

ARTICLES

**DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN TRAVNIK
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ABSTRACT***Development of religious tourism in Travnik tourism-geographical region***

The turbulent past and the events of the past centuries have led to the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the creation of an environment in which different religions co-exist, interact and complement each other. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country of long and rich history, which cultural heritage presents a complex mixture of Mediterranean, Byzantine, Ottoman and Central European influences making the country a unique attraction for cultural and religious tourism. As a meeting point of different civilizations and cultures over centuries, most of major religions Judaism, Roman Catholics, Christian Orthodox and Islam exist in harmony in this country offering a number of sacred places and unique experience to domestic and international visitors. In this paper we will present the representation of religious objects and manifestations of Travnik tourism-geographical region, their tourist valorization and proposal in order to improve this specific form of tourism.

KEY WORDS

Travnik, tourism-geographical region, tourist valorization, religious tourism, tourism development.

1. Introduction

Religious tourism focuses on the visiting of religious sites, monuments or destinations, with the primary aim of engaging with or intensifying a specific faith. Religious tourism is not easy to define, and so the terms 'religious', 'faith', 'spiritual' or 'pilgrimage' tourism may be used interchangeably. Most religious sites, monuments and destinations also attract cultural heritage tourists who may or may not have a religious affiliation. Some tourists have multiple motivations - a visit to a religious site could be motivated by a religious belief, attraction to its architecture and an interest.

Autor Shackley sets out a broad classification of religion-based attractions:

„Natural phenomena (sacred lakes, mountains, islands, groves), Buildings and sites originally constructed for religious purposes, Buildings with a religious theme, Special events with religious significance held at non-religious sites. Sacralized secular sites associated with tragedy or politically significant events“ (Shackley, 2003). „In more recent times, religious tourism or more generally, tourism that is religiously or spiritually motivated, has increased both in scale and scope and now represents a significant sector of the international tourism market“ (Sharpley, 2009).

„As tourism has evolved into a major global social and economic phenomenon, the number of people traveling wholly or partly for religious or spiritual purposes in particular (including attendance at religious festivals/events and visiting religious sites/attractions) has increased both proportionally and in absolute terms. To an extent, this can be explained by both the increased accessibility of sacred places and sites to international tourist markets and also, in recognition of their economic potential, by the greater propensity of governments and other agencies to market such places to tourists“ (Vukonić, 2002).

Religion has always been a powerful force that has attracted many tourists to destinations around the world and tourists believe that religious destinations are too adapting to global tourism and thus religious sites lose their primary importance. The importance of tourism in Travnik tourism-geographical region has been noticed for years, however religious tourism has not used its full potential in this region. There are numerous religious attractions and cultural, historical and natural sites in them that attract numerous religious tourists. Since religious tourism potentials are elements that distinguish the individual destinations and these enumerated participate in the creation tourism identity of Travnik tourism-geographical region. Their optimum use will contribute to the strengthening of this identity, and will make life in this region more dynamic not only for tourists but also for locals and it will bring profits of course.

The problem of religious tourism in this region is the lack of sufficient accommodation capacities, the discordance of religious tourism with cultural tourism, and the lack of a detailed strategy for the development of religious tourism. The reason for the absence of a strategy of religious tourism in this region is the lack of importance to religious tourism as it should be given, which would certainly enable the development of different branches of economy, and thus improve the living conditions at both the local and regional levels.

1.1. Objective and methodology of research

The aim of this paper is to give an overview of all tourist potentials of Travnik tourism-geographical region and the possibility of their valorization which would contribute to the development of religious tourism, as well as the overall economic development of the same. The McKercher and Du Cross models of tourism valorization of sacral objects and events at Travnik region were applied (McKercher, B., du Cros, H., 2012). Identified tourist potentials and indicative parameters were evaluated on the Likert scale (1-5) to measure the tourist significance at the different spatial level. The indicative parameters of sacral objects and events included:

- Tourist-geographical position
- Ambience
- Attractiveness
- Compatibility
- Uniqueness
- The level of utilization for tourist purposes
- Two-season possibility of exploitation
- Construction/Equipment
- The representativeness
- Aesthetic/artistic value
- Tourist attendance

