

DESTINATION MARKETING ACTIVITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF THE TOWN OF PLEVEN)

Eva Tsvetanova¹

ABSTRACT

This article aims to present the specific characteristics of destination marketing as a tool for sustainable urban development; to explore, analyse and assess the cultural tourism potential of the town of Pleven, Bulgaria, and to conceptualize a model of integrated marketing strategy to promote the town of Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism.

Keywords: *Destination Marketing, Sustainable Development, Regional Economy*

INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological progress and increasingly broad access to informational resources significantly alters patterns of consumer behaviour and suggests new challenges to the competitiveness of individual territorial units and their ability to generate economic growth.

Local authorities in Bulgaria are challenged to meet the new needs of modern society and to ensure the successful positioning of a region in the context of continuous deepening globalization process. The paper examines consumer-oriented approach as a kind of catalyst for regional development, as it focuses on the relation between regional competitive advantages and interests, preferences and needs of the territorial unit target markets.

Destination marketing is one of the key instruments in regional marketing, which allows a location (region, district, municipality, city, etc.) to increase its competitiveness in the tourism market. By this marketing tool, the particular territorial unit can achieve: 1) improvement in its attractiveness; 2) successful positioning of its touristic product for desired market segment or segments; 3) consideration between regional marketing activities and the peculiarities of the consumer behaviour of the target market.

Makens [1] defines destination marketing as a combination of resources, goods and services, which are able to create added value in order to meet expectations of given target audiences, thereby motivate them to visit a particular location and purchase the touristic product offered. Destination marketing should also balance the views, opinions and goals of local stakeholders in the process of local development and ensure sustainable exploitation of territorial resources. This tool also offers a number of advantages in the competitive struggle between territorial units, in building local identity, image and promotion of regional brands.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The goal of the article is to use destination marketing to valorise cultural heritage of the city of Pleven, Bulgaria, by creating an integrated tourist product. The later shell assists meeting the objectives of sustainable integrated urban development. The specific tasks are:

- to carry out theoretical analysis of the nature and characteristics of the destination marketing and to study and define its role in the process of sustainable integrated urban development;
- to explore, analyse and assess the tourism potential of cultural amenities and different historic heritage objects of the town of Pleven;
- to conceptualize a model of integrated marketing communications strategy to promote Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism.

This paper was recommended for publication in revised form by Regional Editor Sergio Nardini

¹ D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov, Bulgaria

E-mail address: e.tsvetanova@uni-svishtov.bg

Manuscript Received 2 March 2017, Accepted 6 June 2017

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on a strategic, inductive and deductive approach. The presented analysis and synthesis are accomplished by applying a system of techniques that includes: methods of observation, comparison, interview, descriptive method, content analysis, etc.

The objectives of the study are in the centre of the survey conducted by us in the period October-November 2016, which seeks to answer basic questions such as: to what extent the respondents recognize Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism; does the city image influences their activity and readiness for cultural tourism, and which factors influence positively or negatively the tourists perception about the city.

During the structuring and testing phase of the survey, three main groups of research questions are formulated. Modern methods for multidimensional analysis were used for their study: one-dimensional, two-dimensional and multidimensional descriptive distributions, multiple response tables, realized by statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 19.

DESTINATION MARKETING - A CATALYST FOR INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Currently, worldwide destination marketing is among the key prerequisites for sustainable growth of the tourism market of a particular location. A number of recent studies Seppala-Esser, Airey and Szivas [2], Molina-Azorin, Periera-Moliner and Claver-Cortes [3], and Hays, Page and Buhalis [4] tracked the relationship between the destination and the tourism business, emphasizing four key factors, namely:

- Most aspects of tourism are implemented according to the specifics of the relevant locations;
- The destination is considered as the basic unit of analysis for tourism;
- The destinations are emerging as major brands in the travel industry.
- Today, countries, regions and cities are much more willing to allocate funds for destination marketing, recognizing it as a tool to attract the visitors' market.

