



RESEARCH REPORT

MOUNTAIN TOURISM IN THE
MUNICIPALITY OF PEJA AND ISTOG



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Content of this publication is the responsibility of the Initiative for Agricultural Development of Kosovo - IADK and in no way can be considered as an attitude of European Union, or IPA II program.



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A special thank you goes to the respondents of the two municipalities for their generosity, hospitality and willingness to cooperate.



Abstract

The purpose of this research is to study the potential that the municipalities of Peja and Istog have for the development of mountain tourism, as well as the potential that farmers in katuns in mountainous areas have to provide tourism services.

Using the extensive literature, available secondary data, and primary data collected from farmers in katuns in mountainous areas, this paper explores katuns that represent transhumant practices as a unique and valuable tradition and that add value to the mountain tourism sector, as a very important sector for the development of Kosovo.

Therefore, this document includes a brief description of the current situation of this sector and the importance of cultural, agricultural and natural heritage represented in transhumance. Through this document we will get acquainted with the population that are involved in the mountain tourism sector and those that are not but have the potential to provide services in the mountain tourism sector, we will get acquainted with the main tourist attractions in those areas, and the specific traditions that are realized in katuns.

This research will indicate the challenges faced by this sector and katun owners in mountainous areas; while, including the most necessary improvements of attractions in these areas. In addition, it explains the possibilities for further development.

This report was developed by the professional staff of the Initiative for Agricultural Development of Kosovo - IADK within the project "Transhumance - a new tourism offer of Kosovo and Montenegro", the objective of the project is to improve the volume, quality and visibility of tourism related to valorisation of cultural and natural heritage and values, as well as the inclusion of transhumanism in the tourism offer of Kosovo and Montenegro.



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Abbreviations

EU – European Union
CBC – Cross-Border Cooperation
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
LAG – Local Action Group
IADK – Initiative for Agricultural Development of Kosovo
IPA – Instrument for pre-accession assistance
KAS – Kosovo Agency of Statistics
MAFRD – Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development
MAP – Medicinal and Aromatic Plants
NWFP – Non-Wood Forest Products
WTTC – World Travel and Tourism Council

1. Introduction

Tourism is known as an important mechanism for strengthening the economy of a country and at the same time creating an impeccable image for that country. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, tourism contributes \$8.9 trillion to global GDP, or 10.3% of global GDP, creating about 330 million jobs, meaning 1 in 10 jobs worldwide belongs to the tourism sector[1]. Kosovo has a high potential for tourism development as a result of its geographical position surrounded by mountains and at the center of the Balkan Peninsula.

According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Tourism Division, currently the main pillars of the tourist offer are: cultural tourism, mountain and alpine tourism, rural tourism, eco-tourism and alternative tourism, cross-border and regional visits, meetings and conferences [2].

Based on secondary data, Kosovo's tourist offer can be divided into three different levels. The first level offer includes the widest range of local, regional, national and international demand (Accursed Mountains, Mountain heights reaching over 2600m, Prishtina, Prizren and Peja). The second level offer includes the border regions with Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia (Kopaonik and Mokra Gora mountain ranges, thermal centres, natural attractions such as Mirusha Waterfall, ethnic and cultural diversity). Finally, the third level offer includes day and weekend excursions near urban centres, for the purpose of recreation and leisure.

In Kosovo, especially in the mountainous areas, the inhabitants still practice the ancient traditions of migration or transhumance – where people together with their livestock make seasonal migration by sending their animals to the best pastures of the mountainous areas. This practice not only has a positive effect on livestock nutrition, it also has a positive effect on the environment as it avoids the exhaustion of the area's natural resources.

Transhumance makes it possible for these migrating families to have knowledge of the characteristics of different land areas, the needs of their livestock, and the management of land and other natural resources such as water. Among the advantages of transhumance we mention the abundance of agricultural tools, the prevention of forest fires, the creation of ecological corridors forming landscapes, the increase of income, etc. As such, transhumance is an essential part of our heritage and identity and it contributes to the well-being of the society.