The measured indicators were of great importance to understand the tourist significance of sacral objects and events which is important for their further tourist presentation. This way were determined the aesthetic and monumental qualities, uniqueness and cultural-historical importance, as well as their representativeness, which are the pulling tourism factors. Quantitative approach resulted in calculation of general tourist value of each faith-tourism potential at Travnik tourism-geographical region and the ranking of the identified sacral objects and events according to the following criteria:

- **0 to 1.5** (inadequate quality and low market attractiveness) - are not suitable for tourist presentation and use;

- **1.5 to 2.5** (satisfactory quality and medium market attractiveness) - local tourist significance (L);
- **2.5 to 3.5** (good quality and good market attractiveness) - regional tourism significance (R);
- **3.5 to 4.5** (very good quality and very good market attractiveness) - national tourist significance (N), and
- **4.5 to 5** (excellent quality and high market attractiveness) - international tourist significance (I).

Scoring and rating of sacral objects and events was based on the zoning model where the Travnik tourism region was divided into three zones. The zero level has the best tourism-geographical position (downtown), it is mostly touristically attended, and therefore the majority of financial capital from local communities and government is invested exactly for the reconstruction and representation of tourist attractions in this zone, while the tourist significance of sacral objects decreases further from the center. The paper will consider only the sacral objects and events with their tourist significance above 3.5 (national and international rank of interest).

This detailed and complex analysis, classification and categorization of anthropogenic tourism potentials were made possible through the use of professional and scientific literature, which consisted of spatial plans at the state, entity, cantonal and municipal levels, then development plans and strategies (economic and tourism) of the cantons and municipalities, official websites of municipalities and tourist communities, as well as their own field research.

2. Valorization of the anthropogenic tourist potentials of Travnik tourism-geographical region for the purpose of development of religious tourism

Travnik tourism-geographical region is located in the central parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its tourism-geographical position is therefore very favorable because there are important crossings of Bosnia-Herzegovina roads, and through it passes the international route E661, which in particular enables the development of transit tourism.

The region has a surface of 3,189 km² and consists of the following municipalities: Travnik, Bugojno, Donji Vakuf, Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje, Jajce, Dobretići, Novi Travnik, Vitez, Fojnica, Kreševo, Busovača and Kiseljak (Bidžan, 2015). The tourist center of the region is the municipality of Travnik. According to preliminary data from the 2013 census, there are 273,149 inhabitants, and the population density is 85.6 residents / km² (Institute for Statistics of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013).

The Travnik municipality had a very important political and economic function in Bosnia and Herzegovina throughout history. It was the capital of the Bosnian Pashalic for 150 years, a residence of 77 Viziers, the headquarters of two consulates. Since the time of the ancient Romans for whom the Lašva valley was a passage for important trade routes, Travnik still represents an important crossroads between Bosnian and Herzegovinian and European roads. The town of Travnik represents a kind of museum under the open sky.

