



Role of Tourism in Rural Development of Dukagjini Region in Kosovo

Candidate:

Bujar Demjaha

Student No: 1128691

Submitted for the PhD degree in Spatial Planning

Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Planning - Vienna University of Technology

Mentor:

Sibylla Zech, Univ. Prof. Dipl.-Ing

Co Mentor:

Thomas Dillinger, Assistant Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Dr.techn

28th October, 2015

Kurzfassung

Das Hauptziel dieser Doktorthesis ist es, zu einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung der ländlichen Gebiete in der Region Dukagjin beizutragen. Ländliche Gebiete in Südosteuropa waren nach dem Unterschiedsparadigma Stadt-Land entwickelt, weshalb diese Gebiete auch zurück geblieben waren, und die dort lebende Bevölkerung, in einigen Fällen auch heutzutage mit extremer Armut konfrontiert wird.

In Bezug auf die Entwicklung der ländlichen Gebiete greift diese Doktorthesis auf ein Gesamtkonzept, in dem sie die wirtschaftliche und räumliche Entwicklung, über den ländlichen Tourismus, zu einer nachhaltigen Entwicklung, steuert. Sie beabsichtigt die Problematik auf eine komplexe Weise zu betrachten und behandeln, indem Potenziale, laut der Philosophie „schützen, während nutzen“ erhalten werden, und die Entwicklung des ländlichen Dukagjins auf eigene bzw. Kräfte der Gemeinschaft basiert. Dieser Ansatz, bekannt als eine endogene Entwicklung, hat in diesen Gebieten sporadisch auch früher, historisch stattgefunden. Der Überlebenskampf in ländlichen Gebieten dieser Region, hat der Bevölkerung eine Entwicklung, die in der Vergangenheit spontan erfolgt ist, und auf familiäre Einheiten basierten, imponiert. Somit ist die Existenz mit landwirtschaftlich orientierten Aktivitäten gesichert. Dies erhöht die Erfolgchancen einer endogenen Entwicklung in den ländlichen Gebieten der Dukagjini Region. Das Konzept der endogenen Entwicklung dieser Region, basiert auf Erfahrungen des LEADER Ansatzes („Liaison Entre Actions de Development de l'Économie Rural“ welches auf Deutsch bedeutet "Die Verbindungen zwischen ländlicher Wirtschaft und Entwicklungsmaßnahmen"), die in EU-Ländern erfolgt sind. Die Verknüpfung der Theorie der endogenen Entwicklung mit Erfahrungen der LEADER Initiative in dieser Studie, ist mit Entwicklungsmodalitäten der Gruppe einzelner Zellen kombiniert, Entwicklungen, die die gesamte Entwicklung durch Familienunternehmen stärken. Familienunternehmen, als Merkmal der lokalen Bevölkerung in der Region Dukagjini, sind eine Garantie ihrer Nachhaltigkeit.

Natürliche und kulturelle Potenziale in diesen Gebieten, sowie die im Durchschnitt sehr junge Bevölkerung, sind eine sehr gute Grundlage für die Entwicklung des ländlichen Tourismus, aber auch weiterer Modalitäten eines nachhaltigen Tourismus, der in ländlichen Gebieten der Region Dukagjini entwickelt werden kann. Diese Potenziale alleine sind jedoch für die Entwicklung nicht ausreichend. Recherchen ergeben eine Anzahl verschiedener Probleme, wie das Fehlen einer stärkeren legislativen Förderung, fehlende institutionelle Unterstützung der ländlichen Entwicklung, fehlendes Wissen zur Verwaltung vom ländlichen Tourismus, sowie das Fehlen der sehr notwendigen Unterstützung in der Gründung einzelner Zellen (und deren Gruppen), welche den ländlichen Tourismus in die Region Dukagjini ins Leben rufen können. Die endogene Entwicklung transferiert die Initiative von der nationalen und lokalen Regierung auf die Gemeinschaft selbst. Die "bottom-up" Entwicklung, schließt allerdings die nationale und lokale Regierung nicht von ihren Pflichten aus. Die nationale und lokale Regierung haben weiterhin eine sehr wichtige Rolle im Entwicklungsprozess von ländlichen Gebieten, basierend auf den endogenen Ansatz. Nur ist in diesem Fall, die Gemeinschaft selbst, diejenige die den Prozess leitet. In diesem Zusammenhang, spielen lokale Aktionsgruppen eine wichtige Rolle, deren Transformation in dieser Studie vorgeschlagen wird. Sie sollten in einem kleinen Umfang gegründet werden, mit einer Mehrheit von zusammengesetzten Vertretern der lokalen Gemeinschaften und Unternehmern.

Die Thesis konkludiert dass, basierend auf dem Konzept der endogenen Entwicklung, der ländliche Tourismus die beste Option für eine nachhaltige ländliche Entwicklung der Region Dukagjini ist, und dass diese Region ausreichende natürliche, kulturelle und humane Ressourcen aufweist, um langfristig den Wohlstand der Bevölkerung zu sichern.

Hauptwörter: Region Dukagjini, ländliche Gebiete, ländlicher Tourismus, endogene Entwicklung, LEADER Ansatz.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this PhD thesis is to contribute to sustainable development of rural areas in Dukagjini Region. Rural areas in Southeastern Europe used to be developed based on the paradigm of difference between cities and villages, thus resulting in lack of development of these areas. Consequently, the population living in these areas is still facing extreme poverty even now.

This PhD thesis adopts a holistic approach while treating the issue of development of rural areas by directing this economic and spatial development, through rural tourism, towards a sustainable development. It aims at approaching the issue in a complex manner by preserving potentials according to the philosophy “protecting by using” and by basing the development of rural Dukagjini on its own forces, on community forces. This approach, known as endogenous development, has sporadically happened in these areas even before. Fight for survival in rural areas in this region has imposed on population a development which happened spontaneously in the past and was mainly based on family cells, thus providing activities directed towards agriculture. This increases the chances of a successful endogenous development in rural areas of Dukagjini Region. The concept of endogenous development in this region is also based on experiences of LEADER Approach (“Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rural”, meaning “Links between the rural economy and development actions”) that took place in European Union countries during the past decade. The theory of endogenous development related to experience of LEADER initiative in this research has been combined with modalities of cell-cluster development, activities that strengthen development based on family businesses. Family businesses as characteristic of local population in Dukagjini Region can be considered provide a guarantee for their sustainability.

Natural and cultural potentials in these areas and the population of fairly young average age provide good foundation for development of rural tourism and other modalities of sustainable tourism that can be developed in rural areas of Dukagjini Region, but these potentials only are not enough. The research discovers a number of different problems such as lack of stronger legislative support, lack of institutional support for rural tourism, lack of knowledge about running of rural tourism and lack of necessary support to establish cells (and clusters) at the beginning of implementation of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region. Endogenous approach transfers the initiative from central and local governments to community. But the “bottom-up” development does not exclude central and local authorities from responsibility. Central and local authorities continue to have an important role in the process of development of rural areas based on endogenous approach. In this case, the community leads the process. An important role in this respect is played by Local Action Groups (from LEADER experience) the transformation of which is suggested in the present study –the proposal is for them to be composed of smaller number and have more representatives from local community and local businesses.

The thesis concludes that rural tourism is the best option for development of sustainable rural tourism in Dukagjini Region by basing on endogenous development and that this region possesses sufficient natural, cultural and human resources in order to ensure wellbeing of local population in the long term.

Key words: Dukagjini Region, rural areas, rural tourism, endogenous development, LEADER approach.

CONTENT

KURZFASSUNG	i
ABSTRACT	ii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	5
PREFACE.....	7
1. Introduction.....	9
1.1 Historical background of Kosovo and Dukagjini Region	9
1.1.1. From Illyrians to Byzantine Empire.....	10
1.1.2. Slavic expansion and Ottoman occupation	11
1.1.3. Kosovo following separation from Albania	12
1.2 Definition of territory and the notion of “Dukagjini Region”	13
1.3 Question of research	18
1.4 The purpose, primary goal and objectives of research	18
1.5 Scientific methods used in this research.....	19
2. Theoretical consideration.....	23
2.1 Sustainable Development- meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future	23
2.2 European Spatial Development Perspective in the function of development of Dukagjini Region	24
2.3 Sustainable Tourism for tomorrow.....	25
2.4 Rural Tourism	27
2.4.1 Rural tourism and its modalities.....	28
2.4.2 Types of potential visitors.....	30
2.5 Endogenous Development.....	31
2.5.1 Rural regional endogenous development in the planning process	35
2.5.2 Experience of endogenous development in the EU	35
2.5.3 Leader approach as method used to mobilize and deliver rural development.....	36
2.5.4 Endogenous development in Kosovo and Southeastern Europe	40
2.6 Cluster Development	40
2.7 Endogenous and Cluster approach in function for Rural Tourism Development in Dukagjini Region	43
3. Examples for Rural Development in the Balkans	47
3.1 “Quku i Valbonës” Guesthouse in Albania	48
3.2 “Popova Kula” Winery in Demir Kapija	51
3.3 Rafting in Piva and Tara rivers	54
3.4 Ethno village “KÜSTENDORF” in Serbia.....	57
3.5 “Peaks of the Balkans”	60
3.6 Diversity of touristic offer in Rural Dukagjini as an answer to demanding tourists.....	62
4. Laws, spatial plans and relevant documents in Kosovo related to Dukagjini Region.....	65
4.1 Legislation in Kosovo related to rural tourism.....	65
4.1.1. Progress of legislation in Kosovo in the last 15 years (1999-2014)	66
4.1.2. 32 Kosovar laws from 5 ministries that deal with rural tourism	67
4.1.3. Laws that have direct impact on rural tourism	68
4.1.4. Action plan rural tourism- the best solution of Kosovar legislation for rural tourism	71
4.2 Spatial Plan of Kosovo.....	72
4.3 Plans of Special Protected Zones and Special Interest Areas in Dukagjini Region	78
4.3.1. Special Protected Zones	78
4.3.2. National Park “Sharri”	79
4.3.3. Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfalls”	86
4.3.4. The National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”	92
4.3.5. Spatial Plan of Kosovo and plans for specific areas in the function of rural tourism development in Dukagjini Region	97
4.4 Analysis of Municipal Development Plans in “Dukagjini Region”	98
4.4.1. Municipality of Istog	98
4.4.2. Municipality of Peja.....	101
4.4.3. Municipality of Klina.....	105
4.4.4. Municipality of Deçan.....	107
4.4.5. Municipality of Junik.....	110

4.4.6.	Municipality of Gjakova	112
4.4.7.	Municipality of Rahovec	114
4.4.8.	Municipality of Malisheva.....	117
4.4.9.	Municipality of Suhareka	120
4.4.10.	Municipality of Prizren	122
4.4.11.	Municipality of Dragash.....	126
4.4.12.	Mamusha Municipality.....	129
4.4.13.	The coherence and harmony of the MDP with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo and other relevant documents in the function of rural tourism	132
4.5.	Specific plans, projects and important reports related to Dukagjini Region	133
5.5.1.	“Sector Profile of Tourism in Kosovo”	133
5.5.2.	“Development of tourism and program of spatial regulation of tourism in Kosovo 2004.....	136
5.5.3.	“Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2009- 13”	139
5.5.4.	“Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009”	142
5.5.5.	“Association of Regional Development Agency”	148
5.5.6.	Fragmented process in building of Kosovar documentation for planning related to tourism in Dukagjini Region	151
5.	Interviews and onsite research.....	153
5.1.	Interviews with questionnaires	153
5.2.	Open interviews	160
5.3.	Reflection on results of interviewing	161
6.	Profile of Dukagjini Region	163
6.1.	General information for Dukagjini Region	163
6.1.1	Position and geography	164
6.1.2	Topography.....	164
6.1.3	Climate.....	164
6.1.4	Population.....	164
6.2.	Settlements- Residential units fund and living conditions	165
6.3.	Land exploitation and soils.....	166
6.3.1	Cliffs, minerals and soils.....	166
6.3.2	Land exploitation.....	167
6.3.3	Water resources	168
6.4.	Education, health and social welfare	170
6.4.1.	Education.....	170
6.4.2.	Health	176
6.4.3.	Social welfare	178
6.5.	Economic development and employment	178
6.5.1.	Economic development.....	178
6.5.2.	Employment.....	181
6.6.	Forestry and agriculture.....	182
6.6.1.	Forestry and semi natural areas.....	182
6.6.2.	Agriculture and specific land exploitation	182
6.7.	Biodiversity and preservation of nature	182
6.8.	Culture, Nature and Tourism.....	183
6.8.1.	Natural heritage	183
6.8.2.	Cultural heritage	189
6.8.3.	Tourism.....	195
6.9.	Infrastructure and utilities	196
6.9.1.	Road infrastructure, railways and air traffic	196
6.9.2.	Supply with electricity and energy infrastructure	198
6.9.3.	Telecommunication network.....	198
6.9.4.	Water supply.....	199
6.9.5.	Management of solid wastes and wastewater	199
6.10.	Regional Strategic projects.....	199
6.11.	Networks, urgency and rescue services	200
7.	S.W.O.T Analysis of Dukagjini Region.....	205
8.	Vision of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region	211

9.	Strategic framework.....	215
9.1.	Implementation methodology	215
9.1.1.	Capacity building	216
9.1.2.	Bringing together local actors for efficiency in implementation stage.....	218
9.1.3.	Building a Strategic Plan on regional potential and in harmony with applicable documents ..	218
9.1.4.	Identifying existing activities and initiatives for continuity.....	219
9.1.5.	The establishment of LAGs and partnerships for better efficiency	219
9.1.6.	Preparation of local development plans.....	219
9.2.	Participative approach in the process of strategy definition.....	220
9.3.	Strategic Guidelines and Actions	220
9.3.1.	Integrated education and training regarding tourism and agriculture:	222
9.3.2.	Support, increasing number of cultural events and non-material cultural heritage and their diversification:	223
9.3.3.	Protection and upkeep of natural landscapes and preservation of bio-diversity and development of sustainable tourism:.....	223
9.3.4.	Increasing participation of community in regional policies for development of tourism:.....	223
9.3.5.	Protection, preservation and restoration of historical heritage and its integration	223
9.3.6.	Development of sustainable tourism in mountainous areas:	223
9.3.7.	Activities of sustainable tourism in rivers and lakes:.....	224
9.3.8.	Calibrating accommodation and gastronomic structures according to international	224
9.3.9.	standards of tourism and stimulation of competition:.....	224
9.3.10.	Improvement of infrastructure and touristic services:.....	224
9.3.11.	Designing of typical hospitality packages:	224
9.3.12.	Communication and marketing improvement:.....	224
9.3.13.	Updating of urban plans in the region:.....	225
9.3.14.	Creation of new public spaces and their maintenance in the region:	225
9.3.15.	Waste and water management:.....	225
9.3.16.	Promoting renewable energy and saving of energy in touristic areas:	225
9.3.17.	Healthcare and physical safety of tourists in the region:	225
9.3.18.	Stimulation of typical products and their inclusion in regional touristic offer:.....	226
9.3.19.	Establishment of strings of cultural values and heritage:	226
9.3.20.	Implementation of Strategic Plan for producers’ cells based on family businesses and	226
9.3.21.	agricultural products, food products, handicrafts and traditional textile products:	227
9.3.22.	Implementation of Strategy Plan for production increase and encouraging of producers	227
9.3.23.	grouping in clusters:	227
9.3.24.	Creation of the system for quality assurance certificates:.....	227
9.3.25.	Progressive development of family businesses to help permanent increase of	227
9.3.26.	competition in the market:.....	227
9.3.27.	Legal framework (Law on Rural Tourism, establishment of favorable fiscal policies for	227
9.3.28.	rural tourism):	227
9.3.29.	Improvement of transport infrastructure and mobility (bus stations, railway and	228
9.3.30.	Airport of Gjakova):.....	228
9.3.31.	Marketing at state level (creation of state portal for tourism and rural tourism,	228
9.3.32.	official promotion of rural tourism in international fairs for tourism):	228
9.3.33.	Establishing of annual state budget for rural tourism:	228
9.3.34.	Establishing of “guard of environment”:	228
9.3.35.	Supporting establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs):	228
10.	Action plan	229
10.1.	Devising participatory projects.....	229
10.2.	Projects for regional tourism development	230
10.2.1.	Tourist reception in Dukagjini Region.....	230
10.2.2.	Cultural heritage tourist itineraries	232
10.2.3.	Exploring surrounding mountains and caves	233
10.2.4.	Lakes, rivers and waterfalls tourist itinerary.....	234
10.2.5.	Typical Dukagjini Region arts and crafts	235
10.2.6.	Typical Brands in Dukagjini Region of quality food products	236

10.2.7.	Clean and hospitable region (Rural and Urban area)	237
10.2.8.	Safety (First aid, Policy control, aid in case of emergency situation, etc.)	237
10.2.9.	Safety.....	238
10.2.10.	Establishment of first Ethno village “Welcome to Dukagjini”	241
10.3.	Synergies among projects for regional development	242
10.4.	Notes on the implementation of the Strategic Plan	243
11.	Conclusions.....	245
11.1	Endogenous development, creation of cells and clusters to the function of employment of local young people.....	247
11.2	Learning from LEADER	249
11.3	Nature protection- an imperative for the future of Dukagjini Region	251
11.4	Protection of culture heritage for identity and authentic rural tourism	254
11.5	Action plan needed.....	255
11.6	Complex approach for improvement of human capacity	256
11.7	Improvement of mobility- an urgent task	258
11.8	Promotion of rural tourism through better media coverage and efficient marketing.....	259
11.9	Necessity for practical measures for tourist safety and security.....	261
12.	Epilogue.....	263
13.	Bibliography.....	267
14.	CURRICULUM VITAE	273

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARDA	Association of Regional Development Agencies
ARDP	Agriculture and Rural Development Plan
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CC	Current Contents
CHwB	Culture Heritage without Borders
DC	Didactic Centers
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EC	European Commission
EDEN	European Destinations of Excellence
ESDP	European Spatial Development Perspective
EU	European Union
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Communities (an organization within the EU that collects and collates statistical information relating to member states)
FMC	Family Medicine Center
FVAK	Food and Veterinary Agency of Kosova
GIZ	German International Development Agency
INEPK	Institute for Nature and Environment Protection of Kosovo
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KAS	Kosovo Agency of Statistics
KATA	Kosovo Alternative Tourism Association
KEPA	Kosovo Agency for Environmental Protection of
KOTAS	Kosovo Tourism Association
KPEP	Kosovo Private Enterprise Program
LAG	Local Action Group
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Development de l'Économie Rural”, meaning “Links between the rural economy and development actions”
MAFRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
MCYS	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports
MDP	Municipal Development Plans
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MESP	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MFMC	Main Family Medicine Center
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MLSW	Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PC	Productive Capitals
PCDK	Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo

PDC	Professional Development Center
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RSN	Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009
SCI	Science Citation Index
SPK	Spatial Plan of Kosova
SPNPSH	Spatial Plan for National Park “Sharri”
SAPK	Socialistic Autonomous Province of Kosovo
SP-NMMWF	Spatial Plan - Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfall”
SPT	Sector Profile of Tourism
SPZ	Special Protected Zones
TAK	Tourist Association of Kosovo
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization

PREFACE

Career path is a story on itself and despite detailed planning professional development takes its path by being somehow subject to influences from external factors but also from individual's internal ones. These influences are always noticeable, in some parts more and in some less, but the process does not stop and it is up to each person to maximally direct this journey towards planned objective. External influences in Kosovo were more powerful than in any other country in Europe and had profound impact in my professional and scientific career. I recall the traumas of demonstrations of year 1968 in Kosovo when I was a first grader, then also the demonstration of 1981. 1981, when I was attending the second year of studies in architecture, was a year when the student life idyll ended as political pressures started especially against students. This nightmare continued with threatening gatherings all over Serbia in the eighties that finally resulted in my interrupting of master's studies in the area of urbanism and spatial planning in Belgrade. Although at first glance they seem belated, the PhD studies in Vienna, in case of this research firstly provide a mix of earlier experiences in a summarized form and great wish to help my newly established country (Kosovo), in being prosperous and being able to stand on its own so it would not be a burden to anybody. Secondly, the wish that articulated this goal was to contribute to my country with a study in the area of regional planning, in a proven institution in Europe and among planners that are well aware of Kosovo's circumstances. The most suitable institution in this respect was the Center of Regional Planning and Regional Development - Department of Spatial Planning of the Vienna University of Technology in Austria.

Two facts mainly influenced me to choose the PhD research topic towards proper development of rural areas. The first fact is that fortunately rural areas remained (mostly) protected from devastations, and the second fact is that the majority of population lives in rural areas. Primarily, the aim of sustainable development in rural areas is fighting poverty and improving the quality of life. Long-term sustainable development may be achieved only with a balanced development of a broader territory. Dukagjini Region, being the object of my research, comprises approximately half of overall Kosovo territory. Sustainable development in my study, based on community's own forces (endogenous development) and on experiences of LEADER initiative in countries of European Union, provides an excellent opportunity for quick and successful development through rural tourism. The nature, as the main resource for rural tourism, provides foundation for development of this economic activity, therefore it should be protected by all means (“protecting by using”). Furthermore, the rural tourism is very much interrelated with agriculture as the main economic activity in rural areas for being moment. Both these economic activities that strongly complement each other enable immediate employment of a huge number of young people.

Despite the fact that this PhD topic was focused in the western part of Kosovo, a similar approach could also be applied in the rest of Kosovo but also elsewhere (in neighboring countries and wider). Each region possesses its own specifics, identity, and authenticity that make them unique and attractive to tourists.

While elaborating on the issues mentioned above, especially while visiting the most remote areas of Dukagjini Region, my belief got stronger that there is hope for a better life of people living in these areas. During exploration of rural Dukagjini the initial spark turned into a growing conviction that rural tourism could cause wonders in these areas. This conviction is elaborated and articulated in a

clear vision into a Strategic Plan with concrete actions and projects. Moreover, this research does not end here; rather it opens the opportunity for further developments, based on market demands that change rapidly. Only small cells (family based) may quickly respond to such changes in rural tourism market. Therefore, these cells that can be established with minimal investments may be developed with small government assistance or donations (“start-up” funds) and can cause wonders in transforming the life in rural areas of Dukagjini Region.

Following meetings with hundreds of inhabitants in rural Dukagjini, the objective of this research has become my mission for a positive change in these areas. Generosity and sincerity of these people is embedded in my memory and makes me go back to them again. It obliges me to go beyond the limit of scientific study in order to give my utmost as human being and change the situation, improve their life but without spoiling the balance created in these areas for centuries, the balance between man and nature.

In the end, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to certain people. I would like to start with two people that were special in relation to progress of this PhD topic- mentor Sibylla Zech, Univ. Prof. Dipl.-Ing and co-mentor Thomas Dillinger, Assistant Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Dr.techn who, in the case of the present study, contributed more than required from a mentor of PhD studies. Their great international experience and prof. Thomas’s specific experience in Kosovo generate an added value in the process of drafting of the present document. The seminars and meetings with them and other colleagues of PhD studies that took place in Seminar Room Operngasse 11/ 5th Floor, will be unforgettable for me. The other people in the Center of Regional Planning and Regional Development were hospitable and supportive in critical moments that motivated me towards reaching the objective of my PhD journey.

It would be impossible for me to reach this objective without the contribution and patience of my family- my wife and two sons. This study was also supported by a great number of friends, colleagues and collaborators who contributed in their own way and this document would not have this form had it not been for their contribution.

This great overall support from all given to my work, which was more than scientific, turned it into pleasure by bringing synergy and additional value to this PhD process and I am forever thankful for this.

1. Introduction

Developments throughout the world and the South- Eastern Europe, especially developments in Kosovar circumstances, created a new situation for Kosovo. Although the independence of Kosovo was welcome, being an independent state imposes on the newest country in Europe all respective responsibilities. While the first part of Chapter 1 deals mainly with genesis of establishment of Kosovo as it is presently and give a definition of the territory of Dukagjini Region, the second part of this chapter elaborates on the question of research, its purpose, goals, objectives and scientific methods used in this thesis.

Kosovo, as the youngest country in Europe deriving from ex-Yugoslavia, is located in South-Eastern-Europe (Figure 1.).

Figure1. Kosovo in European context



Source: Author, 2014

Kosovo became a state on 17th February 2008, when its Parliament declared independence. Its grid reference is: North width 43° 16', South width 41° 53', East length 21° 16', West length 19° 59', area: total 10,908 km² and its capital city Pristina 42°40 N 21°10 E / 42.667, 21.167¹. The "newborn" country with a young population is facing all benefits and difficulties of being independent. Dukagjini Region covers almost half the territory of entire of Kosovo in its South-Western part.

1.1 Historical background of Kosovo and Dukagjini Region²

The land inhabited by Albanians today, where the current territory of Kosovo is, started being populated at early ages, in Paleolithic Age, over 100.000 years ago. A great number of such dwelling places in the current territory of Kosovo, such as the cave of Radac and Karamakaz, as well as other smaller caves, are known.

The population of current territory of Kosovo, including Dukagjin, grew in Neolithic Age. People started leaving caves and concentrating on open spaces. Neolithic inhabitants liked more to build

¹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, Pristina, <https://ask.rks-gov.net/eng/home>, (Approched December 2014)

² This chapter is compiled based on interview with Abdyl Hoxha, a historian and ex-director (now retired) of Peja Regional Institute for Monument Protection

their huts in fields and river terraces. Early inhabitants, from living a nomad life in the Paleolithic era, often moved to sustainable dwelling places, mostly dealing with agricultural economy.

1.1.1. From Illyrians to Byzantine Empire

Illyrians, as descendants of the Pellazg tribe, are among the most ancient inhabitants of Balkan Peninsula. They are autochthonous. Illyrians created their culture, language and anthropological features in their place, in the western part of Balkan Peninsula. The start of Illyrian origin dated from the second millennium since the Medium Bronze Age, when Illyrian typical features started being formed.

Dardans were the largest Illyrian tribe that led the Dardan Kingdom, in central Balkans, mainly in Kosovo. The most important city of Dardans was Damastion, known as the capital of metal extraction. Dardans are known as strong warriors, very good miners, livestock breeders and known merchants. The Dardan Kingdom was established in the 4th century B.C. It occupied the current territory of Kosovo and other surrounding provinces. Following long wars with Romans, at the end of the 1st century B.C. Dardans lost their independence and were subject to complete dependence of Rome.

Early medieval Albanians emerged out of the chaos of Western Roman Empire destruction as descendants of Dardans and Feon tribes that used to live in the Upper Illyria and Thrace, until the period of mass occupation of German Goths that took place in Albanian lands during the fourth century of our era. At the end of the sixth century, Thracians and Illyrians were displaced due to invasion of Avar people, Ants and Bulgarian-Turkish-Ugric Slavicized tribes.

Following the division of Roman Empire in two parts, in 395, Illyrian-Albanian lands became part of Byzantine Empire, the ways Roman Empire of the South was called after this date according to ancient name of its capital Byzantine, which in the honor of Constantin the Great was called Constantinople.

The inrush of population started in 4th – 5th century. Although they were not affected by the main direction of inrush of population, Albanian lands were not left out of them completely. By the end of the 4th century, Goth incursions, eastern Goths (Ostrogoth) and those of the west (Visigoths) took place and Illyrian-Albanian lands were also impacted.

Differently from other people, the inrush of Slavs in the Balkans was accompanied by a new phenomenon, the phenomenon of their setting in. Slavs set in places where they treaded and formed the so-called "Sklavini" (Slavic places). At the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century, such Sklavini were established in Macedonia, Thrace, Thessaly, Boeotia, and a rather great number in Peloponnese.

In the 7th-8th century, the ethnic situation in the Balkans was stabilized and there is no inrush of people mentioned any more. This ethnic situation of early medieval centuries, in what was established as the medieval homeland of Albanians (Albania-Arbëria), in essence remained unchanged in coming centuries too. In 13th-15th century, caravans of merchants departed from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) through Breskovo and Rudnik (Sanxhak) arrived in Trepça and Novo-Brdo, and passed through places inhabited by Albanians where Albanian language was spoken (lingua albanesca).

In 1054, when division of churches took place, Albanian lands that included former province of Dardania, largely became part of Catholic Church. For several centuries, Catholicism remained the domineering religion.

1.1.2.Slavic expansion and Ottoman occupation

Albanian lands of Dardania were very attractive for the powerful Serbian state, which was created at the beginning of the 13th century. Dardania fell completely under Serbian domination, during the reign of the Serbian King, Stefan Dushan (1331-1355).

The cities of the latter, Shkodra, Prizren, Prishtina and Skopje, became seats of the Serbian court at different times. From the middle of the 18th century, another important center of Kosovo, Peja, turned into the center of Serbian Autocephalous Church. At the very first year of Stefan Dushan's reign, an anti-Serbian rebellion broke out in northwestern lands and it was led by the nobleman Dhimitër Suma (1332).

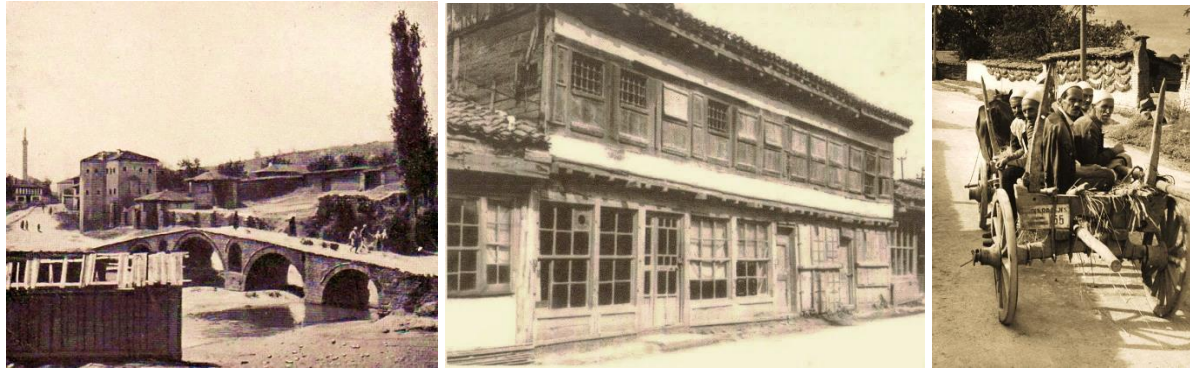
Attacks of Ottoman armies to conquer Albanian lands started in the middle of the eighties of the 14th century. Ottoman conquerors turned Kosovo rulers into their vassals.

While Ottoman conquerors occupied Albanian lands, a part of gentlefolk managed to protect ownership by turning into Sultan's vassals. However, in 1443, Gjergj Kastrioti - Skenderbeu (Gjon Kastrioti's son), helped by his older brother Stanisha, took over the castle of Kruja and started the overall rebellion, which later resulted in creation of Albanian state. Skënderbeu took control over the mountainous region in the South of Skopje and Skopje-Kërçovë road.

Many rebellions organized in Albanian lands, were to a certain point met by solidarity of the Albanian lands of Kosovo. During 1670-1680, inhabitants of Sanjak of Prizren and Dukagjini expressed solidarity with other Albanian Sanjaks, in relation to non-collection of Ottoman state taxes.

Some of inhabitants supported the Austrian army which started occupying Albanian lands, by conquering Ottoman army. Aligning of Albanians with Austrians became more obvious in spring 1689, when Count Ludvig Baden, commander of Austrian front, decided to occupy Nish and through Prokuplje arrive in Kosovo. Following this victory, a part of Austrian army headed by General Pikolomini departed for Kosovo where he was met by Albanians. When he arrived in Prishtina, Kosovo Albanians declared that they were with the Emperor. Pikolomini came across the same situation in Prizren as well. Inhabitants of the city took to the streets and received him with honors. Around 5000 Albanians with their Archbishop, Pjetër Bogdani, saluted him with a fusillade. Austrian, English and Papal sources claim that over 20000 Albanians were with Pikolomini. According to an estimate, 5000 people were from Prishtina, 3000 from Peja, 6000 from Klina and Drenica, 6000-8000 from Prizren. Other Albanians that were not with the Austrian army continued their rebellion. When Austrian forces arrived in Prizren, 3000 Albanian rebels took Peja over.

Figure 2. Cultural Landscape from Gjakova, beginning of 20th century



Source: Unknown author

1.1.3. Kosovo following separation from Albania

When the Serbian Kingdom was created in the territory of Dardania, the new southern clergy called it New Serbia and with the increase of influence of Slavic clergy in the Balkans and creation of the myth of Kosovo, majority of the former vilayet of Kosovo started being called Old Serbia and later on Kosovo and Metohia, whereas the territory of Dardania was divided in three units “Banovina” of Yugoslav Kingdom and one part in Albania. During Balkan and world wars there were numerous changes of borders and names, and majority of former vilayet of Kosovo becomes part of a lay Serbian Federation as a constitutional unit of Yugoslav Federation.

Figure 3. Cultural Landscape from Peja, middle of 20th century



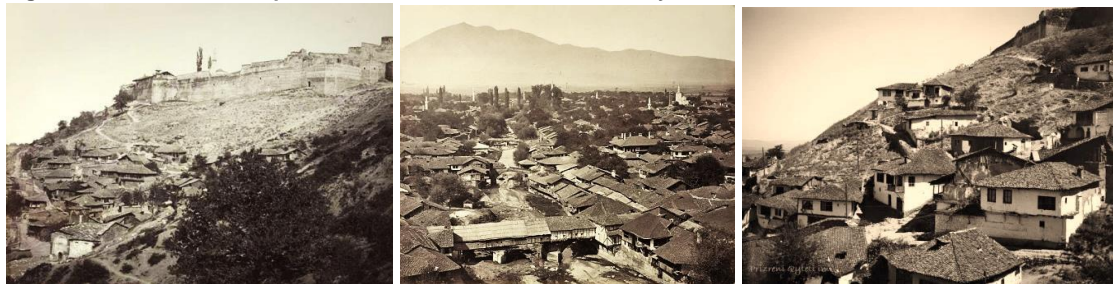
Source: Unknown author

There were forced Constitutional changes in the Assembly of Kosovo on 28 March 1989 organized by the Communist League of Serbia headed by Milosheviq.

On 17 February 2008, Kosovo was declared an independent and sovereign state. The Constitution of Kosovo that provides Kosovo with all powers of a state, entered into force on 15 June 2008.

108 countries (106 out of 193 countries are United Nations members) and 23 out of 28 European Union member states have recognized Kosovo so far (Figure 2, 3, 4).

Figure 4. Cultural Landscape from Prizren, the end of 19th century



Source: Székely Josef

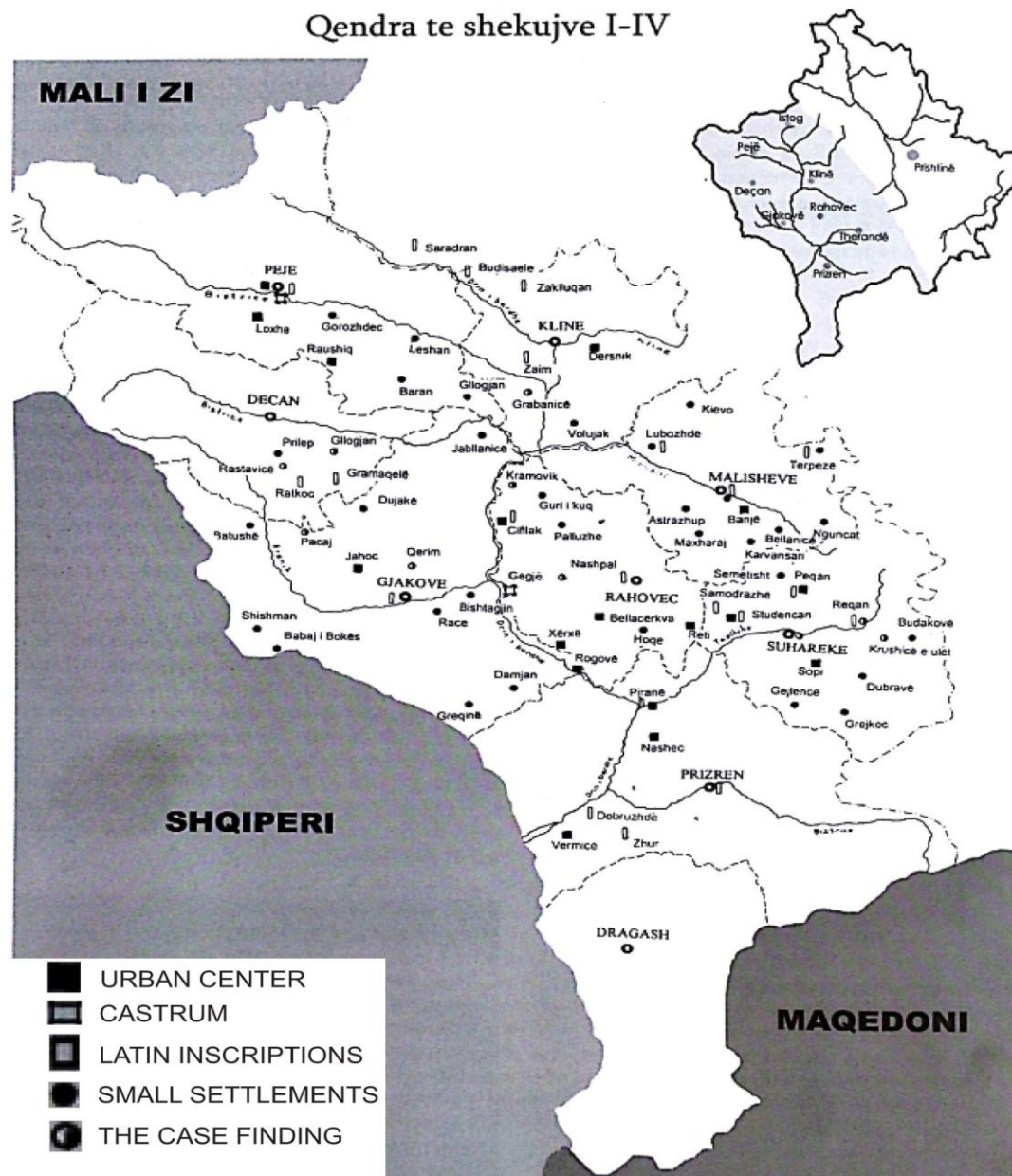
1.2 Definition of territory and the notion of “Dukagjini Region”

The term “Dukagjini Region” is closely related to the term “Dukagjini Valley” or more exactly the “Dukagjini Plain”. None of the above denominations are clearly bordered, but all of them are connected with the Drini i Bardhë River basin. The Drini i Bardhë basin was the place of Illyrian settlements from prehistoric times and historically. Cultural features of the population, which despite the diversity is considered to have similar habits and tradition, were historically built there. Considering that this basin is closely linked to surrounding mountains on all sides, this study deals with the territory of this basin and these mountains by referring to administrative boundaries of 13 municipalities. The fourteenth municipality, the newly established Municipality of Mamusha, with very small territory and number of inhabitants, lies within the territory of Prizren and is treated here within the Municipality of Prizren.

The basin of river Drini i Bardhë runs through Dukagjini Region and through one part of Northeastern Albania. Its total length is 175 km with surface of water collector basin of 4956 km². Drini i Bardhë's spring is in Bjeshkët e Nemuna in Kosovo, in mountain Ruseli near village Radavc of the highland Zhleb, which is around 30 km Northwest of Peja, but this river collects all waterflows from surrounding mountains. From its spring to the point of contact with Toplica stream in north of Prizren, the river Drini i Bardhë creates a waterfall of 30 meters, that flows towards Southeast collecting waters of rivers Bistrica of Peja, Deçan, Mirusha, Erenik, etc. Relief of collection of Drini i Bardhë is a mountain, with average height of 862m, including mainly magmatic and ultrabasic rock³. Water, fertile land, and suitable climate were preconditions for establishment of settlements since prehistoric time, during 1st-4th century until today (Figure 5.).

³ Perzhita et al, “Archeological map of Kosova”, Academy of Science and Arts of Kosova, 2006 (p.16)

Figure 5. Map of settlements from 1-4th Century in Dukagjini Region



Source: Perzhita et al "Harta arkeologjike e Kosoves", 2006 (p.132)

The establishment of dwelling in this region has continuously been based on favorable climatic conditions and other factors such as territorial and geographical compactness, number of inhabitants according to Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS), which foresees 0,8 -1 million inhabitants per region (NUTS2)⁴, and all this make Dukagjini Region be considered as a compact regional entirety compatible with EUROST principles. This geographical territory defined with flow of river Drini i Bardhë, is in compliance with ethnographic zone which has other micro zones such as Lugu i Drinit, Lugu i Leshanit, Dushkaja, Lugu i Baranit, etc. Another province of Dukagjini Region is Podrimja, which lies in the basin of Prizren, in a place from the bridge Ura e

⁴ Eurostat, NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics)

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/principles-and-characteristics>, (Approached December 2014)

Shenjtë, over the river Drini i Bardhë, near Prizren and Drenica.⁵ The most important ethnographic unit in Dukagjini Region is Podguri of Peja, which lies from the spring of river Drini i Bardhë near village Radavc up to the village Runik. Other ethnographic units of this region are Rugova, Hasi, Gora, Opoja and Podguri of Prizren⁶.

In some other documents one may find that Kosovo is organized in different numbers of regions - 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 or 2 (Figure 6.). According to division carried out by the European Commission, both the territory of Dukagjini Region as well as the territory of municipalities which lies in 2 regions of Kosovo have been defined: Region of Peja (Peja, Istog, Klinë, Deçan, Junik and Gjakova) and Region of Prizren (Prizren, Malisheva, Rahovec, Suhareka, Dragash and new municipality of Mamusha).

"The Association of Regional Development Agencies (ARDA) is a network for implementation of Kosovo and EU policies and is an independent, non-governmental organization established in January 2013 by five Regional Development Agencies (North, East, West, South and Centre) in Kosovo".⁷

Figure 6. Maps with different numbers of regions in Kosovo



Source: Kosovo Agency for Statistic, Association of Regional Development Agencies, Map of hydrology of Kosovo

Since ancient times, the economic and political status of Kosovo was more dependent on others than on its own residents. Being occupied by the Turkish Empire for many centuries and having had extremely uncomfortable statuses in all modalities of Yugoslavia, caused this territory to lag behind economic developments and become the least developed country in the Balkans. The new situation created after the 1999 armed conflict in Kosovo was characterized by an unsynchronized development that lacked a clear vision for its development in general. Different international organizations, such as military, police, political and judicial ones instated here did not consider economic development as their primary task. Humanitarian organizations have also carried on their activity mainly based on their plans without having an idea where their contribution fitted in the greater picture of the new state of Kosovo. It might be considered that the trend has gradually improved although at a very slow pace. Following the declaration of independence, the responsibility for setting priorities lies with Kosovo institutions. The priorities of the independent Kosovo Government, which were not so right, were more oriented towards construction of roads which were not in the function of economic development, thus spending over one third of the

⁵ Krasniqi M., "Zonat etnografike te Kosoves", Shqiptaret dhe trojet e tyre, Tirana, 1982, (p.11-75)

⁶ Krasniqi M., "Zonat etnografike te Kosoves", Shqiptaret dhe trojet e tyre, Tirana, 1982, (p. 515-524)

⁷ ARDA (Association of Regional Development Agencies) – Kosovo, <http://arda-kosovo.org/en-us/about-us> (Approached December 2014)

national budget to this end. These developments were not in coherence with 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which was noticed by all political parties, and during this year's electoral campaign their priorities were focused on economic development. This topic which focuses on rural development of Dukagjini Region through rural tourism is in coherence with MDG and reflects on most of the topics of this declaration (Figure7.).

Figure 7. The 8 Millennium Development Goals Report



Source: ShareAMERICA, "Building a new world for the new millennium", (<https://share.america.gov/u-n-millennium-development-goals/>, (Approached June 2015)

Referring to the 2010's information on the MDGs, the basic characteristics which identify the current state of Kosovo are:

- Two out of five Kosovo residents are considered poor and poverty is more evident in rural areas.
- Primary education rate has been low at the global level.
- The index of gender development is the lowest in Balkan region (0.76).
- Infant mortality ranges between 35 and 49 per 1000 live births.
- Mothers' health is considered to be the most worrying issue in the region and is estimated that 43.3 out of 100,000 mothers die during childbirth.⁸

Extreme poverty and little chance for a faster development of rural settlements make it necessary to find a development tool that gives quick results. Apart from agriculture, tourism can be considered as an effective opportunity for elimination of poverty and improvement of living standards in these areas, especially in the long run. Sustainable tourism can be of great importance for Kosovo society, which is a consistent benefit of sustainable tourism to poor countries as articulated by the World Summit of Sustainable Development in 2002 in Johannesburg. This summit determined basis of philosophy "with sustainable tourism-against poverty" in order to reduce world poverty by 50% until 2015. Rich natural and cultural resources in Kosovo and predominantly young population represent an excellent basis for development of rural tourism based on local capacities for economic development of rural Kosovo and for reducing poverty until it is completely eliminated. Massive

⁸ Rexhepi V., "Tourism and the Millennium Development Goals: The case study of Kosovo", *Tourismo & Desenvolvimento* no.17/18, 2012 (p.257)

winter tourism, rehabilitation tourism and other large scale projects have a low impact in the welfare of local population because of the fact that the greatest part of profit goes to investors.

UNWTO, a specialized UN agency for tourism, is committed to promote contribution of the MDG sectors by promoting sustainable tourism development. Tourism is one of the biggest creators of world's jobs and the leading field in export, especially for countries in development, and as such it has an important impact in reaching the MDGs, eradicating poverty, improving gender equality and environmental sustainability and building global partnership for development.⁹

Noticeable results have already been reached in the world providing confirmation in this respect but it is for sure that these goals are to remain for the future of Kosovo and the World as well. The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on his statement on 2013 UN Report said:

"The MDGs have proven that focused global development objectives can make a profound difference. Success in the next 1000 days will not only improve the lives of millions, it will add momentum as we plan for beyond 2015 and the challenges of sustainable development".¹⁰

On the 3rd January 2014, the Report of UNGA stated: "Tourism can foster sustainable development in Central America"¹¹. It is an opportunity for reduction of poverty and an ally for sustainable development on three components: social, economic and environmental. This drives towards goals of Millennium.

"Emphasizing that sustainable tourism in Central America is a cross-cutting activity with close linkages to other sectors and thus generating trade opportunities, the UN General Assembly recognizes tourism as a fundamental pillar of regional integration and an engine of social and economic development, income, investment and strong currency in the region. The resolution further "encourages giving appropriate consideration to the issue of sustainable tourism in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda", which will follow the deadline of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)".¹²

Despite institutional and non-institutional engagement for sustainable development, an unsustainable trend continues. The progress of sustainable development is still little, and ongoing negative trends in Europe cannot stop. Economic growth since the Rio Summit has been fed by unprecedented resource and material consumption and related environmental impacts"¹³. Big parts of natural resources are used from people, causing concerns about the ability of nature to be compensated to bear this progress of growth. That led us to a necessity for a holistic approach involving everyone in the process in the long run. Kosovo should by all means co-exist with these trends while being cautious not to repeat the mistakes of other countries.

⁹ UNWTO, Annual Report 2010, 2010, (p.4)

¹⁰ UNWTO, Annual Report 2013, 2010, (p.62)

¹¹ UNWTO, "UN General Assembly: Tourism can foster sustainable development in Central America", <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2014-01-03/un-general-assembly-tourism-can-foster-sustainable-development-central-amer>, (Approached March 2014)

¹² UNWTO, "UN General Assembly: Tourism can foster sustainable development in Central America", <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2014-01-03/un-general-assembly-tourism-can-foster-sustainable-development-central-amer>, (Approached March 2014)

¹³ UNWTO, "UN General Assembly: Tourism can foster sustainable development in Central America", <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2014-01-03/un-general-assembly-tourism-can-foster-sustainable-development-central-amer>, (Approached March 2014)

1.3 Question of research

A balanced development in all levels, a balanced development of Kosovo in relation to the EU member states, development of the Dukagjini Region in relation to that of Pristina and development of rural areas compared to urban areas is necessary basis for development of sustainable economic development in a broader context. Stagnation of rural development indicates the difficult economic situation of the population in these areas who face poverty and, in some cases, extreme poverty.

The Dukagjini Region, as a territory defined with the Basin of Drini i Bardhë River and the mountains the river begins from, faces two challenges: emergency development before the remaining population migrates from these areas and the other one – the challenge of sustainable development by preserving existing resources. This makes it necessary to ask the following question, which is also the question of this research:

Based on the concept of endogenous development, is rural tourism the option of sustainable rural development of Dukagjini Region and does the concerned region possess sufficient natural, cultural and human resources in order to ensure the wellbeing of local population in the long run?

The best development options which provide quick results are agriculture and tourism. While agriculture provides direct and immediate effects in the fight against extreme poverty, tourism enables added profit for other needs that are essential for a more qualitative life. Residents of rural areas in Dukagjini Region, surrounded by unique natural and cultural resources, have the opportunity to improve their quality of life using the surrounding wealth but also maintaining it at the same time. Indeed, rural tourism that is strongly based on local agriculture and local production is the option that can bring the quickest results in the long run. Besides preserving the environment, a great advantage for development of rural areas through rural tourism is that it requires minimum funding for such development. Initially, it is necessary that the Government or donors help with start-up funds to functionalize the process. Social and comprehensive philosophy on tourism can also be beneficial to building better relations between different social groups, generations, and communities and, in particular, it can contribute to promotion of women in society.

The biggest advantage of rural tourism to that of massive tourism, when the investor collects all profit, is that rural tourism based on the endogenous development concept will reduce poverty in Dukagjini Region in Kosovo.

1.4 The purpose, primary goal and objectives of research

The purpose and main goal of this dissertation is to define strategic principles for rural development of Dukagjini Region through rural tourism in order to mitigate poverty in Kosovo. The main objective of this dissertation is shifting from traditional exogenous approach of development to native-endogenous development approach in rural areas of Dukagjini Region through rural tourism. Rural tourism in this case does not prevent development of agriculture; on the contrary, it is based on and complemented by it, and both together create a synergy of rural development. Selling products directly to tourists is beneficial for both, buyers and producers. Tourists get fresh products at a cheaper cost, and villagers sell their products at a higher price, while avoiding large margins of dealers.

The expected result is identification of potential and opportunities for sustainable tourism, and finding mechanisms for its implementation in order to mitigate poverty. The development to date based on the paradigm of unbalanced development, and prioritized development of urban areas has disrupted the balance, deepened the poverty and stimulated migration of population from rural to urban areas. Development of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region enables immediate development, focusing on rural residents themselves, by providing quick results and long-term well-being.

Development of rural areas in Dukagjini Region at a multi-dimensional aspect requires defining strategies of development for rural tourism to the interest of economic development of rural Dukagjini Region. However, development of rural tourism and the region should not be treated alone, in a fragmented manner. Residents of rural areas face poverty, women marginalization and insufficient care for young population and children. This situation brings into perspective two objectives: first, definition of importance of rural tourism towards poverty alleviation, and second, inclusiveness with a focus on women emancipation and their full integration in development process.

1.5 Scientific methods used in this research

The complexity of research topic, current social, economic and political situation of Kosovo and natural and cultural diversity make the research comprehensive as various methods of scientific research are applied. Application of various methods provides more reliable results in coming up with a proposal as to what is needed and the manner it should be carried out for development of rural areas in the Dukagjini Region by using rural tourism as means of sustainable economic and spatial development of this region. The methodology of scientific research in this document is mainly based on studies carried out by Balkans authors such as Šamić, Taboršak and in particular Zelenika and international scholars like Groat & Wang and Beissel-Durrant.

In the draft of the research topic **primary**, **secondary** and **tertiary** publications shall be used.¹⁴

As **primary publications** will be used a variety of books, articles and doctoral dissertations related to endogenous area development, sustainable spatial planning and sustainable tourism, auxiliary survey and interviews and opinions of residents in rural areas of Dukagjini region, as well as the others - residents of urban areas in this region, nature lovers and in particular municipal and senior officials of the Government of Kosovo.

Secondary publications include titles as well as summaries of papers from primary publications relevant to the field that is created on the basis of primary structure.

Secondary publications include published work related to this area covering a period 3 to 5 years ago. They have key words and codes that refer to the secondary publication, and are divided into two groups: the Science Citation Index (SCI) and Current Contents (CC). SCI is based on quotations of periodicals starting from the principle that the article quoted in another article probably has some scientific and social significance.

¹⁴ Taboršak D., "Metodologija izrade znanstveno-istraživačkog rada", Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, 2007, (p.11)

Tertiary publications include what is already published and has keywords and a code that indicates on the secondary publication of the two above-mentioned groups, SCI and CC. Tertiary publications will be used from professional magazines, newspaper articles, web pages and portals, literature from textbooks, etc.¹⁵

Literature from Kosovo, neighboring countries of former Yugoslavia and researches of similar areas conducted in Europe and worldwide shall be used to create this paper work. Literature in English, Albanian, Serbian-Croatian other languages of former Yugoslavia shall be consulted.

Scientific research of this research is based on synchronized combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, by studying existing literature and documentation, conducting interviews and visiting the region.

Analyzing as part of successful *Examples for Rural Development* in the Balkans in the 3rd Chapter, analyzing of various spatial plans related to the region and areas surrounding it in the 4th Chapter and definition of potentials through interviews, questionnaires, and SWOT analyses helped in creating a vision (Chapter 8) for rural development of Dukagjini Region in Chapter 5. Outcomes of the studied available documents are summarized in Chapter 6. Chapters 9 and 10 will treat the strategic framework and action plan for rural development of Dukagjini Region.

In development of this doctoral thesis the following scientific methods¹⁶ listed and described below have been used:

- the historical method,
- the method of theoretical analysis,
- method of theoretical synthesis,
- case Study,
- descriptive method,
- the method of compilation,
- the comparative method,
- observatory method,
- the method of surveying, and
- the method of interviewing.

The **historical method**, as a scientific method, shall be used to reconstruct the ways of social development in rural areas of Dukagjini Region in terms of preserving its natural and cultural continuity. Endogenous development approach is built gradually on the past in rural areas elsewhere, including Kosovo by strengthening relations between environment, people, culture and economic survival. Based on the existing documents and evidence, this method shall also be used to prove the necessity of pushing the developments forward by linking the past, present and future development of rural areas in Dukagjini Region, and by associating the development of the region through tourism based on their own capacity, function, location, environment and human culture in both terms as an individual and social being.

¹⁵ Taboršak D., "Metodologija izrade znanstveno-istraživačkog rada", Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, 2007, (p.11)

¹⁶ Zelenika R., "Metodologija i tehnologija izrade znanstvenog i stručnog djela", Savremeno Pakovanje with University of Zagreb and University of Belgrade, 1988, (p.169-208)

Method of analysis shall explore broken parts of complex concepts of spatial development of rural areas in simpler component parts. The issues in Dukagjini Region, shall be considered, through the relation of current and planned development through specific Municipal Development Plans in context of environment and the importance of tourism and contemporary strategies for sustainable development in accordance with local population and environment shall be explained. The current issues in the region that can be solved using sustainable tourism shall be taken into consideration as well.

Through the **method of synthesis** the reality shall be explained by grouping disaggregated items into reasonable judgments, by synthesizing conclusions of certain parts of this work and by providing summary of research results. Based on economic and spatial development in villages of Dukagjini Region, through synthesis, the advantage of endogenous approach, when planning in relation to different approaches we find in Kosovo and beyond, shall be proved. Possibilities for final applications and implementation of conclusions in practice will be presented.

The **method of case studies shown** shall display application of rural and other alternative forms of tourism in practice in Kosovo, in neighboring countries and other Balkan countries, and an overview of the manner how implementation of these modalities of tourism within the endogenous development approach may develop in Dukagjini Region. It will disclose relation between natural and cultural resources and benefits of rural tourism and endogenous development aiming at sustainable development.

Descriptive method shall be applied in the initial phase of research aiming at connecting simple explanatory description on observed characteristics of existing situation in the region. This scientific method shall serve to describe social and ecological phenomena in the context of research topics specifying facts, general processes and relations as well. Besides, the geographical location of respective municipality, topography, climate, population, government policies, natural and cultural resources, settlements, arable land, education and health as well as current economic development of each municipality and the region shall be described in entirety.

Compilation Method shall be used for the purpose of collecting existing scientific research results from immediate and wider research area. Findings from research in the field of endogenous development and its concrete implementation through rural tourism in Kosovo can provide substantial ground for further considerations, observations, opinions, conclusions and insights. These collected results will be combined with results of above-mentioned methods by correct quoting of assumed source of information.

Through **comparative method**, by comparing similar phenomena from its quality and quantity aspects, we shall contribute to understanding existing state of affairs of the region and possibility of applying endogenous approach when planning development of rural areas with the help of sustainable tourism modalities.

In this study, **observation method** is of particular importance when collecting information directly from the field by observing with an analytical and critical overview in order to render as accurate conclusions as possible. Observation method aims at collecting material and immaterial information as well as identifying processes and developments in the region of Dukagjin. Visiting the region, combined with information gathered from other sources, completes the final impression on material

and immaterial state of the region, basis on which sustainable, efficient and long-term planning could be grounded.

The **method of surveying** shall be conducted in all municipalities throughout Dukagjini Region where there will be an examination of the attitude of different categories regarding existing resources, knowledge about specific forms of tourism in rural areas, advantages and benefits of existing flows of development as well as shortcomings faced so far, just as well as opinions on what should be done in future to make village tourism efficient in respective area. The survey in these areas is conducted to obtain the opinion on the concept of rural tourism as a mechanism for sustainable development. Survey of villagers and others-residents of urban areas in this region, nature lovers and particularly officials of municipal and central Government of Kosovo should be cautiously done by formulating a clear and concise questionnaire. Questions are prepared in such a manner so that they are either rounded or ticked, while comprehensiveness and simplicity shall enable conducting survey with maximum result in a very short period of time.

Interviewing as a method is very similar to the survey, applied mainly for people with important position whose knowledge and information may not be limited to the format of a questionnaire. Selection of individuals for interviewing shall be done according to criteria related to their position in local or central government and for other persons, whom in one or other way have profound knowledge of the region and contribute to its development (architects, artists, etc.). Conversation to such people shall be guided by Key questions and, for authenticity purposes, it shall be recorded while providing prior warning for such action. Information deriving from the interview process shall be carefully structured.

Holistic approach in scientific methodology and results of this study provide further and articulated strategy for endogenous development of rural areas and the whole region of Dukagjini in Kosovo with rural tourism.

2. Theoretical consideration

The first part of Chapter 1 elaborates on genesis of the population and dwelling places in existing Kosovo, starting from ancient Illyrians up to 17 February 2008 when Kosovo Parliament declared independence. Part two of Chapter 1 elaborates the manner of definition of the territory of Dukagjini Region, which has been dealt with in this document. Based on natural, cultural and geographic characteristics, as well as boundaries, it defines this region as a coherent entirety that is closely interrelated to the surrounding regions. The end of this chapter deals with very important issues that direct the present research by articulating questions of research, its purpose, goals, objectives and scientific methods used in this thesis.

Chapter 2 elaborates on key notions on which this study has been based and fundamental theories on which the topic of this PhD is based. Sustainable Development is the starting point from which rural tourism, which is based on endogenous theory development, derives. This chapter helps to connect the theory of endogenous development and its practicing through LEADER¹⁷ approach. Area-based approach essentially means a local approach, and through LAG's it implements local projects. The second part of this chapter also elaborates on Cluster Development which is considered as a more effective chance for development based on family businesses and combined with the bottom-up approach.

2.1 Sustainable Development- meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future

Rapid increase of population throughout the globe and consequently extensive economic development during the last century has raised concerns of such trend. Unplanned consumption of non-generative natural resources and extreme consumption of resources that need time to regenerate, and then environmental pollution and devastation have forced the society reconsider a way to address these negative trends. This has resulted in the concept of sustainable economic development. Such concept continues to develop, complement and extend into all sectors of development. Identification of the issue of global warming i.e. resulted into a joint platform with common goal even though subjective to continuous modifications and completions. Hence, governments of developed countries, institutions and scientists followed the trends towards concepts for more sustainable and inclusive economic development.

The term itself, sustainable development, was promoted by World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, also known as the Brundtland report, and was introduced in Kosovo in the last decade. Definitions of sustainable development underline the development which meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Recognition of the report by the General Assembly of United Nations built the platform for principles of sustainable development at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. It is generally agreed that sustainable development calls for merging of the three pillars - economic development, social equity and environmental protection (Figure 8).

¹⁷ LEADER is the acronym for “Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rural”, meaning “Links between the rural economy and development actions”

Figure 8. The three target dimensions of sustainable development



Source: Hamburg Model United Nations (HMUN) “Taking sustainability seriously” 2013 (p.13)

The economics of sustainable development depends on being socially inclusive and environmentally sound, both aspects left aside in Kosovo circumstances. “Inclusive green growth requires tackling political economy constraints, overcoming deeply entrenched behaviors and social norms, and developing innovative financing instruments to change incentives and promote innovation – and thus address the market, policy, and institutional failures that lead to the overuse of natural assets”¹⁸. The general direction for Sustainable Economic Development and its continuity is shown by Hamburg Model of United Nations, 2013, which defines Sustainable Development Goals after 2015. United Nations are monitoring the development and realization of the Millennium goals and are analyzing possibilities for potential sustainable development after 2015th. However, it is stated by UN that the task of developing a universal development framework, which embraces the notion of sustainable development, is undoubtedly ambitious and it will be interesting to observe if it can be achieved by 2015, and of course many things will remain for future years.

2.2 European Spatial Development Perspective in the function of development of Dukagjini Region

After World War II, international order suffered large-scale changes. Colonies were dissolved and new states were formed while over 90 territories became independent. The newly created situation fostered the conviction for the necessity to “develop” in becoming a general objective in Europe and beyond. “Modernization” that deepened the difference between developed countries, “First World”, and undeveloped countries, “Third World”, de-balanced relations not only between these states but also within developed countries, stressing the difference among richer industrialized urban areas and rural agricultural poor areas. Such economic development had an influence on spatial development as well. Apart from having negative impact on environment, it affected and brought considerable changes in society as well. Unfortunately, even after five decades, Kosovo shares similar experience.

On the Triangle of Sustainable Development (Figure 9), Environment takes an important part, while a great part of it is delegated to Sustainable Spatial Planning.

¹⁸ The World Bank, “From Growth to Inclusive Green Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development”, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/05/09/growth-to-inclusive-green-growth-economicssustainable-development>, (Approached December 2014)

Figure 9. Triangle of Objectives



Source: European Commission, "European Spatial Development Perspective" (ESDP), 1999 (p.10)

The aim of European Union policy is to develop sustainable and balanced ground. Necessarily, states aspiring to join the EU, including Kosovo, shall follow the same policy. In this regard, three fundamental goals have been identified: a) economic and social cohesion, b) conservation and management of natural resources and cultural heritage, and c) fair competition. Europe is on a good way to switch to the ESDP triangle, "The EU will therefore gradually develop, in line with safeguarding regional diversity, from an Economic Union into an Environmental Union and into a Social Union".¹⁹

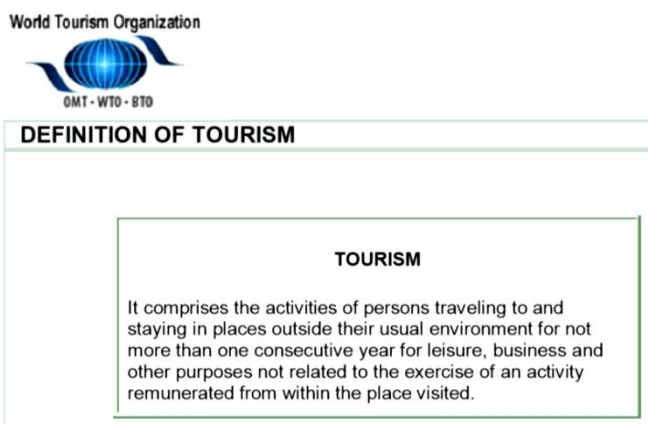
Both sustainable economic development and sustainable spatial development were implemented rather well in Kosovo legislation and other documents, something that can not be said about practices in the field. In practice, obligations stemming from legislation are formally observed by providing regions and municipalities with respective plans which are not sufficiently respected. Kosovo should resolutely fight negative phenomena in spatial transformation and turn more towards planned and proper development implemented and based on principles of sustainable spatial development. The most suitable activities in relation to these policies are agriculture and especially rural tourism. If these two activities are not properly planned, they might not take into account the aforementioned purposes. Use of pesticides, undue exploitation of arable land and its impoverishment, unplanned and unbalanced cultivation of agriculture are some of the risks threatening sustainable agricultural development. Tourism, too, with all its modalities, may cause devastations environmentally, culturally and socially wise. Nevertheless, these risks in agriculture and tourism are minimal and undoubtedly less than in industry.

2.3 Sustainable Tourism for tomorrow

Tourism which each day is getting recognized as "tourism industry" is a new socio-economic and cultural phenomenon, generally defined by UNWTO as directly connected to travel from places/environment to elsewhere, with a duration of stay for less than one year and mainly related to holidays/vacations, business or adventure (Figure 10). Other definitions on tourism evolve pretty much on similar definition terms.

¹⁹ European Commission, "European Spatial Development Perspective" (ESDP), 1999 (p.19)

Figure 10. Definition of Tourism



Source: World Tourism Organisation (WTO), 2014

It is difficult to conclude when exactly might the beginning of tourism be considered as an economic activity. The movements of the English and other countries in the seventeenth century from one place to another or the trend of visiting health resorts known as "Baths" in the late seventeenth century could be considered as the first elements of tourism; the same trends had been followed earlier by Romans as well, providing through these records the first signs/elements of global tourism. If we do not take into consideration these visits or some minor tendencies of group travel such as the one Thomas Cook organized by Railway (personally conducted tour), one could say that genuine tourism started to develop professionally at some point in the late nineteenth century when in Europe it became known as "massive tourism".²⁰

The extent of tourism development is shown by the WTOs statistics which show that 1996 marked 593.6 million trips and there were 422.7 billion USD spent as due to tourism expenditures and international travelling.²¹

Correction of trends in the field of planning towards the concept of sustainability is materialized in Burtland Commission – World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) and the World Conservation Strategy (1980) as one of the goals that human kind, including future tourism, shall consider. From these two events, four fundamental canons were derived: Ecological, Economic, Social and Cultural sustainability.²² "Sustainable tourism... is now used with meanings all the way from recycling waste and reduction of energy consumption to prevention of human impact on natural and cultural resources".²³

Literature provides hundreds of definitions on sustainable tourism, but in a way all appeal for awareness in maintaining ecological and social system and require a new approach to tourism planning and measured costs.

²⁰ Alfier D., "Turizam", Institute for tourism, Zagreb, 1994 (p.23-24)

²¹ Antunac I., "Turizam, Teorijsko-Znanstvene rasprave", Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, 2001 (p.113)

²² Sofield T.H.B., Empowerment for Sustainable Tourism Development, Pergamon, Sydney, 2003 (p.60)

²³ Gunn, C.A., "Tourism Planning" (Fourth Edition), Routledge, New York, 2002 (p.80)

Good examples of successful implementation of Rural Tourism are in Yap in Southwest of Guam (1992), in Bosselman (1999), cities of South Pembrokeshire in Wales, Wilpena Station, within Flinders Range National Park, Australia, etc.

The Tourism Stream of Globe '92 Conference held in Vancouver in Canada brought a Challenge of Statement pertaining to sustainable development of tourism that shows traditional strong land ethic in this country²⁴ structured in four pillars:

1. Policy, legislation and regulation- this pillar aimed at building the foundations for sustainable tourism, by protecting resources and mobilizing actions of the industry for sustainable tourism.
2. Technology and Research- is related to creating some knowledge on natural resource base, cultural values, and measuring three dimensions in the chain of communication with tourists, i.e. tourist demands, expectations, and tourism impact; awareness on better decisions, utilization of appropriate technology; training on visitor management techniques and practices.
3. Economics and Finance– this pillar is related to making tourism economics and finance more practical by estimating environmental costs, making reporting procedures practical, using market influences at home and abroad, and finding ways to benefit from environmental market.
4. Communication and outreach– this pillar is related to proactivity approach to self-regulation, modification of tourist expectations and mobilization in general.

This approach defines the structure of sustainability of tourism which could be used in many cases including rural tourism in Dukagjini Region.

2.4 Rural Tourism

Development of tourism industry was initially directed at sea holidays and skiing in the mountains and later cultural tourism was introduced, thus giving this important branch of economy an industrial character. Mass tourism turned into the most important component of economic development for some European countries. France, Spain, Italy, Croatia, Greece, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, etc., are the main destinations for summer or winter holidays. Despite the attempt to complete their offers, these destinations have more or less stereotyped offers on one side, but also have expensive offers, on the other side. Demands of tourists to get introduced to new regions, new cultures and identities, their desire to spend holidays 'a bit differently' and reduce their cost has created a favorable situation for new touristic alternatives. This new situation provides sufficient basis for the development of rural tourism responding to new demands and offering even more, such as healthy food, relaxing walks, while also providing handicraft products, local food, visits to rural beauties unseen before, so that holidays are considered unrepeatable in a way.

On the other side, economic development often based on mass tourism is not fairly interrelated with improvement of life of inhabitants of the areas that were host to this type of tourism. Most of the profit from the region gets away from it, or even from the country. Rural tourism based on local

²⁴ Gunn, C.A., “Tourism Planning” (Fourth Edition), Routledge, New York, 2002 (p.83-84)

capacity reduces to maximum the cost of mediation by reducing the cost for tourists and increasing profitability for local residents.

Kosovo’s geographic and strategic position has made its territory rich also in natural and cultural terms, which are the two key components for the development of rural tourism.

2.4.1 Rural tourism and its modalities

Touristic offer for rural areas is diverse. What is more, the offer can be combined and adapted for tourists and groups according to their age, skills and interest. Flexibility in running these family-based businesses that are organized in clusters enables flexible offers that are adaptable to the number, duration, but also to the variety. Experiences of former Yugoslavia, namely Croatian experiences, have been articulated in the “Handbook on rural tourism management”²⁵ published by the Croatian Ministry for Tourism which explicitly breaks up in ten types of rural tourism. The diagram of rural tourism for Kosovo circumstances has been developed based on this classification (Figure 11).

Although forms of rural tourism are clearly listed in the above-mentioned listing, in the field one might come across an easier modality, the application of which could fall into two or more types of rural tourism.

²⁵ Baćac R., “Priručnik za bavljenje seoskim turizmom”, Ministry for Tourism of Croatia, 2011 (p.18)

Figure 11. Schematic representation of the interrelationship of rural tourism



Source: Baćac R., "Priručnik za bavljenje seoskim turizmom", Ministry for Tourism of Croatia, 2011 (p.18), modified by author

2.4.2 Types of potential visitors

Potential visitors may be the locals, who may come from neighboring urban areas, the entire territory of Kosovo, the region, Europe and World-wide. A specific profile of tourism can be developed for Diaspora who, in addition to historical monuments (memorials and similar), are very interested in presentation of indigenous culture to new generations born and raised far from their parents' homeland.

Visitors could be offered different activities²⁶ such as:

1. visitors with tour groups,
2. unescorted day-use visitors,
3. unescorted overnight campers and backpackers
4. scientists,
5. collectors,
6. amateur photographers,
7. professional photographers and film makers,
8. boaters, snorkeler, divers (lake and rivers),
9. souvenir hunters,
10. bird watchers,
11. bicyclists,
12. off-road vehicle users,
13. cross- country trackers,
14. Kosovars living in EU and USA,
15. other types of tourists deriving from Chapter 2.4.1.

P.F.J Eagles and B.R.Higgins in their Paper “Ecotourism Market and Industry Structure” conclude that some responsibilities should stay in public sector but others is better to be delegated to private sector. Even delegation of responsibilities is related to specific parks under protection, this approach can be used for other types of rural tourism.²⁷

In Kosovar circumstances, responsibilities could be similarly shared between public and private sector in tourism:

Public Sector’s Role in tourism

1. Environmental Protection
2. Infrastructure (Roads, Airports, Rail Lines, Electricity, Sanitation)
3. Security and Enforcement
4. Monitoring of Impacts; Evaluation of Quality
5. Allocation of Access
6. Limits of Acceptable Change

²⁶ Blangy S. & Wood E. M, “Developing and Implementing Ecotourism Guidelines for Wildlans and Neighboring Communities”, Ecotourism– Guide for planners and managers-Volume 1, The Ecotourism Society, North Bernnington 1993 (p.33).

²⁷ Eagles P. & Higgins R., “Ecotourism Market and Industry Structure”, Ecotourism – Guide for planners and managers-Volume 2, The Ecotourism Society, North Bernnington, 1993 (p.35)

7. Information (Interpretation, Visitor Centers)
8. Conflict Resolution

Private Sector's Role in tourism

1. Accommodations and food
2. Transportation (Buses, Automobiles, Airplanes).
3. Information (Guides, Advertising)
4. Media (Films, Books, Videos)
5. Site Promotions and Advertising
6. Consumer Products (Clothes, Souvenirs, Equipment)
7. Personal Services (Entertainment)

Almost all other unlisted services can be delegated to private sector – local community.

Most of studies dealing with Economic Development try to find opportunities for development in order to reach standards of developed countries. In very rare cases, tourism is used as a tool to overpass difficult economic conditions (Namibia, Botswana, Nepal, etc.).

Even development strategies that base Kosovo's development on Agriculture, Tourism and Industry still miss a clear roadmap as to how to achieve the goals in this regard. One thing that could easily be concluded is that Dukagjini Region has no serious potential for development of industry which provides clear definition of instruments for its development in future, such as agriculture and tourism as two powerful activities that may complement each other if carefully planned to help the development of rural areas of Dukagjini Region.

2.5 Endogenous Development

In socialist countries in the past, strengthening of economically developed countries influenced national economies throughout the territory. Industrial development and modernization of society in Yugoslavia (to which Kosovo belonged as a constitutive province) and Europe in general in one form or another were pretty dependent on the state. This development so called “top – down” depends on the state development policies and is often financially supported by it. In those days, Peja, Gjakova, and Prizren were developed centers with industry but after the 1998-1999 war, these factories were privatized and went out of function. Long-time workers in some of these factories might have some ownership of the factory but could not make it to continue the activity - as it is the case with Factory "Gorenje-Elektromotori", Gjakova (Figure 12). Therefore, the economic development of this region will long remain in the hands of local population alone. (Figure 12).

Figure 12. The Factory "Gorenje-Elektromotori", Gjakove



Source: Jeta ne Kosove, "MTI Mposht Gorenjen...Në Gjyq", <http://gazetajnk.com/?cid=1,1018,5776>, 2013

Such processes have gradually been associated with (or occasionally even opposed by), the "bottom-up" development, which in a way derived from the concept "Innovative Milieu" formulated to clarify the "how, when and why" shifting of regional development planning. These processes are enhancing self-help and self-enforcing methodologies. "That process may be positively mediated by endogenous "intangibles" ... the "New Growth Theory" has actually allowed for both concentration and divergence in regional planning"²⁸. This innovation in developmental philosophy highlights the importance of endogenous development which is important for both analysts and implementers. Endogenous development takes into great consideration the importance of settlements and the region in the process of developments, something that previous theories have not treated. "Understanding these recently recognized processes of change are crucial for analyzing and understanding different patterns of regional economic performance, in formulating and implementing regional economic development planning strategy"²⁹. One could conclude that the alteration of developmental philosophy has occurred naturally simply out of populations necessity to survive, rather than being invented by analysts and scientists. They have identified and articulated it as an option of sustainable development which introduces their own devices that this development brings better results in the environment where it occurs, in the long term. For research and development, creativity and innovation in this field, researchers Nijkamp and van Hemert are considered as catalysts that generated knowledge and outputs. This development model, in particular, is appropriate for rural development with all options it provides (agriculture, rural tourism, etc.)

The notion "Triple Helix Model" invented by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff which contains: (1) wealth generation (industry), (2) novelty production (academia), and (3) public control (government)³⁰, affirms education and research and it has a critical role in economic growth and regional

²⁸ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.10)

²⁹ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.1)

³⁰ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.10)

development in current knowledge based and sustainable economic development. A similar approach was used in 70s and 80s in Kosovo, when faculties of the University of Pristina had close cooperation with Kosovo economy. Faculty of Agriculture (Figure 13.) offered relevant local expertise in agriculture which, during the period, was centralized in form of agricultural combines and cooperatives. A similar cooperation also existed in food industry and other economic sectors. This experience has been assessed as positive and some effort is being made to renew this approach that gave results in developing rural tourism and agriculture as a component that cannot be left aside from it.

Figure 13. The Faculty of Agriculture and Veterinary, UP



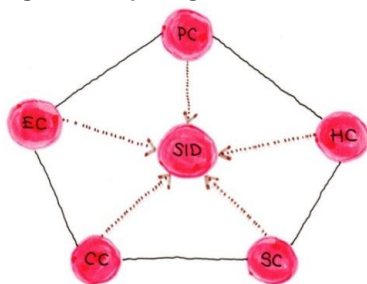
Source: Author 2013

“The biological model of Darwinian evolution theory assumed variation as the one sub-dynamic caused by random mutations, and selection as determined by nature”³¹. In endogenous development, one can distinguish between different selection environments. This makes the endogenous approach favorable because of its flexibility and changing demand in the rural tourism market.

The pentagon model of creative forces compiled by Peter Nijkam (2011) for sustainable regional development, which shows relations between different capitals - productive (PC), human (HC), social (SC), creative (CC) and ecological capital (EC) (Figure 14), is a scheme that synthesizes components of sustainability related to tourism. These and deterministic relations of variations in the rising and falling pattern of spatial development have mobilized scientists towards specific fields that inter-relate to these transformations. Direct effects of exogenous factors (like political stability, taxation, internal and external competition, new technologies, etc.) influenced development policies at central, regional and local levels.

³¹ Leydesdorff L. & Meyer M., “Triple Helix indicators of knowledge-based innovation systems”, Research Policy-Vol.35, 2006 (p.12)

Figure 14. A pentagon model of creative forces for sustainable regional development



Source: Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.10)

"Blakely (1994) emphasizes how regional economic development needs to be viewed as both, a product and a process, but often not by the same groups or actors in development milieu."³² . Both components have to be considered in terms of quantitative and qualitative attributes in order to increase quality of life, infrastructure and capacity building. Furthermore, defined regional economic development by Simpson strongly connects economic development and resources from sustainability point of view as following:

"Regional economic development is the application of economic processes and resources available to a region that results in sustainable development"³³. These are expected economic outcomes for the region and desirable expectations of businesses, residents and visitors as well.

In the last two decades, there has been a refocusing on integrated approach and principles of sustainable development in regional development and planning, as well as planning strategies, where a strategy will seek to advance the capacity and ability of a region for a better achievement of natural reserves focusing on endogenous processes by encouraging public-private cooperation and community³⁴.