Pike, S., and Page [5] emphasize that literature related to the marketing of the destination has applied and fragmented nature. Most of the incentives for the application of destination marketing are determined by the tasks of tourism industry in the particular location, and by the increased competition in the global world. Exactly this reason provokes the interest of academia and local authorities to seek innovative means to make a particular place more attractive and desirable than other territorial units. Ashworth and Voogd [6] stress in their researches the contributions of the place for the development of regional marketing, namely that its uniqueness requires a much more complex marketing activities than traditional business marketing can offer.

UNWTO [7] in their handbook for management of DMOs defines the term "local tourist destination," as a physical space in which tourists spent at least one night. It includes tourism products such as facilitating services, attractions, and other touristic resources within a day trip. Moreover, destination has physical and administrative boundaries, which define its management, as well as its image and perceptions that determine local competitiveness in the global market". UNWTO also stresses that local destinations can be merged to form larger destinations, so that we can identify national, regional, and local levels of destination management.

Tsvetanova [8] emphasise that destination marketing requires effective network partnership between local tourism businesses and public authorities, as the latter often do not have the marketing knowledge, clear control functions, and desire to manage tourism initiatives in the place. Especially sensitive to this issue are communities that do not perceive tourism as a key economic driver of the local economy. They usually accept destination marketing as one of the functions of the tourism and often do not recognize their role in process of place marketing, unless it has a direct EU funding or state grant that one can use in order to implement development initiatives.

For Bulgaria, and in particular for the town of Pleven, we can identify several issues related to the field of destination marketing. First of all, local authorities experience difficulties to implement the appropriate functional recommendations in field of destination marketing, as they go beyond their competence. Second, they usually have lack of knowledge and finances to organize tourism related researches and to create useful databases for the tourism industry. Third, on local level we have necessity of institutions to provide unified management, financing and

information support for tourism development, such as the destination marketing organization. The later can play a significant role in alignment of the rather conflicting interests of different stakeholders, public bodies, agencies, departments, and others on national, regional and local level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section a brief analysis and evaluation of tourism potential of the town of Pleven, Bulgaria is given. Moreover, the results of our study about territorial segmentation of the tourist market of Pleven are presented and discussed; as well as the main measures and recommendations for development of Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism are determined. A special emphasis is placed on specific characteristics of integrated marketing communication of cultural tourism destination Pleven.

Analysis and Assessment of Tourism Potential of Cultural Heritage of the Town Of Pleven

T. Pleven is located in the eponymous district, which covers the central part of the Danube plain. The population according to ESGRAON data [9] of March 15, 2016 is 109 875 people, representing nearly one-third of the population of the region.

T. Pleven is characterized by rich cultural heritage and beautiful scenery. The region has excellent conditions for development of cultural, eco and spa tourism. Millennial history of the city is represented in numerous cultural and architectural monuments. Around t. Pleven on about 25 000 hectares was built "Green Zone" which includes parks "Kaylaka", "General Lavrov", "General Genetski" and others.

As an administrative centre of Pleven Province, as well as of the subordinate Pleven municipality, t. Pleven concentrates cultural life. Some of the most popular events which residents and visitors can enjoy are: International Music Festival "Katya Popova"(biennial), Festival of Bulgarian and Russian culture, the National Competition for Bulgarian dramaturgy, International "Plein Air" painting (biennial), National Biennial of small forms, International Biennial of photography, National Festival of avant-garde video "Art vision", etc. T. Pleven has also Dramatic Theatre "Ivan Radoev" which has two stages and 610 seats, the State Philharmonic Orchestra with open opera scene, the Northern Ensemble for Folk Songs and Dances, National School of Arts "Panaiot Pipkov", "Svetlin Rusev" Art Gallery, and so on.

For this reason is not accidental that local authorities identify tourism as one of the main means of living and want to maximize its contribution to the development of urban economy.