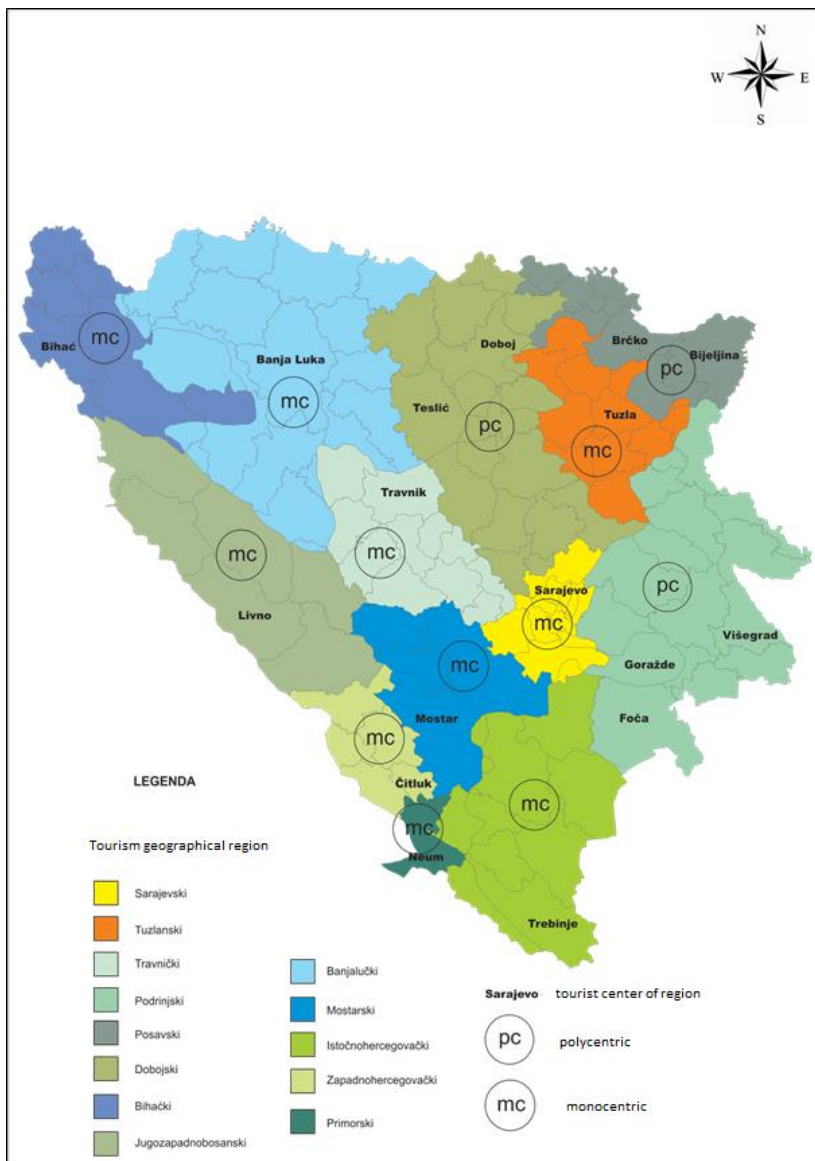


Figure 1: Tourism-geographical regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Source: Bidžan, 2012

The religious uniqueness of this region is based in the town of Prusac, which has kept the memory of Ajvaz dedo for 400 years, through the traditional Muslim dovište site, Ajvatovica. This ancient city is located in Skopaljska valley and represents the oldest settlement in this valley. For years, this city has been a symbol of military power, the power of faith and clarity of mind. There is a belief that Ajvaz dedo brought drinking water from a spring beneath the mountain of Šuljage, about 6 km from the settlement. Namely, on the way there Ajvaz dedo encountered an unavoidable obstacle, a rock 74 m long, however, praying to God for 40 mornings, the rock broke and opened the way to water. Since then, traditionally, this date is celebrated every year (Visit my country – web portal).

The international road E661 (M-5) connects it to the Doboj region, main road M-16 connects it to the southwest Bosnian region, main road M-16.2 connects it to the Mostar region, and M-5 and M-16 connects it to the Banja Luka region. The most important traffic communications stretch along the valleys of the Lašva and Vrbas river where important urban settlements are also located. The central geographic position of this tourism-geographical region connects the transit directions northwest-southeast (Bihać-Travnik-Sarajevo-Goražde) and northeast-southwest (Tuzla-Zenica-Travnik-Bugojno-Mostar-Ploče, and Neum, and from Bugojno to the Livno-Split). In this area there is a network of main roads in the length of 173 km and regional roads in the length of 337 km long (Government Central Bosnia Canton, 2015; Bidžan, 2015). As far as tourist traffic is concerned, the Travnik tourism-geographical region had a total of 48,132 tourist arrivals in 2017, of which 57.6% were domestic tourists and 42.4% were foreign tourists. They made 88,194 overnight stays, of which 57.1% of domestic tourists, and 42.9% of foreign tourists. Most tourists come from Croatia, Slovenia, Saudi Arabia, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Austria (Institute for Statistics of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018).

Travnik tourism-geographical region belongs, for its functionality, to a group of cognitive, educational and religious tourism-geographical regions. It has enormous significance for defining the tourist offer of Bosnia and Herzegovina, out of the total of 626 national monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the area of Travnik region there are 59 national monuments. The inhabitants of this region have long ago realized that the use of nature-giving and cultural-historical wealth can attract tourists, so today, in addition to excursion, business-transit and recreational tourism, there are well-developed sport-recreational, spa-health, hunting, fishing, religious, rural and other specific forms of tourism (Commission for Preservation of National Monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005, Bidžan, 2015). In Table 1 we will give an overview of the tourism valorisation of the highest rated and at the same time the most important sacral objects and religious events of this tourism-geographical region, while the complete list can be seen Bidžan (2015), where all the objects were processed.