Rapid opening of the EU market found most of member states (pre-accession countries as well) unprepared in terms of competition in the global market of European post-industrial economy in many regions. Having in mind the power of global economy, regional businesses should understand the importance of implication of shifting transformation as an economic strategy, and the way infrastructure is built, as a strategy to compete or act together. Rural tourism is not endangered by lower scale tourism. Development of mass tourism such as the one in Brezovica puts at risk not only rural tourism, but also the private economy by downgrading labor market, confusing tourists and workers in sports and recreational centers with large capacities to accommodate guests and employ workers. But, here lies the power of endogenous development. Besides more favorable prices offered by community-based businesses, indigenous entrepreneurs can provide specific services with original and traditional products and can quickly adapt to tourists' demands. Entrepreneurs do not need bureaucratic procedures and they take decisions on their own, enabling them to instantly rearrange tourist packages and adapting them to tourists' wishes, which cannot happen in resorts.

³² Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.2)

³³ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.1)

³⁴ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.3)

Development of theoretical concepts based on indigenous capabilities, use of the balance of resources, and experiences based on these theories represent very favorable patterns for development of rural areas through rural tourism in Dukagjini Region.

2.5.1 Rural regional endogenous development in the planning process

The notion of endogenous regional development is based on the local resources for either tangible or intangible products. Overall planning, as an instrument to materialize regional development, aims at restoring order in spatial development, protecting the environment, and creating conditions for general safety and mobility of people and goods. The plan addresses the exploitation of resources and, in all forms, relies on elements of indigenous activities that make the area and its people more unique, even though there are some similar features. The specific resources are endogenous, and belong to certain location which makes them original. “In many respects, planning as a science rests on the concept of how well local spatial and social/human resources are mobilized and utilized for endogenous development”³⁵.

Endogenous planning provides a clearer vision on local resources that could easily become a potential for self-development, at the same time providing opportunity for creativity by individuals and groups.

2.5.2 Experience of endogenous development in the EU

Boosting the investment which is oriented towards sustainable development, and is in harmony with the main topics of EU (agriculture, economic and monetary affairs, foreign and security policy, trade, employment and social affairs, etc.) is a permanent goal of all EU countries. The recent and its future enlargement based on the situation at its eastern borders is an EU policy built in standards which should bring equality to the EU. But, sometimes this enlargement with new member states such as Bulgaria and Romania and unwanted trends of development in some countries like Greece, highlighted economic disparity between EU states (2004-2007). “In order to support proper functioning of the single market and also to ensure solidarity among its members, the EU cohesion policy has an overall objective to stimulate the process of reducing disparities between states and regions via so-called convergence process”³⁶. In most of the EU Member States the disparity is emphasized in particular between rural and urban areas, which further embrace the issue of genuine and equilibrated economic functioning within the EU.

Unlike the situation that dominated until the middle of the past century, the second half of the twentieth century in the field of regional development is mainly distinguished for developing the “bottom-up” approach. Transition from exogenous development, based on neoclassical theory of economic development, towards endogenous development has mainly occurred in rural areas of the EU countries. Unlike larger rigid companies, incurring bigger expenses, these areas favored development of flexible companies by its residents based primarily on local resources available. Rural areas are more complex and comprehend an economic variety in economic, natural and cultural terms, strongly connected to its location. Positive developments in some rural areas based on diverse and unique potential in some EU countries have succeeded thanks to good business

³⁵ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., “Endogenous regional development”, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.73-74)

³⁶ Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., “Endogenous regional development”, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011 (p.200)

networks, partnerships, local government cooperation, support and commitment of politicians at both central and local level.

The success of many rural regions in the EU shows that the community-based activity in rural areas is not an obstacle to sustainable economic development. There are rural regions that have developed relatively good competitive position in agriculture and tourism achieving employment growth.

However, the EU developed countries are as well facing various difficulties which slow down or obstruct endogenous development. Insufficient knowledge, lack of creativity, limited support funds for such development, improper decisions, poor infrastructure, aging, and decreasing density of local population- all these factors pose an obstacle to genuine indigenous regional development. A better situation lies in areas where development is viewed in a broader context, particularly in the case of agricultural development - which has always been an important option for endogenous development and overall development of rural areas in the EU countries.

Since rural development depends on the environment, development in these areas cannot be imagined if environment of rural areas is polluted. On the other hand, considering that rural areas are “far away” from respective institutions monitoring, they are endangered in all aspects. One of the risks is pressure for unplanned negative developments on suburban areas. Endangering biodiversity, untreated sewage, intensive agriculture because of use of pesticides, factories and HUB are other potential risks for land, air and water contamination.

In rural areas there is considerable potential for renewable energy. The most common is biomass energy, but solar energy, wind and hydro-electric energy in some cases can also be considered. Sometimes even methane production from urban waste in regional waste storages can be considered, too. This opens up important possibilities for wider economic offer in the market and “green energy” for rural market³⁷.

2.5.3 Leader approach as method used to mobilize and deliver rural development

European Union gave special importance to rural development as precondition for sustainable and balanced development of its 28 member states in entirety. One of the most important policies of EU is the Rural Development Policy 2007–2013³⁸ with four axes from which derives LEADER (“Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l’Économie Rural”, meaning “Links between the rural economy and development actions”) is a local development method which allows local actors to develop an area by using its endogenous development potential. This program has shown significant results and has encouraged innovative solutions in relation to issues inherited from the past just as well as the contemporary difficulties of the rural daily life. Through its research conducted and provision of innovative ways to fulfill their needs LEADER, as transformed into a mechanism for local capacity building, has , proved that a considerable change and improvement of villagers’ daily lives could be achieved.

³⁷ European Commission, “European Spatial Development Perspective” (ESDP), 1999 (p.24)

³⁸ The four axes of Rural Development Policy 2007–2013:

- Axis 1: improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors
- Axis 2: improving the environment and countryside
- Axis 3: improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification
- Axis 4 (Leader): building local capacity for employment and diversification

"The main concept behind the Leader approach is that, given the diversity of European rural areas, development strategies are more effective and efficient if decided and implemented at local level by local actors, accompanied by clear and transparent procedures, support of relevant public administrations and necessary technical assistance for transfer of good practice."³⁹

Since Kosovo aspires the EU membership, its laws and official documents are all being harmonized with the EU legislation. LEADER finds the development of rural areas very important also for non EU member states. "Member States could play a significant role in assisting rural areas in new and future EU Member States to adapt to today's changing realities."⁴⁰ This is something that gives more credit to this initiative in particular for circumstances of Kosovo as a new European state, which is going through the EU pre-accession procedures.

The idea of utilizing the LEADER concept in Kosovo circumstances might fit well, both in legislative and practical terms. The idea of the LEADER concept, which originates in the 90s, from the beginning has proposed extensive partnership between public, private and civil sectors in order to have, in a joint platform, the whole information on energy and resources that people could provide and thus be connected with a view of rural development, and local rural development, in particular. "The LEADER approach is associated with local empowerment through local strategy development and resource allocation"⁴¹.

The LEADER is structured into seven key features:

1. Area-based local development strategies
2. Bottom-up approach
3. Public-Private Partnerships: The Local Action Groups (LAGs)
4. Facilitating innovation
5. Integrated and multi-sectoral actions
6. Networking
7. Co-operation

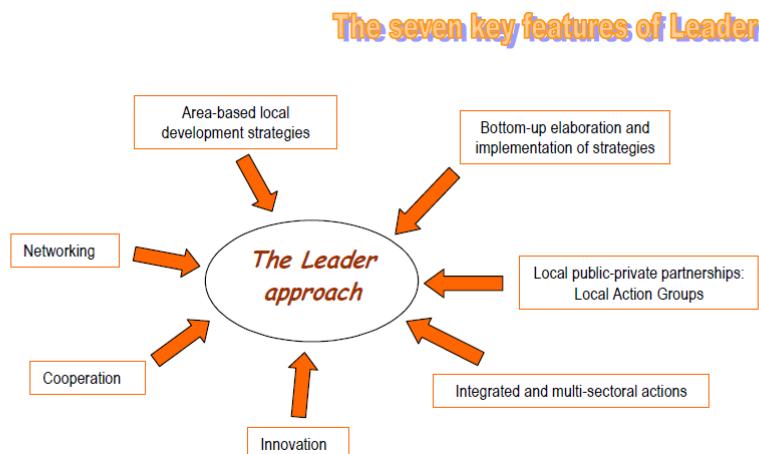
These seven features presented in Figure 15 shall be understood as a tool-kit that fulfil and interact positively with each other throughout the process of implementation, by providing sustainable results in developing rural areas based on their own local capacities and possibility to successfully tackle all the challenges met through the development process.

³⁹ European Commission, "The Leader Approach: a basic guide", 2006 (p.6)

⁴⁰ European Commission, "The Leader Approach: a basic guide", 2006 (p.4)

⁴¹ European Commission, The european network for rural development,
http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/leader/leader-tool-kit/the-leader-approach/en/the-leader-approach_en.cfm,
(Approached December 2013)

Figure 15. The seven key features of the Leader method



Source: The Leader Approach: a basic guide, 2006 (p.7)

Preliminary LEADER has promoted development of rural areas through the concept of agriculture, healthy products and active life-style, to continue with cultural and natural heritage, networking and learning region.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) established in 2007, seeks financial assistance for ten thousands projects of various characters for EU rural areas and continues supporting diverse projects of great benefit for EU citizens. Good practices promoted through EAFRD newsletters could be used as guide for similar projects throughout European rural areas. The edition EAFRD "Project examples 2007-2013" promotes 14 distinguished projects from different fields: Rural economy, Climate action, Innovation support, Cooperation and networking, Social inclusion, Young people and Communication. Each of these could serve as a model for similar area in each village wherever in Europe including the region of Dukagjini valley (Figure 16).

Figure 16. EAFRD Project examples 2007-2013



Source: ENRD, "Project examples 2007-2013"

EAFRD has promoted projects also in seven thematic editions: "Communicating Rural Development to Citizens" (2011-12), "Images of rural Europe" (Autumn 2012), "Local Development strategies and cooperation" (Spring/Summer 2012), "Added value of networking" (Winter 2012/13), "Social media and rural development" (Spring 2013), "Building bridges for the future" (Summer 2013) and "A new generation" (Winter 2013/2014) by publishing various projects to the function of rural development. (Figure 17)

Figure 17. Increased flexibility will give rural businesses access to the finance they need EAFRD magazine,



Source: European network for rural development, “EAFRD magazine, Autumn2012-13”

Part of EAFRD is the portal “Communicating Rural Development Gateway” which promotes rural development programs. “The aim of this gateway is to provide examples of EAFRD-funded information and publicity tools used at Member-State and EU levels to promote the Rural Development Programmes and improve their effectiveness”⁴²

⁴² European Commission, “Communicating Rural Development gateway, http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-static/policy-in-action/communicating-rural-development/eafrd/en/eafrd_en.html, (Approached DEC 2013)

2.5.4 Endogenous development in Kosovo and Southeastern Europe

The spatial area in Kosovo just as elsewhere throughout Southeastern Europe in the second half of the 20th century was understood in the controversy paradigm of village-town, industrialization-degradation, social-private property and favoring huge agricultural corporations versus small family economies. Such a paradigm has not considered multi-sectorial developments and left rural areas very neglected in broader context in particular when comparing to cities. This erroneous approach impoverished rural areas to extreme level.

Kosovo, being a province in former Yugoslavia, then under administration of the Republic of Serbia, and as such politically marginalized, remained the most undeveloped region in all aspects, but mostly economically. These facts just as well as recent developments have brought population of rural areas to an extreme poverty. Political and economic marginalization of Kosovo brought one good thing - the spirit of survival whereas the population is tempered and forced to continuously seek alternatives for survival. This has led to establishment of family businesses and quest for better life conditions throughout the former Yugoslavia. Besides agriculture as the most extended sector, construction work and various crafts were the most frequent businesses of Kosovo citizens during the second half of 20th century in Yugoslavia. The most common businesses were related to dairy products procession (cheese, cream, butter, etc.) wine, schnapps, cultivating orchards, vegetable, wheat and maize, cattle breeding, collecting honey etc. (Figure 18).

Kosovo bakers were scattered throughout Yugoslavia and beyond. Other family- based small business activities developed by Kosovo citizens on the territory of Yugoslavia were the crafts such as production and trade of jewelry and work in the construction industry.

Even today in Kosovo, small businesses are more reliant on family capacity during its investment and exercise phase. Such approach of free and spontaneous doing of business has elements of endogenous economic development and this experience of Kosovo residents could be considered that is in accordance with the EU concept of endogenous development.

Figure 18. A farm based in family business, Kosovo



Source: Author 2013

2.6 Cluster Development

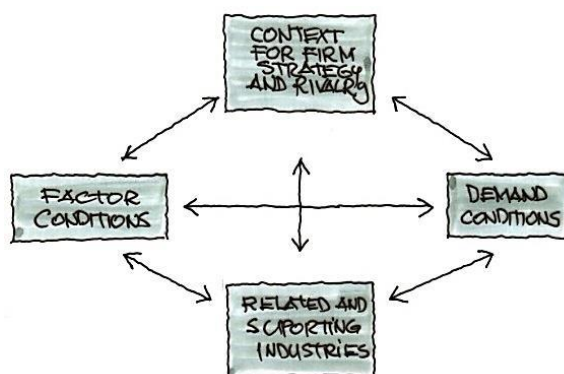
Favoring macro-economic development and stimulation of rapid industrial development in progressive European countries has created favorable conditions for larger companies, narrowing space for micro-economic development of smaller companies. Time has proved that larger companies are more rigid and easily fall into crisis or even undergo bankruptcy, while smaller companies are more flexible to easily follow the trends of market and market demands, and could

be adapted to business environment. Economic development in the form of clusters is a way of organizing to easily follow changing economic trends in the market that fits in the concept of rural tourism and rural development of Dukagjini Region in Kosovo.

Cluster appeared in the market as key idea in recent decades in the field of competitiveness and economic development. Porter's definition of cluster as "groups of companies and institutions concentrated in a specific geographic region and linked by independencies in providing a same and/or related group of products and/or services"⁴³ built the platform of cluster economic development.

Although cells lose a great deal of independence when becoming part of a cluster (done for the interests of all parties involved into cluster), they retain some flexibility in the market. Many researchers of economic development assume that being informally linked in clusters brings a more flexible and efficient offer on market, "The cluster allows each member to benefit as if it had grater scale or as if it had joined others without sacrificing its flexibility"⁴⁴. Model "Triple Helix" based on knowledge innovation system supported redesigning of production and reorganization of production process. This approach has enabled development to take course towards richer ecological spirit with careful consideration of balance between disparity and integration among university- industry- government. Somehow, this approach was successfully impromptu applied in Kosovo during 1970-1980 by small businesses.

Figure 19. The Porter's "diamond"



model

Source: Porter, M., "Cluster and new Economics of Competition", Harvard Business Review November/December, Drawed by Author (p.148)

⁴³ Porter, M., "Cluster and new Economics of Competition", Harvard Business Review November/December, (p.148)

⁴⁴ Porter, M., "Cluster and new Economics of Competition", Harvard Business Review November/December, (p.81)

Porter's promoted "diamond" model (1988) which presents relations between Context for the firm strategy and rivalry, Related and supporting Industries, Demand conditions and Factor conditions (Figure 19.).

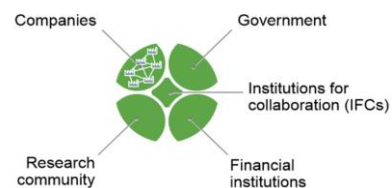
In 2003, a group of experts: Solvell O. Lindqvist G, Ketels C. wrote a book (for which M.E.Porter wrote the Foreword) "The Cluster Initiative Greenbook" (2003) which developed Porter's theory based on previous experience. Figure 20. presents how government, companies, research community and financial institutions are with an Institution for collaboration which accelerates clusters in the market.

Cluster initiatives (CIs) are partnership projects with the objective to promote cluster competitiveness in which three parties are involved (research, Companies and Government (Figure 21. and 22.) with a new way of conducting industrial policies. Investment attraction policies, Regional and SME policies, and Science and innovation policies are three components which "lubricate" the clusters and make them more dynamic.

Even though these initiatives may strengthen relations between industry, research, and the government as policymakers, Lindqvist and Ketels C (2003) argue that the latter "are often faced with lack of systematic evidence and structured thinking about factors that distinguish successful cluster initiatives from failures"⁴⁵. This fact brings to conclusion that cluster initiatives are more effective when locally-based.

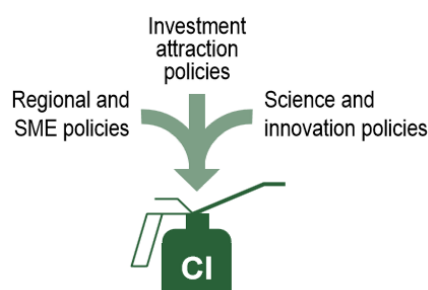
Cluster concept was successfully implemented in USA winery and this model can easy be implemented in Kosovo as well. Furthermore, endogenous approach combined with cluster development could establish a competitive and complementary rural tourism in Kosovo circumstances. Clusters can be non-formally established sometimes offering higher capacity e.g. more beds for bigger groups or wider offer for existing groups e.g. transport, food, guide, wine, etc. (Figure 23.).

Figure 20. Five sets of actors composing a cluster



Source: Solvell O., Lindqvist G. & Ketels CH., "The Cluster Initiative Greenbook", 2003 (p.18)

Figure 21. Cluster build on three main policy areas



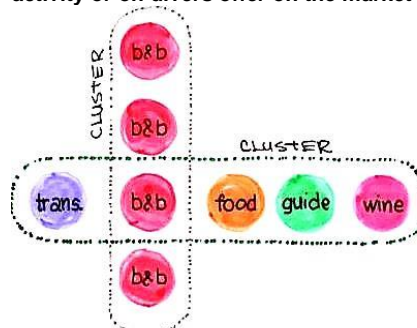
Source: olvell O., Lindqvist G. & Ketels CH., "The Cluster Initiative Greenbook", 2003 (p.17)

Figure 22. The three partners in a Cluster



Source: Source: Olvell O., Lindqvist G. & Ketels CH., "The Cluster Initiative Greenbook", 2003 (p.17)

Figure 23. Cluster build based on same activity or on divers offer on the market



Source: Author

⁴⁵ Solvell O., Lindqvist G. & Ketels CH., "The Cluster Initiative Greenbook", 2003 (p.81)

2.7 Endogenous and Cluster approach in function for Rural Tourism Development in Dukagjini Region

Bad experiences of uncontrolled economic and spatial development in the world so far should serve humanity to rectify this negative course by bringing the human to the center of attention, but now in context of environment surrounding him in a long term perspective. Tourism in general and rural tourism specifically is based on the concept “let’s not take a saw to the branch we are sitting on” and “protecting by using” which is completely in favor of environmental protection. Otherwise, environmental devastation would directly attack results and the profit brought by this activity.

The term “sustainable development” shows the new philosophy of professionals of all profiles, wherever they are, in relation to natural environment and the social one that has the human at its center of attention. Thus, nobody is spared from responsibility about the state of things we have inherited from our predecessors, which we should hand over to new generations. A joint commitment of all of us, including local and central authorities, all professionals and community of all ages, is needed in order to implement the concept of sustainable development.

The necessity for urgent, comprehensive, synchronized and long term reaction requires proper orientations such as sustainable tourism. The concept of sustainable tourism, economic activity based on natural and cultural resources ensures preservation starting from close environment where the activity takes place to wider environment of the region and up to protection of the planet. Dukagjini Region is not distinguished for underground wealth (ores or minerals). Thus, the alternative for the development of the region based on industrial development would not be right. Four main pillars of sustainable tourism described in chapter 2.3. provide a very good roadmap in defining a strategic framework for development of sustainable tourism in Dukagjini Region.

The development of this region, which is rich with fertile land and sufficient water, is in coherence with development of agriculture as an activity that is closely related to sustainable tourism, especially rural tourism. Apart from agriculture, tourism provides the best opportunities for greater employment of local population. Development of rural areas in Dukagjini Region, through these two economic activities that may be strongly connected, would be the quickest and the most efficient way to reduce poverty that is very much present. Natural and cultural capacities enable development of different modalities of tourism listed according to Baćac (2011) described in Chapter 2.4.1. to provide services and products for different types of potential visitors (Chapter 2.4.2).

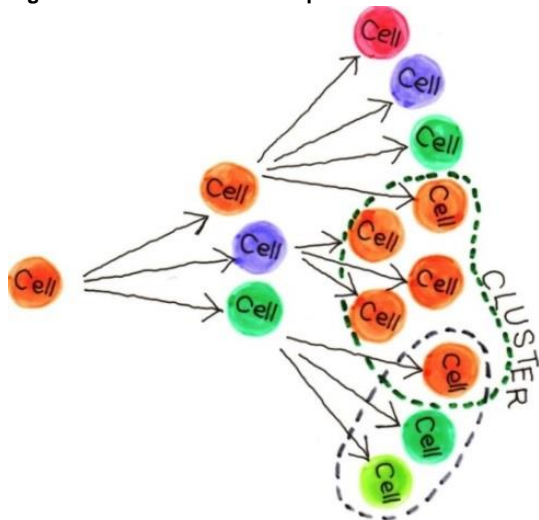
In order to implement the philosophy of sustainable development, apart from clarifying the doubts, manner of implementation and funds to do it should also be defined.

Such approach of environment- friendly development , based on local capacities and carried out through individual synchronized and harmonized initiatives in local and regional context, should be the future of development of rural areas in Dukagjini Region mainly for local people. Republic of Kosovo, as e newly established country, may not harbor any hopes for a quick development led by its Government. Furthermore, rural areas that were historically neglected may not count on enjoying attention and economic development by the state in near future. The existing natural, cultural capacities and assets as well as human resources provide sufficient basis to start development based mainly on their own forces through endogenous development – following the concept “bottom up”. This development concept is appropriate for rural development with all options it provides and it fits

especially for rural tourism. Endogenous development approach doesn't exclude exogenous development but gives priority to local people and their businesses which for Kosovan circumstances is a promising ground. Since centuries ago until today, rural people in Dukagjini Region used to make a living on their own to survive and this approach only should be supported in its beginning. Supporting initial family businesses (cells) and advising them to develop their businesses by bringing them together in a wide local and regional network (cluster) would make the development more efficient.

The endogenous concept combined with the development concept in a cluster form would operationalize the development even more so, especially at initial stage which, like in case of any other beginning, causes greater difficulties. Stimulation of first cells with "start-up" funds by central and local governments as well as donors, and provision of support in their establishment and grouping in clusters would be a promising initiative towards their interrelation and weaving of various touristic services in rural areas of Dukagjini Region (Figure 24.).

Figure 24. Cell/Cluster development



Source: Author, 2013

A very good experience of endogenous development is LEADER initiative which brought lot of results in the EU. The fact that Kosovo claims to join European Union, it is a reason more to follow LEADER approach for meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future. The difference between LEADER approach and traditional rural policy measures is that it indicates "how" to proceed rather than "what" needs to be done. As the LEADER is structured in its seven key features, it is very important to consider them rather as an integrated initiative than separately one by one. The best solution is to follow six steps to be taken in the process of implementing the LEADER approach starting from Capacity building till last step - Preparation of a local development plan.

"Setting up a local partnership, known as a "Local Action Group" (LAG) is an original and important feature of the Leader approach. The LAG has the task of identifying and implementing a local

development strategy, making decisions about the allocation of its financial resources and managing them."⁴⁶ (Figure 25.).

Based on Strategic Framework presented in Chapter 7, and diagram in Figure 108, LAGs should start acting before public discussion and give their contribution in drafting Local Plans and support community for implementation of these plans.

Figure 25. The rural actors in LAGs



Source: European Commission, "The LEADER Approach: a basic guide", 1991 (p.10)

⁴⁶ European Commission, "The Leader Approach: a basic guide", 2006 (p.9)

3. Examples for Rural Development in the Balkans

Theoretical consideration from Chapter 2 that analyze main notions of sustainable development, specifically endogenous and cluster development have been widely applied and contributed to the success of the five cases selected to be studied in this chapter. These findings in previous chapters and successful experiences in the region provided in this chapter are guide to profiling analysis of legal framework, spatial plans in Kosovo in the next chapter, planning of interviewing and surveying of people in the field, which is necessary to draft the profile of Dukagjini Region (Chapter 6).

Development of mass tourism, which turned into tourism industry, became unavoidably stereotyped and tourism fans started seeking something different. This fact and the aim of moving away from stressful urban life provided room for new modalities of tourism. Rural idyll and picturesque landscapes, healthy living with natural food, originality and local identity provided an advantage of a different way of spending vacation days for local tourists and those coming from other countries. This form of tourism, as mentioned in the previous chapter (Chapter 2) has in a way started being developed and may be developed in future mainly by relying on its own forces. The concept of endogenous development enables the establishment and increase of family business cells which might “spring up like mushrooms after the rain” thus interactively reflecting demands by tourists. Rural generosity and hospitality have greatly contributed to the initiative and development of this type of tourism and development of rural areas by visibly influencing creation of better living conditions and prevention of youth migration to urban areas or even abroad.

In the last two decades rural tourism, as a segment of industry of tourism in the World and Europe, has seen rapid increase thus turning into a current trend for good business perspective and sustainable development. It is not very important whether a rural tourist destination is distinguished or special. The important thing is that these destinations are always unique and have their own identity and this is what makes them special. A way should be found for their supplementation and enrichment with additional offers and their promotion in wider tourist market. Now, world tourist portals that offer hotels follow these developments with special focus while trying to keep up with and participate in rural tourism as a sector of opportunities. In this respect, for example portal “Hotel Club” in its “Top 7 Rural Destinations in the World” carries on its promotion by ranking Transylvania and Bukovina in Rumania, then Kuldiga (Latvia) New Zealand, Durbuy (Belgium), Florina (Greece) and Krems (Austria)⁴⁷.

Rural development and especially development of tourism are given great importance by European Commission also. In 2007, the European Commission awarded ten best destinations in rural development in the Annual Forum of European Tourism “European Destinations of Excellence” (EDEN) held in Portugal. “The aim of EDEN is twofold: to draw attention to the value, diversity and shared characteristics of European tourist destinations and to promote destinations where commercial success goes hand in hand with social, cultural and environmental sustainability”⁴⁸. This way, apart from promoting Europe as an important tourist destination in the world, is also a stimulation and wide awareness-raising about touristic diversity of Europe in the global context. On

⁴⁷ Hotel Club, “Top 7 Rural Destinations in the World”, <http://www.hotelclub.com/blog/top-7-rural-destinations-in-the-world/>, (Approached November 2014)

⁴⁸ European Commission, “the ten European tourist destination”, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-07-1624_en.htm?locale=en, (Approached November 2014)

that occasion, EDEN singled out 10 destinations of rural development: Austria-Pielachtal, Dirndl is the valley's trademark; Belgium: Durbuy, the smallest city of the world; Croatia- Sveti Martin na Muri, preserved natural heritage; Cyprus- Troodos, a relaxing break away from cosmopolitan coastal resorts; Greece- Florina, conciliating tourism and rural environment; Hungary- Őrség, characteristic landscape in harmony with nature; Ireland- Clonakilty District, amenities of natural beauty; Italy- Specchia, tradition meets innovation; Latvia- Kuldiga, the Latvian Venice; and Malta- Nadur, scenic beauty which are unique and rather rare.

The Balkans has also caught up development of rural tourism. In spite of rich and qualitative offer of beach tourism, Slovenia and Croatia had a lead also in the offer of rural tourism field. Other land - locked countries also joined this trend soon. Serbia caught up soon and now it does not lag behind Croatia or Slovenia.

An analysis of some *successful cases in Kosovo's neighboring countries* was carried out. When selecting these tourist destinations apart from their success, the criteria of their ability to supplement Kosovar offer in the area of rural tourism was also taken into account. Each destination was analyzed while considering its geographical position, historical background, content, elements that make it special as a destination, and the level and success factors.

3.1 "Quku i Valbonës" Guesthouse in Albania

The village of Valbona is located in the district of Tropoja 26 km from the city of Bajram Curri. This village, with 40 houses and only 300 inhabitants, is located 810 m above the sea level and is surrounded by the mountains of Kollata, Jezerc and Pecmara which reach the height of over 2.500 m. This place belongs to the National Park of Valbona and is located in Northern Albania, bordering Kosovo and Montenegro. These picturesque ridges located in three borders Albania – Kosovo – Montenegro are spread in the Northeast of Albania – from the border Kosovo – Montenegro. Although it belongs to Albania, Valbona Valley National Park is geographically more linked to Kosovo than the country it belongs to. Sometime ago, this place was almost completely isolated due to bad and dangerous roads whereas after the construction of highway Kosovo – Albania even the inhabitants of Albania visit the spring of Valbona River by passing through Kosovo (Figure 26.).

Figure 26. Map of Valbona Valley



Source: Google, 2014

Tourism is gradually assuming its important position in the post-Communism period in relation to economic development of Albania. It is natural that a country with such a rich coast such as Albania

to initially focus on this natural resource – the coast. But in recent years, tourism based on mountainous resources has been also assuming a strong position in the industry of tourism by providing its most diverse modalities.

Trends of development of new tourism modalities, especially regulation of road infrastructure, enabled international and local tourists to pay more visits to the Albanian Alps. Local initiatives that have been very little supported by the Government be it central or local, found no relevant support by donors either. Spontaneous development inclined towards requests of visitors continues to further develop tourism which started bringing to local inhabitants a better quality of life than before. The Spring of Valbona River and its valley, Mrizi i Zanave, etc. were identified by many nature lovers, who, following their first visit there, are impressed with natural beauty of this Park and hospitality of local inhabitants and go back to these places again and again. The case that is considered to be the most specific is the one of Catherine’s and Alfred’s Guesthouse but except this there are also some other guesthouses around. Catherine who is from New York came here for a five days stay but she has been living in Valbona for five years now. Being in love with nature and also with Alfred, made her change the concept of her life completely by leaving behind the life filled with stress in New York and embrace a relaxed life close to family and nature. This combination of cultures resulted in a synergy which helped Alfred’s family start and develop the business by relying on own capacities, thus advancing it day by day.

It is difficult to describe all the things offered by this Guesthouse. In a way, this couple and their family are at disposal of guests, to make their stay as enjoyable as possible. Moreover, guests are also at service of other guests by promoting co-existence, tolerance and self-contribution with the purpose of making this accidental “union” feel like home and, above all, spend time healthily. The extremely beautiful nature, fresh air and hospitable people are the starting point and the foundation of offer in Valbona (Figure 27, 28.).

Figure 27. Photos of Valbona Valley



Source: Author, 2014

This family also provides very comfortable accommodation (around 50 beds in 15 rooms and 3 buildings), local natural food, guides and maps for tourist walks, equipment for snow walk but also books to read. There are also other offers that are common for rural tourism such as drinks or lunch in houses of the villagers who had the prices standardized or even offers to ride horses, transport offers, etc. that are carried out through cooperation with village inhabitants. But the stay in this Guesthouse is made even more special by the feeling of being welcomed as well as making friends with guests and stimulation of guests to keep company.

Figure 28. Photos of buildings of “Quku i Valbones” Guesthouse



Source: Author, 2014

Merging of local generosity of Alfred and his family (mother, brothers and children) who are autochthonous on one hand, and Catherine’s urban culture and experience on the other hand have resulted with an articulated offer for Albanian but also for Anglophone guests with a synergy that makes the offer more complete and makes communication easier (Figure 29.).

Figure 29. Photos of life and food “Quku i Valbones” Guesthouse



Source: Author, 2014

Above all, it is beyond any doubt that tourism in general in Valbona Valley is being developed more and more mainly by relying on local people’s own capacities. In some random visits carried out to the Guesthouse “Quku i Valbones” and not only there, many tourists of different nationalities and ages were there. Although it is difficult to obtain information from owners regarding the number of visitors, according to the manner of organization and the way the guesthouse is reserved, it could be concluded that this business has sufficient profit and functions well. Gradual, but permanent, development and expansion of this family’s business (annexes, the new building, etc.), and also of other guesthouses make us realize that this business is moving forward and is progressing. Their price list published in the following webpage <http://www.jurneytovalbona.com/> makes us believe that the business is strongly standing on its feet. Prices are not to be underestimated; moreover they are higher than in the Northern Albania coast (Durrës, Shëngjin, Velipojë, etc.).

There is an impression that the secret to this business lies in several factors:

- natural wealth;
- human resources and their initiative;
- good organization of business:
 - combination and completion of offer by maximally adapting it to tourists;
 - natural and typical food for the region;
 - services at reasonable prices;
 - guests received with great hospitality;

- organizing of events on special dates (Thanksgiving Day, Flag Day, Easter, Eid al- Fitr, etc.)
- simple and efficient information (functional webpage, efficient communication through email and by phone, etc.);
- simple and clear signs showing buildings, walking paths, etc. in Valbona and in surrounding areas (Figure 30.);
- being able to arrive relatively easy from the dwelling place to the destination which could not be said about public transport; and
- safety during the stay and the journey to destination

Figure 30. Photos of life and food at “Quku i Valbones” Guesthouse



Source: Author, 2014

It is beyond any doubt that arrival of the “Bride” from the USA in the family gave a strong incentive to the idea and the business, not only to this family but to all local inhabitants too. Not intending to reduce the role of Alfred and his family Selimaj, Catherine’s contribution was special both in thinking up the business and also in providing consistence to its continuous development. Her contribution also involved the awareness-raising of population regarding the importance of natural resources, environment and preserving identity as a good opportunity to profit.

A very important factor in stabilizing business is the new recently asphalted road. On the other hand this road, like in many such cases, brings the risk of uncontrolled construction and devastation of nature caused by humans. The initiative of inhabitants alone will probably not be enough to this end. In this case, the need for the help of the state and implementation of the law are unavoidable, otherwise this natural wealth is seriously endangered from destruction.

3.2 “Popova Kula” Winery in Demir Kapija

Macedonia has carefully preserved its natural and cultural wealth. This country with its beautiful natural landscapes, rivers and lakes, cultural heritage and traditional food provides diverse tourist offer through official portal Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism⁴⁹. This portal gives very important place to rural tourism in Macedonia by promoting all its attributes - “The territory of Macedonia is home to approximately 1,600 villages and rural areas that are home to one third of country's population. Villages are big and small, in the mountains and in the valleys, rich and poor, modern and traditional, near and far, but their Inhabitants are always hospitable and ready for

⁴⁹ Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism, <http://www.tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/en/>, (Approached December 2014)

generous sharing".⁵⁰ But it stops here by recommending very briefly some villages such as Galicnik, Vevcani, Ljubojnjo, Trpejca, Brajchino, Lazaropolje and Malovishte. The inspiration for the project of "Popova Kula" Winery in a common Macedonian village Demir Kapija came about based on this wealth but like in any other private initiative it was made more concrete with all necessary things required to make a project successful.

"Popova Kula" (Priest's Tower) with its vineyards is located in Southern slopes of Veliko Brdo to the West of the city of Demir Kapi close to highway Skopje-Thessaloniki (Figure 31.).

Figure 31. Map of "Popova Kula" Winery



Source: Google, 2014

Demir Kapija valley lays on the southeastern part of the Tikveshiya grape growing sub-region that is part of the Povardarie region. Archeological discoveries show that this region has been dealing with viticulture since 13th century, maybe even earlier, and continued the tradition of viticulture until nowadays. "Popova Kula" was named after an old tower which served as important control point in the old Roman road that used to pass close to this place.

"Popova Kula" with its observation tower of 17m was constructed in 2005 as a replica of the old tower that served as an important landmark of the region, but which was destroyed since.

In 2006 it started processing the first grapes and two years after completion of work it started with wine tourism. In 2009, construction of the hotel and the restaurant was completed. Initially, the tower had 7 ha of vineyards and except the restaurant, the cellar and the store had also 11 rooms for accommodation. As business developed now, it has 15 ha and 21 rooms for accommodation. The building has been constructed in an architecture pertaining to the spirit of local architecture and in a way it is related to rural environment, thus continuing to be a landmark of this hilly location just like the old tower used to be (Figure 32, 33.).

⁵⁰ Macedonia Timeless, <http://www.macedonia-timeless.com/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=1339>, (Approached December 2014)

Figure 32. Photos of “Popova Kula” Winery



Source: Webpage of “Popova Kula” Winery, 2014

“Popova Kula” Winery is special due to its comprehensive approach and is a project based on: a) winery as the most important agricultural branch in the region, b) rural and cultural heritage by providing wine for sale but also on the table close to traditional typical food of the region, and c) Greenfield approach.

Factors that determined the success of the business in question are as follows:

- Natural wealth:
 - Vineyards
 - Picturesque rural landscape
- Original idea built on the cult of wine, traditional food entwined with the past.
- Good business organization:
 - Combination and completion of offer by adapting it not only to common tourist but also to businesses and groups of officials of local institutions and neighboring countries.
 - Natural and typical food for the region.
 - Very friendly reception of guests both by the staff and also by inhabitants of the region.
 - Organizing of attractive events such as biking (rent-a-bike service), sightseeing (Old village Klisura, the archeological localities, Fortress Prosek and Ramnishte, Dragon Cave, Cactus Hill, sightseeing by river Doshnica, Picnic, Bird watching and Hunting
 - Organizing of events on special dates (New Year’s Eve celebration, St. Trifun party on 14th February, St. Bogorodica party on 28th August, etc.)
 - Simple and efficient information of the complex (functional webpage, efficient communication via email and telephone, clear signaling from the highway to the destination, etc.)
 - Easy arrival by car from the dwelling place to the destination which could not be said about public transport.
- Safety during the stay and the journey to destination.

Figure 33. Photos of Demir Kapi village and “Popova Kula” Winery



Source: Author, 2014

On one hand the courageous approach to start almost from scratch, and on the other hand decisiveness to cautiously continue to expend capacities of accommodation, gastronomy and also wine production are another proof that the business made the right progress. This complex is visited by individuals, couples, families, small and large groups and someone from such groups is almost always at “Popova Kula”. A very good information, rich offer with a great program suitable for everybody, hospitality, reasonable prices in relation to services provided and all this closely related to location, rural idyll, cultural and food tradition, focused on domestic wine, make this place special and make people visit it time and again. Promotional events like anniversary, training or seminar, board meetings, party for clients or events for birthday, Baptism day, Name-day, engagement parties, weddings, bachelor parties, are very often hosted by this complex, and this makes “Popova Kula” very successful (Figure 34.).

Figure 34. Photos of various events and basement of “Popova Kula” Winery



Source: Webpage of “Popova Kula” Winery”, <http://popovakula.com.mk/> , (Approched November 2014)

3.3 Rafting in Piva and Tara rivers

One of the cases we could learn a lot from is the case of adventurous tourism in waters of Piva and Tara Rivers that spring in the Northwest of Montenegro and when they meet in Scepanopolje they form Drina River Piva (Figure 35.).⁵¹ The shortest section of Drina, collects water from the mountain of Piva whereas Tara from the mountains of Durmitor (Durmitor National Park) and Ljubisnja. Both branches have a beautiful canyon during their entire watercourse.

⁵¹ RaftingMONTENEGRO, <http://www.raftingmontenegro.com/mapa/mapa%20tare.jpg>, (Approched November 2014)

Piva region is located close to border with Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is characterized by virgin picturesque natural beauty. The landscape near Piva is characterized by dense forests, craggy limy rocks and canyons formed by Piva but also by River Tara, Komarnica and Sushica rivers in the region, thus forming a system of rivers, canyons and unique landscape.

However, Tara Canyon is more special than Piva Canyon, not only due to its beauty and height (which makes it occupy the first place in Europe and the second place in the world) but due to the fact that this phenomenon was evaluated as special because of its geology, hydrology and biology and has been listed in UNESCO's list as a natural monument of global importance.

Figure 35. Map of Piva and Tara rivers



Source:

Trip advisor, "Tara River Canyon Photo: Tara river", http://www.tripadvisor.ca/LocationPhotoDirectLinkg1096284-d1895406-i69902603-Tara_River_Canyon-Zabljak_Durmitor_National_Park_Zabljak_Municipality.html#71580953, (Approached, May 2015)

As it often happens, other economic interests (in this case the energetic ones) prevail over those "less important" such as the issue of nature, biodiversity, etc. is. This is what happened in this case also when a dam and a hydro power plant were built in Piva River in 1976. But fortunately this did not happen in case of Tara. Despite Government priorities, naturalists exerted pressure and under the moto "Nećemo Baru – Hoćemo Taru" ("we won't swamp-we want Tara") they won the battle.

The decision to preserve Tara brought a new and more qualitative development which is based on the fascinating beauty of the river and its canyon. Rafting is the main bait for tourists whose aim is adventure and nature and this brought a considerable number of resorts in Pive but especially in Tara. An active holiday that offers fun to tourists is wild and untouched nature, chutes, clearings and old buildings such as water mills, churches, monasteries and bridges. Sailing of rafting boats can be carried out in about one hundred kilometers of Tara River. The canyon of Tara possesses two parts, the upper part of the canyon and its lower part which has two starting points. Rafting boats, kayaks, canoes, hydro speed may be used for sailing there, including improvised rafts and other means of sailing. The first starting point is Splaviste close to Durdevica Tare where the rafting, which goes through the entire length of Tara canyon, starts from. Tours through entire canyon (about 100km) last at least two days and during the tour one night is spent in any of the camps of National Park Durmitor. Apart from rafting, there are offers with other activities such as forest safari, fishing, riding, climbing, tours with 4x4 vehicles, cycling, zipline but also other tours such as visiting of wine-cellars, Sarajevo, Andric Grad, etc. All options of tourist packages include traditional food. The offers

are rather complete and presented by rafting clubs such as “Rafting EKO Piva”, “Drina-Tara Club”, “Rafting Kamp DMD”, “Tara 87”, etc. (Figure 36-37.).

Figure 36. Air view of “Rafting Kamp DMD”, Sčepanpolje



Source: Author, 2013

Factors that determined the success of this business are as follows:

- Natural wealth:
 - Rivers
 - Rural picturesque landscape
- Legislative support provided by the state;
- Comprehensive approach maximally adapted to tourists and based on natural resources;
- Good business organization:
 - Combination and completion of offer by adapting it to tourists of all ages, while focusing on young people of the country and the neighboring countries;
 - Natural and typical food for the region;
 - Friendly reception of guests by staff and also inhabitants of the region;
 - Organization of other attractive activities except rafting such as riding, zipline, biking, forest safari, fishing, climbing, tours with 4x4 vehicles, cycling but also other tours of visit to wine-cellars, Sarajevo, Andric Grad. (Figure 38.);
 - Simple and efficient information (functional webpage), efficient communication by email and telephone, clear signaling to destination, etc.;
 - Easy access by car from the dwelling place to destination which could not be said about public transport;
- Professional and trained rafting staff.

Figure 37. Wild life in Tara-Piva-Drina region, Sčepanpolje



Source: Author, 2013

Figure 38. Rafting and zipline in Tara Region



Source: Unknown

It is for sure that long and rich professional experience of Montenegro in tourism helped every aspect- promotion, support, monitoring and above all high Government awareness regarding importance of nature and its protection made development of this specific modality of tourism simpler. There are very amicable relations amongst the population but state and local authorities have also played an important role, otherwise everything would be a lot more complicated.

Although rafting in Tara and Piva cannot be considered as tourism developed in village capacity, this kind of tourism was developed in local capacities, which coincides with endogenous development approach. Such a successful experience in Montenegro can help in conceptualizing rural tourism although in Dukagjini Region there are no rivers suitable for rafting. But the holistic approach, excellent inter-border cooperation and support of initiatives by the state, convey powerful messages regarding the manner of turning an asset into a generator of regional development specifically of rural areas.

3.4 Ethno village "KÜSTENDORF" in Serbia

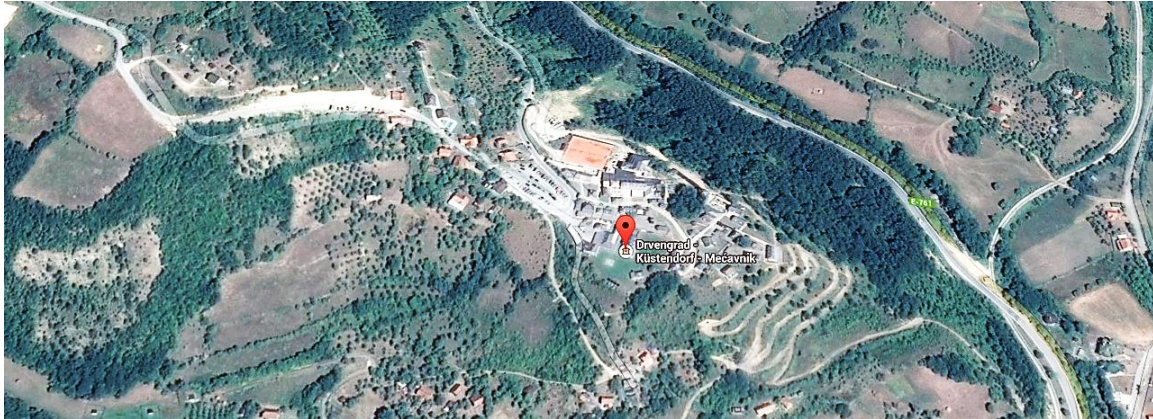
Considering that Serbia had no sea, rural tourism in parallel to winter tourism was favored more and somehow it might be concluded that it is the most developed in Southeast Europe. Almost all Serbia's territory provides favorable offers of this kind and it might be concluded that Serbia's rural tourism is an important branch of economic development of Serbian rural areas⁵². There are also some Ethno-villages in Serbia. "The best known ethno-villages in Serbia are Staro selo in Sirogojna, Drvengrad in Mokra Gora and Koštunići"⁵³. Undoubtedly the open air museum Old village Sirogojno Zlatibor served as inspiration in conceptualizing and materializing the idea for two more ethno-villages.

But it can be considered that a unique modality of tourism in rural areas is the case of Ethno village "KÜSTENDORF", which is located in Serbia close the Bosnian border, south west from Belgrade, in National Park of Mokra Gora (Figure 39.). The contradictory name of the village was chosen by Emir Kosturica himself. "Village on the coast", whereas it is located in the mountains which perhaps has etymology from his name Kusturica "kustu-dorf", Kusturica in different interviews also calls it Drvengrad (*the wooden village*) or Mečavnik (the name of the neighbor village).

⁵² Seoski turizam Srbije, http://www.selo.rs/RS/vrsta_objekta/apartmani/page/1 (Approched Decembar, 2014)

⁵³ Angekova A., "Uloga specifičnih vidova turizma u revitalizaciji pograničnih Područja između Srbije i Makedonije", Univerzitet Singidum, Beograd, 2010 (p.31)

Figure39. Map of Küstendorf



Source: Google, 2014

Figure 40. Photos from Etho village Kustendorf



Source: Webpage of Kustendorf, <http://www.kustu.com/w2/en:kuestendorf>, (Approached, June 2014)

"KÜSTENDORF" was announced by the ideator Emir Kusturica⁵⁴ in 2004 through a statement that provided clear vision on what he wanted to develop with it. *"I lost my city during the war. This is why I wished to build my own village. It bears a German name: "KÜSTENDORF". I will organize seminars there for people who want to learn how to make cinema, concerts, ceramics, and painting. It is the place where I will live and where some people will be able to come from time to time. There will be of course other inhabitants who will work there. I dream of an open place with cultural diversity which sets up against globalization."*⁵⁵ This idea became a reality through another project by constructing an entire dwelling place to shoot the movie "Life is miracle" (Figure 40.).

"Emir's dream was to build a cinema school, develop agro-tourism in this area, give a second life to the many kilometers of railways built for film... It is now done, also with a church, a hotel, a restaurant, shops, and guest houses, for him, his family and his friends"⁵⁶.

Like always, these projects are faced with other conventional projects, which happened in Mokra Gora, too, when it was concluded that there are reserves of nickel in this region. In relation to Mečavnik, there were also some projects for a Bear Sanctuary but both central and local

⁵⁴ Emir Kusturica is a famous Bosnian director from former Yugoslavia who was awarded many important international prizes

⁵⁵ Kustupedija, <http://www.kustu.com/w2/en:kuestendorf>, (Approached November 2014)

⁵⁶ Kustupedija, <http://www.kustu.com/w2/en:kuestendorf>, (Approached November 2014)

Governments of Serbia gave priority to "KÜSTENDORF" project as a project for sustainable development (protecting by using) vis-à-vis the project of region's economic development based on development of industry or the project that protects nature but brings no economic development.⁵⁷(Figure 41.).

Figure 41. Photos from Etho village Kustendorf



Source: Webpage of Kustendorf modified by Author, <http://mecavnik.info/wsw/index.php?p=197>, (Approached Januar 2015)

Initially the complex started off with an existing log-house and continued to be supplemented with some other log-houses and was transformed from a village that was needed for the scenes of the movie into a sophisticated ethno-village complex which was rewarded in 2005 by prestigious Philippe Rotthier architecture the prize for reconstruction of the city.

Built in an urban style, Drvengrad preserves characteristics of 19th century traditions becoming a perfect example of the "Life beyond the Usual". Located on the slope of Mećavnik Hill above the idyllically beautiful Mokra Gora valley, "KÜSTENDORF" (itself genuinely natural) is immersed in the unspoiled nature and filled with dear to our souls' ambiance.

Kusturica has skillfully integrated all of them by introducing craftsmanship in realizing the idea of "KÜSTENDORF". He used his name and authority in the field of motion pictures, built the identity of the complex with his personal way of life, his friendships and values as well as political standings. The streets bear the names of distinguished artists, film directors, writers, athletes and others that through their ideas or accomplishments have left philosophical mark in the history of mankind.⁵⁸

The ideator and its profiling into a tourist offer make this project special

10 years later there is no dilemma about the conclusion that "KÜSTENDORF" was a good project with a clear vision, great and complex planning. The idea of building a village to shoot a movie and dedicating it for tourism by using the philosophy of rural tourism, besides the nature and rural idyll,

⁵⁷ Pescanik, <http://pescanik.net/mokra-gora/>, (Approached November 2014)

⁵⁸ Amazing World in free stock picture and photos, <http://www.amazing-world-in-free-stock-pictures-and-photos.com/drvengrad-mokra-gora.html>, (Approached November, 2014)

to relate to the movie made this complex generate very good revenues for everybody.

The factors determining the success of this business are as follows:

- Natural wealth
- Human resources
- The original idea built on Emir Kusturica’s popularity, the film entwined with the Serbian rural culture
- Good business organization:
 - Combination and completion of offer by adapting it not only to common tourists but also to movie lovers, especially to young people who think of watching movies
 - Natural and typical food for the region
 - Services of romantic weekends
 - Very friendly reception of guests
 - Organization of events on special dates (playing of Kusturica’s and other movies)
 - Simple and efficient information provided in the complex, but also Serbia wide (functional webpage, efficient communication via email and phone, etc.)
 - Simple and clear signs of buildings in the ethno-village
 - Being able to arrive by car relatively easy from the dwelling place to the destination which could not be said about public transport.
- Safety during the stay and the journey to destination.

Promotion of the region, employment of population, revenues from ecological taxes and direct revenues from visitors make this complex profitable and encourage family businesses in the region to engage in rural tourism. Quite expensive prices in this complex and the replica on the wooden village with the stone village of “Andricgrad” in Visegrad of Bosnia, the construction of which is ongoing, prove that this modality of rural tourism can function successfully. Moreover, “KÜSTENDORF” has strengthened the development of family businesses in Mokra Gora by adapting and supplementing the offer of this ethno-village⁵⁹.

3.5 “Peaks of the Balkans”

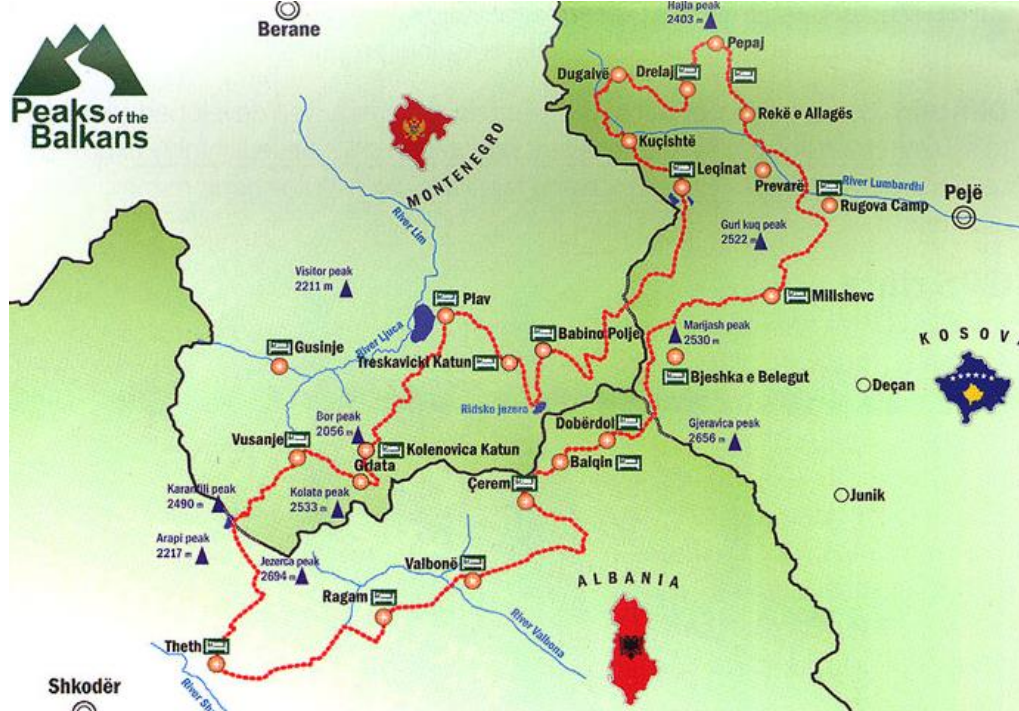
The project “Majat e Ballkanit” (“Peaks of the Balkans”) can be regarded as the best example of international cooperation. It involves the two neighboring countries of Kosovo. The project for creation of mountain path “Peaks of the Balkans”, of 192 kilometers length, which passes through Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania, has entered the second phase of agreement between these countries, supported by German Governmental Organization for International Cooperation Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit- GIZ. The three parties expect good results, while GIZ is convinced that this is a formula for success⁶⁰.

(Figure 42.)

⁵⁹ Zlatibor-Seoski turizam, “Smestaj- Cajetina i okolina Zlatibora, Seoski turizam”, <http://www.zlatibor.org/privatni%20smestaj/seoski%20turizam.htm> or “Izdajem stan u Mokroj Gori pored Drvengrada” <http://www.seloturizam.com/2013/11/04/izdajem-stan-mokroj-gori-pored-drvengrada/> (Approached November 2014)

⁶⁰ Jeta në Kosovë, “Majat e Ballkanit” Synojnë Turizëm Ndërkombëtar, <http://gazetajnk.com/?cid=1,1018,7441>

Figure 42. "Peaks of the Balkans" Long-Distance Hiking Trail (Albania – Kosovo – Montenegro)



Source: STAFORDS, http://www.stanforads.co.uk/Countries/Albania/Maps--Atlases/Peaks-of-the-Balkans-Long-Distance-Hiking-Trail-Albania-Kosovo-Montenegro_9783943752168.htm, (Approached Januar 2015)

Factors that should determine the success of the business in question are as follows:

- Natural wealth:
 - Picturesque rural landscape
- Specific idea built on the cult of long distance hicking,
- Cross-border organization:
 - Combination and completion of offer by adapting it not only to common tourist but alto to businesses and groups of officials of local institutions and involved countries ;
 - Natural and typical food of the 3 different countries in the region;
 - Very friendly reception of guests by inhabitants of the region;
 - Organizing of attractive events, sightseeing, Picnic, etc;
 - Simple and efficient information of the project (functional webpage, efficient communication via email and telephone, clear signaling from the highway to the destination, etc.);
- Easy arrival to the destination with public transport and by car.
- Safety during the stay and the journey to destination.
- Easy and safe passing of the border during hicking from one county to another one.

In order to make this and similar projects successful, it is necessary to have the readiness of the local population, local and central governments. Also, international organizations have contributed to significant results, both by supporting these kinds of projects and mediating between institutions and residents.

Thanks to similar initiatives as the project “Peaks of the Balkans”, last year, the municipality of Peja was selected by World Tourism Organisation in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, as winner of the first tourist destination worldwide for 2013, being estimated as unique, specific and attractive form of mountain tourism (Jeta në Kosovë, 2014).

3.6 Diversity of touristic offer in Rural Dukagjini as an answer to demanding tourists

If we consider successful experiences of rural tourism in neighboring countries, it can easily be concluded that tourists nowadays, are very demanding and it is very important for them to avoid costly holidays. They want their holidays filled with activities and events, which imposes increased creativity on service providers and touristic products. Their stay should be planned well but there should be flexibility in changing details from one case to another by adjusting it to an individual, a family or a group that came here to spend holidays.

All the above selected cases (Chapters from 3.1 to 3.4) first of all have one thing that makes them special - flagship offer that they mentioned in their web page and in all other ways of marketing. But in parallel to flagship offer, tourists in this case are also offered a wide range of other services and products so that they have an unforgettable holiday. While Valbona and Tara offer the nature that has hardly been touched by human hand, “Popova Kula” bases its project on history. On the other hand, the example of “KÜSTENDORF” shows that sometimes the originality or the oldness of constructed environment is not very important. The important thing is the originality of the idea and the offer provided by a certain project.

Following the stay in Quku i Valbones, one keeps in memory the picturesque nature that has mysterious traits – this is “the bait”. But apart from natural food, one also keeps in memory two more things: a) family and social atmosphere created by the host couple Catherine and Alfred that makes you feel relaxed and b) attractive activities they organize on specific occasions (Christmas, New Year’s Eve, Easter, Flag Day, etc.). Pig roasting; flag cake, firing of fireworks together, singing of all guests while accompanied by a guitar, etc. make the atmosphere informal and relaxing, but also unforgettable for everybody.

“Popova Kula” flagship offer possesses vineyards and the wine they produce from grapes cultivated there. But, apart from this product, this business offers many other things (events based on religious holidays, wedding ceremonies but also services for seminars and conferences, etc.). After leaving this place, you cannot help remembering the wine (several kinds) but also the food and events mentioned in Chapter 3.2.

Rivers Piva and Tara and their canyon with natural surroundings, undoubtedly flagship, possess rafting but it is exactly there where special holidays begin. The challenge of courage and adrenaline rush continues also with zipline, climbing, etc. Specific natural beauty of its most prominent canyon in Europe undoubtedly attracts tourists to visit it along with the Durmitor National Park. Tara is also made special by the victory of civil society in protecting nature and opposing construction of a hydroplant. Border crossing makes this region more interesting for such tourists as they are able to use the same holiday “to stay in several countries”. Something like that is possible in borders with Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia. Therefore, rural tourism through cross-border cooperation should not be seen only as one of imperatives for rural development. Numerous conflicts that

happened in Balkans in the past have resulted in cold interethnic relations that are more evident in areas bordering Serbia but also Macedonia and Montenegro. Projects that in a way include these areas represent a very good opportunity to ease tensions and pave the way for reconciliation between people in age-long hostility. The Albanian nationality population which lives in the border areas of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and also nationals of these neighboring countries living in Kosovo (although in much smaller numbers) can be “bridges” to new regional connections.

Kusturica’s “KÜSTENDORF” is distinguished for the phenomenon of Kusturica and the film. This individual of Muslim origin, who sided with the Serbs during and after the war in predominantly Muslim populated Bosnia, successful in the movie world in Europe and the USA, provokes the curiosity not only of movie lovers but of others as well. An Ethno-village in the region, which is also full of controversy, with numerous conflicts nearby between Muslim Bosnians, Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats, makes this place even more mysterious.

All the above analyzed cases convey a joint message for rural tourism in Kosovo: if natural and cultural wealth complement each other and are creatively combined, results are guaranteed.

From five case studies we find that identity, authenticity, creativity, hospitality, agriculture and healthy food, good accommodation and information based on natural and cultural heritage, as well as easy mobility, are the key to successful rural tourism. These are the key elements which should be accompanied by the element of active preservation of natural and cultural heritage. These elements should be promoted and applied at the very stage of definition of development policies for rural tourism as well as at the stage of carrying out touristic activity by local community. From these five case studies we learn that if these principles are followed, rural tourism will be successful.

4. Laws, spatial plans and relevant documents in Kosovo related to Dukagjini Region

Experiences in the region (Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) analyzed in Chapter 3 show that apart from key elements needed for development of rural tourism, there is also a need for favorable legislation, Government support, and spatial plans that contain elements of tourism with a focus on the rural one. A whole range of necessary documents is also needed in order to create a friendly environment for development of rural tourism such as administrative instructions, strategies at central and local level, etc. These binding and nonbinding documents studied in this chapter, spatial and municipal plans and different reports show the importance of legal framework and planning pattern for the development of rural tourism. The next chapter (Chapter 5) studies the other side involved: inhabitants, nature lovers and officials who are expected to reflect it in relation to legislation and conditions for rural tourism development.

In the past (1945-1999), ex-Yugoslavia's space was less developed with comprehensive planning. Planning was mainly done in three levels and in some periods, in four levels: Spatial Plan of the Republic, General Urban Plans and Detailed Urban Plan. Spatial Plan of Kosova was designed only once, while in other cases, its territory was treated under Serbia's spatial plans. Presently, some cities have designed their General plans while some parts of the city are equipped with detailed urban plans. Villages rarely get involved in these processes, and even when it happened, plans were partial and superficial.

The most difficult years in the field of spatial planning in Kosovo were during the period 1999-2010. On one side, there were outdated plans from the old system, and on the other side, there was a total disorder in space management which was poorly organized by international administration (UNMIK)⁶¹.

Large differences in economic development between areas in Kosovo are main inducers of movement and migration of population. A large part of settlements, especially those located in remoted mountainous areas, are faced with very poor rates of economic development.⁶²

4.1 Legislation in Kosovo related to rural tourism

Laws, spatial plans and relevant documents in Kosovo related to Dukagjini Region apart from having a great impact in establishing favorable legislative pattern to encourage and support local businesses, are also important in ensuring a safe and secure environment for everybody, especially for international tourists. As mentioned in the beginning of Chapter 4, friendly environment is necessary for rural tourism development. This chapter will study 32 laws that are directly interrelated to rural tourism and tourism in general.

Legislative framework is of utmost importance for the perspective of development of a country.

⁶¹ United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo UNMIK was established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1244 which was passed on 10 June 1999. In that Resolution, the UN decided to deploy in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices, an international civil and security presence in Kosovo

⁶² MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosova 2010 – 2020+", The Institute of Spatial Planning, 2010 (p.20)

The Constitution of Kosovo was drafted based on "Ahtisaari Package" of 2007, and then it was adopted upon the declaration of Kosovo as an independent state in 2008. Since the declaration of independence, completion of Kosovo legislation has been intensified even more. Legislation is supported by the Council of Europe and is in harmony with the laws of the EU countries.

Clarification of development policies and drafting of favorable pattern for development of the country should be supported by laws and by-laws. Apart from providing basis for documents at the drafting stage, laws are even more important during the implementation phase of strategies. Clear legislative framework is important especially in relation to complex activities such as tourism, which in case of rural tourism is closely interrelated with laws that regulate the issue of **environment**, **cultural heritage** and **agriculture and forestry** but also the issue of **education**. Undoubtedly, tourism is in some way related to almost entire legislation of the country (such as for example the law on public finances, on road transport, on profit tax, law on inspection, etc.).

The laws that are important more because of their character than spatial development are those dealing with Special Protected Zones that originate from Ahtisaari's Proposal, such as "Law on the village of Hoçë e Madhe/Velika Hoča (Law No. 04/L-062).

4.1.1. Progress of legislation in Kosovo in the last 15 years (1999-2014)

Since 1989 when Kosovo's autonomy was abolished, Kosovo has faced legislative crisis. The laws approved by Serbia at that time rapidly reduced rights of Albanians in Kosovo, thus leading Kosovo to an armed conflict which initially started sporadically but assumed its harshest shape in 1999. "Humanitarian Law Center from Belgrade, and its Director Natasa Kandic, informed that based on 31.600 documents, it was verified that from January 1st 1998 until 31st December 2000, 13.535 people died or went missing during the war in Kosovo"⁶³ mostly women, children and civilians.

Since 1999, the legislation of Kosovo passed through several stages:

- The first stage – suspension of all laws of Serbia and former Yugoslavia and administration of Kosovo by delegated European officials and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo UNMIK⁶⁴ (deployment of NATO forces and beginning of installation of UNMIK Administration)
- The second stage – joint administration of Kosovo (international and local) and drafting of legislation based on European standards
- The third stage – legislation after declaration of independence of Kosovo (17th February 2008)

The first stage was very short, it lasted less than a year, and passed by improvising from one case to another. All authorities (mainly international ones) were focused in urgent sheltering of population that had lost their houses in devastations of the 1999 war. UNMIK's solution of compromise, that enabled re-application of laws of former Yugoslavia, Serbia and Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo that were cleaned from political elements, might be considered as an important

⁶³ RROKUM TV, "FHP: 13.535 asht numri i viktimave te luftes ne Kosove", <http://www.rrokum.tv/3/fhp-13535-asht-numri-i-viktimave-te-luftes-ne-kosove-11964>, (Approached February 2015)

⁶⁴ By its resolution 1244 the Security Council at 10th June 1999 decided on the deployment in Kosovo, under United Nations auspices, of international civil and security presences.

achievement in the area of legislation in Kosovo. This action was acceptable and it provided a good opportunity to establish order in the area of urbanism as well. Unfortunately, despite this very important step for spatial management in Kosovo, irregularities and unplanned constructions (often referred to as “illegal constructions”) continued with even higher intensity, thus devastating mainly urban spaces but also the rural ones. During the second stage – following the declaration of independence of Kosovo, two first legislatures approved 138 laws. The third stage was more expeditious and in its two mandates, the Parliament approved 425 laws and gradually brought a fairly acceptable order in the area of spatial planning, while the legislation of the new state of Kosovo was being drafted and completed (2008-2014).

4.1.2. 32 Kosovar laws from 5 ministries that deal with rural tourism

The hurried drafting of the laws took its toll in their quality, despite the fact that they have been monitored by the Council of Europe. In fact, laws are qualitative but it happens that they are not in line with one another.

The laws related somehow to rural tourism have been elaborated by different ministries:

A. *Laws elaborated by the Ministry of Trade and Industry*

1. Law on Tourism (04/L-176)
1. Law on Geographic Indications and Designations of Origin (04/L-187)
2. Law on Trademarks (04/L-025)
3. Law on Accommodation Tax in Hotels and Tourist Facilities (03/L-027)
4. Law on Crafts (2004/44)

B. *Laws elaborated by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning*

5. Law on Protection of Nature (03/L-233)
6. Law on Waste (04/L-060)
7. Law on Environmental Protection (03/L-025 2009)
8. Law on Protection of Air from Pollution (03/L-160)
9. Law on National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” (04/L-086)
10. Law on Inspectorate of environment, waters, nature, spatial planning and construction (04/L-175)
11. Law on Waters of Kosovo (04/L-147)
12. Law on National Park “Sharri” (04/L-087)
13. Law on Construction (04/L-110)

C. *Laws elaborated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development*

14. Law on Livestock of Kosovo (No. 2004/33)
15. Law on Land Regulation (04/L-040)
16. Law on Wines (02/L-8) and Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law No. 02/L-8 (04/L-019)
17. Law on Forests of Kosovo, No.2003/3 and Amendments and Supplements of Law No.2003/3 on Forests of Kosovo (2004/29)
18. Law on Farmers’ Cooperatives No. 2003/9 and the Law on Amending and Supplementing Law No.2003/9 on Farmers’ Cooperatives (03/L-00),
19. Law on Veterinary No.2004/21
20. Law on Hunting 02L-53
21. Law on Fishery and Aquaculture 02/L-85
22. Law on Apiculture No.02/L-111
23. Law on Protection of Plants Varieties No.02/L-98

D. *Laws elaborated by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports*

24. Law on Cultural Heritage (02/L-88)
25. Law on the Village of Zymi i Hasit (04/L-196)

26. Law on the Village of Hoçë e Madhe/Velika Hoča (04/L-062)
27. Law on the Historical Center of Prizren 04/L-066
28. Law on the National Ensemble of songs and dances “Shota” and other ensembles (04/L-164)
- E. *Laws elaborated by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology*
29. Law on Education and Professional Training 04/L-138
30. Law on Education and Training of Adults in the Republic of Kosovo (04/L-143)
31. Law on Pre-University Education in the Republic of Kosovo (04/L-032)
32. Law on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo (04/L-037)

There are many other laws that indirectly relate to rural tourism such as: Law on Public-Private Partnership (04/L-045), (Law on fire-fighting and rescue 04/L-049), Law on protection against natural and other disasters (04/L-027), and Law on Energy Efficiency (04/L-016), etc. Many other by-laws, administrative instructions and regulation derive from these laws, thus contributing to completion of legislation in Kosovo that has impact in tourism in general but particularly in rural tourism.

4.1.3. Laws that have direct impact on rural tourism

Certainly the most important law for tourism is Law No. 04/L-176 on Tourism but the Law on Spatial Planning, the Law on Nature Protection and the Law on Cultural Heritage might be considered as laws of greatest importance for rural tourism.

4.1.3.1. The Law on Tourism

This law approved on 11th April 2013, based on Article 65 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo defines, in 23 articles, the Purpose of Law, Scope, Definitions, Principles, Voluntary registration in respective organizational unit for Tourism, Revocation of registration, Creation of categorization system, Registry of categorizations, Catalogue of categorizations, The use of categorization, Performance of touristic activity, Tourist packages, Disagreements with clients, Tourism Council of Kosovo, Transitional and final provisions and Repealing provisions. The 2nd article of this law provides a definition of the scope of tourism: “This Law shall regulate relationship between public institutions and private entities, natural and legal persons, local or foreign, that practice tourism activity, shall define the rights and obligations of participating entities in the field of tourism in accordance with standards set forth in legislation into force.”⁶⁵ Article 3 explains terms used in this law but there is no structuring or modalities of tourism. There is only one term for Touristic village which has not been explained sufficiently: “A structure organized in the form of a village, concentrated on touristic resources, classified in compliance with approved standards for development of tourism, and which enjoys certain privileges according to provisions of this Law;”⁶⁶

Despite the fact that this law does not deal with rural tourism (it does not mention it at all), it may not be considered as an unfavorable law for development of tourism in rural areas of Dukagjini Region. Moreover, this law as such may not stimulate the development of rural tourism, therefore this law should be subject to amendments and introduction of new stimulating articles for rural tourism or a special law should be drafted. Although it is encouraging that in the MTI webpage under “Table for tourism potentials” (Figure 43.) modalities for rural tourism have been provided, diminution of the Department of Tourism to the level of Division of Tourism is a bad signal. Such a

⁶⁵ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, “Law No. 04/L-176 on Tourism”

⁶⁶ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, “Law No. 04/L-176 on Tourism”(p. 2)

diminution of administrative level of the sector of tourism in the MTI may reflect on decrease of interest about this sector both within the Government, Kosovo, and abroad.

Figure 43. Table for tourism potentials

Kosovo tourism potentials

Tourism types	Actual	Possible	Beginner
In transit	x		
Nature			x
Water sources		x	
Healthcare	x		
Wintry	x		
Culture - History			x
Rural		x	
Hunting - fishing		x	
Alpine			x
Speleology (Cave)		x	
Adventure			x
Scientific		x	

Source: MTI - Tourism Division, <http://www.mti-ks.org/sq/Divizioni-i-Turizmit>, (Approached May 2015)

4.1.3.2. Law on Spatial Planning

Law on Spatial Planning was approved on 31st July 2013 and contains 29 articles elaborated in 6 chapters and 25 pages. Similarly to other laws, the present law starts with **Chapter 1** - General provisions: Purpose, Scope, Definitions, Principles, and then continues in **Chapter 2** with Levels of Planning and Spatial Planning Documents, Responsible Entities, Responsibilities of Assembly, the Government of Kosovo and Ministry for Spatial Planning. Article 11 deals with Responsibilities of the Municipal Authority Responsible for Spatial Planning and Management.

Chapter 3 of this law defines the following spatial planning documents:

- Spatial Plan of Kosovo
- Zoning Map of Kosovo
- Spatial Plans for Special Zones
- Municipal Development Plan
- Municipal Zoning Map
- Detailed Regulatory Plans
- Protected Areas

This chapter defines also Spatial Planning Database.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to participation and public review starting from Terms of construction, Copies of Spatial Planning Documents and Environmental Implications of Spatial Planning Documents.

Chapter 5 of this law specified Supervision: Administrative Supervision and Applicability.

Chapter 6 of this law deals with Transitional and final provisions: Drafting and Harmonization of Spatial Planning Documents, Sub-legal acts and Repealing Provisions.

The issue of rural area in this law has been dealt with more carefully than in the Law on Tourism—the word “rural” is mentioned seven times in different contexts and rural tourism is mentioned only once (Article 1.10.). “Rural Area – an area characterized with low level of construction, population

density and technical, public and social infrastructure, and of employment through development of agriculture, rural tourism, healing centers and of manufacturing that doesn't pollute the surrounding environment."⁶⁷

4.1.3.3. Law of Nature Protection

Law of Nature Protection defines the system for protection and conservation of nature and biological and landscapes diversity. This Law, which entered in force at 30th September 2010, has 62 pages, 15 chapters and 177 articles. In chapter 1, this Law lays down Subject and Nature protected values. Chapters 3-4 defines Procedures of annunciation of nature protected values and Implementation of protection and nature conservation.

The Law of Nature Protection defines basic documents for protection of nature which are the Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity (SaAPfB)⁶⁸. Municipalities should compile programs for nature protection for their territory that have to be harmonized with the SaAPfB approved by the Assembly of Republic of Kosovo. Chapters 5 - 9 lay down special nature protection and conservation measures, usage of nature goods, planning and organization of nature protection, access to information and public participation and sign of nature protection. Chapter 10 treats a very important topic-promoting education on nature protection. The next two chapters are related to recognitions and prizes for achievements in nature protection and financing nature protection. Chapter 13, "*Supervisio*"ⁿ, covers a very important issue for implementation of this law in which types and instruments of supervision are specified.

Punitive provisions have been elaborated in details in 9 pages specifying punishments for legal and natural persons.

Chapter 15 on transitional and final provisions should be distinguished as it links this Law with European ecological network "NATURA 2000".

This law may be deemed as one of the best completed laws, which contains very clearly defined instruments for its implementation. This document clarifies responsibilities with other ministries too (for example Article 76.2., Article 91.4., etc. regulate relations with the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development). It is very well related to other laws and clarifies relation with SaAPfB as well.

4.1.3.4. "Law on Cultural Heritage"

"Law on Cultural Heritage"⁶⁹ might be considered as the most delicate law in Kosovo legislation. It has the aim of creating legal and regulative infrastructure, regarding protection, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage of Kosovo. This law includes **Architectural**, **Archaeological**, **Movable**, and **Spiritual** heritage and **Cultural landscapes**⁷⁰. This law, which is in the stage of redrafting, has favored Orthodox heritage by seriously bypassing international conventions and world principles of categorization of cultural heritage. The gaps of this law rendered its redrafting necessary and Kosovo is expected to approve the new law on cultural heritage during 2015.

⁶⁷ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, "Law on Spatial Planning"(04/L-174), 2013 (p.3)

⁶⁸ Department of Environment Protection, "Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020", 2011

⁶⁹ Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, "Cultural Heritage Law" (02/L-88)

⁷⁰ The Article 2.5. defines notion in the context of this law "Archaeological heritage" which means constructions, structures and groups of buildings, developed settlements, movable objects, monuments of various kinds and their contents, found on land or under water. The Archaeological Heritage may be protected through an Archaeological Reserve where the remains, whether visible or hidden in the ground are to be left undisturbed., 2006 (p.2)

This 15 page document contains 12 articles, systemized in 9 chapters:

- I. General Provisions and Definition of Notions in the Context of the Law
- II. Inventory, Documentation and Temporary Protection of the Cultural Heritage
- III. Architectural Heritage
- IV. Archaeological Heritage
 - Preliminary and Rescue Measures
 - Archaeological Reserves
 - Protective Zones and Areas
 - Procedures for an Archaeological Excavation
 - Rights and Obligations
 - Expropriation and Compensation
 - Professional Advice and Guidelines
 - Public Access
- V. Cultural Landscapes
- VI. Movable Heritage
 - Public Collections
 - Private Collections
 - Legal Limitations on Exhibition
 - Circulation of Movable Heritage
 - Alienation
 - Import and Export
 - Conservation Measures of Protection and Preservation of the Movable Cultural Heritage
- VII. Spiritual Cultural Heritage
- VIII. Sanctions
- IX. Final Provisions

Despite some shortcomings, this law in general provided sufficient legislative basis for proper functioning of activities in the area of cultural heritage. Expressions, notions and definitions stemming from this law are in function of an integrated approach towards conservation and restoration of cultural heritage of Kosovo.

4.1.4. Action plan rural tourism- the best solution of Kosovar legislation for rural tourism

The list of laws that interfere with rural tourism is long but these mainly relate to laws of Ministry of Trade and Industry; Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning; Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development; Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, etc. Since there are plans to extend rural tourism outside Kosovo, a number of laws of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, etc. are related with it. Each of ministries materializes specific issues in laws and in a multitude of documents in the form of programs, strategies, etc. The situation of legislation in Kosovo fails to define rural tourism very much or its position in Kosovo economy, but it is good that there are no obstacles that could be confusing.

It could be considered that the existing legislation does not prevent rural tourism development; moreover there are good signs in Kosovar legislation about rural development. On the other hand, it could be assessed that legislation in the Republic of Kosovo provides convenient basis for non-

governmental organization (NGO) and other foundations. Civil society plays the role of very good bridge connecting government and community. Legislation cannot define every detail in society and many times this gap might be covered by Local Action Groups and NGO's.

Not only in Kosovo, but elsewhere, too, have forms of non-governmental organizations often provided greater and faster results than the government. Civil society, local and international associations in Kosovo are giving considerable contribution to development of rural tourism and other activities related to it.

The fact that tourism in general is sufficiently dealt with by Kosovar legislation is not enough. Protection of nature and cultural heritage, development of agriculture, etc. indirectly helps in developing tourism. The fact that the Law on Tourism (studied in Chapter 4.1.3.1.) makes no mention of rural tourism proves that this specific category of tourism has no important role in this law. This law cannot be considered unfavorable for the development of rural tourism in rural areas of Dukagjini Region either. However, in order to develop rural tourism, such legislation is necessary to stimulate development of rural tourism. Therefore, this law should either be subject to amendments and introduction of new stimulating articles about rural tourism or a special law should be drafted, considering circumstances. Based on experiences and provided conclusions, the outcome of this chapter is: the best solution for development of tourism is compiling of the **Action plan for rural tourism** (elaborated in Chapter 11.5).

The Action Plan for rural tourism should oblige review of spatial plans in order to adapt them to rural tourism. To this end, next chapter (Chapter 4.2.) will analyze Kosovo Spatial Plan as the most senior document of planning system in Kosovo. It will provide general and specific information of the document and extent of consideration of rural tourism by this document.

4.2 Spatial Plan of Kosovo

Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK) is the first comprehensive document that Kosovo produced recently. This document, compiled by Institute of Spatial Planning in 2010, creates very good basis for further development of municipalities in Kosovo. The profile, vision, principles and goals that derive from this document are a framework for all Municipal Development Plans. This document gave definitions and built terminology in planning as well. "Spatial planning is the planning of a physical space which surrounds us: the space where our homes are, space in urban and rural areas, space in which we work, road space, infrastructure and natural and cultural heritage."⁷¹

Generally, this plan treats in a correct manner, elements that should be treated in a national document of such scale.

