

Basics of traffic tourism in the Republic of Macedonia

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Abstract

In this manuscript we will give an overview of traffic tourism, society, geographical position, borders, and size of the Republic of Macedonia. The analysis is based on the international highway E-75, the corridor of air and traffic communication, the main railway line Kumanovo-Skopje-Gevgelija. In 1957 the highway Skopje-Sofia-Kriva Palanka around the east-west corridor (with a total length of 295 km) was built, which is the most important connection in the north of the country. The most frequent connection with neighboring countries such as Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro in the past and nowadays is the river Vardar, which bring the possibility to connect with Central Europe and the Middle East. The most important transport corridor to connect with Serbia, Kosovo and Montenegro is the Morava valley where the highway of Morava has been built and two corridors are active (Belgrade - Skopje - Thessaloniki and Pristina - Skopje - Thessaloniki). The independence of Macedonia established four international border points which are quite busy: Jazinec, (Tetovo-Pristina) Volkovo (Skopje-Pristina, railway lines), Blace (Skopje-Pristina), Tabanovce (Kumanovo-Vranje).

Keywords: traffic tourism, society, tourist-geographical position, borders, tourism.

Introduction

Tourism as a phenomenon represents a modern dynamic and a socio-economic phenomenon, since the early industrial period when traveling was a privilege only for rich people, while today is a need of all social groups in society. Tourism represents a journey for recreation, holiday etc. A tourist is considered a man who travels from hometown to another country for recreation. Tourism represents a service industry which consists of a large number of elements (tangible and intangible). Tangible tourism elements consist of transportation systems, such as roads, water and air traffic, but also food, drinks, hotels, souvenirs, banking services, insurance etc.

The Republic of Macedonia has a very favorable geographical position, because it is located in the central part of the Balkan peninsula and is surrounded by four neighboring countries who have a different socio-economic development. The favorable geographical position of the Republic of Macedonia is conditioned also by its spatial features (hills, valleys and gorges).

Table 1. Final points and the length of the border of the Republic of Macedonia

Direction	WNB	WNE	Location	Komuna
North	42° 22' 21''	22° 18' 041''	Anista (Dukat Mountain)	K. Palanka

South	41° 51' 16"	21° 07' 33"	Markova noga (Gr. kamen)	Resen
East	42° 42' 33"	23° 02' 12"	Cengino Kale (Gr. kamen)	Berovo
West	41° 31' 04"	20° 27' 32"	Kestenjare stolbE16/18)	Debar

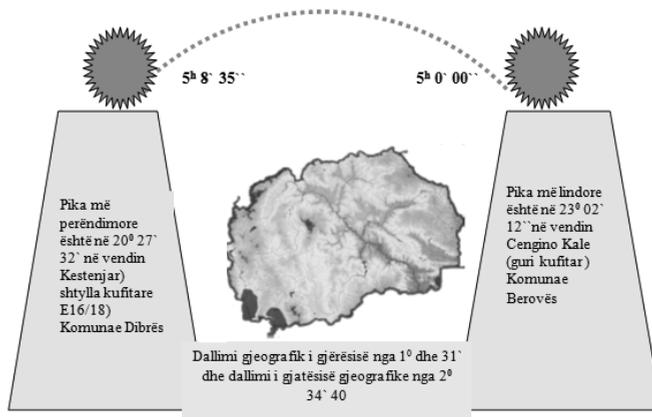


Photo 2. The geographical difference of width from 1° and 31' and the difference of geographical Longitude from 2°34'40"

Through Macedonia's territory are passing the most important international communications which gave a special mark to this small state. The traffic axis of Vardar through its history has played a very important role in the connection of certain parts of Europe with the Mediterranean and Middle East countries (Selmani, 1992, 7). The change of sunrise between the eastern and the western point of the Republic of Macedonia is 8' and 35".

In the Balkan Peninsula the territory of the Republic of Macedonia has a favorable transition position, however these areas are threatened by pollution from gas produced by traffic motors. The international road E-75 can gain greater importance because the Adriatic highway will be built, which enters through Kacanik. Also there are tendencies to intensify the construction of Corridor 8 which will connect Macedonia to Bulgaria, Albania and beyond. Corridor 8 starts from Sofia through Kriva Palanka - Kumanovo - Skopje-Tetovo-Struga up to the border point Kafathane entering the territory of Albania.

The Highway of Western Macedonia has more tourism traffic, consisting of Skopje-Tetovo-Gostivar-Debar-Struga-Republic of Albania. This road will represent important traffic highways for this part of Macedonia and for the countries from Southeast Europe (Stojmilove, 2002, 26).