Table 1: Tourism valorization of Sacral Objects and Religious Events in Travnik tourism-geographical region.

Anthropogenic tourist potentials	Tourism-geographical position	Ambience	Attractiveness	Compatibility	Uniqueness	The level of utilization for tourist purposes	Access to anthropogenic tourist motives	Two-season possibility of exploitation	Construction /Equipment	The representativeness	Aesthetic / artistic value	Tourist attendance	General tourist value	Rank
1.Jeni or Šarena Mosque, Travnik	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4,5	4,5	5	4	4,8	I
2.Elči Ibrahim-Pasha Madrasa, Travnik	4	4	4	4	4	3,5	4	5	4	4	4	3,5	4,0	N
3.Church of St. Ivan Krstitelj, Travnik	5	3,5	3,5	3	3,5	3	5	5	3	3	4	3	3,7	N
4.Varoška Mosque, Travnik	3,5	4	4	3	4	3	3,5	5	4	4	4	3	3,8	N
5.Parish Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Travnik	3,5	4	4	3	4	3	3,5	5	4	4	4	3	3,8	N
6.Franciscan Monastery, Guča Gora, Travnik	3	4	4	4	4	3	2,5	5	3	3	4	3	3,5	N
7.Esma Sultanija Mosque, Jajce	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4,6	I
8. Franciscan Church and Monastery, Kreševo	3	4	4	4	4	3	2,5	5	3	3	4	3	3,5	N
9. Franciscan Monastery, Fojnica	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4,5	4,5	5	4	4,8	I
10.Nakšibendijska Tekka, Fojnica	5	4,5	4,5	4,5	4,5	4	5	5	4,5	4,5	4,5	4	4,5	I
11.Tekka, Živčići, Fojnica	3,5	4	4	3	4	3	3,5	5	4	4	4	3	3,8	N
12.Sultan Ahmed Mosque, Bugojno	5	4	4	4	4	3,5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4,3	N
13.Sulejmanbeg Mosque, Busovača	5	4	4	4	4	2,5	4	5	4	4	4	3	4,0	N
14. Ajvaz dedo Turbeh, Prusac, Donji Vakuf	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	3	3,2	R
15."Days of Ajvatovica", Prusac	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	1	4,5	4,5	5	5	4,5	I
16. Pilgrimage of St. Iva in Podmilje	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	1	4	4,5	5	5	4,5	I

Source: Commission for Preservation of National Monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005; Bidžan, 2015.

Legend:

- **0 to 1.5** (inadequate quality and low market attractiveness) - not suitable for tourist presentation and use;
- **1.5 to 2.5** (satisfactory quality and medium market attractiveness) - local tourist significance (L);
- **2.5 to 3.5** (good quality and good market attractiveness) - regional tourism significance (R);
- **3.5 to 4.5** (very good quality and very good market attractiveness) - national tourist significance (N) and
- **4.5 to 5** (excellent quality and high market attractiveness) - international tourist significance (I).

Below we will give a brief description of religious objects and religious events that have gained the greatest value in tourism valorisation, and these are the Jeni Mosque or the Šarena Mosque in Travnik and the Franciscan Monastery in Fojnica, as well as the events of "Days of Ajvatovica" and "Pilgrimage of St. Iva" in Podmilčje.

- *The Jeni Mosque or the Šarena or Sulejmanija Mosque* is located in Varoš on the southwest side of the architectural ensemble of the Old Town of Travnik, at a distance of about 300 meters (Fig. 1). It is assumed to have been built in the second half of the XVI century. In 1757, the vizier of Ćamil Ahmed-aga built a mosque, which the inhabitants of that place called the Ćamilija. It burned down in a fire in 1815, and in its place a new mosque was erected by Bosnian vizier Sulejman Pasha Skopljak (Sujoldžić, 1998).



Figure 2: *The Šarena or Sulejmanija Mosque*
Photo: Bidžan A.