Based on **climatic conditions**, Kosovo is divided into two agro-ecological areas. One is the Dukagjini Plain, which covers around 48% of the total area, with continental climate conditions under Mediterranean impact. The other is the Kosovo Plain, the eastern side, which covers 52% of the total territory, with a more continental climate.⁷²

⁷¹ MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosovo", 2010 (p.9)

⁷² MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosovo", 2010 (p.41)

In this document, **Tourism** is treated in Chapter 1.1.5.7. "The natural values of Kosovo represent touristic resources of high level. The description of the Kosovo Touristic potential is closely related to geographic position of Kosovo's territory. Kosovo has an excellent mountain tourism potential, national park, potential for hunting and cultural potential. Kosovo has a considerable potential to develop winter tourism in the mountains of Sharr and Bjeshkët e Nemuna. Currently, there is only one skiing center – Brezovica, which is being used by local and international tourists that are present in Kosovo. There are two rehabilitation spas in Kosovo, one in Klokot and the other one in Peja. Majority of visitors have a one-day stay and they usually come from nearby urban centers. Kosovo has potential in development of hunting tourism. This type of tourism could be practiced in a lot of places in Kosovo, such as Kozhnjari Forest, Rusolia and Blinaja. Other natural values in Kosovo are: the Mirusha Canyon, the Marble Cave in Gadime, Rivers and lakes that offer possibilities for development of fishing, water sports and recreation. Productions of rare artisanal crafts, such as the Filigran, represent an attraction for foreign tourists. Kosovo has a potential to develop cultural tourism with a lot of buildings with an extraordinary cultural and historical value. Total number of buildings and cultural institutions is 1,282."⁷³

The traffic after armed conflict in 1999 Kosovo was in bad condition. This document shows Kosovo's connection to European road corridors E10, E8 and the Adriatic highway as a challenge for this area and it should, based on this fact, create a strategy to access these corridors. It is possible to connect to the E10 corridor through the M25 highway (Pristina – Podujeva), or through the Merdare – Durrës highway, which is almost finished. With corridor E8 (Durrës – Varna), Kosovo could be connected through highway M2 (Ribariq – Hani i Elezit)⁷⁴. This plan was implemented from Morina to Prishtina. From this point to the border with Serbia (Merdare), the project is planned to be implemented after negotiations of Kosovo with Serbia in Brussels.

Railway Transport was treated in chapter 1.1.6.1.2. This document finds **railway** transport in Kosovo in a very low level. This is as a result of under-developed railway infrastructure. From 2008, three passenger trains have been in circulation. First, train of free movement which is a subsidy of Ministry of Transport and Communications and circulates twice a day in relation Fushë Kosovo – Hani i Elezit - Leshak and vice versa. The train, due to occupation of the northern line since March, has stopped operation of the line Fushë Kosovo - Leshak and is expected to be back in operation after necessary conditions are in place. Second, train in relation Prishtina - Skopje which has stopped due to small number of passengers causes an annual loss of 620,000.00 Euros. Third, train traveling from Prishtina to Peja and vice-versa was highly utilized in 2008 but incurred a loss of 230,000.00 Euros.⁷⁵

Similar situation prevails in other lines, too. Finally, the Railway Transport needs to study this issue and use sustainable holistic approach for its revitalization.

SPK shows that **Air Transport** travels only from Prishtina airport from where passengers can travel to different international destinations. Number of flights from international airport of Prishtina in 2009 was 5714, whereas number of passengers (departure- arrival) was 1.2 mil. passengers. Today, the number of passengers is decreasing because most of international missions in Kosovo have been completed. Besides the above-mentioned aeroport in Sllatina near Prishtina, there is another Military

⁷³ MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosova", 2010 (p.66)

⁷⁴ MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosova", 2010 (p.73)

⁷⁵ MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosova", 2010 (p.75)

Airport in Gjakova⁷⁶. **Heritage** on SPK is linked with sustainable development - the approach that can protect it from losing both Kosovo's natural and cultural heritage.

Reflection on resources and development strategies in lot of meetings brought out a statement for the Kosovo spatial development vision, which includes several factors beginning with country's integration into European Union, sustainable development in social and economical terms, to education opportunities and strengthening capacities of qualified labor force, which in Kosovo's case would be helpful for economic development. The statement also mentions preservation of environment, including natural and cultural heritage of Kosovo and neighboring countries, then an “open society that promotes diversity and exchange of ideas and respects the rights of all communities.”⁷⁷

From this statement, spatial development goals and objectives emerged, which foresee Kosovo as a country integrated in the EU, with policies that aim achievement of balanced social development with equal access to services for all Kosovo inhabitants, sustainable and balanced spatial development, protection and respect for cultural and natural heritage resources of its territory and neighbors. The goal focuses on sustainable and balanced economic development based on natural and human resources, modern technology, competitive markets and implementation of environmental standards, whilst the last goal concerns mobility plan transport and integrated infrastructure and communication, in coherence with environmental standards.⁷⁸

According to the concept of future spatial development, Kosovo is divided into four areas (in some documents we can find five), based on specific characteristics for each of them. These characteristics represent diversity and at the same time are unique to each of them. This division has been made based on potential development, geographical characteristics, and economic activities in these four zones. These areas are designated by names which represent a form of identity and some of their characteristics, whereas they all appear in certain colors in the map (Figure 44.). These areas are:

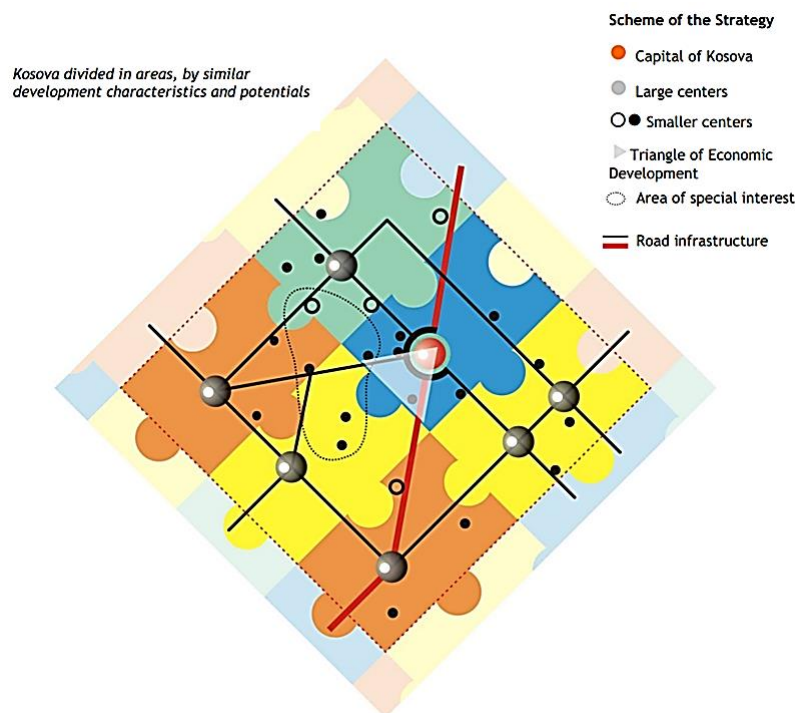
- The Treasury of Kosovo (the Green Area) – industrial, service and trade – includes the northern part of Kosovo, comprised of municipalities: Mitrovica, the main center and Vushtrri, Skenderaj, Zveçan, Leposaviq and Zubin Potok, smaller municipalities gravitating to Mitrovica.

⁷⁶ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.74)

⁷⁷ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.75)

⁷⁸ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.118-119)

Figure 44. Zoning of Dukagjini Region – Yellow and Orange



Source: Spatial Plan of Kosova, 2010 (p.122)

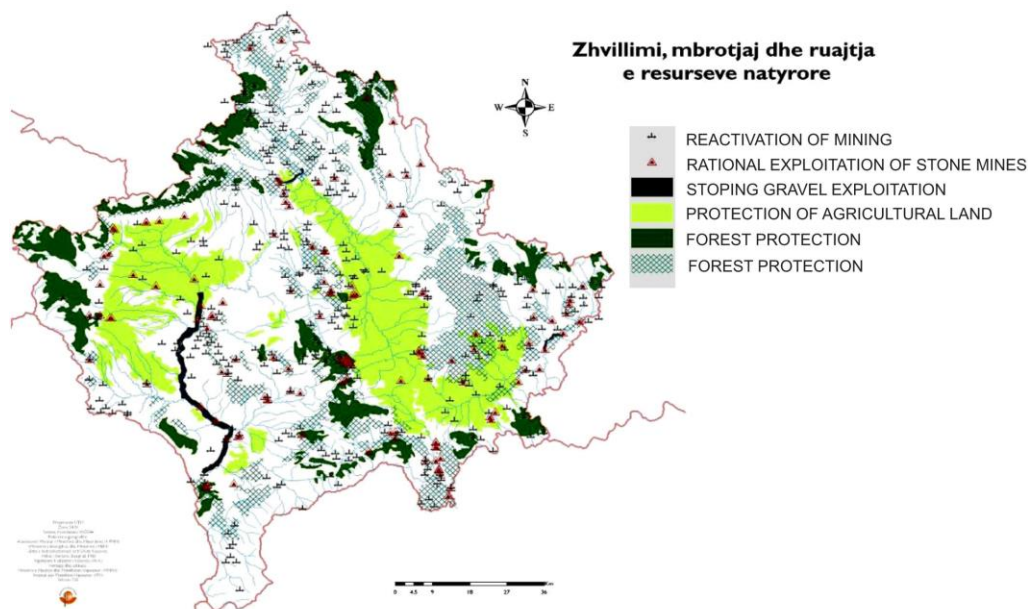
- The harbor of Kosovo (the Blue Area) - administrative, service and trade, agricultural industry, and tourism – includes the Northern part of Kosovo, comprised of Municipalities: Pristina – the main center and the Capital of Kosovo, Obiliq, Podujeva, Fushë Kosovo, Lypjan, Drenas and Shtime, gravitating to the city of Pristina.
- The Bridges of Kosovo (Yellow Area) – service and trade, agricultural and tourism industry – covers the south-eastern and south-western parts of Kosovo, comprised of Municipalities: 1) Ferizaj, Gjilan, Kaçanik, Shterpce, Kamenica, Novo Brdo and Viti, Ferizaj and Gjilan at the center; 2) Gjakova, Deçan, Rahovec and Malisheva, with Gjakova at the center.
- The Gardens of Kosovo (Orange Area) – cultural-tourism, service and trade, agricultural industry; covers the western/north-western and southern parts of Kosovo, comprised of Municipalities: 1) Peja, Klina and Istog with Peja at the center; 2) Prizren, Suhareka and Dragash, with Prizren at the center. Kastriot, Fushë-Kosovo, Drenas, Lypjan, Besiana and Artana (Blue Area); Skenderaj, Vushtrri, Zubin Potok, Zvecani and Leposaviq; (Green Area); Burim, Klina, Suhareka and Dragash (Orange Area); Deçan, Rahovec, Malisheva, Viti, Dardana, Shtime, Kaçanik and Shterpce (Yellow Area)⁷⁹.

Due to the fact that villages make the largest number of settlements in Kosovo and that around 60% of population lives in rural areas, the Spatial Plan of Kosovo treats this as a very important issue to be considered during planning process in lower levels, too. The SPK divides Kosovo villages by their development into “developed villages” which are situated in plains and near the key axes of road network of larger urban areas., The second type are the “under-developed villages”, the vast

⁷⁹ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.127)

majority of which are in remote mountainous areas and have a poor access to road network. These villages could be considered as target for this research for elimination of poverty through tourism.

Figure 45. Development, preservation and protection of natural resources in Kosovo



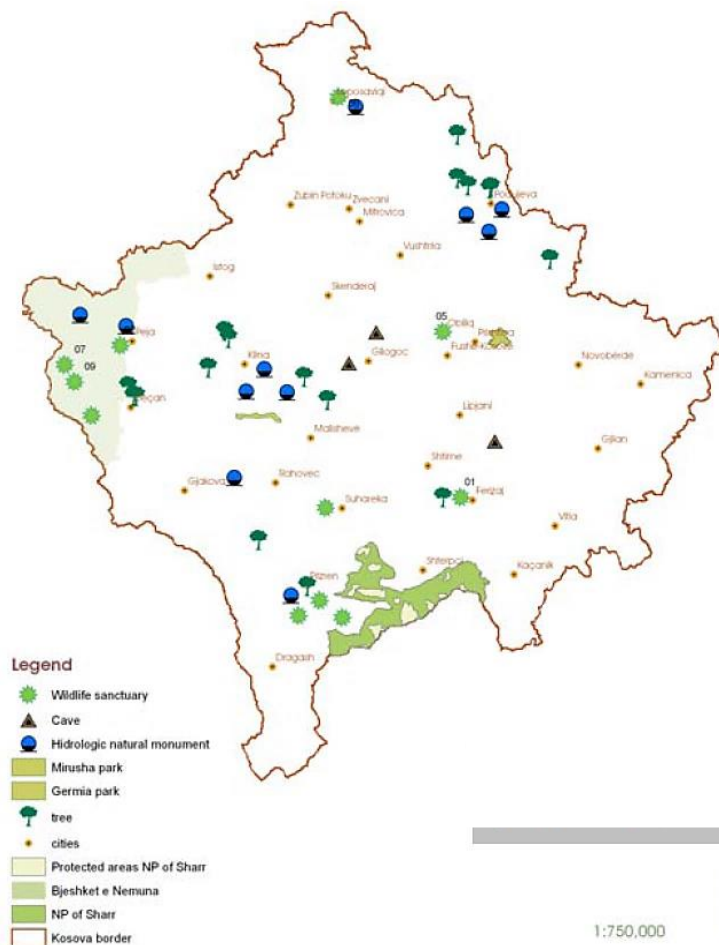
Source: Spatial Plan of Kosova, 2010 (p.167)

SPK considers the Protected Zone a defined territory in order to protect the natural and cultural values from pollution and other forms of devastation. These areas are divided into "Protected area of cultural heritage, protected area of natural heritage and Special protected zones for Kosovo"⁸⁰ (Figure 45, 46.).

SPK gives special importance to nature, its preservation and protection of natural resources in Kosovo, in particular in areas of special protected zones.

⁸⁰ MESP, "Spatial Plan of Kosova", 2010 (p.128)

Figure 46. Natural resources in Dukagjini Region



Source: MESP, Spatial Plan of Kosova, 2010 (p.129)

Despite the fact that Spatial Plan of Kosovo does not dwell much neither on development of rural areas or rural tourism, this document is in line with modern treatment of protecting heritage and sustainable spatial development. Favorable zoning of the territory of Dukagjini Region and development framework originating from this plan encourage Municipal Development Plans to engage in development that is based more on landscape and culture rather than industry. Favoring of agriculture and tourism in SPK provides good direction on drafting MDP of municipalities of Dukagjini Region and also of specific areas in this region. Nevertheless, due to changing of the Law on Construction and especially the Spatial Law of Kosovo, this document should be reviewed or a new one should be drafted. It is important that the next plan specifically attaches importance to rural tourism as a component of sustainable spatial and economic development of rural areas of Dukagjini Region.

The spatial plan of Kosovo was the compulsory starting point for Municipal Development Plans (MDP) and thus influenced the MDP of municipalities and Plans of special protected zones in Dukagjini Region (Chapter 4.3.) in adopting more or less the same approach towards rural tourism (Chapter 4.4.).

4.3 Plans of Special Protected Zones and Special Interest Areas in Dukagjini Region

Spatial Plan of Kosovo (analyzed in Chapter 4.2.) also deals with special protected zones (SPZ) which according to the previous law on spatial planning (2008) has defined 45 such areas throughout Kosovo territory (Figure 47.) of which mainly belong to Serbian Orthodox Church.

4.3.1. Special Protected Zones

These zones have been favored by Ahtisaari Plan which gives them a special status in the area of planning. Certain activities are prohibited from taking place in these zones, such as: constructions of industrial facilities, dams, power plants, furnaces, transit roads in rural areas and constructions that cause deforesting or environment pollution of that zone.⁸¹

These zones are divided into three groups which have different characteristics:

1. Parts of the 1st group are areas borders of which are given by maps.
2. Parts of the 2nd group are areas that have buffer zone of 100 m from the perimeter of their "yard".
3. Parts of the 3rd group are areas that have buffer zone of 50m from perimeter of their "yard".⁸²

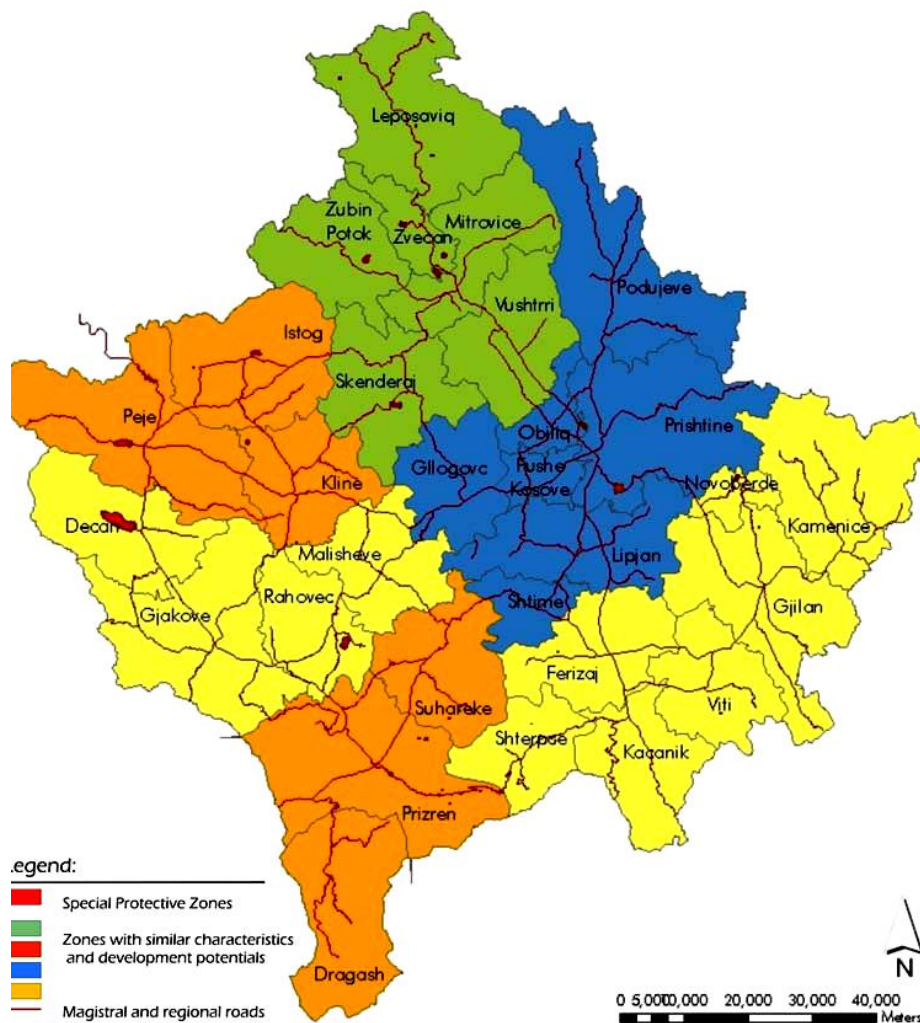
“Spatial Plan of Kosova” (2010) defines allowed construction activities in Special Protective Zones. “Activities limited within SPZ- primarily dealing with possible construction of buildings with higher Canterbury than the monument which should be protected, construction of roads, workshops, restaurants, hotels, nightclubs, gas stations, repair of vehicles, self-service, public meetings and urbanization urbanization of agricultural land.”⁸³

⁸¹ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.131)

⁸² MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.131)

⁸³ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Kosova”, 2010 (p.131)

Figure 47. Map of Special Protected Zones



Source: Spatial Plan of Kosovo, 2010 (p.130)

These zones have been overstated with conditions and limitations, thus causing obstructions to spatial development and posing obstructions to the Orthodox Church too. As such, interpretation of planning in these special zones should be reviewed in future with the purpose of stimulating sustainable development and especially rural tourism. The best experience in this respect is Hoça e Madhe in Rahovec municipality.

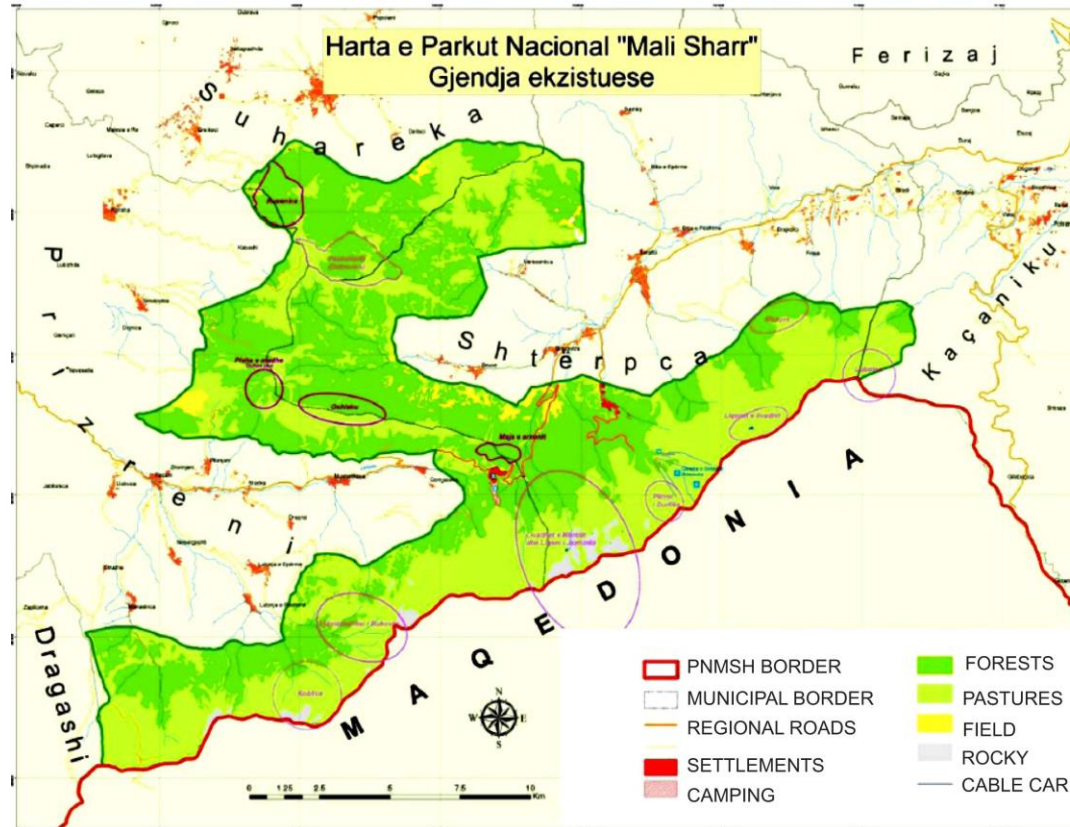
4.3.2. National Park "Sharri"

National Park "Mountain Sharr" lies in the south of Kosovo with 1100 km². Settlements which have direct and indirect influence in National Park "Sharri" are placed in the distance of 4 km from the border of the park. More than 50.000 inhabitants live in these settlements⁸⁴ (Figure 48.).

⁸⁴ Most notes provided are from the Spatial Plan for National Park "Sharri" (2013), Institute for Spatial Planning, MESP Prishtina

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosovo 2010 – 2020 (SPK), the National Park "Sharri" is part of Yellow Zone–Bridges of Kosovo, whose planning priority for its economic development is commercial service and agricultural activities.

Figure 48. Map of National Park "Sharri"



Source: Spatial Plan of National Park "Sharri"- Agency for Environment protection of Kosovo, 2009 (p.32)

Its natural value and importance made MESP and Kosovo Environment Protection Agency of (KEPA) and Institute for Spatial Planning produce a very important document approved by the Government in 2013– the Spatial Plan for National Park "Sharri" (SPNPSh). The "Sharr" Mountain National Park has been registered in international listing, and pertains to National Parks (second category) of protected areas by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). According to SPK, the National Park territory covers an area of around 23,000 ha, and is part of territories belonging to four municipalities: 1) Prizren, around 41 % (or around 9200 ha), 2) Shtërpce, 47 % (or around 10700 ha), 3) Suhareka with 10 % (or 2300 ha) and 4) Kaçanik with 2 % (or 400 ha)⁸⁵. Belonging of the park to several Municipalities and neighboring countries imposes inclusive approach and cross-border cooperation. Both these aspects should be improved in regard of proper protection of nature and correct use of this distinguished resource.

Spatial Plan of Kosovo firstly includes analysis and research of the Sharr Park's territory under the then legislation of 1986, according to which "parts of territories of Prizren, Shtërpce, Suhareka and Kaçanik municipalities are within an area of the park with 39000 Ha."⁸⁶ There was a request for

⁸⁵ MESP, Spatial Plan for National Park "Sharri", 2013 (p.20)

⁸⁶ MESP, Spatial Plan for National Park "Sharri", 2013 (p.9)

expansion of territory as a result of the public hearing of the document. This request resulted into the involvement of one part of Dragash municipality under park's area, and according to the decision of the Minister it became an interim protected zone for two years.

In its southern and southeastern part, Sharr Mountains cross over neighboring country Macedonia.

Settlements within park

Within National Park, namely in Brezovica, there are 270 holiday houses and this trend is continuously increasing. Construction in this zone began during '80, based on Urban Regulatory Plan of Touristic Center in Brezovica. After year 2000, constructions started disrespecting plan, and because of lack of control there have already been built one hundred holiday houses. Likewise, the situation in Prevala became even worse. “Regulatory Urban Plan for Touristic Village Prevalle (2006)”, was developed for this area too, but it was not observed due to phenomenon of unplanned constructions which endanger environmental balance at a great extent. Recent demolishings of dozen buildings could be considered a good sign for the future of this resource.

Settlements within the park could be considered as an opportunity but also as threat to rural tourism. These settlements have mostly been spontaneously developed, and this unplanned development can devastate the area. Therefore, it is urgent to develop detailed regulatory plans for each settlement and prevent any unplanned construction out of settlements' border.

Landscape features

According to Spatial Plan, important spaces which characterize National Park areas is a number of localities in high and medium mountains. The most qualitative features of natural beauties are high mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, waterfalls, rocks, glaciers, etc. While in lower areas, there are crops, agriculture and gardens. The most attractive surfaces are forests (beech, pine, molika, fir, etc.), meadows and pastures.

Rivers and streams in Sharr Mountains are very rich in mountain trout. Rivers known for big amounts of water during the year are river Plava, Radeshka, Brod and Restelica. Inclination of village Brod is well known for its beautiful landscape, and rich fauna like wild pigs, rabbits, foxes and other hunting animals.

Areas with special natural values

Natural reserves within National Park “Sharr” which are already under protection include: Koxhaballkan (Big Pine), Oshlak, Maja e Arnenit (Arnen's Peak in Prevala) and Rusenica. There are few other areas with special natural values which deserve to be strictly included under the category of natural reserves, as Pashallare (Ostrovica), Luboten, and Meadow of King – Lake of Jazhnica (figure 49.).

Figure 49. Landscape in Sharri mountains



Source: MESP-KEPA, "Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009", 2010 (p.51)

Special protected zones

There are spatial categories described in detail within the Law on Special Protected Areas. The law in question is part of Ahtisaari package approved by the Assembly of Kosovo in June 2008. According to the Law, 45 such areas have been identified in the territory of Kosovo, mainly belonging to Orthodox cultural heritage.

These areas have different borders, divided into three groups, with different characteristics.

1. The 1st group- is comprised of areas, borders of which are determined by maps.
2. The 2nd group - is comprised of areas that have a buffer area of 100m 'from their perimeter.
3. The 3rd group - is comprised of areas that have a buffer area of 50m "from their perimeter"⁸⁷

As special protected area within the National Park "Sharri" is the Monastery 'Manastiri i Treshit te Shenjte' (Monastery of the Holy Trinity). This area is a village near to Mushtisht in the municipality of Suhareka. Based on the Law on Special Protected Zones, this monastery belongs to the second group with a buffer zone of 100m.

The buffer zone does not block development although it makes it more complicated. Development of these zones should be carefully planned and the suggested development, above all, should not pose a threat to monuments in this zone. Moreover, certain cultural assets in these zones should also be acceptable for authorities.

Geomorphologic and geologic features

Geomorphologic and geologic features of this park are the highest mountain peaks of Sharr which are in southern part. Tectonic movements created geomorphologic compounds and in a later stage from the influence of external forces like glaciers, water streams, waves, glacial insights, and glacial lakes were created. The most attractive ones are lakes of Lidavica and Jazhanica. Other glacial insights are in the highest peaks, in southern area of Sharr like those of Bistra, Çukes se Liqeve, etc.

Other influence in the morphologic form of Sharr is the big number of rivers and streams which are mainly deposited in Prizren's Bistrica and Lepenc. Valleys above 1.200m to 1.400m are cut from

⁸⁷ MESP, Spatial Plan for National Park "Sharri", 2013 (p.30)

upper streams of rivers Muzhice, Bollonjske, Bllateshtice, etc. while from 250m to 400m, they are in form of canyons.

Vegetation

The territory of National Park "Sharri" is rich with various types of trees like oak *Quercus*, beech *Fagus moesiaca*, fir, *Picea*, white pine, pine endemic and relicts of high mountains: Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichi*) and Balkan white pine (*Pinus peuce*) as well as fir of high mountain pine (*Pinus mugo*). Aside from a big number of trees in this park, there are endemic mountain maples like *Acer heldreichi*, a very rare type of wood and almost extinct from these mountains, then common yew (*Taxus baccata*), etc. It is worth mentioning the important types of high mountains as *Trollius europaeus*, *Ranunculus montanus* (mountain buttercup), *R. Thora* (Thora buttercup), *Ranunculus ura-ura*, *R. Oreophylus*, *Dianthus sylvestris* (woodland pink), *Daphnea alpine*, etc., the areal which is linked mainly to the high mountains of the southern and middle Europe like Alps, Apennines, Carpathians, Perinea and Tatra.

Fauna

According to the Spatial Plan of National Park, the Sharr territory has a very rich fauna, with various types of animals which are linked with specific biotopes and belong to endemic types. Either fauna of Kosovo or Sharr are explored enough, and as a result so far are identified 7 types of fish, 9 types of amphibians, 10 types of reptiles, 154 types of poultry and 30 types of mammals (figure 50.).

Figure 50. Fauna in Sharri mountains: *Lynx lynx* and *Gypaetus barbatus*



Source: Spatial Plan of National Park "Sharr Mountain", 2009 (p.42)

Economic condition of the Park

According to SPK, the proclamation of Sharr National Park contributed a lot to carry out an organized preservation, and utilization of park values, mainly for tourism. The international interest for the park was shown even earlier when "experts of the European Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 1968) researched opportunities for winter tourism development in the former Yugoslavia."⁸⁸

One of activities that have big influence in economic development of the park is tourism. In National Park "Sharri", tourism is the biggest economic development activity carried out in the form of

⁸⁸ MESF, Spatial Plan for National Park "Sharri", 2013 (p.41)

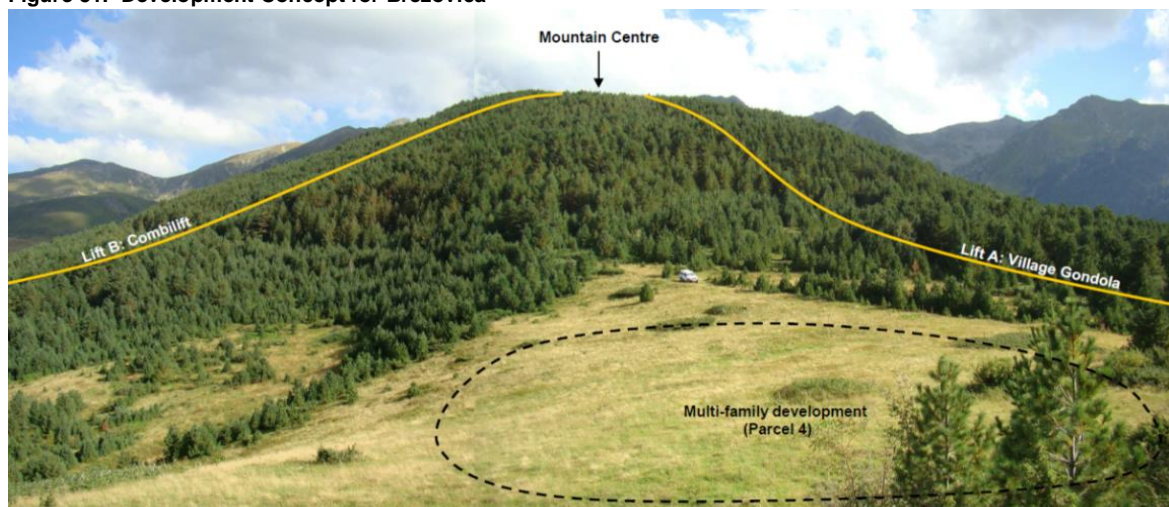
mountain tourism during winter or summer, then rural tourism, tourism for health purposes, alpinism, etc.

Another opportunity for development is the area of cultivated land of 18.1 % out of the total area of National Park, which can be used for agriculture, livestock farming and cultivation of fruits, dairy production, vineyards, etc. Beside others, forestry activities can be developed as well.

In Brezovica, there is some investment which has enabled touristic material basis, while Prevalle area is ranked by the OSCE experts as the center for winter-sports tourism. The Brezovica Ski Center has not seen any investment for years. Consequently, the number of visitors/tourists is decreasing and they are visiting the site only for daily or weekend stay. Accommodation, ski lift and other facilities are in bad condition, and their capacity is not fully operational. Formerly, Brezovica was visited by thousands of tourists from the region and beyond and was very popular for its very attractive skiing slopes. Today only the “Molika Hotel” is in use. Some restaurants, villas and very poor supporting facilities are part of today’s offer in existing Ski Center.

From the Brezovica settlement, and up to the Molika Hotel (ski slopes), there are restaurants providing hotelier services for guests. Within the area of Brezovica – Treshnja and near Molika Hotel, there are weekend houses used for vacation in various seasons, and also being let. Within the area, there are also guest houses as the “Electro-Economy Staff Guesthouse” (now a collective center), the former “Federal MIA Guesthouse”, the Pioneer Guesthouse”, the “Pensioner Guesthouse, etc, which are not let to visitors. The Sharr Mountains NP has much greater potential of receiving guests in comparison with the current offer. Brezovica Ski Center is located 12 km away from the namesake village of Shterpce municipality. The Ski Center spreads over a territory of 2500 ha, at heights from 1718 up to 2522 meters above sea level. OSCE is in the stage of preparation of New Brezovica Skiing Resort (Figure 51.) with new skiing slopes (Horwath HTL, 2011). This politically motivated action represents a very important large scale project for Kosovo’s tourism development. Since massive tourism is not every time in coherence with rural tourism, a careful analysis of its influence on Dukagjini Regions’ rural tourism is needed.

Figure 51. Development Concept for Brezovica



Source: Horwath HTL, 2011 (p.18)

The vision of the project

According to the SPK, the project’s vision statement⁸⁹ is concentrated into three main aspects:

- Interrelation of the past with future, i.e. Park’s careful maintenance in the long run so as to become part of generations to come, by offering a lifestyle of settlements of traditional and protected values.
- Environmental protection- benefits to be dedicated to environmental protection and community.
- Opportunities for diverse activities- A Park that offers visitors a satisfaction and opportunity for sports, cultural and research activities, etc.

Strategic projects

Spatial Plan of National Park “Sharri” foresees the design of management plan for area of the National Park “Sharri”. It plans forestry protection from natural and human factors (logging, disease, fires, erosions and avalanche), monitoring and rational use of park resources. There are plans for needed infrastructure for areas and cultural heritage buildings, awareness and information on their role and importance and preservation and protection of spiritual heritage. Furthermore, agreements are planned to take place on cross- border cooperation with Macedonia and Albania concerning joint developments, capacities for creative tourism, health, ecology, rural, etc.

This plan has six objectives:

1. Full administration and efficient management of the Park
2. Protection, preservation and usage of resources for sustainable development
3. Mutual impacts between the Park and settlements within and around the Park
4. Sustainable economic development of the Park
5. A park internationally recognized and accepted; cross-border and international cooperation in protection and development of the Park
6. Technical infrastructure development

As regards cooperation between institutions, there is a cross- institutional cooperation in central and local level, namely on rural development of park’s surrounding areas. There are also plans to support settlements around the park in providing touristic offers; offers on eco – products, traditional products and marketing. Spatial Plan also includes activities which affect development of ecotourism, and awareness for preservation of traditional culture of communities who live in areas around the park. The planning also includes building accompanying facilities (business and controlling) to the function of the park. Moreover, it plans to review curricula for industry and tourism in order to improve labor offer for touristic purposes.

The development concept emphasizes dividing entire area in 4 zones (Figure 52.)

⁸⁹ MESP, “Spatial Plan of Mountain Sharri”, 2013, (p.41)

Figure 52. Concept of development



Source: Spatial Plan of National Park "Sharr Mountain", 2013 (p.81)

Part of important planning is applying in projects for international joint funds for Kosovo and Macedonia cross-border area of Sharr Mountain. Planned road connection with Macedonia might be an additional opportunity for tourism development in Sharr Mountain and the region.

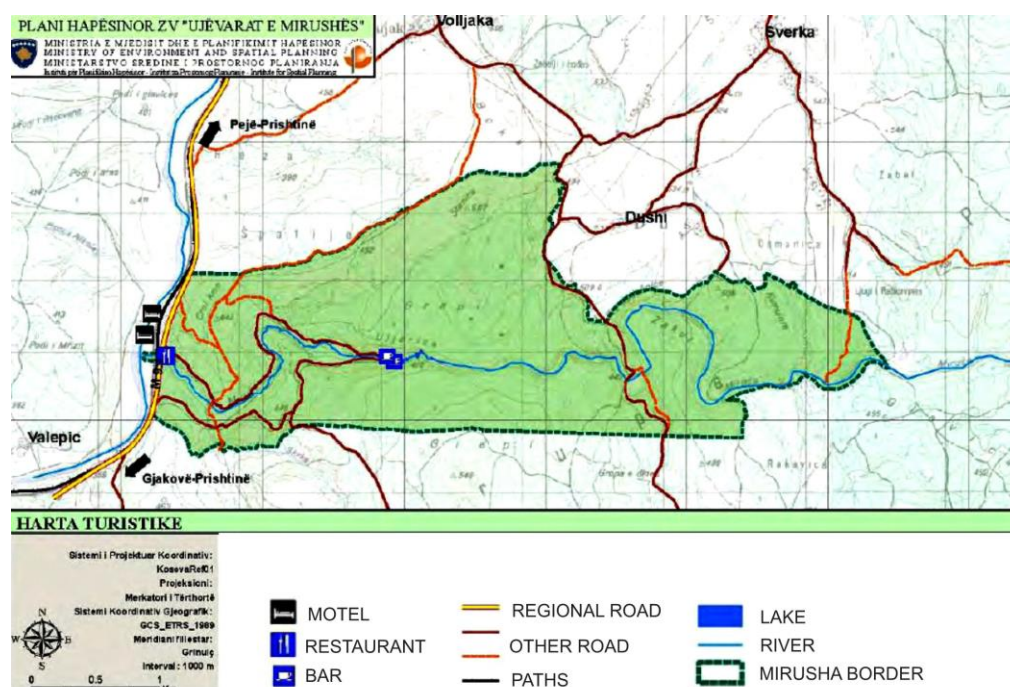
4.3.3. Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls"

Natural monument "Mirusha Waterfalls" lays in the central part of Kosovo, in the territory of Klina, Malisheva and Rahovec and covers an area of 598.40 ha. Settlements, which have direct and indirect impact on "Mirusha Waterfalls", are about 3 km from the border of the Natural Monument. These settlements have over 3,180 inhabitants.⁹⁰

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK), the Spatial Plan - Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfall" belongs to the Yellow Zone – Kosovo Bridges, where the prior activity would be trading and agro- industry in the economic development (Figure 53.).

⁹⁰ Most notes provided are from the Spatial Plan/Natural Monument with special importance "Mirusha Waterfalls" (2003)

Figure 53. Map of Natural Monument 'Mirusha Waterfalls'



Source: Spatial Plan/Natural Monument with special importance "Mirusha Waterfalls", 2013 (p.34)

Settlements within the Natural Monument

Settlements which are near the Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls" are Llapçevë with 1013 inhabitants, Panorë with 997 inhabitants, Dush with 241 inhabitants and Volljaka with 929 inhabitants which could be considered as a good opportunity for rural tourism but they need to develop detailed regulatory plans for each settlement and to prevent any unplanned construction out of border of certain settlements.

Landscape of "Mirusha Waterfalls"

According to the SP-NMMWF (2003), the important areas which characterize the landscape of the Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls" are some natural elements such as forests, meadows, water surfaces with certain qualities, etc. From the flow of Mirusha river, which crosses the territory of the Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls", are created 12 waterfalls and 16 lakes which create a hydro morphological phenomenon (Figure 54.).

Mirusha Canyon is located at the bottom flow of river Mirusha, left branch of Drini i Bardhë River. The gorge was formed in carbonate formations of upper Cretaceous. Canyon, besides impressing morphological forms, excels in numerous lakes and waterfalls, with different surfaces, shapes and heights.⁹¹

⁹¹ The Kosovo Environment Protection Agency of, "The State of Nature 2008-2009", 2009 (p.40)

Figure 54. Landscape of Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfalls”, Malishevo Municipality



Source: Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance “Mirusha Waterfalls”, 2012 (p.20)

The landscape of Mirusha is rich with different kinds of plants, trees, shrubs, and wild trees which create a variety of colors, especially during the season of spring and autumn. Another characteristic are the cultural heritage monuments, such as caves with frescoes and jewelry, etc.

Unfortunately this monument is facing serious problems such as lack of water. During summer, water quantity decreases and the rest is used for agriculture and often happens that waterfalls remain without water at all.

Special Protected Zones

Within the “Mirusha Waterfalls”, a special protected area of 27.73 ha, there are two caves which represents direct impact in raising overall level of protection.

A particular protected area by law is also the Church of the Hermits Uljarice, in Klinë. Development should be carefully planned in the buffer zone. Although this makes it more complicated, these cultural monuments are excellent for attracting tourists.

Geomorphologic and geologic distinctions

According to the SP-NMMWF (2003), important areas which characterize the Natural Monument of “Mirusha Waterfalls” are specific geological forms of terrain, caves, cracks, and other rock phenomena which are created as a result of geological past, from erosion effects of water and other exogenous factors. Mirusha Canyon consists of limestone cliffs of Mesozoic with the decline in water flow direction. The forms created by the erosion of limestone rocks in canyon create an attractive natural outlet. Among the special geological features are quaternary, alluvium, Deluvion and Pliocene.

Vegetation

The Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfalls” territory is rich with different types of vegetation where majority of the community is covered with living of Shpardi with Qarra (*Quercetum scardicum farnetto-cerris*). A special characteristic of this monument are white willows (*ALBA Salicetum fragilis*), red willows (*Salicetum purpurea*), Black Alder (*Alnetum glutinosae*), Shpardi with Qarra (*Quercetum farnetto scardicum cerris*), Bunge-vat with Qarra (*Quercetum pubescentis -cerris*), juniper (*Asteron-Juniperetum oxycedri*), *Polygala Genistetum hassertianae*, *Hyperico Euphorbietum glabiflorae*, *Potentilla-Fumaretum bonopartei*, *Salvio-Scorsoneretum villosae*, *Echinario-Convolvuletum althaeoides*, *Onosmo-Scabietosum fumaroides*, and *Vitici-Tarmaricetum dalmaticae* (Figure 55.).

Figure 55. Vegetation on Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls", Malishevo Municipality



Source: Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance "Mirusha Waterfalls", 2012 (p.26)

Also this natural monument territory is rich with 330 vascular plant species and 44 species of higher fungi (macromycetes). Another characteristic is the presence of three endemic plant communities: *Polygalla Genista hassertianae*, *Forsythia Polygalla europaea*, and *Potentilla Fumanetum bonapartei*.

Other types of endemic plants in the Natural Monument are *Grojterit Petriku* (*Aristolochia merxmuelleri*), Albanian star (*Aster albanicus*), *Kokoçeli of Albert* (*Centaurea albertii*), *Kokoçeli of Koshanini* (*Centaurea kosaninii*), *European arista* (*Forsythia europaea*), *FUMANE of Bonaparte* (*FUMANE bonapartei*), the *Hasert broom* (*Genista hassertiana*), (*Halaqi I Sentnerit-Halacsya sendtneri*), *Macedonian Knaucia* (*Knautia macedonica*), lovely linen (*Linum elegans*), *Poligala of doerfleri* (*Polygala doerfleri*), *Zorrëca of Visianit* (*Potentilla visianii*), *Albanian Lulekomishti* (*Sanguisorba albanica*), *scabies drug* (*Scabiosa fumaroides*), *eastern Skutellaria* (*Scutellaria orientalis*), *Rrushqyqja of serpentine* (*Sedum serpentinii*), *Pendëkaposhi of Major* (*Stipa mayeri*), the *Andrasovski Veronica* (*Veronica andrasovskii*), etc.

Fauna

The territory of "Mirusha Waterfall" is very rich in specific types of animals as wolf (*Canis lupus*), rabbit (*Lepus europaeus*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), badger (*Meles meles*), squirrel (*Sciurus vulgaris*), wild cat (*Felis silvestris*), *Sqarthe* (*Martes martes*), *Rat bizam* (*Ondata zibethica*), mountain yellow mouse (*Apodemus flavicollis*), hedgehog (*Erinaceus concolor*), land tortoise (*Testudo sp.*), Stone poisonous snake (*Vipera amodytes*), etc. (Figure 56.).

Figure 56. Fauna: *Canis lupus*, *Lepus europaeus* and *Sus scrofa* on Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls", Malishevo Municipality



Source: Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance "Mirusha Waterfalls", 2012 (p.28)

Economy

Among the biggest influences on economic development of this Natural Monument is the rare morpho-hydrological phenomenon which creates a very beautiful and attractive landscape for visitors.

“The exploitation of natural resources, especially of plants, fruits and as well as mountain pastures and meadows, can affect rural development with extension of capacities of ecological products such as agricultural ones, livestock, honey, healing herbs, etc.”⁹²

Vision statement

Vision statement emphasizes the development of sustainable tourism:

“Mirusha Waterfalls is a Monument with national unique values of natural and cultural heritage, protected, maintained and used rationally. The development of sustainable tourism is for the benefit of local and regional community. Its famous monument is part of the World Natural Heritage”⁹³.

Strategic projects

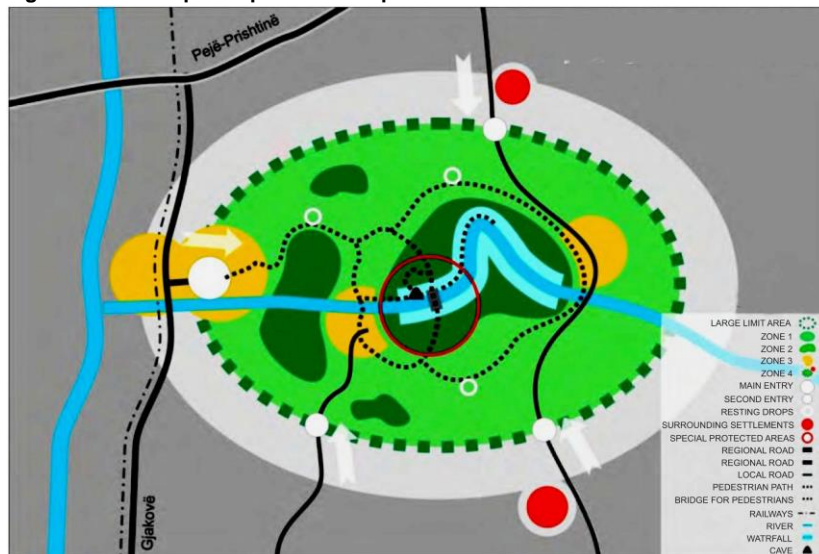
This plan intends protection, conservation and utilization of environmental values as well as efficient management of natural resources. It also plans conservation of natural and cultural heritage and prevention from the risk of natural disasters and human factor. It plans permanent control to ensure biological minimum in river flows during summer season, and re-functioning of hydrological point for monitoring. There is planning, too, to include the researching, identifying and continuous inventory of plants and animal species and determination of sites for conservation in the International List of IUCN. As regards researching the state of Natural Monument, there are plans for further research, refinement of Dushi Cave and possibility of its use for tourism and further value researching of the Cave (Church Cave) of Uljarica and visitor accessibility through paths, by constructing two observation piles on both sides of the river. The plan also includes treatment of a number of issues as identification and inventory of landscape characteristics, restoring natural state around 16th Lake, signing of international conventions, banning wood cutting for the next 10 years, building fences as defense belts, whilst Commission has drafted plans to prevent flooding of Mirusha river from the last lake till the estuary and the plan of emergency intervention in case of fire, etc. Concept of Spatial Development of Park-Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfalls” connects four zones and areas from one point (Figure 57.).

In general “Mirusha Waterfalls” is a monument and is a distinguished touristic point, which due to its attractiveness should be part of all touristic maps. Drafting of a Strategic Plan for this monument is suitable and promotes sustainable touristic development (Figure 58.).

⁹² MESP, Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance “Mirusha Waterfalls”, 2012 (p.49)

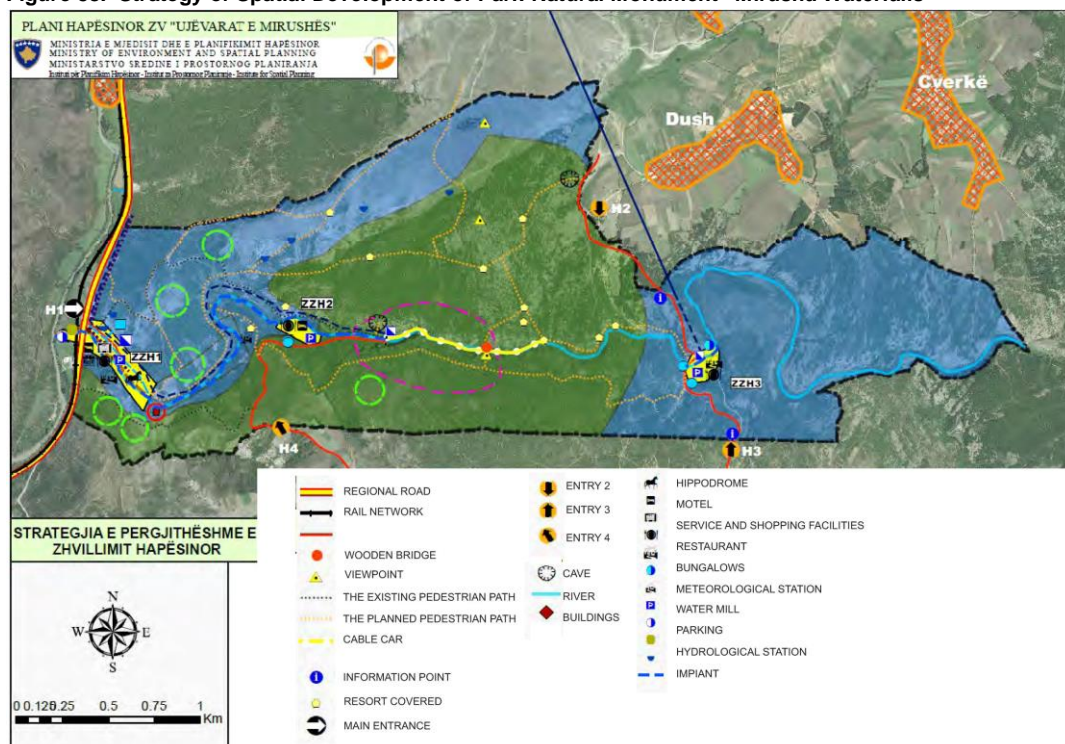
⁹³ MESP, Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance “Mirusha Waterfalls”, 2012 (p.49)

Figure 57. Concept of Spatial Development of Park-Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls"



Source: Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance "Mirusha Waterfalls", 2012 (p.51)

Figure 58. Strategy of Spatial Development of Park-Natural Monument "Mirusha Waterfalls"



Source: MESP, Spatial Plan – Monument of Nature of distinguished importance "Mirusha Waterfalls", 2012 (p.70)

4.3.4. The National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”

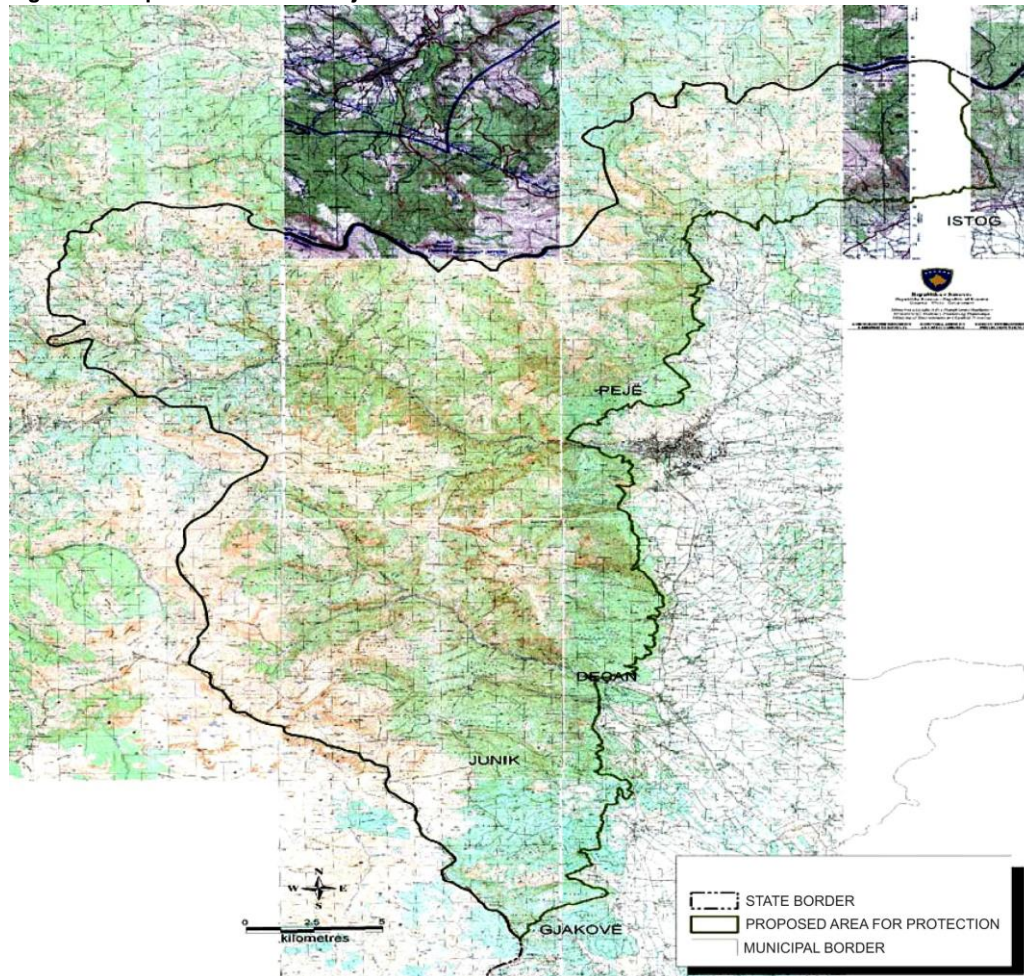
The national park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” lies in the west of Kosovo and covers an area of 62,488 ha. The National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” lies in Peja, Deçan, Istog and territory of Gjakova. The number of habitants inside the park area is 4.354. Since 2003, the Institute for Nature Protection of Kosovo has begun the initiative for protection of “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” as a Park. After a decade, in 2012, the Law on the National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”, Law No. 04/L-086 (Figure 59.) was adopted and Kosovo now has one more protected area with the status of National Park and with distinguished value.

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosova (SPK), National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” is part of two zones, the Yellow Zone – Kosovo Bridges, where a prior activity would be trading, agro industry in economic development; and the Orange Zone – Kosovo Gardens, planned for economic growth through agriculture.⁹⁴

The law has not been followed by any specific plan, but there were numerous studies on this particular area.

⁹⁴ The majority of notes provided are from the Feasibility Study for declaration of Bjeshkët e Nemuna territory as National Park (2003) the Institute for Nature and Environment Protection of Kosovo (INEPK)

Figure 59. Map of National Park "Bjeshkët e Nemuna"



Source: Law for on National Park "Bjeshkët e Nemuna". 2012 (p.5)

Settlements within the park

In the territory of the National Park "Bjeshkët e Nemuna", there are 18 villages that are scattered. The villages within the national park are Haxhaj with 89 inhabitants, Boge with 167 inhabitants, Jashanice with 167 inhabitants, Dugaive with 128 inhabitants, Koshutane with 247 inhabitants, Pepiq with 159 inhabitants, Drelajt with 259 inhabitants, Reke e Aliages with 329 inhabitants, Malajt with 190 inhabitants, Shtupeq i madh with 303 inhabitants, Llazbollaq with 73 inhabitants, Shtupeq i vogel with 38 inhabitants, Lipe with 71 inhabitants, Ceroverhe with 220 inhabitants, Bellej with 9 inhabitants, Gjocaj with 215 inhabitants, Irzniq with 1.431 inhabitants and Koshar with 250 inhabitants.

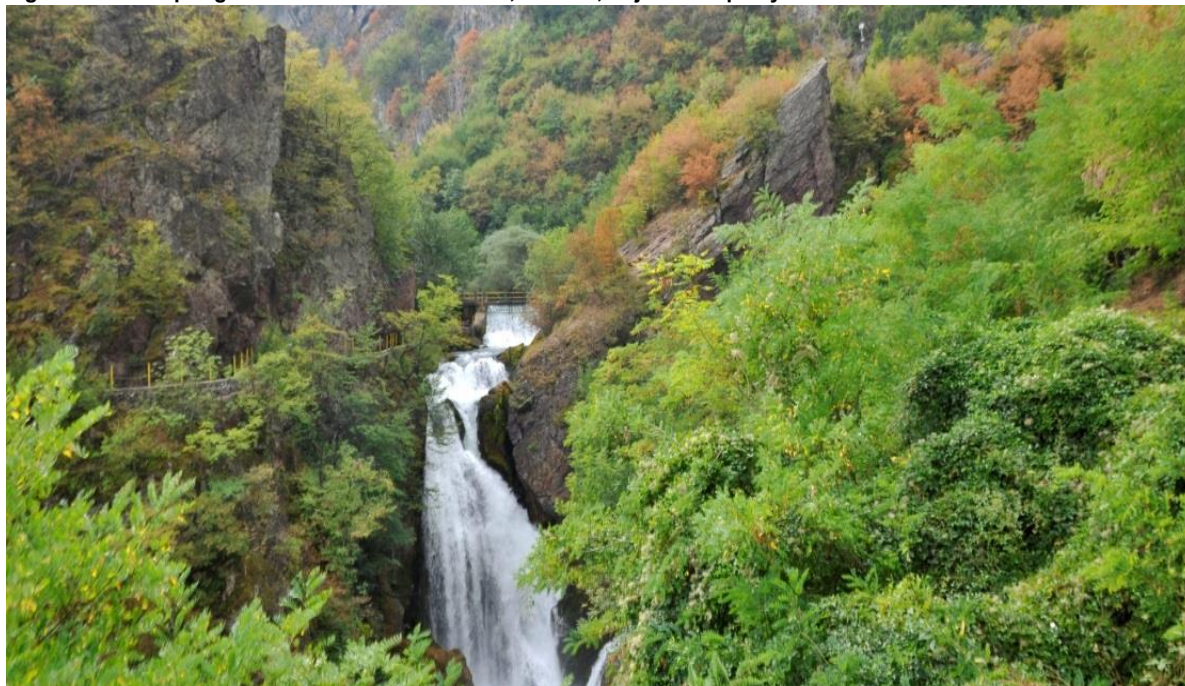
Settlements within the park could be considered more as an opportunity than as threat for rural tourism. These settlements are spontaneously developed and this unplanned development can devastate the area. Therefore it is an immediate necessity to develop detailed regulatory plans for each settlement and prevent any unplanned construction out of border of settlements.

Landscape distinctions

According to a study on reasoning the declaration of Bjeshkët e Nemuna area as National Park, this park is distinguished for its large number of high Alps such as Gjeravica Alp, which is the highest alp in Kosovo, Bogavica Alp and Koprivnik Alp. Another distinction of Bjeshkët e Nemuna are Rugova

Gorge with a length of about 22 km, Radavc Cave which lies near Drini i Bardhë, mountains, valleys, canyons, caves, etc. “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” are characterized with sloped shale and magnetic rocks, herbaceous and forest complexes, and also water springs (Figure 59, 60.).

Figure 59. Wellspring of the river “Drini i Bardhë”, Radavc, Peja Municipality



Source: Author, 2012

It is also characterized with branched valley glaciers in the region of the rill of Deçan’s Bistrice, glacier of the watershed of Erenik, watershed of Kozhner’s Bistrice, Locan’s Bistrice etc., which make a beautiful and attractive landscape. Another resource is in the Moknaja mountains in the valleys and glaciers in the Black River (Lumi i Zi) and in the Alps where there may be found the dependent tans and glaciers. Other resource of Bjeshkët e Nemuna are the rivers such as Drini i Bardhë, Peja’s Lumëbardhi, Deçani’s Lumëbardhi and other rills with sprinkles such as Vrella-Istog, Vrella-Vrellë, Radavc Rill, Uji i Bardhë-Pejë (white water), Uji i zi-Pejë (black water), Vrella e Gubavcit-Peja, Vrella e Lubeniqit-Lubeniq, Vrella e Jasiqit-Jasiq, Vrella e livadheve të mëdha-Jasiq, Vrella e Isposnicës (Deçani’s Lumëbardhi), Vrella e Belajes (Deçani’s Lumëbardhi), Vrella e Junikut-Junik, Vrella (Haxhaj) etc.

Figure 60. Landscape of Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountain



Source: Bjeshkët e Nemuna-Perla natyrore e Kosovës, 2010 (p.31, 19, 15)

Special Protected Zones

Declaring the original values as protected zones and categorizing them by their importance is the best way to protect them. IUCN (International Union for Conservation of the Nature) divides the protected zones management into six categories. “National Parks are categorized in the second category and are generally wide zones that are conserved and managed for ecosystem, education and recreation (relax, entertainment)⁹⁵. Zones and objects protected in the territory of Bjeshkët e Nemuna are: the alp of Rops, Kozhnjari, Prilep Mountain, Gubavci, Rugova Ravine, Rill of Drini i Bardhë and the cave of Radavc (Figure 61.).

Geomorphologic and geologic distinctions

Geomorphologic and geologic distinctions of the National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” that determine physiognomy of the landscape are mountains, valleys, gorges, canyons, caves, etc. Another characteristic of the relief of Bjeshkët e Nemuna are variable tectonic, glacial, fluvial, karstic, nivation and denudation shapes, and also the surfaces of rocks made of carbon-lime, marble and dolomite (Mokna, Zhlebi etc.), that are stripped or weak vegetation, and in these surfaces, there are no rills or water springs, etc.

Figure 61. The cave “Gryka e Madhe”, Peja municipality



Source: State of nature 2006-2007, 2007 (p.63, 64)

Vegetation

The National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” is rich with diverse vegetation. Forests of chestnut, beech, fir, grasses, oak, etc. are types of high vegetation. “In aspect of vertical laying of vegetation, the biggest part of the highland massif of Bjeshkët e Nemuna in the lower part is covered with deciduous vegetation, in the upper the coniferous one while over the upper line there is the pasture, meadow and alpine vegetation. In the deciduous forests dominate oak and beech, while in the coniferous the fir, spruce, Bosnian oak and patch⁹⁶ (Figure 62.).

⁹⁵ MESP, “Bjeshkët e Nemuna territory as National Park” the Institute for Nature and Environment Protection of Kosovo(INEPK), 2003 (p.4)

⁹⁶ MESP, “Bjeshkët e Nemuna territory as National Park” the Institute for Nature and Environment Protection of Kosovo(INEPK), 2003 (p.44)

Figure 62. Vegetation: Pisha, Morchella esculenta, Forsythia europea and Pimula sp.



Source: MESP, "Bjeshkët e Nemuna-Perla natyrore e Kosovës", 2010 (p.37, 33, 34)

Fauna

According to Spatial Plan of National Park of Bjeshkët e Nemuna, there are some sorts of fauna which have national status of protection such as Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*), brown bear (*Ursus arctos*), deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), wild goat (*Rupicapra rupicapra*), royal eagle (*Aquila heliaca*), mountain eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), white clutches falcon (*Falco naummani*), wild chicken (*Tetrao urogallus*) etc. (Figure 63.)

Figure 63. Fauna: Buteo buteo, butterfly Testudo sp. and Rupicapra



Source: MESP, Bjeshkët e Nemuna-Perla natyrore e Kosovës, 2010 (p.35, 16)

Economic condition of the Park

Some of the influential activities in the economic development of the National Park are agricultural lands, arboriculture, etc.

Tourism in National Park of Bjeshkët e Nemuna is one of the most important aspects of its economic development, where the mountain and villages can be visited during winter and summer for rural, health or alpinist tourism and similar activities. Forests and grasses cover over 80% of the area proposed for National Park, representing a great potential. Most of forests are used for production of the wood mass but also for their protective function. "The National Park will contribute to rational economization and exploitation of forests based on forestry economics. The strict lining of forests exploitation will be concentrated in reservoirs of nature that constitute significant area of the territory".⁹⁷

The proposed territory is characterized with rich pastures that are being used for cattle especially in summertime. The ones in Rugova are known for this (Figure 64.)

⁹⁷ MESP, "Bjeshkët e Nemuna territory as National Park" the Institute for Nature and Environment Protection of Kosovo (INEPK), 2003 (p.44)

Figure 64. Bussines in Bjeshkët e Nemuna: Power plant, wooden industry, Beekeeping, etc.



Source: Bjeshket e Nemuna-Perla natyrore e Kosoves, 2010 (p.35, 16)

Strategic Projects

There are conceptual designs for establishment of other hydropower in flows of waters that are created in the complex of National Park which is considered as a serious threat to biodiversity of this park. Visibility study considering threats for certain project should be compiled for this and other large scale project. Due to high natural and cultural potentials and capacities to employ people, rural tourism and agriculture have to be prioritized.

4.3.5. Spatial Plan of Kosovo and plans for specific areas in the function of rural tourism development in Dukagjini Region

These documents are of great importance. The Spatial Plan of Kosovo and the status of specific areas such as “Mali Sharr”, “Ujëvara e Mirushës” and “Bjeshkët e Nemura” and their equipping with aforementioned documents is a big step for Kosovo towards protection of region from degradation and creation of conditions for development of proper tourism to the function of development of rural areas of Dukagjini Region. Insufficient experience and institutional difficulties made these documents suffer from shortcomings but they do not diminish their direct value to protect and develop these areas or the value of available documentation with research and planning in future. As seen in the following Chapter 5, Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK) has served as roadmap for drafting of Municipal Development Plans (MDP) and Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning mainly succeeded in making these plans in line with the SPK. However, this enabled a balanced spatial development of the entire territory of Kosovo.

Based on these documents, we may come to a conclusion that Dukagjini Region possesses very important resources for tourism development and above-mentioned documents either encourage development of tourism or in worst case scenario do not impede it. Although part of the territory of these special areas goes beyond the framework of the present study, they represent development potential not only for Dukagjini Region but for entire Kosovo. Boundaries should not be seen as impediment to development of tourism but rather as bridges for cooperation between municipalities. The same approach as the one in the project “Peaks of the Balkans” should be adopted in relation to resources of border areas of Dukagjini Region with countries such as Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro.

4.4 Analysis of Municipal Development Plans in “Dukagjini Region”

Municipal Development Plans of municipalities belonging to Dukagjini Region have been drafted in line with Spatial Plan of Kosovo (elaborated in Chapter 4.2.). The plans of special zones such as: National Park “Sharri”, the Monument Ujëvara e Mirushës and the one of Bjeshkët e Nemuna (analyzed in Chapter 4.3.) have mutual influence. Most of Municipal Development Plans have been drafted following the approval of Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK), whereas plans of special zones have been drafted following the approval of SPK.

Dukagjini Region treated in this research covers 12 municipalities – Istog, Peja, Klina, Deçan, Junik, Gjakova, Rahovec, Malisheva, Suhareka, Prizren, Dragash, and Mamusha which was part of Prizren Municipality and recently became an independent municipality. Because of this, all data still remain under Prizren; therefore this municipality is treated in context of Prizren Municipality. As mentioned in Chapter 4, these Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) were consequently adopted to the SPK.

Analyzing of MDP focused in six main topics which mainly affect tourism development:

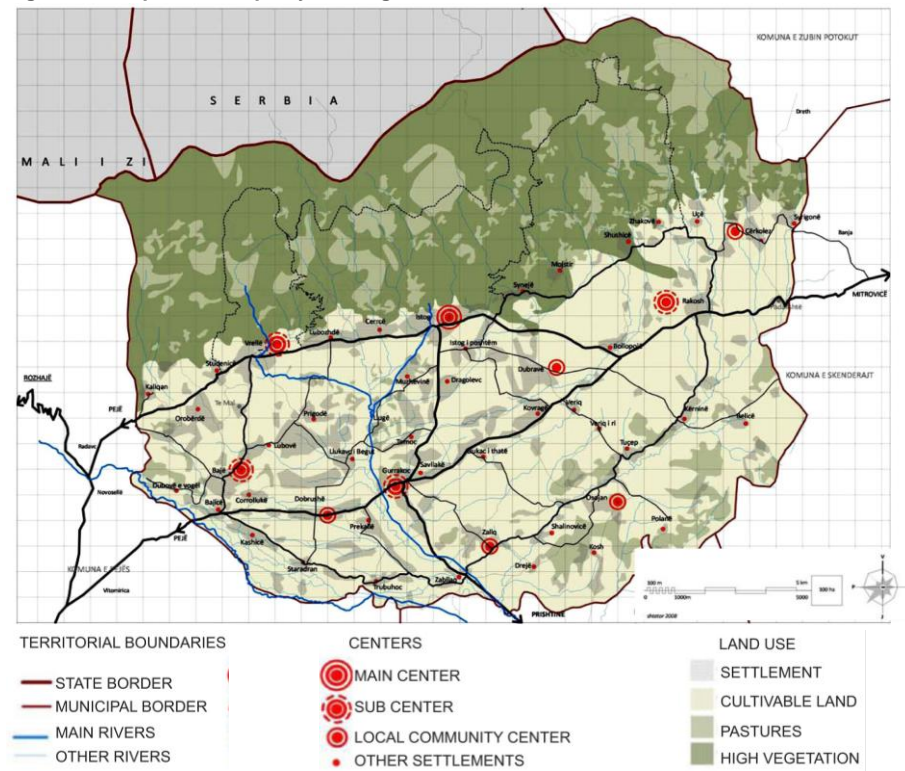
- General information regarding its surface, number of inhabitants and its compliance with SPK and zones defined in this plan (yellow or orange).
- Natural heritage
- Cultural heritage
- Economy
- Education
- Strategic projects planned in municipality in the future

4.4.1. Municipality of Istog

Istog municipality lies in the northern part of Dukagjini Region covering an area of about 453.84 km² and counting about 41.628 inhabitants. According to Kosovo Agency for Statistics, during the last census conducted in 2011, a total of 39.289 inhabitants were registered⁹⁸ (Figure 65.).

⁹⁸ Majority of the notes taken from Municipal Development Plan of Istog (2008)

Figure 65. Map of Municipality of Istog



Source: MDP of Istog, 2019 (p.30)

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosova (SPK), the municipality of Istog belongs to the Orange Zone-Gardens of Kosovo, with agriculture as main potential for its economic development. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) of Istog is drafted in full compliance with the Spatial Plan of Kosova.

Natural heritage

One of the most important natural resources in the municipality of Istog is the National Park of Bjeshkët e Nemuna (which, in literal translation, means "Accursed Mountains").

Another natural resource of the municipality is the "Mokna" mountains which, according to MDP – Istog, are specific for their natural geological, geomorphological, hydrographical, vegetative and botanical features.

Potential natural resources in municipality as per the law on natural conservation, and based on hydrological and botanical features, are three natural water springs. These springs are categorized as natural monuments and are listed under protection. One of them is the water spring located in Vrelle, and another is the thermo-mineral spring (geyser) in Banja⁹⁹.

Another natural resource of Istog municipality is the caves located in the hilly part. According to MDP-Istog, a great number of caves have not been properly identified or investigated, therefore as such, for the time being, they could only be visited by speleologists for studies or researches.

⁹⁹ Banja is treated in the Development plan of Peja as well

An important natural potential of this municipality are several types of rare fish that grow in the waters of Istog municipality like: bleak, catfish, eel, trout, streams trout and Danube trout.

Cultural heritage

The Municipal Development Plan of Istog (MDP of Istog, 2009) appraises tradition, cultural heritage and archaeological sites as great potential for development of cultural tourism in Istog. The municipality considers marketing as an important tool to attract tourists' interest in cultural heritage, history and archaeology that may be found in the form of heritage buildings such as Kulla (stone mansions), water mills, religious monuments, artefacts and other archaeological sites.¹⁰⁰

Among the most important cultural heritage monuments are: Gorioç Monastery, St. Nicholas Church, Studenica archaeological site including Monastery of the Holy Virgin of Hvosnos.

Economy

Hydro-Istog Powerplant represents a great potential for production of electricity, but currently it is out of function.

Istog municipality is recognized as one of the municipalities with long agricultural tradition- arboriculture, beekeeping, aquaculture, medical plants, herbs, etc. The Istog MDP (2009) emphasizes that a well-developed and sustainable regional economy can be competitive in the local market and abroad if the following entrepreneurship types are developed: small businesses, mainly oriented towards existing development potentials like fish ponds, apple and wood procession, industry-procession of fish, wood procession, etc¹⁰¹

Istog has an arable land with a well-grounded irrigation system of 23,250.00 hectares, which, according to the Istog MDP, represents the main prosperity for its economy, “giving the municipality an exceptional agrarian feature¹⁰². Approximately, 12,059.00 hectares in the municipality of Istog consist of agricultural area with predominantly cultivation of wheat, maize, sugar beet and other cultures such as cultivation of apple, plum, pear, cherry, quince and peach.

A potentially progressive agro-sector is the culture of fishery, whereas Istog is distinguished for its fish farm-trout cultivation. This complex, besides fish-breeding ponds, developed other activities and services by extending hotelier services within its compound. The municipality possesses another six fish-breeding ponds with smaller capacities. Nevertheless, development of these cultures has largely contributed to economic development of this municipality.

The mineral composition of the soil provides for high quality vegetables products like: potatoes, peppers, watermelon, melon, onion, tomato, cabbage, etc. A smaller area of land consists of vineyards which, according to 1978 data, covered an area of about 11 ha.

Education

According to the information obtained from the MDP Istog, the upper secondary education is organized through two educational institutions: “Haxhi Zeka” gymnasium in Istog and Technical High School “Mithat Frashëri” Gurrakoc, as well as a branch of Technical school which operates

¹⁰⁰ MDP of Istog, 20019 (p.30)

¹⁰¹ MDP of Istog, 20019 (p.10)

¹⁰² MDP of Istog, 20019 (p.128)

within Dubrava prison situated in the vicinity of Istog town. About 1967 students attend upper secondary education out of which 65% male and 35% female. According to standards, the municipality lacks sufficient number of educational facilities so as to cover education per number of inhabitants and areal coverage with allowed distance from the dwelling place to the school.

“The municipality formed two special education classes for students with special needs, one in Istog and another in Banja, counting in total 22 students. Transport is free of charge (it is facilitated by the Municipal Assembly jointly with the Ministry of Education). Another form of education is informal (accelerated) learning for candidates, who for various reasons have stopped education. Such classes are attended by 68 students in total”.¹⁰³

Strategic projects

Protection from environmental and social impacts of the National Park of “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”, Gorici Monastery, St. Nicholas Church in Gurrakoc and the Holy Virgin Monastery of Hvosnos, are considered as natural and cultural heritage sites under special protection.

The Municipal Development Plan of Istog foresees the establishment of collective units with adequate equipment for collection and procession of agricultural products and their placement into strategic locations in order to enable immediate procession and transportation of products. MDP also foresees establishment of an agricultural high school that could educate young professionals on agricultural production as well as on basic marketing knowledge.

MDP also plans to organize the following: Inform farmers through their association about the trends in agricultural development as well as new products and technologies; promote agriculture through study visits and excursions in the field to regions where they can gain useful experience, whether in Kosovo or neighboring countries; initiation of pilot projects on agro-tourism; creating organizational informative structures etc.; advancing honey processing technology; creation of an organized production and procession of apple and its products, etc.

4.4.2. Municipality of Peja

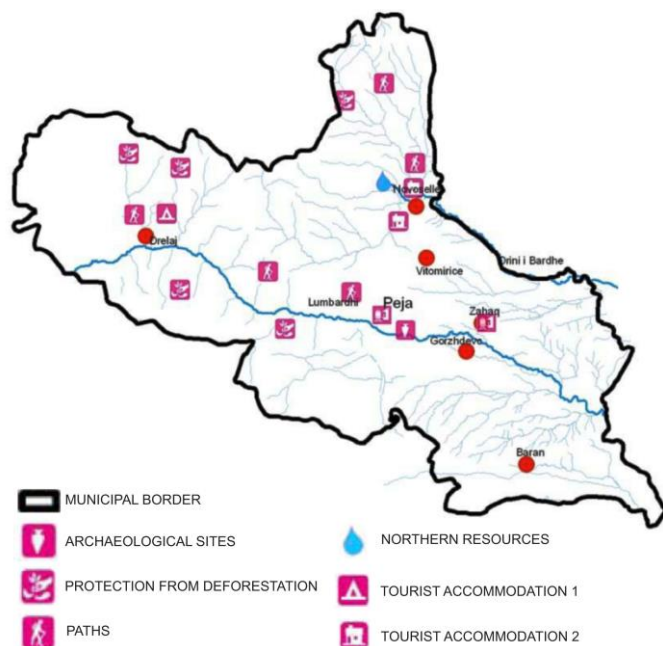
Peja municipality lies in the north-eastern part of Dukagjini Region and covers an area of approximately 603 km². According to the Municipal Development Plan (MDP), Peja municipality has about 122.000 inhabitants, while according to the last census of Statistical Office carried out in 2011, 96.450 inhabitants were registered (Figure 66.).

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosova (SPK), this municipality belongs to the Orange Zone - Gardens of Kosovo, with agriculture as main priority for economic development¹⁰⁴. MDP was drafted in harmony with SPK.

¹⁰³ Municipal Development Plan of Istog, (p.77)

¹⁰⁴ These notes are taken from the Peja Municipality Development Plan (2010)

Figure 66. Map of Municipality of Peja



Source: MDP of Peja, 2006 (p.46)

Natural heritage

One of the most important natural resources in the municipality of Peja is the National Park of Bjeshkët e Nemuna with about 38.000 ha of protected area.