Through the valley of river Vardar the second road highway construction is expected

to be constructed with a total length of 220 km, which leads to the large seaport of Thessaloniki, which has a great economic importance.

Road corridors for the Republic Macedonia represent important development axes which will also affect the quality of the environment. The rail network in the Republic of Macedonia is 920 km. The main railway line Kumanovo-Skopje-Gevgelija has an international character and is electrified. The railway line Skopje-Gostivar-Kicevo, represents the foundation of the previous railway line with narrow gauge. There is a project for the extension of this line reaching Struga and through Cafethane will be connected with the railway network of Albania.

Today, Macedonia is linked with 4 international border points which are quite busy: Jazince, (Tetovo-Pristina) Volkovo (Skopje-Pristina, railway lines), Blace (Skopje-Pristina), Tabanovce (Kumanovo-Vranje) and two statal border points (Kumanovo-Bujanovce through the old road) and Pelince (Kumanovo Sh. Prohor Pcinjski) (Stojmilove, 2002, 23).

Macedonia is connected to Bulgaria through an important communicative line, which passes through the valley of river Kriva Reka, namely through Sliviliste and Kriva Palanka, then through the valley of the river Bregalnica, respectively Pijanec or Delcevo and the valley of river Strumica.

There are three international border points with Bulgaria, concisting of: Deve Bair (from Kriva Palanka to Kustendil), Delcevo (Delcevo-Blagoevgrad) and Novo Selo (Strumica-Petric). The fourth border point Simitli in Berovo is also under construction.

Table 2. The length of the borders in the Republic of Macedonia

	Total	Land	Rivers	Lakes
Total	850	786	16	48
Albania	191	151	12	28
Bulgaria	165	165	-	-
Greece	262	238	4	20
Serbia	232	232	-	-

E-65: Petrovec-Blace

E-852: Skopje-Kafethane

E 75: Tabanovc- Gevgelija

E-871: Kumanovo-Deve Bair

Tabela 3. The main European road corridors passing through the territory of the Republic of Macedonia

<i>The main European road corridors in the Republic of Macedonia</i>
Corridor 8: East –West(Bulgaria-Albania) Length: L=304 km
Corridor 10(E-75): North-South(Serbia-Greece) Length: L=176 km

Corridor 10: (Veles-Bitola-Greece)
Length: L=304 km

All these traffic directions with more border points with international character (Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Greece, Bulgaria) have a tendency to be intensified, keeping in mind the EU integration of the western balkan countries.

Now and in the future is expected that in these traffic directions will increase the coefficient of environmental pollution by gases emitted by vehicles with internal combustion. This applies particularly to the traffic axis of Vardar 9Panov, 2008, 17). The total length of the border between Macedonia and neighboring countries amounts to 850 km, where 786 km are land borders, 16 km are river borders and 48 km lake borders.

Borders and size

Macedonia borders with 5 countries. The Republic of Macedonia has borders with Kosovo in northwest, Serbia in the north, Bulgaria in the east, Greece in the south and with Albania in the west. The total length of Macedonia's borders with neighboring countries is 849 km, where the longest border is with Greece (262 km), while the shortest border is with Bulgaria (165 km).

The north border of the Republic of Kosovo and Republic of Serbia lies mainly in the west-east direction with a total length of 263 km. The north border of the Republic of Macedonia with the Republic of Kosovo has a length of 161 km, while the north border with the Republic of Serbia is 102 km (Panov, 2008, 21).

According to Talevski (1998) the total length of the northern border is 257.9 km, where a part of this border (40.9 km or 19.8%) passes through the river flow, which is the biggest part and represents a natural border and it is very attractive to open new border points.

It is also important to note that most favorable places for the border points are the locations around the front part of the river Radika, then village Jazinca, river Lepenc and Kacanik. This section presents a traditional communication space between Macedonia and Kosovo.

Natural-geographical factors and other elements are of great importance for the establishment of border points and their necessary infrastructure. The location theory for the establishment of border points is linked with the characteristics of the relief space, hydrographic elements and other space elements.

Conclusions

This paper presented the most important tourism traffic through border point in Macedonia. River valleys, plains, gorges and mountains are favorable to build border points with all infrastructure facilities, quality elements and characteristics of relief. The current situation presents border points that are located in the lower parts and become passable through mountain spaces. Busiest border points of Macedonia are with Serbia and Kosovo, because they are located near important roads

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