It was named Šarena (Colorful) because of the unusual visual decorations on the interior and exterior walls. There is a bedestan on the ground floor of the mosque. The Sulejmanija mosque is a unique example in Ottoman architecture where the same building is used for sacral and secular purposes. Minaret (mosque tower) is on the left instead of on the right side of the mosque, as is the rule of Islamic houses of worship. Such a move can be justified by the damp and unstable ground for building on the west, i.e. right side. It is assumed that the minaret is older than the mosque and originates from the previous Ćamilija. The Sulejmanija was inexplicably bypassed by a catastrophic fire in 1903. The building also suffered several damage in the Second World War, so that in the 80s of the last century a thorough restoration was made, which brought back its former appearance with unavoidable plant ornaments (Kajmaković, 1959).

The Spatial Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1980) evaluated and categorized The Jeni Mosque as a monument of the I (first) category, of national importance (Institute for Architecture, 1980). The Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments placed the Jeni Mosque on the List of National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Commission for Preservation of National Monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005).

In the tourist valorization of the Šarena Mosque, the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market attractiveness) was obtained from criteria: tourism-geographical position, ambience, attractiveness, compatibility, uniqueness, access to anthropogenic tourist motives, two-season exploitation opportunities and aesthetic / artistic value, and the lowest rating (4 - very good quality and very good market attractiveness) was obtained from the criteria: the level of utilization for tourist purposes and tourist attendance. The general tourist value of this mosque is very high and amounts to 4.8, which means that it has an international tourist significance (Table 1) (Bidžan, 2015).

- ***The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Fojnica*** is a church and monastery, which were built in the 14th century in the northern part of Pazarnice. "At the beginning of the 16th century the church and monastery were moved to the lower slopes of Križ hill, where they are still today. At the end of the 16th century a new church was built, when the monastery was also restored. In the great fire in 1664, both the church and monastery disappeared. The new monastery was erected in 1666-1668 and the church in 1669. By the end of the 19th century, both buildings were restored, and in 1940 one part of the monastery was demolished and a new one was built in its place. In the remaining part of the monastery from 1863 there were a library and a museum (Benac and Lovrenović, 1980).

In July 2000, this part of the monastery from 1863 was also demolished, and a new library and museum building was started, which was completed in 2008. From 2009 until today, a professional exhibition of museum exhibits on the ground floor of the Museum (this work was done by workers of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina) was completed, where the Old Library (over 10,000 titles were entered into the library program) and the New Library (over 37,000 titles, entering the library fund is still running) were placed. The employees of the Archive of Bosnia and Herzegovina completed the arrangement of the Archive, and M. Husedžinović edited a permanent exhibition of pictures in the attic (over 300 works by various authors). Today, the museum is under reduced capacity. Through the burning history of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit for more than 650 years, the friars have managed to preserve the great cultural and historical treasures of invaluable value for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official website Franciscan monastery of the Holy Spirit).

Spatial Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1980) registered The Franciscan Monastery and the church as a monument of II (second) category, of regional significance (Institute for Architecture, 1980). The Monastery complex (monastery, museum, church, retaining wall and surroundings), museum collection, archive and library fund are the National Monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Commission for Preservation of National Monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005).

In the tourist valorization, the Franciscan monastery of the Holy Spirit got the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market attractiveness) from the criteria: tourist-geographic position, ambience, attractiveness, compatibility, uniqueness, access to anthropogenic tourist motives, two-season exploitation opportunities and aesthetic / artistic value, and the lowest grade (4 - very good quality and very good market attractiveness) got from the criteria of the degree of utilization for tourist purposes. The general tourist value of this monastery is very high and amounts to 4.8, which means that it has an international tourist significance (Table 3) (Bidžan, 2015).

The most important Religious-cultural and Tourist events in Travnik region are: Ajvatovica and Podmilačje.

- **Ajvatovica** is the largest traditional religious-cultural event of Bosniaks. Nowadays, the beginning of "Days of Ajvatovica" is marked by organizing various scientific and cultural-sporting events. The traditional ceremonial part of Ajvatovica begins with a parade of cavalry and infantry. Travnik mufti is usually at the top of the colony together with adorned cavalry. Bajraks (banners), horses, tekbirs and nasheeds are an integral part of Ajvatovica spirit. The procession approaches Shaheed (martyrs) cemetery from the time of Sultan Fatih and the Al-Fatiha is recited.