Under the proposed of the Tourism Ministry Concept for tourist zoning of Bulgaria [10], Pleven falls within the so-called "Danube Region", which is extremely broad in territorial scope. The most significant competitive advantages under the so-outlined strategy for Pleven are related to cultural tourism, where the town can become a "market leader". By destination marketing we conceptualize the main elements that will contribute to the leadership of Pleven, (see. Figure 1)

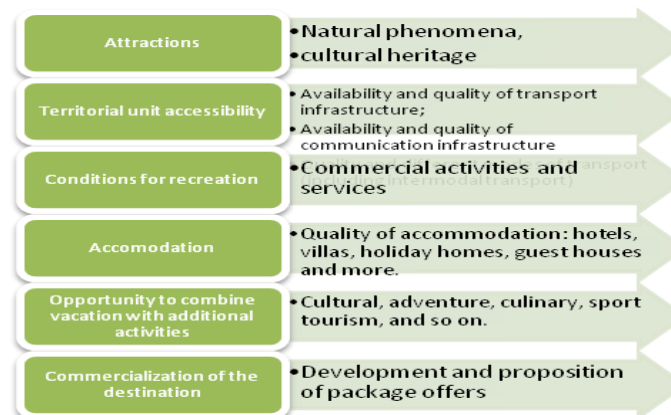


Figure 1. Key components of the destination's competitiveness

Of course the importance of these components should not be seen uniquely but rather one should assess their interaction in the process of attracting various segments of tourists. At present, we can summarize that the 'destination Pleven' offers to its visitors over 200 monuments in memory of the glorious military past of the city, unique museums, rich cultural program that includes over 30 different events (concerts, festivals, biennales, exhibitions and others) including 8 with international character. The quality of transport and communication infrastructure is fairly good; means of urban transport are modernized under EU-project 'Integrated urban transport of Pleven', part of the old trolley network is reconstructed and a new one is built in more districts of the city; central urban environment is improved, and so on. Last but not least, Pleven is also shopping centre, which offers to the visitors' segment many market opportunities for shopping and entertainment. Regarding the quality of accommodation, official information indicates [11] the prevalence of hotels with 2 or fewer stars, hotels with 3 and 4 stars are seven. Dining and entertainment spaces in t. Pleven with 4 stars are three, with 3 stars are 15 in number, and with 2 stars and fewer are 35, according to the information of the Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism. The level of recreation is acceptable in terms of the relation "price-quality."

The last two components (from the figure 1) recommended by destination marketing – the commercialization and the opportunity to combine vacation with different activities should be developed to allow city to compete further for the visitors market preferences.

The delineated characteristics of potential of destination for cultural tourism Pleven provoke the next basic research questions:

- who are our visitors, according to the level of the complex cultural tourism product of the city;
- geographically speaking who are our costumers;
- which are their attitudes towards Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism, and
- will a probable change in the local tourism strategy increase consumers satisfaction with the product.

Territorial Segmentation of Visitors' Market for T. Pleven

As a destination, Pleven is required to refine its marketing efforts in order to establish a set of unique comparative advantages for different groups in its visitors' market. For every one of these segments local authorities should consider whether it is appropriate to implement special programs to attract them (i.e. whether they are target for a territorial unit). In this paper 7 segments have been outlined according to criteria, such as: the opportunity to obtain satisfaction in relation 'quality and price of the complex tourist product of the destination and what is their main motivation to indulge in cultural tourism in Pleven, (see. Table 1)

Target costumers of the destination for cultural tourism Pleven can be divided into two large groups: internal -children of different ages, families, students and pensioners and external – foreign tourists and business visitors.

Regardless of which of these segments, town shell focuses its efforts, it needs differentiated initiatives and measures in order to attract them, namely:

- 1) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'Children aged 5 to 10 years' Pleven needs to focus on:
 - Accessible and attractively built programs to familiarize children with rich historical and cultural heritage of the t. Pleven;
 - Creative attractions, historical re-enactments, games of orientation, workshops and so on.
 - Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.
 - Safe access to sites of cultural heritage.
 - Opportunity to buy souvenirs.
 - Organization of RPGs and separation of place to play in line with the aesthetic style of the site.
 - Design Brochures, virtual games design; section or employee at the tourist information centre that meets their specific needs.
- 2) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'Teens' Pleven needs to focus on:
 - Attractive program focusing educational needs of teens.
 - Creative attractions, historical re-enactments, games for orientation, competitions, quizzes.

