

# Stari Slankamen—Potential Destination of Nautical Tourism in Serbia

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Nautical tourism has a high trend of growth, and the highest growth trend is expected in eastern and south-eastern Europe. It is type of tourism that takes place on water or on the coastline. Nautical tourism in Serbia could include 3,500 km of waterways and 50 km of water surface on various types of lakes, using at least 6,000 km of coastline. Nautical tourism represents a great potential for AP Vojvodina and Serbia, and it is necessary that local governments, private sector, and the state government work together on further development. Two international rivers, the Tisa and the Danube, flow through several European countries and merge at place where Stari Slankamen is located. Stari Slankamen, as a settlement created at the mouth of two rivers, has great potential for the development of nautical tourism, both on the water and on the coastline. In this work, it will be presented all potentials factors for the development of Stari Slankamen as a future destination of nautical tourism in Serbia, as well as all kind of events and hospitality facilities. Furthermore, the attitudes of local residents towards tourism development were examined due to the great importance of support of local population for tourism development at the destination. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis presented all strengths and opportunities for developing nautical tourism and weakness and threats as well. Finally, based on examination of observed potentials and residents' attitudes, it will be proposed guidelines and conclusions for the further development of nautical tourism in this part of Serbia.

*Keywords:* nautical tourism, Danube, Vojvodina, Stari Slankamen, local residents

## Introduction

Within the global tourism development in Serbia, special attention is given to nautical tourism. Experts have made analyzes of the natural and anthropogenic potentials of rivers and lakes in Serbia, which conclude that the rivers—Danube, Sava, and Tisa—are particularly important for tourism. Certainly, the most promising river for the development of nautical and other types of tourism is the Danube and the coasts of this river. As a renowned tourist sites in the Danube river banks are Kalemegdan, Petrovaradin, and Golubac fortresses. Between Petrovaradin and Kalemegdan is the site of a village Stari Slankamen. Stari Slankamen is located opposite the mouth of the Tisza into the Danube, with mineral water springs, a medieval fortress, geological remains and historical sites. It attracts the attention of tourism agents, experts in the field of tourism, and ultimately tourists themselves. According to the Law on Tourism of the Republic of Serbia of 2005, “nautical activity includes providing nautical tourism services, receiving, servicing and renting nautical tourism vessels,

organizing sports moto-nautical activities on water, tourist cruises, as well as providing other services for nautical tourism". For the purposes of this Act, objects of nautical tourism are reception and vessels of nautical tourism reception facilities and navigation facilities (Закон о туризму—"Службени гласник РС", број 45/2005). Although Serbia is a landlocked country, it has many rivers and lakes that enable the development of nautical tourism. The Danube, as Europe's main river destination and most important river transport corridor (Pan-European Corridor 7), has the greatest potential for the development of nautical tourism (Dragin, 2010). In the former Yugoslavia, domestic tourism was based on the Adriatic coastal areas, which means that domestic tourists preferred seaside destinations over river areas. Today, domestic tourists still choose seaside destinations over some others. Tourists from Serbia travel most to the countries of the eastern Mediterranean which are in the near vicinity of Serbia (Dragin, Pavic, Davidovic, Jovanovic, & Armenski, 2011). According to the Tourism Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (MHCEF, 2005), nautical tourism is one of nine key tourist products of Serbia, mainly because of its potential and rapid development potential.

### **Literature Review Regarding Nautical Tourism Development**

Scientific literature has provided numerous definitions of nautical tourism. Nautical tourism is a set of relationships and phenomena arising from travel to different waterways vessels and stay of tourists in certain places along the waterway flows (Катић, Мухи, Станковић, & Ковачевић, 2010). Nautical tourism is a set of relations and phenomena arising from travel to different waterways vessels and stay of tourists in certain places along the waterway flows (Катић et al., 2010). Nautical tourism can be considered as a navigation and staying of nautical tourists on their vessels and in nautical ports for the purpose of relaxation and recreation (Bartoluci & Cavlek, 1998). Nautical tourism is a sum of multifunctional activities and relations that are caused from the stay of nautical tourists inside or outside the port of nautical tourism and by the use vessels or other facilities related to the nautical and tourist activities for the purpose of recreation, sport, entertainment or other needs (Luković & Gržetić, 2007). Most of the nautical tourism activities are fast growing sectors and many of them have growth rates that are much higher than tourism as a whole. Nautical ecotourism is a rapidly evolving sector, especially when it comes to observing sea animals and their activities (Lück, 2007). Nautical tourism was viewed as a tourist stay and activities on and by the water, including the vessel (Dragin et al., 2011).