At Čardak-han the procession comes in the time of the Fajr prayer. After praying Fajr, Ja'sin is also recited to the Prusac Shaheeds and all the Shaheeds of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Then, after hot tea or coffee, the Bajraks are called out and the Ajvatovica parade is formed. At the forefront is, as always, the Bajrak Ajvazdedo, followed by other Bajraks, pedestrians and horsemen. Islamic songs and the Takbir are recited all the way to the Ajvaz-dedo rock, at the end of which the procession stops. Upon completion of this part of the road, the procession emerges on the Ajvatovica meadow on top of which there is a stage with a special program prepared (ilahaja and kasida). This special opportunity is used to address reputable religious personalities. The Zuhr prayer is led by Reisu-l-ulama after which this traditional part of Ajvatovica is completed (Official site of the islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Ajvatovica is probably one of the most mass religious and cultural events in Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of program content and number of participants in the event. It certainly took on an international character with the participation of cultural and artistic groups and individuals from neighboring countries; Croatia, Serbia, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and diasporas from America, Australia, Canada and Europe. The beneficiaries covered by the project are a wide audience that animates as a religious and cultural manifestation of Ajvatovica, such as: tourists, pilgrims, lovers of nature and spirituality, etc.

In the tourist valorization, the "Ajvatovica" event obtained the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market attractiveness) from the criteria: tourist-geographic position, ambience, attractiveness, compatibility, uniqueness, access to anthropogenic tourist motives, aesthetic/artistic value and tourist attendance. The lowest rating 1 was obtained from the criteria of the two-season exploitation opportunities, and this is because this event takes place once a year. The overall tourist value of this event is high and amounts to 4.5, which means that it has an international tourist significance (Table 1).

- **Podmilačje** is a village in the municipality of Jajce and is known primarily for the sanctuary of St. Ivan Krstitelj. This place is visited by pilgrims from this part of Europe. As early as the 18th century, there was a written mention of pilgrimage, and probably a very long pilgrimage tradition. By the end of the 19th century, the numbers from 7,000 to 8,000 pilgrims during St. Ivo (24th June) holidays are mentioned, and they come from many regions (Posavina, Herzegovina, Lika, Srijem). In the period between the two wars, an average of about ten thousand pilgrims took place at the solemnity of St. Ivo, while tens of thousands of believers gathered in the seventies and eighties (Official site of the Parish of Podmilačje).

The sanctuary of St. Ivo is famous for its many miraculous healings for the sick in body or soul. Until the emergence of the Medjugorje phenomenon (1981), the number of pilgrims was the most visited pilgrimage site in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the number of pilgrims. It has recorded many cases of miraculous healing. The Chronicle of the Parish from 1959 to 1973 recorded 42 cases of healing. The number of pilgrims has increased again in recent years. In those days, more than sixty priests are available to the pilgrims to confess (Official site of the Franciscan Province of St. crosses - Bosna Srebrena).

In the tourist valorization, the "St. Iv" event obtained the highest rating (5 - excellent quality and high market attractiveness) from the criteria tourist-geographic position, ambience, attractiveness, compatibility, uniqueness, access to anthropogenic tourist motives, aesthetic/artistic value and tourist attendance. The lowest rating 1 was obtained from the criteria of the two-season exploitation opportunities, and this is because this event takes place once a year. The overall tourist value of this event is high and amounts to 4.5, which means that it has a international tourist significance (Table 1).

3. Conclusion

By its religious and cultural heritage, Bosnia and Herzegovina is among the richer countries in Europe. There are three major religious communities operating in this country, each with its own significant shrines. The state is under-working to promote religious tourism. Organizing and promoting tourist religious sites, with a few exceptions, is a concern of mostly religious communities and municipalities. Tourism of Travnik tourism-geographical region has not been adequately represented so far and is poorly represented in foreign markets, which shows that tourism was not approached in the right way, because the arrival of foreign guests depends on the tourist operators. However, every year the number of tourists visiting religious buildings and events is increasing, such as the Sarena Mosque in Travnik, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Fojnica or Ajvatovica in Prusac and the pilgrimage of St Ivo to Podmilacje. If we look at the well-known religious tourism centers in the world, which receive millions of tourists each year and have become a true commercial haven for local entrepreneurs, then we can see how significant religious tourism can be for the development of tourism, hospitality and the economy in general in the region. Travnik region has great conditions for the development of religious tourism, it has yet to work on improving the tourism products of this area, and tourists will then recognize its values and visit it in greater numbers.

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