- Convenient transport access to sites, information boards and signs.
 - Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.
 - Free WiFi access, advertising, information page on social networks, internet advertising.
- 3) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'Families with small children' Pleven needs to focus on:
- Creative attractions, historical re-enactments, games, orientation workshops, fairs, by which to familiarize this segment with rich historical and cultural heritage of the town. The focus should be an active involvement of the whole family;
 - Accessible, safe and maintained urban environment;
 - Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.
 - Advertising, information page on social networks, internet advertising.
- 4) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'History, archaeology, anthropology students and other history related enthusiasts' Pleven needs to focus on:
- A program that emphasizes the uniqueness and rich fund of cultural heritage objects of the town;
 - Volunteering, certification, collaborative work, opportunity for applied research, participation in conferences, seminars and trainings.
 - Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.
 - Specialized communication campaign aimed at universities, by which to promote the uniqueness and value of cultural heritage of Pleven;
 - Presentation of the internationally recognized scientific publications related to the city and so on.
- 5) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'Pensioners' Pleven needs to focus on:
- A program that combines cultural events with opportunities for relaxation, attention and respect for the elderly people.
 - Accessible, safe and maintained urban environment
 - Information booklet with cultural events of the city, transport map, working hours and prices of museums, galleries and so on.
 - Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.
 - Advertising campaign in the newspapers such as: "Third Age" or on the Bulgarian national television.
 - Introduction of Directors of pensioner clubs and similar organizations with the unique advantages of the destination "Pleven".
- 6) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'Foreign tourists and local people who have emigrated from the country/town' Pleven needs to focus on:
- Attractive program emphasizing on the uniqueness of the city cultural heritage and markets these amenities as iconic places (i. e. the ones that a person necessarily must visit in a life time).
 - Creative attractions, historical re-enactments, games, orientation workshops for local crafts.
 - Convenient transport access to sites, information boards and signs in English.
 - Information announcement in the bus /railway station in English about places and events to visit and how to reach them.
 - Free WiFi access, advertising, information page on social networks, online advertising, and presentation of the destination by tour operators and on various information portals for tourism.
- 7) To increase its attractiveness in front of target audience 'Business visitors' Pleven needs to focus on:
- Program that stresses the exclusivity of the city's cultural heritage and markets local amenities as iconic places (i.e. the ones that a person necessarily must visit in a life time).
 - Accessible, safe and maintained urban environment;

- Creative brochure with cultural events of the city, transport card, working hours and prices of museums, galleries, theaters and so on.
- Free WiFi access, advertising information page on social networks, internet advertising.

Table 1. Main segments in visitors’ market for t. Pleven

Segments	Main Motivation factors	Satisfaction by relation “price - quality”
Children aged 5 to 10 years	Entertainment, identity building, education	Satisfactory <i>(This decision is taken by parents or teachers)</i>
Teens (aged 11 to 19 years)	Identity building, education, creativity	Satisfactory <i>(This decision is taken by parents or teachers)</i>
History, archaeology, anthropology students and other history related enthusiasts	Learning, creativity, professional development, increasing knowledge, self-improvement	Satisfactory
Families with small children	Entertainment, identity building, creativity	Satisfactory
Pensioners	Respect, diversity, entertainment, identity	Satisfactory
Foreign tourists and local people who have emigrated from the country/town;	Entertainment, Expand knowledge, self-improvement.	Acceptable / unsatisfactory
Business visitors	Entertainment, self-improvement.	Acceptable / unsatisfactory

MEASURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF PLEVEN AS A DESTINATION FOR CULTURAL TOURISM

Achieving the status of ‘uniqueness’ can be done with the help of clustering local attractions and development of special programs for their marketing, with focus on what in Pleven makes the difference with other recognizable locations.

In terms of Pleven we believe is appropriate to create two clusters of attractions to promote the town as a distinct tourist destination:

1) ‘Pleven Centre - Cultural Renaissance’, which covers the chapel-mausoleum “St. George the Victorious”; Regional Historic Museum in Pleven; “Skobelev park” museum; Panorama “The Epopee of Pleven -1877”; House museum “Tsar Liberator Alexander II”; Church “Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker”, and etc.