Other wealthy resources in this municipality are Mokna mountains (of altitude over 2500 m), mountain peak Kopraniku, mountain settlement Boge, the river Drini i Bardhë (in literal translation White Drin) canyons, river Lumëbardh, natural monument of botanic character Sham Mulberry tree, monument of nature – Black peak, rocky ridges, and many more, that provide huge potential for development of winter and summer tourism, mountain climbing, skiing, speleo-tourism etc.

Other important resources are "Rugova Gorge" created by river Lumëbardhi, natural monument of hydrological and geomorphologic importance. The cave "Great Gorge", located near Rugova Gorge with a length of about 13450 m rich in underground water flows, lakes, stalactites and stalagmites, is partially explored. "Radavc Cave located near the river Drini i Bardhë extends for 1420m, except for its richness in stalactites and stalagmites, it is also characteristic for having several basins; thermal center Ilixha (known as "Peja baths") with its geyser categorized as hyper thermal spring, being one of its most important values.¹⁰⁵

Other protected areas and natural resources in Peja is also the herbal reserve of relict/species of endemic type (*Forsythia europaeae*).

¹⁰⁵ Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA), "Environmental Protection Agency of Kosovo's Report 2008-2009", 2009 (p.35)

Touristic Mountainous region of Bjeshkët e Nemuna is larger than the region of Sharr Mountains, a fact that would allow for formation of some areas (current areas of Peja municipality) to combine from mountain peaks of Kopraniku in the south, to Mokna, Rusolia and Hajla in the north.

Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains have rare natural resources and fauna of tremendous value - dark fur bear, wild boar, wild grouse, chamois, etc. (Figure 67.).

Figure 67. Natural and cultural heritage in Municipality of Peja



Source: MDP of Peja, 2006 (p.11)

A Waste Sanitary Landfill is located in the municipality of Peja.

Cultural Heritage

Some of the most characteristic values of historical and cultural heritage in Peja are the following: the ancient City of Peja – “Siparunt”, the Old Bazaar Complex, Castle of Peja-Gradina, Patriarchal Monastery Complex, houses of stone (known as “Kulla”) of 10th -19th century, Jashar Pasha Kulla (stone mansion), the Clock Tower of Broqi family, Stone House of Gocka family, stone mansion of Sheremeti family, “Albanian Kulla” a guest house of Kahreman Aga, Zenel Bey Kulla, Selman Zhuji Kulla, Haxhi Zeka family House, Peja city Guest House, sacral monument of Bayrakli Mosque (Mosque Bazaars), urban residential house of Tahir Beu, Guest House of Jashar Bey Pasha, the mill complex of Haxhi Zeka, Haxhi Bey Hamam, Peklena road, 12 churches, 22 mosques, 102 Kulla’s (Stone Mansions), three bridges, one tekke, masjid, 1 shrine, numerous guesthouses, 8 mills, and many more.

Peja municipality has its own Ethnographic Museum and Cultural Heritage Regional Institute.

Peja MDP describes Peja Bazaar, with its four main units, great Bazaar, extended Bazaar, small bazar, Fountain of Bazaar, “as an integral part of the overall urban system and core city center with Artisanal production and sale of agricultural commodities.”¹⁰⁶

Economy

For the Municipality of Peja, agricultural lands provide huge potential. The municipality is in possession of about 31252 ha of agricultural land with a surface of arable land such as fields,

¹⁰⁶ MDP of Peja, 2006 (p.13,14)

orchards, gardens etc., of approximately 13145 ha, respectively 42%, pasture surface are about 10248 ha respectively 33 %, and meadows are about 7849 ha respectively 25% of the territory.

The following industrially cultivated cultures are very present and cover the territory as follows: corn with 5,300.00 ha or 25.28%, wheat with 1550.00 ha or 7,39%, barley with 120.00 ha or 0.6%, oat 150.00 ha or 0.7%, rye 70.00 ha or 0.3%. Cultivation of vegetables covers an area of about 4300.00 ha or 20.5%.

Other industrially cultivated cultures are marking rapid decrease such as cultivation of tobacco, sunflower, beet, soya, etc. reflecting negative impact on economic development. Fruit cultivation also is in falling scale of about 5 %.

Numerous social enterprises were promising for economic development. Some of potential social enterprises that perhaps could enable industrial development are: Wood Procession Cooperative, Leather and Shoe Factory, “Ringov” Brick Factory, Metal production factory “UTVA”, Industrial Batteries Factory, Bicycle Factory, “Unis” -warehouse, Factory “Ramiz Sadiku”, Scrap metal depository, Department store “17 November”, agricultural corporation “Zahaq”, Agricultural Corporation Vitomirica, bakery and baked products factory, Trade Company “Rugova”, Brewery, etc. While this industry, on one hand, represents a source for sustainable economic development, on the other hand it poses a great risk for contamination of environment.

Education

The municipality of Peja has six high schools with about 5,283 attending students.

Among these educational institutions are the Music School, Special School for the Blind and Partially Sighted persons, and the Technical Faculty of Management. Special teaching is arranged for 69 students with disabilities while the School of Music is attended by 175 students.

Faculty of Management is organized in three specialized areas: Business Administration, Business Applied Informatics and Management in Tourism and Hotelier Services.

Strategic projects

Due to current economical situation, lack of budget and opportunities, the municipality of Peja has oriented its developmental plans towards foreign investments for its capital projects. Peja MDP envisages several conceptual projects for tourism development, such as:

- Touristic center for sports and recreation- PEJA Project
- Tourism development and promotion project
- Speleological research to Rugova Gorge caves and Istog/Istok-Radac¹⁰⁷

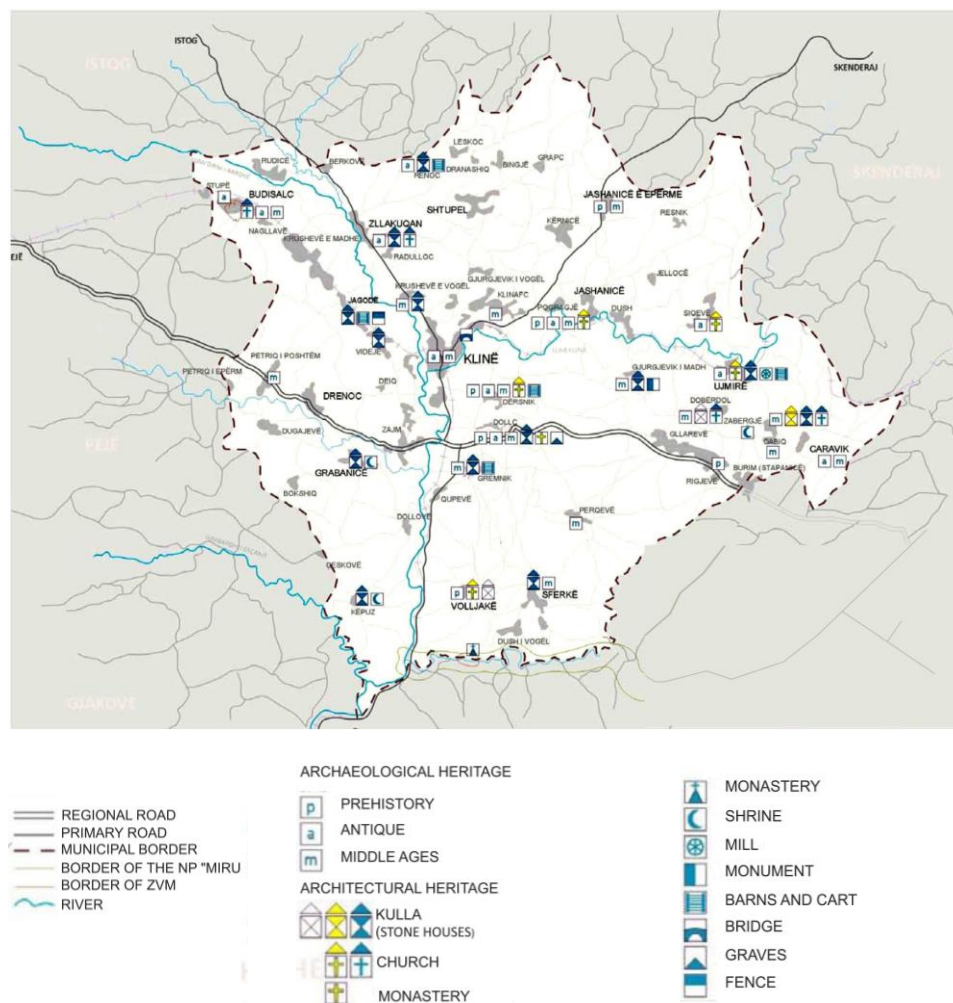
Peja MDP plans to propose and focus on some special priority projects such as: organization of tourism policies, protection of natural and cultural heritage, developing long-term economic development strategies, training of staff in managing tourist agencies, creation of necessary infrastructure, and studying development of sites connected with road networks which have an impact on potential natural and cultural resources.

¹⁰⁷ MDP of Peja, 2006 (p.40, 41)

4.4.3. Municipality of Klina

Klina municipality lies in the North-Eastern part of Dukagjini Region covering an area of about 308 km². According to Statistical Agency of Kosovo, during the last census conducted in 2011, 38496 inhabitants were registered there. According to the SPK (2006), this municipality belongs to the yellow zone - Gardens of Kosovo, planned to have agriculture as priority for its potential for economic development. Municipal Development Plan (MDP) of Klina is drafted in compliance with the Spatial Plan of Kosova (Figure 68.).

Figure 68. Map of Municipality of Klina



Source: MDP of Klina, 2012 (p.50)

Natural heritage

MDP of Klina considers the natural park "Mirusha" as great potential to boost tourism development locally and internationally due to its rare aesthetic properties. "These waterfalls that lie along the river Mirusha, are characterized with precious natural and physical-geographical values including flora and fauna"¹⁰⁸. The current status of "Mirusha Waterfalls" is that of a protected National Park.

¹⁰⁸ MDP of Peja, 2006 (p.29)

Natural resources in the municipality of Klina are the mineral water spring, Klina River Gorge, thermal water reserves and underground mineral resources such as coal, bauxite, gravel and clay. Other natural resources are the complex of timber-root, oak tree, etc.

Rivers that permeate the municipality of Klina are the following: Drini i Bardhë, Istog River, Bistrica River -Peja, Deçan's Bistrica and rivers Klina and Mirusha (Figure 69.).

Figure 69. Rural landscape-Village Binca in Municipality of Klina



Source: MDP of Klina, 2010 (p.43)

Cultural heritage

Klina municipality has rich cultural heritage; here have been listed some settlements with Kulla (fortified house) from 18th century like the Kullas of Merlak Azem, UkëMaxharaj, etc. until kullas from beginning of 20th century like Mehmet Ahmetxhekaj, Mark Laskaj, Nikë Gjergji, Mark Jaku, etc. Other distinguished monuments are Stone Bridge, Uke Maxharaj barn and other facilities, Ismet Bajrak barn, Gani Bajraktari barn and storage, storage and barn of Mikel Deda, water mill of Beslim Mustafa, knitted fence of Ndrec Gojani, Mustafa's shrine, the church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Revelation Monastery of St. Virgin, Stone Cross and Illyrian cemetery, St. John the Baptist church, Lady of Berisha Church, cemetery church of Holy Virgin, village Kpuz's shrine, family Memorials of Jusuf Eshref Dushi, foundations of church (14th century), Paskalica village Church, the Church of St. Demetrios, traces of Illyrian localities in Përcetë village, Gllarevë, Budisavlc Monastery, Dolac Monastery, Church of the Hermits, etc.

Economy

According to the MDP (2012), Klina economy is mainly based on farming and processing of agricultural products. "Agriculture as main economic activity of this municipality is based on suitable conditions of agricultural land, abundant water flows and rainfalls which are considerable in Klina".¹⁰⁹

This municipality is distinguished for cultivation of trees -apples, plums and strawberries, etc., while the most grown vegetable is cabbage. More specific cultures cultivated in the area are strawberries and honey collection.

¹⁰⁹ MDP of Peja, 2006 (p.29)

Industrial economy in Klina municipality is wood procession, developed through factory for doors and windows, then fresh water procession/bottling, etc.

Education

Upper secondary education in Klina is organized in two educational institutions: Gymnasium “Fehmi Agani” and Vocational Technical High School “Luigj Gurakuqi” which has another facility under construction.

Gymnasium “Fehmi Agani” is attended by 1,093 students, whereas Vocational Technical High School “Luigj Gurakuqi” by 1,079 students in total.

If compared with the standards, this municipality lacks school facilities.

Strategic projects

Projects strategically important as per SPK are defining responsibilities of the municipality in relation to environmental and social impacts on natural monument of “Mirusha” and on protected zones, Budisalci Monastery, Monastery of Dolac and church of Hermits. Harmonization of MDP with development plans of these areas is a task that should be carried out in the near future.

The MDP of Klina envisages these strategic projects: initiating pilot projects on agro-tourism; identification of potential participants for procession of agricultural products; establishment of agricultural school; creation of a local brand for agricultural products in collaboration with farmers and marketing specialists; advanced honey processing technology with the aim of increasing and improving production; creation of organized productivity of apple and its products; identification and classification of quality of arable land to determine cultivation of specific agricultural products; rehabilitation of agricultural land degraded by floods; capacity building in tourism through specialized courses, etc.

4.4.4. Municipality of Deçan

Deçani municipality lies in the western part of Dukagjini Region covering an area of about 284 km² and counting about 55000 inhabitants. According to Statistical Agency of Kosovo, during the last census in 2011 there were 40019 inhabitants registered.¹¹⁰

According to the SPK (2006), this municipality belongs to the yellow zone - Bridges of Kosovo planned to have commercial advantages in servicing and trade as well as agro- industrial activities for its economic development. This plan is drafted in harmony with the SPK.

Mountains “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” (sometimes called “Albanian Alps”) extend through western part of municipality of Deçan continuing towards the Republic of Albania to include Shkodra, and in the Montenegrin part the cities of Plava and Gucia, and the Ibar Valley up to Mokna mountains bordering with Serbia.

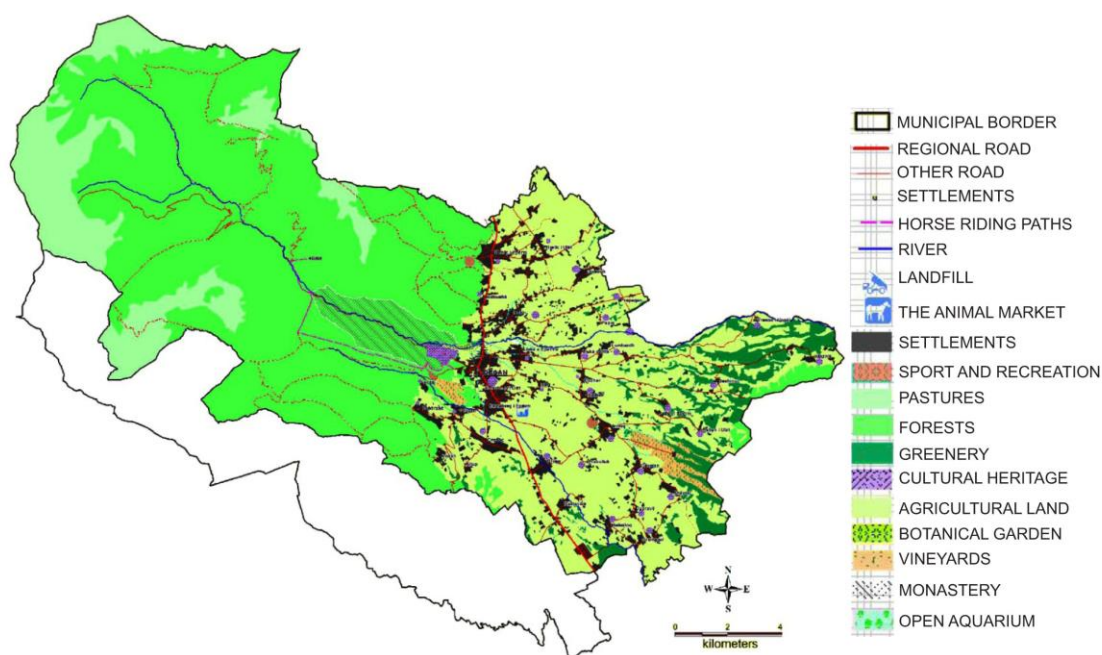
Significant potential in this municipality are mountain peaks reaching an altitude above 2000 m such as: Marjashi Peak, Strelc peak, Gjeravica mountain peak, Dobroshi Mountains, Belegu Mountains, Kurvalla Mountain, Prelep Mountain, Mountain Milishevc, Roshkodol Mountain, Zogu Stone, Batuse

¹¹⁰ Notes taken from the MDP of Deçan (2009)

Mountain - Jedova, Kunora, Pllacica of Voksh, Great Mountains, Budosh Mountain, Lumëbardhi Mountain, Irzniqi Mountain and Zllanopoja Mountain.

Other natural assets are rivers originating in the territory of municipality of Deçan such as: Deçani's Lumëbardh and Lloqan's Lumëbardh. Among the most characteristic properties of this municipality is the spring of mineral water, which, according to MDP, stipulates that spring water is attributed healing feature, for transmitted diseases, bone diseases, skin diseases, etc. Capacity building for procession of this water could result into new product of high quality and healing minerals (Figure 70.).

Figure 70. Map of Municipality of Deçan



Source: MDP of Deçan, 2011 (p.42)

Cultural heritage

Deçani Municipality has very rich and diverse cultural heritage.

One of the most significant sites of cultural heritage in municipality of Deçani is the Monastery of Deçan. This monastery built in the fourteenth century with its surrounding area which covers around 790 ha, and which is listed by UNESCO as monument in danger, enjoys the protection of Kosovo Government.

Some Kullas or fortified stone house typical for Dukagjini Regjion are: Osdautaj's Kulla in Isniq village from 19th century; Kuklec's Kulla in Isniq village, from 18th century; Demukaj's Kulla in Deçan village from 19th century; Mushkolaj's Kulla in Decan from 18th century; Binakajve's Kulla in Drenoc village from 19th century; Kulla e Mazrekaj's, etc. Mills of Tahir Sadria in Isniq village and Shabanaj's in Decan from 19th century are distinguished monuments in this municipality with lot of springs and streams. But this municipality has numerous monuments of other types like: mosques, shrines,

bakers, old schools (religious and historic), fountains, cemeteries, old bridges, old barns, etc. It is interesting that in Deçan, there were some cases of private initiatives for collection of old relicts like exhibits/artifacts in the old coffee Isniq, private exhibits of Mr. Beqir N.Geci, collection of Mr. Zeqë Loshi, and Zymer Loshi's collection.

Economy

Industrial development in Deçan is conducted by these companies: armored network factory, wood-procession complex “Gjeravica”, massive furniture factory, honey procession factory “Apiko” while the factory of vehicle parts “Ramiz Sadiku”, metal products workshop, agricultural cooperative “Progress” operate in the village Isniq.

Natural resources of Municipality of Deçan provide opportunities for development of winter and summer mountain tourism, recreational, cultural, alpinist, hunting and fishing activities, cave-tourism, etc.

Deçan municipality is in possession of rich agricultural land covering a surface area of about 11551 ha, out of which 5916 ha of arable land. The most cultivated products in these areas are corn, wheat, potatoes, etc. Specific culture typical for this area is the chestnut forest covering an area from Junik to Strelc in the altitude of 100-1000 m, including the culture of fruit collection.

Education

Deçan municipality organized its upper secondary education sector in three educational institutions: “Vëllezërit Frashëri” gymnasium in Deçan and “Sami Frashëri” gymnasium in village Irznik; Technical High School “Tafil Kasumaj” in Deçan. Gymnasium “Vllezerit Frashëri” is attended by 1045 students, while Gymnasium “Sami Frashëri” is attended by about 105 students; Technical Secondary School “Tafil Kasumaj” has about 725 students. The total number of students in upper secondary schools is 2387. These school buildings are renovated and are in good condition.

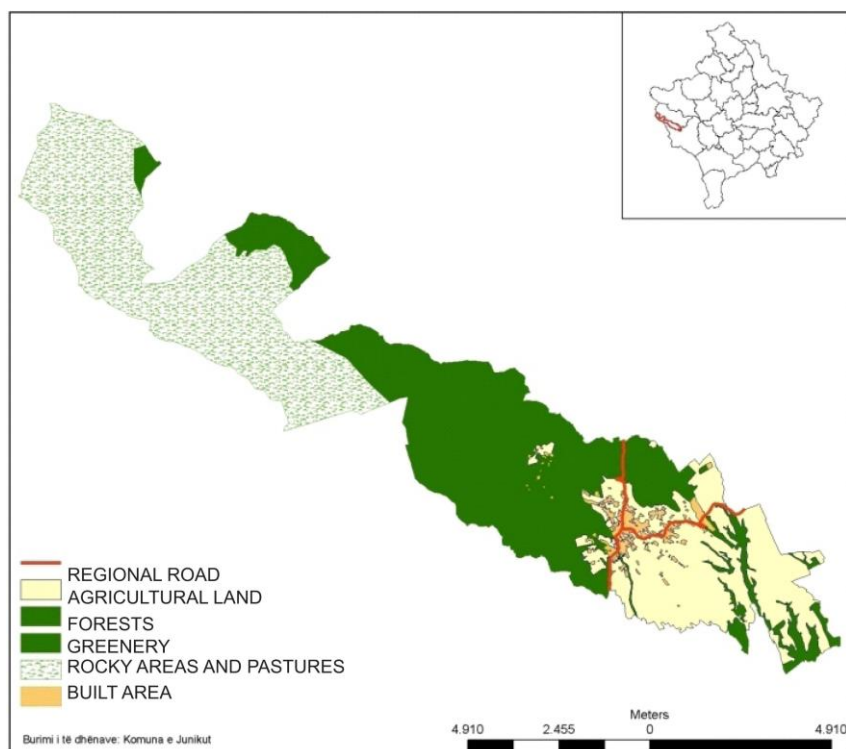
Strategic projects

One of the strategic projects planned as per Deçan MDP is to establish farmers' associations which would become training centers in order to increase knowledge capacity for production of agricultural products and its promotion/placing in the market. Pilot projects for agriculture and tourism are also planned. Information office, information centers are also envisaged to attract investments in industry, whilst manufacturing of fruits including chestnut as well as collection of ecological herbs and vegetables could also take place. The plan envisages mechanisms to support efficiency of farming and livestock breeding so as to increase capacity of dairy products and meat. MDP considers establishment of comprehensive tourist information network and provision of specialized trainings for capacity building and knowledge on tourism. Interaction with central level to declare Bjeshkët e Nemuna (Albanian Alps) a “National Park” has resulted in promulgation of law to address this matter. Construction of winter sports' skiing center “Belegu” and building of camping zone in the mountains of Deçan, Voksh, Strelc, Isniq, and village Prejlep, and promotion of healing and recreational characteristics of these areas, has been planned. Projects on use of cultural heritage sites and religious sites such as the old part of the city, residential Kullas- fortified houses, mosques, tekkes, Deçani monastery, cultural heritage sites in village Isniq, Drenoc, etc., have also been foreseen.

4.4.5. Municipality of Junik

Junik municipality lies in the North-Western part of Dukagjini Region and covers an area of about 78km² with 12500 inhabitants. According to Kosovo Agency for Statistic during the 2011 census 6084 inhabitants were registered. According to the Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK), this municipality belongs to the yellow zone - Bridges of Kosovo, planned to have commercial advantages in servicing and trade as well as agro- industrial activities for its economic development. MDP of Junik is drafted in full harmony with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo¹¹¹(Figure 71).

Figure 71. Map of Municipality of Junik



Source: MDP of Junik, 2010 (p.46)

Natural heritage

Hydrographical landscapes as rivers Erenik and Trave, streams, Junik Plains, hilly - mountain landscapes as Gjeravica and Moronica are key natural assets of Junik. About 500 km² of Junik mountainous area is part of Bjeshkët e Nemuna Mountains.

“Viewed in terms of touristic development, Junik municipality is divided into three touristic potential zones: urban areas with potential of cultural and recreational tourism development, Juniku Gorge area with its touristic locations; Gjeravica mountain peak with lakes, Erenik river spring, the long valley, the Bird stone, as well as Zharra locations: Gradina (archeological site), Jedova, Zharra, Jasiq and Gjocaj”.¹¹²

¹¹¹ The notes taken from MDP Junik, 2011

¹¹² MDP of Junik, 2011 (p.29)

Cultural Heritage

Potential resources for economic development in municipality of Junik are its cultural heritage sites, in particular “Kullas” - fortified traditional stone houses and archaeological sites. The oldest “Kullas” are those in Hoxhaj neighborhood, and “Oda of Junik”. Other cultural heritage sites in the municipality of Junik are historic stone Mansions, barns, while as far as industrial heritage in Junik is concerned there are three mills in neighborhoods Gacaferi, Krasniqi and Berisha, then weavers, water saws, etc. Many Archaeological findings discovered like ancient settlement in “Gradina” in the gorge in direction of Gjeravica peak sideways “...with epigraphic material found in this settlement, just as in numerous other settlements, ancient remains found in Erenik river valley, etc. prove Junik as an ancient Illyrian settlement.”¹¹³

Economy

Junik municipality has a well established tradition in craftsmanship and artisans, in particular cultivation of crafts, procession of wool, texture of traditional clothes, knitting, etc. The following agricultural products are cultivated in Junik: wheat, corn, beans, rye and vegetables (peppers, tomatoes, cabbage and onions). Fruit cultivation culture is averagely treated: apples, pears, cherries, and strawberries. Through increase of irrigation capacities, a tendency for expansion of orchard surfaces was noticed recently. Junik is characterized with cultivation and collection of medical herbs and some types of mushrooms. This municipality developed glasshouse for production of young plants “Ptuj” and “Fidanishte”.

Education

Upper secondary education in the Municipality of Junik is conducted in one single facility- high school, with 251 students attending. According to standards, this school facility is sufficient and meets requirements as per number of inhabitants and by areal coverage (maximum distance from the dwelling places to school).

Strategic projects

MDP of Junik (2011) envisages significant projects and reduction of pollution of Ereniku River is considered a priority. The first stage of these actions is primary treatment that is to take place during 2013-2015 and the secondary treatment is planned for 2018-2019.

“Construction of wastewater treatment plants in seven regional centers”- Junik is covered by this Project through Gjakova project” MDP of Junik (2011) as indirect impact of SPK.¹¹⁴ The MDP Junik (2011) supports projects that stimulate craft activities, projects in traditional gastronomy, etc. The plan envisages establishment of an agro-business park, warehouse storage and agro-products, forest fruits and medical herbs. There are plans to establish farmers' associations, processors and selling of agricultural products and livestock. Awareness-raising on benefits of agriculture, via trainings, courses and consultations in the field of agriculture, is also foreseen.

MDP foresees drafting of action plan for forest management, design of urban development plan for Moronica locality and Erenik Valley, archaeological site Gradina, Jedova, water Spring of Ereniku River, Gjeravica mountain peak and Lakes, as well as Zogu Stone.

¹¹³ MDP of Junik, 2011 (p.11)

¹¹⁴ MESP, SPK, 2006 (p.166)

The plan envisages construction of multi-purpose facility including library, house of culture, youth center and city museum building. Projects supporting tourism and its activities such as tourist info centers and marketing, publishing of maps and touristic guides as well as developing human resources for this sector, etc. are also foreseen.

4.4.6. Municipality of Gjakova

Gjakova municipality lies in the Western part of Dukagjini Region and covers an area of about 521 km² and numbers about 150.000 inhabitants. Data from the last census in 2011 Kosovo Agency for Statistics shows that 94556 inhabitants are registered in Gjakova Municipality. According to the SPK (2010) this municipality belongs to the yellow zone - Bridges of Kosovo, designated to prioritize servicing and commercial activities for its agro - economic development. Gjakova Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is drafted in compliance with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo¹¹⁵ (Figure 72.).

A Waste transfer station is located in the municipality of Gjakova.

Natural heritage

Among natural resources with special interest in Gjakova municipality are the mountains "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" which extends through north-western part of municipality of Gjakova. Potentially important observation points are the following: peak "Suka e Cërmjanit", Qabrati Park, Gorge of the river "Drini i Bardhë", etc. Gorge of the river "Drini i Bardhë" cuts through a high rock creating spectacular and magnificent natural phenomenon. This area became a picnic place and on daily basis, it gathers visitors from all over Kosovo either through organized excursions or individually, so that they get acquainted with beauties of the gorge".¹¹⁶ "Fshajtë's Bridge on Drini i Bardhë canyon is a natural monument of hydro-geomorphologic character extending through an area of 199 ha partially within municipality of Gjakova (74 ha) and partially within municipality of Rahovec (125)"¹¹⁷

Cultural heritage

Gjakova municipality is rich with large number of cultural heritage buildings in particular Kullas (fortified houses), mosques, churches, bridges, archaeological sites, tumuli (Tombs), Tekke, etc. Enlisted are some of "Kullas" (fortified stone houses) among which: Adem Ademi, Ibish Ali, Musa Lushi, etc. Gjakova has some buildings with distinguished history like the house of the national hero Dragutin Dordevic, Old House of Jelena Jakic, House of Sylejman Vokshi, Naim Zajmi's House, and assembles and religious monuments (Urban Complex of Old Bazaar, Hadum Mosque, Hasan Aga Mosque, Church of the Lady's Assumption into Heaven, Foundations of Catholic Church, Shah Emini shrine and fountain, Shah Danjolli shrine). Old bridges belong to diverse cultural heritage (Terëzi Bridge, Tabak Bridge, Talic Bridge, etc.) and archaeological sites (Illyrian necropolis with tumuli, the Suka e Cërmjanit Complex, Illyrian Tumuli close to Fshejts' Bridge, etc.).

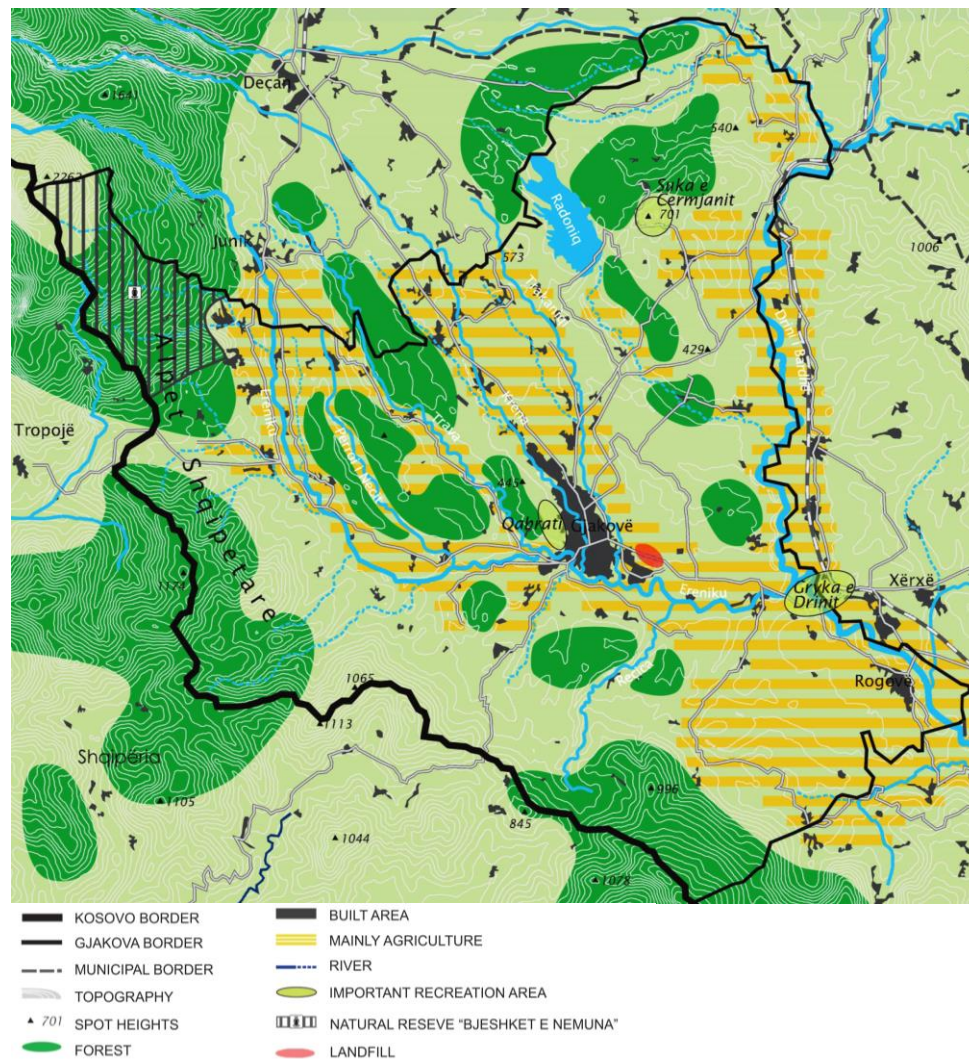
Gjakova municipality has its own Museum and Institute for Protection of Monuments.

¹¹⁵ Notes taken from Municipal Development Plan of Gjakova (2007)

¹¹⁶ MDP of Gjakova, 2007 (p.45)

¹¹⁷ MESP, Report on state of nature 2008-2009", 2010 (p.59)

Figure 72. Map of Gjakova Municipality



Source: MDP of Gjakova, 2007 (p.181)

Economy

Gjakova has great potential for economic development in particular crafts, commerce, agriculture, livestock breeding, etc. According to MDP - Gjakova, this municipality was well-known for industry with factories producing yarn, fabrics, knitwear, heavy and light confection, metal industry - production of pipes, wire, enameled vessels; electronic industry with manufacturing electromotor, food industry – mills and bread factory, wine and liquor industry, woodworking industry, rubber procession industry, production of technical gases, tobacco industry, construction and production of construction materials. "Gjakova is also renowned as the second Kosovo city to have an airport which is situated in the village Trakaniq, the northern part of the city. Currently the airport is being used by KFOR and is not open to civilians. According to MDP data (Municipal Development Plan of Gjakova, 2007), this airport has been partly repaired and rebuilt by KFOR with some of its equipment repaired. The airport is used as heliodrome, where helicopters and airplanes of size C - 130 can land"¹¹⁸. Gjakova municipality has favorable conditions for agriculture development where the total

¹¹⁸ MDP of Gjakova, 2007 (p.98)

area of arable land is about 14741 ha. Agriculture in these areas mostly implies corn and wheat cultivation (about 57 %) in its arable surface.

Education

Upper secondary education in Gjakova municipality is divided into general education and vocational trainings. Upper secondary education is organized into 5 school facilities and numbers about 1566 students. Higher vocational education also takes place in five school buildings attended by approximately 2491 students. In addition, Faculty of Education and Senior Pedagogical School “Bajram Curri” are also operational.

Strategic projects

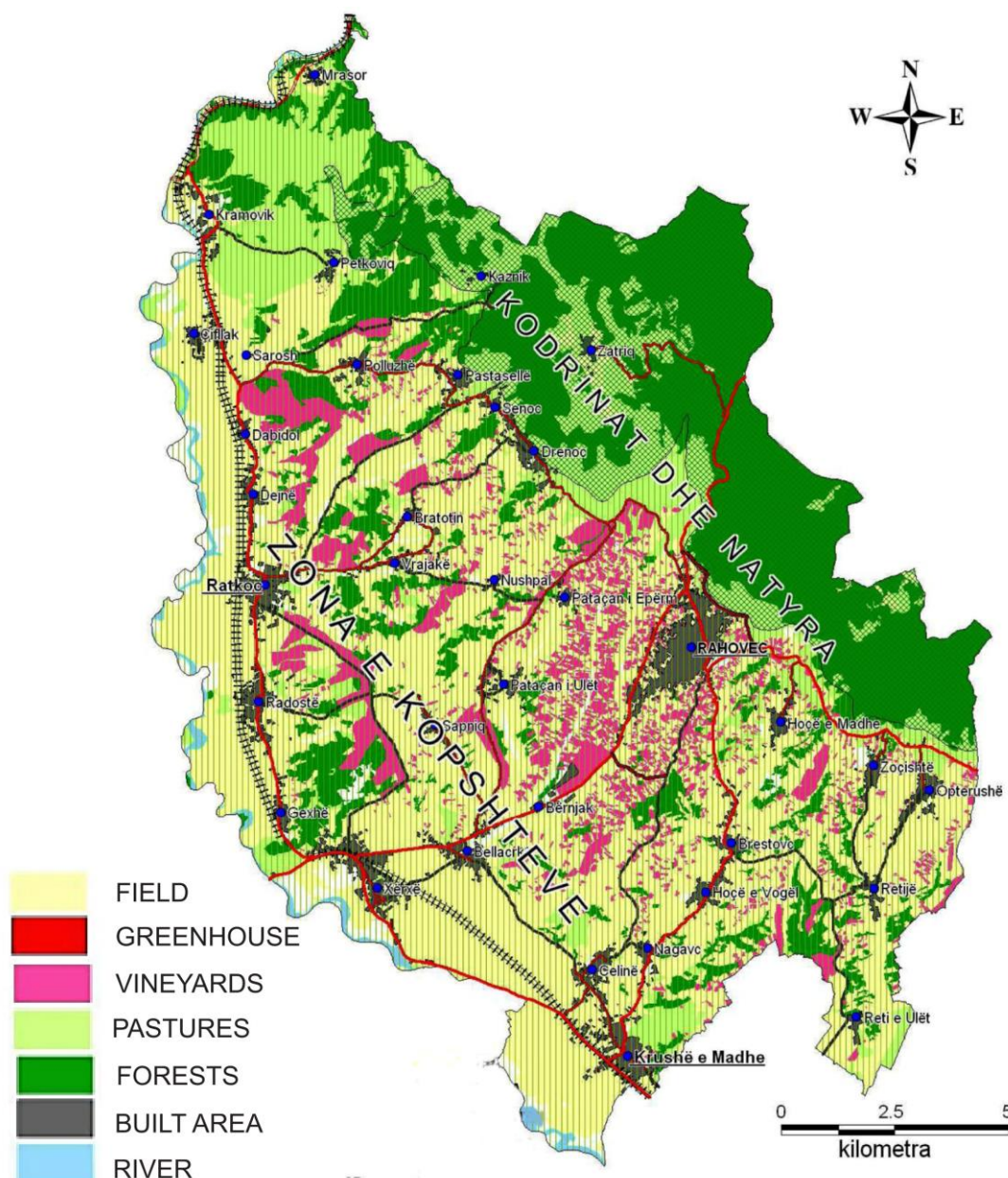
One of strategic projects planned in MDP-Gjakova is drafting of urban regulative Plan for Gjakova Airport, drafting of Urban Regulative Plan for commercial areas, drafting of Urban Regulative Plan for Cërmjan, Rogova, Damjan, Skijvan, Novosello and Ponoshec villages which tend to become major settlements. Platform for approaching Drin River Gorge for visitors and environmental protection of this area is also foreseen. Cleaning of the river banks of Ereniku, Llocani and Trakaniq are treated in this draft as well as implementation of existing plan for Qabrati Park.

4.4.7. Municipality of Rahovec

Rahovec municipality lies in the central part of the Dukagjini Valley extending to about 275 km² with about 71522 inhabitants. According to Kosovo Agency for Statistics, during the last census in 2011, 56208 inhabitants were registered. Within the Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK) this municipality belongs to the yellow zone - Bridges of Kosovo, where commercial and service activities are main priorities for its agro-economic development. It is worth mentioning that the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) of Rahovec is drafted in full harmony with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo.¹¹⁹ (Figure 73.).

¹¹⁹ Notes taken from the MDP of Rahovec, 2011

Figure 73. Map of Municipality of Rahovec



Source: MDP of Rahovec, 2010 (p.167)

Natural heritage

Rahovec municipality possesses diverse natural resources of botanical, hydrological, geomorphologic character and scenic nature, landscapes as Drini i Bardhë Canyon Bridge, Fshejt Bridge and in particular regional park of Mirusha as protected area. According to Rahovec MDP, old timbers are also proposed for protection in the following areas: village Nagavc- oak tree, village Drenovc-oak tree, Veranjake –elm tree, Dabidol - oak trees, Lower Patacan-oak trees, Brestovc- oak tree (Bajrak's old oak tree), etc.

Very important natural assets of this municipality are the rivers: Drini i Bardhë, Hoca River, Ratkoc River, Rimnik River, Palluzha River, Bellaja River, Duhle River and Sopnic River (Figure 74.). Rahovec underground contains ornamental stone reserves and minerals of chromites, asbestos, nickel, cobalt, copper and coal.

Figure 74. Natural and cultural heritage in of Municipality of Rahovec



Source: MDP of Rahovec, 2011 (p.102)

Cultural heritage

Among the most important cultural heritage monuments are the Clock Tower, Martyr's Cemetery, memorials of Tony and Mici, Shkodrani's peak, Bazzar's Mosque, Meriq Family's Kulla, Haxhi Neighbourhood Fountains, Spring in the Republic Square, the Fortress (Durman fortress), Orthodox Church, Old Vine Cellar, Stone-art in village Zatriq, Byzantine Cemetery in Reti, Mahmut Pasha Kulla, Byzantine cemeteries in Opterusha, Fshenjte Bridge on the Drini i Bardhë river, Hoti residential House as museum in Big Krusha, etc.

Rahovec Municipal Development Plan (MDP) provides information on origin of cultural heritage of Rahovec dating back from Illyrian times and their diversity. According to Rahovec MDP (2011), precious treasure of cultural heritage which is placed under protection is: “the Clock Tower Rahovec dating back from 1206, which once used to be a small Illyrian castle, Anadrini Kullas, Durman fortress (3rd and 4th century), Castles -Zatriq, Gexhë, Gurkuq, etc.”¹²⁰

“The emperor Stevan Nemanja in 1198 offered regions' products as gift to the monastery of Hilandar (Mt.Athos), at the times when this zone (medieval times) became a great cultural and historical center. There are 12 churches: St.Nichola, St.John, St.Stefan of 14th century, St.Sunday church, St.Parask, St Ana, St. Luka and St. Peter (16th century), Holy Virgin, and St.Ilija. Vine warehouses (21) are distinguished for their exclusive rarity. They may be found in the center of the village with barrels up to 5 meters tall and 4 m wide”.¹²¹

Another potential in this municipality are the historic monuments built 400 years ago as the Great shrine-Helveti, Rufai Tekke, Melami Tekke, the Clock Tower built in 1791, five mosques and other tekkes in the city center and its neighborhood.

¹²⁰ MDP of Rahovec, 2011 (p.81)

¹²¹ MDP of Rahovec, 2011 (p.101)

Economy

There are several resources for municipal economic development, including traditional grape growing and winery in the area, as well as flour and pasta factory “Silos”.

Agricultural lands in Rahovec, covering an area of about 12020 ha (43 %) of total arable surface, are an important factor. These areas are further classified into zones for exercise of viticulture, vegetable production, grain, fruit production zones, etc.

According to MDP of Rahovec, agriculture, viticulture and winery constitute the basic economic activity in all aspects including production; while at the same time they generate employment.

As great potential for economic development, the MDP of Rahovec foresees the procession of available natural minerals: ornamental stone and coal, which could contribute to economic growth of municipality and wider: “Territory of Rahovec municipality contains sufficient reserves of ornamental stone and minerals such as chrome, asbestos, nickel, cobalt, copper and stone coal”.¹²²

Education

According to information obtained in the MDP of Rahovec, upper secondary education is organized into four educational institutions. High School “Xhelal Hajda-Toni” in Rahovec has 1,566 students attending classes, 10 students attend Serbian High School, the high school “12 May” in Ratkoc is attended by 790 students, whereas the high school “Ukshin Hoti” in Krusha has 511 students.

Strategic projects

Spatial Plan of Kosovo has drafted strategic plans about the following capital projects: Regional water-supply system plant; Mirusha Waterfalls, Canyon of River “Drini i Bardhë” and Cultural Heritage for Village Hoca e Madhe.

Speaking of occupations, MDP envisages opening of schools for respective areas as per the labor market. Promotion of cultural heritage of Hoca e Madhe and cultural heritage protection from potential degradations is treated in the development plan. Financial support of farmers, improvement of agricultural mechanization and use of new scientific methods to increase productivity and establishment of glasshouses, orchards, etc., are constituent parts of the development plan.

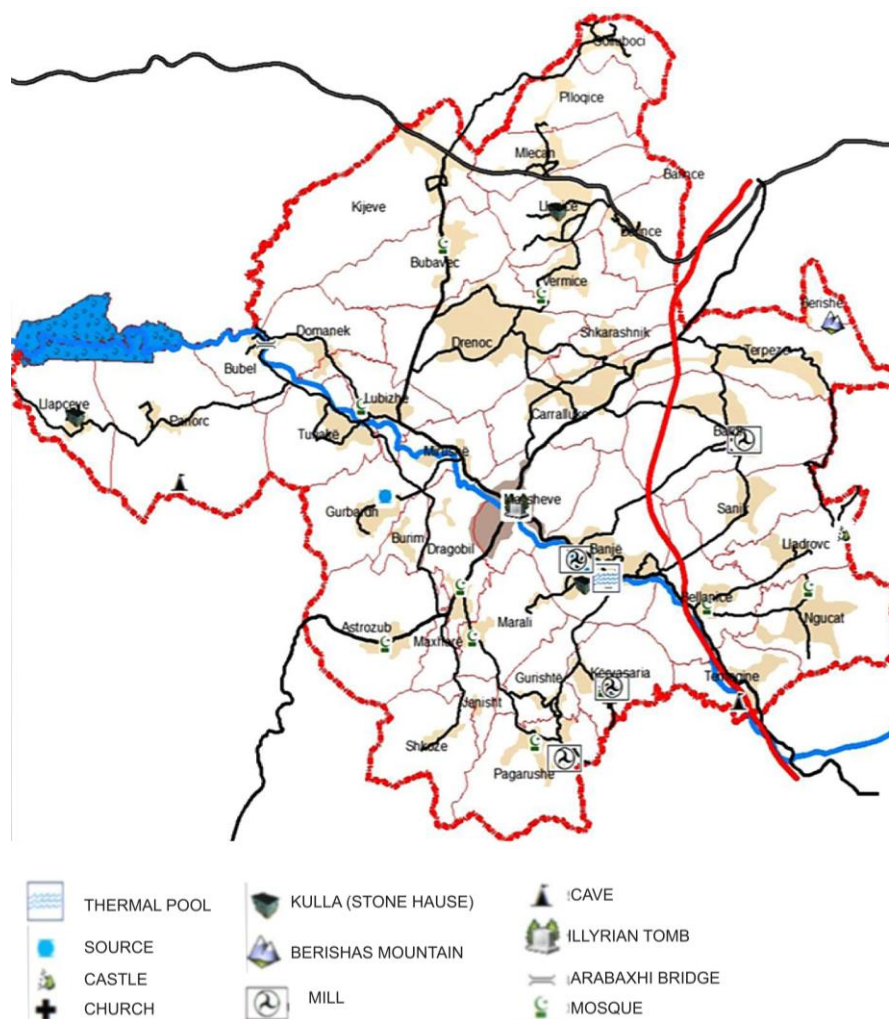
4.4.8. Municipality of Malisheva

Malisheva plain lies in the eastern part of Dukagjini Region, covering an area of about 306 km². According to Kosovo Agency for Statistics, during the last census in 2011, 54.613 inhabitants were registered.

According to Spatial Plan of Kosovo (2010), this municipality belongs to the yellow zone - Bridges of Kosovo, planned to have commercial advantages in servicing and trade as well as agro-industrial activities for its economic development. Since Malisheva MDP is in its drafting phase, information has been obtained from Malisheva Guiding Plan drafted in 2004 (Figure 75.).

¹²² MDP of Rahovec, 2011 (p.86,87)

Figure 75. Map of Municipality of Malisheva



Source: MDP of Malisheva, 2006 (p.32)

Natural heritage

Places with natural particular importance in Malisheva are: open thermal pool in the village of Banja, Cave in Panorc Bridge, and Rabaxhi Bridge in village Bubel. In particular, Berisha Mountains and Mirusha River, distinguished for its waterfalls, represent great potential and natural resources of this area.

"What characterizes Mirusha River is the 2 km long section, where throughout the river canyon, 16 karst lakes of various sizes intercepted by waterfalls (cataracts) as high as 21 m, are created. The canyon in some parts is extremely sharp and vertical up to 200 m"¹²³

Mirusha Waterfalls and its Canyon is a distinguished attraction and considering this, it has been declared a natural monument. Moreover, a spatial plan (2013) for this area has been drafted. Convenient location of Mirusha Waterfalls, which is located close to Pristina-Peja road axis (only 2.5 km away) and 20 km from Malisheva city center, makes this resource very important for touristic development of Malisheva and the region as well.

¹²³ MDP Malisheva, 2008 (p.31)

Cultural heritage

MDP identifies several cultural heritage monuments in the municipality of Malisheva, such as: mosques in villages Guncat, Bellanicë, Banje, Marali, Astrazup, Bubavec, Vermicë, Malisheva, Gurebardh, Lumishte, etc. Whereas Arabaxhi Bridge in village Bubel restored in 18th century (1758), is currently out of use. During past centuries, through this bridge passed the road which connected Kosovo with Dukagjini Region towards and across the Adriatic Sea.

In MDP are enlisted some cultural heritage monuments such as “Kullas” (fortified stone houses): Hazrolli, Shurdhan, Llapqeva, and Karvasariku family Kullas. Other distinguished monuments in Rahovec Municipality are the Begaj family Mill, Vernica village mosque, Catholic Church in Karvasari village as well as archaeological sites in Mirushe, Llubizhde, Bellanice, Ngucat, Karvasari, Pagarushe, Drenoc, Terpeze, Illyrian Tuma (tomb).

Very important monuments with historic value are the Memorial Center “Martyrs Cemetery in Klecka” and “Martyrs Cemetery in Malisheva”.

Economy

Malisheva municipality is characterized by agricultural lands which have a great impact on economic development. The arable land area of about 11735 ha is mainly cultivated with wheat, corn, rye, barley, oat, etc. Vineyards cover an area of 1388 ha, with only 51.50 ha being cultivated. Arboriculture covers an area of 37 hectares of apple, pears, quince, plum, cherry and peach trees as well as the culture of raspberries, blackberries and strawberries. Vegetables cultivation is expanding to an area of 235 ha to cultivate peppers, tomatoes, onion, garlic, cabbage, spinach, etc.

Malisheva economy also includes handicrafts such as stone/marble procession factories as well as wood procession and furniture production.

Education

Education system is organized through following educational facilities: Vocational School-Center of Competence in Economy, Administration, Trade and Hotelier Services, and two upper secondary schools attended by approximately 2601 students, 951 out of which are female and 1650 are male students.

According to standards, municipality’s educational system is not supported by sufficient number of facilities, as required per number of inhabitants and areal coverage (maximum distance from dwelling place to schools).

Strategic projects

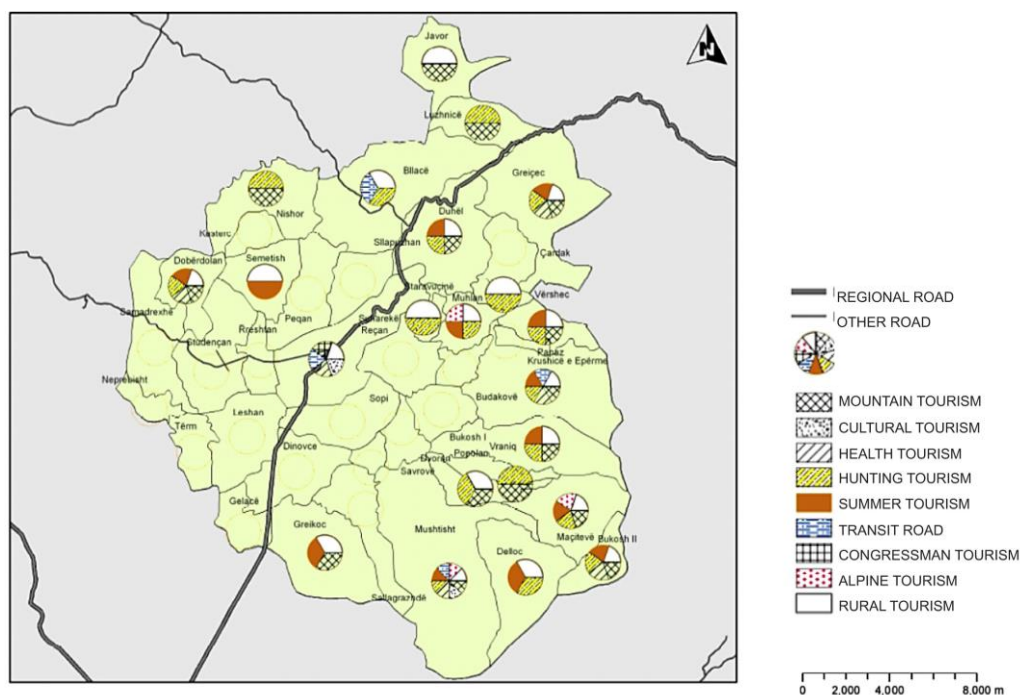
The MDP Malisheva draft envisages establishment of suitable conditions for agricultural and mineral industry development. It also stimulates local residents to cultivate agricultural production, vineyards, orchards and vegetables. Mirusha Waterfalls provides the basis for country’s promotion as well as introducing natural and cultural values for development of tourism, recreation and touristic centers etc.

4.4.9. Municipality of Suhareka

Municipality of Suhareka lies in the southeastern part of Dukagjini Region covering an area of about 361 km² with about 81311 inhabitants¹²⁵. On the other hand, according to Kosovo Agency for Statistics, during the last census in 2011 there were 59722 inhabitants registered.

The Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK) categorizes this municipality into Orange Zone - Gardens of Kosovo, with agriculture as priority for its economic development (Figure 76.).

Figure 76. Map of touristic potentials in Municipality of Suva Reka



Source: MDP of Suhareka, 2007 (p.39)

Natural Heritage

Municipality of Suhareka is rich in natural heritage with Sharr Mountains, Carraleva Mountains, Toplluha River, Semetishte River, Dragaqina River, and Leshan River etc.

Other resources are raw materials/metals such as chrome that is found in areas between villages Mushtisht and Grejkoc, while iron is found in slopes of Rusenica hill. Other non-metal minerals like clay carbonate rocks and stone graffiti plaques are also part of Suhareka's resources.

This municipality has rich flora and fauna. "Rusenica is home to the Balkan lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*), rare and endangered species. Rusenica reserve is a protected area located inside the National Park of "Sharr Mountains", in the municipality of Suhareka, covering an area of 300 ha. The reserve was declared in year 1955, in order to protect the residence of lynx. Rusenica is characterized by limestone cliffs and two communities of forest trees: beech and pine tree (*Abieti - Fagetum*) and low forests (*Orno-Ostryio carpinetum*). This location is also important for its flora with significant presence of endemic species: burnumullera (*Burnmullera dieckii*), and mountain

maple (*Acer heldreichii*), etc.”¹²⁴ Rural landscape in municipality of Suhareka is a typical landscape of Dukagjini region (Figure 77.).

Figure 77. Rural landscape in Municipality of Suhareka



Source: MDP of Suhareka, 2007 (p.49)

Cultural Heritage

Suhareka municipality is very rich in cultural heritage monuments. There are about 22 mosques in Suhareka, 6 Orthodox and one Catholic Church. Other cultural heritage monuments are “Kullas”- stone fortified house (Kulla of Rexhë Daka, Sylë Selimi, Sherif Agë Gjinoci, etc.). There are a few dwelling houses like house of Zyber Morina, Agim Qatani, etc. Other monuments are municipal building in Duhl, the old water mills of Buzhala family, Elez Ramë Buzhala Mill, old Mill of Ymer Ali Aliaj, old Mill of Mehmet Jashari, Berisha family water mill, Durmishi family water Mill, Mill of Ibrahim Ramadan Bulgari and the shrines of Azem Shehu, Lezi, etc.

Economy

The Suhareka Municipal Development Plan (2007) foresees vine production as one of the most important development areas in Kosovo. It plans to revive this specific branch of economy through regeneration of vineyards and better organization of production and marketing. Like other municipalities, Suhareka MDP sees expertise and foreign investments as very important in this regard. In addition, it plans to create employment opportunities and local economic development from vineyards. Other activities like “wine tourism”, wine degustation, and fairs are also considered as an important factor to boost tourism and economic development.

Besides vineyards, agricultural lands mainly cultivate grain: wheat, corn, barley and rye. Industrial plants and vegetables are cultivated: sunflower, beans and potatoes. Orchards comprise an area of about 426 hectares with apples, pears, plums, cherries, peaches, walnuts and chestnuts mostly cultivated.

Suhareka municipality has good potential for economic development due to the fact that it had: textile factory “Nerezina”, factory for production of aluminium doors and windows “Seco”, factory for production of concrete elements, Rubber Factory “Balkans”, Food procession factory, and factory for production of beverages “Schwepps”. But, unfortunately these potentials were not properly rehabilitated during and after process of privatization.

¹²⁴ MDP of Suhareka, 2007 (p.33)

Non-metallic substances, such as clay for bricks and carbon rocks processed for construction material, are also of economic importance. In Biraq village, according to the research, an area has been found as a potential place to process stone serving as foundation for asphalt.

Education

Upper secondary education in municipality of Suhareka is provided by gymnasium “Jeta e re” and Technical High School “Skender Luarasi”. These two institutions are attended by 2871 students. The elementary school “11 Marsi” and Handikos Center provide education for students with special needs.

Planning by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for establishment of professional schools-competence center for education and training in agriculture, in harmony with MDP-Suhareka has been already implemented.

According to standards, municipality of Suhareka needs more school buildings.

Strategic projects

One of the strategic projects planned in the MDP of Suhareka is the establishment of an industrial business park; informing farmers through their association on trends and agricultural developments as well as new products and technologies in order to increase capacity of knowledge on better quality of agricultural products; initiation of pilot projects on agro-tourism; creating organizational informative structures, etc. Support of renewable energy projects is also foreseen. MDP has planned the establishment of vocational training center for young professionals for capacity building in agriculture, tourism and energy. Research opportunities for preservation of historical and landscape values, development and promotion in order to support tourism and outdoor recreation are also part of Suhareka MDP.

As number of schools is insufficient, MDP foresees establishment of three high schools in the urban area of Suhareka, Mushtisht and Studençan, then establishment of primary schools in rural and urban areas, supplementation of teaching material for preschool and kindergartens, etc.

Highway Pristina - Merdare – Morine, which is planned in Spatial Plan of Kosovo (2006), has been already finished and is operational. Another major project planned in MDP of Suhareka is Hydro system Dracena and municipality development should be adapted to it.

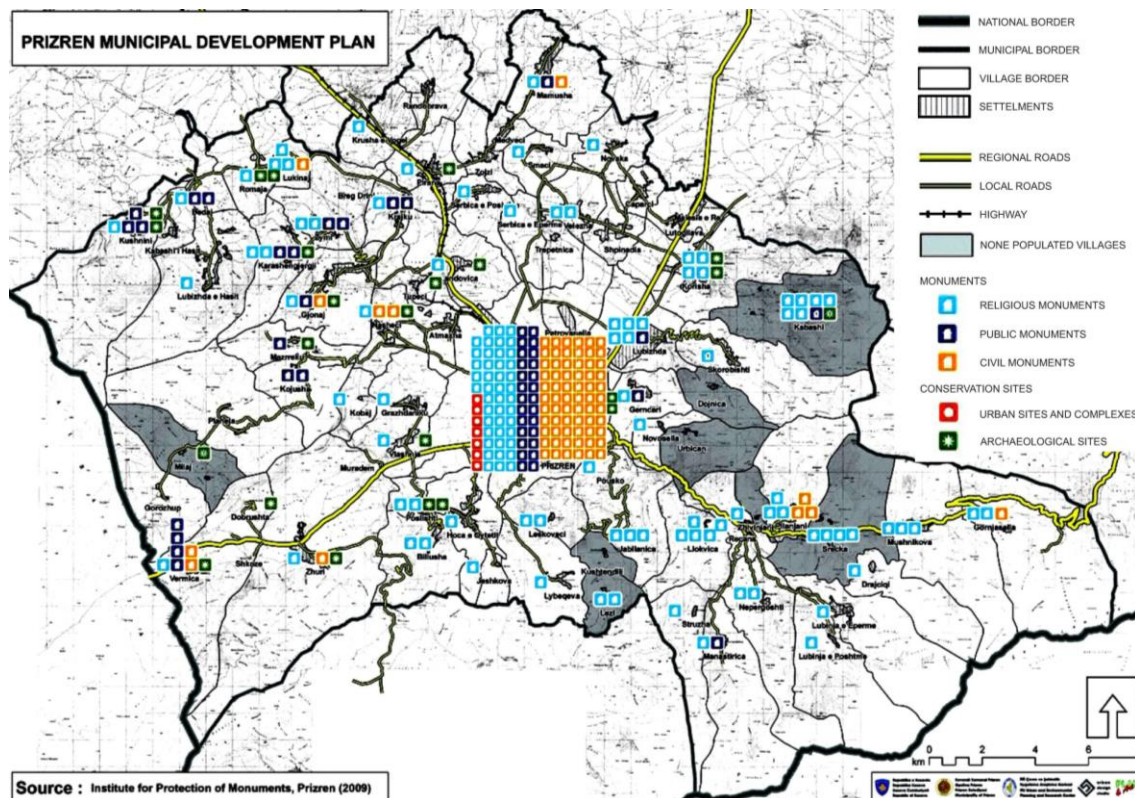
These important projects will positively affect lives of local residents, contributing to overall development of the municipality of Suhareka¹²⁷. The SPK (2010) calls the municipality to actively participate in capital projects, in planning and implementation, and Suhareka Municipality provides very good example for this.

4.4.10. Municipality of Prizren

Municipality of Prizren lies in the northern part of Dukagjini Region and covers an area of about 640 km² with about 240000 inhabitants. The Kosovo Agency for Statistics during the last census in 2011 registered 177781 inhabitants.

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosovo (2010), this municipality belongs to the Orange Zone-Gardens of Kosovo, with planned agriculture as great potential for its economic development (Figure 78.).

Figure 78. Map of cultural monuments in Municipality of Prizren



Source: MDP of Prizren, 2010 (p.93)

The Municipal Development Plan (MDP of Prizren, 2010) Prizren is drafted in full harmony with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo.

Natural heritage

Among the most important potentials of the Municipality of Prizren is the National Park "Sharr Mountain", containing botanical, zoological and environmental values. The park covers approximately 19500 hectares of area and extends further through the mountains of Prevalaa. Another potential of Prizren are natural reserves such as: Popovo prase, mountain peak Oshlak, Golem Bor, river Lumbardh Gorge, Oak tree in Maras, Elm tree, etc.

MDP of Prizren (2010) underlines two main potentials in Prizren, Cultural Heritage and natural reserves which are original natural environments. These reserves contain characteristic plants, zoological world and ecosystems as its integral part, and are designated for conservation of such genetic stock. Natural reserves are stored in situ under strict classification of plants, zoological species as well as special environments. In Kosovo, there are 75 protected natural areas covering about 46437 ha (4.25 % of the territory of Kosovo). Prizren possesses three of such natural reserves: the mountain peak Arnet, Oshljak peak and the Great Pine tree composed of pure Pine-Arnet (*Pinus*

Heldreichi); the largest protected area is “Sharri” Mountains National Park located in the Municipality of Prizren. “Sharri” Mountains are located in both Kosovo and Macedonian territory and cover an area of 1600 km². An area of about 1100 km² of Sharr Mountains in northern part belongs to Kosovo.

The most important river is the Drini i Bardhë which forms a small lake in the village Dorusht, then the river Lumëbardh which flows from Zupa and passes through the center of Prizren, as well as Topllusha River which joins flows into the “Drini i Bardhë” river in Krajk village, etc. (Figure 79.).

Figure 79. Natural and cultural heritage in municipality of Prizren



Source: MDP of Prizren, 2010 (p.26)

A Waste Sanitary Landfill is located In the municipality of Prizren.

Cultural Heritage

The municipality of Prizren is one of the wealthiest cities in Kosovo in terms of its cultural heritage. According to Prizren MDP, the Regional Office for Protection of Monuments has enlisted a total of 291 cultural monuments in this municipality. The following are capital monuments: Prizren Fortress, Museum of Prizren League, the Fountain Square, Marash neighborhood and sub-fortress complex, Karabash Square and Sinan Tekke Complex. The other cultural heritage monuments in the Municipality of Prizren are 55 mosques, 15 shrines and 8 tekkes. The most popular mosques are Sinan Pasha Mosque, Gazi Mehmet Pasha Mosque, Emin Pasha Mosque, etc. The Christian monuments include 47 churches and 4 monasteries; the most renowned are the Church of St. Friday, Bogorodica Ljevishka, St. Gabriel Monastery etc.

Prizren possesses buildings with emphasized vernacular architecture such as bridges, roads, springs, houses etc. These cultural monuments make Prizren a very special place and as such, the most visited one for cultural tourism.

Economy

Significant potential for economic development in the municipality of Prizren are agriculture, livestock breeding, fisheries, aquaculture etc. According to Prizren MDP, the villages Mamusha, Krusha e Vogël, Medveci and Pirana are key areas for production of vegetables like peppers, tomato, pumpkin, potatoes, beans, peas, onions, cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, spinach, etc., grains like sunflower, corn, barley, oats, rye, etc., orchards like apples, pears, plums, etc., and cultivation of

forest fruits like blackberries, raspberries and medical herbs. One of traditional and prospective potentials in the municipality of Prizren is vineyards currently covering an area of about 900ha of socially-owned property. Prizren MDP¹²⁵ considers fertile land and abundant water resources as great potential for development of agriculture, especially cultivation of fruits, along with capacity for livestock breeding and fishery, although there is a lack of proper organization for development of these sectors. Prizren area is known for fishery- villages Vlashnje and Vërmica have numerous fish restaurants contributing to fish production as well as local tourism. MDP also sees exploitation of gravel and sand from river beds as one of important industrial activities in the area.

Numerous social enterprises are considered as potentials for economic development. They include: Metal Production Plant, Brick Factory, Leather Factory, Textile Factory, Shoe Factory, manufacture of chemical and pharmaceutical products Farmakos, Three Flour Mills, food procession factories, vineries, liquor factory, etc.

Hydropower plant Zhur,¹²⁶ as another potential for economic development, is part of Kosovo's Energy Strategy. It has two hydropower plants within Prizren municipal boundaries, one in village Zhur and another one in river banks of Drini i Bardhë.

Education

Prizren's educational system is organized in the following educational institutions: “Gjon Buzuku” gymnasium, technical high school “Gani Çavdërbasha”, Economic High School “Ymer Prizreni”, Medicine High School “Luciano Motroni”, and Music High School “Lorenc Antoni”. Educational institutions are attended by about 2,418 students. Prizren developed teaching in two special schools for students with disabilities. Municipality of Prizren opened two private colleges and public University of Prizren “Ukshin Hoti” with faculties: Faculty of Computer Science, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Education.

According to Ministry of Education, Science and Technology plans, the Competence Center shall be established in Prizren as an institution for vocational education and training mainly in administration, business and marketing.

Strategic projects

Some of strategic projects planned under Prizren MDP are programs for implementation of urban design and projects related to historic center of Prizren city. Plans to develop a comprehensive project for restoration of historic buildings and monumental buildings and rehabilitation projects are also expected. Preparation of management plans for locations situated in historical protected parts are planned, whereas promotion of cultural and natural heritage will be encouraged in regional and global programs. Informative educational programs, management of natural and cultural touristic destinations including archaeological sites, managing the National Park as well as building of capacities for development of tourism, are also expected.

Special projects for protection of Lumëbardh and Drini i Bardhë River, research project on suitable location for gravel extraction activities, drafting of management plan for river reservoirs etc., are planned. Prizren MDP encourages production of crops and establishment of training and consulting

¹²⁵ MDP Prizren, 2010 (p. 189)

¹²⁶ MDP Prizren, 2010 (p. 358)

programs to increase efficiency in all economic development spheres including livestock breeding, dairy production and procession, local beverage production, artisanal activities, and cultivation of vineries. Establishment of educational institutions in rural areas, touristic centers for promotional purposes, etc. are to be considered. In this regard, one of capital and very ambitious projects is planning for construction of ski center in Prevalle.

4.4.11. Municipality of Dragash¹²⁷

Dragash municipality lies in the southern part of Dukagjini Region, with an area of about 453.80 km². According to Kosovo Agency for Statistics, during the last census in 2011, a total of 33.997 inhabitants were registered.

According to the Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK), this municipality belongs to the Orange Zone - Gardens of Kosovo, planned to prioritize agriculture as its potential for economic development. The Municipal Development Plan (MDP) for Dragash is drafted in compliance with the Spatial Plan of Kosova (Figure 80.).

Natural Heritage

One of the most important natural resources in Dragash municipality is the National Park of Sharr Mountains which covers an area of about 55.5 % of the overall size of municipality.

"Numerous alpine landscapes, mountain meadows and forests including endemic ancient pine trees that contribute to natural resources of the area, significant number of habitual locations, rare species of flora and fauna, including species of common European importance such as brown bear, Balkan wolf and lynx"¹²⁸

In all Sharr mountains of widespread species, naming is in general done from references as "Scardus" in ancient maps by Ptolemeaeus (Ptolomaeus Claudius, AD 100-178) like *Anthyllis scardica*, *Crocus scardicus*, *Nartheceum scardicum*, *Onobrychis Montana*, *Sideritis scardica*, *Stachys scardica*, *Verbascum scardicolum*, and *Viola schariensis*¹²⁹. Other potential natural resources of this municipality are rivers: Drini i Bardhë, Restelica, the River Basin Lepenc, river Brod, Pllajnik river, river Sotka etc.

In the municipality of Dragash, a Waste Sanitary Landfill is located.

Cultural heritage

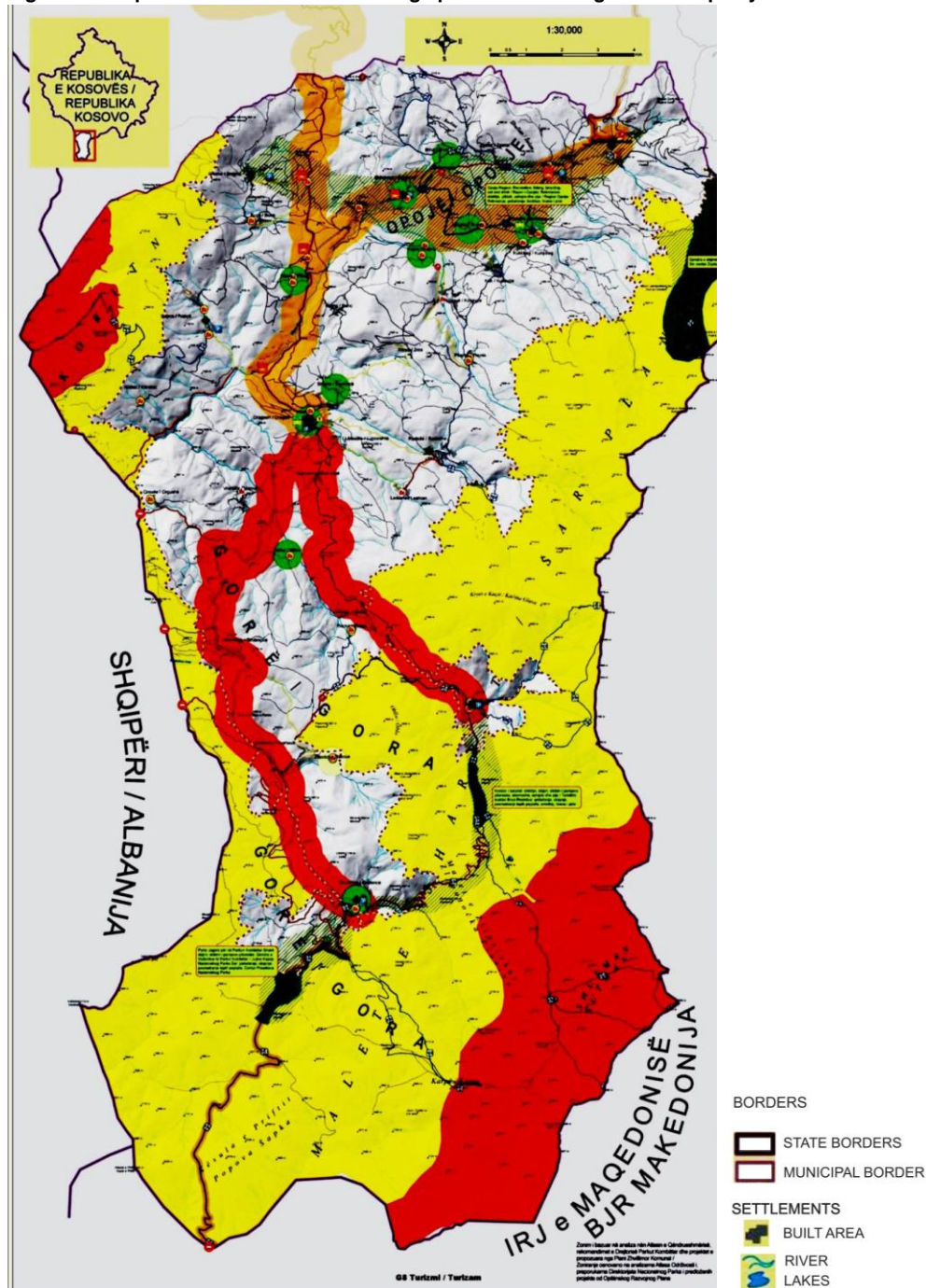
According to KDP for Dragash municipality, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports is preparing an inventory list of cultural heritage, whereas through workshops and contacts with local communities a list of cultural heritage assets was produced, involving, among others, two archaeological sites, eight religious sites and two agricultural buildings. This list also includes monuments and artefacts protected by the law of the former Yugoslavia such as: the ruins of fortification, the Hill of Hissar, Kukli Bey Mosque, and ruins of facility/religious artefacts.

¹²⁷ The notes are taken from the Municipal Development Plan of Dragash, 2012

¹²⁸ MDP of Dragash, 2012 (p.113)

¹²⁹ MDP of Dragash, 2012 (p.113)

Figure 80. Map touristic and cultural heritage potentials in Dragash Municipality



Source: MDP Dragash, 2012

The Dragash Municipal Development Plan (2012) states that this heritage is in line with international cultural values as defined in series of UNESCO and the Council of Europe chapters and conventions, though not at the level of protected monuments in Kosovo. "This also includes a great consideration for natural and cultural landscapes, intangible cultural heritage, local architecture (including

agricultural buildings) and groups of buildings, as well as a broader list of potential archaeological objects, religious objects/artefacts and other potential monuments.”¹³⁰

Economy

“Beautiful Sharr landscapes, healthy climate, clean air, numerous cold springs, rivers and attractive alleys, forests, flora and fauna, characteristic of Opoja lake, traditions and customs, folklore, Ottoman period buildings, snow –fall, suitable skii terrain etj., are the twelve potential resources Dragash possesses for tourism development.”¹³¹

Another potential for economic development is the opportunity to cultivate lands that comprises an area of about 11,603.00 ha (26.6 %). In these areas, grain (wheat, oats, barley, rye, etc.), herbs, fruits, vegetables and honey are cultivated. Economic development is promised by a great number of entrepreneurs such as: textile factories Remateks, three dairy products procession factories, three slaughterhouses, etc. Plantations with an area of about 211 hectares located in the north of Dragash also provide some potential for economic development.

Education

According to information obtained from the Dragash MDP there are two facilities where teaching is attended by 487 women and 191 men. According to standards, it is obvious that there is a lack of schools in the municipality, considering the number of inhabitants and the areal coverage.

Strategic projects

Dragash MDP plans promotion of traditional buildings value as part of cultural heritage, support of private owners in preservation and restoration of traditional buildings, proposing of funding and technical expertise. This document plans touristic development through existing opportunities (climbing trails, festivals) and promotion of new opportunities (i.e. skiing, ethnological museum). Villages hosting major tourist activities shall serve as Dragash “tourist center”, which will serve as starting point for every activity that interrelates with organizing events to preserve cultural and spiritual beliefs based on professional research and international best practices.

The above mentioned objectives and increase of public awareness about cultural and natural heritage as an essential objective of the municipality of Dragash development is planned through establishment of a municipal board for planning and economic development that involves at least directorates of agriculture, economy and education. Some important pillars for the economic development is supporting existing associations of producers and new associations by economic sectors (bee-keepers, farmers, dairy product collectors etc.), and establishment of an industrial area and its implementation in the city of Dragash. Through them, one can observe continuous improvement of manufacturing process of agricultural products, bees, forests, plants, meat and dairy products, which provide great potential, thus leading to increase of their quantity and quality through cooperation and marketing.

The MDP plan envisages opening of a new vocational secondary school and establishment of professional classes in the region of Gora, etc.

¹³⁰ MDP of Dragash, 2012 (p.119)

¹³¹ MDP Dragash, 2012 (p.58)

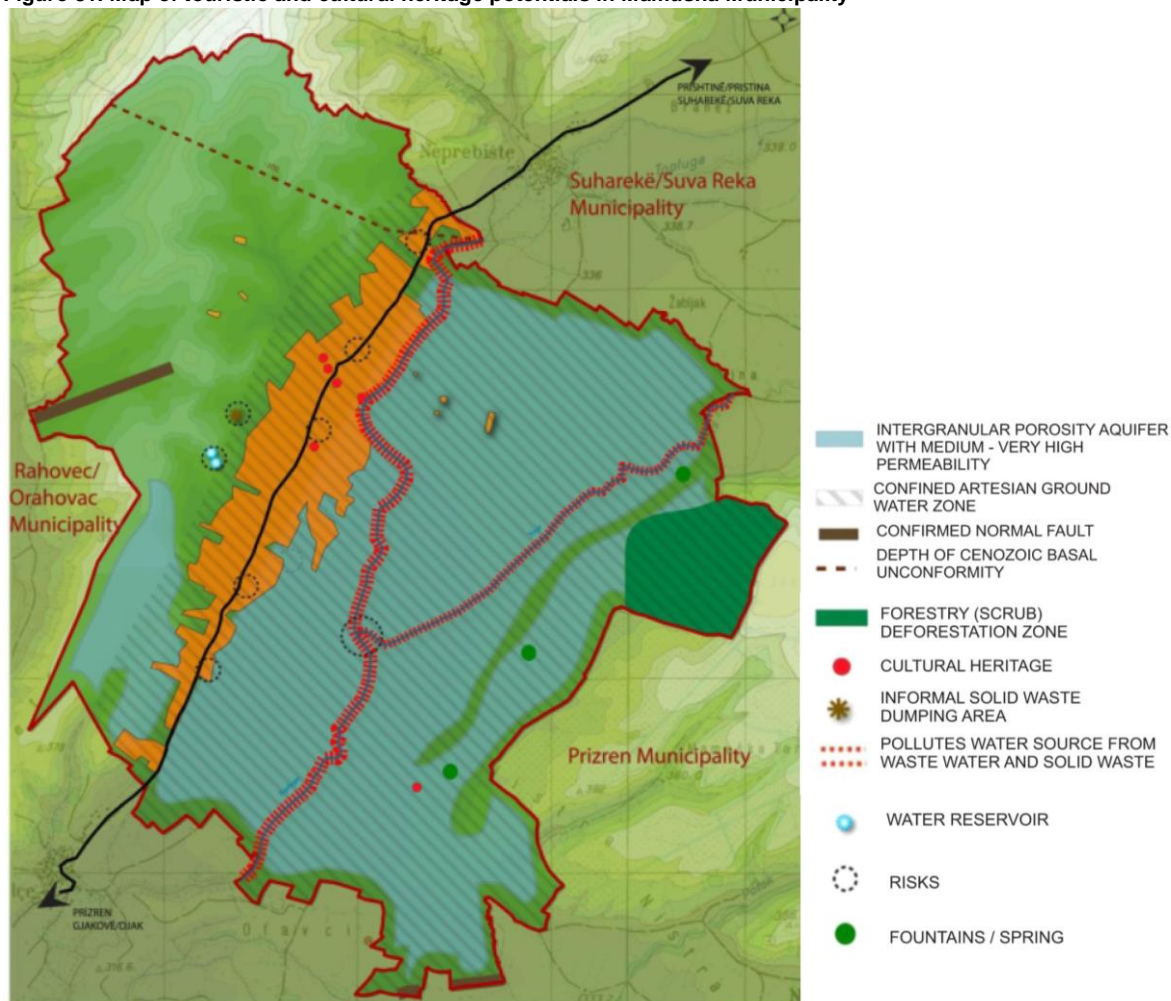
4.4.12. Mamusha Municipality¹³²

Mamusha municipality lies in the south of Kosovo, namely the southeast of Dukagjini Plain and has a surface of about 11 km² and 5507 inhabitants.