Depending on how the local population accepts the development of tourism as an economic activity in its place, it is possible to predict the performance of a particular tourism product. The attitudes of the local population may be different in the midst of the existence of different socio-demographic characteristics, place of residence, and economic dependence on tourism. In addition, these attitudes can be positive and/or negative, which is caused primarily by the degree of involvement in tourism, but also the tradition of tourism development a certain place (Тепавчевић, Блешић, Брадић, & Ивков, 2019). Nawijn and Mitas (2012) evaluated the association between observed impacts of tourism and subjective well-being in a mass tourist destination. Their results indicate a correlation of perceived tourism impacts by residents with life satisfaction. Gon, Osti, and Pechlaner (2016) investigated the impact of leisure boat tourism on the local community in coastal areas. Their results indicate that residents consider this type of tourism to have a long tradition and that it has contributed to improving the community as a tourist destination. They divide local residents into three groups—supporters (51%), cautious (29%), and skeptics (20%).

## Methodology

For the purposes of this research, a questionnaire was used, which was taken from the work of Tepavčević et al. (2019), who dealt with the survey of the attitudes of the local population in Vrbas (Tepavčević et al., 2019). The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of six questions related to the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents (gender, age, length of residence in Old Slankamen, level of education, occupation, and activity in the field of tourism). The second part of the questionnaire consisted of allegations of different aspects and causes of the attitudes of the local population towards tourism development in Stari Slankamen grouped into four factors—“positive effects of tourism development” (six statements), “negative effects of tourism development” (five statements), “support for tourism development” (four statements), and “tourism development potentials” (three statements). The examination was conducted by face-to-face technique, and a five-step Likert scale was used to express the degree of agreement of the respondents with the statements (1 = “Completely disagree” and 5 = “Completely agree”). The research was conducted in the period from the 1st until 10th of August 2019 in the territory of Stari Slankamen. A total of 91 respondents participated in the survey, but due to the invalidity of the survey questionnaires, 82 valid survey questionnaires were included in the data analysis. The research was aimed to respond to the question how local residents perceive tourism development and its positive and negative impacts.

Based on the review of relevant professional and scientific literature and the field research conducted, the following starting hypotheses were made:

H1: There are no statistically significant differences in the perception of “positive effects of tourism development” in relation to the age of the respondents.

H2: There are no statistically significant differences in the perception of “negative effects of tourism development” in relation to the age of the respondents.

H3: “Support for tourism development” is statistically significantly different depending on the age of the respondents.

## Sample Description

The first part of the questionnaire is related to the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Based on the analysis of data, it is noticeable that domination of men (57.3%) is more than women (42.7%). In terms of age, most respondents are older than 60 years old (48.8%) and respondents who live in Stari Slankamen are more than 30 years old (36.59%). As for the educational structure of the respondents, the majority of respondents are secondary education (70.7%). Also, the sample has the highest number of employees (40.2%), but most of them do not have a job in the field of tourism (86.6%), which sufficiently speaks about the tourism underdevelopment of Stari Slankamen.

## Results and Discussion

This chapter will present the results of research. In addition to the descriptive statistical analysis (see Table 1), it was carried out using ANOVA (see Table 2) to determine the existence of the difference between the dependent and independent variables (age respondents). The “positive effects of tourism development” factor has the highest mean value (4.82), while the “negative tourism development effects” factor has the lowest (4.27). Standard deviation in all factors does not exceed the value of 1. Analyzing individual attitudes, it can be concluded that the economic impact has the most noticeable benefits, while the least perceived negative impact

of tourism development on the quality of recreation and outdoor activities. For that reason, we can conclude that the local population expects economic benefits from tourism development in Stari Slankamen, and that the local population is largely in agreement with further investment in tourism development. On the other side, respondents showed concern towards the disruption of traffic quality and creating traffic problems in their communities.