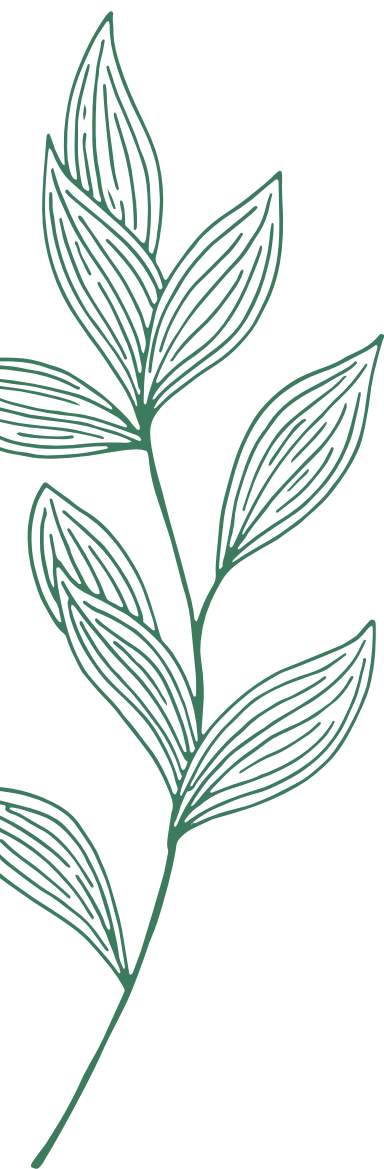
Transhumance as heritage increases the potential that Kosovo has in developing the mountain tourism sector. As such, it has a high and significant economic value at the central and municipal level, for small businesses, as an attraction for tourists, and why not for domestic and foreign investors.

[1] World Travel and Tourism Council, *Economic impact reports* 2019. (<https://wtcc.org/Research/Economic-Impact>)

[2] Ministry of Trade and Industry, Tourism Division, 2020. (<https://mti.rks-gov.net/page.aspx?id=1,38>)

While researching secondary tourism data (especially mountain tourism data) we notice a significant lack of official statistics and data for this sector. Data available from the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, show that the number of visitors (domestic and foreign) in 2019 in the entire territory of Kosovo was a total of 287,083 visitors, where overnight stays were 490,401 visitors/nights. Regarding the Peja region, the number of visitors (domestic and foreign) was 65,099 visitors and there were overnight stays with 149,803 visitors/nights. As for the Istog region, data on visitors and overnight stays are missing (Republic of Kosovo, KAS, Hotel Statistics, 2019).

Therefore, to gain an overview of this industry, the data was obtained from a mountain tourism questionnaire (Appendix A) that was developed to research about the population operating in the agricultural sector and having the potential to provide services in mountain tourism sector.



2. Purpose and research objectives

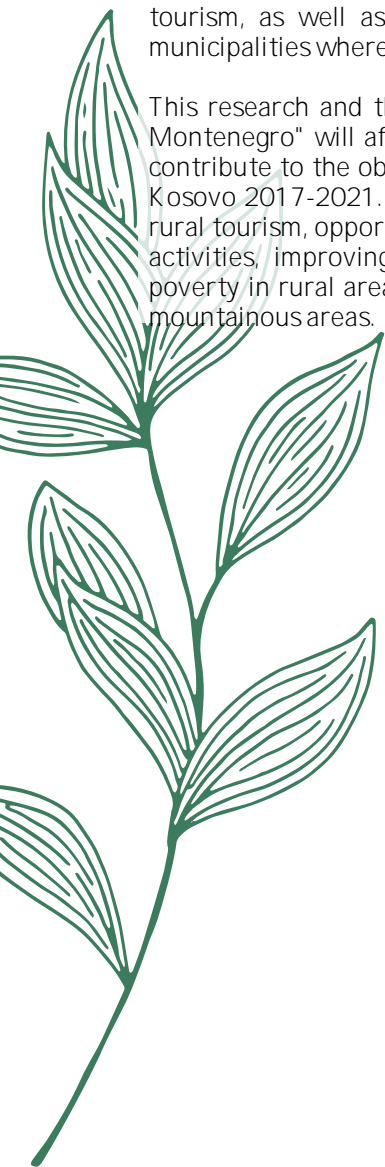
The main purpose of this research is to analyse the current situation of mountain tourism in the municipalities of Peja and Istog, to analyse the potential for the development of mountain tourism, as well as to analyse the potential that farmers in katuns have in providing tourism services.

The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

- Identification of families, katuns, and transhumans as well as analysis of tourist activities that take place in the municipalities of Peja and Istog;
- Identification of accommodation capacity and number of visitors per year in katuns of the municipalities of Peja and Istog;
- Identification of specific traditions, main attractions and mountain trails of these areas;
- Analysis of the potential for development and promotion of mountain tourism;
- Identification of the key challenges and improvements needed to strengthen rural tourism.

The results of this research will create a clearer picture regarding the current situation of tourism, as well as families living and providing tourism services in rural areas in municipalities where this research has been conducted.

This research and the project itself "Transhumance new tourism offer of Kosovo and Montenegro" will affect the development and promotion of mountain tourism and will contribute to the objectives presented in the Governmental Program of the Republic of Kosovo 2017-2021. Among the objectives that it will contribute we mention: improving rural tourism, opportunities for new jobs by supporting the diversification of agricultural activities, improving tourism activities in rural economies, reducing emigration and poverty in rural areas, creating new jobs and preservation of existing ones in rural and mountainous areas.