As its name suggests the cluster is located in the central area of the town. Accessibility to the main amenities is built and offers both pedestrian route and clean urban trolley transport. Neighbouring attractions allow diversifying the package of activities for tourists. They are urban garden, water cascade (unique installation of fountains), Drama and Puppet Theatre, philharmonic orchestra, art galleries and art centre. All these sites are a prerequisite for the promotion of clusters as a cultural hub. This area also offers enough accommodation, shopping, entertainment, and dining opportunities for tourists.

The main issues, facing the marketing of the cluster for different target market segments, are related to: 1) provision of support and active participation of local stakeholders; 2) insufficient number of souvenir shops. In order to optimize revenues from the cluster, we recommend the development of a specified for individual segments preferential price package, that includes a discount card for visiting all of the amenities in the cluster, reductions for urban transport, hotels and restaurants in this part of town. This decision requires an equal partnership between the public and private sector in the city. Finding an optimal price and content for the touristic product can be achieved by conjoint analysis, which determines what will be the most attractive incentives for different groups of tourists.

2) Interactive touristic product ‘Pleven city for recreation’, which includes: declared as a protected area, park “Kaylaka”. It offers a unique combination of opportunities for walking, recreation and entertainment. The park has ponds and dams, boats and pedal boats, swimming pools, hotels, bars, cafes, restaurants, playgrounds, tennis courts, zoo and distinctive restaurant, entirely built in a cave. The park also holds The Summer Theatre of Pleven and one of its kinds in Bulgaria Wine Museum. At the entrance of the park are located the ruins of a late-ancient Roman fortress ‘Storgozia’. The park is part of the “Green Zone”, which was built around Pleven and one of the most recognizable attractions in the town.

Therefore we believe that the park should be marketed as a cluster of services offered in it and thus to maximize cultural experiences for tourists, and deepen their relationship with the destination. As a comprehensive product we think the park needs to host more festivals, competitions and other outdoor activities. There are such events in the present but they are rather sporadic and are not communicated sufficiently.

The park is suitable for creative attractions such as the historic restoration of the fortress ‘Storgozia’ but here again there is no systematic planning of such initiatives and they fail to keep constant interest of tourists. Moreover the complexity of such a kind of events requires a strong partnership between the public and private sectors in the town.

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION FOR CULTURAL TOURISM DESTINATION PLEVEN

A territorial communication policy [12] covers promotional efforts that territorial unit should take to increase its attractiveness and the competitiveness of the local economy. Its main role is to form, distribute, maintain and update the territorial image to different target groups of users.

The article examines the opportunity of imposing Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism. In the aspect of communication that sets some basic questions:

- What is the level of interest and awareness of visitors to the destination Pleven?
- How to most effectively promote the benefits of visiting the city for the purpose of cultural tourism.
- How to increase the interest of target audiences to cultural and historical landmarks, and other specialized tourist services of the city.

To promote Pleven on visitors’ target market one must use a combination of communication elements, working in synergy. The rich cultural heritage of Pleven allows local authorities to develop an integrated tourist product throughout the year.

Currently, the competitive advantages of the tourist destination Pleven are: the relatively inexpensive and low fair territorial product, characterized by uniqueness of cultural heritage, relatively well developed urban environment and beautiful scenery, and satisfactory quality of services such as accommodation, facilities, and entertainment.

Baker [13] argues that the main objective of the communication strategy is to create an emotional connection with a visitor destination. This requires channels to promote tourist destination Pleven to be oriented mainly to tour operators and the Internet in order to attract foreign touristic markets. While for the internal touristic market most successful channel would be the social networks, which are outlined as the preferred channel for information and recommendations from friends.

