

ARTICLES

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT OF BJELASNICA MOUNTAIN-PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVE*AUTHOR****Edin Hrelja***

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*ABSTRACT****Tourist development of Bjelasnica mountain-problems and perspective***

The subject of paper is Bjelasnica mountain, or problems and perspective of tourism development. This area is rich of rarity natural geographical and socially geographical elements, which contribute to its uniqueness. Natural geographical specificity of the study area is related to its component natural geographical elements such as: relief, climate and hydrogeographic and biogeographic characteristics, which together with anthropogenic tourist elements form the basis for satisfying of complex needs of tourism. Seasonality of tourism movement is expressed on Bjelasnica, which is evident in the winter period of the year.

As a normal consequence of the increasing tourist demand in the winter period, arranging ski areas gains on special importance in the process of tourism planning and mountain areas. Ski slopes and lifts are the essence of winter offer and their functioning must be a prerequisite for the finalization of other elements of the offer such as accommodation, food and recreation. Also, if you want to achieve main purpose of the ski centers, and this is primarily recreation and psycho-physical rest, it needs to take care of the capacity of space that will be incorporated in the work.

KEYWORDS

Bjelasnica, perspective, problems, capacity, planning, tourism

1. Introduction

Bjelasnica is an integral part of the Dinaric mountain system, which has northwest-southeast direction, parallel with the Adriatic Coast. Bjelasnica is in the central part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, located southwest of Sarajevo, at a distance of about 25 km. In south Bjelasnica borders with Treskavica and Visocica. From Treskavica, Bjelasnica is separated partly with river Rakitnica's valley. In the southwest, border goes through the valley of the Neretva river. In the west and northwest orographic border is mountain Bitovnja and hydrographic border is river Tresanica's valley, a tributary of the Neretva and the river Bijela's valley, tributary of river Lepenica. From the north Bjelasnica is bordered by the river Zujevina's valley and on northeast with river Prijesnica, which is Željeznica's tributary. Bjelasnica and all other mountain destinations is characterized by two seasons of tourist visits, or summer and winter season.

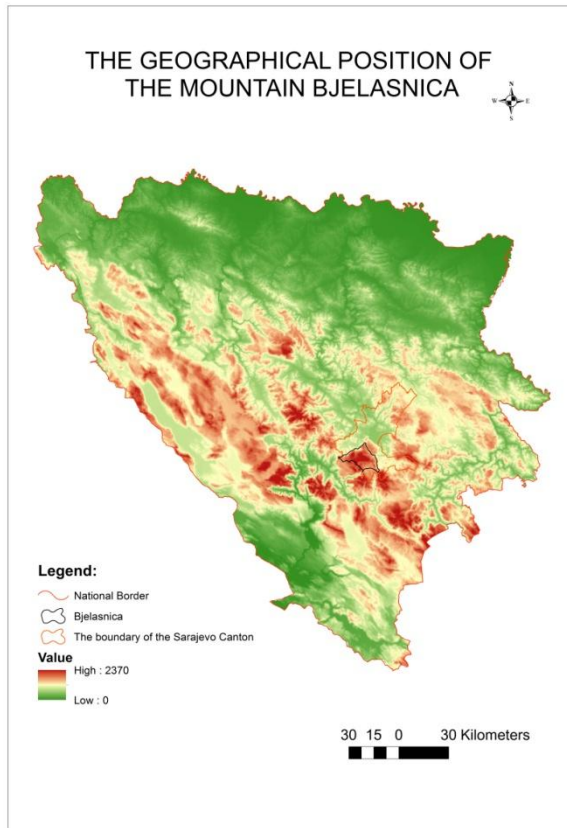


Figure 1. The geographical position of the mountain Bjelašnica, Source: Database Geographic Information System

However, despite the good tourism offer in the summer months which is reflected in paragliding, rural tourism, recreational walks, hiking, mountain climbing, cycling, photo safari, collecting of medicinal herbs and hunting tourism, most tourist visits on Bjelasnica are for the purpose of ski tourism. Ski tourism has markedly seasonal character, and depends on the thickness of snow cover and the length of its duration, quality of snow cover, infrastructure, which Bjelasnica has.