Table 1

*Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis*

Factors and questions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Positive effects of tourism development (F1)	4.82	0.249
The development of tourism would bring economic benefits to Stari Slankamen.	4.94	0.241
The development of tourism would improve the quality of life.	4.87	0.377
The development of tourism would make the place more attractive.	4.87	0.343
Built facilities for tourism could benefit residents of Stari Slankamen.	4.83	0.379
Tourism development would impact on unemployment.	4.85	0.356
I will have benefits from the development of tourism.	4.61	0.561
Negative effects of tourism development (F2)	4.27	0.559
Tourism development can cause traffic problems.	4.50	0.689
Tourism development would increase property taxes.	4.49	0.653
Tourism development would increase crime rates.	4.28	0.790
Tourism development would reduce the quality of outdoor recreation.	4.04	0.823
Too many tourists would make noise and disturb local citizens.	4.07	0.843
Support for tourism development (F3)	4.56	0.354
Better tourist propaganda of Stari Slankamen would make it an interesting tourist destination.	4.67	0.473
Local government should control the development of tourism.	4.56	0.499
Should increase taxes for tourists on accommodation in accommodation facilities.	4.44	0.687
Tourists should pay more ticket prices for tourist sites compared with local citizens.	4.56	0.687
Potential for tourism development (F4)	4.63	0.376
Stari Slankamen is an ideal place for tourism development.	4.77	0.425
Stari Slankamen has a wide range of tourist attractions.	4.61	0.515
The future of Stari Slankamen in terms of tourism looks good.	4.52	0.613

Table 2

*Analyzes of ANOVA Variance by Age Structure of Respondents*

Factors	The age of respondents				F value	p	LSD
	up to 20 years	21-40	41-60	over 60			
Positive effects of tourism development	4.9259	4.8750	4.8651	4.7708	1.490	0.224	
Negative effects of tourism development	3.6222	3.7667	4.3238	4.5500	16.989	0.000**	1 < 3, 4
Support for tourism development	4.1667	4.4375	4.5119	4.7063	8.377	0.000**	4 > 1, 2, 3
Potential for tourism development	4.9630	4.6944	4.6190	4.5500	3.338	0.024*	1 > 3, 4

Notes. \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

ANOVA analysis was using to determine differences between the independent variable and age dependent variables (questions related to attitudes). Statistically significant differences were found for three factors. Statistically significant differences exist with “negative effects of tourism development” ( $p < 0.01$ ), “support to tourism development” ( $p < 0.01$ ), and “potentials for tourism development” ( $p < 0.05$ ). There are no significant

differences with the “positive effects of tourism development”, thus confirming Hypothesis 1. In order to distinguish between which age groups there are statistically significant differences, Least Significant Difference (LSD) post-hoc test was applied. Within the factor “negative effects of tourism development”, there are significant differences in the direction that respondents younger than 20 years old give statistically significantly lower scores than those in the age groups 41-60 years old and over 60 years old. This can be explained by the fact that younger respondents are often unaware of the negative effects that tourism development brings and do not consider the phenomenon from all sides, while older respondents are more aware. This rejected Hypothesis 2, the assumption that all respondents equally perceived the “negative effects of tourism development”, regardless of their age. Respondents older than 60 years old gave a statistically significantly higher score than other factors in “supporting tourism development”, thus confirming Hypothesis 3. Respondents who are younger than 20 years old give a statistically significantly higher rating to the “tourism development potential” factor than respondents from groups 41-50 years old and over 60 years old, which may explain that younger respondents are more optimistic about the future tourism development of Stari Slankamen.

### SWOT Analysis of Stari Slankamen as a Tourist Destination

One of the biggest problems of Stari Slankamen as a potential tourist destination is the lack of adequate tourist infrastructure. Info boards and propaganda materials on the English language almost do not exist, and marketing activities of the competent tourist organizations are minimized. A problem for all over the country, including this area, is the emigration of young people, so, in that sense, the perspective of tourism development in Stari Slankamen may be questionable in the coming decades.