One of the new strategies in the marketing of tourism products and destinations is the use of a variety of events and festivals to promote and strengthen a particular territorial brand. In the field of tourism special events are crucial for promoting the destination as image and messages associated with them can be transferred to the local community. Anastasova [13] argues that events in tourism have specifics to be inherently linked to the destination. They can be used as tools to promote the identity of the destination and to present the advantages of different cultural

and historical tourism products. For example, conducting historical re-enactments has a unique role in educating young people. This is a good way to arouse interest in history and to create positive attitude towards cultural heritage. A successful illustration is the Reconstruction of the third storm of Pleven, held in 2014, unfortunately the event is sporadic.

In practice tourism fairs are the place for selling demanded accurate information as the most valuable capital in future communications with customers. Aleksieva [14] stresses that “the promotion of tourism products (often perceived as pure advertising) and information about the successes (sometimes identified as hidden PR), often do not have access to public speaking real facts in Bulgarian tourism”.

We suggest that in case of t. Pleven, it is appropriate to include in specially designed initiatives, such as launched by the Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism advertising campaign aimed at promoting domestic tourism. This initiative provides free advertising billboards in the districts and municipalities, by which to promote tourism products and attractions located in other districts and municipalities in Bulgaria. Another worthy opportunity is to prepare project application for the grant donating scheme of the Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism named “Organizing and developing web campaign to promote domestic tourism” [15];

Information becomes the most valuable asset to attract tourists and partners in rather difficult conditions of a strong competition in the European area. For Bulgarian cities that means to strive with variety of destinations rich in history, tradition and experience. Anastasova and Luizov [16] argue that approaching the limits not only in intercultural communications, but also in the psychological attitude to work with many different cultures and business situations requires information and publicity. Communication between the two parties (i. e. tourist organization / company and customers) in tourism fairs can identify problems, immediately clarify the situation, and offer flexible and fast solution to overcome the obstacles.

In case of t. Pleven it is appropriate to participate in the Forum “Go2Balkans”, which allows meetings with tour operators from the programme “Hosted Buyers”. In advance the local administration of the town can arranging special summits during the event, by which to present the town’s natural, cultural and historical attractions, to exchange experience, present the best spa and wellness hotels in the Balkans. This exhibition also presents the opportunity to show new tourism products, meet partners, exchange ideas and get acquainted with the achievements of the tourism business in the country and abroad.

Nikolova [17] and Vasileva [18] underline that social media and networks are the new strategic tools for the presentation of cultural and historical tourism products. They offer new ways of perceiving the world, allow development of new online tools to promote the cultural and historical heritage. Maintaining a quality website is one of the conditions for the effective promotion of these touristic products, especially in front of audience of young people.

For t. Pleven we believe is appropriate to create the additional Facebook Pages in order to attract predominantly internal tourism market:

- 1) “Pleven – city for your recreation”, in which to emphasis the exceptional opportunities for leisure provided by cluster for active recreation “Kaylaka”, calendar of current events taking place in it, the local authorities’ initiatives in terms of cluster development, current photos, videos, and so on.
- 2) “Light show – the Central Fountain” and “Sound and light show – the Singing Fountain”, by which to stress the uniqueness of these attractions and to inform about additional opportunities for recreation and entertainment adjacent to the cluster “Renaissance”.

The expected results from the campaigns on social media are associated with:

- transformation of the cultural heritage exploitation in local strategic priority;
- presentation of new opportunities for cultural tourism;
- approval of the proposed city tourism product;
- design of specialized reference books in English, electronic brochures and other tools to promote Bulgarian cultural heritage and to attract foreign tourists.

We can summarize that the basis of a successful communication strategy to promote cultural tourism is related with provision of: reliable information; targeted communication; clear messages to different costumers, strong

partnerships between governmental and non-governmental organizations, tourism businesses, media, competitors, and other interested parties; and effective feedback from the target audiences.

CONCLUSION

This article analyses the role of destination marketing in the process of sustainable integrated urban development. The strategic vectors for the development of Pleven as a destination for cultural and educational tourism are outlined. Visitors market for city of Pleven is segmented in order to define strategic measures to develop the local tourist potential, according to the specificities and the needs of the target markets, territorial development and European perspectives.

Concrete proposals are defined to assist local authorities in creating local environment that promotes increased entrepreneurial activity and achievement of sustainable growth in the city.