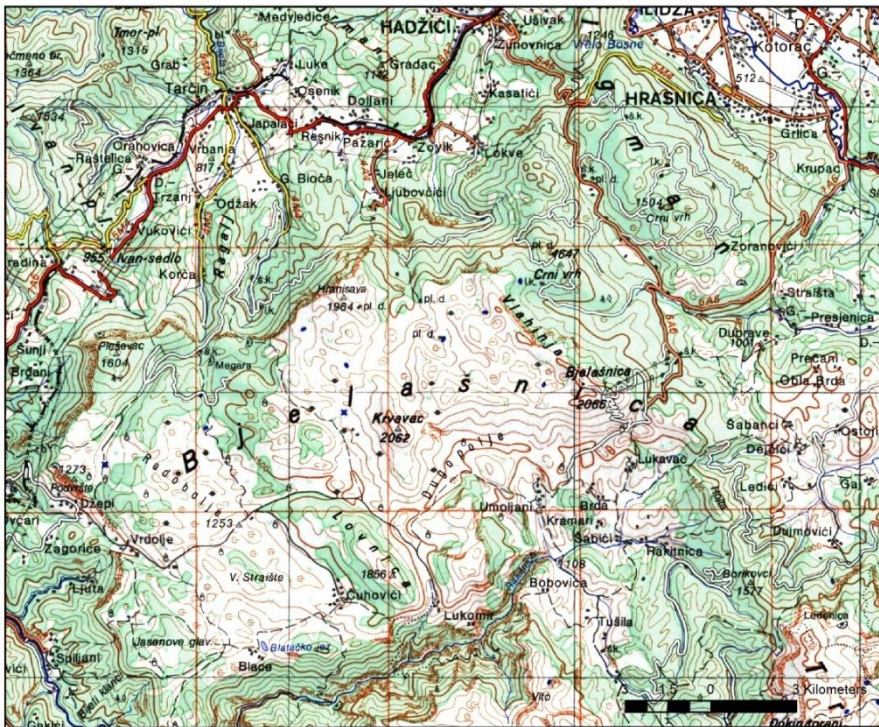


Figure 2. Mountains Bjelasnica and Igman
 Source: Topographic map in scale 1:200 000, sheet Sarajevo

In Regional Plan for the purpose of hosting the Winter Olympic Games in 1984 for the first time were examined in detail the possibility of using Bjelasnica for the purpose of winter sports and recreation. Detailed cartographic and field observations of the entire Bjelasnica massif in order to determine the zones as well as capacity use in a competitive and recreational purposes were carried out. Research results indicated that some areas have a strong preference for the development of ski tourism and so become the subject of study in this project. Also, it is important to emphasize that the Winter Olympic Games largely contributed to the development and construction of Sarajevo and its wider region. Closeness to tourist dispersive, urban agglomerations and Sarajevo as a

large urban center, is a comparative advantage of Bjelasnica compared to some mountain destinations in the region. In the complementarity of tourism offer is a chance for the development of tourism not only in Sarajevo, but also in the wider area of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. Tourism traffic on Bjelasnica

In Strategy of economic development of the Sarajevo Canton, tourism is a very important activity. In addition to cultural heritage in the prospection of tourism development ski tourism as an element of recognition of the tourism product of this tourism destination is emphasized. Bjelasnica, as well as other Olympic mountains in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Winter Olympic Games in 1984. oriented to recreational and tourist skiing, where this whole area next to the competitive, got the economic-tourism purpose. It should also be noted that in the last few years seasonal concentration of tourists is trying to be reduced, which is certainly one of the biggest challenges, and although this area was known as a ski resort, in recent times following the trends of tourist movements are developed and other forms of tourism. Due to the existence of the natural basis and development of receptive factors, congress, adventure and sports tourism are developed, as well as arrivals in the form of school in nature, excursions and day trips, that obtain significant tourism traffic.

Table 1. Types of services - ski passes and parking lots

Service	Season	Babin Do	Total
Ski tickets	2008/09	33.634	40.360,8
	2009/10	27.911	33.493,2
	2010/11	22.942	27.530,4
Parking	2008/09	21.683	26.019,6
	2009/10	19.945	23.934
	2010/11	9.715	11.658

Source: Activity plan, KJP ZOI 84 d.o.o.. Sarajevo for the location Bjelasnica, Sarajevo 2011, page. 18

In Table 1. number of services such as ski passes and parking spaces in the area of sport center Bjelašnica (Babin Do, Malo polje and Veliko polje), are listed based on which, due to lack of relevant indicators of the number of visits and the number of nights, can be discussed about the tourism traffic. Based on the above mentioned data can be concluded that in this area significant tourism traffic takes place. Also, by examining the mentioned data it is concluded that from season to season the number of tourists is significantly reduced. In total turnover of tourists or visitors who have purchased ski passes, traffic from 2008/09 to 2010/11 fell by 32%. Also, on the basis of utilization of parking spaces tourism traffic on Bjelasnica can be analyzed. Based on the above data it

is evident the significant drop in the number of tourists by 56%. The reason for such a large fall in the number of tourists should seek in reduced duration of the winter season as a result of the reduced number of days with snowfall and brevity retention of snow cover. Considering the number of tourists fall, Bjelasnica needs to develop complementary forms of tourism offer in order to complement and extend the tourism season.