Table 3

#### *SWOT Analysis of Stari Slankamen as a Tourist Destination*

<p>Strength</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Positive geographical location</li> <li>2. Close to the city's urban centers</li> <li>3. Location on the Danube shore, close to the E-75 highway and close to the Belgrade-Budapest railway line</li> <li>4. Affirmed spa resort and opportunity to develop different types of tourism</li> <li>5. Different kind of special medical treatments in the Special Hospital “DR Borivoje Gnjatic”</li> <li>6. Close to cultural and historical monuments (Monument of the Battle of Slankamen and Monastery of Saint Mark from 2011)</li> <li>7. Close to amusement parks (Fashion Outlet Park and Pool Complex “Horizont”)</li> </ol>	<p>Weakness</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of marketing strategy and promotional activities</li> <li>2. Lack of info boards on English language in Stari Slankamen and lack of other tourist infrastructure</li> <li>3. The lack of hotels and other types of accommodation facilities</li> <li>4. The lack of young and educated local population that would give impetus to the development of tourism in this area</li> <li>5. Undeveloped asphalt road to the site of the Battle of Slankamen</li> <li>6. The poor condition of the house of Dr. Djordje Natosevic</li> </ol>
<p>Opportunities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaboration with tourism organizations of neighboring municipalities in creating a unique tourism product and attracting tourists</li> <li>2. The connection of the Tisa and the Danube rivers and the ability to create program “Two rivers—the Danube and the Tisa rivers”</li> <li>3. The increase in amount of international cruisers flowing through our country and the possibility of their landing in Stari Slankamen</li> <li>4. Applying with international funds (e.g., IPA) to obtain the necessary funding to equip it with tourism infrastructure</li> </ol>	<p>Threats</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Existence of established destinations on the Danube coast (Bač, Smederevo, Golubac, Kladovo)</li> <li>2. Insufficient distance from Petrovaradin and Kalemegdan fortresses, and possible lack of tourists interest for frequent stopping their vessels</li> <li>3. Political and economic instability in the country</li> </ol>

What are certainly opportunities for further development of nautical tourism in this part of Danube's banks is the cooperation of the Tourist Organization of Indjija with tourist organizations of neighboring cities and municipalities (Stara Pazova and Novi Sad) in order to create a unique tourism product. On the other side, there is the river Tisa with the municipalities of Titel and Bečej, and, in this direction, a project should be developed for the tour of two rivers, whose shores from there are so far untapped potentials for the development of different types of tourism. Furthermore, there is ability to access European funds and apply for various financial resources in order to equip them with the necessary tourism infrastructure. A positive example is the affirmation of the Golubac Fortress on the other part of the Danube flow through our country.

The existence of affirmed fortresses on the Danube coast, such as Golubačka fortress, Petrovaradin and Kalemegdan fortresses, can be as a threat for development of Stari Slankamen as a tourist destination. This may be due to the lack of interest in international river cruisers for frequent landing on the coast. Also, there are a lot of problems in our country and environment, expressed through political and economic instability.

### Conclusion

Starting from the attitude of potential tourism demand, the development of nautical tourism in Stari Slankamen would move to the following:

1. Planned tourism development during the summer and winter tourist season; tourists income during the winter season is as close as possible during the summer season;
2. Maximum exploitation of the Danube throughout the year in order to attract tourists as much as possible. It is necessary affirmation of additional facilities in Stari Slankamen that already exist;
3. Construction of the necessary infrastructure for the arrival of foreign tourist ships and cruisers;
4. Promotion of Stari Slankamen as a new and unexplored destination on the Danube coast; it is necessary active promotion is by the Tourism Organization of the Municipality of Indjija and the Tourism Organization of Vojvodina;
5. Cooperation with domestic and foreign tour operators in order to attract domestic and foreign tourists.

As a result of the statistical data processing in this work, we can point out that the local population has a positive attitude towards tourism development. In certain segments, there has been a negative attitude towards the development of tourism, especially in younger patients. In this regard, local governments should work more to educate local population and to explain potential positive effects of tourism development. Moreover, local government has invested some financial resources to equipping communal infrastructure in Stari Slankamen in the past.

Considering the activities undertaken so far, it can be concluded that Stari Slankamen has great potential for the development of nautical tourism. We can conclude that Stari Slankamen is still an unexplored and completely un-established destination on the tourist map of Serbia. Supports for the development of nautical tourism in Stari Slankamen are various complementary activities, with their attractiveness, offer opportunities for potential development of other forms and types of tourism (spa, eco, rural, wine, picnic, hunting and fishing, etc.).

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