3. Methodology

Several different sources of information have been used in this paper in order to fulfill the purpose and objectives of the research. Primary and secondary data were used to collect the data. The first step was to collect and read secondary data to analyse the potential that Kosovo has, especially the Municipality of Peja and Istog for the development of mountain tourism.

Primary research was conducted through a questionnaire containing open-and closed-ended questions. Its purpose was to collect data from farmers and owners of katuns that in addition to working in the sector of agriculture and livestock undertake some form of tourism activities, as well as the creation of a database that serves as a starting point on mountain tourism in these two municipalities covered by the project scope.

The respondents in this research are owners of katuns as well as accommodation houses that provide tourist services or have the potential to offer them, acting at the same time in the agriculture and livestock sector (which makes them ready to cover the demands of tourists with traditional products and foods). The method of distributing the questionnaire was through field visits in the mountains of Istog and Peja, surveying a total of 55 people who deal with these activities. Although we did not have a list of people who owned a katun and practiced transhumanism, the officials of the Municipalities of Peja and Istog, tourism officials, officials from the LAG "Agrotourism", as well as the Alpine Club Podguri, have been an assistance in the selection of appropriate persons for the development of mountain questionnaire.





3.1 Limitations

During the realization of this research we have encountered some limitations which directly affect the results of this research. Time limitation is one of these constraints, which is related to the situation created by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Another limitation has been the inappropriate time to find the target persons of the project in katuns, since during the months of October and November the climatic conditions are not favourable for these families to stay in the mountains with their livestock. The lack of previous studies in the field of research also presents a limitation. As a result of this restriction, we did not have a list of katun owners in these areas.

4. Questionnaire results

The questionnaire was developed and designed in order to meet the objectives of mountain tourism research in the municipalities of Peja and Istog. It consists of the general data part of the respondent, then the part of the tourist activities that are realized, the accommodation capacity, the number of visitors per year, the main attractions and trails and the last part includes the improvements necessary for strengthening rural tourism. The survey consists of 27 questions, where some questions are open-ended and some are closed-ended questions with 3-5 alternative answers.

A total of 55 persons were surveyed, of which 34 persons surveyed were from the municipality of Peja, and 21 persons from the municipality of Istog. This comes as a result of the great development of commercial tourism in the municipality of Peja where a smaller number of families practice transhumance and mainly deal with the management of villas, inns and accommodation houses. On the other hand, in the municipality of Istog this tradition is still widely practiced.

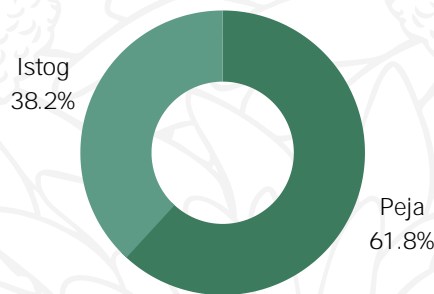


Figure 4. 1 Sampling by municipalities

From the general data part of the surveyed person was a question that belonged to their level of education. According to the results, most of the surveyed, more precisely 35 people, have completed high school, 12 people have a bachelor's degree in various fields, of which 3 have a degree in Hospitality or Tourism, 6 people have completed or are in the process of obtaining a master's degree, while 1 person has completed primary school, 1 person has superior education (PhD).

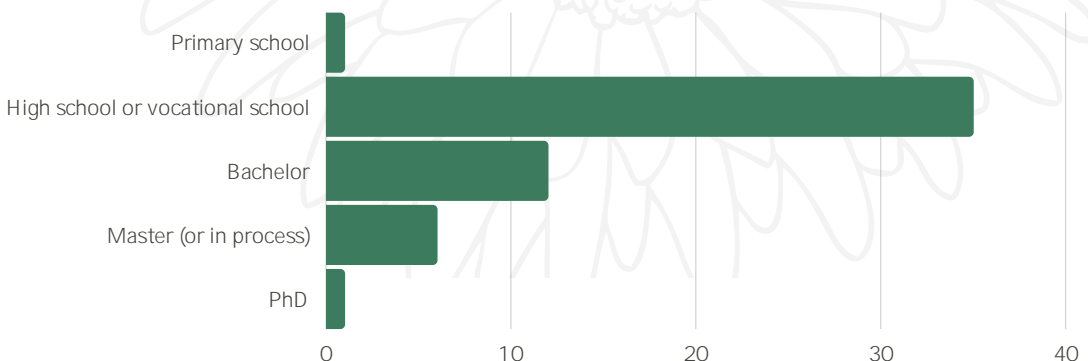


Figure 4. 2 Level of education of respondents

Part of the general data was also the question about the respondents' main family income. What we need to keep in mind is the fact that most of the respondents were engaged in different activities at the same time. The vast majority of respondents, 41 people, were engaged in agriculture and livestock. Many of the respondents were already involved in mountain tourism where we have a number of 37 people. In the private sector were employed 12 people, while in the public sector were 8 people. Among the respondents were 3 people who were retired, but were still engaged in agricultural activities and mountain tourism. Finally, 4 people dealt with various sports clubs, various non-governmental organizations such as environmental protection organizations.