According to Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK), this municipality belongs to the orange zone – Gardens of Kosovo and plans have been made to give priority to agriculture in order to boost its economic development.

It is worth mentioning that Municipal Development Plan (MDP) of Mamusha was drafted in line with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo.

Figure 81. Map of touristic and cultural heritage potentials in Mamusha Municipality



Source: MDP Mamusha, 2012

Cultural heritage

Natural resources of Mamusha Municipality contained in the MDP are hills Macovina and Ticalnik planted with vineyards. Mamusha possesses very rich underground water sources that were used by

¹³² All information was obtained from the MDP of Mamusha, 2014

inhabitants for drinking and irrigation of arable land. Two rivers pass through this municipality- the bigger one called River Toplluhe and the smaller one called Terne.

The fauna in the forest is composed of birds, insects, turtles, bees, foxes, wolves, snakes, etc.

Another potential of this municipality is wild blueberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*), clover (*Trifolium*), Timotej (*Phleum pratense*). Some parts are dominated by oaks (*Quercus sessiflora*), but there are also some Acacia, wild pears (*Pyrus sylvestris*), wild plums (*Prunus domestica*), different types of fig trees (*Acer ssp*) and wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) growing.

Cultural heritage

The MDP of Mamusha identifies some monuments of cultural heritage such as Sahat Kulla, which according to Islamic calendar was built in year 1230 by Mahmut Pasha, and the Ottoman historic cemetery located in southeast of Mamusha. This cemetery is about 300 years old. Sahat Kulla and historical cemetery are out of use and damaged. The MDP has also identified old houses which were built 100 years ago with only two or three of them being habitable.

There are two mosques in Mamusha: one of them located in the center of Mamusha and the other one in southern part of this municipality.

Economy

Natural sources such as rivers, mountains, hilly and mountainous terrain, which will be adequately protected by limiting construction areas, are considered as potential in Mamusha municipality. Another potential for economic development are fertile agricultural lands, vineyards, etc.

Transport also represents a very important activity of people and it is a vital part of economy, thus playing an important role in spatial connections. The main road connecting Municipality of Suhareka and Municipality of Prizren pass through Municipality of Mamusha, hence the MDP foresees this as another potential for economic development.

Education

According to information acquired from the MDP of Mamusha, it is obvious that the system of education in this municipality is organized in three levels: pre-school, primary and secondary educations that take place in two school buildings.

Pre-school education is placed in school "Haci Ömer Lütfü".

As of 2010, the primary and lower secondary level have started attending classes in new school "Haci Ömer Lütfü". This school is attended by five children with disabilities.

Secondary school level – the secondary school "Ataturk" in Mamusha started functioning in 2002 whereas it provided two courses in natural and social sciences.

Strategic projects

The MDP provides a vision for spatial development of municipality of Mamusha and joint direction for policies and programs in order to achieve identified strategic goals and priorities.

The MDP suggests some strategic plans related to future development of the municipality such as boosting agriculture as the main development sector for the municipality, preserving agricultural land, improving social infrastructure, public services, etc.

The MDP provides strategic instructions for local leaders, business community and citizens. The purpose of these instructions is as follows:

- Control development in sustainable manner by promoting common interests of inhabitants in area of social development, environment, economic and infrastructure development within Mamusha municipality.
- Identify strategies efficiently and effectively in order to use potential natural and social sources.
- Carry out identification of potential locations and resources for development of municipality.
- Support balanced development in urban and rural areas.
- Identify priorities for implementation of projects.
- Protection and use of natural and cultural heritage for tourism and economic development.
- Manage construction, reconstruction, protection and consolidation.
- Manage drafting of Urban Regulation Plan for zone A. etc.

4.4.13. The coherence and harmony of the MDP with the Spatial Plan of Kosovo and other relevant documents in the function of rural tourism

All municipalities in Dukagjini Region have been completed with Municipal Development Plans (MDP) and they have maximally adhered to recommendations provided by the Spatial Plan of Kosovo (SPK). These documents produced by different organizations or competent planning companies, have been drafted according to recommendations of the Law on Spatial Planning No.2003/14. Article 13 of the law in question regulates destination, content and procedures of the MDP drafting and approval. All MDPs, apart from being in coherence with the abovementioned law and the SPK, are tentatively oriented towards sustainable development by maximally trying to protect agricultural land. Apart from registering facts about the surface and the number of inhabitants, the MDP analysis has focused on natural and cultural heritage, economic capacities, education and strategic projects foreseen for economic development of the municipality in the future. Based on analysis of these documents, we find that Dukagjini Region has very good natural and cultural capacities for development of rural tourism. Although there were some projects oriented towards industry development, it cannot be assumed that, in future, developments may take a negative course so as to endanger natural and cultural potentials. Based on analyzed MDPs, tourism is not priority for spatial development of Kosovo neither in the SPK nor in the MDP. Only a few of them make a slight mention of rural tourism as development option. But in all MDPs, agriculture is the foundation of economic development and there are elements in favor of sustainable development.

It should be pointed out that relevant offices and experts of traffic, health, education, police, etc. have been consulted about all MDPs and they have gone through public discussion stage.

However, in relation to perspective of rural tourism, these plans should be corrected in their revision stage and there should be a clearer definition of development course for municipalities of Dukagjini Region towards sustainable development by favoring nature protection, development of “green” agriculture and creation of conditions for rural tourism development.

Having in mind that it was the first time that these MDPs were drafted in Kosovo, all contracting parties lacked experience and municipal officials were faced with a new format of plans they had not seen before, therefore the process of providing municipalities with MDPs was not satisfactory. While Urban Development Plans were accepted better, Municipal Development Plans were given minor importance by municipal administration. Partition of municipalities (the case of Mamusha being separated from Prizren Municipality) or favoring of some municipalities with predominantly Serbian population (such as Hoqë e Madhe) have created unnecessary development eccentricity by causing differences in development, which is not in line with principles of sustainable development.

However, findings from MDP analysis in this chapter provide favorable basis that could be used to draft the profile of Dukagjini region, since the presented factual state of affairs is rather credible. There are some other distinguished MDPs, drafted by international institutions that brought their experience and quality (MDP of Suhareka, Dragash, Hocë e Madhe, etc.).

Almost all MDPs mention rural tourism slightly, but no document deals seriously with this type of touristic activity, apart from MDPs dealt with by in this chapter and plans in Chapter 4.2 and 4.3, which directly or indirectly take into consideration rural tourism (Chapter 4.5.).

4.5. Specific plans, projects and important reports related to Dukagjini Region

Documents for evaluation in this chapter were selected by using the following criteria:

- Interrelation of the document with the topic of research
- Interrelation of the document with Dukagjini Region
- Credibility of the document, and
- Time frame of drafting

This study also considered a great number of documents which are also important and maybe as important as these ones but, which, in this case, either repeat data or percentage of their content of importance to the study is minor in comparison to entirety. It could be said that these documents complete the puzzle that remained empty from documents analyzed and evaluated in Chapters 4.1.-4.3.

4.5.1. “Sector Profile of Tourism in Kosovo”

The most recent document dedicated to tourism in Kosovo is the document of the Ministry of Trade and Industry “Sector Profile of Tourism” (SPT) drafted by Hajrulla Çeku. This report is financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, within the framework of “Aid for Trade” project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This report offered to the Government of Kosovo, to the involved and to interested parties a profile of the sector of tourism to support processes and projects for development of tourism in Kosovo. “The data sources include a large scale survey with tourism firms, a review of existing legislative and policy framework regulating the sector, existing reports and statistical data on tourism and semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders of the sector (central and local government tourism officials, tourism associations, cultural event organizers, tourism experts, etc.).”¹³³

This document provides information on changes and developments of institutional policies in the field of tourism, thus completing existing data and statistics, with the purpose of not only presenting the current state of affairs but also the trends in Kosovar tourism. Lack of complete and systematic information, including the lack of statistics made studies and planning more difficult in every sector, including tourism. This report used data provided by formal common sources, municipal sources but also those collected at the level of companies and organizations involved in the sector of tourism (66 businesses were surveyed). A great part of the report is based on a considerable number of interviewees that were in any way involved in the sector of tourism.

“Sector Profile of Tourism” provides important information regarding basic firm data, Trade Regulations and Free Trade performance, employment and human capacities and Labour Regulation in Kosovo. There are also some relevant data regarding legislation, law enforcement, bussines associations of tourism, festivals and cultural events, and International assistance for tourism development.

¹³³ Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, 2014 (p.7)

Based on information provided by Mr. Baki Hoti, Head of Kosovo Alternative Tourism Association, this report provides that Kosovo had 20% increase in the number of foreign tourists in the first six months of 2013 compared to the same period of 2012. “The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) has set a goal that tourism will constitute 10-12% of GDP by 2020. While this ambitious objective is encouraging, it also raises a number of questions including, whether Kosovo has necessary resources, infrastructure and capacity to meet this goal, not to mention long-term vision and sound, sustainable strategy.”¹³⁴

Chapter 10 of SPT describes business associations of tourism that operate in Kosovo and associated in “Kosovo Tourism Association (KOTAS) which is non-profitable, non-governmental association, founded by individuals for the purpose of supporting development of mutually beneficial tourism and its related sectors, programmes and initiatives implemented at all levels in Kosovo.”¹³⁵

- The Kosovo Alternative Tourism Association (KATA)- recently established non-profit tourism association.
- Tourism Association of the southern region is a joint initiative between Regional Development Agency South and Municipality of Prizren.
- The association PRO IN was established in 2012, with the goal to promote locally produced food and drinks. It has 2.500 individual members.

Chapter 11.2 of SPT elaborates Strategic Approach stating that tourism is left outside priority areas of wider development agenda of Kosovo. “Therefore, Kosovo needs to have a coherent strategy for tourism development, one that would allow for parallel resource management and sustainable tourism development. However, this implies that, along with the government, participation of local residents as mediators between the private sector and government is essential to protecting natural resources and environment in general.”¹³⁶

Chapter 12.1 – “Festival and Cultural Events” elaborates on few important events and few others are only mentioned.

- **Dokufest** in Prizren, a film festival, one of the most influential events organized annually. According to festival’s statistics, some 10000 people attended the last edition, while 23 % of the total numbers of guests were foreign visitors. Research conducted by GAP Institute during the 10th edition of the festival in 2011 revealed that economic impact of Dokufest on GDP was €3.1million, while this number over the following four years is expected to reach € 21.9million.¹³⁷
- **GreenFest**, a music festival in Peja, is an event for Balkan audiences, especially young people. The festival, which was established to promote art, nature and tourism in the region of Pejë/Peć, is organized in the park.

¹³⁴ Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, taken from (Council of Europe, A dilemma: use of cultural heritage for tourism or utilisation of tourism for the protection and maintenance of cultural heritage? at <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/cooperation/kosovo/PejaHeritageArticle.pdf>), 2014 (p.16)

¹³⁵ Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, 2014 (p.16)

¹³⁶ Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, 2014 (p.25)

¹³⁷ Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, 2014 (p.27)

- **Tour de Kosovo** is a tourist event which uses cycling for promotion of natural and cultural heritage of Kosovo.
- **Anibar**, animated film festival in Peja organized its 4th edition in 2013 and hosted over 4,000 visitors. Anibar also offers special touring programs for cultural and natural heritage sites of Pejë/Peć region.
- **NGOM Fest** is Prizren-based music festival. This event is attended by dozens of music bands and DJs from all over the world. "It attracts thousands of visitors from Kosovo, the region and farther afield (the 2013 edition is reported to have hosted over 6000 visitors) and it was also awarded by local government as the most massive cultural event of the year"¹³⁸

Chapter 11.2 of SPT elaborates on institutional support which is, in general, very weak. In this chapter are listed 5 difficulties related to promotion of cultural tourism:

- Limited funding from local and central governments
- Lack of proper cultural and tourism policies at the level of local government
- Inability of local governments to integrate culture into broader tourism development strategic framework
- Inadequate physical infrastructure for cultural and artistic events, and
- Insufficient cooperation between cultural events and other tourism operators (mainly private)

Tourism was supported more by donors than by governments. The most common donor agencies for tourism development projects were: European Union, German International Development Agency (GIZ), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and several other national agencies.

"As one of good practices, European Commission funded the Tourism Development Project "See you in Dukagjin", implemented by Cultural Heritage without Borders. The aim of the project is to contribute to creating basis for sustainable development in Kosovo and contribute to consolidation of economic regions, creation of regional development framework and support economic regeneration, job creation and human resource development in economic regions "¹³⁹

GIZ supported Enhancement of competitiveness of private sector and rural economic development projects, whereas UNDP Kosovo supports tourism development in Kosovo through its project *Sustainable Land Use Management and Conservation of Biodiversity in Dragash municipality*. The Kosovo Private Enterprise Program was a four-year activity designed to stimulate Kosovo's economy by increasing competitiveness of private businesses, supported by the USAID. The USAID-elaborated Kosovo Private Enterprise Program (KPEP) program was launched in late 2008 where Tourism was launched as key activity for KPEP in early 2009.¹⁴⁰

"Sector Profile of Tourism" is a summarized report which could be considered as one of the most complete documents with information about tourism in Kosovo and segments on which tourism depends either directly or indirectly. In spite of some recommendations provided in some of its parts, this document adheres to its main purposes – the Profile of the Sector of Tourism in Kosovo.

¹³⁸ Çeku H., "Sector Profile of Tourism", MTI, 2014 (p.28)

¹³⁹ Çeku H., "Sector Profile of Tourism", MTI, 2014 (p.30)

¹⁴⁰ Çeku H., "Sector Profile of Tourism", MTI, 2014 (p.30)

Conclusions and recommendations emphasize “The first challenge for development of tourism sector is lack of reliable official data and statistics.”¹⁴¹ It lists a few conclusions and recommendations like:

- Kosovar authorities do not consider tourism a priority policy area.
- Kosovo also lacks tourism managers and mid-level hotel and restaurant professionals.
- Small number of women owners in businesses (9.1%).
- Curricula of vocational schools and university departments need improvement.
- Missing tourism development strategy slowed down institutional coordination.
- Many cities do not even have proper tourist information points.

Based on findings of this document, it is obvious that development of sustainable tourism in Kosovo is possible and rather feasible perspective. All it takes is to place tourism higher in the list of priorities in development strategy of Kosovo. The Government of Kosovo should consider tourism as true potential for development and bring together all relevant stakeholders (municipalities, businesses, civil society, tourist operators, etc.) to the common platform and language for development of Kosovar tourism. Natural and cultural resources, but also existing touristic capacities in Dukagjini Region are richer, compared to the rest of Kosovo.

4.5.2. “Development of tourism and program of spatial regulation of tourism in Kosovo 2004

One of the first documents that dealt with the issue of Kosovar tourism is “Development of tourism and programme of spatial regulation of tourism in Kosovo 2004” drafted by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), with author Kolë Staka, advisor in the MTI and two co-authors, Halil Bajrami (the then Director of Department of Tourism in the Ministry of Trade and Industry) and Zana Mehmeti (Professional researcher of the Institute for Spatial Planning in the MESP).

This report describes the difficult situation of hotel capacities, which became even more difficult during the period 1989-1999 and the armed conflict in Kosovo, by mentioning the decline of number of beds from 8000 to 6000. The dire situation of touristic economy is also based on conclusions provided below¹⁴².

- Social sector hotels, which possess about 70% of beds in Kosovo, are old, in a bad state and not well equipped.
- They used to be oriented to transit and business tourism that is based on prices and are still oriented this way.
- Number of guests in socially-owned hotels is small (premises for leisure activities, catering alternatives, etc.), Kosovo failed to create its touristic image both in the past and now.
- Efficient domestic sale as an instrument of marketing or KNOW-HOW is little or not present at all.
- Hotels’ management is not oriented towards competition or market economy and possesses no modern communication and information systems.
- Poor organization and management of touristic policy at national level.
- Poor connection of touristic offer (lack of attractive touristic product).
- Lack of strategy for long-term social-economic development.

¹⁴¹ Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, 2014 (p.32)

¹⁴² MESP, “Development of tourism and the programme of spatial regulation of tourism”, 2004 (p.4, 5)

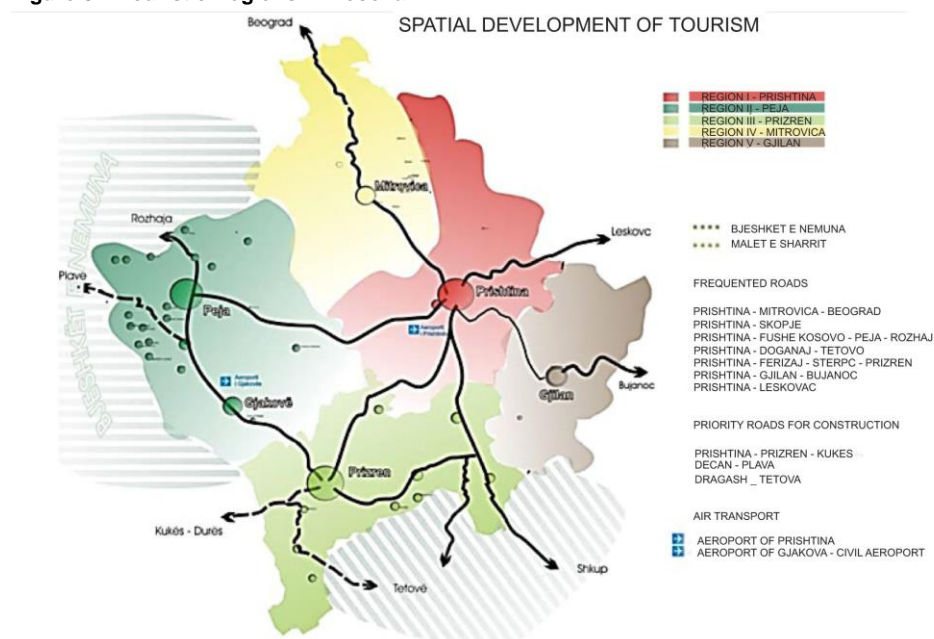
- Lack of spatial planning of Kosovo.
- Poor training of managerial staff and non-development of managerial system in touristic and hotel companies of Kosovo.
- Problems with energy, water and sewerage of black waters and waste.
- Destruction of nature and urban centers by illegal construction.
- Absence of sales channels and cooperation of providers.
- "Black market".
- Insufficient interest of investors due to failure to solve ownership over land, benefits for investments and categorization.

Since then, this document underlines the necessity of having a strategy for development of tourism in Kosovo that has not been drafted yet.

This sectorial report divides Kosovo in 5 touristic regions and the two biggest ones belong to Dukagjini Region -Peja and Prizren regions (Figure 82.):

1. Central touristic region of Prishtina
2. **Touristic Region of Bjeshkët e Nemuna**
3. **Touristic Region of Sharr**
4. Touristic Region of Kopaonik
5. Touristic Region of Morava e Epërme

Figure 82. Touristic Regions in Kosova



Source: Çeku H., "Sector Profile of Tourism", MTI, 2014 (p.32)

According to this document, the **Touristic Region of Bjeshkët e Nemuna** sits in 6 municipalities: Peja, Deçan, Istog, Klina, Gjakova and Rahovec. The main center is Peja, while Deçan and Gjakova are sub-centers. Touristic resources which may be used in all seasons are identified in this region. Apart from all winter sports that may take place at a height of over 1.000 m, it also provides ideal opportunities for summer mountain tourism (walking, alpinism) as well as health tourism. The following are priority touristic products planned in this touristic region:

- Mountain tourism
- Winter – recreational tourism
- Rural tourism
- Hunting and fishing
- Health tourism
- Transitory tourism
- Health – curative
- Recreational excursions
- Alpinist tourism
- Speleological tourism

Touristic Region of Sharr includes the mountainous massive as the most distinguished and widest entirety of this part of Kosovo. These areas include the following municipalities: Prizren, Shtërpce, Dragash, Kaçanik and Suhareka. According to this document, organization of two touristic systems, the one of Brezovica and the Dragash one, was planned.

- Mountainous tourism
- Winter – recreational tourism
- Rural tourism
- Hunting and fishing
- Activities in nature
- Alpinist tourism
- Recreational excursions

"Development of tourism and programme of spatial regulation of tourism" attaches special importance to both road and air transport. Opening of new corridors in direction of Montenegro and Macedonia is foreseen as precondition for development of tourism. There is also a recommendation to "operationalize the Airport of Gjakova, as regional, civil and alternative airport to the one of Prishtina"¹⁴³

This report on spatial development of tourism contains measures for spatial development: aims, activities, basic steps for relevant use of space and drafting of relevant plans, master plans and/or detailed urban plans especially about areas of special values:

- Winter – recreational system "Bjeshka e Belegut" in Deçan,
- Winter – recreational center "Kopranik" in Peja
- Winter – recreational center "Brodi" in Sharr
- Winter – recreational center "Kaçaniku", and
- Winter – recreational center "Bogaj" in Peja.

¹⁴³ MESP, "Development of tourism and the programme of spatial regulation of tourism", 2004 (p.14)

Having in mind that this document was drafted a decade ago, it is a very important document. It is important especially for its evaluation of current situation in a critical manner by also recommending a clear vision for development of tourism in Kosovo. A less traditional approach towards tourism while drafting the Report does not make it less valuable. The document is focused only in the territory of Kosovo and is not viewed in wider regional context. Although, almost the entire text refers to “summer” and “winter” holidays, it however does not forget alternatives such as mountain tourism, winter-recreational tourism, rural tourism, hunting and fishing or speleological tourism. This document preceded drafting of specific documents for Spatial Plan of Kosovo, National Park “Sharri”, Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfalls” and National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” elaborated in Chapter 4.2.

4.5.3. “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2009- 13”

One of the most important documents related to rural development in Kosovo is the general strategy for achieving Agriculture and Rural Development Plan (ARDP) 2009-13 compiled by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD) with EU objectives. In this document, MAFRD has harmonized objectives of Kosovo’s agri-rural sector with the EU Strategy for Rural Development and the two pillars of Common Agricultural Policy of the EU¹⁴⁴ (CAP):

- taking actions in relation to overcoming difficulties that impede sustainable rural development in Kosovo, and
- starting of lining up of agri-rural sector with CAP support policies .

It has objectives to undertake actions to overcome bottlenecks holding back sustainable rural development in Kosovo and start aligning Kosovo’s rural sector with the four axes and 8 of current EU rural development strategy.¹⁴⁵ These axes are:

Axis 1 Competitiveness

- Development of vocational training to meet rural needs (Measure 1)
- Restructuring physical potential in agri-rural sector (Measure 2)
- Managing water resources for agriculture (Measure 3)
- Improving processing and marketing of agricultural products (Measure 4)

Axis 2 Environment and improved land use

- Improving natural resource management (Measure 5)

Axis 3 Rural diversification and quality of rural life

- Farm diversification and alternative activities in rural areas (Measure 6)
- Improvement of rural infrastructure and maintenance of rural heritage (Measure 7)

Axis 4 Community-based local development strategies

- Support for local community development strategies (Measure 8)

Throughout the entire document, there is a spirit of harmonization of rural policy development by comparing the up to date achievements. The “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan” shows the status of progress of immediate challenges in framework of priorities of European Partnership for agri-rural sector for Kosovo. In action 8 of the list, it underlines the necessity for Focus

¹⁴⁴ MAFRD , “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan (ARDP) 2000-13”, 2009 (p.6)

¹⁴⁵ MAFRD , “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan (ARDP) 2009-13”, 2009 (p.7)

implementation of ARDP 2009-13 on following priorities the status of which is “Underway”. This action is broken down into 4 sub-actions, with the last sub-action (d) directly linked to the LEADER approach described in Chapter 2.5:

- a. restructuring agricultural sector, including providing grants for farmers, plus implementing land consolidation (Measure 2);
- b. supporting irrigation, particularly tertiary irrigation, as well as irrigation providers and water users’ associations (Measure 3);
- c. modernising agro-food establishments that have high potential for export and import substitution (Measure 4); and
- d. implementing local community development strategies based on principles of LEADER+ (Measure 8).

This sub-action foresees community based development, especially by enabling rural operators become organized in public-private sector through authorities called Local Action Groups (LAG) composed of administration, businesses and civil society and Associations of Producers or Cooperatives (Figure 83.).

Figure 83. National and Rural Development Objectives Hierarchy

<p>ARDP 2009 - 13 general objectives (level 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased income levels • Improved efficiency and competitiveness of farming • Improved efficiency and competitiveness of processing and marketing of agricultural products • Improved quality and hygiene standards • Sustainable rural development / improved quality of life • Increased employment opportunities • Facilitate entry to the EU 		
<p>National Agriculture Programme Assist in agri-rural restructuring and build agri-rural administrative capacity in line with EU requirements Funding: National and donors</p>	<p>EU's 4 Rural Development Axes, 2009 – 13</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing the competitiveness of agriculture 2. Enhancing the environment / countryside / forestry 3. Enhancing the quality of life in rural areas, and promoting diversification of economic activities 4. Integrating a bottom-up, community approach to formulate local development strategy 	<p>National Agriculture Programme Assist in agri-rural restructuring and build agri-rural administrative capacity in line with EU requirements Funding: National and donors</p>

Specific objectives of EU alignment/rural development measure						
Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
Improving human potential: vocational training; setting up of young farmers; early retirement; management, relief and advisory services	Restructuring physical potential: improvements in production, processing and marketing infrastructures: support for producers groups + semi-subsistence farms	Managing water resources for irrigation: primary, secondary and tertiary irrigation systems: developing sustainable irrigation providers and water user associations	Improving the quality of agricultural production and products: adaptation to new EU standards; participation in food quality schemes (HACCP/TQM); promotion of quality products.	Natural resource management: sustainable use of agricultural and forestry land: a forestation/ establishment of agro-forestry systems; Nature 2000 areas;	Diversifying the rural economy: non-agricultural activities; support for micro-enterprises and SMEs; agro/eco tourism; protection and management of natural heritage	Improving the quality of rural life: basic services; village renewal; rural heritage
<p>Measure 8 Implementation of local community development strategies, contribute to inter-territorial and trans-national cooperation</p> <p>Source: MAFRD, Agriculture and Rural Development Plan (ARDP) 2000-13, 2009 (p.36)</p>						

This document has also considered ARDP 2009-13 strategy and European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) Council Regulation on support for rural development for 2007-13 (Council Regulation 1698/2005) where in its 4th axes emphasizes the importance of integrating LEADER+ bottom-up approach to preparation of local development strategies. Following LEADER, ARDP aims at establishing Local Action Groups (LAGs) in each municipality of Kosovo.

The great support of the EU and donors provided to MAFRD enabled this ministry take the lead with the sector of agriculture and forestry and progress more than other government departments. Unfortunately, like in case of many developments in Kosovo, projects are partial and despite numerous inter-ministerial commissions, experiences are not shared with sectors, with which specific activities are interrelated. Rural tourism as very important economic activity, apart from the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, also requires the involvement of the MAFRD and its similar projects such as LEADER.

4.5.4. “Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009”

“Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009” (RSN) starts with an article from the Constitution of Republic of Kosovo which says: “Nature and biodiversity, living environment and national heritage are everyone’s responsibility”. In a way, given that it is a paragraph of the Constitution, this quote reminds everybody of the importance of natural environment to which, humans as the biggest consumers of its products, belong too.

This report starts with a summary of information collected about the nature of Kosovo that shows beautiful biodiversity that this small place possesses. “Based on previous research, there have been over 1800 species of vascular plant flora identified, 250 vertebrate species, 200 species of butterflies and over 500 macrozoobenthos water taxon. However, survey and inventory of biodiversity are not yet complete.”¹⁴⁶

This report then continues with other data concerning national parks, nature reserves, etc.” The number of preserved natural areas is 97 and includes an area of 47,842.34 ha (4,39% of the territory of Kosovo). These areas include: 11 Nature Reserves, 1 National Park, 82 Nature Monuments, 2 Regional Nature Parks and 1 Forest Park. There are 159 other proposed areas, including the territory of “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” with an area of about 60,000 ha for National Park.”¹⁴⁷

Chapter 2 of RSN provides an interpretation of Law on Nature Protection 2005/02-L18 (Reg. No. 2006/22) where aims of nature protection have explicitly been shown:

- Protection, maintenance, renewal and sustainable use of nature and renewable natural resources.
- Revitalization of damaged areas of nature or parts of it and compensation for damages caused.
- Conservation and restoration of ecological balance in nature.
- Setting up the system for planning, management, inventory, monitoring, information and funding for nature protection.
- Carrying out the goals set out in policies of nature protection.

¹⁴⁶ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.5)

¹⁴⁷ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.7)

- Reduction of extreme use and endangering species of flora and fauna, especially those of particular importance, rare and endangered, as well as their habitats.
- Ensuring the right to public information and public participation in protection of nature.
- Ensuring the right of citizens to healthy environment, rest and recreation in nature.
- Protect biodiversity through conservation of important natural habitats and important species of flora and fauna in favorable conservation status.
- Bringing Kosovo standards in line with those of the European Union.

This document is also special due to extracts from Law on Nature Protection and Categorization of Protected Areas in the Law on Nature Protection is made according to World Union for Conservation of Nature – IUCN:

1. Strict nature reserves
2. National park ("Sharr Mountain" and Bjeshkët e Nemuna) (Figure 84.)
3. Natural monuments
4. Habitat and species' management areas
5. Protected landscape with the purpose of conserving land sceneries (Mirusha Waterfalls)
6. Natural resources protected area

Figure 84. Scenery from “Sharr Mountain” National Park, 16 View from Rusenica Reserve



Source: MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.18)

Chapter 5 of this document provides the list of very well described 19 distinguished natural examples in Kosovo with lot of data, most of them belonging to the Dukagjini Region.

1. “Sharr Mountain” National Park –is one of the biggest resources of Kosovo’s nature (it was widely elaborated in Chapter 4.3.2.) and comprehensive approach is needed for its protection and valorizing.
2. Nerodime River Bifurcation – This natural phenomenon (that does not pertain to Dukagjini Region in this Report) was given an important place in this report. “Nerodime river bifurcation represents the only example in Europe, flowing of a river into two seas: the river springs in the Jezerc Mountains and in the village of Nerodime, it splits irreversibly into two branches, which are pouring in two different seas.”¹⁴⁸ This natural curiosity, which is under protection since 1979, has been endangered so much that there is a risk for it to completely disappear (Figure 85.).

¹⁴⁸ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p. 17)

3. Lynx Reserve in Rusenice (wild cat) is rare and endangered species which is located inside the "Sharr Mountains" National Park in the municipality of Suhareka with a protected area of 300 ha from 1955.
4. "Peak of Arneni" reserve which lies in the altitude of 1946m is rich with endemic type forests - relict of Bosnian pine (*Pinus heldreichii*). One part of these forests with an area of 30 ha, in 1960 has been declared as strict nature reserve.¹⁴⁹
5. Oshlak Reserve is characterized by specific floristic, faunal and phytocenologic species.
6. "Pisha e Madhe" Reserve is located between Prizren and Ferizaj municipalities. Special symbol of Oshlak is local endemic type of *Achillea alexandri* Regis glacial age, where with the other endemic types from the central Balkans *Onobrychis scardica*, forms specific community of *Achillea alexandri* Regis - *Onobrychis scardica*.
7. "Rugova Gorge" is one of the most valuable areas with special natural values which were declared in 1985 a nature monument with hydro-geomorphologic significance with an area of 4.301.05.49 ha. "Besides richness in terms of flora and fauna (biodiversity), the Rugova Gorge introduces prettiness of sceneries, geo-diversity and hydrological features that can be rarely found."¹⁵⁰ In Rugova Gorge is located "Gryka e Madhe" Cave (Figure 86.).
8. "Gryka e Madhe" Cave, with length of the passable corridors and galleries is about 13,450 m, is created in rocks of Triasik from the water flow.¹⁵¹
9. "Thermal Spring" in Istog SPA is from a particular importance, with the thermo-mineral springs (with a water flow of about 17.5 l/s and temperature around 49° C). The water contains calcium-magnesium-hydro carbonate.¹⁵²
10. "Plane Tree" in Marash (*Platanus Orientalis*) in Prizren – is one of oldest tree with over 18 m height and trunk diameter of 2.70 m, which represents a natural rarity in Kosovo. This tree with an area of 0.5 ha was put under legal protection in 1959.
11. Six Trunks of Likoshan represents natural of Kosovo, which in 2006 has been taken under protection as a monument of nature with botanical character.
12. "Radavc Cave" with 1420 m passable corridors is located near the village of Radavc and near the source of Drini i Bardhë. "It is a morpho-hydric phenomenon with genetic, visual and educational values."¹⁵³ (Figure 86.).
13. "SPA Thermal Spring" Skënderaj is located on the slope of the village of Banjë in Skënderaj municipality. The spring has rare hydro values and average flow of about 15 l/sec, with a constant temperature throughout the year (24.8 /0C). In 2007, the area of 1000 m2 was taken under protection as a monument of nature with hydro character.
14. Drini i Bardhë Canyon at Fshajtë's Bridge Canyon, due to hydro-geomorphologic value, in 1986 was taken under protection as a Natural Monument, with genetic, visual and educational values. (Figure 86.).
15. "Drini i Bardhë Spring" has water rich in calcium, nitrate and bicarbonate. It creates the largest waterfalls (25 m) and the largest river in Kosovo. Because it's of hydro-morphological value, Drini i Bardhë was declared a Natural Monument in 1983.

¹⁴⁹ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.19)

¹⁵⁰ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.22)

¹⁵¹ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.23)

¹⁵² MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.24)

¹⁵³ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.29)

16. “Gadime Cave” is built in marble rocks and is one of the most beautiful caves not only in Kosovo. “In this cave are presented all kinds of ornaments, stalagmites and stalactites in various shapes and sizes, and particularly the attention is drawn by aragonite ornaments. The cave is tens of millions years old. It was discovered and put under protection in 1969.”¹⁵⁴
17. “Mirusha Canyon” is the left branch of the Drini i Bardhë River. It has morphological forms, and it is known for 13 lakes and 12 waterfalls with various territories, shapes and heights. In 1983, it was declared a Regional Nature Park.
18. “Gërmia” Regional Park in Prishtina covers an area of 62 km². In this park, about 600 species have been identified. They include vascular flora (five endemic), five types of terraqueous, 7 types of reptiles, 19 mammals and 30 species of birds, etc.
19. “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” (Cursed Mountains) has very valuable geological, geomorphologic, fauna and floristic content. There are over 1,500 plant species, many of them are relict. “These mountains consist of: 8 fish species, 13 species terraqueous, 10 reptile species, 148 bird species, 36 mammals species, 129 species of butterflies from the Lepidoptera type, etc.”¹⁵⁵

Figure 85. Nerodime River Bifurcation



Source: Epoka e re – “Të funksionalizohet Bifurkacioni”,
<http://epokaere.com/index.aspx?SID=13&PMID=6&LID=2&ACatID=5&AID=60011&Ctype=1>, (Approached June 2015)

¹⁵⁴ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.31)

¹⁵⁵ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.34)

Figure 86. Crystals in Gryka e Madhe Cave, Rugova Gorge, Ura e Fshejtë in Gjakova and Baths in Radavc cave in Peja



Source: MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.23-27)

Chapter 6 elaborates on the state of protected areas in 7 sub-chapters by providing data about surfaces, categories, hydrology, speleology, flora, fauna, etc. with maps and photos. These sub-chapters are:

1. Nature protected areas
2. Management of protected areas
3. The state of natural resources at "Sharr Mountain" National Park and Reserves within the Park
4. The state of other reserves
5. The state of nature monuments
6. The state of regional nature parks
7. Proposed areas for protection

RSN describes purposes of managed Nature protected areas, the state of forest ecosystems problems and actions to be undertaken. It brings zoning of National Park, 3D of the profile (Gadime Cave) and lots of tables, giving specific data for certain assets or sites.

Figure 87. Brown Bear(1), Lynx(2), Chamois(3)



Source: MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.70, 71)

Biodiversity, as the most important and critical issue to be treated, is dealt with in Chapter 7 of RSN¹⁵⁶. In this chapter are described:

1. Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*) (Figure 87.)
2. Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) (Figure 87.)
3. Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*) (Figure 87.)
4. Mountain Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) (Figure 87.)
5. Prairie Chicken (*Tetrao urogallus*) (Figure 87.)
6. White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) (Figure 87.)

¹⁵⁶ MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, (2010: 69)

Figure 88. Mountain Eagle (4), Prairie Chicken (5), White Stork (6)



Source: MESP-KEPA, Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009, 2010 (p.71, 72)

Chapter 8 "Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009" brings Regional and International Initiatives and Chapter 9 contains Activities, Legal and Institutional Framework.

In the last chapter (Chapter 8), this report lists problems and recommendations.

Problems:

- Unsatisfactory implementation of existing laws;
- Unsatisfactory reflection of Birds and Habitats Directive in the Law on Nature;
- Lack of Strategy and Action Plan on Nature and Biodiversity;
- Lack of an institution dealing exclusively with nature protection (Nature Protection Institute);
- Lack of management bodies for protected areas;
- Lack of spatial and management plans for protected areas;
- Uncontrolled use of natural resources in protected areas;
- Lack of scientific research on biodiversity;
- Lack of full inventory for flora, fauna and habitat;
- Insufficient budget for nature protection;
- Lack of sufficient staff for nature protection.

Recommendations:

- Approval of 3 new Laws: on Nature Protection, "Sharr Mountain" National Park and "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" National Park,
- Support of exploration project with the purpose of carrying out the inventory of species and habitats, caves etc.
- Drafting the *Red List* of flora and fauna;
- Support of cross border projects for nature protection;
- Preparation of spatial and management plans for nature protected areas;
- Drafting programs and projects on awareness raising and sensitizing on nature protection;
- Establishment of coordination office for identification, ratification and implementation of conventions and other international agreements on nature protection.

"Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009" is the most comprehensive document related to nature, their special and group richnesses, its state, protection and management, etc. This document is sufficient for majority of categories interested in the nature of Kosovo: officials, donors but also students and scientists, in initial stage. In this comprehensive way, it is impossible to provide details of things more than it has been done now in the document in question, but as an initial stage it

provides directions for future studies, a course they may take in providing greater details of any specific chapter or segment.

4.5.5. "Association of Regional Development Agency"

Regional Development Agency for regional development of Kosovo is an excellent initiative supported by EU. "The Association of Regional Development Agencies (ARDA) is a network for implementation of Kosovo and EU policies and is an independent, non-governmental organization established in January 2013 by the five Regional Development Agencies (North, East, West, South and Centre) in Kosovo."¹⁵⁷

ARDA's mission is to coordinate and promote regional and rural development in Kosovo. Despite the fact that the association exists formally, the agencies are more independent than linked. Supporting five Regional Development Agencies in taking leading role in planning and facilitating regional development of Kosovo formally is difficult because at administrative level Kosovo has neither administrative nor planning level. "The ARDA network operates in all five economic regions (North, South, East, West and Centre) in Kosovo and coordinates cooperation and networking of the RDA's to contribute to accelerated regional development of Kosovo. ARDA's key task is to facilitate partnership and collaboration amongst national and local government, business community and civil society initiatives."¹⁵⁸

Six Municipalities of Kosovo are part of the RDA-WEST: Peja, Gjakova, Istogu, Klina, Decani and Junik. The vision of this RDA provides as follows: "Regional Development Agency (RDA-WEST) to become the key institution in the West economic region of Kosovo, engaged in fostering EU Regional Economic Development (EURED) process in the country, confirm strategic role towards its partners assisting in interethnic reconciliation, and assisting in integration of local governments into Kosovo's European integration process."¹⁵⁹

5.5.1.1. Regional Development Agency (RDA) – West region of Kosova

Mission of RDA-WEST is to support regional development which is mainly focused in supporting stakeholders. From 5 mentioned points, the last one is dedicated to inclusiveness and environment: Main-streaming sustainability objectives of "Equal Opportunity for All" and "Securing Sustainable Environment"

It seems that the proposal to support stakeholders in relation to activity of rural tourism development under the topic "*Continuing development structure to achieve long term sustainability and effective stakeholders input for the EURED processes in the Region*", derives from this mission¹⁶⁰ (Figure 89.).

¹⁵⁷ The Association of Regional Development Agencies, <http://arda-kosovo.org/en-us/Home>, (Approached January 2015)

¹⁵⁸ The Association of Regional Development Agencies, <http://arda-kosovo.org/en-us/Home>, (Approached January 2015)

¹⁵⁹ RDA-WEST, http://www.rdawest.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=59&Itemid=92&lang=en, (Approached January 2015)

¹⁶⁰ RDA_WEST, http://www.rdawest.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=12&Itemid=93&lang=en

Figure 89.RDA WEST 20th Governing Board Meeting-March 29th, 2014



Source: Web page of RDA WEST,
http://www.rdawest.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=159&Itemid=97&lang=en, (Approached January 2015)

5.5.1.2. Regional Development Agency (RDA) – Southern region of Kosovo

"The RDA- South has been founded in December 2008 as partnership of municipalities of Prizren/Prizren, Dragash/Dragas, Rahovec/Orahovac, Suhareke/Suvareka, Malisheva/Malisevo and Mamusha/Mamusa to act and function as coordinator and driver of development activities in the southern economic region and its municipalities"

The objective of this agency is to improve regional development activities. It is similar to RDA-West and this agency is also mainly focused in institutional capacity building- "Kosovo to strengthen its economic regions and expand regional development framework in line with EU practices"¹⁶¹ (Figure 90.).

Expected contribution of this project could be found in the overall objective of this agency "...to foster employment for minorities, women and vulnerable groups, as well as civil society and good governance and youth. Special consideration should also be given to environmental issues."¹⁶²

g=en, http://www.rdawest.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=159&Itemid=97&lang=en, (Approached January 2015)

g=en, http://www.rdawest.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=159&Itemid=97&lang=en (Approached January 2015)

¹⁶¹ RDA-South, <http://www.rda-south.org/index.php?lang=en&id=1>, (Approached January 2015)

¹⁶² RDA-South, <http://www.rda-south.org/index.php?lang=en&id=1>, (Approached January 2015)

Figure 90.RDA EAST – Planning meeting in Sharr Hotel



Source: Web page of RDA EAST, <http://www.rda-south.org/index.php?lang=en&id=1>, (Approached January 2015)

Compering with RDA West, web page of RDA EAST is less functional and difficult to be explored. This Agency has managed to develop "Regional Development Strategy for the Economic Region South 2010-2013" which has tourism as third priority. This priority is specified with three measures (in one page):

1. Improving existing tourism base (hard: hotels, restaurants, ski areas, hiking paths etc. as well as soft: capacity building of human resources involved in tourism through training and education).
2. Highly enriching and diversifying existing tourism offer (product development for tourism).
3. Providing improved information and promotion of tourism offer of the region (product marketing, communication).

5.5.1.3. "Local Development Strategy for Municipality of Novo Brdo" (2009)

Local Development Strategy for Municipality of Novo Brdo (LDSfMoNB) is the document that has been mostly adapted to the format of LEADER approach drafted in Kosovo. This format of local strategy in the study related to the present PhD thesis and in regional strategy of rural development in Dukagjini Region has been thought as a final planning stage as Local Plan for territories as large as a municipality or smaller. The LDSfMoNB faithfully follows LEADER guidelines and the document possesses the following structure:

1. General aspects and methodology used
2. Building Local Action Groups in Kosovo
3. Local Development Strategy for Municipality of Novo Brdo
4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The main part of the document "Local Development Strategy for the Municipality of Novo Brdo", elaborated in 30 pages, deals with the Situation and SWOT Analysis for rural areas of the municipality.

The document continues ranking themes according to importance and ranking *key issues* by urgency in Novo Brdo providing, in addition, priorities for Rural Development in the municipality. A very important chapter is dedicated to Composition of the LAG in Novo Brdo. Sub-chapter 9 of this document deals with establishing of Local Library of Rural Development. Last sub-chapters (10-15) elaborate on the Basket of Local Projects, LAGs networking, Consolidation process, Road Map for Implementation, Implementation of Development Strategy and Assumptions and Risks.

Although the document appears to be completely all right, Novo Brdo has considerable natural potential and plenty of heritage, which is diverse and of high value, but until now rural tourism in Novo Brdo failed to flourish. In this case, the LAG structure is based more on municipal authorities (the top-down approach) than on private initiatives (“bottom-up”). A great number of background members in the LAG make the group heavy-handed which, in the end, results in unsatisfactory implementation success. Certainly, another shortcoming is poor knowledge of central, local governments, and community about rural tourism. But, having in mind that we are talking about a five year period, this issue could have been handled better.

4.5.6. Fragmented process in building of Kosovar documentation for planning related to tourism in Dukagjini Region

As mentioned in the beginning, there is a big number of similar documents and selection of documents, in line with provided criteria, took place according to author’s impression of their possible contribution to the quality of this PhD study. There are some documents that were considered in a way, but it is worth mentioning that there are two other important documents which were not specifically dealt with in this chapter, even though they were taken into account:

1. Policy and Strategy Paper on Forestry Sector Development 2010 – 2020, and
2. Strategy for Education for Rural People in Kosovo (2004 – 2009)

A vast number of different civilian and military institutions and organizations from Europe and the USA have gone through the Third Millennium Kosovo. There has been a lot of transformation governance in Kosovo from 2000 until now, therefore it was impossible to draft systematic and synchronized documents. The big number of invited international experts brought more the experience of their country (which is considered to be positive), but there was no common platform to complete and harmonize actions and documents on specific matters.

Despite the fact that the majority of documents, both within the legal framework and spatial plans of different levels, are satisfactory in a narrow sense, there is no interrelation amongst them. Such situation of unsynchronized documents required serious and comprehensive approach for more efficiency in their implementation. Revision of these documents and drafting of new ones should certainly have a common platform towards sustainable economic and spatial development. Approval of new laws (especially Law on Construction and Law on Spatial Planning) imposes “refreshing” of all previous documents related to them. In this respect, the new state of Kosovo should identify and institutionally orient itself towards sustainable development. The best opportunity for such development is rural tourism. Clearly defined support in national documents provides safe basis and opens the opportunity to start developing rural tourism in Dukagjini Region, which possesses undisputable natural and cultural wealth – that is the main axis for development of tourism in general and rural tourism in particular. The following actions should be taken in this respect:

- Draft the Law on Rural Tourism with the purpose of linking all opportunities provided in other laws and creating new conditions that favor development of this economic activity.
- Draft the new spatial plan of Kosovo which should be also reflected in recently approved laws (construction and spatial planning laws) and in the proposed law on rural tourism.
- Synchronize and favor plans for specific areas in the function of rural tourism development in Kosovo and in Dukagjini Region.
- Draft national strategies on rural tourism; this study may provide very good basis for drafting rural tourism strategy in Kosovo.
- Revise development plans of municipalities in Dukagjini Region and synchronize them with respective laws (especially with the law on rural tourism sponsored in the present study) and, in particular, adapt these developments based on natural and cultural resources beyond boundaries of municipal territories.
- Operationalize and strengthen Regional Development Agencies and LAG's to the service of rural tourism development and sustainable development in general.

These actions, if undertaken in central and local levels, would create an excellent pattern for development of rural tourism not only in Dukagjini Region but also throughout the territory of Kosovo. Development of rural tourism should maximally adapt to interests of local community, therefore it is necessary to carry out identification of wishes and requests of all stakeholders—community in rural areas, admirers of nature and healthy living in rural areas, and municipal and national officials that take part in and implement plans of different regional levels. In this respect, data were collected through a survey and interviews with these three categories and results were presented in Chapter 5.

5. Interviews and onsite research

Direct contact during onsite work with a diverse and complex environment, both in terms of nature and culture, brings the real impression and creates synergy. Analysis of laws, spatial plans and relevant documents in Kosovo related to the Dukagjini Region presented in Chapter 4 has to be supplemented with information collected on site. Completion of notes and information deriving from mandatory documents (laws and administrative instructions, regional and municipal plans, etc.) and non-mandatory documents (reports, strategies, etc.) elaborated in the previous chapter, together with notes and information collected in the field that are provided in this chapter, complete the overview on development potential of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region.

Work on questionnaires, interviews and discussion with people from central and local government to the common people and finally to the potential entrepreneurs in villages contributes to build a real picture of sustainability of rural tourism approach in Dukagjini Region.

5.1. Interviews with questionnaires

In order to establish direct contact and collect reliable information, field visits were conducted where prepared questionnaire forms were filled. Questionnaires had four target groups: central and local government officials, common inhabitants, and nature admirers and villagers who are potential entrepreneurs that might start a tourist business in their own village. Diverse structure of 111 interviewees qualitatively provided an idea for potential rural tourism development in the Region of Dukagjini.

The questionnaires were designed for four target groups:

- i. villagers who may be aspiring to deal with entrepreneurship in the field of rural tourism;
- ii. naturalists, people passionate about nature;
- iii. officials in municipalities and other institutions; and
- iv. urban citizens and people who are active in any way, either those walking in mountainous areas, climbing, speleologists or even simple nature worshipers. From all the interviews conducted, it can be concluded that there is no sufficient knowledge about rural tourism, which indicated that little work has been done on this issue, and that it will be difficult to do unless there is serious support by all possible sides. But on the other side, everyone speaks with passion and positivity about nature and architectural heritage (Figure 91.).

Figure 91. Summary table of interviewed people

Municipality	Villagers	Naturalists	Officers	Citizens
Istog	8	11	1	13
Peja	0	1	3	1
Klina	1	0	0	2
Deçan	2	2	2	2
Junik	1	1	1	1
Gjakova	0	3	1	1
Rahovec	2	6	7	6
Malisheva	1	1	2	1
Suhareka	1	1	1	2
Prizren	5	1	2	5
Dragash	0	0	5	0
Government officers	0	0	4	0
Total	21	27	29	34

Source: Author

Figure 92. Results from questionnaires filled by villagers who may be aspiring to deal with entrepreneurship in the field of rural tourism

Questionnaire....." The role of tourism in the Rural Development of Valley of Dukagjini.....for villager

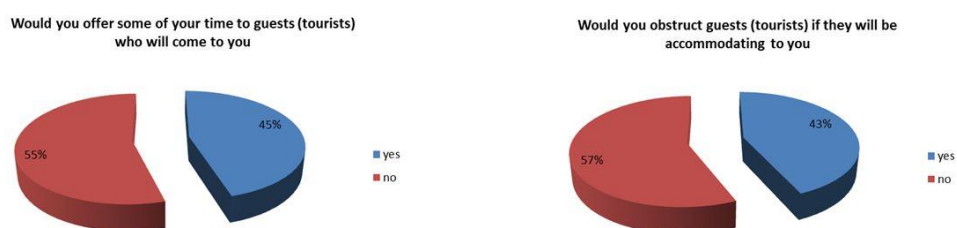
Name	
Surname	
Profession	
Address	
Telephone	
Activity in village	Agriculture, Livestock, fruit, vegetables, grape, Beekeeper, <i>Other</i> :

<i>Nr.</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
1.	Do you rejoice guests	19	2
2.	Do you wish to talk with people who you see for the first time	21	1
3.	Do you put quickly contact with people who you see for the first time	12	11
4.	Would you offer some of your time to guests (tourists) who will come to you	21	1
5.	Would you obstruct guests (tourists) if they will be accommodating to you	10	12
6.	Do you become irritable if they sometimes had to pledge in the daily obligations	10	13
7.	Would you mind that guests (tourists) to tell the interesting things which are near	8	14
8.	Do you have the ability to solve the problem when you run in conflict with people	17	4
9.	If the weather is bad, are you ready to arrange something interesting for guests (tourists) (such as food preparation, as made lace, as spin wool, animals milked, preparing cheese and maza, as loom work or something similar)	17	4
10.	Are you ready to collaborate with other families and other people for better services for guests (tourists)	21	

Source: Author, from interviews conducted in field work 2012 - 2013

Questionnaire for villagers who may be aspiring to deal with entrepreneurship in the field of rural tourism was designed based on Manual for rural tourism¹⁶³ and the objective of this Questionnaire was to evaluate readiness of people in villages to deal with rural tourism. Impression was that rural people do not understand that they can benefit from their hospitality provided to guests, and often their answers were full of wondering. After detailed description of philosophy of this kind of tourism, most of them get opened and started giving their ideas about the manner of design of rural tourism in their case, including ideas about the amount of money needed to functionalize the idea. Definitely, people in rural areas are not informed about this opportunity to improve their living conditions, earn extra money and, on another hand, their generosity and great need for income promises success of rural tourism (Figure 93).

Figure 93. Readiness to invest time for tourists (Questionnaire, 'VILLAGER' - question No. 4 and 5)



Source: Author, from interviews conducted on field 2012 - 2013

¹⁶³ Baćac R., "Priručnik za bavljenje seoskim turizmom", Ministarstvo turizma Republike Hrvatske, Zagreb, 2011 (p.26)

Figure 94. Results from questionnaire for naturalists, passionate people for nature

Questionnaire....."The role of tourism in the Rural Development of Valley of Dukagjini"(naturalists)

Name		Profession	
Surname		Post	
Address		Institution	
Telephone		Hobby/ Activity	

Tourism is an economic activity which can create income to the country. Is believed that the valley of Dukagjin area is rich in natural and cultural resources, which are a prerequisite for the development of tourism. Many developed countries have this activity oriented towards the development of rural tourism, which is based on the willingness and readiness of residents.

To understand your opinion regarding this event, please reply to the following questions:

Nr	Question	Answer		Answer		Answer		Answer	
1	I visit nature and villages in the Valley of Dukagjini	Often	20	Seldom	7	1 time per year	1	No	
2	I stay during these visits	Only per day	7	Sleep one night		Up to 3 nights		3 nights and more	
3	I visit nature and villages in the Valley of Dukagjini	To recognize my country or foreign	17	For keeping Condition	6	To associate with friends	4		
4	I think that tourism activity can bring benefits for the society	Yes	28	Little	1	Maybe		No	
5	Our society plans its develop with tourist activity	Yes	10	Little	16	Maybe	2	No	
6	Residents of these areas have sufficient knowledge to deal with rural tourism	Yes	5	Little	20	Maybe	2	No	1
7	Residents in these areas have the opportunity to exercise the activity of rural tourism with family members	Yes	15	Little	11	Maybe	2	No	
8	Valley of Dukagjini has much value which can offer tourists	Yes	26	Little		Maybe		No	
9	Valley of Dukagjini is contaminated	Yes	3	Little	17	Maybe	2	No	5
10	Population would deal with rural tourism, but needed training in this direction	How to lead the business	7	Advices about the onset of activity	17	How to inform potential tourists	8	Supporting institutions in this action	8
11	I visit these areas with	Family	13	Partners	4	Group	18		
12	Who do you prefer to visit rural areas in your municipality?	Families	14	Couple	7	Groups	20		
13	I visit nature in the Valley of Dukagjini for activities like:	Walking tour	19	Horsemanship	1	Fishing	2	Hunting	3
		Participation in weddings in the village -	1	Skiing		Cycling -	7		
				Walking around in the snow	10	Participation in pickings	6		
14	I think it would be better to offered also	Paraglajd	7	Speleology	5	Jump from the rock	6		
		Motocross -	10	Observation of poultry	14	Paint ball	5		
15	The rural areas / mountainous terrain need also:	The Information Points	21	The Logistic in emergency cases	9	More guides	5		
		Health point	16			Refreshing points	7		
16	Valley of Dukagjin can offer tourists local products like:	local food (fli, pie)	17	Milk products	14	Wines	11	Honey	13
		Sausage	8	Handmade	14	Brandy	11		
17	Villages possess free space which can leased	Yes	9	Little	12	Should be renovated	9	No	
18	Tourists can visit the mountain regions by means of transport	Bus	6	Car	18	4x4	13		
19	In this side there is a risk of criminal groups and individual	Yes		Little	2	Maybe	4	No	22
20	In this side there is danger from wild animals (wolves, bear, snakes, etc..)	Yes		Little	11	Maybe	9	No	9
21	In this side there is danger from nature (snow avalanche, downpour rain, floods, earth or of stones, etc.)	Yes	1	Little	9	Maybe	4	No	13
22	Young people in these areas have the perspective that can live better	Where they are	9	In greater center	8	In Pristina	5	West (Germany, Switzerland)	12
23	We believe that tourism can affect the development of the region of Valley of Dukagjini	Yes	28	Little		Ndoshta		No	

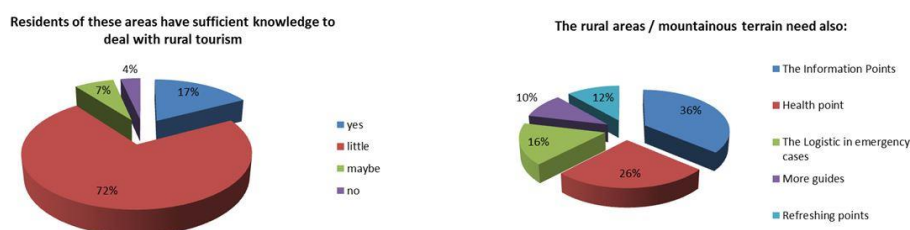
(*)Spaces

(**)Own opinions (personal or otherwise) - out this questionnaire can be expressed in the rear of the sheet

Source: Author, from interviews conducted on field 2012 - 2013

Questionnaire for passionate people about nature, who often go hiking, was much easier to be conducted. These people are almost every weekend in nature visiting different parts of Kosovo and wider. They filled in the questionnaire without hesitation and liked very much saying what should be done concerning their stay in nature. The biggest need they emphasized was the need for detailed topography maps with other inserted information, better coverage of mobile phone network and some pit-stop points serving them with some various information and basic facilities (i.e. first aid, some medicines, radio line, etc.). Most of them strongly believe that rural tourism can be a tool for regional development and can bring benefits to local people. Since they prefer group walking, they would like to enjoy the support of any office for possible routes and support for planning of breaks. Half of them think that young people in rural areas would migrate to western European countries. But they do not prefer at all to stay in mountains (Figure 95.).

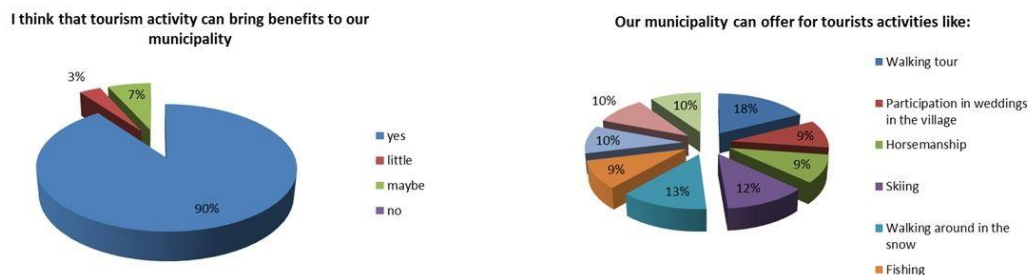
Figure 95. Knowledge for rural tourism (Questionnaire, 'NATURALIST' - question No. 6 and 15)



Source: Author, from interviews conducted during field work 2012 - 2013

Questionnaire for officials in municipalities and other institutions, was designed more to explore knowledge and information about rural tourism in their municipalities or institutions. Most of them wanted to discuss in general terms and about various documents drafted by them or by others. All of them believe that tourism can bring benefits to rural people and can develop the region. Even though in most MDPs rural tourism is poorly presented as a development tool, municipal officers declared that their institution possess sufficient perspectives about rural tourism. Based on this questionnaire, we can conclude that tourists can use bus, car and all wheel drive for transport. Although questionnaires were correctly completed, there is an impression that these officers like rural tourism but they did not thing much about it until today. They see it as an alternative to regional development but prefer more a development that could be measured easier (Figure 96.).

Figure 96. Opinion regarding beneficiary of tourism (Questionnaire, 'OFFICIAL' - question No. 3 and 12)



Source: Author, from interviews conducted on field work 2012 - 2013

Figure 97. Results from questionnaire for officials in municipalities and other institutions

Questionnaire....." The role of tourism in the Rural Development of Valley of Dukagjini"(official)

Name		Profession	
Surname		Post	
Address		Institution	
Telephone		Hobby/Activity	

Tourism is an economic activity which can create income to the country. Is believed that the valley of Dukagjin area is rich in natural and cultural resources, which are a prerequisite for the development of tourism. Many developed countries have this activity oriented towards the development of rural tourism, which is based on the willingness and readiness of residents.

To understand your opinion regarding this event, please reply to the following questions:

Nr	Question	Answer		Answer		Answer		Answer	
1	Our municipality is visited from tourists	Many of	8	Little	17	too little	3	No	2
2	Tourists who visit my country are	Kosovars	20	Migrants	22	Foreigners from neighboring countries	23	Foreign, from remote places	11
3	I think that tourism activity can bring benefits our municipality	Yes	27	Little	1	Maybe	2	No	
4	Our municipality provides its development with tourism activities	Yes	25	Little	3	Maybe	1	No	
5	Residents of our municipality has sufficient knowledge to deal with rural tourism	Yes	7	Little	22	Maybe - 2		No - 2	
6	Our municipality has the opportunity to exercise the activity of rural tourism with family members	Yes	19	Little	12	Maybe		No	
7	My country has many value which can offer to tourists	Yes	26	Little	5	Maybe		No	
8	My country is contaminated	Yes	4	Little	19	Maybe	2	No	6
9	In our municipality population in villages cultivates	Wheat	24	Tree-grapes, apples, etc.	25	Fold	17		
		Corn	24	Vegetables	27	Cows	21		
10	Population would deal with rural tourism, but needed training in this direction	How to lead the business	16	Advices about the onset of activity	24	How to inform potential tourists	15	Supporting institutions in this action	7
11	Who do you prefer to visit rural areas in your municipality?	Families	21	Couples	11	Groups	28		
12	Our municipality can offer tourist activities like:	Walking tour	22	Horsemanship	12	Fishing	12	Hunting	12
		Participation in weddings in the village	12	Skiiing	15	Cycling	12		
				Walking around in the snow	16	Participation in pickings	12		
13	Our municipality can offer tourists local products like:	local food (fli, pie)	19	Milk products	20	Wines	12	Honey	13
		Sausage	19	Handmade	22	Brandy	16		
14	The villages possess space leased	Yes	9	Little	19	Should be renovated	11	No	
15	Tourists can visit the mountain regions by means of transport	Bus	25	Car	25	4x4	19		
16	In this side there is a risk of criminal groups and individual	Yes	2	Little	6	Maybe	4	No	22
17	In this side there is danger from wild animals (wolves, bear, snakes, etc..)	Yes	1	Little	13	Maybe	5	No	13
18	In this side there is danger from nature (snow avalanche, downpour rain, floods, earth or of stones, etc.)	Yes	5	Little	13	Maybe	2	No	15
19	The youth of our municipality have hope that they can live better	Where they are	13	In greater center	14	In Pristina	6	West (Germany, Switzerland)	18
20	We believe that tourism can affect the development of the region of Valley of Dukagjinit	Yes	28	Little	2	Maybe	2	No	1

(*) Spaces

(**) Own opinions (personal or otherwise) - out this questionnaire can be expressed in the rear of the sheet

Source: Author, from interviews conducted during field work 2012 - 2013

Figure 98. Results from questionnaire for urban citizens and people who are active in any way either those walking in mountainous areas, climbing, speleologists or even simple nature worshippers

Questionnaire "The role of tourism in the Rural Development of Valley of Dukagjini.....(urban people)

Name		Profession	
Surname		Post	
Address		Institution	
Telephone		Hobby / Activity	

Tourism is an economic activity which can create income to the country. Is believed that the valley of Dukagjin area is rich in natural and cultural resources, which are a prerequisite for the development of tourism. Many developed countries have this activity oriented towards the development of rural tourism, which is based on the willingness and readiness of residents.

To understand your opinion regarding this event, please reply to the following questions:

Nr.	Question	Answer		Answer		Answer		Answer	
1	Tourists visiting my country	Yes	18	A little	15	Maybe	2	No	2
2	Tourists who visit my country are	Kosovars	14	Migrants	21	Foreigners from neighboring countries	14	Foreign, from remote places	9
3	I think that tourism activity can bring benefits	Yes	28	Little	5	Maybe	1	No	1
4	Me and my family will try to deal with tourist activities	Yes	16	Little	4	Maybe	12	No	3
5	Me and my family have sufficient knowledge to deal with rural tourism	Yes	12	Little	15	Maybe	5	No	3
6	We have the human power to exercise that activity business with family members	Yes	22	Little	6	Maybe	1	No	4
7	My country has more value who can offer to tourists	Yes	32	Little	3	Maybe		No	1
8	My country is contaminated	Yes	5	Little	14	Maybe	2	No	12
9	In my country population in villages cultivates	Wheat	25	Tree-grapes, apples, etc.	30	Fold	15		
		Corn	24	Vegetables	27	Cows	21		
10	We will try to deal with rural tourism, but we need training in this direction	How to lead the business	13	Advices about the onset of activity	14	How to inform potential tourists	12	Supporting institutions in this action	13
11	Who do you prefer to visit your sides?	Families	21	Couples	6	Groups	28		
12	My country can offer to tourist activities like:	Walking tour	27	Horsemanship	6	Fishing	10	Hunting	14
		Participation in weddings in the village		Skiing	8	Cycling	16		
			14	Walking around in the snow -	13	Participation in pickings -	17		
13	My country can offer to tourists local products like:	local food (fli, pie)	27	Milk products	23	Wines - 16		Honey	
		Sausage	19	Handmade	21	Brandy	18		
14	Possess space leased to	Yes	5	Little	12	Should be renovated	4	No	13
15	Tourists can come to us with transportation vehicles	Bus	26	Car	27	4x4	14		
16	In this side there is a risk of criminal groups and individual	Yes	1	Little	4	Maybe	2	No	29
17	In this side there is danger from wild animals (wolves, bear, snakes, etc..)	Yes	1	Little	10	Maybe	5	No	20
18	In this side there is danger from nature (snow avalanche, downpour rain, floods, earth or of stones, etc.)	Yes		Little	6	Maybe	6	No	22
19	Young people of my country have hope that they can live better	Where they are	15	In greater center	10	In Pristina	2	West (Germany, Switzerland) -	10
20	Rural tourism, the state can help with	With financial assistance	27	With advices (tourism experts)	16	with advertisements	14		
21	I believe that tourism can affect the development of region in Valley of Dukagin	Yes	29	Little	4	Maybe		No	1

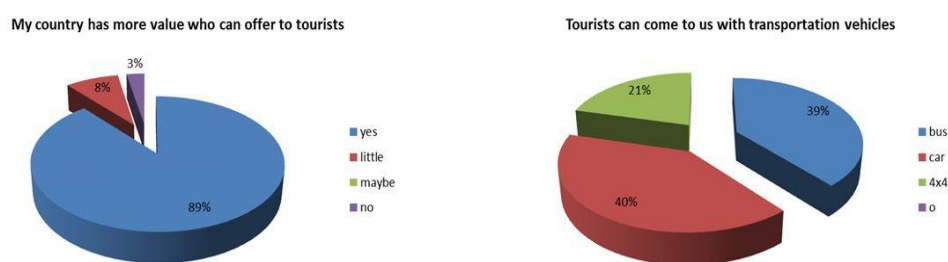
(*) Spaces

(**) Own opinions (personal or otherwise) - out this questionnaire can be expressed in the rear of the sheet

Source: Author, from interviews conducted during field work 2012 - 2013

Questionnaire for citizens who like nature was completed by people living in cities, not only those living in Dukagjini Region. They like nature and expressed readiness to support this research with pleasure. Most of them believe rural tourism can bring benefits and that there are resources for it. This group thinks tourists can be served with local food and drinks (flia, pie, sausage, milk products, etc.) and handcrafts as well. They see bus and car as an option for transport and half of them include 4x4 vehicles as an option, too. They find rural tourism more convenient for people from Kosovo and those of neighboring countries than for western countries because of poor offer and insufficient organization. When asked "How do you prefer to visit rural areas" most of them chose two alternatives either with family or in groups which shows rural areas as an opportunity for socialization. They do not consider there is any risk from animals or natural disaster (Figure 99.).

Figure 99. Local opinion regarding values (Questionnaire, "CITIZEN" - question No. 7 and 15)]



Source: Author, from interviews conducted during field work 2012 - 2013

The diagrams shown are part of interviews conducted during field work 2012 – 2013.

5.2. Open interviews

It was easier to interview and get information from some officials and personalities, by offering them more space to express their views. The twenty persons interviewed through the "open interview" method were mainly senior officials in ministries or important persons from civil society. Here are the institutions and number of staff interviewed:

1. Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (1)
2. Spatial Planning Institute of Kosova (3)
3. Ministry of Trade and Industry (1)
4. Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (2)
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (1)
6. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (1)
7. Officer in Council of Europe in Pristina (1)
8. Officer in European Commission in Pristina (1)
9. Culture Heritage without Borders (1)
10. Freelance Architect from Peja (1)
11. Stage designer in City Theater of Peja (1)

12. Head of Touristic Center in Peja (1)
13. Head of Touristic Center in Novo Brdo (1)
14. Entrepreneur from Hoqa e Madhe (1)
15. Freelance artist Peja (1)
16. Speleologist from Peja (1)
17. Journalist from Gjakova (1)
18. Tour operator (1)
19. Historian from Peja (1)

Kosovo people are generally known to be hesitant when it comes to interviews. Despite a culture of conversation developed in “Oda” - known in Dukagjini Region, as a room where men gathered and wise men led discussions for hours, drinking tea, coffee, and smoking or even having alcohol- in general, Albanians of this side are hesitant to talk to strangers, especially if they are recorded or notes are taken. In particular, leaders in high positions preferred interviews but only were willing to talk about documents drafted or those ongoing. There was an impression that most of the interviewees gave answers that they thought would make the interviewer happy.

However, most of them are connected with nature and think that Dukagjini Region and Kosovo in general have considerable potential, and their interest is to orient development through rural tourism, besides being of opinion that legal infrastructure may be improved and that the Government should have done much more in this regard.

The summary of all open interviews from 21 various people from local and central government, civil society, science and arts showed that rural tourism is very complex and needs a comprehensive approach which will bring success in the development of rural areas. It is very interesting that this target group was very difficult in formal interviews, but very open minded and cooperative in free discussion bringing excellent ideas and options for development of rural tourism.

As per methodology used in questionnaires, the interviewees could mainly circulate answers, so as to conduct the interview and process data easy in statistical terms.

5.3. Reflection on results of interviewing

The process of surveying through questionnaires and open interviews (through conversation) included about 150 people coming from different municipalities, places of residence, age, gender, social status or administrative position, etc. The interviewing process yielded results also in respect of creating more precise impression about the environment and the human, and their mutual relations.

As mentioned before, the questionnaire for villagers was dedicated more to the knowledge of inhabitants in these areas about rural tourism and their readiness to deal with this activity. Results show that inhabitants are not informed at all about this possibility of development and have no idea how this family business may start being developed at a later stage also. There is doubt in faces of these people related to whether they would in future ever be able to have a decent life in their dwelling places. Their traditional hospitality and calm discussions with them provided very favorable situation and in most cases, despite numerous doubts and dilemmas, there was optimism that things may get better. Dire economic situation, hard life, and isolation from the world creates the impression that rural inhabitants of Dukagjini Region are ready to make changes and are cooperative

in this respect. There is also fear from changes, fear from evil that might be brought by development of rural tourism and passing of strangers through their yards. Therefore, in order for this area to have rural development, cautious, gradual and very well-planned approach should be applied. Raising the awareness of local inhabitants about rural tourism and interrelation of such tourism with day to day activities they carry out in their households, is crucial in getting them involved in this initiative.

- v. Questions in three other questionnaires (naturalist, people passionate about nature; officials in municipalities and other institutions and urban citizens and people who are active in any way either those walking in mountainous areas, climbing, speleologists or even simple nature worshipers) have been listed in such a manner that the survey with respondents is conducted smoothly and naturally. The criteria to formulate questions were focused on several thematic issues:
- How much informed are respondents about rural tourism?
 - How suitable is the current situation, both legislative and in practice in the field, in order to develop rural tourism?
 - What more could be done in creating a more favorable environment for development of rural tourism?
 - Do respondents see a perspective about inhabitants of these areas in places where they live?

This long and exhausting process has in a way turned into a rural tourism campaign throughout Dukagjini Region but also in municipal and local institutions. An impression is gained that had we repeated this process once more now, we would have seen more favorable results for rural tourism.

Results of the interviews are promising that Dukagjini Region has the potential and willingness to try a different life, which leads to sustainability, and get the process oriented towards preservation of natural and cultural heritage by protecting the nature through rational exploitation.

Conclusions provided above should not be misunderstood, and one should not think that everything is all right and rural tourism may immediately start without any problem. Natural, cultural and human resources do exist, but there is a need for complex and comprehensive work in respect of building favorable legislative and planning environment (Chapter 4), conducting moral and professional preparation of individuals and groups that want/may deal with rural tourism, as well as allocating start-up funds in order to incite establishment of first family business cells in rural tourism in Dukagjini Region. The situation of the region shows the steps that should be undertaken in this respect (geographic, topographic and climate conditions, population, residential areas, geology and hydrology, education, health, agriculture, biodiversity, culture, infrastructure, etc.) in a summarized form in Chapter 6.

6. Profile of Dukagjini Region

Relevant elements of the municipal development plans and spatial plans of areas of special interest are elaborated In Chapter 4., whereas in Chapter 5 are processed questionnaires that together have created a sufficient basis for the compiling of profile for Dukagjin Region that will be elaborated in this chapter.

6.1. General information for Dukagjini Region

The term "Dukagjini Region" is closely related to the term "Dukagjini Valley" or more exactly the "Dukagjini Plain". None of the above denominations are clearly bordered, but all of them are connected with the Drini i Bardhë River basin. The Drini i Bardhë basin was the place of Illyrian settlements from prehistoric times. Cultural features of the population, which despite diversity are considered to have similar habits and tradition, were historically built there. Considering that this basin is closely linked with surrounding mountains from all sides this study deals with them by referring to administrative boundaries of 13 municipalities. The fourteenth municipality, municipality of Mamusha, a recently established one, with very small territory and number of inhabitants, lies within the territory of Prizren, and is treated here within the Municipality of Prizren (Figure 100.).

Figure 100. Dukagjini Region in context of Kosovo



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

6.1.2.Position and geography

Dukagjini Region is defined by the pond of river “Drini i Bardhë” and lies in South-West of Republic of Kosovo. This region extends from the north to the mountains Mokna and Mali i Thatë up to the mountain Sharr in the south, mountains “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” in the west, extending with Llapusha hummocks in the east, at a length of about 70 km and a width of about 40 km. Administratively, Dukagjin Region lies in the territory of 11 municipalities starting from northern ones: Istog, Peja, Klina, Deçan, Junik, Gjakova, Rahovec, Malisheva, Suhareka, Prizren and Dragash to southern part of Kosovo.

6.1.3.Topography

Dukagjini Plain has an appropriate topographic position with beautiful and dynamic landscape. In some parts, this region has a corrugated topography in its center which is known as “Dukagjini Plain” and the rest of surrounding territory is mainly mountainous and hilly in some parts. This dynamic topography and the Drini i Bardhë River basin itself have determined the development of settlements. The highest peak of “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” is Gjeravica with an altitude of about 2656 meters, which is also the highest peak in Kosovo. The favorable position of Dukagjini Plain provides a special potential for tourism development.

6.1.4.Climate

The most important factors that influence the climate of Dukagjini Plain are proximity to the Adriatic Sea which, according to MDP of municipalities of this region, is approximately 105 km, then sea level, geographic location, etc. The climate of this region is of continental character with slight influence of Mediterranean climate in low altitudes above sea level, while in high altitude places there is harsh mountain climate. Mild climate and hydrological properties make Dukagjini Region be considered rich in natural resources and suitable for agriculture. Climatic conditions and fertile land have enabled rich flora and growth of various medical plants, which can be used in pharmaceutical industry.

6.1.5.Population

Like elsewhere throughout Kosovo, Dukagjini Region has also been evaluated in two ways: by the municipality and by the Kosovo Agency for Statistics (KAS). As per municipality evaluation, Dukagjini Region has 883.617 inhabitants, while according to the Statistical Agency’s statistics from the last census of 2011, there are 697.215 inhabitants where 348,903.5 are males and 348,311.5 are females. According to GAP non-governmental organization, there are 59.193 inhabitants of Serbian, Montenegrin, Turkish, Roma nationalities etc., in Dukagjini Region. The vast majority of minorities in Dukagjini Region are concentrated in Prizren municipality. According to estimates by Kosovo institutions, the young and active population has a dominant share of population.

Big number of children in one hand and complex family (several couples living together in one family) once used to reach a three-digit number of family members in certain cases. Family relations in some cases remind us of “Kibbutz democracy” in settlements Kibbutz in Israel¹⁶⁴.

Kosovo is a small country, both in terms of surface area and population. A rural-urban population is split around 60/40. However, many rural areas are close to urban zones, and the economies of both are often interrelated – through employment and trading links. Life in rural areas of Kosovo is

¹⁶⁴ Kostić C., “Sociologija sela”, ICS, Beograd, 1975 (p.36)

characterized by features often not present in urban centers. Rural people usually live in extended households or households with large number of members (average 7-8 persons) clustered in family groups. The population age structure in rural villages, however, is similar to urban areas where young people (less than 25 years old) are majority and there are more males than females in every age group, apart from ages over 65.

Unemployment, poverty and extreme poverty are general characteristics of economic development in rural areas in Kosovo.

Structure of population by age (SPRK, 2014) is:

0-14 years	33%
15-64 years	61%
65 and older	6%

Rural females in Kosovo were the main support of the family. They were engaged from doing daily home works to education of new generation. On the other hand, the problem of their social isolation in rural areas and communities, and their position towards new culture is a challenge which awaits the future of tourism in rural areas.