The developed conceptual model of an integrated communication system for destination marketing allows increasing the administrative capacity of the local authorities in Pleven; helps building identity and improves the image of the town.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was supported by the Institute of Scientific Research of 'D. A. Tsenov' Academy of Economics – Svishtov, Bulgaria.

The author also wants to thanks to Pleven Province Administration for their support and cooperation during the implementation and promotion of this research.

NOMENCLATURE

EU	European Union
UNWTO	(United Nations) World Tourism Organization
T. Pleven	Town of Pleven
RPG	Role Playing Game
PR	Public Relations
WIFI	Wireless Internet

REFERENCES

- [1] Kotler, P., Bowen, J. T., & Makens, J. C. (2009). *Marketing for hospitality and tourism*. Prentice Hall, p.78.
- [2] Seppälä-Esser, R., Airey, D., & Szivas, E. (2009). The dependence of tourism SMEs on NTOs: The case of Finland. *Journal of Travel Research*, 48(2), 177-190.
- [3] Pereira-Moliner, J., Font, X., Tari, J. J., Molina-Azorin, J. F., Lopez-Gamero, M. D., & Pertusa-Ortega, E. M. (2015). The Holy Grail: Environmental management, competitive advantage and business performance in the Spanish hotel industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 27(5), 714-738, pp.714 – 738.
- [4] Hays, S., Page, S. J., & Buhalis, D. (2013). Social media as a destination marketing tool: its use by national tourism organisations. *Current issues in Tourism*, 16(3), 211-239, pp. 211-239
- [5] Pike, S., & Page, S. J. (2014). Destination Marketing Organizations and destination marketing: A narrative analysis of the literature. *Tourism management*, 41, 202-227, pp. 1-26.
- [6] Ashworth, G. J., & Voogd, H. (1990). *Selling the city: Marketing approaches in public sector urban planning*. Belhaven Press, pp. 489–494.
- [7] Middleton, V. T., Fyall, A., Morgan, M., Morgan, M., & Ranchhod, A. (2009). *Marketing in travel and tourism*. Routledge. 2014.
- [8] Tsvetanova, E. Marketing of territorial units in the context of sustainable regional development. Issue: Standards and Challenges to Public Administration in the XXI Century: Jubilee International Conference - Svishtov , 10-11 May 2013, pp. 100-110.

- [9] Bulgarian National Statistical Institute (2012). Population by province, municipality, settlement and ethnic identification, by 01.02.2011; Bulgarian National Statistical Institute Publications.
- [10] Concept for Tourism Zoning of Bulgaria (2015). Ministry of Tourism Publications.
- [11] Ministry of Tourism, <http://tourism.egov.bg/registers> (last access: 29-11-16)
- [12] Tsvetanova E. Regional Marketing. AP 'Tsenov', Svishtov, Bulgaria, 2016, p. 180.
- [13] Baker, B. (2007). Destination branding for small cities: The essentials for successful place branding. Destination Branding Book, p. 157.
- [14] Anastasova L. (2010). Marketing of tourist product, Communication Policy in tourism and services. EX-PRESS, p. 56.
- [15] Ministry of Tourism, "Support for effective national marketing tourism products and improve information services", BG161PO001 / 3.3-01 / 2008 / 001-3 "Communication Campaign to promote domestic tourism in Bulgaria" http://www.tourism.government.bg/sites/tourism.government.bg/files/uploads/programi_i_proekti/prikliuchili/project_03_new.pdf
(Last access: 25-11-16)
- [16] Anastasova L. and Luizov. 2012. At. Branding of the city by festival events and study of consumers' attitudes towards the festival "Join City" in Burgas, methodological and applied aspects. Yearbook BSU, Burgas, Bulgaria.
- [17] Nikolova, M. (2015). Promotion of cultural heritage in social media and networks // Media and Public Communications. UNWE; Alma communication, №22.
- [18] Vasileva, S. (2014). Planned and Unplanned Communication Messages Used for Brand Building, International Scientific Conference, The Financial and Real Economy: Toward Sustainable Growth, University of Niš., pp. 243-25.