3. Carrying capacity of the ski centre Bjelasnica

Carrying capacities of ski resorts are based on the capacity of the area of basic tourism attraction, which relate to the determination of primarily physical carrying capacity. In ski centers application of this methodology refers to the capacity of ski terrains.

Under normal capacity of ski terrain maximum is considered number of skiers who can ski at the same time, not interfering with each other. There are several categories of ski slopes carrying capacity due to the comfort for skiers. According to some estimates, 0.1 ha / skier track surface is assessed as comfortable capacity, 0.05 ha / skier as normal, and 0.02 ha / skier as a minimum. Capacity saturation is considered to be double the normal capacity, ie. 0,025 ha / skier. (Marinović-Uzelac 2001., 473)

Capacity analysis of the skiing area on Bjelasnica was made regarding the available data and the number of skiers in the area in which they meet their needs. Slopes for alpine skiing constructed for the Winter Olympics 84 are located in the zone of Babin Do-Top of Bjelasnica, and these are:

- Observatory - Babin Do, ski path for downhill, north-east exposure, track length is 2850 m., altitude difference 803 m., track covers 16, 3 ha;
- Plato-Štinji Up, slalom slope, eastern exposure, track length 1047 m., altitude difference 382 m., path covers 8.9 hectares.
- Štinji Do, a slalom path, eastern exposure, track length 511 m, altitude difference of 209 m., path covers 4.7 hectares.
- - Training paths: "A", "B", "C", "D" and "E"(Activity plan, 2011).

Based on the size of the area in hectares that cover the ski paths and the number of skiers, it can be concluded that significantly exceeded carrying capacity of the ski slopes is expressed. The ski slopes in accordance with these standards that do not meet the minimum ski facilities, where the total turnover of the tourist season 2010/11 capacity was 0,001 ha track per skier, and in the area of Babin Dol 0.0007 ha per skier. Also, to the number of skiers should be added a significant number of non-skiers.

Number of skiers on the mountain areas is calculated so that the total number of visitors is divided by 1.3, as it is believed that about 30% of all visitors to the ski centers are non-skiers. Given to these facts, it can be concluded that during the tourism season the benefit of the tourist stay on Bjelasnica is significantly reduced, and it must be taken to account the unburdening of capacity, through the expansion of other forms of tourist offer.

3.1. Carrying capacity of vertical transportation infrastructure

Equipment of tourist centers varies according to their kinds, sizes and categories. When it comes to equipped tourist centers, special attention is focused on sports and recreational equipment of winter sports centers, and primarily refers to the arrangement of skiing slopes and vertical transportation infrastructure.

Cable cars and ski lifts:

- Three seat ski lift - 1350 persons per hour;
- Two seat ski lift / Štinji Do - 1200 persons per hour;
- Ski lift Šumski skok - 900 persons per hour;
- Ski lift Babin do - 900 persons per hour;
- Ski lift HELIODROM - 900 persons per hour;
- Ski lift Kotlovi - 900 persons per hour;
- Ski lift Kolijevka - 900 persons per hour.

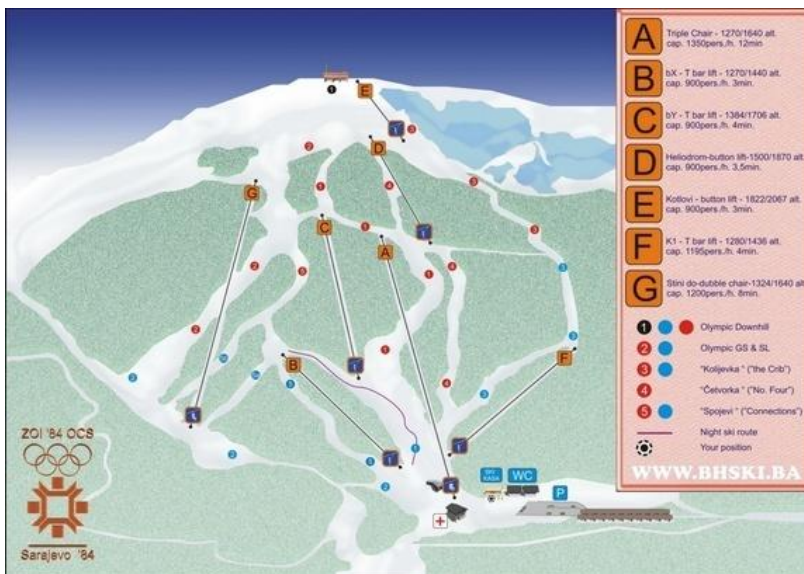


Figure 3. Cable cars and ski lifts on Mount Bjelasnica
 Source: <http://www.skijanje.rs>