Many reports produced about Kosovo emphasize that one of the greatest resources of Kosovo is human resources. Average age of population is very young - a third of population is younger than 16 years, a fact that can be considered as an advantage for development in every economic sector. On the other hand, the more this potential can be of advantage for development, the more it can be considered as potential risk if it is not addressed and tackled properly. This is an indicator that youth education and training for labor market should be well planned. At the same time, a strategy for attracting all these young people to Kosovo economy should be prepared, otherwise migration of young people of Kosovo will continue, while another part of it risks being oriented towards criminality.

Besides agriculture, tourism is an economic branch that may employ large numbers of young people, in a short period of time. Adequate education and short trainings on skills in the field of agriculture (viniculture, arboriculture, farming, beekeeping, fishing, etc.) may help in reaching competencies required for work in these fields. This is especially easy for young people, because of the fact that they have basic knowledge on agriculture and local food preparation gained from their parents (explained in detail in Chapter 9.9.)

6.2. Settlements- Residential units fund and living conditions

In order to carry out the classification of settlements, surface and number of habitants, geographic position, topographic characteristics, type of residence, etc, were considered. There are different types of settlements in Dukagjini municipalities i.e. dispersed settlements type, neighborhood type, semi-dense, and dense type. In some municipalities, densified pattern of settlements is visible. Unfortunately, in almost all cases, villages were left aside from detailed planning and monitoring and their development happened spontaneously. Although in many cases these developments gave identity to every village, in some others villages, devastating natural environment grew further. Excluding centers of 11 municipalities, Dukagjini Region has 550 villages (Figure 101.).

Figure 101. Table of settlements in Dukagjini Region

	Municipality	Surface in km ²	Number of villages	Number of inhabitants
1	Istog	453,84	50	41.628
2	Peja	603,00	95	122.000
3	Klina	308,80	54	55.000
4	Deçan	284,40	37	55.000
5	Junik	77,77	2	12.500
6	Gjakova	521,00	84	150.000
7	Rahovec	275,50	34	71.522
8	Malisheva	306,48	43	54.656
9	Suhareka	361,00	41	81.311
10	Prizren	640,00	74	240.000
11	Dragash	453,80	36	33. 997

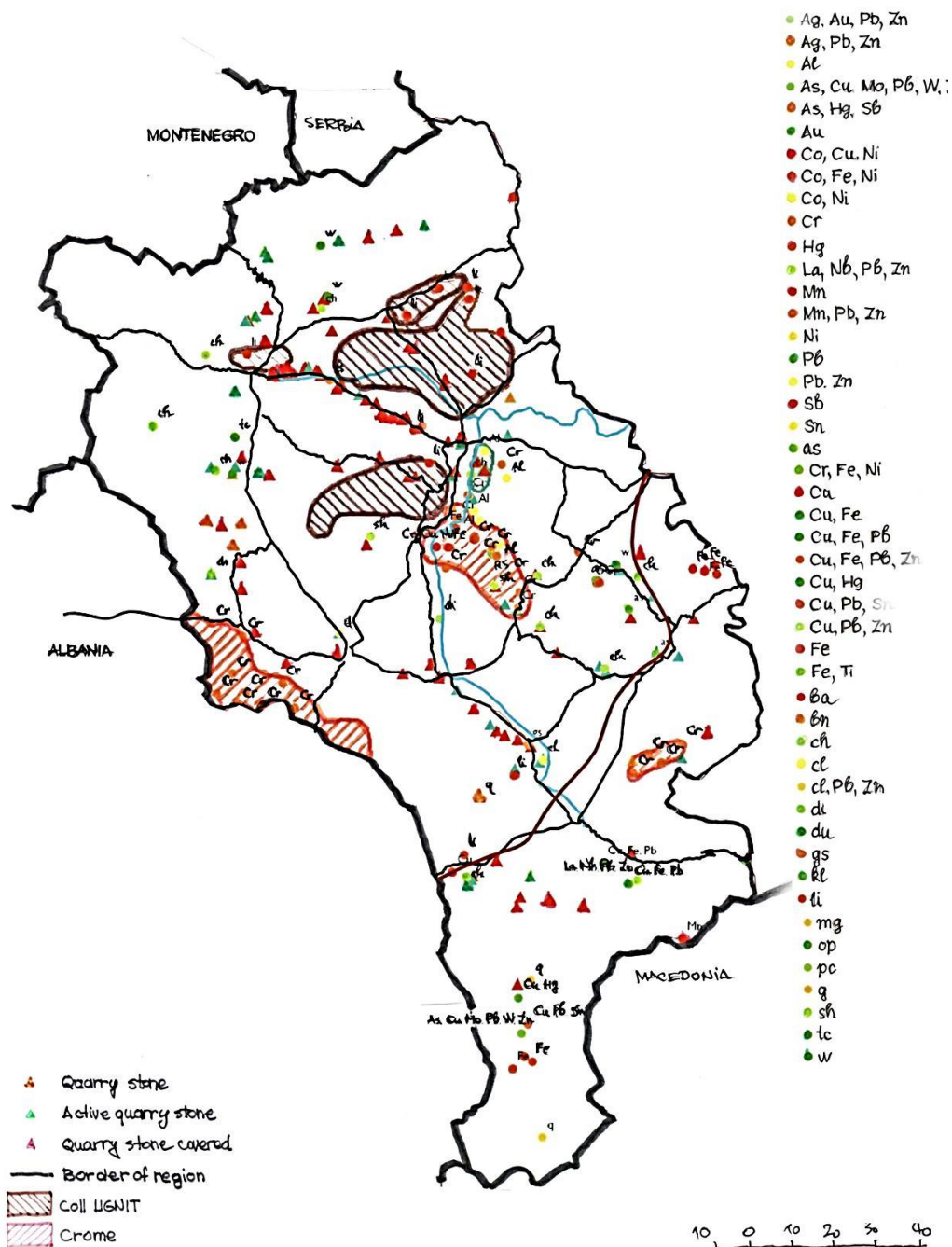
Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

6.3. Land exploitation and soils

6.3.1. Cliffs, minerals and soils

Dukagjini Region has composite geological structure rich in minerals in the mountainous part, and fertile soils especially in its central part. The fact that this region was concentrated in agriculture in the past shows that agricultural land has dominated in comparison with that of ores and minerals making the region (Figure 102.).

Figure 102. Cliffs, minerals and soils



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

6.3.2.Land exploitation

Land in Kosovo is one of the most important natural resources for its economic development. Kosovo has a total surface area of 10,877 km² which is classified as: 53 to 54.23% agricultural land, 40.92% forest land and 4.85% infertile land. Kosovo holds a wide variety of soils. It is evaluated that

15% of the soil in Kosovo is high quality soil, followed by 29% of medium quality and 56% of all soil is low quality soil¹⁶⁵.

6.3.3. Water resources

Kosovo can secure around 131x106 m³ of water per year from its underground water and river flows which provides for relatively low reserves of water as compared to its needs. Apart from having insufficient water resources for citizens and economy's needs, Kosovo is also characterized by an unequal distribution of water across its surface. Due to its low potential, hydropower is only modestly used. Water resources are mostly located in Dukagjini Valley. In the area of the Drini i Bardhë river basin, there are several groundwater accumulations.

In Kosovo, there are only few natural **lakes**. Among its artificial lakes are: Gazivoda Lake, Batlava, Përlepница, and Badovci, and in Dukagjini Valley it is Radoniqi Lake with a total accumulation volume of 113 m³.

The **rivers** in Dukagjini Valley are: Drini i Bardhë and its branches in Deçan, Peja, Prizren, Erenik, Klina and Mirusha Waterfalls, that continue to Adriatic Sea.

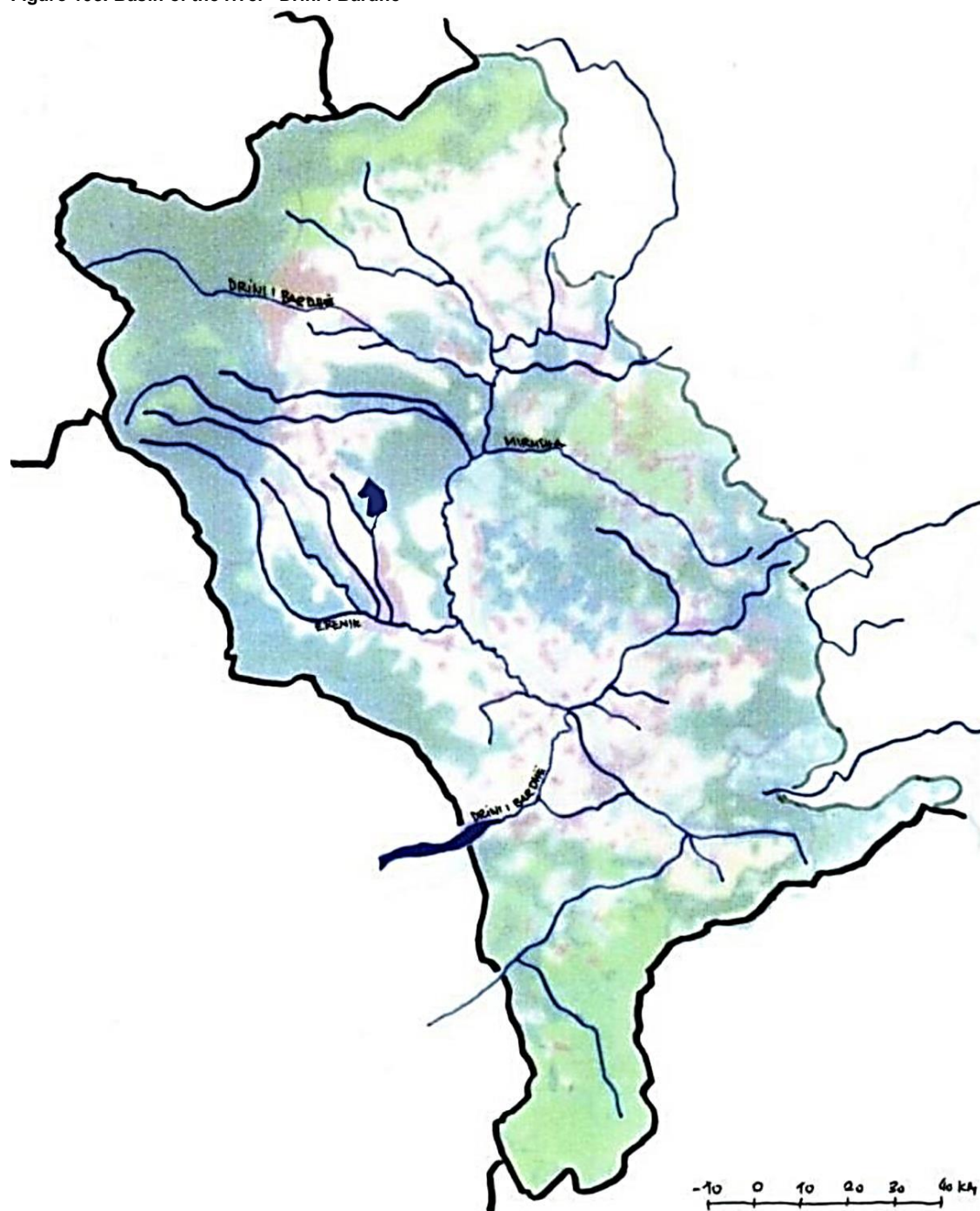
The main source of **thermal and mineral water** in the region is "Banja e Pejës" in Peja Municipality and village Banja in Malisheva municipality.

Fisheries are evident in Kosovo in most of freshwater sources; however, there is lack of fisheries management which makes their maintenance difficult. Main fish species found in Kosovo are: trout, catfish, Luce, perch, roach, sneep etc.

Information structured above containing potentials of Kosovo and specifically Dukagjini Valley proves that they provide excellent basis for rural development and rural tourism itself. Surrounding mountains with beautiful landscape and diverse valley possess a very valuable and unique landscape, both natural and cultural. There are three protected zones: Sharr Mountains, Bjeshkët e Nemura Mountains and Mirusha Waterfalls, which are already well-known touristic destination for tourists in Kosovo. (Figure 103.)

¹⁶⁵ Gusia I, "Natural resources as a factor of economic development of SAPK", Rilindja, Prishtina, 1982 (p.7)

Figure 103. Basin of the river "Drini i Bardhë"



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

6.4. Education, health and social welfare

6.4.1. Education

Pre-school classes are available in 75% of rural primary schools and only around 20% of 5 year old children attend pre-school. The main problem with participation in pre-school education in rural areas is with demand rather than supply. Although not all primary schools have pre-school classes, in those villages where pre-school education exists, many children do not attend. The main reasons given are lack of interest by parents or long distance for children to walk. To increase participation in pre-school, three steps should be considered: motivation of parents through awareness-raising, increasing the number of pre-school classes to cover all primary schools and improving transport to schools where pre-school classes are outside the village.

With the great international support, Kosovo’s education has over the last fifteen years undergone reforms in respect of structure and substance. Former standard structure of Kosovo’s education used to be as follows:

- 8 years primary school
- 4 years secondary school
- 4 or 5 years university education
- 2 years of Masters’ studies
- 2 years of PhD studies

Nowadays, Kosovar education possesses the following structure:

- 1 year pre-school education
- 5 years primary school
- 3 years lower secondary school
- 3 years higher secondary school
- 3 years Bachelor studies
- 2 years Master studies
- 3 years PhD studies

Kosovar education has been reformed and the biggest reforms are substantial. “Subject learning” has been replaced with “learning areas” and integrated learning. Areas of curriculum are as follows:

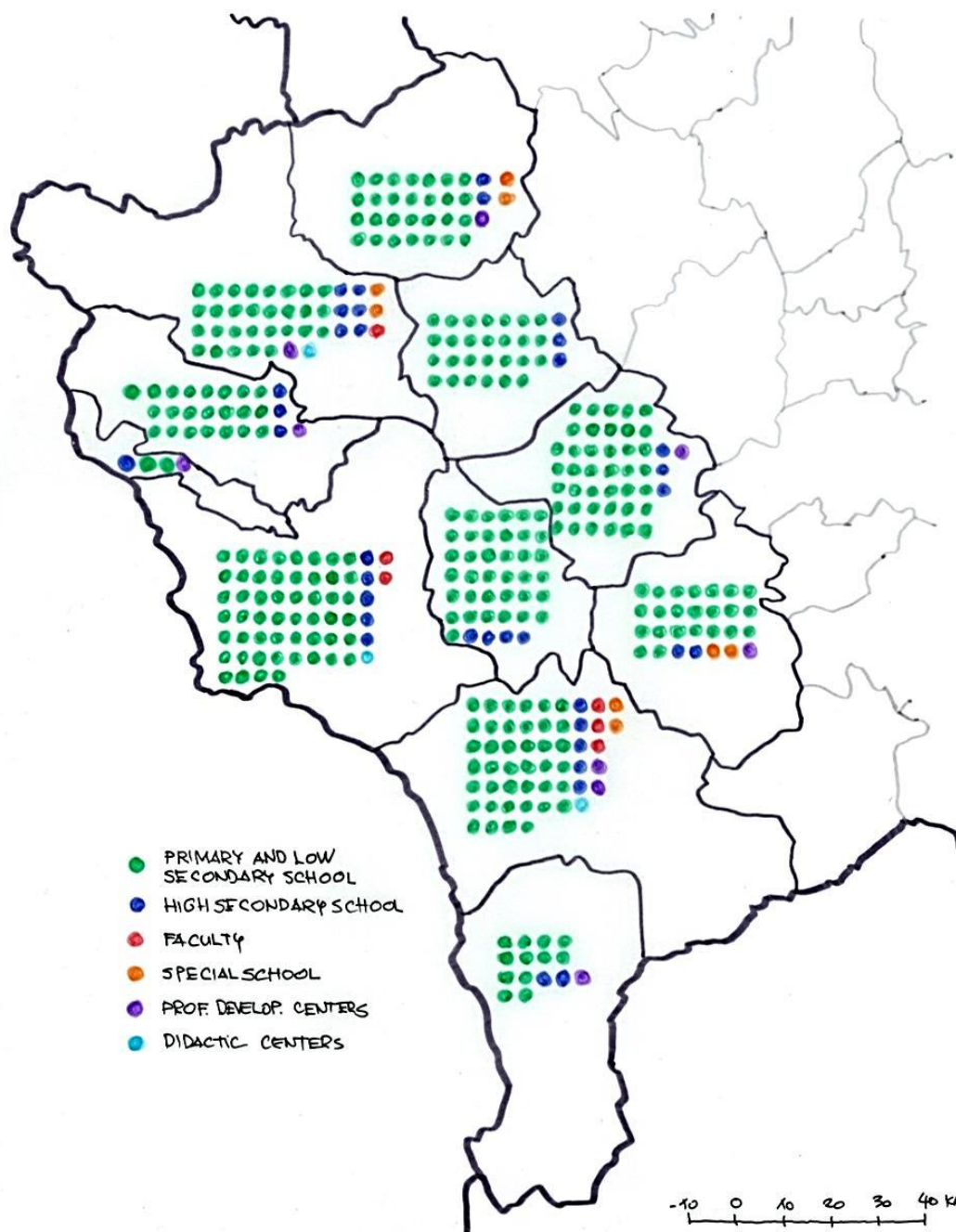
- Languages and communication
- Arts
- Mathematics
- Natural sciences
- Society and environment
- Health and welfare
- Life and work

Availability of basic education-grades 1– 9 in rural areas is good. Even in remote villages, children have access to primary and lower secondary school (1–5 and 6-9), almost all children aged 6-14 attend school. Participation in upper secondary school, grades 10 – 12, is lower for children from rural areas, in particular from remote areas rather than from urban centers. As per location of schools, available secondary schools for all children are located mainly in urban centers, which are a

disadvantage for rural children, having to travel further. Traveling and lack of financial resources remain limiting factors for rural children to attend secondary school. The preferred choice of rural people in upper secondary education is for General Secondary (Gymnasium) rather than Vocational Secondary Schools. Generally, students attend the “nearest” secondary school rather than a school of their choice. By investing in carrier orientation for students, it is hoped that enrollment and retention in grade 10 will increase, and that students will select secondary schools according to personal interests rather than distance. This may have implications for provision of boarding facilities with the purpose of enabling rural students attend some specialized schools, such as agriculture or tourism education. Despite the potential for development in agricultural sector, few agricultural vocational schools are of very little interest to students, especially students from rural areas.

Exception is the agricultural school in Lipjan, which has high enrollment and demand for courses it provides. This school offers new courses in “commercial” farming and, having better practical teaching facilities, it is able to provide a more practical training program. In agricultural school in Pristina, which offers courses in “fruit and vegetable production”, there are pretty good conditions in place. But this school has not attracted high interest from students (Figure 104).

Figure 104. Map of schools in Dukagjini Region



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

Adults in rural areas have limited access to education. Non-formal education and skills training for adults is organized on ad-hoc basis by a range of private, non-governmental and governmental organizations. Subjects and levels are based on demand and cover literacy programs, health education, income generation and business skills. However, courses for rural people are limited, uncoordinated and usually held in urban centers. Services offered to villagers by different providers are necessary to support capacity building in rural areas.

There are some issues related to **quality of education for rural people**, which need to be addressed. Many of recent education reforms are aimed at improving quality. Efforts are invested to introduce

new initiatives in order to identify existing problems and understand solutions clearly. One example of this is introduction of new curricula into primary and secondary schools. Investment is made to improve management, teacher training, materials production and teaching facilities. In addition to this, without the participation and support of teachers and communities in this process, it is unlikely to succeed.

Many teachers in Kosovo, in particular in rural schools, were unqualified and their training was undertaken many years ago. Luckily, curriculum reform made a lot of positive changes. Since 2011, new Curriculum Framework for pre-university education is in place, which requires a competency based approach, integrated learning methods, team work, cooperation with parents and communities in general, and learning for living. As implication, new training programs are designed for in-service teachers on: learning methodologies in different learning areas, integration of sciences, the use of ICT in learning process, environmental protection, entrepreneurship skills, etc. During the last decade, and especially in the last five years, teachers from all over the country have been subject to very professional trainings.

There are good signs to involve parents and community in the learning process of students. They care about what is happening in school life and what their children learn about. Strengthening School Boards should provide an opportunity for communities to play greater role in supporting the work of schools, but also schools should be developed as an important resource for learning in community.

New curriculum framework allows certain percentage of school autonomy in teaching plan, in order for them to address specifics of local needs. This means that municipalities / schools can decide by themselves about offering different learning modules, and adjust the needs to develop local economy, for example: tourism, environment, water supply, waste management, etc.

Although monitoring processes in schools show improvement and many positive changes are evident, there is still room for actions to be undertaken in future.

Trainings of teachers are implemented through different training providers, donors and funded by governmental institutions. Training venues are mainly training centers (regional Didactic Centers¹⁶⁶ - DC) and Professional Development Centers (PDC)¹⁶⁷, both equipped with modern technology, internet access, computers, and all materials needed for training. Trainings are led by master trainers, who are certified to provide accredited training programs. As a result, there are many teachers trained on new teaching methodologies, and other skills required with the new Curriculum Framework. In this regard, there are certain challenges as well, like traveling of teachers from their home place to training venue, travel expenses, time consuming, etc. In the last few years, school-based trainings have been considered in order to bring training opportunities closer to teachers. For

¹⁶⁶ Didactic Centers (DC) were established on 2001 by Soros donation. They are located in 7 bigger cities in Kosovo, in school premises. Since 2004, these facilities are handed over to the Government of Kosovo. They are now administered by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

¹⁶⁷ Professional Development Centers (PDC) are established with joint funds of USAID and Government of Kosovo. There are 25 PDC located mostly in bigger cities but not all of them. At least 10 out of 25 PDC are located in Dukagjini plain (Gjurakovc, Peja, Deçan, Junik, Gjakova, Prizren, Mamusha, Suva Reka, Dragash and Malisheva). They are located in schools and are in ownership of Municipalities. PDCs are accessible for all schools in the municipality, but for the wider community as well.

this purpose, policies have been designed by central and local level of education. Document “Framework for School Based Professional Development of Teachers” compiled by Kosovo Basic Education Program gives clear guideline to local education authorities and to schools on how to proceed with this issue. This way, municipalities and schools are flexible to identify their specific training needs, plan and organize trainings of their colleagues in schools. Schools are more open to larger community, and this fact should be used for further developments. With joint efforts schools can easily become community learning centers.

Through the recent curriculum reforms, primary and secondary schools now have responsibilities for certain aspects of the curriculum. This provides an opportunity to contextualize learning and adapt it to specific needs and situation of education in rural areas. Schools, and particularly teachers, will need help and support to do this with larger and better participation of local community.

This would help provide much needed basic education for adults and youth. These people are already living and working in rural communities who have missed out on education, but who need training to make maximum use of their skills and opportunities. Finally and very important, is the need for an open and accessible, accurate and updated education information system, which will help inform policy decisions and prioritize allocation of scarce resources.

Considering that physical infrastructure and competent human resources are in schools and schools are public institutions spread in rural zones, we must definitely rely on them also during the planning and implementation process of different projects concerning development of rural tourism. These facilities and teachers are free in afternoons, during weekends and might be involved in preparation of projects and their implementation. Schools in villages can be transformed into Community Learning Centers and into an additional multidisciplinary spot for developing another direct touristic purpose like trainings, hiking, presenting guides for tourists, etc.

According to information received from different sources, it is noticeable that education in Dukagjini Region is not functioning properly. If we compare it with standards, the number of schools is insufficient if the number of inhabitants and maximum distance from home to school premises is considered. In Dukagjini Region, there are around 21 upper secondary schools in general, 13 upper secondary technical schools, special schools for students with special needs, and a primary music school, with about 25.484 students in total.¹⁶⁸

Faculty of Management in Peja is organized in three specialized areas: Business Administration, Informatics Applied in Business and Tourism, and Hotel Management. In Gjakova, there is the Faculty of Education and Higher Pedagogical School, whereas in Prizren, there is the University of Prizren “Ukshin Hoti” with these faculties: Faculty of Computer Science, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Education.

Educational opportunities in the field of tourism in Kosovo are very limited. There is only one school exclusively dedicated to catering and tourism, and it is based in Pristina. This is an overused school, without much opportunity for professional practice. The school organizes practice by students in one of city hotels or restaurants, but not all of them get this opportunity. Additionally, some of catering and tourism profiles can be found in vocational schools of profiles combined with other professions.

¹⁶⁸ MAFRD & FAO, “Strategy for Education for Rural People”, 2004 (p.75)

This includes grades 10 to 12, respectively ages 15-24 years, which teach a number of educational profiles associated with tourism. It is worth mentioning Malisheva Competence Center (Figure 105.) which offers various economic courses, including tourism and catering ones. This is a very modern center which provides all necessary elements for practical learning.

Figure 105. Competence Center in Malisheva



Source: Author, 2013

As per the last announcement by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for enrollment of students in schools, profiles offered in vocational schools in Kosovo, level I and II, are currently as follows:

- Tourism assistant: offered in Pristina (3 classes, about 75 students), Drenas (1 class, 25 students), Peja (1 class, 25 students)
- Catering Assistant: Prizren (1 class, 25 students), Gjakova (1 class, 25 students), Kijeva (1 class, 25 students), Malisheva (Competence center, 25 students)
- Restaurant Assistant
- Cook

In tourism and catering profiles, it can be concluded that there are about 250-300 students enrolled per generation, while the number of students that successfully finish school is about 200 students per year.

“Tourist assistants”, which are partly qualified (Level I), can be employed in ancillary jobs in the travel agency sector as well as in reception and accommodation in hotels, institutions and organizations. Whereas, qualified students (Level II) may be referred to activities in reception and accommodation, hotel administration and tourism and travel agencies. Also, tourist assistants can be employed in hotels, travel agencies of all categories, or can be self-employed as tourist assistants. With further qualifications and after considerable work experience, they can establish their own business in this sector and employ others.

As regards education at university level in Kosovo, the offer for catering and tourism is very limited. Such offers are available only in the Economic Faculty of the State University of Prishtina “hasan Prishtina”, and in private university college “Pjetër Budi” within the BA and MA program on Tourism

and Hotel Management. A wider offer can be found in neighboring countries, such as Albania and Montenegro.

Besides formal education, some primary Kosovo schools have organized their so-called “Green Clubs” to get informed in an alternative way on protection of nature and environment in general.

Specific trainings which have been focused in community are those by The Joint Programme “European Union/Council of Europe Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo” (PCDK): “Construction of a stone facility – kulla”; “Lectures on conservation and rehabilitation of stone structures”; “Practical work on restoration of stone structures in the neighborhood of Tourism Centre in Junik”; summer camp & local economic development initiatives in Moronica (food preparation with local producers/practitioners), etc.

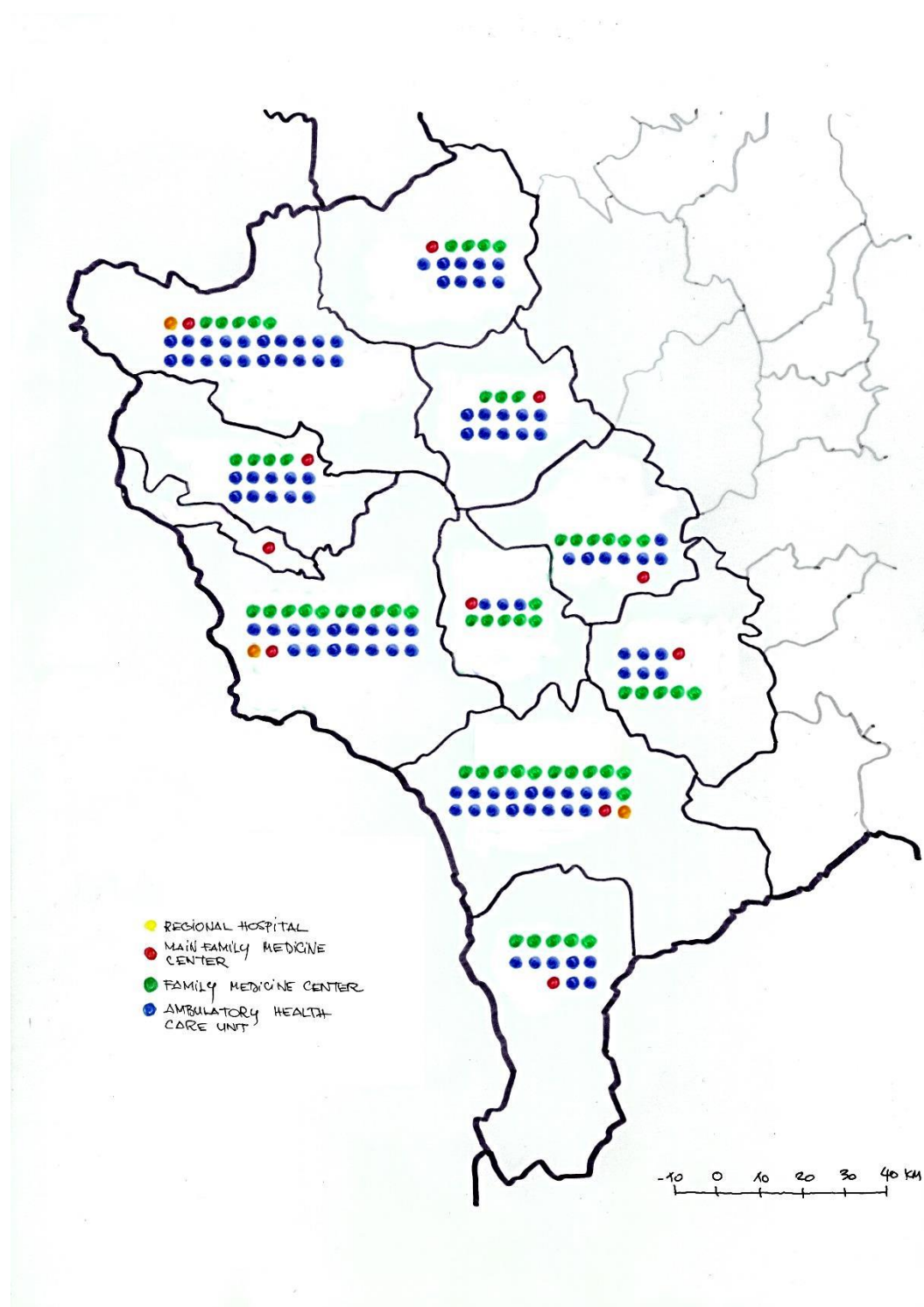
The governmental organization from Sweden, Cultural Heritage without Borders, has also organized specific trainings to prepare beneficiaries of projects with skills for rehabilitation of old houses in Dukagjini Region.

6.4.2. Health

In municipalities where Dukagjini Plain lies, health service is organized in several levels as Regional Hospitals, Main Family Medicine Centers (MFMC), Family Medicine Centers (FMC) and ambulatory health care units. Regional hospitals in this region are located in the municipalities of Peja, Prizren and Gjakova. Number of FMCs which cover urban areas of municipalities is 11, number of family medicine centers in rural areas of these municipalities and in urban ones is 69, whereas number of ambulatory health care units is about 90. In Gjakova, there is an operational center for mental health as well as protective home for psychiatric cases. There are also private health care units with general practitioners, dentists etc., the number of which is unknown, but their number is considered to be rather high.

All documents identify the need for health facilities and improvement of physical situation of these assets, but undoubtedly it is also necessary to better train and manage both the existing and the new staff. For example, in municipality of Prizren, there is lack of ambulatory health care units in 37 villages, then in a large part of municipalities, due to settlements scattered in several villages, maximum allowed distance from home to ambulatory health care unit is exceeded. Therefore, health needs an inclusive and creative treatment with the aim of providing quality and efficient services for residents and tourists. (Figure 106.)

Figure 106. Map of health care institutions



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

6.4.3. Social welfare

The central level should plan the following: social welfare centers that deal with mental health, orphanages, elderly care homes, persons with disabilities, social collective housing for homeless families, and integration homes for people with mental health problems from where they will return to their families in a short time and can reintegrate in society, home education, etc.- In general, in Dukagjini Plain, social centers are insufficient. Some of these facilities are already constructed but are not operational. So is the case with the elderly care home in Gurrakoc, Istog municipality designated for the region of Peja. An elderly care home also exists in Rahovec municipality, but it does not fulfill requirements and standards for this type of service.

Dragash municipality, in addition to having the Association for Paraplegics and Paralyzed Children, also offers its citizens protection of children, elderly care, support for patients with chronic diseases, support for ex-offenders, social housing, psycho-social counseling, various therapies, adoption, coordination with schools, courts and cooperation with other organizations, etc. The overall coordination of services for the whole municipality and its villages is done by the Main Center for Social Welfare which is located in the city of Dragash.

As regards Deçan municipality, there is a center for persons with disabilities, where the principle of community- based rehabilitation is used.

6.5. Economic development and employment

6.5.1. Economic development

Fertile agricultural lands are among the most important potentials in Dukagjini Region, with 189,602.00 hectares of arable fields, orchards, vineyards, gardens, pastures, etc.

Cultivation of plowing has an area of planting with corn, wheat, barley, oat, rye, etc.

Cultivation of fruits includes: apples, plums, pears, cherries, cherry and quince, peaches, apricots, walnuts, chestnuts, etc. Cultivation of vegetables includes: cabbage, potatoes, beans, peas, peppers, tomatoes, beans, onions, garlic, parsley, spinach, pumpkin, carrots, cucumbers, watermelon, melon, etc.

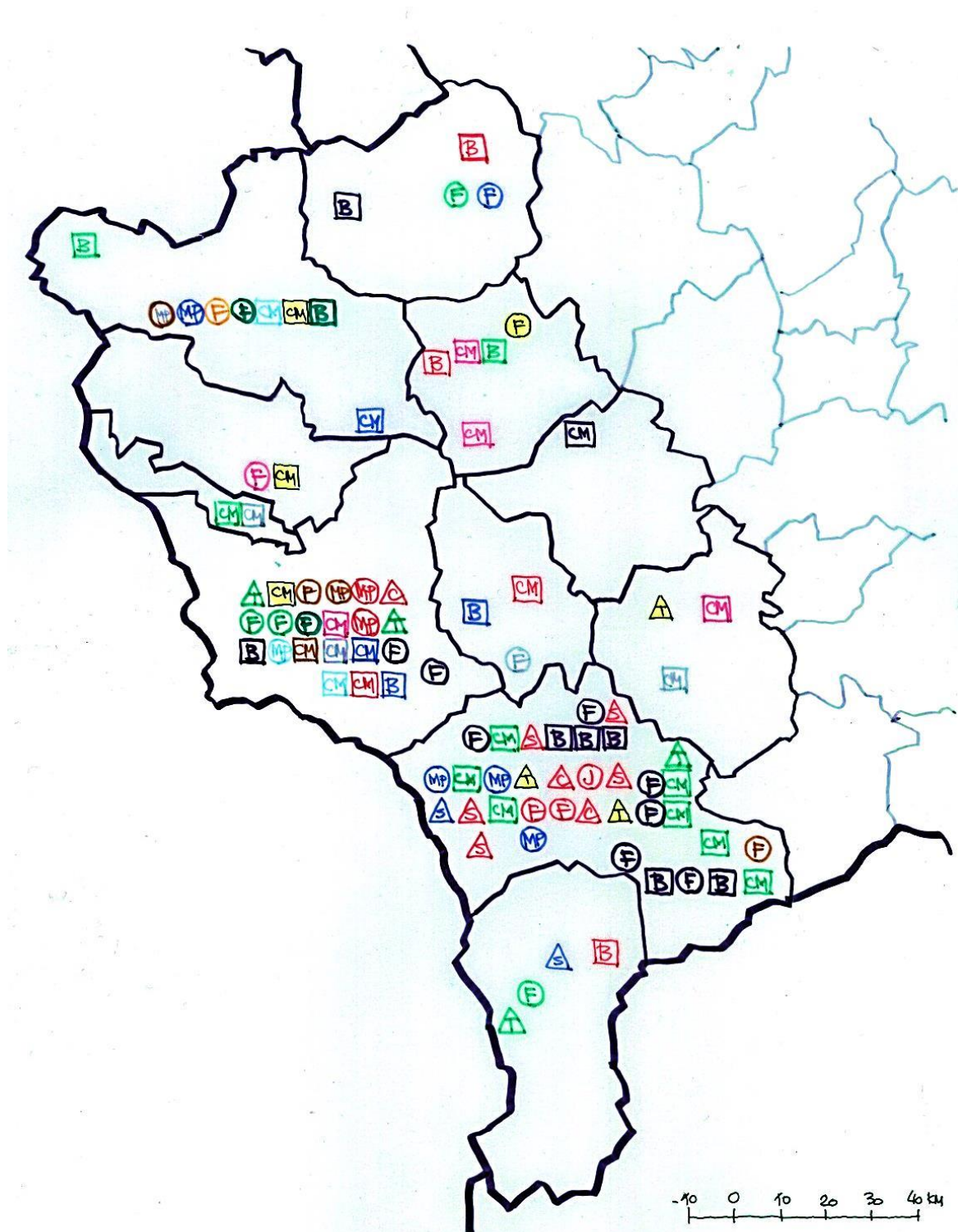
Another potential for economic development in Dukagjini Region are plant crops with medical properties such as lincure, great burdock and some types of fungi which are found in Junik municipality, then Forage crops in Rahovec, etc.

Dukagjini Region also has the potential for cultivation of strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, tobacco, sugar beet, rape, sunflower, soy, honey, etc.

A potential of great impact on economic development are fish farms and ponds that are located in the municipality of Istog. Also, in municipality of Prizren (Vërmica and Vlashnje villages), there are the main fish restaurants that can be added in to productivity of rural tourism. Another potential are grape and wine products which are mostly produced in the municipality of Rahovec, Suhareka, Prizren and Malisheva. It is observable that Dukagjini region has a great number of social enterprises that have large impact on economic development of this region. Some of these enterprises are: shoe and leather Combine, Brick Factory, metal processing, tile, batteries, bicycles, ironmongery, shopping mall, bread factory, beer factory, etc. These are all located in Peja. Klina is notable for its doors and windows factory, water factory, animal food factory, etc.

(Figure107.)

Figure 107. Map of industry and production



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

Description of signs from Figure 107.

CHEMICAL INDUSTRY		INDUSTRY OF FOOD PRODUCTION	
	WORKSHOP FOR SHAMPOO PACKING		CHEESE PRODUCTION
	FACTORY FOR PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTIONS		MEAT PROCESSING
	FACTORY FOR SYRINGES PRODUCTION		FACTORY FOR BREAD PRODUCTION
INDUSTRY OF TEXTILE PRODUCTION			PROCESSING OF PEPPER
	SHOE FACTORY		MUCHROOMS PRODUCTION
	BAG FACTORY		GARLIC PRODUCTION
	TEXTILE FACTORY		CULTIVATION OF FISH
INDUSTRY FOR METAL PROCESSING			FACTORY FOR WHEAT PROCESSING
	STEEL PROCESSING		CULTIVATION OF HONEY
	PROCESSING OF NAILS		FACTORY OF CHOCOLATE
	FACTORY OF THE ELECTROMOTOR PRODUCTION		ICE CREAM FACTORY
	FACTORY FOR GALVANIZING OF PROFILES		FACTORY FOR FOOD PROCESSING
	IRONMONGERY	INDUSTRY OF DRINKS AND BEVERAGES PROCESSING	
INDUSTRY OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS			FACTORY FOR WATER PROCESSING
	FACTORY FOR TILE PRODUCTION		BEER FACTORY
	FACTORY FOR BRICK PRODUCTION		JUICE FACTORY
	CONSTRUCTIONS COMPANY		FACTORY FOR MILK PROCESING
	FACTORY FOR CONCRETE PRODUCTION		WINE PROCESSING
	FACTORY FOR DOOR AND WINDOW PRODUCTION	INDUSTRY OF SEWERAGE MATERIAL	
	FACTORY FOR ASPHALT PRODUCTION		PLANT FOR POLLUTED WATERS TREATMENT
	FACTORY FOR WOOD PROCESSION		LANDFILL OF SEWAGE MATERIAL PRODUCTION
	FACTORY OF MATERIALS FOR CONSTRUCTION	INDUSTRY OF JEWELLERY	
	FACTORY FOR PROCESSING OF PLASTIC		FACTORY FOR JEWELLERY
	STONE MANUFACTURE		

Source: Author

Factory of armored network, woodworking complex, massive furniture factory, automobile parts, piston pumps, honey processing, agricultural cooperatives, etc. can all be found in Deçan.

Crafts cultivation, wool processing, traditional clothes weaving, embroidery, etc., can be found in Junik, together with developed forestry that has two nursery gardens, Enterprise “Ptuja” and “Fidanishtja” in Junik.

Gjakova is known for its textile industry with factories producing yarn, fabrics, TS Koagulati, knitwear, heavy and light confection, metal industry for production of pipes, wire products, production of enamel dishes, teflon ones or zined; electronic industry with production of electromotor, technical gas production, tobacco industry, wine and liquor industry etc. Another important potential in Dukagjini Region is the airport of Gjakova which will be transferred from KFOR to the Government of Kosovo in the beginning of year 2015.

Another resource for economic development is the long tradition of grape growing, wine processing, and flour factory in Rahovec.

Malisheva has its stone factory and factories for production of soft drinks.

Non-metallic substances such as clay for bricks and rock processing, carbon building materials, ornamental stone reserves and minerals like chromium, asbestos, nickel, cobalt, copper and stone coal (coal), factory processing dairy products, butcheries, etc. are of economic importance, too.

Hydropower plants are also important, that of Istog which is out of function and hydropower plant of Zhuri which is part of Kosovo's energy strategy.

6.5.2. Employment

Kosovo, including Dukagjini Region, faces high unemployment rate which reaches around third of population active for work. The degree of participation in labor force is 36.9 %. For 20% of rural households, the main source of cash income comes from members who are employed in public or private sector mainly in urban centers. They work in towns and bring their salaries back to villages. Some households rely heavily on remittances from family members working abroad or overseas and for some households, especially in remote areas, social security or pensions are the main source of income. For majority of rural households, especially in the remote villages, agriculture is the main economic activity both for income generation and/or food supply.

Based on information of Kosovo Agency for Statistics (KAS, 2014), key labor market has:

Labor force participation rate	36.9 %
Inactivity rate	63.1 %
Unemployment rate Total	35.1 %
Unemployment rate Male	28.1 %
Unemployment rate Female	40.0 %
Youth unemployment rate (15-24 years)	55.3 %

Though these statistics are official, the situation in practice is even worse than presented in these data. One can notice that young people and women are the most discriminated categories in

relation to exercising the right to work. There is an impression that unemployment status is even worse in rural areas.

Women unemployment rate of 40.0 %, too, challenges Kosovo’s society. In the past, women have been much discriminated against, whether in exercising their fundamental rights in girlhood (e.g. in education, the right to inherit family property, etc.) as well as in marital life. On the other hand, their contribution in both cases has been very large, with them being the main support of family development, and whose contributions have not been recognized.

Such difficult situation shows the need for immediate development where great number of young unemployed people, suitable for education and respective training, could be employed.

6.6. Forestry and agriculture

6.6.1. Forestry and semi natural areas

The territory of Dukagjini Plain has a vast area of forests which represents significant potential for this region, but it needs scientific research in various disciplines. The mountainous area offers potential to develop activities related to forest resources, and is covered with high forests which, if well planned, can be used for timber production. Besides scientific research, this important sector needs young people with basic skills in the field of forestry. In this regard, establishment of a training center – secondary vocational school for specific occupations on forestry, would help in developing and preventing forestry from degradation but also in raising residents’ awareness on this very important resource for economic development. Mountains in Dukagjini Plain are characterized by pasture, shrubs, bushes, etc, which are half natural.

6.6.2. Agriculture and specific land exploitation

The territory of Dukagjini Plain is very rich in quality agricultural land suitable for production of vegetable growing, orcharding, viniculture, etc. An initiative to offer loans would help development of agriculture, livestock, vineyards, etc. Agricultural lands provide sustainable utilization of natural resources, however, due to unplanned constructions there is a risk of degradation of agricultural lands along rivers.

6.7. Biodiversity and preservation of nature

Dukagjini Region has an extraordinary biodiversity with considerable number of rare endemic species which are mainly located in the National Park “Sharri” (Chaper 4.3.2), Natural Monument “Mirusha waterfalls” (Chapter 4.3.3), National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” (Chapter 4.3.4). In rural Kosovo, there are also relicts of flora and fauna of scientific and pharmaceutical values. Some relicts that are not important for science, but contribute to beauty of landscape and identity of location should also be valued (Figure108.).

Figure 108. Old tree in Ostrazub village, Malisheva municipality



Source: Author, 2011

Kosovo as a young country is in procedure of preparation and approving of few laws spatial plans and study of special protected zones. Institute for Spatial Planning within Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning has compiled spatial plans for these areas with special interest in Dukagjini Region (National Park “Sharri” and National Natural Monument “Mirusha Waterfalls” and for “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”) which are elaborated in Chapter 4.3.

Kosova is faced with great danger coming from environment pollution, and complete devastation in some cases. There is a need to protect the seriously endangered natural resources with a rapid response and comprehensive approach for the protection of nature in the region of Dukagjin. Risks to the nature devastation are diverse and mainly come from negligence and lack of human responsibility as:

- Pollution with solid waste
- Pollution with sewage waters and chemicals
- Unplanned constructions
- Damaging of forests
- Unplanned stone exploitation (quarries)
- Devastation of river beds, etc.

Region of Dukagjini has 3 waste disposals (Peja, Prizren and Dragash) and 1 waste transfer station (Gjakova), but there is no center for wastewater treatment

6.8. Culture, Nature and Tourism

While the previous chapters (Chapter 6.6 and 6.7) treat matters of forestry, agriculture, biodiversity and preservation of nature, this chapter elaborates natural and cultural Heritage, and tourism. These are components that strongly correlate with each other, upon human commitment. A wise placement of relations between these three components guarantees sustainable development in long trails.

6.8.1. Natural heritage

Kosovo is noted for its natural wealth, both for subterranean and surface wealth, their quantity and value with lot and diverse natural monuments: geological, geomorphologic, hydrologic, botanic, etc. History of natural preservation and legal protection in Kosovo dates from 1953 when the first area in municipality of Pristina was declared protected. It was Gazimestan village, peony plant reserve-Paenoniadecora Anders, and then in 1955, three other natural reserves were declared protected

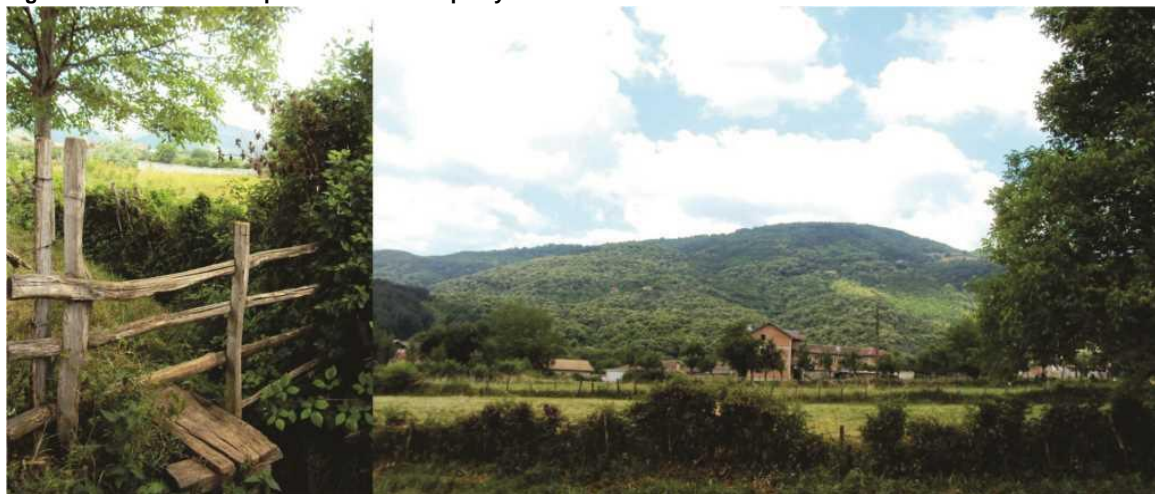
areas. After that, Maja e Ropsit (Ropsi Peak) - plant reserve, Kozhnjeri - animal reserve in the Municipality of Deçan, and Rusenica-animal reserve in the Municipality of Suhareka, were declared protected. Protection of natural heritage continued in 1960 with five other reserves of plant species being declared protected, such as Gubavci, Maja e Arnenit (Arnen's Peak), Pisha e Madhe (Big tree) Oshlak and Prilep Mountain¹⁶⁹. Declaring other natural heritage protected by ex-Yugoslavian administration continued with “Sharr Mountain” as National Park in 1986, Mirusha Regional Park in 1982, Gërmia Regional Park in 1987, Rugova Gorge in 1985 (Figure 57.), Spring of Drini i Bardhë, Cave and Waterfall of Radavc in 1983), etc.¹⁷⁰ (Figure 58, 83, 117.).

Figure 109. Rugova gorge, Peja municipality



Source: Author, 2011

Figure 110. Rural landscape in Junik municipality



Source: Author, 2011

The entire Dukagjini Region, both in terms of nature and historical development of settlements is based on river basin “Drini i Bardhë” and surrounding mountains. It can, without hesitation, be said that the most important natural resources in Dukagjini Region are National Park Bjeshkët e Nemuna, National Park “Sharri” and natural monument “Ujëvara e Mirushës” (“Mirusha Waterfall”). These three natural entiresities have been treated in a special manner by the Government of Kosovo, through legislative and technical documents that regulate their protection, development, and their correct use by people. Certainly, development of rural tourism is not limited to the use of the above-

¹⁶⁹ Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA), “Report on state of nature 2008-2009”, 2010

¹⁷⁰ Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA), “Report on state of nature 2008-2009”, 2010 (p.12-13)

mentioned mechanisms only. Dukagjini Region is plenty of natural beauties which cannot be listed or be put under state protection like certain springs, cliffs, wooden fences, trees with specific shapes, etc. but considering the context, they become special and convey emotions to visitors.

The distinguished attractions which visitors are encouraged to visit are: National Park “Sharri”, “Mirusha Waterfall”, National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”. This list also includes some areas like “Rusenica Reserve”, “Oshlak Reserve”, “Maja e Arnenit Reserve” and most popular “Rugova Gorge”. Valuable monument of nature in Region of Dukagjini are ancient “Radavc Cave”, Thermal spring in Istog and Drini i Bardhë Canyon at Fshajtë’s Bridge. Sometimes, even relict as Plane Tree (*Platanusorientalis*) in Marash, Prizren, presents attraction for tourists and excursions of students and others.

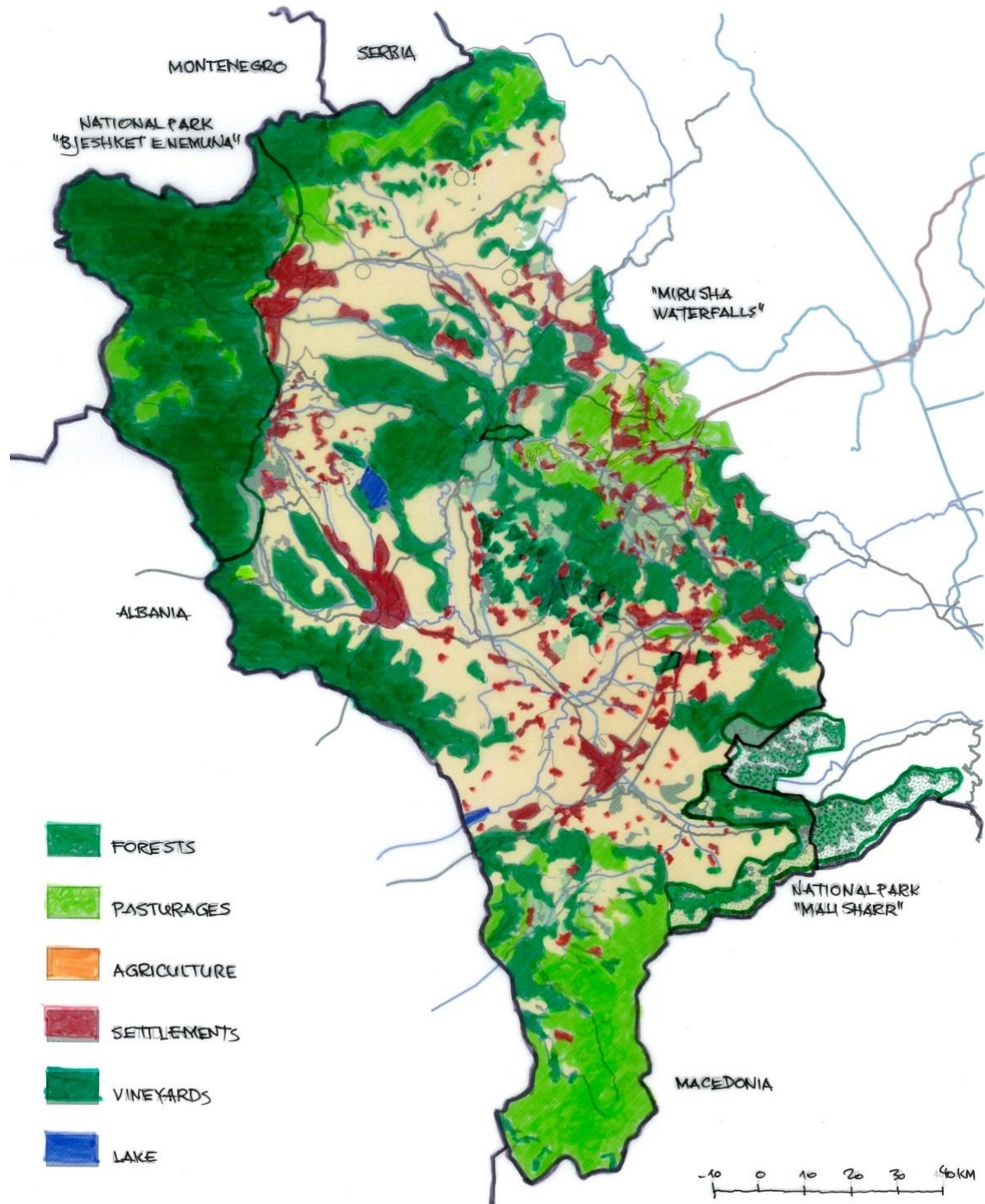
Other natural wealth in Dukagjin region are mountainous centers Mokna, Maja e Koproanikut, Boga, mountains Rusolia and Hajla, which lie in municipalities of Istog and Peja, and stand for their geological, geomorphologic, hydrographic, vegetation and botanical characteristics as their natural values (Figure111.).

Figure 111. Landscape from “Sharri Mountains”, Dragash municipality



Source: Author, 2011

Figure 112. Zoning Map of Dukagjini Region



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

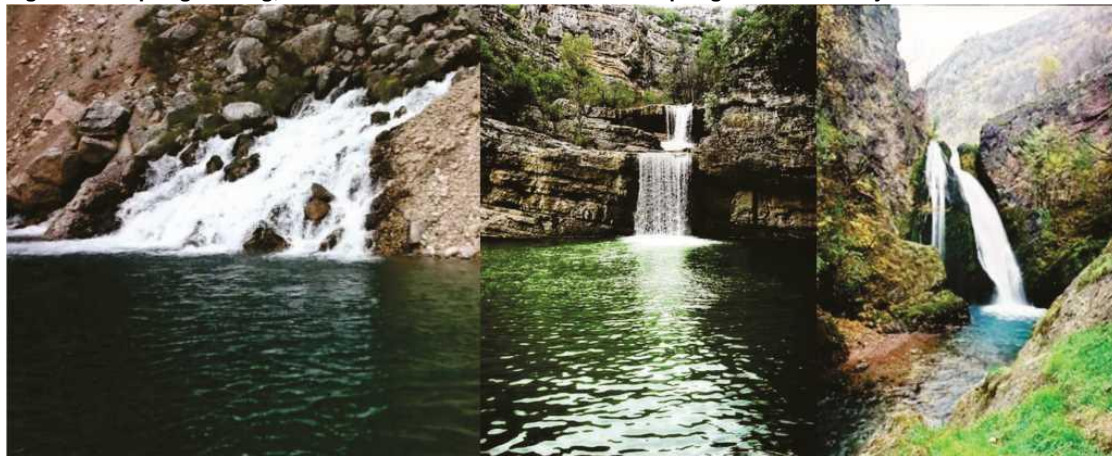
Figure 113. Natural resources



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

Rivers: Lumëbardhi of Deçan, Lumëbardhi of Lloqan, Istog River, Lumëbardhi of Peja, rivers Klina and Mirusha, rivers Erenik and Trave, water canals, Hoqa River, rivers Ratkoc, Rimnik, Palluzhe, Bellaja, Duhle, Sopnica, Toplluha, Semetisht, rivers Dragaqina, Leshan, water pond of Lepenc River, Blaç River, rivers Brod, Pllajnik, Sotka etc., represent great potential for development of winter and summer tourism, climbing, skiing, cave tourism, etc. (Figure114.).

Figure 114. Spring in Istog, Mirusha Waterfalls in Malisheva and spring in Radavc - Peja



Source: Internet ("Hapesira jone", "Panaromic travel" and webportal of Peja municipality)

Natural monuments listed as distinguished in the municipality of Peja are Rugova Gorge with a surface of about 4301 ha then the "Big Gorge" of 13450m length which is rich in subterranean rivers and all types of rocs as stalagmite and stalactite, then "Radavc Cave" with a length of 1420 m that is rich in stalactites, stalagmites, columns and is characterized by cave pools.¹⁷¹

Deçan municipality is characterized by the following natural monuments: Maja e Marjashit (Marjash Peak), Maja e Strellcit (Strellc Peak), Gjeravica, Bjeshka e Dobroshit, Bjeshka e Belegut, Bjeshka e Kurvallës, Bjeshka e Prelepit, mountains of Milishevc, Roshkodol, Rrasa eZogut, Batusha, Jedova, Kunora, Pllaqica e Vokshit, Big Mountain, Budosh, Lumëbardh, Irzniq, and Zllanopoja. Whereas Carraleva Mountains, Berisha Mountains, Shpella e Flladit (Breeze Cave), and Ura e Rabaxhive (Rabaxhi'sBridge) are monuments located in Malisheva.

Other important potentials are: observation point Suka e Cërmjanit (Cermjan Hillock), Qabrat Park in Gjakova and Ura e Fshajtë (Fshajtë Bridge), the bridge in Drini i Bardhë Canyon, which is a natural monument of hydro-geomorphologic character with a surface of 199 ha and lies in territory of municipality of Gjakova (73.86 ha) and Rahovec (125 ha).¹⁷²

Other important natural potentials in Dukagjini Region are some kinds of fish that are grown in waters of Istog municipality such as: juvenile fish, gudgeon, eel, trout, stream trout, carp and Danube trout.

Other important natural resources are Banja Pool, Gorge of Klina River, thermal water reserves, mineral water springs which cures infectious diseases, bone diseases, skin diseases, etc. Another potential are subterranean resources: coal, bauxite, gravel, clay, decorative stone reserves and minerals like chrome, asbestos, nickel, cobalt, copper, etc.

¹⁷¹ Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA), "Report on state of nature 2008-2009", 2010

¹⁷² Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA), "Report on state of nature 2008-2009", 2010

Raw materials of metals are other natural resources found in Suhareka municipality. Whereas Lynx Reserve in Rusenica, Protected Nature Reserve with a 300 ha protected area, part of National Park Sharr Mountain, natural reserves as Popovo Prase, Oshlak, Golemi Bor, Lumëbardhi Gorge, Plane tree in Marash, Field elm-tree, etc., are situated in Prizren.

Other natural wealth is the Complex of the root timber, Sessile oak, Turkey oak, etc. in Klina municipality.

6.8.2. Cultural heritage

Kosovo is a territory with rich cultural heritage and diversity. The new Law on Cultural Heritage (in the process of approval) clearly defines the scope of the law in question and types of heritage by categorizing cultural heritage into architectural, archaeological, movable and spiritual heritage, and cultural landscapes. Nonetheless, it is time to create a functional decision-making system, defining relations between beneficiaries and implementing entities of supposed work in integrated conserving approach¹⁷³ (Figure 115.).

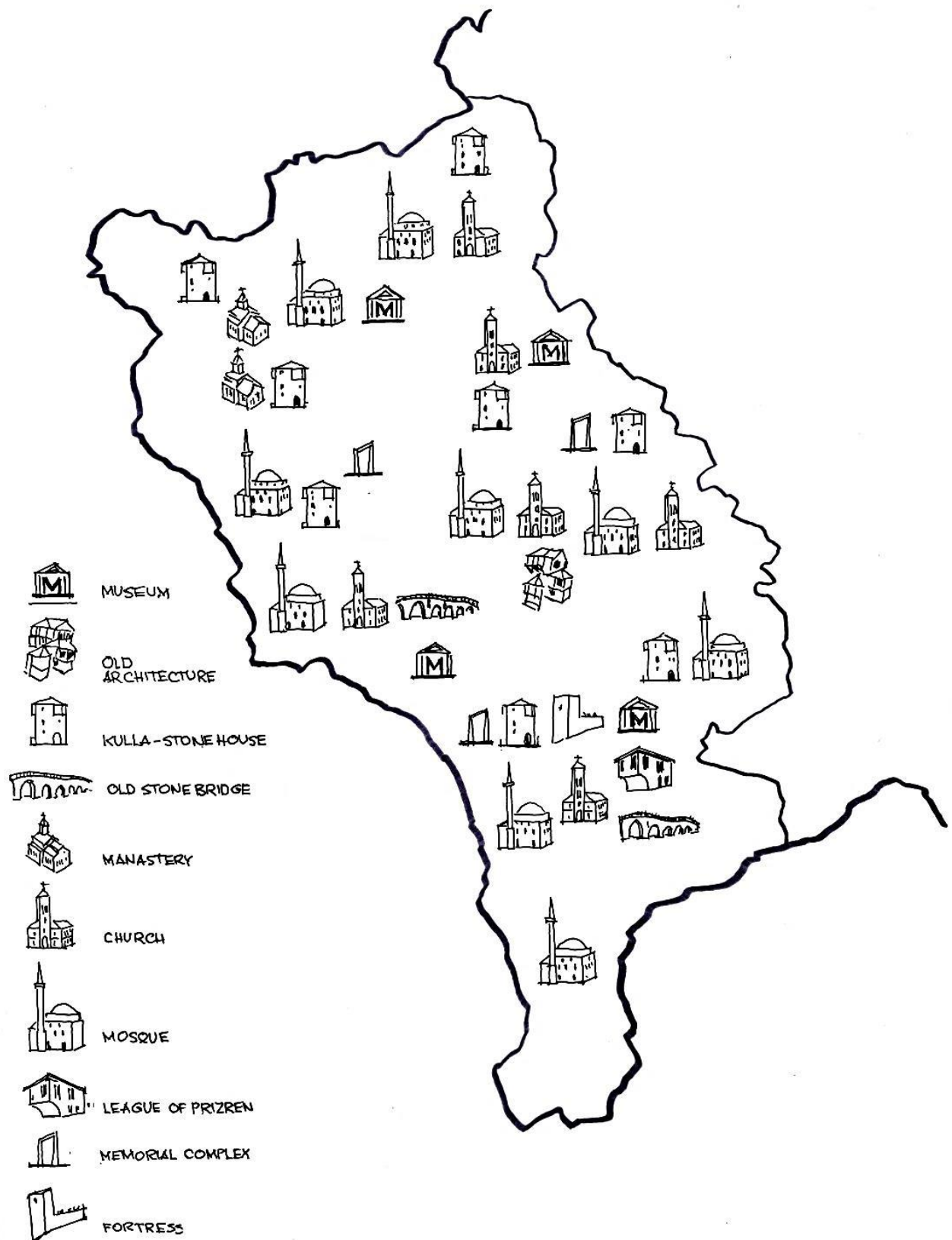
Figure 115. Urban and natural landscape, Prizren municipality



Source: Author, 2004

¹⁷³ MCYS, Draft Law on Cultural Heritage, 2014 (p. 1, 2)

Figure 116. Cultural monuments



Source: Compiled by Author, information gathered from MDP in region and SPK, 2006

Kosovo is rich with all kinds of heritage. A document of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports called the "List of cultural heritage for temporary protection" provides a list of 1470 monuments categorized in:

- I. Category: Archaeological Heritage
 - A. Subcategory: Monument/ Ensemble
 - B. Subcategory: Archaeological Locality/ Reserves
- II. Category: Architectural Heritage
 - A. Subcategory: Monument/ Ensemble
 - B. Subcategory: Architectural conservation areas
- III. Category: Movable objects
- IV. Category: Special protected areas

Archaeological Heritage in Dukagjini Region is rich but not much explored. There are remains of fortifications like Prizren Castle, traces of fortification Zatrici in Rahovec, fortifications in Vranic, Suhareka, cave in Radavc, the one in Uljarice at Mirusha lakes, tumulus (ancient cemetery) etc., that can be listed as potential places to be visited by organized groups of students of archeology from Kosovo and other countries, as part of their summer schools (Figure117, 118).

Figure 117. Archeological Heritage - Fortress, Prizren municipality



Source: Author, 2005

Figure 118. Architectural Heritage, Junik municipality



Source: Author, 2011

Architectural Heritage- a large number of diverse cultural heritage buildings like churches, mosques, tekkes, mausoleums, mills, saws with water, bridges, towers and stone houses, inns, hostels, "pozllom" (an open housing facility for cars or storage for agricultural products), etc., make Kosovo

an attractive country in terms of cultural diversity. Cities like Peja, Deçan, Gjakova and particularly Prizren, are distinguished for their architectural heritage (Figure 119.).

Figure 119. “Haxhi Zeka” mill, Peja municipality



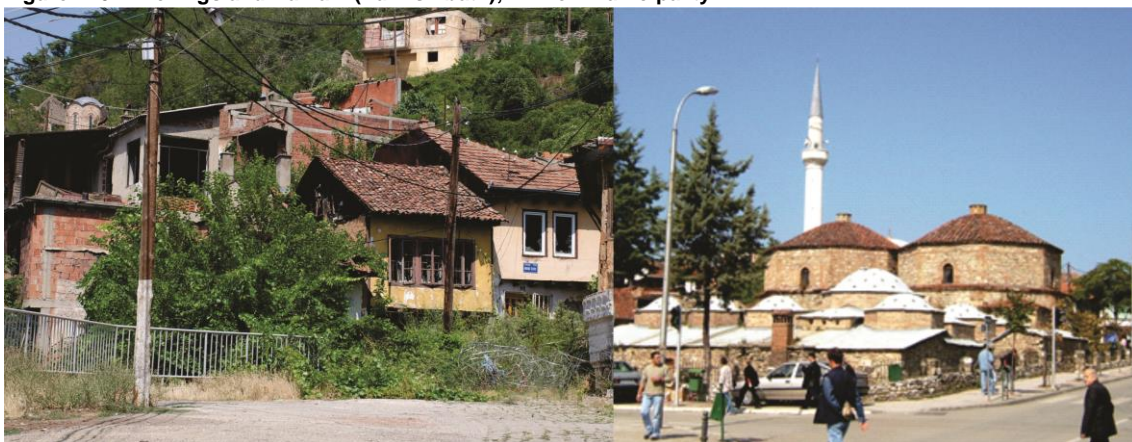
Source: Author, 2005

As regards municipality of Peja, the most distinguished monuments to visit are: Bajrakli Mosque, Hamam of Haxhi Beu, Mill of Haxhi Zeka, Tahir Begu’s Inn, Haxhi Zeka Tower, Goskajve Tower, Qamil Limani Tower, Zenel Beu Tower, Kurshumli Mosque, Qarshija e vjetër (old market), Peja Patriarchy, etc.

Monuments worth visiting in Gjakova municipality are: Qarshia e Madhe (Big Market), Hadum Mosque, Clock Tower, Koshi Tower, Sheh Emin Tekke, Taliq, Terzive and Tabakut Bridges, Haraqija Inn, etc.

Prizren, in all documents and guides, is distinguished as a historical city with several monuments and ensembles. Some of them are: Prizren Castle and the street situated beneath it, bridges and monuments of the Ottoman period (Sinan Pasha Mosque and other mosques (about 30), about 30 shrines and tekkes, Church of St. Prenda (st.Friday) and other Orthodox churches (about 10), Hammam of Gazi Mehmed Pasha, the Bridge over Lumbardh, old houses, etc. (Figure 120).

Figure 120. Dwellings and Hamam (Turkish bath), Prizren municipality



Source: Author, 2007

Other municipalities have distinguished monuments too. Perhaps the most famous monument of architectural heritage in Kosovo is the Deçan Monastery, listed by UNESCO as a monument in danger. Deçan also possesses tower complexes in villages Isniq and Drenoc, which are regarded as

typical original and native architecture of Kosovo. Despite destruction during the war, this type of facility can also be found in the municipality of Junik- Towers of Ramë Zymberi and Jahlmeri and Çoku Mosque that represent fragments of typical Albanian settlement of 15th-19th century. As per Istog municipality, some interesting places are the Stone Bridge in Zallq, St. John's Church, Tower of Qerim Rugova and Qelë Bicaj Mill, whereas Mark Jakaj Tower can be found in Klina municipality. Great Tekke-Helveti, Rufai Tekke, Melami Tekke, Clock Tower built in 1791, etc. are some of distinguished monuments in the municipality of Rahovec (Figure121, 122).

Figure 121. Catholic Church in Budisalc, Klina municipality



Source: Author, 2014

Figure 122. Mausoleum in Rahovec and Church in Hoqa e Madhe, Rahovec municipality



Source: Author, 2014

The village of Hoqë e Madhe belongs to this municipality and has an agricultural population which deals with winery. With the support of European Commission and Cultural Heritage without Borders (CHWB) - a Swedish organization with its branch in Kosovo, this village has successfully started conducting the business of rural tourism.

Other municipalities, too, have monuments of economic character (mills, mill shops, and other shops), residence buildings and religious buildings, in particular.

Movable objects, which are mainly placed in museums, are numerous. Museum artefacts are mainly located in Pristina. Unfortunately, most museum artefacts were transferred to Serbia in 1999, so the Museum of Kosovo cannot praise itself for its artefacts (Figure 123.).

Figure 123. Museum artifacts



Source: Arben Llapashtica, 2014

In some cities of Dukagjini region, there was a tendency to establish museums, but results are poor. Museums where significant artefacts can be found are:

- Ethnological Museum in Peja
- Ethnological Museum in Gjakova
- Archaeological Museum in Prizren
- Private Museum in Klina.

Memorials and **historical heritage** has taken an important form for tourism in Kosovo. Memorials in Kleçka village of Malisheva, the one of Glogjan in Deçani, of Koshare in Gjakova, etc., are some of spots visited by students during excursions organized by schools. They are also visited by citizens of Diaspora. The recently established Agency for Memorial Management is hopeful that these places could become attractive points for visitors, with a view to keeping constant visitors' interest about these categories in the future (Figure 124.).

Figure 124. Memorial in Klecka – Malisheva and Memorial in Glogjan - Decan



Source: Unknown (from internet)

Intangible Heritage (non-material) is a value at risk. A big part of this type of inheritance has diminished with passing of time and change of generations. Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, in collaboration with Institute of Albanology in Pristina, are in the final stage of the project for preservation of particular value of spiritual heritage—Eposi i Kreshnikëve (Epic of the Knights). A joint project of Institute of Albanology in Pristina and Albanological Research Center in Tirana to introduce it for listing under UNESCO's protection is on the way. "Creating Plis-traditional hats" in Peja, "Cradle making craft" in Gjakova, "Traditional weaving" in Deçan, "Darka e Lamës" (similar to Thanksgiving) in Istog, traditional costume "Reka" in Klina, "Game kutaklic", and horse races in Junik are some forms of spiritual heritage which can still be found in the north of Dukagjini region¹⁷⁴. The south of Dukagjini is distinguished for some races, games and rituals that still exist, such as races of "Pehlivans" in Dragash or "Face painting of bride" in Ljubinje in Prizren municipality (Figure 126.).

Figure 125. Intangible Heritage: Bride Face painting in Lubinje, Hand craft (wool)



Source: PCDK – office in Kosovo and Arben Llapashtica, 2013

A good example that could be mentioned is a festival named Albaniada which is organized in village Kukaj. This event has competitive character and the best participants win medals. "More than 60 medals were awarded at various disciplines, such as: Hats (Kapuça), Measure and Stick (Kut e Kleçkë), Crouch (Guxhas), Ball-on-Horse (top-n-kali), Arm Wrestling (rrëzim i duarve), Bag Hopping (vrapi me thes), Leg Wrestling (rrëzim i këmbëve), Boards (rrasash), Capture the Handkerchief (kapja e shamise), Rope Pulling (tërheqja e litarit), Stone Throwing Sideways (gurapesh me dy duar anash), Overhead Stone Throwing (gurapesh prapa), Single-Hand Stone Throwing, etc."¹⁷⁵ Traditional rituals in Dukagjini Region as races of "Pehlivans" and those in Dragash that have existed for centuries, might also be touristic attractions in Southern Dukagjini.

Handicrafts can be found everywhere: embroidery, knitting, sewing, wood carving etc, and they are usually considered as interesting products by foreign visitors.

6.8.3. Tourism

Tourism in Kosovo is a known notion mainly in urban areas. Tourism in Kosovo has begun sometimes after the Second World War mainly when people started going to sea during summer holidays and sometimes skiing during winter holidays. Rehabilitation in spas was mainly considered as "healing or therapy" after diagnosis of any specific disease. Nowadays, in some areas where local people face extreme poverty - lack of food, drinking water, clothing, education, etc., rural tourism is little known. Rural tourism is mainly known in institutions and professional circles having knowledge of it.

¹⁷⁴ Joint Project EU/CoE Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo-PCDK, "Sofra", 2013

¹⁷⁵ Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, "Albaniada-a competition event to promote and cultivate cultural heritage", <http://www.mkrs-ks.org/?page=2,6,645#.Va6BuvmqpBc>, (Approached May 2014)

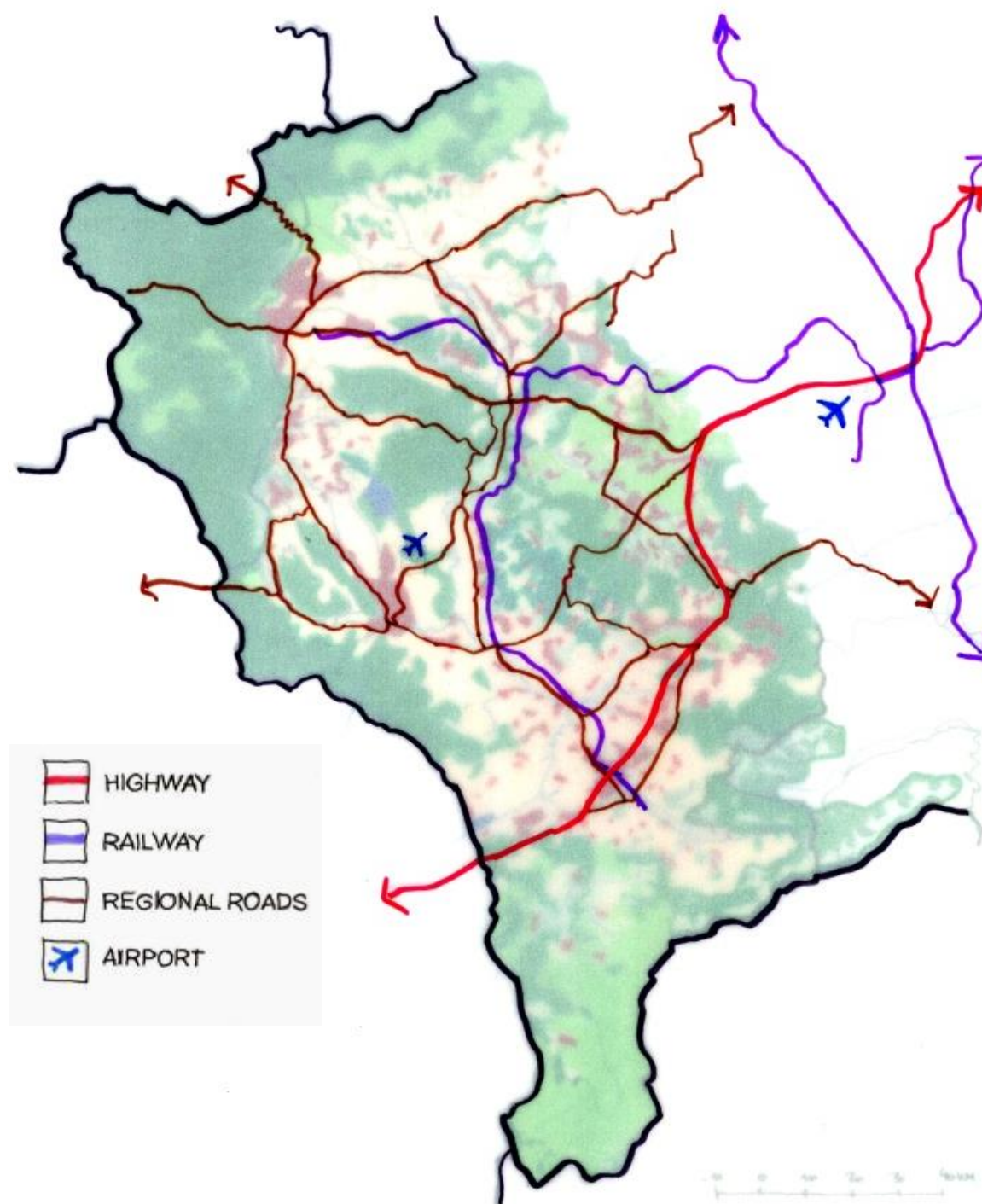
In rural areas, situation is more difficult, where very few inhabitants of these areas know of rural tourism, and even fewer believe they can do something with this branch of economy and tourism. The situation has improved a little bit with the emergence of recent projects like Hoqë e Madhe project, and some attempts in Drenoc and Junik. Residents of rural areas in Dukagjini Region face poverty, and in some areas, extreme poverty (lack of food, drinking water and sanitation, clothing, education, etc.). This socioeconomic meltdown makes people hopeless and very few of them are hopeful they will get out of this difficult situation. Often, these people, and young people in particular do not see their future there, instead they seek it elsewhere, regardless of the fact that they are surrounded by natural and cultural resources. In cases when families have any of their members employed, especially in western countries, their economic situation is significantly better.

6.9. Infrastructure and utilities

6.9.1. Road infrastructure, railways and air traffic

Kosovo as a province of former Yugoslavia had all components of infrastructure that were interconnected with Serbia and Yugoslavia. The main **road links** of Kosovo with Serbia have been towards Raska through “the Ibar Highway” (22-3), in direction of Novi Pazar (R217 - 234), in direction of Kurshumlia (E-80 and R127), in direction of Leskovac (R125), in direction of Bujanovac (M25-3) and in direction of Presheva (25-2) (Figure126.).

Figure 126. Traffic network in Dukagjini Region



Source: Author

There were two links with Macedonia- one in direction of Tetovo (R116) and the other one in direction of Skopje, which was of special importance. The only line with Montenegro was through Rozaje (R106) and another line in direction of Andrijevica (M9) has been removed by the Montenegrin state ten years ago.

Road links with Albania have always been delicate, due to political reasons. Although there were three passages, in direction of Kukës (E851), Bajram Curri (M9-1) and Kruma (SH23), the traffic has been rare.

Difficult situation produced the need for stronger relation with Albania namely for a line towards the Adriatic Sea. An agreement between two governments produced construction of a four lane highway that connects the two countries (Albania and Kosovo) and goes towards Serbia. This corridor (E851) is of particular relevance to the region of Dukagjini because most of its part goes through its territory (Malisheva, Suhareka and Prizren) and is only a few hours away from the Albanian coast. Currently another necessity is improvement of road infrastructure in other parts (Gjakova, Peja, etc.) in both directions, towards Pristina and Prizren, in order to make the region accessible much more easily.

Kosovo **Railways** is completely different than road network. Before year 2000, the main functional line was the corridor that ran through Fushë Kosova to Belgrade via Kraljevo and Skopje, being part of the known railway line “Acropolis” connecting Athens with western countries. Other lines were intended mainly for goods. After 2000, Kosovo railways were in collapse and almost out of order. Rail infrastructure, although not very good (old and outdated), had been destroyed even more during the war in 1999. What is important for the region is that there is a corridor that goes to Peja and as such, this infrastructure represents a resource that can be functionalized through concessionary investments.

Air transport is mainly organized by international airport “Adem Jashari” near Pristina. This airport, with the new building and technology, has been restored quickly, thus being transformed from a local airport into an airport with significant frequency for regional circumstances. Another opportunity of extreme importance is Gjakova Airport which, until this year, has been used by KFOR and from 2015 will be in the service of the Government of Kosovo.

6.9.2. Supply with electricity and energy infrastructure

Kosovo is mainly supplied with electricity from Obiliq power plant. Electricity network is mostly outdated. Reductions in electricity supply are still present. There are big losses, whilst networks are damaged and production of electricity is not stable. There are several hydropower plants like that of Dikance, the hydropower plant in Istog, the one in Radavc, and there are also plans for several major hydropower plants such as hydropower plant in Zhur (which is under construction), then another one in Brod and in Restelica. The existing electricity highway with Serbia and the one under construction with Albania enable comfortable position for Kosovo in electricity market, in producing mainly for their own needs, but also to import and export at times. The passing of corridor no.8 through Macedonia and Albania offers Kosovo an opportunity to connect with the pipeline in near future.

6.9.3. Telecommunication network

The post-war Kosovo inherited the outdated system of Serbia’s Post and Telecom and mobile telephony Mobtel. While the first socially-owned system was reconstructed, though outdated, and

was revived with the mobile telephony VALA, Mobtel operated only in Serbian enclaves until recently. Later, operators Kujtesa, IPKO and Z-mobile were licensed, which are so far, the only operators offering services of telephony, cable TV and Internet. Almost all rural areas in this region are covered with Internet and mobile telephony, with good network. Distribution of fixed telephony is insufficient.

6.9.4. Water supply

Resources of special importance in Dukagjini Plain are sufficient water resources and supply with good drinking water. These water resources represent a potential for development, and there are possibilities for improvement of water supply. Multiple sources, terrestrial and underground waters make Dukagjini Region free from risk of lack of water supply during dry seasons. Water pollution is caused mainly from sewage spills.

6.9.5. Management of solid wastes and wastewater

Lack of waste management, especially in rural areas of municipalities in Dukagjini Region, is threatening public health. The coverage radius is small for waste management service. Unplanned dumping of solid waste is done in different environments including rivers directly. Environmental polluters come from waste disposal sites and their burning, as well as from quarries.

Few existing waste disposal sites do not meet EU standards. Almost each municipality faces issues of waste disposal, outdated technology and habit of selected waste collection. European Commission and donor countries have supported Kosovo solve this problem and there are now waste disposal sites in Peja, Rahovec, Suva Reka, Gjakova, Dragash, Prizren, etc.

While the issue of water supply and processing is on the agenda and is expected to be solved in a couple of years, the issue of raising residents' awareness to waste management is still very little treated. In particular, rural areas are often neglected and pollution often comes from these areas as residents and visitors together throw everything in rivers, polluting rivers and nearby settlements right away.

Selected waste collection and their recycling is not only a matter of laws and regulations. It is also a matter of people's practice-wherever people are, they should have clean environment, efficient and cheaper management.

6.10. Regional Strategic projects

According to Spatial Plan of Kosovo and municipal development plans in Dukagjini Region, there are plans to define municipal responsibilities with respect to environmental and social impacts of natural monument “Mirusha Waterfall”, Drini i Bardhë Canyon, Cultural Heritage in Hoqë e Madhe village, etc. Protection from environmental and social impacts of National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”, National Park “Sharri”, Gorici Monastery in Istog, Church of St. Nicholas in Gurrakoc and the Holy Virgin Monastery of Hvosnos, Budisalc Monastery, Dollc Monastery and Hermitage or the church of Hermits in Klina, Deçani Monastery in Devic, etc. can turn them into natural and cultural heritage in special conservation areas.

Planning is ongoing as regards establishment of units with collective equipment for processing agricultural products, progress of honey processing technology, development of craft activities, supporting projects in traditional gastronomy, and establishment of vocational schools in different

municipalities of Dukagjini region that will educate young professionals in agricultural production and basic marketing knowledge. Also, there are plans to inform farmers on agricultural development, products and new technologies, and create associations of farmers, promoting excursions and field trips so one can learn out of useful experiences, whether in Kosovo or neighboring countries, then initiation of pilot projects on agro-tourism, creating organizational structures for information, and publication of maps and tourist guides.

Given the current state of development and small municipal budget, some municipalities have oriented their development policies towards stimulating foreign investments, where several such pilot projects have been ongoing so far. Some of them are: projects on tourists, sports and recreation centers, projects promoting tourism, cave research projects, etc. Organizational information offices are also planned in order to attract investments in industry of fruits and vegetables such as chestnut, medical ecological herbs etc. Also, there are plans for construction of winter sports centers such as skiing and areas for holiday camping, promoting healing and relaxation characteristics of these areas, and similar initiatives.

There is planning for informative educational programs, management of tourism destinations including natural and cultural archaeological sites. Projects for river beds cleaning, construction of regional facilities for wastewater treatment, construction of motorway Pristina-Merdare-Morina, creation of industrial business park, supporting development of renewable energy projects and supply of new renewable energy business park, warehouse and preservation of agro-products, forest fruits and those with medicinal properties are also part of planning.

Also, there are plans to develop comprehensive projects for restoration of historic buildings and monumental building rehabilitation projects, and to draft management plans for protected historic sites.

6.11. Networks, urgency and rescue services

Public awareness for rural tourism is a crucial topic. In general, Kosovo's population is not informed about tourism. Hospitality of people of these areas, and especially of Dukagjini region, was known in former Yugoslavia, but this was not in function of profit. The oldest association in Kosovo, “Tourist Association of Kosovo” (TAK), is an independent nonprofit association and organization founded in 1953. TAK was oriented towards offering touristic packages in ex -Yugoslavia, mainly focused in Ulcinj in Montenegro. Kosovo, being economically the most undeveloped region of former Yugoslavia, had its tourism promoted only in narrow circles of rich people by exploiting some holiday spots reserved for Kosovo people (e.g. sea holidays resort Kamenova in Montenegro or some smaller capacity resorts in Croatia).

Kosovo's Brezovica with several hotels (“Narcissus” and “Molika”) and some other resorts was tourist destination known both in Kosovo and in former Yugoslavia. This place was visited very little by Kosovans and only for skiing during winter. There were also travel arrangements through pioneers’ or pensioners’ associations allowing only a very small number of privileged groups to visit the spot.

Another resort in Kosovo was that of Deçani which was known for summer holidays. Such a situation in the field of tourism enabled only a handful of people to have knowledge about tourism as the most important branch of economic development. Within the last decade, that awareness is being

raised thanks to support of international institutions and organizations, but still this awareness only took place in urban areas. Rural areas, in most cases, have not been able to understand this “phenomenon” and are often confused when visited by individuals and groups of tourists. These visits only arouse curiosity of local people of these areas so as to why there is interest for them and they challenge themselves whether they should treat visitors as guests and not as tourists, to make profit out of visits by offering services and indigenous products.

Safety in the territory of Kosovo is managed by:

- Kosovo security forces
- Kosovo police
- KFOR (who has a temporary status up in the training and the functioning of the system of protection in Kosovo).

Information in Republic of Kosovo is still in stage of consolidating all systems that were once interconnected and dependent of Serbia and former Yugoslavia. The major cultural and information system is Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK) that derived from Radio Television of Pristina which is the only television network that began with one public channel and continued with the second, while just recently it was complemented with 2 more channels: RTK 3 and RTK 4. Besides this electronic medium, there are 3 other national TVs (TV 21, KTV and Klan) and a very large number of local TV stations. Radio Kosova, Radio Dukagjini and Radio K4 are the most distinguished radios. Information is also spread through numerous internet portals.

Besides electronic and print media in Kosovo, there are several radio networks, but undoubtedly the most spread network is that of mobile telephony. In rural areas, there is almost no other system of emergency communications that may be of particular utility.

Information system, as a system which is delicate and still under consolidation phase, needs to be developed in two directions, from the region towards tourists to equip them with necessary information and vice versa - from tourist to various local services (police, health, tourist centers, etc.). In small countries like Kosovo, it is difficult to complete all information mechanisms like in large and developed countries. Kosovo needs a flexible system with the possibility of complementing each other. Communication through electronic media, radio, mobile telephony and other forms of alternative service should be in service of two-way information, for good and fair information, and in service of overcoming emergency situations.

Emergency response in emergency cases like fires, floods, snow avalanche, etc. require a comprehensive approach. Army, police and fire-fighters on one side, and civil society and community on the other side, need to be united in helping one another to synchronize. Mountaineering associations, guides and local residents often can act faster and be more efficient than police or army services which, due to bureaucracy, may remain one step behind community. In order to have synchronized actions, there is a need for training and exercises in normal conditions so that the degree of readiness is much higher in cases of disasters. In case of emergency, tourists would feel safer if they could easily access nearby shelters, and from where they would be able to make calls for help and wait for rescue teams.

Community **Health Improvement** is of a great importance for residents' welfare and healthy life, creating conditions for sustainable development. Setting priorities by identifying prioritization criteria is a guarantee for successful planning of Health Improvement. Protecting water, soil and air from pollution is condition for better human health and living things in general.

Water pollution in Dukagjini mainly happens due to lack of facilities for wastewater treatment, their discharge into surface water or groundwater, accumulation of waste in illegal sites, extraction of gravel from river beds, etc. Another problem with regards to pollution is low awareness of people on environment and its importance for quality of life and sustainable economic development.

Some of the most polluted rivers in Dukagjini region are Drini i Bardhë, part of Erenik, Krena, Trava, etc., which are classified according to water quality. In some cases, according to municipal development plans, gravel extraction has caused degradation of river banks, which was followed by a shift in the natural flow of rivers. Also, the unplanned growth of plants has negatively affected natural flow of rivers.

Air pollution in Dukagjini Region mainly comes from the traffic of old motor vehicles without catalyst, uncontrolled industrial production, agricultural fertilizers (methane, nitrogen and nitrogen oxides), and mixed substances released by nature or man, open waste landfills (methane and CO₂), stone crusher, dust from unpaved roads, etc. Although air is very little monitored and it is unknown what its pollutants are, according to municipal development plan, the region's biggest air pollution comes from urban areas.

Uncontrolled construction, inadequate planning, inadequate infrastructure, large number of vehicles, water pollution, big number of septic tanks, etc., can be considered as land pollutants. These make Dukagjini region face major environmental degradation. In recent years, illegal constructions have taken place even within protected areas.

Quality of food in Kosovo and especially in rural areas of Dukagjini Region could be considered as sufficient. Quality of food should be considered as a process that requires permanent monitoring in order to avoid poisoning and other diseases that may come from contaminated food. Sources of **food contamination** are from food handlers, water, soil, dust, raw material ingredients, packing material, garbage and sewage, and contamination may be caused by rodents, insects and animals. For this reason, it is very important to put in place food control mechanisms that should be considered more as support, through counseling farmers and rural businesses, than as inspections for the purpose of fining them.

Housing conditions and quality directly affect human health. Despite clean natural environment, these conditions can scale to serious health damage as that of respiratory organs, nervous and cardiovascular system. **Housing and health** in rural areas is mostly in good condition but undoubtedly, it needs an improvement of sanitary and hygienic conditions to a level that is acceptable for provision of “bed & breakfast” services. In this regard, all spaces especially bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens should meet criteria to provide clean accommodation and food. For sustainability of investments, these rehabilitations should include EU criteria for energy efficiency. Policies improving housing conditions are imperative and this trend should be followed anywhere, not only on assets planned for rural tourism. European branch of World Health Organization (WHO) deals with evaluation of effects that implementation of local plans for housing rehabilitation has on

health, and sets priorities on a number of housing technical issues, such as thermal comfort and energy, indoor environmental conditions, home safety, and residential housing environments (World Health Organization, 2014).

Exposure and epidemiology is a crucial topic for rural tourism and regional development in general. As a consequence of exposure, water, soil and air pollution and other influences such as genetic influences, there are light effects in respiratory and cardiovascular health, mainly in urban residents. A problem inherited from the past is epidemic hemorrhagic fever caused by virus “Crimean Congo”, which is present in rural areas of Malisheva and in some neighboring municipalities. According to epidemiology experts in Kosovo, the “Crimean Congo” virus has been isolated from rats, rabbits, and domestic animals which carry the virus to humans by biting. Given the importance of this issue, Kosovo Government has established a committee that plans to eradicate this risk entirely by 2017. Concrete action has been taken by the Government in allocating special budget for these measures, which, according to experts, will be sufficient to cover all activities associated with the disease by 2017. Another important step is planning to cultivate the land, destroy shrubs and disinfect barns and animals, as well as conduct analysis and collect samples in order to stop outbreak.

This committee linked the Ministry of Health with other institutions such as Ministry of Agriculture, Faculty of Veterinary, Kosovo Agency of Food and Veterinary Control, Kosovo Police, Kosovo Security Forces, Ministry of Environment and all relevant institutions can contribute toward a holistic approach which promises results and this practice should serve in other similar cases in the country.

Crime

As a new state, Kosovo still faces problems and difficulties associated with security and crime prevention. Despite several campaigns and delivery of weapons actions, Kosovo people still have considerable number of weapons that pose permanent risk for conflicts, but also organized crime.

Currently, there are two main formations of local security in Kosovo: Kosovo Security Force and Kosovo Police, and KFOR as an international one. UNMIK Police has been reduced and it serves only for internal needs of their mission in Kosovo.

Eventhough the proces of **identification and marking of mined fields** is completed, because of its importance, it should be considered in the future. For example, a concern brought up in some municipalities of Dukagjini is the presence of mines, e.g. in municipality of Junik (Jasiq and Gjocaj villages), etc.

Political and social strength is an issue to be considered in Kosovo circumstances. Despite the fact that Kosovo has homogeneous population with approximately 90% native Albanians and 10% other inhabitants, it cannot be said that Kosovo is a politically stable country. The problem of northern part of Kosovo, mainly inhabited by Serbs and Serb enclaves in Gracanica, Strpce, etc., make Kosovo still more politically unstable. International pressure on Serbian Government to accept new reality in Kosovo has resulted in “Ahtisaari Plan” which provides the so called “positive discrimination” for Serbian population in Kosovo. This plan that was guide to Kosovo Constitution and a whole range of laws that shaped legal framework in Kosovo have created good conditions for a safe life for the Serb minority who are even privileged to some extent. This was supposed to be a guarantee to building sustainable political stability in the country. This long-awaited stability is good basis for economic development and social improvement and advancement of Kosovo. There are not many Serbs in

Dukagjini Region and this issue is not considered as obstacle now as regards internal relations. But, if we take into consideration general image, this part of Kosovo is under the shade of not very affirmative security situation of Kosovo, both in social and political terms. Negotiations in higher level, under supervision of EU states, have approximated many opinions and some barriers have been already eliminated and this process is apparently guiding Kosovo towards a politically and economically stable country which is convenient for doing business.

7. S.W.O.T Analysis of Dukagjini Region

Stereotyping of mass tourism across the world is slowly satisfying the curiosity of tourists throughout the world. The tourist of nowadays is more demanding and attracted to something authentic that possesses its own identity. The five cases elaborated in Chapter 3 were successful due to this. “Quku i Valbonës” offered excellent natural landscapes, “Popova Kula” offered distinguished wine produced by its own vineyards, “Piva and Tara” offered experiences and adrenaline rush through rafting, Ethno village “KÜSTENDORF” of Emir Kusturica was distinguished because of the film as a special “product” of art, while “Peaks of the Balkans” are known for “defeating” state borders in another way. All these cases also offered other experiences based on nature and culture that make these places unique and provide them with identity that attracts tourists to visit them more than once.

Existing laws and documents in Kosovo neither prohibit nor support successful rural tourism. There is a big potential in rural areas of Dukagjini Region for the development of rural tourism. The “bottom-up” approach enables development of rural tourism in these circumstances too, but in order to have proper development of rural tourism that would help development of rural areas, there is a need for more decisive and comprehensive approach which should be strongly supported by official and unofficial documents. Benefit should be drawn from the moment of change of laws – Law on Spatial Planning and Law on Construction which impose changing of Spatial Plan of Kosovo and Municipal Development Plans. Awareness - raising of civil society and support provided by institutions and international organizations in recent years have created a very favorable situation for the development of rural tourism. This newly created situation and recently drafted documents such as plans of Special Interest Areas in Dukagjini Region: National Park “Sharri”, Natural Monument “Mirusha waterfalls” and The National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” should be used. This distinguished natural riches in the territory of Dukagjini Region presents a potential that should essentially be protected but also serve the development of rural areas. The paradox of being so close to these natural beauties and face poverty happened because of wrong development. This development was carried out based on a paradigm of giving priority to urban areas against rural ones during the dominance of communist regime in former-Yugoslavia. The controversy paradigm towards differentiation between village-town, industrialization-degradation, social-private property and favoring huge agricultural corporations versus small family economies caused extreme poverty in all rural areas in Kosovo and wider. This paradox should be turned in favor of local population by advising and supporting them conduct self-development based on family businesses- endogenous development (Chapter 2.5.).

Dukagjini Region, composed of twelve municipalities including the newly established municipality of Mamusha, possesses Municipal Development Plans. Despite their shortcomings, these plans have filled the vacuum in the area of planning that lasted about two decades. But these plans (other plans also) were faced with difficulties during implementation. Detachment from communist planning culture and transfer to a culture of planning based on market economy was inefficient due to lack of experience of local companies that drafted the plans, but even more so due to lack of experience of professional staff in municipalities regarding new format of planning framework. When these plans were being drafted, local planners and officials in Kosovo municipalities (including Dukagjini Region) were still under the influence of former Yugoslav concepts. There was a poor knowledge about new development trends on sustainable and endogenous development, LEADER approach, rural

tourism, etc., therefore these plans for development of municipalities were based more on traditional concepts of the more recent past, exogenous developments, industry, agriculture of old-time cooperatives, mass tourism, etc., based on “top-down” and “big investments” approach .

During research in the field, interviewing of key persons in the region and surveys conducted with three categories (inhabitants of rural areas, citizens of the region – nature admirers and officials of local and central governments), it was found that the region and officials have insufficient knowledge about rural tourism and the possibility of development through it. Based on research conducted in the field, it results that there were forms of autochthonous development of family businesses and development based on own forces even before, but they were spontaneous and not well organized. Despite undefined and random form of “local-based” development in rural areas of Dukagjini Region, such experience is promising for development of these areas through rural tourism, which was concluded in the stage of studying and analyzing of the region by direct research in the field. Traditional generosity and hospitality towards guests in these areas is a potential that should be appreciated and carefully put to the function of development of rural tourism because during visits in the field there are still signs of a kind of reservation (sometimes even suspicion) towards “foreigners”. Due to bad experiences in the past, there are moments when local people might be afraid of negative influences of people from urban areas to their traditional families. This fear is more emphasized when it comes to girls and in general women who often do not enjoy equal rights with men in the family. Apart from being young, the population is also healthy and sufficiently educated, but often their education is inadequate for rural circumstances.

Favorable geographic position, dynamic topography (dominated by “Dukagjini Plain” and ridges surrounding the plain), diverse climate (continental, mountainous and partly mediterranean) and favorable population structure (young average age) make this region a good environment for the development of rural tourism. Dukagjini Region is rich with minerals in the mountainous part and fertile soils in its central part. But, the most important and valuable resource is Rver Drini i Bardhë with all its branches. Sufficient water supplies in the region make the plain suitable for agriculture and its sources make the environment they pass through attractive. Unfortunately, there are some tendencies to exploit sand, and in some places there are serious devastations of the flow of this river. Apart from agriculture that inhabitants of rural areas mainly deal with, light industry is also developed in the region but it mainly employs inhabitants of urban areas. Recent developments in the region were accompanied by construction of road infrastructure. There are expectations that in future the airport of Gjakova (which was dedicated to military and official needs until now) will be used for civilian needs. World Bank also promised support in rehabilitation of Kosovo railways. All these developments are promising for construction of favorable infrastructure for efficient mobility of all citizens and visitors of Kosovo.

There is no doubt that, apart from human resources, the main resources in Dukagjini Region are natural and cultural ones. The three of them form region’s identity – “*genius loci*” which should be protected with great care. Overall tourism, as well as rural tourism, is based on these resources. Ancient age-long culture, material and spiritual heritage, and nature with beautiful landscapes are potentials upon which rural tourism should be built. The philosophy “protecting by using” could be applied in this manner of regional development. Natural and cultural wealth could be best protected by locals after they become convinced that region’s development and their social and economic welfare mostly depend on the value and authenticity of these two resources.

Based on data collected from different sources mentioned above and from sightseeing, **SWOT** analysis focused on rural tourism, provided below, was compiled.

Strengths:

Natural potentials :

- Favorable geostrategic position
- Rich natural heritage
- Fertile agricultural land and boosting of agricultural production
- Hilly relief of the area with opportunities to develop various recreational activities such as mountain biking, camping, and hunting

Cultural potentials:

- Rich in cultural, national and religious diversity
- Appropriate age ratio-young population
- Generous and hospitable population in rural areas
- Rich inheritance of traditional food and products
- Strong connection with the Albanian migrated population in developed countries of the EU

Current strengths:

- Young population
- Presence of still inhabited traditional buildings in villages and rural areas
- Green Clubs growing sensitiveness about the environment
- Existence of several plans and strategies for tourism development
- Positive initiative and results of private business development in rural tourism
- A relatively clean environment
- Favorable legislation for tourism, at a certain stage
- Readiness of EU and USA to support sustainable economic development of Kosovo

Opportunities:

Spatial and economic development:

Weaknesses:

Education:

- Lack of competent human capacities
- Limited knowledge on the use of natural and cultural potentials and resources
- Lack of training in productive sectors
- Lack of awareness of the importance of cultural heritage and sustainable development
- Lack of trained people for tourist services (guides, transports, touristic packages etc.)

Economy and transport:

- Lack of integrated offer in touristic market
- Low offer for quality of hospitality and lack of integrated tourist services (guides, transports, touristic packages, etc.)
- Low level of agricultural development
- Absence of certifications of quality for regional products
- Lack of access of local products to market
- Insufficient road infrastructure - difficult accessibility to mountain areas
- Poor offer of public transport

Natural and social environment:

- Poor management and degradation of natural resources
- Mismanagement of cultural resources
- Migration of youth from rural areas and depopulation of mountain villages
- Unplanned spatial development and endangerment of natural resources
- Lack of health services
- Fragile political situation

Threats:

Management:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilization of favorable geostrategic position - Development of the region on the principles of sustainable development - agriculture and tourism based on the principle "Protecting by using" - Combating poverty in rural areas - Balanced and sustainable growth development of the whole territory of the Dukagjini Region - decrease in number of people migrating from rural areas <p><i>Natural and cultural and social benefits:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of cultural diversity in order to promote Kosovo as a newborn country in Europe - Stimulation of family businesses and the economy based on local capabilities - Empowerment of position of women in society - Emphasizing of cross-border cooperation with various programs and projects between Dukagjini Region, Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro (similar with "Peaks of the Balkans") <p><i>Fundraising benefits from different sources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundraising from Kosovar government (new road from Prishtina to Peja border, agriculture projects, etc.). - Fundraising from IPA Programs for Kosovo development - Fundraising from several organizations and agencies (GIZ, USAID, etc.) working on various projects in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of coordination between local residents, government and organizations can cause inefficiency - Reduction of quality of home made services and products because of their commercialization <p><i>Natural and social environmental:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unplanned urban expansion can lead to the destruction of natural landscapes - Unplanned development of dirty industry can lead to the pollution and devastation of environment - Pollution from motorized traffic - Poor management of wastewater and waste - Pollution and devastation of environment and agricultural land - Uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources - Negative impacts of tourists in the culture of the local population (identity shift) <p><i>Political:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient support for rural development by the central and local government - Insufficient local capacity to manage funds - Unstable political situation and security
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Since ancient times, Dukagjini Region has been oriented towards nature and has given priority to agriculture. Such development was certainly necessary due to two reasons. Firstly, because this region possesses small underground assets (ores and minerals) and, secondly, because the region had excellent conditions for agriculture development. Such a trend, development based on natural, cultural and human capacity resources, should also be pursued nowadays. This development, the

objective of which should be prudent consumption of natural goods, may be achieved through rural tourism by protecting natural and cultural environment. There is a need for coordination of national regional strategy by exceeding their expectations in local and regional territory.

In 2030, Dukagjini Region will be a must see tourist destination in the Balkans. This region will receive visits from different tourists: young and old, men and women, business persons and families, young couples and groups, compatriots from EU countries, local and international tourists, irrespective of their national, racial and religious background or sexual preferences. Dukagjini Region will be distinguished for its diverse (different modalities of rural tourism), integrated (many things for many people at the same time) and unique (that cannot be found everywhere) touristic offer.

Natural potentials (picturesque landscapes, mountains, rivers, lakes, flora and fauna), cultural ones (ancient history, architectonical, archeological and unique spiritual heritage) and population with the youngest average age in Europe will be the main generator of sustainable development of the region while having local inhabitants at the center of attention. Municipalities of Dukagjini Region will be viewed in a wider context. They will be looked at in regional context with synchronized MDP and in harmony with other regional plans, and above all with the Strategy on Rural Tourism. The region will be open to entire territory of Kosovo and to neighboring countries. Legislation and other documents will be drafted so as to enable (and not obstruct) functioning of this territory as an area of integrated tourism. It is expected that in 2030, rural Dukagjini will have categorized and sufficient accommodation capacities with standardized quality, professional services, but above all it will offer hospitality and traditional food. Promotion of material and spiritual heritage, cultural events, adventure, sports, eco-tourism, etc. will be characteristics of rural tourism. The chain of values will be complete and integrated into a single unique system.

The advantage of tourism is its close relation to both natural and cultural environment. The region with a developed rural tourism will have its loyal, sincere and uncompromised “guard” of natural and cultural environment. The principle “protecting by using” will be a widely used slogan throughout Dukagjini Region. The aim of sustainable development of the region will be more a process than an objective and will continue in Dukagjini Region in the future, too.

This chapter included elaboration of the SWOT analysis and is deployment vision, whereas the next chapter will elaborate guidelines and strategic actions.

8. Vision of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region

The previous chapter, in particular the SWOT analysis, provided an overview of the situation in Dukagjini Region and established the necessary foundation to formulate the declaration of the vision for development of rural tourism in this region, which has been elaborated in this chapter.

The vision of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region is an idealized picture of tourism in rural areas of this region following its development for the fifteen year period (2015-2030). This vision represents the starting point based on resources of Dukagjini Region and based on critical and analytical view of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to the rural tourism of this region. Prior to formulation of the vision of rural tourism on Dukagjini Region, there were carried out theoretical and scientific researches in the area of sustainable development (in particular endogenous development), existing documentation (legal framework, spatial plan, Plans for Special Interest Areas in Dukagjini Region, MDP, specific plans and important reports) and field research (interviews and questionnaires) as well as experiences in neighboring and European countries (such as LEADER experience). The vision of rural tourism aims at facilitating the definition of purpose, aim and path to be chosen in order to witness the full success of Strategic Plan for development of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region.

8.1. Principles

Based on research of literature, documents and work in the field, there were distinguished values that served as basis for drafting of the Vision of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region for the period 2015-2030 such as:

1. Development of rural tourism based on principles of sustainable development and endogenous approach
2. Promotion of rural tourism as an instrument to achieve 8 Millennium Goals, in particular focusing on combating poverty
3. Inclusion of tourism as a manner of economic “exporting” activity in order to ensure direct revenues from abroad
4. Directing tourism development towards the interest of everybody – local inhabitants, the region, Kosovo and wider.

8.2. Learning on strategic advantages

Dukagjini Region should base the development of rural tourism on its obvious strategic potentials and advantages:

- 1) Natural resources (rich flora and fauna, attractive landscapes, fertile land, etc.)
- 2) Cultural resources (rich movable and spiritual cultural heritage)
- 3) Human resources (young population)
- 4) Predispositions for hospitality, organization of celebrations, ceremonies and festivals, and promotion of authentic life in Dukagjini Region.

8.3. Values to be promoted by Dukagjini Region

The declaration of the Vision for development of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region should tell the following to local and international tourists:

1. Hospitality for everybody irrespective of racial, religious or national background, sexuality or disabilities, thus promoting professionalism in tourism by showing generosity, understanding, tolerance and respect for everybody;
2. Pride, identity, authenticity and diversity in cultural, historical, religious and national levels;
3. High level of culture and maximal awareness about the value of natural and cultural heritage and readiness for their systematic preservation as a resource upon which rural tourism is built and all modalities of tourism in general;
4. A safe, secure and attractive place, and above all a purely touristic destination;
5. Creativity and originality in diverse offer for all ages and social categories throughout the year;
6. Political and social readiness of businesses, local and central authorities towards sustainable economic development;
7. Readiness in adapting human capacities to demands of rural tourism (professional education and training);
8. Readiness and adapting physical capacities and developing new assets to respond to demands of rural tourism; and
9. Readiness for quick transformations of touristic offer first of all by reflecting about demands of tourists, but also by providing innovations with the purpose of being competitive in the market in the long run.

8.4. The vision of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region until 2030

Dukagjini Region, the southwestern part, the “Newborn” country Kosovo, highly values its natural and cultural resources. Its geostrategic position, attractive morphological configuration, with edges surrounding the pond of River “Drini i Bardhë”, Sharri Mountains, Bjeshkët e Nemuna (Cursed Mountains) and Mirusha Waterfall, are particularly valued areas for rural tourism. Valorization of cultural heritage (material and spiritual heritage) promotes a rare cultural and religious diversity. Apart from distinguished natural beauty and rich cultural heritage, Dukagjini Region is also distinguished for special traditional food, which is a result of autochthonous originality and influences of age-long cultures in these areas.

8.5. Dukagjini Region towards a sustainable developed region in the Republic of Kosovo

Complementing rural tourism with agriculture will be an inalterable approach and in harmony with the vision of the document “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2010-13”, which reads: “Balanced contribution should be given to economy, environment, society and cultural wellbeing of rural areas and Kosovo as whole, through effective and profitable partnership between private sector, central/local Government and local communities within European context”¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷⁶Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2010-13”, 2010 (p.18)

Sports tourism (common and adventurous sports) will be important elements of tourism in Dukagjini Region because it will possess assets to play sports that currently cannot be organized (for example kayaking in Radoniqi Lake). Environments created in the region will also enable adventurous sports, cycling tracks, climbing rocks, walking paths in nature, paragliding, riding, sportive fishing, etc.

In 2030, Dukagjini Region will meet its objectives by adopting a new approach inspired by theory of endogenous development and experiences of LEADER approach. This approach has a clear purpose: community led development by private or public-private initiative with the purpose of leaving profit to local inhabitants. Experience of combined system of growing local business through cell/cluster development will serve the region in long term– even beyond 2030.

By 2030, inhabitants of rural areas of Dukagjini Region will not face poverty but will live a dignified life and will also have perspective for equal integration with other inhabitants of the Republic of Kosovo.

Vision	Rural Dukagjini Region in 2030s as an Integrated Territorial System: “A Sustainable Rural Touristic Region”
---------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Vision for Rural Dukagjini Region at 2030th does not mean that everything will be completed in that year and the region has to change this course. Instead, with the implementation of this Strategic Plan, the region will continue its development in the future based on this plan.

The Vision articulated in this chapter is a roadmap for definition of Strategic Framework elaborated in Chapter 9.

9. Strategic framework

The profile of Dukagjini Region, which was built after analysis of documentation and exploring of field, resulted in a vision that provides basis for conception of strategy for the development of rural tourism in this region. The clearly defined Vision in Chapter 8 determines 4 Strategic Guidelines that represent directions to be pursued in order to achieve it-this part is elaborated in Chapter 9.3. An integrated system focused on decisive issues for Dukagjini development lies on 28 actions that represent tools for transformation of current situation and development of rural tourism in future. The 28 actions are interrelated with each other, thus creating an integrated and synergic system. These actions contain projects to be implemented based on community forces. Drafting of Strategic Plan for development of rural tourism in the entire territory of Dukagjini Region creates an important basis for drafting of local strategies that are directly or indirectly related to tourism development in rural Dukagjini.

9.9. Implementation methodology

Implementation is planned based on recommendations of Basic Guide of “The LEADER¹⁷⁷ Approach” (European Commission, 1991). From these, the vision on development of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region and the suggested strategy to achieve this were drafted based on procedure which is planned in the third step (Chapter 5.1.3) starting from territorial analysis gathered from:

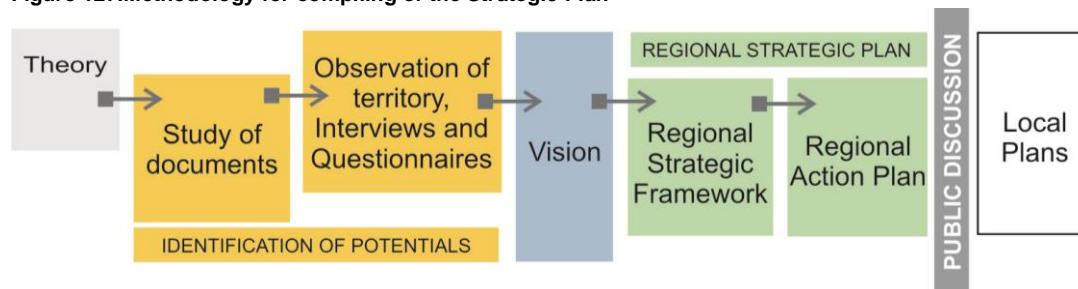
- Study of municipal development plans
- Study of plans of national parks
- Study of Kosovo Spatial Plan
- Study of researches and analyses carried out until now by local and international institutions and NGO-s
- Information collected during observations in the field
- Information originating from Surveys and Interviews described in Chapter 5.
- Documents and experience in the EU

Methodical approach for drafting of Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Dukagjini Region through tourism is designed in four Phases:

- Theoretical consideration
- Identification of potential for development of rural tourism and SWOT analysis
- Vision
- Drafting of Regional Strategic Plan for the development of rural tourism

The Strategic Plan for rural tourism provides a pattern for further development of Local Plans after public discussion of each certain Plan led by LAGs (Figure 127.).

¹⁷⁷ The LEADER Approach: a basic guide, 1991

Figure 127. Methodology for compiling of the Strategic Plan

Source: Author, 2014

The strategic framework provides many ways that often lead to the same result or at least to a similar one. This is the reason why the Strategic Framework of Dukagjini Region, apart from being in line with Kosovar official documents, is also in line and is compatible with EU documents with the purpose of coordinating this process with the national process of Kosovo for its integration in the EU. LEADER approach described in Chapter 2.5.3, as one of the biggest and most comprehensive initiatives for development of rural areas in the EU, is also a basis for conceptualization of this strategic framework for the development of rural areas of Dukagjini through tourism. Having in mind the seven principles of LEADER (see chapter 2.5.3) after drafting of the strategic framework in regional level, local level should actively involve local residents in drafting specific Local Plans and Projects. In this respect, LEADER envisages six basic steps in the process of implementation of this concept in areas where this approach is applied for the first time, thus leaving room to adapt the strategy to specific cases. Capacity building, bringing together local stakeholders, territorial analysis and its potentials, identification of existing activities and initiatives going on around, creation of partnership in local level and broader, and preparation of local development strategy for specific areas, which will be the basis of LAG's application for support of proposals to municipalities or Government of Kosovo, are steps which should lead LEADER action of certain projects in specific locations in Dukagjini Region.

9.9.1. Capacity building

Building of local capacities requires innovative approach, which enables people to be equipped with sufficient knowledge in order to implement specific activities and manage them financially. Awareness-raising of local actors is also important in increasing their interest and in active participation in preparing the strategy for development of rural tourism in their community and projects related to them. Building of local capacities is a joint activity that requires good articulation of local initiatives with Kosovo's central and local institutions, and donors' mediation. Through education and training, different stakeholders in rural community will become aware of importance of the issue of rural development. In order to be successful in building human capacities in regional context, territorial and social inclusiveness should be made possible in Dukagjini Region. Establishment of a regional library/archive, where all information and materials related to trainings taking place in the region are archived, would contribute to this. This would enable access to information and continuation of professional development of people from any organization, institution or individuals throughout the region.

The information technology methods would facilitate this process at a great extent by using electronic platforms where materials accessible for entire region would be published. On-line trainings and electronic learning platforms will be the future of capacity building, especially in remote rural areas in Dukagjini Region. It is easy to conclude that education in rural areas in general

and particularly in case of Dukagjini Region, needs improvement of standards and their adapting to specific needs of Dukagjin. For the time being, this region does not fulfill basic standards regarding number of schools per inhabitants, the distance of schools from living areas, school profiles needed for specifics of region, insufficient school equipment, and unqualified teachers for specific profiles.

Existing capacities of university education should also undergo reform and be supplemented with new courses that match more with agriculture, sustainable tourism and rural tourism.

Until now, specific trainings in the region, which were focused in community, are those by The Joint Programme “European Union/Council of Europe Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo (PCDK): “Construction of a stone facility Kulla”, “Lectures on conservation and rehabilitation of stone structures”, “Practical work on restoration of stone structures in neighborhood of Tourism Centre in Junik”, summer camp and local economic development initiatives in Moronica (food preparation with local producers/practitioners), etc. The governmental organization from Sweden, Cultural Heritage without Borders, has also organized specific trainings to prepare beneficiaries of projects with skills for rehabilitation of old houses in Dukagjini Region. These are very good experiences that should be supported and supplemented with new similar trainings, especially in relation to rural tourism and tourism in general.

Besides formal education, a big number of primary Kosovo schools organized a joint student-teachers clubs which deal with different issues. There are “Green Clubs” in schools to get informed in an alternative way about school safety, and take actions on protection of environment in their community and environment in general. Green Clubs work very closely with parents and business community as well. Another recent initiative in schools is “Technician Clubs”, where students support teachers and other students on issues linked with information technology and maintenance of other educational technology in school. Similar initiatives could be applied in other clubs in school or in community in order to build sustainable awareness and recruit newcomers of endogenous development.

Comparing current state of education and training in Kosovo, including needs for development of rural tourism, adaptation of education is needed in order to prepare competent personnel in charge of this specific field. It is not enough to just open new vocational branches or faculties. For an integrated approach to education, it is necessary to raise students’ awareness from preschool and elementary school levels on natural and cultural assets at their surroundings and the need for their preservation.

The nature of rural tourism itself is based on strengths of indigenous population. As such, these strengths should not be “distorted” but should only be improved by adapting them to new destination (such as traditional food or life in certain rural areas in general). Support and training needs to be oriented more towards methodology of functionalizing components that already exist by adding only those elements necessary to make them attractive for tourists and sustainable for business processes. In order to achieve the desired results without delay, study tours in countries like Austria, Croatia, Slovenia, etc., should be organized, so that participants would see closely how these businesses operate.

Sporadic specific trainings should be synchronized and adapted to any frame designed and approved before by interest groups represented through LAG’s (representatives of local governments, leaders

of business clusters and cells, experts, etc.) with the aim of meeting the needs of local human capacity building and avoiding the possibility of duplication of training.

9.9.2. Bringing together local actors for efficiency in implementation stage

Capacity building, awareness-raising of local inhabitants is certainly the most important step that opens the way to comprehensive, transparent organization and above all one that is based on sound and trustworthy bases. Regardless of expectations for these mutual relations among inhabitants to be established in the very first step, trustworthiness and amicability should be continuously stimulated in order to avoid endangering human relations amongst local inhabitants. These relations among local inhabitants should be maintained and improved in order to bring local actors together, which is the second step towards success of local initiatives. Dukagjini inhabitants are known for their generosity, hospitality and bravery. All these features should be carefully safeguarded so that they keep control and be oriented towards joint prosperity. The phenomenon of “Oda e Burrave”¹⁷⁸ (“*room of men*”) known in Dukagjini should be introduced to the function of the second objective of the second step – “Bringing together local actors”. Different events bringing together actors in the same place are: “seminars and workshops; public meetings; media and telecommunications; and, fairs and exhibitions are the most common means for local actors to get together to discuss issues of mutual interest and become aware of different opinions and projects for the area”.¹⁷⁹ The greatest danger to the projects was key players’ lack of knowledge and fear from unknown things, therefore this matter should not be underestimated in this step. Apart from mayors and chairpersons of local community offices in villages of Dukagjini, a great influence is often exercised by elderly people, religious clerics, etc. Cohesion between all involved parties is a guarantee that in future there will be no obstruction related to strategy planning or implementation of projects deriving from action plans. A more active involvement at the very planning stage, including key players also, enables coordination of everybody in order to implement the strategic plan and projects stemming from the plan.

9.9.3. Building a Strategic Plan on regional potential and in harmony with applicable documents

The third step related to territory analysis is of utmost importance. This includes Identification of domestic potentials while considering everything, natural, cultural and human resources as well as know-how. The entire Dukagjini Region territory possesses Municipal Development Plans (MDP), with the first part of these documents being dedicated to territory analysis exactly. Although profiles of municipalities in these documents pertain often to more descriptive nature, together with other documents or national parks and monuments of nature (Chapter 4.2), they may provide good basis for supplementation and analysis of specific information which make certain rural areas special (any old tree, water spring, rock, house or even any specific food, history, legend or similar). This area-based analysis can be extracted from MDP not only in relation to resources but also to possible plans or strategies regarding locality. In the final stage, it is necessary to publicly discuss data collection from all resources and their supplementation with direct information from the field (inhabitants and experts) and medium and long term development vision, in order to achieve an overall consensus. This consensus enables all key players in the future to seriously engage in projects that they should consider as their own.

¹⁷⁸Typical Albanian room for men only where non-formally they discuss the happenings in the village and wider

¹⁷⁹The LEADER Approach: a basic guide, 1991 (p.14)

9.9.4. Identifying existing activities and initiatives for continuity

The fourth step is closely related to the previous step. The profile, territory analysis, diligent collection of small but very important things and histories about Dukagjini region is followed by identification of activities and initiatives that have already started or are soon to start being implemented. To this end, events organized in the region such as “Festa e Vjeljes së Rrushit” (“The celebration of grapes harvesting”) in Rahovec, “Dita e mollës” (“Apple day”) in the village of Kovraga, etc. should be preserved and continue to be organized along with lots of other traditional cultural and sports events. There are projects in the region which could be identified as being contrary and damaging to sustainable rural development. The power of community voice is big because it could facilitate or impede realization of the strategy. For example this happened in the case of Emir Kusturica’s Kustendorf in Serbia or the case of Tara in Montenegro (Chapter 3.3) where development based on nature preservation won over the one based on industry or energetics. In this step, there is serious need for review of previous vision of rural development and decision to continue with implementation and updating of existing vision or plan a completely new vision for development of their area.

9.9.5. The establishment of LAGs and partnerships for better efficiency

From the first until the fourth step, there is a call for bottom-up approach or endogenous development which implies that community should be aware of the importance, their collective and individual role in implementing projects in rural areas. Community involvement is important in every step. But the importance of community keeps increasing when planning goes down to local level, things become more concrete when community’s region is in question. At this level, partnership with local inhabitants should take place at the stage of territory analysis and the SWOT analysis should be compiled while working together with participation of wider community. In this step of planning, it is important to rely on wider community and groups of interest with the purpose of identifying components of strategic planning and priorities together with them. Local actors–persons that should be included in public-private partnership should be brought together, contacts between community, institutions and organizations should be established, and implementation of plans should be managed. Establishment of working groups, initially informal ones, precedes establishment of Local Action Groups (LAG). This process that results in the establishment of LAGs should be transparent and fair whereas its members should be credible and authoritative. There were only a few partnerships of this kind in rural areas of Dukagjini Region. The experiences so far show that, in case of similar projects, non-governmental organizations have spent considerable amounts of money for their services (staff, rent for offices, transport, etc.). LAG should put an end to such practice with NGOs by increasing efficiency at the maximum.

9.9.6. Preparation of local development plans

“The local development approach is formalized in a local development strategy document. This includes establishment of objectives, definition of strategic priorities and ranking of actions to be undertaken. This local development strategy will be the basis of LAG’s application for support under open calls for proposals organized by Member States/regions for LEADER.”¹⁸⁰ This step marks finalization of drafting of local strategies, which should be clear, well-conceived and have a clear vision for drafters, community and especially for the institution that is possibly expected to financially support it. Having in mind that LEADER approach, once an EU initiative, after its three

¹⁸⁰ The LEADER Approach: a basic guide, 1991 (p.14)

stages is already integrated in national policies of its states, application for grants and subsidies are carried out directly to their governments. Since Kosovo is undergoing the stage of adapting and synchronizing legislation and strategies with the EU countries, it should also integrate LEADER approach in its legislation by allocating the budget for implementation of strategies suggested for local areas.

This approach of development in six steps and under the guidance of LAG's enables endogenous development by preserving identity and diverse local specifics in relation to the region and wider. The bottom-up approach poses no impediment to the possibility of institutional and donor support, on the contrary, it increases this support even more so but in more precise and rational direction of local interests.

9.10. Participative approach in the process of strategy definition

Identifying territorial actors, opinions and proposals in order to integrate them within the strategic planning, considering their specific objectives, is very important for a sustainable Strategic Plan. Since this document should include clear objectives and ranking of actions to be done, it is essential to have a common platform for involved actors. Therefore, it is very important at this stage to describe how to bring together actors and foster collaboration among them and how to gather opinions and proposals from them, to integrate the Vision and Strategy for regional tourism development in Dukagjini Region. Family businesses, as initial cells of endogenous development, should remain at the focus of attention in all cases and stages, while keeping their identity and building upon it the diversity of offers within a balanced strategy for development of a certain rural area.

9.11. Strategic Guidelines and Actions

Based on findings from documentation, surveys and interviews analyzed (in Chapters 3, 4, 5) and led by methodology defined in chapter 9.1, the Strategic Plan is structured in 28 actions systemized in 4 Strategic Guidelines (SG) that deal with the main aspect of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region. The categories of intervention articulated in 24 Actions define the purpose of each action. The advantage of endogenous development concept is the fact that it is flexible. Ranking of actions listed within the SGs is only the starting point and they may be corrected depending on developments in the field and in accordance with involved businesses, under support and supervision of the Local Action Group.

LEADER and different programs of EU support funds should be a guide not only during the drafting stage of Guidelines and Actions but also during their implementation. It is an imperative for countries that plan to achieve membership to continuously follow EU development trends and maximally adapt to them in order for them to have natural integration in area of tourism development when they achieve membership. Guidelines and actions should be mutually and continuously harmonized with Municipal Development Plans and other plans for this territory.

This strategic plan followed a comprehensive document - Strategic Plan for Sustainable Tourism in Shkodra Region¹⁸¹ which guides this Strategic Plan for Rural Tourism Development in Dukagjini Region.

The Strategic Guidelines for tourism development in Dukagjini Region are as follows:

¹⁸¹ UNDP ART GOLD 2, Strategic Plan for Sustainable Tourism in Shkodra Region, Shkodra, Albania, 2011

- Qualification and diversification of rural touristic offer
- Improvement of quality of environment and services in Dukagjini Region
- Endogenous development based on typical products and services in rural areas
- State projects in function of development of rural (tourism) development

Strategic Guidelines and 28 actions have been presented in the table below:

Strategic Guidelines	Nr. Act	28 Actions
Qualification and diversification of rural touristic offer	1	Integrated education and training related to tourism and agriculture
	2	Support, increasing the number of cultural events and non-material cultural heritage and their diversification
	3	Protection and preservation of natural landscapes and bio-diversity and development of sustainable tourism
	4	Protection, preservation and restoration of historical heritage and its integration in tourism
	5	Increasing community participation in regional policies for tourism development
	6	Development of sustainable tourism in mountainous areas
	7	Activities of sustainable tourism in rivers and lakes
	8	Calibrating of accommodation and gastronomic structures according to international standards of tourism and stimulation of competition
	9	Improvement of infrastructure and touristic services
	10	Designing of typical hospitality packages
	11	Communication and marketing improvement
Improvement of quality of environment and services in Dukagjini Region	12	Updating of urban plans in the region
	13	Creation of new public spaces and their maintenance in the region
	14	Waste and water management
	15	Promoting renewable energy and saving of energy in touristic areas
	16	Healthcare and physical safety of tourists in the region
Endogenous development based on typical products and services in rural areas	17	Stimulation of typical products and their inclusion in regional touristic offer
	18	Establishment of strings of cultural values and heritage
	19	Implementation of Strategic Plan for producers' cells based on family businesses and agricultural products, food products, handicrafts and traditional textile products
	20	Implementation of Strategic Plan for increase of production and encouraging of producers' grouping in clusters
	21	Creation of the system for quality assurance certificates
	22	Progressive development of family businesses to help permanent increase of competition in the market
State projects in function of development of rural (tourism) development	23	Legal framework (Law on Rural Tourism, Establishing favorable fiscal policies for rural tourism)
	24	improvement transport infrastructure and mobility (bus stations, railway and Airport of Gjakova)
	25	Marketing on state level (building state portal for tourism and rural tourism, official promotion of rural tourism in international fairs for tourism)
	26	Establishing of state budget for rural tourism
	27	Establishing "guard of environment"
	28	Supporting establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs)

All Strategic Guidelines for development of tourism in Dukagjini Region are, before all, based on environmental protection and development of the region with sectors that serve this purpose: agriculture and tourism, both complementing one another. Current forms of sustainable tourism, with focus on the rural one, have already yielded considerable results in EU countries by being based on two axes: endogenous development and sustainable development which is in line with the concept “protecting by using”. Implementation of strategy for development of tourism in rural areas of Dukagjini Region requires a quick and very coordinated action with all decision makers, in order to avoid devastation of natural and cultural resources and create a dignified life for all.

Strategic Guidelines 1 - Qualification and diversification of rural touristic offer

Background:

Dukagjini Region is a valley surrounded by ridges, beautiful mountainous landscapes, rural and cultural landscapes. In this region, there are several areas and villages with special values that are protected by the state: National Parks “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” and “Sharri”, Natural Monument of special importance “Mirusha Waterfalls” and two villages with distinguished religious and cultural and historic heritage: Hoqë e Madhe and Zymi i Hasit, which are equipped with Laws aimed at protection of these values. These areas and villages, in general natural and cultural diversity of Dukagjin, offer tourist attraction, active holidays far from urban stress for demanding tourists belonging to all ages and social categories.

Strategic Guidelines 1 aims at expanding touristic offer in Dukagjini Region through preservation and promotion of natural resources, material and non-material cultural heritage, integrated rehabilitation of cultural and historical heritage and stimulation of rural tourism and sustainable tourism in general. Proposals provide a template for similar projects throughout the region and beyond, whether for those within borders or those with neighboring countries (Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia).

Actions:

Actions are oriented towards ensuring all necessary composing elements of strategic Guidelines. They aim at ensuring different types of products and profiled touristic services for local and international tourists.

9.11.1. Integrated education and training regarding tourism and agriculture:

- Completion of the range of education offer relating to both fields: tourism and agriculture (touristic operators, experts for alternative tourism, schooling for guides, gastronomy, ecological agriculture, etc.);
- Establishment of Central Library/Archive of Dukagjini Region;
- Strengthening of existing green clubs in primary schools, increasing their number in rural schools and supplementing their program with topics related to rural tourism;
- Information technology education and training for students and local inhabitants with the purpose of reaching two aims – enhance professional competences and introduce products and their services in tourism market in the country and abroad;
- Education and training of students/local inhabitants in mastering foreign languages;

- Creation of friendly environment to interrelate education, tourism, agriculture and local inhabitants;
- Re-operationalization of existing centers and establishment of new training centers to the function of rural tourism development.

9.11.2. Support, increasing number of cultural events and non-material cultural heritage and their diversification:

- Identification, evaluation of museums and collections and their support in relation to improving quality of presentation of artifacts and increase their number through collection from private collectors;
- Identification and support of existing cultural events in the region and neighborhood;
- Creation of annual itinerary of cultural events in the region;
- Stimulation of regeneration of events (parties, ceremonies, rites, competitions, etc. that used to be organized before) and their organization;
- Support of organizations, associations and cultural groups;
- Building of favorable environment for development of culture.

9.11.3. Protection and upkeep of natural landscapes and preservation of bio-diversity and development of sustainable tourism:

- Identification, protection and creation of protected natural areas;
- Protection and rehabilitation of areas of high natural and landscape value;
- Environment protection by favoring revitalizing of existing buildings vis-à-vis new constructions;
- Support and stimulation of novelty approach in the sector of protection of nature and culture.

9.11.4. Increasing participation of community in regional policies for development of tourism:

- Development of a comprehensive process for awareness-raising of population regarding importance of environment and rural tourism;
- Use of public discussions, consultations and reviewing of proposals with focus groups;
- Joint implementation of programs and projects and dissemination of achieved results.

9.11.5. Protection, preservation and restoration of historical heritage and its integration in tourism:

- Integrated rehabilitation of architectonic and archeological heritage with the purpose of its re-functionalization for the needs of tourism;
- Stimulation of traditional construction techniques with the purpose of their integration in conservation, restoration and revitalization of monuments, ensembles and localities.

9.11.6. Development of sustainable tourism in mountainous areas:

- Development of regional product of mountain tourism in cooperation with local inhabitants;
- Identification of existing skiing areas and new areas for promotion of winter sports;
- Promotion of various activities in mountainous areas (walking in nature, snow walking, paragliding, riding, sportive fishing, bird watching, etc.), and promotion of conducting activities throughout all seasons;
- Creation of adventurous parks (climbing, zip line, etc.).

9.11.7. Activities of sustainable tourism in rivers and lakes:

- Protection of water and environment from pollution and devastation;
- Cultivation of adequate fishery culture;
- Organization of fishing competition;
- Organization of sailing clubs and kayak competitions in calm waters (Radoniqi Lake).

9.11.8. Calibrating accommodation and gastronomic structures according to international standards of tourism and stimulation of competition:

- Categorizing of existing and new capacities based on international standards and experiences;
- Developing human capacities to conduct categorization of services;
- Inciting positive competition between service providers and products by announcing first places (winners) yearly;
- Promotion of constructions and repairs with recyclable material.

9.11.9. Improvement of infrastructure and touristic services:

- Improvement and maintenance of road infrastructure at local level;
- Development of an alternative environment- friendly transport (by bicycle, horses, etc.);
- Placing of adequate signaling up to destination and signaling of attractions within the destination;
- Creation of information centers and tourist agencies;
- Revitalizing of existing buildings and construction of new ones – provision of support to those constructed in line with ecological and environmental principles.

9.11.10. Designing of typical hospitality packages:

- Designing of various typical packages in cooperation with representatives of family businesses, LAGs and tourist operators;
- Identification and establishment of different paths depending on age and shape;
- Designing of local, regional and inter-border itineraries;
- Use of existing itineraries and creation of new ones based on products (Wine routes);
- Integration of small (cell) businesses in more complex packages (cluster) with the purpose of providing more diverse offer.

9.11.11. Communication and marketing improvement:

- Creation of a regional tourist brand;
- Drafting of information and promotional specific tourist materials including entire Dukagjini Region (brochures, maps, etc.);
- Creation of integrated regional portal with links for specific businesses and with Government portals;
- Marketing in targeted markets;
- Participation in fairs of tourism, trade, agriculture and culture.

Strategic Guidelines 2 - Improvement of quality of environment and services in Dukagjini Region

Background:

SG 2 intervenes with the purpose of creating conditions to protect quality of existing environment and its improvement that can ensure sustainable and balanced touristic development in Dukagjini Region. The space of Dukagjini Region is planned through Municipal Development Plans (MDP), which were analyzed in Chapter 4.3. MDPs address all aspects of development of municipal territories. This is the reason why it is important to revise these plans to the function of development of rural tourism. The truth is that these plans cautiously address the improvement of quality of environment which makes the situation more encouraging for development of rural tourism in rural areas of Dukagjini Region.

Actions:

Actions are oriented towards enhancement of quality of life and the value of environment in areas which are to become tourist destinations as well as balancing of differences between urban and rural areas in Dukagjini Region.

9.11.12. Updating of urban plans in the region:

- Review of all MDPs, especially their parts relating to development of rural tourism and provision of conditions for this economic activity;
- Prioritizing urban interventions;
- Prevention of unplanned constructions (constructions without permit).

9.11.13. Creation of new public spaces and their maintenance in the region:

- Promotion of increase of public spaces and creation of centers (squares) of villages suitable for different events (cultural manifestations, markets of local products, etc.), according to environmental criteria of sustainability;
- Environmental regeneration and rehabilitation of polluted and degraded areas;
- Rehabilitation of areas (dwelling places) constructed out of planned framework.

9.11.14. Waste and water management:

- Black water management in urban and rural areas;
- Initially, inciting and later imposing an obligation to throw solid waste and carry on its systemized gathering;
- Cleaning of waste polluted areas (plastic bottles, plastic bags, vehicle tires, thrown cans, etc.).

9.11.15. Promoting renewable energy and saving of energy in touristic areas:

- Inciting ecological constructions according to energy efficiency standards;
- Concrete stimulating measures at local level for construction with recyclable material;
- Promotion of renewable energy use.

9.11.16. Healthcare and physical safety of tourists in the region:

- Adaptation of local health system for tourists in rural areas (mobile ambulance, doctor that speaks foreign languages, skillful teams for reaction in emergency situations, etc.);

- Creation of integrated systems for emergency interventions by helicopter in Dukagjini Region (army, police, firemen, health);
- Creation of the system of complementary health services (for athletes, older people, pregnant women, etc.).

Strategic Guidelines 3 - Endogenous development based on typical products and services in rural areas

Background:

The success of Strategic Plan depends on the success of putting local potentials in function with the purpose of developing the region. Apart from agriculture, natural and cultural resources, handicrafts also confirm regional identity of products and services for guests in the region. Absence of a production system in remote rural areas or existence of a global (communist) system in rural areas close to cities created a difficult situation for agricultural production and handicrafts. They are almost out of function. SG 3 to strengthen and integrate these economic sectors and improve the quality of products, open new markets and generate additional income for rural areas in Dukagjini Region.

Actions:

Actions have been provided in details in strengthening of agricultural and handicraft sectors, by developing chains of values and improving quality of rural products.

9.11.17. Stimulation of typical products and their inclusion in regional touristic offer:

- Creation of a package of typical local products and handicrafts that represent tradition (alcohol, wine, honey, meat products, dairy products, tea and medical herbs, handicrafts made of textile and wood, etc.);
- Increase of typical local products and services;
- Revitalizing of old “çarshi” and creation of new markets for local products (handicrafts and food products).

9.11.18. Establishment of strings of cultural values and heritage:

- Supporting creation of networks based on protection, conservation and restoration of cultural heritage and its promotion in the function of rural tourism;
- Creation of a network of centers for promotion of handicraft products;

9.11.19. Implementation of Strategic Plan for producers’ cells based on family businesses and agricultural products, food products, handicrafts and traditional textile products:

- Development of human capacities specialized in agriculture;
- Assistance for food producers;
- Stimulation and supporting of clusters and associations of hotels, farmers, handicraft producers, etc;
- Stimulation and supporting of participation of distinguished family businesses of the region in international exhibitions and fairs;
- Development of dairy products, alcoholic drinks, meat products, honey, curative teas and herbs and handicraft value chains.

9.11.20. Implementation of Strategy Plan for production increase and encouraging of producers' grouping in clusters:

- Registering of business cells in the region, creation of a central database and their encouragement for unification in clusters in order to provide wider and/or more diverse offer;
- Creation of functional network of Dukagjini Region on voluntary basis;
- Stimulation and support for participation of clusters and associations in international exhibitions and fairs.

9.11.21. Creation of the system for quality assurance certificates:

- Permanent improvement of quality of products and services and ensuring their standard quality;
- Technical and institutional support with the purpose of meeting ISO rules and certification of the HACCP system;
- Stimulation and promotion of “brand” policies, identification of typical products and services and their promotion.

9.11.22. Progressive development of family businesses to help permanent increase of competition in the market:

- Promotion of progressive development of family businesses (cells) through trainings and start-up funds;
- Creation and promotion of brands with high added value focusing on friendly environment and energy efficiency;
- Marketing focused on delivering products to international tourists and export them abroad.

Strategic Guidelines 4 - State projects in function of rural (tourism) development

Background:

Despite the fact that the development concept of this strategy is based on community, endogenous development according to bottom-up philosophy, the Government should offer its share in order to implement the strategic plan. SG 4 foresees the development of legal framework, transport infrastructure, prioritizing of rural tourism in state policies of marketing and creation of fiscal policies that favor this activity. Environmental protection and establishment of a fund for start-up grants of projects that deal directly or interrelate with rural tourism should lie with the state level. These actions are precondition for sustainable development of rural tourism and development of entire Dukagjini Region.

Actions:

Actions will ensure favorable pattern of economic development of Dukagjini Region in general, and rural tourism in particular. Large scale projects such as Gjakova airport, railways of Kosovo and road infrastructure in the region are necessary in order to have comprehensive development of the region, not only of rural tourism.

9.11.23. Legal framework (Law on Rural Tourism, establishment of favorable fiscal policies for rural tourism):

- Drafting of the Law on Rural Tourism for Dukagjini Region but also for entire territory of Kosovo;

- Improvement of existing laws about taxes and fiscal policies related to rural tourism;
- Support of Tax Administration officials in relation to providing tax facilitations for family businesses in areas of rural tourism in order to prevent possible fear and discouragement of these businesses due to taxes.

9.11.24. Improvement of transport infrastructure and mobility (bus stations, railway and Airport of Gjakova):

- Regeneration of public transport by buses based on public-private partnership (renovation of bus stations, creation of stable, correct and efficient bus schedule, replacement of old buses with new ones, provision of possibility for on-line booking etc.);
- Regeneration of public transport by train based on public-private partnership (modernizing of Kosovo railways, renovation of train stations, provision of possibility for online booking, etc.);
- Re-functionalization of Gjakova airport for civil transport and its introduction to international flights of low cost operators (Wizz Air, EasyJet, etc.);
- Creation of integrated electronic platform for travel to destination.

9.11.25. Marketing at state level (creation of state portal for tourism and rural tourism, official promotion of rural tourism in international fairs for tourism):

- Establishment of a portal at state level (Ministry of Trade and Industry) which is interrelated to other Government and international portals and webpages that could be connected to cells and cluster web-pages by links;
- Organization of regional and national fair of tourism focusing on rural tourism;
- Organized participation in international fairs and exhibitions.

9.11.26. Establishing of annual state budget for rural tourism:

- Financial support of pioneering projects (start-up projects);
- Financial support to continue successful projects;
- Financial support of joint projects (clusters).

9.11.27. Establishing of “guard of environment”:

- Annual engagement of “environment guards” (1-3 persons) and continuing their engagement based on results of work proven in an annual report;
- Establishment of indirect monitoring system (LAG with increased responsibility in this process) of environment protection Ministry-Municipality-village environment guard;
- Creation of an interactive monitoring portal where everybody would be able to report the “crime” of pollution or environment devastation.

9.11.28. Supporting establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs):

- Support provided by central and local authorities to evaluate the up-to-now work of local action groups (LAG), re-implementation of LAGs that were passive and establishment of new LAGs;
- Strengthening of LAGs in municipalities;
- Temporary financing of LAG by central and local governments until they reach the stage of being able to function on their own;
- Provision of working conditions for LAG members.

10. Action plan

Action Plan is based on a flexible system of projects that might be adjusted according to time and place. Having in mind that inhabitants of rural areas in Dukagjini Region have very little experience with projects of any nature, action plan foresees their gradual involvement. The objectives of the Strategic Plan of tourism in the Region should be achieved through the Action Plan which aims at:

- Synchronizing objectives deriving from the Spatial Plan of Kosovo, municipal development plans, plans of protected areas and official and unofficial documents such as those of NGOs;
- Enhancing the level of community participation in development of the region, and
- Identifying financial resources and specific needs for efficient implementation of the strategy.

Identification of potentials in the first stage (analyzing of existing documentation, survey, interviewing and observation of the region) and devising of the vision resulted in eleven packages of projects, each one of them containing projects that are closely related to each other. All these projects systemized in eleven packages should be transparent and placed in a library/archive and in the joint economic platform for Dukagjini Region, so that everybody from the region and beyond has access to it.

10.1. Devising participatory projects

Drafting of the Strategic Plan of a region is a process that, apart from identification of potentials, also requires examining of the mood of population, stakeholders and decision makers, both at local and central levels. However, it is difficult to implement a regional strategy with a population of one million, with a surface of almost 5.000 km² and it is time consuming. Moreover, natural, cultural and social diversity require specific approach also during discussion phase. Therefore, in order to obtain information regarding the mood of inhabitants and decision makers about development of rural tourism in the Region of Dukagjini, several instruments to get information were used and they were extracted from:

- documents drafted before (SPK, MDP, etc.) which were publicly discussed during their drafting;
- interviewing of inhabitants, officials and NGO representatives;
- surveying of inhabitants and officials, and
- territory exploring.

Collection and systematization of information deriving from above-mentioned actions resulted in several proposals provided below:

- Adaptation of higher and secondary professional education to the needs of rural tourism.
- Better promotion of natural and cultural heritage (brochures, maps, CD, etc.).
- Provision of a more balanced and qualitative coverage of the region with museums and other cultural institutions.
- Operationalization of houses that have undergone restoration and renovation of other buildings with the purpose of introducing them to the function of tourism.

- Supporting existing cultural events and festivals and promotion of similar events in the region (festival of grapes, apple harvesting, wine, songs and dance, traditional sport, etc.).
- Support to existing recreational events and promotion of other similar events in the region (biking, hiking, tracking, mountain climbing, paragliding, etc.).
- Reviving of existing points for tourist information in the region and establishing of new ones.
- Establishment of an internet page and creation of iPhone and Android applications.
- Establishment of small flexible centers to support and advise family businesses in the region
- Supporting of agriculture and food production.
- Establishment of some kind of school for cultural material and non-material heritage.
- Revitalization of Qarshi in Peja and Gjakova and establishment of handicraft production and selling cells (setter, maker of white-felt caps, traditional carpenter, workshops and stores for carpets and traditional clothes, etc.).
- Better connection of road, rail and air communication.

Drafting of local plans requires organization of public discussions with the purpose of carrying out more efficient concretization of documents and easier implementation of projects.

10.2. Projects for regional tourism development

10.2.1. Tourist reception in Dukagjini Region

There are a handful of tourist activities in the Region of Dukagjini and they lack synchronization. Natural, cultural and human resources are managed by different institutional sectors of central and local level. The present research has an integrated approach in providing touristic products and services (transportations, maps, guides, easier movement to destination, etc.), building of human capacities and a holistic approach towards all components that make tourism sustainable in the long run. The package of tourist reception in Dukagjini Region is based on actions of the Strategic Plan that aim at improving infrastructure, competence of potential workers and marketing. This package suggests also creation of promotional materials in several languages (printed, portals, video-materials, etc.). Given that promotion of identity and presentation of unique locality is the main pillar for development of tourism in the region, this package foresees provision of support to cultural activities through establishment of institutions that should do this.

The first package of projects is related to following actions of Strategic Plan:

- Integrated education and training related to tourism and agriculture (1)
- Increasing participation of community in regional policies for development of tourism (5)
- Protection and preservation of natural landscapes and preservation of bio-diversity and development of sustainable tourism (3)
- Protection, preservation and restoration of historical heritage and its integration in tourism (4)
- Support, increasing the number of cultural events and non-material cultural heritage and their diversification (2)
- Designing of typical hospitality packages (10)
- Updating of urban plans in the region (12)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Raising the awareness of local population about tourism in rural areas	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The campaign for awareness-raising of local population about tourism in rural areas through media and marketing Establishment of "Green Cubs" and strengthening of existing clubs with content about tourism Organization of study visits to the most successful cases in the country and elsewhere 	<p>Central and local governments, different organizations (GIZ, CHwB, etc.).</p> <p>Duration: 6 months at information level + 6 intensive months</p>
2 Building of human capacities	1 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training package: Hospitality, Food and Handicrafts Training of tourist guides Opening of new adequate professional schools for tourism and reforming of existing schools (Peja, Gjakova and Prizren) 	<p>Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, governmental and non-governmental organizations</p> <p>Duration: Continuous trainings, 1 year preparation for schools then continuous education</p>
3 Preparation of natural resources map	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of the map of Dukagjini Region, National Parks, natural monuments, attractive areas and special places (caves, observation points, canyons, walking tracks, paragliding spots, etc.) Creation of maps of walking tracks Uploading of maps on the Internet page Providing photos and other data related to the region to Google Earth 	<p>Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, municipalities, different international organizations, different organizations of mountaineers and speleologists, "Green clubs".</p> <p>Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent updating</p>
4 Preparation of cultural heritage map	4 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of an integrated heritage map of entire region by integrating maps that were created so far and their supplementation with new data, especially those pertaining to non-material heritage. Creation of museums map and enabling their promotional virtual visit 	<p>Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, regional institutes and museums, etc.</p> <p>Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent updating</p>
5 Designing of the web page for tourism in Dukagjini Region	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a web page of the region containing all information about accommodation, restaurants, natural and cultural resources, events, brochures, maps, itineraries, etc. Interlinking of this web page with other existing web pages through links 	<p>Ministry of Trade and Industry, municipalities in the region, LAG's</p> <p>Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent updating</p>
6 Improvement of coverage of the region with mobile telephony (4G) and installation of Wi-Fi spots	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spreading of the network of mobile telephony antennas of Kosovo operators, Vala and IPKO, even in the most remote rural areas, mountains, etc. Installment of Wi-Fi spots especially in areas that lack mobile telephony coverage 	<p>Vala, IPKO, municipalities, different organizations, family businesses, etc.</p> <p>Duration: 1 year</p>
7 Designing of an agenda of events in the region	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping record of and improving existing periodical cultural, historical and religious events. Creation of a joint regional agenda of activities and festivals, continuously coordinated and updated, to improve regional cultural identity and attract tourists from the country and abroad. A "Network of festivals" should be selected, organized and promoted in the region 	<p>MTI, MCYS, municipalities, LAGs, governmental and non-governmental organization.</p> <p>Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent updating</p>
8 Establishment and strengthening of information points,	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of information points with the purpose of coordinating tourism activities in the region to promote and 	<p>MTI, MCYS, municipalities, LAGs, governmental and non-governmental organization.</p>

the three main points in Peja, Gjakova and Prizren and municipal points in all municipalities of the region	carry out market analysis and implement strategies of marketing for tourism in the region	Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent updating
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------

10.2.2. Cultural heritage tourist itineraries

The second package intended for cultural heritage aims at creating complex network of monuments, ensembles or localities of cultural heritage including mosques, Turkish baths, old "çarshia" (downtown), Kulla (fortified houses made of stone), churches, monasteries, kala (castle), etc. Intervention implies integrated conservation including their subsequent cooperation in daily life, particularly in tourism. Part of this package is also the creation of needed infrastructure, which is necessary for touristic use, such as: parking places, public toilets, shops for supplies in the field (tickets, SIM cards, batteries, souvenirs, monographs, etc.). Designing and printing of tourist guides and brochures in many languages is also part of this package.

The first package of projects is related to following actions of the Strategic Plan:

- Improvement of public transport offer (4)
- Support, increasing the number of cultural events and non-material cultural heritage and their diversification (2)
- Improvement of infrastructure and touristic services (9)
- Creation of new public spaces and their maintenance in the region (13)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Tourist centers for tourists in municipalities of Dukagjini Region	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of touristic centers in every municipality Drafting and distribution of information materials to tourists in relation to touristic potentials in the region 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work until 2030
2 Restoration of Prizren Castle	4 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition of framework on how Prizren Castle should look like when conservation and restoration work is over Designing of an action plan for intervention in stages so that the castle is accessible to visitors at all times Planning of summer schools for archeology (students and young archeologists) Functionalization of public spaces in the castle to be used for different events (Dokufest, festival of cultural heritage of Dukagjini Region, etc.) through annual agenda 	MCYS, Archeological Institute of Kosovo, RIMP of Prizren, Prizren Municipality, IPA funds, different NGOs, etc. Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
3 Revitalizing of Kullas (fortified stone houses) in Dukagjin	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a unique list of fortified stone houses (Kullas) that should be conserved and be subject to restoration Prioritizing of monuments in this list (according to value, amount of investments, etc.) Their revitalization – functionalization in order to use them for accommodation, as a national restaurant, space for multipurpose use (library, museum, meeting room, workshops, etc.) 	MCYS, RIMP of Peja, Deçan Municipality, Junik Municipality, donors and investors. Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030

4	Old House Gjakova	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitation of old house in Qarshi e Madhe of Gjakova Adaptation of existing catering activity (coffee shop) into a national restaurant 	MCYS, RIMP of Gjakova, Gjakova Municipality, donors and public-private investment Duration: 1 year
5	Haxhi Zeka Mill Peja	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the complex of Mulliri i Haxhi Zekes (Haxhi Zeka's Mill) with conservation and restoration of the granary Introducing it to the function of tourism – tourist center (exhibitions, presentations, workshops) 	MCYS, RIMP of Peja, Peja Municipality, donors and public-private investing Duration: 2 years
6	Creation of public spaces in Hoça e Madhe	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation of the village center in Hoça e Madhe and adapting the square for multipurpose use Annual planning of events in this square (weekly market, summer wine fair, brandy and food products, festival of traditional dance, etc.) 	MCYS, Municipality of Rahovec, donors Duration: 2 years
7	Network of regional museums	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovation of existing buildings, Their enrichment with new artifacts Networking of regional museums and their coordinated development Training of tourist guides Preparation of a museum webpage and virtual visits 	MCYS, all municipalities in Dukagjini Region Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030

10.2.3. Exploring surrounding mountains and caves

The most complex package of projects is exploration of mountains, caves and in general nature located far from urban and rural dwelling places. Nature and culture are two main pillars of development of rural tourism. This makes the two first packages very important; therefore these packages should be carefully designed and updated based on developments taking place during implementation. Malet e Sharrit, and Bjeshkët e Nemuna known as Albanian Alps are the main destinations, however, road infrastructure should be improved in order to enable tourists visit landscapes in these mountains safely and comfortably. The package of projects includes creation of walking paths close to rivers, bicycle paths and riding horses as well as bird watching. This should also be used to promote Adventure tourism offer (paragliding, mountain biking, etc.), bird and animal watching, and scientific exploring of cultural and natural (flora and fauna) heritage.

The first package of projects is related to the following actions of Strategic Plan:

- Integrated education and training related to tourism and agriculture (1)
- Protection and preservation of natural landscapes and bio-diversity, and development of sustainable tourism (3)
- Development of sustainable tourism in mountainous areas (6)
- Improvement of infrastructure and touristic services (9)
- Designing of typical hospitality packages (10)
- Waste and water management (14)
- Legal framework (Law on Rural Tourism, Establishing favorable fiscal policies for rural tourism) (23)
- Establishment of "guard of environment" (27)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Monitoring of plans for special areas	3 23 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharr spatial plan • Spatial plan of Bjeshkët e Nemuna • The monument of nature "Ujëvarat e Mirushës"(Mirusha's waterfall) 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
2 Network of touristic roads in mountainous areas	24 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of road network in villages • Improvement of regional roads 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
3 Creation of walking paths	6 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of existing paths and their showing in the map • Identification of new attractive paths and their showing in the map 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
4 Creation of paths for mountainous cycling	6 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of easy attractive paths and their showing in the map • Identification of difficult attractive paths and their showing in the map 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
5 Creation of mini skiing slopes	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of slopes and their preparing for skiing (ski lift, etc.) 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
6 Adventure tourism	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragliding • Climbing • Mountain bicycles • Zip-line 	Different organizations of civil society
7 Protection of forests from devastation	27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of forests from uncontrolled cutting carried on by unauthorized persons 	Respective municipalities, Forest Agency, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
8 Network of local agents in rural and mountainous areas	1 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of local agents to promote and sell touristic products and services • Enabling networking and guiding between agents 	MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
9 System of signs providing information	9 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking of roads, paths, touristic resources and attractions by internationally recognized signs 	Respective municipalities, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030

10.2.4. Lakes, rivers and waterfalls tourist itinerary

The basin of Drini i Bardhë River currently dominates in Dukagjini Region and mainly represents agricultural potential. It is beyond any doubt that this natural resource is an environmental and landscape potential which could be made functional for the benefit of natural tourism. Implementation of such itineraries should be accompanied by structures for accommodation, refreshment, renting of boats and bicycles, etc.

The first package of projects is related to following actions of Strategic Plan:

- Protection and preservation of natural landscapes and bio-diversity and development of sustainable tourism (3)
- Development of sustainable tourism in mountainous areas (6)
- Activities of sustainable tourism in rivers and lakes (7)
- Establishment of "environment guard" (27)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Sailing in calm waters (Olympic discipline)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radoniqi Lake • Drini i Bardhë 	MCYS, Municipalities of Gjakova and Rahovec
	6		
	7		
2 Sportive diving	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of diving clubs 	MCYS
	7		
3 Management of black water sewage	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of black water sewage (locally or of dwelling places) 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work until 2030
	7		
	27		
4 Protection of rivers from devastation	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of river beds – prevention of sand exploitation 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work until 2030
	7		
	27		

10.2.5. Typical Dukagjini Region arts and crafts

Handicraft products are a powerful element of local and regional identity. This region is known for cultural diversity, material and spiritual one, but it was not promoted either in Kosovo or abroad. This cultural wealth represents strong potential for development, especially in relation to the market of tourism. This package of projects aims at developing typical handicraft and also its sustainability in the future, by integrating it in the function for rural tourism. Awareness-raising about this value is necessary and should be affirmed by disseminating it to younger generations. Promotion of the past increases awareness of young generations about the importance of handicraft helps achieve fruitfulness of this value and regional identity by defining it as a "brand" which could be introduced to international markets, thus bringing benefit. It could also be used to promote Dukagjini Region.