Based on the previously shown it can be concluded that Bjelasnica as ski resort is very well equipped with infrastructure of vertical transport with a total of 7050 skiers / hour. By comparing the total number of tourists / skiers and capacity of ski lifts, this area meets the standards of a modern ski center. However, there are numerous problems related to tourism infrastructure. One of the problems is the infrastructure which is with constant renewal quite outdated, seldom malfunctions occur and should be reinstated as soon as possible, in order to continue the tradition of winter tourism.

4. Perspectives of tourism development on Bjelasnica

In tourism are increasingly included environmentally conscious people, who want to affirm a "new tourism". Trend in demand is equated with authentic experiences, contacts with the local culture and the local people, enjoying the original and enriched environment of the countryside or the mountains, along the river or meadow, with active recreation. Thus, the stronger will develop various forms of alternative tourism, eco-tourism in the countryside, sports and recreational tourism, spiritual tourism and so on. As a result of the favorable geographical position, exceptional and preserved natural-geographic elements, cultural and historical values, suitable climatic conditions and other circumstances Bjelasnica with the surrounding area may represent a particularly interesting and long term, attractive and challenging destination. Bjelasnica has enormous potential for the development of summer and winter tourism. However, to become the center of winter and summer tourism Bjelasnica must meet certain conditions, which will contribute to improving the overall tourist offer of the region, which leads towards the development of sustainable tourism. One of these conditions is to improve the quality of tourist staying and extending the tourist season.

Currently, Bjelasnica is the center of ski tourism, however if in the future they want to achieve strategic plans to become a mountain resort, without seasonal concentration of tourists, some new forms of tourist movements, for which Bjelasnica has a real basis must be developed. In recent years, some form of tourism in the summer period, which is reflected in paragliding, rural tourism, recreational walks, hiking, mountain climbing, cycling, photo safari, collecting medicinal herbs and hunting tourism are trying to develop in which lies real possibility of increasing the number of tourists, relieving capacity of the ski area and the extension of the tourist season. Based on the data presented it can be said that this area has ideal conditions for the development of tourism, however, despite the lack of all parameters that are needed, capacity exceeding in the number of tourists in a small space are noticed. However, it is clear that the shown parameters do not correspond to the actual image area, so it is necessary to make an inventory of all facilities and supporting infrastructure, check their legality and make a comparison with standard carrying capacity.

Further it is necessary to exert strict control of the number of tourists and define the limits in accordance with the carrying capacity of the area. Also, one of the measures for the improvement of tourism development is the need to strengthen environmental awareness in the local population and visitors, emphasizing the harmony between tourism development and environmental protection.

5. Conclusion

Mountain tourism is one of the most attractive forms of tourist movements. It is the most massive continental recreational form of movement, and is characterized by two seasons. Bjelasnica, due to its natural-geographic and social-geographic characteristics nearness of emissive tourist centers and nearness to Sarajevo as a tourist destination is an area that attracts large numbers of visitors, and is one of the most attractive mountains in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although this region is attractive throughout the year, Bjelasnica continues to be a ski center, without significant visits outside the winter season. One of the reasons for seasonal concentration of tourists are poorly valorized comparative tourism attractions and forms of tourist movements outside the winter season. Seasonal concentration of tourists greatly contribute travel and tourism agencies that Bjelasnica as a tourist product sell only in the winter, while in the off-season only individual visits are recorded. Also, in recent years, and during the winter season recorded declines in tourist arrivals, caused by various objective factors, but also the factors that caused by the competent institution. When we talk about these factors that primarily refers to a difficult road connection as well as a low level of concern for the environment, resulting in many problems in meeting the many tourist needs. Illegal construction of residential buildings where no account is taken of the capacity of the environment and environmental disorders, causes many psychological and physical consequences for the tourists.

Based on the above said, it can be concluded that this area very attractive for mountain forms of tourism movements, but there is a lot more to improve in tourism development, because it is not enough just to dispose with natural and human resources, and on that basis develop centers of tourism development.

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