The first package of projects is related to the following actions of Strategic Plan:

- Integrated education and training related to tourism and agriculture (1)
- Stimulation of typical products and their inclusion in regional touristic offer (17)
- Establishment of strings of cultural values and heritage (18)
- Implementation of a joint regional program for producers' family-based cells businesses and agricultural products, food products, handicrafts and traditional textile products (19)
- Implementation of Strategic Plan for production increase and encouraging of producers' grouping in clusters (20)
- Progressive development of family businesses to help permanent increase of competition in the market (22)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Textile	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National costume • Rugs • Scarf • Carpets • Plis (Albanian white hat for men), etc. 	Handicrafts associations, shops and individuals, MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work until 2030
	17		
	18		
	19		
	20		
	22		
2 Wood	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Çiftelia (string instrument) • Lute • Pipe • Smoking pipe 	Handicrafts associations, shops and individuals, MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
	17		
	18		
	19		
	20		
	22		
3 Copper	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baking-pan • Tray • Coffee-pot 	Handicrafts associations, shops and individuals, MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP,
	17		
	18		

4	Silver (Prizren filigree)	19	• Vase	MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030 Handicrafts associations, shops and individuals, MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
		20	• Artistic – handicraft work	
		22		
		1	• Rings	
5	Pottery	17	• Necklace	Handicrafts associations, shops and individuals, MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
		18	• Broche	
		19	• Jewelry box	
		20	• Knife	
6	Old "Qarshi" (downtown) and handicraft markets	22	• Smoking pipe	Handicrafts associations, shops and individuals, MTI, respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
		1	• Plate	
		17	• Vase	
		18	• Crock	
7	Organizing of workshops to train young people about producing handicraft	19		MCYS, local governments, different associations and organizations
		20		
		22		
		1	• Revitalizing of old "qarshi" (downtown) of Peja	
		17	• Revitalizing of old "qarshi" of Gjakova	MCYS, RIMP of Peja and Gjakova, Peja and Gjakova Municipality, IPA funds, different NGOs, etc. Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
		18	• Creation of mobile markets in city and village squares	
		19		
		20		
		22		
		1	Organizing of workshops to work with:	
		17	• Textile	
		18	• Wood	
		19	• Copper	
		20	• Silver (Prizren filigree)	
		22	• Crock	

10.2.6. Typical Brands in Dukagjini Region of quality food products

Food products in Dukagjini Region are powerful elements of regional and local identity of Dukagjini Region. This cultural and agricultural potential should serve the development by engaging both production and trade. Products such as wine, grape brandy, honey, dairy products (Rugova cream and cheese of Sharr and Brod) are food products that may be standardized, protected and introduced to international and local markets.

The first package of projects is related to following actions of Strategic Plan:

- Calibrating of accommodation and gastronomic structures according to international standards of tourism and stimulation of competition (8)
- Communication and marketing improvement (11)
- Establishment of strings of cultural values and heritage (18)
- Creation of the system for quality assurance certificates (21)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 The brand of Dukagjini Region	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of some distinguished values in the region and creation of the brand "Dukagjini Region (food, hospitality, handicrafts, etc.)" 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
	11		
	21		
	18		
2 Identification of original products and their certification as indivisible part of the brand of the region	8	Work with chains of value, improving and increasing knowledge, specializing in new products (for example those based on honey) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine • Brandy • Dairy products (cheese, cream) • Meat products (sausage, ham, etc.) • Honey 	MTI, FVAK ¹⁸² , respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
	11		
	21		

10.2.7. Clean and hospitable region (Rural and Urban area)

This package aims at achieving something that entire Kosovo aims and what European Union requests if the state wishes to reach its goal of membership in the EU. However, the success of these packages is not easy at all. There is a need for comprehensive and complex approach through campaigns, children's green clubs and creation of stimulating/punitive system for inhabitants. This rule should also be applicable to tourists, but to be honest they rarely contribute to environment pollution.

The first package of projects is related to the following actions of the Strategic Plan:

- Protection and preservation of natural landscapes and bio-diversity and development of sustainable tourism (3)
- Waste and water management (14)
- Establishment of "environment guard" (27)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Waste management	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorted throwing of waste (glass, paper, plastic, cans, bio-waste) • Collection of sorted waste and systemization for recycling 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
	14		
	27		
2 Establishing points for garbage collection in different paths	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing of garbage bins accessible to moto cultivator 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
	14		
	27		
3 System "Zero waste" for sustainable administration of waste	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of systems for waste administration according to program of Zero Waste Alliance (www.zerowaste.org) 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
	14		
	27		

10.2.8. Safety (First aid, Policy control, aid in case of emergency situation, etc.)

Creation of an integrated system for health safety and safety in emergency cases, as well as overall safety in the region is objective of package no. 7. Projects of the package in question aim more at functionalization through network creation and re-systemizing of capacities rather than creation of

¹⁸² Food and Veterinary Agency of Kosovo

new capacities. Existing health system may offer ambulant services in rural areas both for rural inhabitants and tourists that need medical care. But there are plans to make army, police and firemen part of the network for quick reactions in extraordinary natural disasters (floods, ground sliding, snow avalanche, forest fires, etc.).

The first package of projects is related to the following actions of the Strategic Plan:

- Integrated education and training related to tourism and agriculture (1)
- Healthcare and physical safety of tourists in the region (16)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Creation of regional headquarters for health safety, safety in emergency cases and overall safety	1 16	Nomination of representatives and other members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kosovo Security Force • Kosovo Police • Firemen • Ministry of Health • Representatives of mobile telephony • Associations of Hikers and Alpinists • Associations of radio amateurs 	Government of Kosovo, local governments, phone operators, civil society, etc.

10.2.9. Safety

In order for endogenous development to be successful, local and central governments should create favorable conditions for rural tourism, in legislative, economic and technical terms. To this end, this package aims at creating conducive environment for rural tourism in respect of:

- Legislation supporting rural tourism;
- Priorities in national development policies;
- Stimulations through tax relief;
- Improvement of transport infrastructure with the purpose of creating modern and efficient movement of people;
- Advancing education for the benefit of tourism while focusing on rural tourism;
- Facilitation of networking of the strategy on rural tourism through regional library/archive;
- State support in promoting rural tourism in Dukagjini Region in national and international levels.

Establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs) enables facilitation of above mentioned aims, but it also harmonizes actions with the LEADER approach, which has been the most comprehensive initiative in respect of development of rural areas in EU countries in the last decade.

The first package of projects is related to the following actions of the Strategic Plan:

- Integrated education and training related to tourism and agriculture (1)
- Increasing participation of community in regional policies for tourism development (2)
- Calibrating of accommodation and gastronomic structures according to international standards of tourism and stimulation of competition (8)
- Improvement of infrastructure and touristic services (9)
- Designing of typical hospitality packages (10)
- Communication and marketing improvement (11)

- Updating of urban plans in the region (12)
- Creation of new public spaces and their maintenance in the region (13)
- Implementation of Strategic Plan for production increase and encouraging of producers' grouping in clusters (20)
- Legal framework (Law on Rural Tourism, Establishing favorable fiscal policies for rural tourism) (23)
- Improvement of transport infrastructure and mobility (bus stations, railway and Airport of Gjakova) (24)
- Supporting establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs) (28)

Projects	Action	Short description of the project	Implementation-Possible partners
1 Law on Rural Tourism	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing of all laws and regulations that deal with rural tourism in Kosovo legislation (support, obstruction or bypassing of the issue of rural tourism) • Analysis of policies related to rural tourism at municipal level (good and bad experiences, facilitations and obstructions faced in development of tourism in general and rural tourism in particular) 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs
2 Drafting of a national strategy for tourism in Kosovo by giving priority to rural tourism	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of different sectorial strategies that pertain to rural tourism • Acceleration of drafting of National Strategy on Kosovo Tourism and favoring of rural tourism in the Strategy in question. 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs
3 Tax reliefs for rural tourism	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing of international experiences at expense of tax relief for rural tourism and possibilities for their application in legal circumstances in Kosovo • Review of possibilities for stimulation of tax measures for investments in rural tourism • Amendment of tax laws and regulations in order to favor rural tourism 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs
4 Modernizing mobility of passengers by bus transport (public-private partnership)	9 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of all bus stations in Dukagjini Region • Modernization of services (replacing old buses with new ones, introduction of new direct lines from the airport to Prishtina bus station, then towards main tourist destinations, efficiency of transport services, on-line tickets, etc.) • Interconnection with other transports in the region. 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs, transport organizations
5 Modernizing of mobility of passengers by train transport (public-private partnership)	9 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of all train stations in Dukagjini Region • Modernization of services (replacement of existing diesel operated trains with electric trains, introduction of new direct lines from airport to bus station in Prishtina then towards main tourist destinations, efficiency of transport services, on-line tickets, etc.) • Completion of railway network in the segment Peja-Gjakova-Prizren. • Interconnection with other transports in the region. 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs, transport organizations and Kosovo Railways

6	Operationalization of Gjakova Airport for civil passengers (public-private partnership)	9 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting of a business plan for Gjakova Airport related to sustainability of this project at the level of Dukagjini Region and entire Kosovo (in particular in relation to its complementation with Prishtina Airport) Low stimulation taxes for airline companies Stimulation of companies that provide low cost flights (Wizz Air, EasyJet, etc.). Organization of charter flights. Interconnection with other transports in the region. 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs, transport organizations
7	Adaptation of university and pre-university education to needs of rural tourism	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening of the Faculty of Tourism in Gjakova Opening of professional schools for tourism, gastronomy, etc. in Kosovo centers (Peja, Prizren, Hoçë e Madhe/Velika Hoça) Strengthening of green clubs in primary schools and expanding of their activities with content about rural tourism 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs, donors and other organizations in the education sector
8	The central library of rural tourism in Gjakova	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of a cultural heritage object to turn it into a library (archive) of Dukagjini Region (for example "Innovation Center in Gjakova) Creation of an interactive software (creation of the forum) with dual access: for library members and visitors The archive of projects and feedback provided to it (good experiences, difficulties, problems, recommendations for others, etc.) 	Government of Kosovo, civil society, LAGs, transport organizations and Municipality of Gjakova
9	Organization of annual rural tourism festival	11 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of annual rural tourism festival which changes location (Peja, Gjakova, Prizren, Dragash, Rahovec, Istog, etc.) Organization of a rural tourism stall in Prishtina in December and July when Albanians living abroad come to visit Kosovo 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MAFRD, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
10	Participation of rural tourism in stalls of Kosovo in international tourism fairs	11 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internationale Tourismus-Börse Berlin (ITB) Ferien-Messe Wien Tourbusiness-Minsk Salon Des Vacances (Brussels Holiday Fair) Regiontour International Fair of Regional Tourism in Brno 	Respective municipalities, MCYS, MESP, MTI, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
11	Promotion of rural tourism through Kosovo embassies throughout the world and foreign embassies in Kosovo	11 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations of rural tourism in different promotions organized by different embassies Distribution of promotional material (books, brochures, CDs, etc.) 	MIA, MCYS, MESP, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
12	Promotion of rural tourism in public television RTK	11 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotional videos Special shows 	MIA, MCYS, MESP, donors and LAGs Duration: 1 year intensively, then permanent work up to 2030
13	Establishment of fund "Welcome to Dukagjini"	26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocation of annual budget at state level for the fund of rural tourism development "Welcome to Dukagjini" Advocating to donors for financing of 	MESP, MAFRD and MF

			projects of rural tourism and other projects that indirectly help this economic activity in Dukagjini Region	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of financial mechanisms for generation of means from successful businesses to rural tourism (membership, commission fees, contributions, etc.) 	
14	Review of MDP in regard of rural tourism and rural development	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying of existing MDPs and addressing rural tourism and rural development • Review of MDP in regard of rural tourism and rural development 	MESP, MAFRD and respective municipality
15	Creation of LAGs	2 28	Creation of Local Action Groups (LAG) in specific regional localities.	Local community offices, family businesses (cell) MTI, MCYS, municipalities, LAGs, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Duration: 1 year intensively, then as needed

10.2.10. Establishment of first Ethno village "Welcome to Dukagjini"

The aim of this package is to create an Ethno-village with features of Dukagjini Kulla (fortified stone houses). Such an approach is always disputable and there are different opinions about this. Systematic destruction of architectonic heritage during the war in Kosovo (1999) has eradicated traces of unique landscape villages of this area used to possess. Samples that remained are only parts of ensembles of typical Albanian Kullas that fail to show architectonical culture of old-time artisans of Dukagjin.

The first package of projects is related to the following actions of the Strategic Plan:

- Designing of typical hospitality packages (10)
- Promoting renewable energy and saving of energy in touristic areas (15)
- Establishment of strings of cultural values and heritage (18)
- Legal framework (Law on Rural Tourism, establishing favorable fiscal policies for rural tourism) (23)

<i>Projects</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Short description of the project</i>	<i>Implementation-Possible partners</i>
1	Building of Ethno-village	10 15 18 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of the location (Deçan or Junik), possibly close to the river • Studying of typology of Kullas and selection of types to be presented in Ethno-village • Preparation of the program to be placed in Ethno - village (public space – square, accommodation, restaurants, religious objects, shops, halls for multipurpose use, farms, garden, etc.) • Preparation of business plan for Ethno-village 	MCYS, Municipality, public-private investment Duration: 1 year preparatory work, 4 years intensively, then permanent work up to 2030

10.3. Synergies among projects for regional development

An integrated approach of applied action in Rural Development Strategy for Dukagjini region conveys effects of synergies. Disintegration of the whole strategy in 10 components is preceded for easier implementation but certainly these components must be treated as part of one integrated unit, while stimulating added values, which are result of packages and projects that are linked up. “Reception of tourists “cannot be seen separately from “Safety “or link of “Typical Dukagjini Region arts and crafts“with “Cultural heritage tourist itineraries“. In some cases, a project listed in one package can without any problem be scheduled in other package whilst not losing content or context. This enables the strategy be consistent and at the same time separated in smaller parts for easier implementation. In some projects, part of 10 packages might be superposition and repetitions of contents and activities, which cannot be considered as difficulties. Flexibility is an advantage to the endogenous development, which enables adjustment of different activities, changes of trade circumstances (number of tourists, their requests, competition etc.).

These adjustments might mostly establish super- positioning, which can spontaneously be corrected during the implementation process.

The synergy is mostly pointed to natural and cultural diversity. Offers deriving from packages and projects are not limited in administrative (organizational) or other borders. Cooperation based on local identity usually ignores and goes beyond formal borders and spreads activities where the tourist interest lies.

Project packages “Reception of tourists in Dukagjini Region and marketing “(8.2.1), Safety (8.2.7), Clean and hospitable region (8.2.8), and Building of favorable environment for rural tourism (8.2.10) are packages that deal with general issues of the region. As such, they directly or indirectly help not only other packages but also common development of the region.

“Establishment of first Ethno village Welcome to Dukagjini” (8.2.9) is a particular package which is self-supported but in a wider context it is also obvious that it is linked with the rest of packages.

Relations between packages are presented in table below where clear impression is created about relations between packages and synergies deriving from projects within particular packages (Figure 128.).

Evaluation in this table is done by links between packages in three levels:

- **Low synergy**, where packages have in common only the general objective;
- **Medium synergy**, where packages have in common the same general objectives and beneficiary groups or participants included in projects;
- **High synergy**, where packages are closely interdependent and have the same objectives, beneficiary groups and interfering zones.

Figure 128. Relations between packages

		Reception of tourist in Dukagjini Region and marketing	Cultural heritage tourist itineraries	Exploring surrounding mountains and caves	Lakes, rivers and waterfalls tourist itinerary	Typical Brands in Dukagjini Region of quality food products	Typical Dukagjini Region arts and crafts	Safety	Clean and hospitable region	Establishment of first Ethno village "Welcome to Dukagjini"	Building of favorable environment for rural tourism
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Reception of tourist in Dukagjini Region and marketing		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
2	Cultural heritage tourist itineraries	XXX		XX	XX	XXX	XX	XXX	XX	XXX	XXX
3	Exploring surrounding mountains and caves	XXX	XXX		XXX	XXX	XX	XXX	XXX	XX	XXX
4	Lakes, rivers and waterfalls tourist itinerary	XXX	XXX	XXX		XXX	XX	XXX	XXX	XX	XXX
5	Typical Brands in Dukagjini Region of quality food products	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX		XX	XX	XXX	XX	XXX
6	Typical Dukagjini Region arts and crafts	XXX	XXX	XX	XX	XXX		X	XX	XXX	XXX
7	Safety	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	X	X		XXX	XXX	XXX
8	Clean and hospitable region	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XX	XX		XXX	XXX
9	Establishment of first Ethno village "Welcome to Dukagjini"	XXX	XXX	XX	X	XXX	XXX	XX	XX		XXX
10	Building of favorable environment for rural tourism	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX	

Level of synergy: XXX-high; XX-medium; X-low

Source: Author

10.4. Notes on the implementation of the Strategic Plan

Placing 56 projects in 10 packages in one way reflects the complexity of Strategic Planning of Development of Rural Tourism in Dukagjini Region. On one hand, this large number of projects does not even roughly provide information about large number of events (projects) which have to be undertaken in the region. For example, the establishment of fund "Welcome to Dukagjini" (Package 10 of project 13) is provided in the table as the last point placed in last package, but from this project hundred projects may derive, and as such they have to be supported by start-up funds. There are many similar projects from which other projects, linked to each other, may derive. Moreover, many other projects may take place in the region despite not being part of 56 projects provided here and encouraged in this Strategic Plan and may be in line with it.

On the other hand, interconnection takes place based on the closest territory focused in specific geographical zones in the region and might be considered homogenous from morphologic, cultural,

social and economic point of view. In these cases, the synergy of projects from different packages happens because of the same location or meeting where the project is implemented.

Implementation usually takes place in wider territory but there are cases where smaller territories have more and complex potentials.

A very important moment is when many Local Plans (Local Strategies) derive from the Strategic Plan (Figure 127.). In complex environments with plenty of diverse potentials, investors and beneficiaries are different. In this case, a detailed coordination will be required, or a “mini strategy” can be figured out, which may be led by public discussion. Drafting of this document will mobilize community, to harmonize and connect their project with Local Plan and the Strategic Plan for Development of Tourism in Dukagjini Region. This would create a much clearer situation for beneficiaries.

This complexity proves the necessity of LEADER approach and especially existence of LAG in order to coordinate projects and actions and place them in full synchrony.

In some cases, different projects within the package or a group of smaller projects from different packages can keep one project for a longer time. Some projects below can be stimulated (some smaller projects can be coordinated within the projects).

Archeological heritage network

Package 1-Project 4(P1P4), P1P5, P2P1, P2P2, P2P7, P3P9, P10P3,4,5,6,10,12,13.

Reception of tourists in Dukagjini Region and marketing:

Package 2 – Project 1 (P2P1), P2P6, 7, P3P9, P5P1, P7P1, P8P1, P9P1.

These two cases provide an illustration of projects listed in 10 packages that can be placed in other packages. This alternative approach enables savings in some cases, and in other cases it makes implementation more effective. These combinations are encouraged with this Strategic Plan in order to build a cooperative spirit between communities and local and central government, leading to an effective implementation of the Strategic Plan in the field.

11. Conclusions

Redefinition of the boundaries of the Balkan states as a result of conflicts in the late twentieth century has brought a new political and socio-economic situation. The 22-million-inhabitant Former Yugoslavia which was formed more on a basis of manifest differences rather than coexistence could not resist tendencies for identity of its each integral unit. With the declaration of independence on 17th February 2008, the Republic of Kosovo became the newest country in Europe and in a way defined the borders of the Balkans known as the “Blood and Honey” region. Under this new situation, Kosovo still remained with a fragile economy and under international monitoring, but what is unusual for post-war countries, people were still optimistic, regardless of the fact that they still have a fresh memory of massacres, murders, and rapes that happened a few years ago.

The “The young Europeans” slogan, derived from three main Kosovo’s resources (natural, cultural and human resources), drew attention to the whole European community, a fact which was considered as an opportunity but also a risk for the EU, which is always into trouble with refugees coming from all sides and from Kosovo as well. The EU has a positive rural development policy to achieve goals for developed countryside and for better life of the people who live and work there. Based on research from the field but also from information from media sources, it can be concluded that fear is based and that fact is a sign that Kosovo must act fast in opening the prospects for young people, so that the resource does not turn into a problem. Central and local government has drafted employment policies, but there is no harmonization between them. This great number of unemployed youth requires immediate steps for economic development and employment of youth.

The best answer in the Kosovo case is regional development is based on local resources. The environment where the human beings belong to needs a planning and balancing between consumption and renewal of resources. The country does not experience permanent devaluation that leads to complete spending of these resources. A development vision based on own indigenous forces, sometimes united with others, and supported through “start-up” grants and subsidies, makes the endogenous development flexible and adaptable to changing conditions in the rural tourism market and to the tourism in general.

Kosovo is rich in various natural resources that must be included in the development. Sharr Mountains, “Bjeshkët e Nemuna” mountains, and “Mirusha Waterfalls” are natural pearls of the Dukagjini Region. A great number of impressive natural landscapes such as caves, flora and fauna etc., are the resources that make visitors come back several times. The “Drini i Bardhë” river with many branches stemming from the mountains surrounding Dukagjini Region create a basin which was attractive for the establishment of ancient settlements, from the prehistoric times. The “Drini i Bardhë” basin enables development of agriculture of all kinds.

In this direction, this study provided an answer to question of research and enabled achievement of purposes set forth at its beginning. Dukagjini Region can be developed with rural tourism based on concept of endogenous development. The study has delivered a clear strategic plan for development of the region through rural tourism by suggesting the manner of administration, funding and planning based on existing natural, cultural and human resources. The Strategic Plan, through an integrated and comprehensive process based on local capacities and modern principles, creates suitable platform which can be adapted to different situations in the field and changes that might

take place over time by not deviating from objectives set forth by its strategic framework. The concept of establishment of family businesses as initial cells, their later networking, and grouping in clusters make the Strategic Plan flexible and functional for a long time.

From the very analytical stage, apart from the potential and opportunities, there was also an identification of possible problems and shortcomings, both legislative and current negative developments, and also those planned at central and local levels. There was also an analysis of several cases in neighboring countries which served as inspiration for development of similar modalities of rural tourism in the Region of Dukagjini too.

Establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs), an experience borrowed from the LEADER approach (see Chapter 2.5.3) with the purpose of preserving resources, business initiative and advancement of development in the region, establishment of three touristic centers (Peja, Gjakova and Prizren) and establishment of Central Archive/Library (with print and electronic copies accessible through Internet) are elements that should guarantee implementation of the Strategic Plan in Dukagjini Region. LAG's and Touristic Centers enable interrelation of the Government and community by loading the burden of development to businesses and community, on one hand, and by ensuring the support of the Government, on the other hand. The archive and its electronic platform enable transparency and easy distribution of experiences from one side of the region to another.

The present study suggests financial resources for implementation of specific projects deriving from three strategic guidelines, twenty-eight actions and ten packages. At the beginning of implementation, the Government, by its own and donors funds, through the LAGs should support the first cells with start-up subsidies. This study also foresees that the Government and donors should support some overall actions such as:

- implementation of Law on Protecting Natural and Cultural Heritage,
- improving infrastructure,
- human capacity building,
- promotion and marketing at state level in international fairs, etc.

Year after year, the Government reduces financial support and focuses on legal support at state and local levels. The strategic plan clearly defines its beginning and does not try to provide a conclusion. It leaves the way for its continuation open by being disseminated, expanded, multiplied throughout the territory, while encouraging the spirit of principled competition, but also by preserving diverse and balanced development throughout the region. It should be kept in mind that tourism also brings along the danger of negative effects such as pollution, environment degradation, fading of identity and the spirit of location (*genius loci*).

The study contains numerical and graphical systemized and usable information also about Local Plans and specific projects that might be developed in the future.

Based on previous chapters, it is concluded that Dukagjini Region possesses potentials and can direct its development towards sustainable development through rural tourism. This chapter articulates nine messages that should be the main indicator in the sense of this study and a general instruction for implementation of the Strategic Plan for Development of Dukagjini Region.

11.1 Endogenous development, creation of cells and clusters to the function of employment of local young people

Past experiences in Dukagjini Region and across the world have shown that exogenous development favored urban areas and individuals more than rural areas and community. This approach (when government took care for development) has developed agriculture and sometimes tourism in rural areas in Dukagjini region. But even in these developments, local community was not sufficiently engaged. So the “top-down” approach of development accentuated differences of village-city development, thus bringing rural areas to difficult economic situation and losing any hope of young people for perspective in these areas. Kosovo as a young country with weak economic power, and small opportunities for investments in large scale projects, should be oriented towards small budget developments and support individual investment initiatives coming from the community itself - (“community based development”). The “bottom-up” approach does not imply setting local and central authorities free from responsibilities. It means that they should create conditions for family businesses with the purpose of generating self-employment for local inhabitants. Initially, the Government should provide its maximal contribution in legislation, draft strategic plans for development of tourism at state level and create sound business environment in rural areas. “Start-up” funds and various supports (human capacity building, promotion, marketing, raising of population’s awareness in general about importance and possibilities offered by rural tourism) are necessary supports to be provided by the Government in the first initial stage of rural tourism development. Then local inhabitants should continue. They should be self-organized in small family based business cells. Such tradition which used to exist even before in these areas and development of micro business of various types, such as those provided below, should be based on this experience:

- Accommodation (rehabilitation and adapting of existing spaces and annexes in order to provide quality accommodation for tourists);
- Food (preparing of traditional and other foods as requested by tourists);
- Production of local standardized products (honey, cheese, wine, brandy, sausages, ham, pickles, handicraft products, etc.);
- Guide (training of young creative people, who know the place, the region and speak several foreign languages);
- Provision of services and equipment for different activities in the region (bicycles, horses, walking equipment, paragliding, fishing and hunting gear, etc.);
- Organization of traditional festivals and events (festivals of grape, apple, wine, brandy, weddings, traditional sports, songs, dancing, bird watching, etc.).

Only few of micro-businesses have been mentioned above, therefore the local population should identify as many autochthonous attractions in order to valorize their identity for more attractive offer in a market full of competition. These cells should not increase the number of employed people too much but the number of cells has to increase gradually and besides all, there should be networking and establishment of clusters on two bases:

- Clusters established according to business similarities with the purpose of providing positive answer to higher demand than the capacity of a cell (Figure 23,24.), and
- Clusters established based on their location with the purpose of diversifying the offer.

Joining of cells in clusters should be done on voluntary basis and to the interest of all parties interested to be temporarily united (based on development of interests of being united). Clusters will also help in reducing unfair competition.

Micro-businesses based on small cells make them flexible and able to easily and quickly adapt to demands of tourists. These businesses are organized based on family members:

- Increase the quality of permanent services because they are aware that they do business for themselves and the better they run it, the more successful they will be.
- Ensure sustainability because training of employees is family based and does not interfere with the work and does not impede business flow.
- Maximally reduce “running costs” (that cause headaches to big businesses during seasons when there is no work) because they are at their home and spend no financial means on workers employed in these businesses.

Although it depends on some other conditions, economic development based on philosophy of endogenous development may immediately start without having to wait for the government or someone else. Completely or partially emptied houses that meet conditions for accommodation may start the business with minimal expenses by not losing hope that they will lose possible donations in the future. Business always needs to be developed and expanded, and it will be easier to acquire financial assistance when it is obvious that it stands on its feet safely. A common seven- member family in villages of Dukagjini Region may borrow an empty house vacated by relatives who migrated in European Union countries. This building may be refreshed with small investments, a simple webpage, an email address, and Facebook and Twitter accounts may be created, mobile phone number may be provided, and in the beginning they could offer the products close to them:

- clean and comfortable accommodation (warm rooms in winter, beds with new linen, bathroom with hot water, etc.)
- food similar to the one they consume
- amateur guide to walk around the village
- activities related to the village and the region such as planting, harvesting, fruit picking, mowing, participation in parties such as weddings, national state holidays (Flag Day, Independence Day, etc.), religious holidays (Eid al-Fitr, Christmas), etc.
- self-made food products (honey, cheese, wine, brandy, etc.)

Century-long tradition of hospitality combined with achievements in education, science and technology will yield quick results with additional revenues that could be generated from rural tourism, which is an activity that a family could carry out just as they carried out the activities it conducted so far (agriculture, farming, education, etc). This activity could start with minimal investments of few thousand euros that may have been saved before, borrowed from family members employed in the western world or due to co-investment with other family members of friends living there.

Taking into consideration that the development of rural tourism does not need major investments, a part of infrastructure for accommodation already exists, but it needs to be adapted and updated, and this fact creates optimism about the success of rural tourism. Employment and self-employment

would give quick results and would bring back hope to the population that they can make a good living in their homes and places.

While mass tourism requires investments in facilities that cost millions, rural tourism has an almost complete infrastructure for accommodation, which needs a little improvement and adaptation. Investments in this area should not be incorrectly oriented thus ruining the image; instead there should be some improvement in hygienic conditions (water supply, sanitation, clean bathrooms and kitchens). The advantage of endogenous development enables planning investments in stages by reflecting on the guests' requests. Capacity expansion may be done depending on frequency of tourists and their interests on specific issues. Reconstruction of existing infrastructure i.e. hotels, hostels, villas and transformation of existing passive facilities - old and abandoned houses, adopting one part of big houses for guests, construction of small capacities in rural areas, adrenaline parks, etc. represent possibilities and variants to complete rural tourism services by using the motto “the content should be adapted to facilities, not facilities to the content”. It is insufficient to invest in facilities only, it is also necessary to monitor them to provide tourists with safety from potential diseases.

11.2 Learning from LEADER

The most important initiatives of EU are the Rural Development Policy 2007–2013 from which derives LEADER (acronym from French language meaning “Links between the rural economy and development actions”). More exactly, this document in Axis 4 foresees that LEADER carries out building local capacity for employment and diversification. LEADER is a local development method which encourages local actors to develop their areas by using its endogenous development strategy. This program has shown significant results in development areas applying innovative solutions with very small funds. In a way, economic development in rural areas always depends on inhabitants and their initiatives not only in Kosovo but in Europe as well. This is one of the main reasons why this approach to development of rural areas has given good results in EU countries. Kosovo should also follow these experiences due to:

- The need for development of rural areas through application of modern methods that showed evident results in implementation;
- The necessity of being in line with developments of European Union (where Kosovo aims at adhering) so that Kosovo is able to apply for EU support funds from the budget foreseen for the development of rural areas.

This instrument based on seven key features (see Chapter 2.5.3) directly reflects the concept of endogenous development by promoting “area-based local development strategies” and “bottom-up approach” which are keys to endogenous approach. So, Dukagjini Region, by following instructions of LEADER should incite public-private partnership which could be best achieved through establishment of Local Action Groups (LAGs). Experiences of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development with LEADER should only be strengthened and expanded throughout the territory of Dukagjini Region. The same goes for some LAGs established in four regions of Kosovo defined by European Commission (South, North, East and West). LAGs established by the five regions: Center, East, North, South and West (South and West belongs to Dukagjini Region) need to undergo restructuring, meaning they have to reduce their members and create more space for local

entrepreneurs and planners in order to make them operational. Politicians and senior municipal officials should be close to but not part of these groups, so that LAGs pursue interests of communities maximally and are never politicized. Creation of functional LAGs in Kosovo circumstances takes time, therefore they should be encouraged to start the first business cells in parallel with this process. Functionalizing of LAGs would help in easy implementation of processes such as facilitating innovation, integrated and multi-sector actions, networking, and cooperation in regional level.

Considering the seven principles of LEADER after drafting of strategic plan in regional level, local level should actively involve local residents in drafting specific Local Plans and Projects. In this respect, LEADER proposes six basic steps in the process of implementation of this concept. In areas where this approach is applied for the first time, it should encourage local people to adapt the strategy to specific cases with the purpose embodying them with Local Plans. The following steps in the process of implementing the LEADER approach are:

1. Capacity building
2. Bringing together local actors
3. Territory analysis and its potentials
4. Identifying existing activities and initiatives happening around
5. Creation of partnership in local level and broader and
6. Preparation of local development strategy for specific areas

This task will be the basis of LAG's application for support of proposals for fundraising which should lead LEADER for certain Local Plans in specific locations in Dukagjini Region (Chapter 7.1).

For the beginning, it is necessary to have support from central and local authorities to evaluate the up-to-now work of LAGs, re-functionalization of LAGs that were passive, and establishment of new LAGs where needed. As foreseen in step four of LEADER, in this case also there should be identifying of existing activities and initiatives happening around, so identification and strengthening of LAGs in municipalities should take place, temporary financing of LAG by central and local governments until they reach the stage of being able to function on their own and improving of working conditions for LAG members.

Functionalizing of existing LAGs, establishment of new LAGs on special interest areas in Dukagjini Region (Special protected zones, National park “Sharri”, Natural monument “Mirusha Waterfalls”, etc.) and their networking and synchronizing through their association, will create an excellent pattern for development of rural areas not only in Dukagjini Region but throughout Kosovo. LAGs will not be focused on rural tourism only. LAGs will be engaged in all modalities of development of rural areas and rural tourism, and in parallel to agriculture, will be the main component.

LAGs should start acting before public discussion and give its contribution in drafting Local Plans and support community for implementation of these plans (see Figure 127). Considering Kosovo circumstances (where individuals are often more important than the institution), great caution should be paid when selecting the people to head these groups (LAGs). They should be professionals, politically neutral, credible and above all, they should belong to and love the region covered by their LAG. LAGs may be good interrelation between:

- Central and local authorities, and
- Local authorities among themselves.

These groups may provide great assistance in both directions (local government–central government –local government) by articulating community requests related to processes to central government during the stage of drafting of spatial, development, and strategic plans but also during the implementation stage of different plans and projects from central to community level.

The Local Action Groups (LAGs) should be the main “care-takers” of everything that happens in the region by taking care about the progress of sustainable regional developments in rural areas, especially, development of rural tourism.

Although Kosovo is not a member of the EU, it is making careful preparations on the course of becoming an equal member, like other countries. Harmonization of criteria must also progress towards fulfilling the criteria set forth in the international banks and EU policies like the one called LEADER.

11.3 Nature protection- an imperative for the future of Dukagjini Region

The main challenges of rural development through tourism will be the protection of natural and cultural environment because the development of tourism relies a lot on them. On the other hand, these two elements are more endangered from devastation. The risk comes from all sides, and in all cases it is the human factor that permanently affects this process and endangers rural tourism, tourism in general and the overall environment in Kosovo.

The biggest risks and steps have to be taken in protection from:

- Pollution with solid waste
- Pollution with sewage waters and chemicals
- Unplanned constructions
- Damaging of forests
- Unplanned stone exploitation (quarries)
- Devastation of river beds, etc.

The above -mentioned problems pose great and permanent risk for devastation of nature in spaces of Kosovo and Dukagjini Region. The problem of environmental pollution is solved through legislation, and in this case the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning sufficiently covers the problem of protection of natural environment with six laws and many administrative instructions (Chapter 4.1.2 / B). All it takes is to implement these laws properly.

Protection from pollution with solid waste (together with protection from pollution with sewage waters and chemicals) is an urgent matter for entire Kosovo territory. Dukagjini Region should take the following measures as soon as possible:

- Build modern solid waste disposal sites;
- Conduct selected waste collection;

- Recycle waste and stimulate production and sale of packaging created from self-destructive material instead of glass and PVC;
- Create a system of waste collection in rural areas too;
- Make the population aware of importance of clean environment and organize actions for waste collection;
- Strengthen environment protection with environment guards.

Reduction of waste in natural and habitable environments is an imperative for development of rural tourism that needs a harmonized involvement of local and central authorities, and community.

Protection from pollution with sewage waters and chemicals is as important as protection from pollution with solid waste and this problem is even more complex in some aspects. While solid waste usually remains where thrown, polluted water moves and pollutes other rivers' waters and the land. They go even further and pollute other dwelling places beyond the region and Kosovo. In case of Dukagjini Region, all waste and sewage flows through the River Drini i Bardhë in Albania and in Adriatic Sea. This is the reason why one of EU conditions for integration of Kosovo in this institution is regulation of the issue of environmental pollution. Therefore, Kosovo and Dukagjini Region should approach this issue with greater seriousness by undertaking steps to:

- Separate the network of rainwater sewer system from the one of waste water sewer system;
- Construct sites for wastewater treatment;
- Complete dwelling places with sewerage network;
- Place respective filters for different industrial polluters.

Waste water requires more planning (even beyond the region) and capital investments are required for installation of the system for collection of sewage waters and building of centers to treat these waters. These investments go beyond capacities of the country and the only hope to solve this problem is getting foreign funds. Rural areas in Dukagjini Plain should partially solve the problem of wastewater by using alternative solutions such as "Small community wastewater cluster systems"¹⁸³.

Stopping of unplanned constructions (illegal constructions) is a serious approach to prevent this negative phenomenon that engulfed entire Kosovo. This phenomenon did not save rural areas either. Moreover, the case of "Prevala" in National Park "Sharr" in Municipality of Prizren shows the importance of prevention of this phenomenon and rehabilitation of devastated spaces. Having in mind that there are respective laws and plans in place, this phenomenon could be easily stopped and devastated places from unplanned construction could be revitalized and be brought back to their previous state to a certain extent.

Prevention of forest damaging is a smaller issue if compared with the three previous cases. Forests in Dukagjini Region are damaged by:

- Illegal wood cutting for heating purposes
- Cutting due to constructions

¹⁸³ Very efficient systems of wastewater management have been developed throughout the world. One of these systems is this system which instead of using special septic holes, it connects several households in a system that afterwards treats waste. Some systems are even more advanced, as they use wastewater sites for alternative energy.

- Forest fire (spontaneously or setting of fire by irresponsible people)

Considering that it takes up to fifty years for a tree to grow, it is important to protect forests. Planned cuttings allowed by law should be respected and these actions should be monitored in order to verify whether all of them are in line with the law: inspections, environment guards but also the community. In order to protect woods, firefighters should be provided with suitable equipment and mechanisms for fire fighting. Apart from prevention or emergency interventions in case wood is caught by fire, local institutions and bodies should also plan afforestation of bare surfaces with new saplings. The community must be involved in all ways, with the purpose of ensuring sustainability of wood protection.

Unplanned exploitation of stones and **Devastation of river beds** is a process closely related to construction activities. While sand exploitation from river beds has almost been put under control, quarries pose a serious problem to environment in Kosovo and Dukagjini Region. Quarries have been established all over by not considering at all their negative effect, both visual and functional (biodiversity, dust, etc). Two steps should be urgently taken:

- Reduce their number thus enabling expansion of other quarries' capacities in order to reduce the number of spots devastating the environment
- Re-cultivate spaces of quarries end their exploiting activity.

All the above mentioned activities would maximally contribute to protection of natural environment for rural tourism and healthier life in rural areas and wider. Clean natural environment is a precondition for development of rural tourism. Natural environment protection does not mean that nature should not be touched at all, but it should be maximally protected so that it continues to be healthy for local inhabitants and attractive for tourists. Laws, inspections and guards may contribute to environmental protection, but local population should be the main protector of nature from devastation. This is exactly where the success of man-nature co-existence lies by being based on “protecting by using” approach. “Making people aware that they can profit and make a good living out of these resources is the best mechanism to protect the nature. In one hand, such an approach prevents the devastation of nature by local population, and makes them protect this wealth from others. Local residents are the ones that best protect the environment where they live. The same situation applies to the cultural heritage, for whose protection the state cannot allocate budget. The use of these assets for development would enable the allocation of additional funds for their protection and rehabilitation, and their use would help in developing rural tourism.

Tourism in rural areas might have as “Leitmotif” a natural monument, for example “Mirusha Waterfalls” (like the case of Rafting in Piva and Tara rivers – Chapter 3.3) or food products for example Hoça e Madhe (like the case of “Popova Kula” winery in Demir Kapija- Chapter 3.2) and build its development based on them.

In order to introduce it to the function of development, some other activities should be undertaken such as: drafting of brochures on natural heritage and its promotion through web pages, portals and social networks.

11.4 Protection of culture heritage for identity and authentic rural tourism

The second important pillar of rural tourism development is cultural heritage. Cultural heritage makes a region specific with identity. This is the reason why cultural heritage should be appreciated, protected and integrated in development of the region. Protection of cultural heritage has been defined through the Law on Cultural Heritage (02/L-88) which is described in Chapter 4.1.3.4.

Unfortunately, cultural heritage has suffered great damage both in number and quality. Their destruction took place after the second world war, during the time of social revolution, where centers of most dwelling spaces were destroyed. In the name of development and prosperity, in order to build “new modern” buildings there was a systematic destruction even during the war 1998-1999, when Serbian forces destroyed a considerable number of stone houses – “Kulla” that represent the most original architecture of Dukagjini Region. There were destructions even during the period from 2000 until now, when due to inability of institutions, thousand of monuments, ensembles and localities were destroyed by irresponsible people. A considerable number of relics was missing from localities, and if we add the fact that a considerable number of artifacts of the Museum of Kosovo was transferred in Belgrade during 1999, it is obvious that museums of Kosovo have remained almost without any artifacts. Due to lack of finances and proper care, spiritual heritage is also disappearing.

In order to protect and valorize what remained from rich cultural heritage and put it in function of development, urgent steps should be taken in the following aspects:

- Permanent updating of the list of cultural monuments under state protection;
- Stocktaking of all buildings and ensembles possessing cultural or environmental values and their ranking according to priorities;
- Systematic preservation and restoration of cultural monuments based on a priority list;
- More creative treatment in urban and spatial plans;
- Rehabilitation of museum buildings, establishment of new museums in the region and systemizing of artifacts in a professional manner so as to protect and present them to visitors;
- Revitalizing of restored monuments and revitalizing of monuments that need conservation and restoration by looking into the possibility of public-private partnership with the purpose of putting them in function of tourism development;
- Valorizing, protection and development of spiritual heritage (weddings, chatting in men room -“Oda”, face painting, handicrafts, traditional sports, etc.)
- Valorizing and protection of tradition of preparing local food;
- Drafting of brochures for Kosovo heritage and its promotion through web pages, portals and social networks.

In all cases, conservation and restoration should be oriented towards adapting monuments to tourism needs and more qualitative life of inhabitants in general. Religious buildings (mosques and churches) continue to carry out their primary function for believers but if Hammams (Turkish baths) cannot be transformed into cultural centers, museums, etc. they may be given the function of tourist centers.

This document foresees establishment of a Central Library/Archive for Dukagjini Region in Gjakova and it would be good to accommodate such function in any of architectonic monuments or in “Çarshia e Vjetër” (old market) of Gjakova. Re-functionalizing of monuments in the function of rural tourism and tourism in general should be objective of developments in rapport tourism-heritage. Risks from abuse of monuments and their devastation to new function is manageable, all it takes is follow experiences of EU countries.

Given that no ensembles of typical stone houses (“Kulla”) remained in this region, among others, it was suggested to find a new location for establishment of a dwelling place inspired by previous dwelling places of Dukagjini Region (similar to Ethno village KÜSTENDORF in Serbia described in Chapter 3.4).

11.5 Action plan needed

The biggest contribution of central government is to create favorable legislative environment for rural tourism. In particular ministries elaborate specific issues in laws and several plans, programs, strategies, etc. Legislation in Kosovo doesn’t define rural tourism in Kosovo but it is good that there are no obstacles to block it. Chapter 4.1.2 analyzes 32 Kosovar laws from 5 ministries that deal with rural tourism and situation with legal framework concerning rural tourism is unsatisfactory. This is the reason why Chapter 4.1.4 suggests drafting of particular Action Plan for rural tourism that related all binding and non binding documents dealing with rural tourism and creates a pattern for development of rural tourism on secure social and economic basis. Apart from laws elaborated on by the Ministry of Trade (Law on tourism, crafts, Accommodation Tax in Hotels and Tourist Facilities, etc.), other laws elaborated by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development which deal with Farming, Land Regulation, Wines, Forests, Farmers’ Cooperatives, Veterinary, Hunting, Fishery and Aquaculture, Apiculture and Protection of Plants Varieties (Chapter 4.1.2 A and C) are related to rural tourism. Important laws are also those elaborated by Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

This big number of laws related to rural tourism proves the necessity for an Action Plan, on the contrary, the issue of rural tourism will continue to remain without “an address”. Action Plan for rural tourism should create conditions in order to:

- Ensure “start-up” funds for the start of businesses and later on subsidies for successful businesses in rural tourism;
- Ensure favorable taxes for businesses in rural tourism by exempting them from paying taxes completely in the beginning and then impose lowest possible taxes;
- Ensure favorable place of rural tourism in plans, strategies, etc.;
- Ensure necessary infrastructural support (roads, electricity, drinkable water, etc.);
- Ensure necessary institutional support through the support of government in international tourism markets while providing guarantees to tourist operators;
- Carry out ranking of services according to experiences of EU countries and South-Eastern Europe;
- Promote rural tourism in official portals.

Based on Action Plan, harmonization of following documents should also take place:

- Kosovo Spatial Plan
- Plans of Special Protected Zones in Dukagjini Region
- Plan of Special Interest Areas in Dukagjini Region
- Development Plans of Municipalities belonging to Dukagjini Region

A great number of important documents, which are non-obligatory but have essential impact in the stage of review and their implementation, are interrelated with the related plans.

Drafting Action Plan for rural tourism is a very important initiative which can bring a common platform for immediate action for an easy start of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region and process adjustment of existing laws which can be amended in the future when they are in the process of being changed.

Current change of laws imposes the need to change plans. So, documents in general need reviewing. Rising of awareness related to rural tourism in Kosovo is obvious and there is a chance to put things in place with a few efforts.

The risk coming from official encouragement is that these family economies may be misunderstood of being encouraged to run informal business. Tax exemption may be an incentive for entrepreneurs, but they should not be tax-exempt forever. In all cases there must be taxes, even if they are symbolic for two reasons: to get these businesses to be orderly and to educate all generations to follow rules and fiscal policies.

11.6 Complex approach for improvement of human capacity

Kosovo's education is undergoing the process of reform since 2000. Reforms are difficult due to limited budget but also due to events of the last two decades of the end of previous century. At that time, Albanian teachers were forced out of jobs and later on students were forced out of school premises. However education did not stop, rather it continued in buildings without basic conditions for teaching and with dubious quality of educational process. This period, which was not difficult for education sector only, left consequences in intellectual development of students which are still obvious nowadays.

Kosovo education has in last fifteen years undergone reforms in respect of structure and substance (see Chapter 6.4.1.).

Positive tendency of transformation of education is giving priority to vocational education which aims at preparing young people as soon as possible (and better) for labor market. To this end, several centers of professional education have been established in Kosovo. One of them, Malisheva Competence Center, offers tourism and catering courses. But, the mere establishment of schools and training centers does not solve the problem. Despite the potential for development in agriculture, most of agricultural vocational schools have very small number of students. It is the same with students from rural areas which do not see themselves dealing with agriculture in the future. But the agricultural school in Lipjan, which has a high enrollment for courses it provides, shows that a better organization and engagement of community in making young people aware of importance of agriculture may yield results.

As far as university studies are concerned, the offer for catering and tourism is very poor and limited (the Economic Faculty of the University of Prishtina and in college “Pjetër Budi” - program on Tourism and Hotel Management).

Fragile situation in Kosovar education requires a holistic approach of adapting education and training about rural tourism. An integrated approach for education and training regarding tourism and agriculture is the only option for quality and quick preparing of necessary profiles for rural tourism.

While determining of profiles in schools and training centers takes place, consideration should always be given to two areas – tourism and agriculture, which in fact are inseparable areas for development of rural tourism. But youth (and all other interested parties) education and training should not be profiled too much. Professional profiles such as: tourist operator, guides, experts of alternative tourism, cook, expert of ecological agriculture, etc. should be combined. This way, following completion of education, individuals will be able to conduct several jobs. Almost everybody should have some of competences. Mastering skills to use information technology, knowing foreign languages, possessing basic knowledge about management, etc., should be accompanying components for all profiles that will be dealing with rural tourism.

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives, reorganization of existing training centers and establishment of new centers should take place, to help the development of rural tourism. While formal education needs procedures to approve plans and programs, which takes considerable time, training centers are more practical and flexible in following the needs to prepare inhabitants for labor market.

Primary schools (facilities and teachers) in rural areas provide potential that should be put in the function of training of young people and everybody else. The school is the most present social institution in rural areas, and schools in villages may be easily turned into community centers. During regular working hours, the school would be in the function of regular learning whereas after the regular hours the village school would serve the community for trainings but also other activities related to life and work in the village. With minimal preparations, teaching staff could also be re-qualified to become competent trainers of different modules related to rural tourism (IT, management, organic food, environment protection, etc.)

Kosovo education has undertaken important steps in central level by carrying out the reforms mentioned above and also in their implementation in practice. Some excellent initiatives should be supported and directed to the function of rural development in Dukagjini Plain– where rural tourism, in parallel to agriculture, is considered to be the best opportunity (“Green Clubs”, “Ecology Clubs”, “Clubs of biologists”, etc.). Strengthening of existing clubs that deal with environmental issues in primary schools, increase of their number in rural schools and completing their plans and programs with topics related to rural tourism would contribute to creation of friendly environment for rural tourism and agriculture. There should be initiatives to establish other clubs that informally educate generations about culture and identity. In particular, incentive should be given to clubs that create bridges of friendship between children of rural and urban areas in the regional and wider context. Other sporadic initiatives that deal with rural tourism should be taken into account and introduced to the process of education and professional training.

Education in Dukagjini Region cannot be considered separately from the rest of Kosovo's territory. Education is planned and monitored by the central level of Kosovo administration. But the Government might request opening of relevant branches that relate to rural tourism in higher secondary level. Professional trainings may be planned based on specifics of the region and interests for specific development (gastronomy, guide, viticulture, farming, etc.) and may be implemented by community through LAGs.

Average age of young population and their need to work make the situation less difficult in terms of workforce. The only difficulty may be considered competencies in several specialized tasks which need professionals to be initially prepared either through courses, training and similar, by favoring formal education for young people and "on job training" for adults.

The existing school buildings in rural areas are a good opportunity to be used for training and during holidays.

Speaking of short-term planning which makes rural tourism start up safely, quick trainings and visits to similar businesses in Europe are considered more practical. This approach would build up the first steps in rural tourism development, and would establish a very good pattern for sustainable development of rural tourism in the Dukagjini Region.

11.7 Improvement of mobility- an urgent task

Efficient mobility of people and goods is a precondition for development of a country. After the 1998-1999 war, the infrastructure of Kosovo was devastated. Road infrastructure was poor and damaged, railway infrastructure was in a bad state and Pristina airport was not functional. In 15 years, the biggest investments were made in road infrastructure and results in this respect are obvious. The highway "Ibrahim Rugova" connecting Prishtina to Albania is finished and the road from Prishtina to Peja has improved considerably the situation in **road transport** in Dukagjini Region. Regional roads have also benefited from investments and the territory of Dukagjini Region has sufficient network of roads. In order to complete this network, it is necessary to improve the Peja-Gjakova-Prizren road. This would complete the network by connecting the main centers in Dukagjini Region.

The situation of **railway transport** is rather bad, therefore it could be practically said that there is no such transport at all. A line connecting Pristina and Peja with engines running on diesel fuel, with old trains and completely unsafe infrastructure is alarming. In order to have a sustainable economic development, Kosovo should revitalize the railway. Quick revitalization of railway transport, including train stations and connection of Peja with Gjakova and Prizren by railway in the future, would complete the main element of mobility by public transport.

Air transport has seen similar progress if compared to the road traffic. Previous airport of Pristina had two functions (military and civilian) during former Yugoslavia. From 1999 until 2003, it was managed by KFOR as multinational international force. Modernization of this airport (now International Airport "Adem Jashari") and establishment of military airport in Gjakova enabled Kosovo to be compared to other countries of Eastern Balkans in this respect and in some case even be ahead of them. Year 2011 saw the record number of passengers' transport (1.422.302 passengers a year). Having in mind that the airport in question will in future also have the primary role in

Kosovo's air traffic, Dukagjini Region should by all means create favorable and efficient connection with public transport (train and bus). It is in the interest of neighboring countries to establish a network between airports in wider region (Prishtina, Tirana, Skopje, Beograd and Podgorica) with good reliable public transport. But the transformation of airport in Gjakova, currently under KFOR function, for civilians would be an opportunity for the development of the region if previous feasibility study shows that it is a sustainable investment. Organization of low cost charter flights would be a possible incentive for development of rural tourism but also for the economy in Dukagjini Region.

Dukagjini Region should organize **complementary ways of transport** for people. Transport by minibuses, vans, taxis, rent- a- car, should complement public transport (train, bus and plane). Other ways of alternative transport of passengers should be organized in rural areas (4x4, bicycles, horses, donkeys, horse carts, etc.).

In order to have efficient mobility of people, certain actions should be taken:

- Setting a schedule and observing exact itinerary of trips
- Interconnection of different transports (train, bus, airplane, etc.)
- Possibility to book/purchase tickets online and through phone applications (android and iPhone)
- Ensure transport from the last stop to destination

In order to have an efficient transport, each of elements, but also their easy interconnection, should function.

Mobility of goods and people in the Balkans, which became prioritized over the last decade and the improvement of the road infrastructure goes in favor of the whole economic development in general, and tourism in particular. In this regard, vehicular traffic has been significantly improved after the construction of Albania-Kosovo – Serbia highway. The almost completed four- lane highway has brought Kosovo closer to the Shengjin harbour in Albania in the South, and with Belgrade in Serbia, in the North. Pristina-Peja corridor that is about to be completed has special importance for Dukagjini Region. The other planned corridor towards Skopje makes Kosovo more accessible to potential tourists. As regards air traffic, the international airport “Adem Jashari” in Pristina is distinguished in South –Eastern Europe for its huge influx of travelers. This airport and networking with other airports in wider region (Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) would be sufficient for an easy and safe access of tourists visiting the region. There is still much left to be done to functionalize the railways and public transport in general.

11.8 Promotion of rural tourism through better media coverage and efficient marketing

Apart from nature and culture, the success of rural tourism depends on quality of services, their cost but also its promotion and marketing. In parallel to marketing in Dukagjini Region, work should be done in respect of promoting rural tourism among the population, and to local and central governments. Promotion, as an action to raise awareness of all parties involved in rural tourism, should be perceived as a process that is conducted along with rural tourism. This process should take place everywhere: in schools, civil society, institutions, and mostly in community, and this is where

the importance and contribution of LAGs is seen. Without proper awareness of population, one cannot count on any success of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region.

Media and marketing is becoming a very important factor in development processes everywhere. Marketing carried out directly from information points, through printed brochures, flyers, touristic maps, etc. is a solution. But, in our case media is also a very important mechanism for development by informing people of rural tourism. TV, radio and Internet are basic tools for active marketing. Some portals and websites have been functionalized and are already bringing considerable results, but still this is insufficient. Still, both local and international tourists should spend a lot more time to find the desired information and even more to find the destination. Creation of a central portal, linked to the web sites of all institutions and organizations would give much better results.

Dukagjini Region composed of several municipalities has to be devoted in developing the tourism market throughout rural areas of the region. The Rural Tourism Marketing process allocates funds to rural communities for tourism related projects. Funds that are allocated for Rural Tourism Marketing structured in a unique Program in the beginning should come from the government, local and state, later from room taxes collected in rural areas and is allocated to Region to encourage more tourism.

The Rural Tourism Marketing is the business of selling, packaging, and advertising rural Dukagjini Region in a unified and integrated effort within the Kosovo area and wider. Tourism product development in rural areas will utilize the rural/metro tourist connections to maximize rural benefit.

The marketing program should invite rural areas to increase transient room tax revenues by making their town enticing to visitors so that they want to stay there for business and recreational needs. Their town will be packaged as a destination, a place where groups and recreationists want to come and stay.

Efficient marketing helps to market the idea to visitors. This also includes marketing, notion during “non-peak” times as well. This would include those winter and early spring months when the outside weather turns gray. By providing cooperation between Dukagjini Region and rural areas, tourist organizations will realize that this destination has a reputation for fun, friendly people, great service provided by hotels, motels and restaurants and is not only a great place for business functions, but for outdoor enthusiasts as well.

Considering distance and difficulties to reach remote villages, developing online training program for rural businesses is a necessity that can enable training people how to build Internet Marketing that allows small local business owners worldwide to create and manage an effective internet marketing strategy, working at their own place. In this regard, maintaining and distributing an e-mail newsletter should be considered to provide hundreds of businesses with the latest information concerning media and Internet marketing. Weekly blogs to share effective, affordable, state of the art marketing ideas on rural tourism and small local businesses throughout the online community can be considered for interactive communication with potential tourists.

Dynamic life, lack of time to go to the tourist agency and the tendency of rationalization of life has made the Internet more and more important in the field of tourism. Web sites with existing modalities of rural tourism are not organized well and this makes tourists give up because of the difficulties and obstacles to reach information that is inclusive, accurate and reliable to find what's

on in Dukagjini region and the cost of a certain activity. An integrated electronic portal which relates all information by providing all links in one platform would provide a complete picture for tourists who are interested in information. Enrichment of websites with the basic information tourists need like availability of rooms and beds, their cost, location linked to Google Map, manner of transportation to reach the destination, then specific offers from entrepreneurs and from their cluster (horse walk, walk in the snow, hunting, fishing, climbing, traditional food, etc.) make tourism offer more credible. Interconnecting such a platform with electronic social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) could offer much more to tourists wherever they are.

11.9 Necessity for practical measures for tourist safety and security

Safety and security, in all aspects, is a precondition for economic development, investment from abroad and especially for tourism. Therefore, in order to offer quality tourism in Dukagjini Region, safety and security should be the primary objective of tourist destinations in rural areas of this region. To create a comfortable environment for tourists, all actors are requested to coordinate, act together and get placed in a single network both in local and central level. But, only the institutional engagement does not suffice to provide safety and security. Synchronized engagement of everybody, such as media, non-governmental organizations and groups of interested citizens, is also needed.

Risks pertaining to physical or environmental nature should be registered and tourists should be informed about them beforehand. Each region possesses its natural and social specifics and the tourist should be easily informed, especially about its flora and fauna, and should be advised on taking necessary preventive measures (vaccines, etc.). Given that rural tourism promotes traditional food, tourists should be informed about food ingredients that might cause health problems (fats, sugars, etc.). On the other hand, local and central institutions should control their quality and hygiene. Tourists should also be informed about places where they might be exposed to dangerous situations due to physical environment such as natural disasters (erosion and snow avalanches, earthquakes, floods, etc.). To this end, World Tourism Organization (WTO) addresses measures for safety and security of tourist in the book “TOURIST SAFETY AND SECURITY - Practical Measures for Destinations” (1996). In order to become compliant with international standards, rural tourism in Dukagjini Region should create measures for the safe stay of tourists in the region. Safety and security of tourists should be organized and based at (State, Regional and Local) levels and on following types (Police, Army, Health, Civil Society, etc.) and they should be efficiently interrelated through known European systems (Emergency Call Center).

Organization in several levels should be conducted in order to provide security in Dukagjini Region:

- State level
- Regional level
- Local level and
- Individual level

Responsible institutions at state level (the highest and most important level) are as follows:

- Kosovo Police and Firefighters as special department
- Kosovo Security Force
- KFOR (temporarily deployed in Kosovo)

At regional level:

- Regional hospitals (Peja, Gjakova and Prizren)

At local level:

- Family health centers
- Emergency services
- Associations of mountaineers, alpinist, divers, radio amateurs, etc.

As recommended by WTO, planning of tourism safety and security should be done in coordination with leadership, policy and planning, media, and through existing legal, regulatory and judicial framework. All levels and documents in this regard should take the following aspects under consideration:

- prevention of organized crime and terrorism,
- prevention of drug trafficking,
- creating local networks for visitor and resident safety and security,
- police protection of tourists,
- fire prevention and evacuation of tourists in case of emergency,
- first aid, emergency services and emergency call center,
- establishing of tourist complaint system for consumer protection,
- establishing of communication lines in case of problems of visitors,
- signs and public information symbols in rural remote areas, etc.

These capacities exist in the region and function rather well. Their interconnection with community should be established for cases of emergency as this is necessary for tourists' safety and security. Time after time, exercises should take place stimulating different situation of natural disasters of different types and dimensions.

12. Epilogue

Kosovo, the “NEWBORN” country, with the declaration of independence on 17th February 2008 was saved from difficulties, disagreements and century-long conflicts with Serbia. With international help, following 78 days of bombardment (that started on 24th March and ended on 12th June 1999) it was saved from humanitarian catastrophe, which during 1998-99 reached its fiercest stage. After the dream of majority of Kosovo Albanians to be free and independent became a reality, then the challenge of economic independence followed. The political and especially economic support provided for many years by the EU countries and the USA should end one day and Kosovo should find its own way towards sustainable development. Kosovo has not many options to achieve this objective, while the Dukagjini Region possesses even less options. High unemployment rate, especially among the young people, and distinguished natural and cultural resources drive towards two possibilities that interrelate and interact strongly with one another: agriculture and rural tourism. Rural tourism has three other advantages: one needs not plenty of land and expensive agricultural machines, minor initial funds are needed and inhabitants of these areas benefit from cash that is necessary for a more quality life. The development based on their own forces, endogenous development, was successful even in rural areas of EU countries through the LEADER initiative.

Although, at the first glance, it might seem that rural tourism based on endogenous development approach is easily implementable in Dukagjini Region, everybody should be aware that they face a big challenge. But knowing that inhabitants of this region with the passing of each day have fewer alternatives, this makes us believe that with professional, sincere and emotional engagement of all of us, we can succeed. Rural tourism in a way is dedicated to inhabitants of rural areas who face poverty and their progress does not endanger the success or business of anybody else in Dukagjini Region. The new state of Kosovo, facing serious economic difficulties, is not able to support large scale projects. Moreover, these projects realized through foreign investment, despite the fact they employ local inhabitants they take the profit to the place they came from. Therefore, as concluded in the previous chapter, community-based development is the best option and maybe the only possibility for rural progress of Dukagjini.

The development based on endogenous approach of regional development and the mechanism of economic development in cells and clusters would create a very good pattern for sustainable development in the longer term. Theoretically, entrepreneurs can only fully function without others’ help, which is rarely happening in the cases of Dukagjini Region. Practically, these cells of family business are very small and cannot afford to pay professional consultants, advertising and many other expenses. Cells united into clusters based on the type of services they provide or based on geographical affiliation can have the comfort of hiring experts, make joint advertisements and avoid unfair competition by using a “win-win” situation. Basic services and facilities maintenance are also reasons to unite entrepreneurs. These services include maintenance of footpaths, financial obligations for the operation of information points, garbage collection, etc., which can be paid by collecting incomes from services offered as: accommodation, renting horses, donkeys, bicycles, escort services, lectures, sales of promotional materials, sales of food and other traditional products, etc. The cell -cluster system in some Dukagjini territories can grow up at the extent of transforming the area into a compact tourism area that offers accommodation (B &B), healthy rural life, intact nature, diverse cultural heritage, traditional food, adventure, and similar).

Endogenous approach is in coherence with the "Millennium Goals" and is harmonious with Kosovo's aims for the EU membership. Sustainable economic development and employment of youth would have their impact in relation to crime prevention and national reconciliation with Serbs, which are both very important for states that want to join the EU. Agriculture, as a special category of economic importance for the regional development of Kosovo, is being supported by all parties: the Government of Kosovo, the EU and other donors. The lack of harmonization of projects without links between them is often happening.

Kosovo and EU together should think of preventing this wealth from degeneration, which might become a burden and turn into a problem for everyone. The huge number of young people should be educated and trained properly in vocational schools so they find jobs. The advantage of rural tourism and agriculture is that it can absorb manpower. What is more, rural tourism business is located near to students' parents, thus care for youth is much greater. Therefore, it is necessary to design a comprehensive scheme of education and training considering existing human capacity, the needs of the market and the educational potential in the region of Dukagjin, Kosovo and beyond.

Dukagjini Region, as territory defined with the basin of "Drini i Bardhë" river possesses sufficient potentials for development by providing answers to two main challenges, such as:

- emergency development before the remaining population migrates from these areas, and
- the challenge of sustainable development by preserving existing resources.

Following collection of data, studying of literature and relevant documents, this PhD work positively reflects on two above mentioned challenges and proves that ***the Dukagjini Region possesses sufficient natural, cultural and human resources, and based on the concept of endogenous development, rural tourism is the best option for its sustainable rural development to ensure the wellbeing of local population in the long run.***

With such development, while agriculture provides direct and immediate effects in fighting extreme poverty, through rural tourism, local inhabitants are enabled to gain added profit for other needs that are essential for a more qualitative life using the surrounding wealth, but also maintaining it at the same time.

Contribution of this research to science

The contribution of the present study articulated at the end of the Strategic Plan for development of rural tourism in Dukagjini Region also extends to the area of scientific research. If we look at it in general terms, we come across this contribution in many aspects, starting from theoretical approach of this study to its outcome-Strategic Plan for development of tourism, but however the following could be singled out:

- Use of scientific theories and practices in specific combination help in conceptualizing rural development through tourism in Dukagjini Region. Interconnection of theories of endogenous development and regional cluster development with practices of LEADER initiative, and using a holistic approach in an integrated form, and general development in Dukagjini Region, make it original and valuable for development of science.
- Results gained during analysis and observation of the region, have shown certain applicative conclusions for the future development of the region.

- Considerable number of development maps, schemes and pictures might be considered a useful material for further research in future.

While providing an answer to research questions in this study, it has been proved that rural tourism and endogenous development approach are the best options for sustainable development with focused interests on local inhabitants. This way, considerable results could be achieved in relation to problems causing continuous migration and emptying of villages, poverty reduction and opening perspectives for quality life for inhabitants of rural areas of Dukagjini Region.

Projects deriving from eleven packages mark only the start of implementation of Strategic Plan for the development of rural areas of Dukagjini Region. The establishment of LAGs and encouragement of initiatives of family businesses in the form of cells is only the beginning of a process foreseen in this study. In the future, planning of changing clusters and their interconnections, based on the same activity of cells or clusters based on geographic closeness, should take place. This way, it will be possible to come to a wider and more diverse offer in the market in a synchronized and complementary manner. In this study, the development of rural areas in Dukagjini Region is not separate from developments of cities; on the contrary, this development is viewed as part of developments closely related to one another in order to achieve balanced development of the entire region.

While considering mutual influences between nature-culture-people, three key elements were most distinguished:

- Natural heritage
- Cultural heritage
- Historical continuity
- People

Analysis of these four elements and treating them as basis during the study proved that natural and cultural identity of Dukagjini Region is a treasure that should be preserved by the local population which, through rural tourism, might be turned into generator of development of a quality life for all.

13. Bibliography

Books:

Alfieri D., "Turizam", Institute for tourism, Zagreb, 1994

Antunac I., "Turizam, Teorijsko-Znanstvenasprave", Institute for tourism, Zagreb, 2001

Bačac R., "Priručnik za bavljenje seoskim turizmom", Ministarstvo turizma Republike Hrvatske, Zagreb, 2011

Blangy S. & Wood E. M., "Developing and Implementing Ecotourism Guidelines for Wildlands and Neighboring Communities", Ecotourism – Guide for planners and managers- Volume 1, The Ecotourism Society, North Bernnington 1993

Eagles P. & Higgins R., "Ecotourism Market and Industry Structure", Ecotourism – Guide for planners and managers-Volume 2, The Ecotourism Society, North Bernnington, 1993

Gunn, C.A., "Tourism Planning" (Fourth Edition), Routledge, New York, 2002

Gusia I., "Natural resources as a factor of economic development of SAPK", Rilindja, Prishtina, 1982

Kostić C., "Sociologija sela", ICS, Beograd, 1975

Krasniqi M., "Zonat etnografike te Kosoves", Shqipetaret dhe trojet e tyre, Tirana, 1982

Leydesdorff L. & Meyer M., "Triple Helix indicators of knowledge-based innovation systems", Research Policy-Vol.35, 2006

Sofield T.H.B., Empowerment for Sustainable Tourism Development, Pergamon, Sydney, 2003

Perzhita et al, "Harta arkeologjike e Kosoves", 2006

Stimson R., Stough R. & Nijkamp P., "Endogenous regional development", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, Northampton, 2011

Zelenika R., "Metodologija i tehnologija izrade znanstvenog i stručnog djela", Savremeno Pakovanje with University of Zagreb and University of Belgrade, 1988

Documents and papers:

Angekova A., "Uloga specifičnih vidova turizma u revitalizaciji pograničnih Područja između Srbije i Makedonije", Univerzitet Singidum, Beograd, 2010

Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, "Cultural Heritage Law" (02/L-88), 2008

Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, "Law No. 04/L-176 on Tourism, 2013

Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, "Law No. 04/L-176 on Tourism"

Assembly of Republic of Kosovo, “Law on Spatial Planning” (04/L-174), 2013

Baćac R., “Priručnik za bavljenje seoskim turizmom”, Ministry for Tourism of Croatia, 2011

Brezovica, Horwath HTL, 2011

Çeku H., “Sector Profile of Tourism”, MTI, 2014

Department of Environment Protection, “Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020”, 2011

Documents and papers:

European Commission, “European Spatial Development Perspective” (ESDP), 1999

European Commission, “The Leader Approach: a basic guide”, 2006

Hamburg Model United Nations (HMUN) “Taking sustainability seriously” 2013

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development & FAO, “Strategy for Education for Rural People”, 2004

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, “Agriculture and Rural Development Plan 2010-13”, 2010

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Draft Law on Cultural Heritage, 2014

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning -KEPA, “Report on the State of Nature 2008-2009”, 2010

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, “Development of tourism and the programme of spatial regulation of tourism”, 2004

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, “Spatial Plan for National Park Sharri”, 2013

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, “Spatial Plan of Kosova 2010 – 2020+”, The Institute of Spatial Planning

Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Law for on National Park “Bjeshkët e Nemuna”, 2012

Municipal Development Plan of Deçan

Municipal Development Plan of Dragash

Municipal Development Plan of Gjakova

Municipal Development Plan of Istog

Municipal Development Plan of Junik

Municipal Development Plan of Klina

Municipal Development Plan of Malisheva

Municipal Development Plan of Mamusha

Municipal Development Plan of Peja

Municipal Development Plan of Prizren

Municipal Development Plan of Rahovec

Municipal Development Plan of Suhareka

Porter, M., “Cluster and new Economics of Competition”, Harvard Business Review

November/December

Rexhepi V., “Tourism and the Millennium Development Goals: The case study of Kosovo”,

Tourismo&Desevolvimento no17/18,2012

Solvell O., Lindqvist G. & Ketels CH., “The Cluster Initiative Greenbook”, 2003

Spatial Plan/Natural Monument with special importance “Mirusha Waterfalls”, 2003

Taboršak D., “Metodologija izrade znanstveno-istraživačkog grada”, Faculty of Mechanical

Engineering and Naval Architecture, 2007

UNWTO, Annual Report 2010, 2010

Internet sources:

Agency for Promotion and Support of Tourism, <http://www.tourismmacedonia.gov.mk/en/>

Amazing World in free stock picture and photos, <http://www.amazing-world-in-free-stock-pictures-and-photos.com/drvengrad-mokra-gora.html>

Association of Regional Development Agencies, <http://arda-kosovo.org/en-us/Home>

Association of Regional Development Agencies – Kosovo,

<http://arda-kosovo.org/en-us/about-us>

Epoka e re – "Të funksionalizohet Bifurkacioni",

<http://epokaere.com/index.aspx?SID=13&PMID=6&LID=2&ACatID=5&AID=60011&Ctype=1>

European Commission - ENRD, http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/leader/leader-tool-kit/the-leader-approach/en/the-leader-approach_en.cfm

European Commission, "Communicating Rural Development gateway,

[http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-static/policy-in-action/communicating-rural-](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-static/policy-in-action/communicating-rural-development/eafrd/en/eafrd_en.html)

[development/eafrd/en/eafrd_en.html](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-static/policy-in-action/communicating-rural-development/eafrd/en/eafrd_en.html)

European Commission, "the ten European tourist destination",

http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-07-1624_en.htm?locale=en

Eurostat, NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics)

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/principles-and-characteristics>

Hotel Club, "Top 7 Rural Destinations in the World",

<http://www.hotelclub.com/blog/top-7-rural-destinations-in-the-world/>

Jeta në Kosovë, "MTI Mposht Gorenjen... Në Gjyq", <http://gazetajnke.com/?cid=1,1018,5776>, 2013

Kosovo Agency of Statistics of Kosovo, Pristina, <https://ask.rks-gov.net/eng/home>

Kustupedija, <http://www.kustu.com/w2/en:kuestendorf>

Macedonia Timeless, <http://www.macedonia-timeless.com/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=1339>

Pešcanik, <http://pescanik.net/mokra-gora/>

Popova Kula Winery", <http://popovakula.com.mk/>

Rafting MONTENEGRO, <http://www.raftingmontenegro.com/mapa/mapa%20tare.jpg>

Regional Development Agency -South, <http://www.rda-south.org/index.php?lang=en&id=1>,

Regional Development Agency-

WEST, http://www.rdawest.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=59&Itemid=92&lang=en

RROKUM TV, "FHP: 13.535 ashtnumri i viktimaveteluftes ne Kosove",
<http://www.rrokum.tv/3/fhp-13535-asht-numri-i-viktimave-te-luftes-ne-kosove-11964>

Seoski turizam Srbije, http://www.selo.rs/RS/vrsta_objekta/apartmani/page/1

Share AMERICA, "Building a new world for the new millennium", STAFORDS,
http://www.stanfords.co.uk/Countries/Albania/Maps--Atlases/Peaks-of-the-Balkans-Long-Distance-Hiking-Trail-Albania--Kosovo--Montenegro_9783943752168.htm

The World Bank, "From Growth to Inclusive Green Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development", <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2012/05/09/growth-to-inclusive-green-growth-economics-sustainable-development>

UNWTO, "UN General Assembly: Tourism can foster sustainable development in Central America",
<http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2014-01-03/un-general-assembly-tourism-can-foster-sustainable-development-central-amer>

Vizijadanas, <http://www.vizijadanas.com/drvengrad.html>

Zlatibor, <http://www.zlatibor.org/privatni%20smestaj/seoski%20turizam.htm> or "Izdajemstan u MokrojGori pored Drvengrada" <http://www.seloturizam.com/2013/11/04/izdajem-stan-mokroj-gori-pored-drvengrada/>

14. CURRICULUM VITAE

1. **Surname:** Demjaha
2. **Name:** Bujar
3. **Date of birth:** 01.10.1960
4. **Nationality:** Kosovar/Albanian
5. **Civil status:** Married
6. **Education:**

Institution	Degree, Diploma
Technical Faculty, University of Pristina (1979-1985)	Diploma on Architectural Department
Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade, (1986-1988)	Postgraduate Studies in Urbanism and Planning -interrupted because of political situation in Serbia
State Examination, Pristina (1987)	Degree in State Examination
Faculty of Arts, Pristina (1996-1998)	Postgraduate Degree in Department of Design

7. Employment History

- 2005 – onwards AAB University, Prishtina, Kosovo
- 1987 – onwards University of Prishtina, Kosovo
- 2008 – onwards State University of Tetovo, Tetovo, Macedonia
- 1985 – 1987 Enterprise for Design and Engineering „Unikosprojekt“, Prishtina, Kosovo
- 1985 – 1986 Institute for Monument Protection of Kosova, Prishtina, Kosovo

8. Language skills: (1 - excellent; 5 - basic)

Language	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Albanian	Native	Native	Native
Serbo-Croatian	1	1	1
English	1	2	2

9. Membership of relevant professional bodies and publications:

- 1999 - 2000 Director of the Urban and Regional Planning, Ministry of Reconstruction and Development in the Interim Government of Kosovo ongoing
- 2000 - ongoing Municipal Court in Pristina, Expert for Architecture and Civil Engineering
- 2000 - 2001 Project Manager, Department of Education and Science
- 2002 CHwB, "Preservation and urban Planning in Prizren"
- 2002 - 2003 Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Chief of Section for Technology
- 2003 - 2009 Project Coordinator of IRPP/SAAH for Kosovo, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, supported by European Commission and Council of Europe
- 2004 - 2004 Member of National Board for Cultural Heritage of Kosovo
- 2004 - 2004 Member of First professional body of CoE for Assessment and evaluation of damages in March events in Kosova
- 2005-2007 Member of Artistic Board of National Gallery
- 2005-2006 Member of Steering Committee "Vocational Education Support" – Donator of Project: SDC, Implementation: Swiss Contact
- 2009 - ongoing Member of professional Board of Scientific Magazine "Thesis Kosova" AAB University in Prishtina
- 2010 - ongoing Member of Executive Council of Planners Association of Kosovo

10. **Other skills:** Competer literacy, communication skills, management skills.
11. **Present positions:** Lecturer at the Faculty of Applied Arts, AAB University, Prishtina
Lecturer at the University of Prishtina
Lecturer at the State University of Tetovo, Macedonia
Director of the Company "A design" in Prishtina
12. **Publications:**
 - 2002** *"Problem or Challenge", Finish Human Rights Project, co-author of book*
 - 2005** *"Pershtatja e Objekteve Publike per personat me aftesi te kufizuar", Finish Human Rights Project, author*
 - 2006** *"Accessibility in public buildings for disable people", HandiKOS-Prishtina, author (Technical data for design of architectural spaces and modules)*
 - 2010** *"Free Environment-Society for All", Council of Europe, author*
13. **Participation in International Conferences**
 - 2008** "Informal within formal settlement", UNECE-Geneva
 - 2010** Contemporary architectural concept of rural school buildings in – Case study: Primary school "Shote Galica", Village SYRIGAN
 - 2010** "Impact of the humanism on construction environment in the primary schools around Kosovo villages", International Conference for improving of build environment for persons with disabilities, Prishtina, Supported by Council of Europe Liaison Office
 - 2014** "Regional contextuality of Prishtina in its Municipal Development Plan"
14. **Professional experience:**
 - Experience in spatial and urban planning and development*
 - Urban Plan of Memorial Park "Aradha partizane Zenel Hajdini", **Second Price in national Competition**, Ferizaj 1984
 - Urban Plan of Center of Town, Skenderaj 1986
 - Urban Plan and Architectural Design of Memorial Center, Klecka, Lipjan, 2004
 - Urban Concept Olympic City in Cubrel, Skenderaj 2003
 - Concept Urban Development, Lipjan, Competition, 2004
 - Urban – architectonic design of Peja City Center, 2004
 - Visibility study for sewage of Prizren city 2004-2025, Coauthor with KICO Kittelberger 2004
 - Memorial Centre "Adam Jashari" Prekaz, **First Price in international Competition**
 - Memorial Centre "Varrezat e deshmereve" Gjilan, **Third Price in national Competition**
 - Urban Plan and Architectural Design of downtown of Lipjan, 2007
 - Urban Regulation Plan "Dry Hill" Gnjilanje, 2008
 - Development Plan for rural settlement Gurakovc, Istog, 2009
 - Urban Regulatory Plan "Pejton", Prishtina, 2010
 - Urban Regulatory Plan for downtown Vucitrn, 2010
 - Urban Regulatory Plan for rural settlement Djurakovac, Istog, 2010
 - Urban Regulatory Plan for the city of Junik, 2010
 - Municipal and urban development plan for Skenderaj, 2010
 - Development plan for rural settlement Saradran, Istog, 2010
 - Municipal and Urban development plan for Fushë Kosovë, 2010
 - Municipal Development plan for Prishtina 2013
 - Urban Regulatory Plan "New Prishtina-EAST", Prishtina, 2013
 - Memorial Centre "Ibrahim Rugova" Prishtina, **First Price in national Competition**, 2013