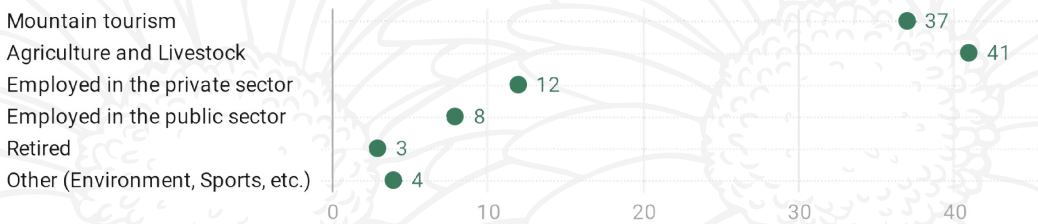


Figure 4. 3 Main sources of income

While conducting the research we learned about the specific traditions that are realized in the katuns. Unfortunately, many of the respondents, 17 people, did not have any specific tradition. However, there were others, 16 people, who were engaged in sheep shearing, where as a tradition they organize a feast where traditional food is prepared and under the accompaniment of music with traditional instruments they shear sheep. In the municipality of Peja, on an annual basis, the traditional games of Rugova are organized which include up to 7 sports disciplines, assemblies with songs and dances, rhapsodies from the Albanian territories, where hundreds of different competitors and participants partake. Of the respondents, 15 people mentioned these games as a tradition of their katuns or accommodation houses. 7 people have traditional hospitality with fresh and domestic products. Another tradition which is practiced by 2 people is the Lama Dinner, which is also known as the Field Dinner or the Bereqet Dinner. This is a kind of ancient holiday since the time of the Illyrian Dardanians, it marks the end of summer and the beginning of winter, when cereals, fruits and blessings are gathered. In other words it is Thanksgiving, and as we know giving bread and helping with labour has been a key aspect of social relations between the villagers. Chestnut Day is another tradition performed by 1 person from the respondents. Of the respondents, 6 people mentioned the organization of summer camps for children, as well as the organization of various sports such as archery and skiing as a tradition that is realized in their katuns. What we need to keep in mind is the fact that most respondents had the opportunity to state that they carried out more than one of the abovementioned activities.

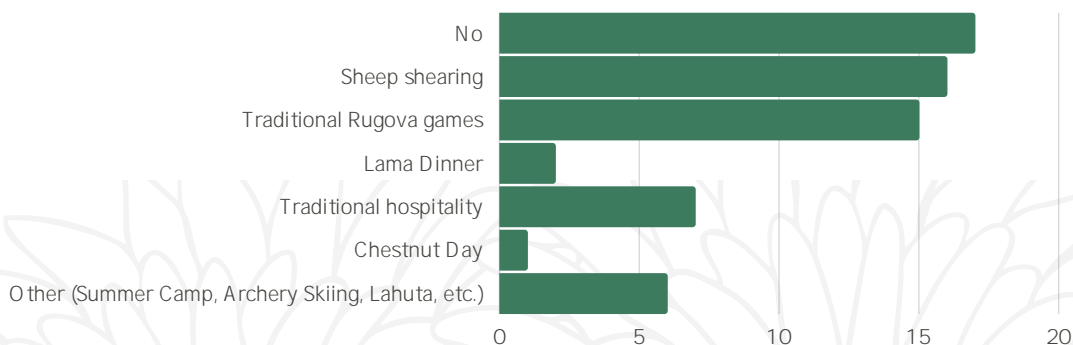


Figure 4. 4 Specific traditions realized in katuns

The tourist activities offered by the respondents were diverse, and most of them stated that they are willing to carry out several different activities at the same time. Of the respondents 50 persons are able to accommodate tourists, 44 persons stated that they serve traditional food or can serve on demand, and 30 persons organize or are willing to organize guides to tourists. There were some others (2 people) who mentioned that they offer mountain motorcycles for riding, as well as (1 person) offers riding snowmobile as part of their tourist offer. There were 2 people who currently do not carry out any activity but are motivated to work in this direction.

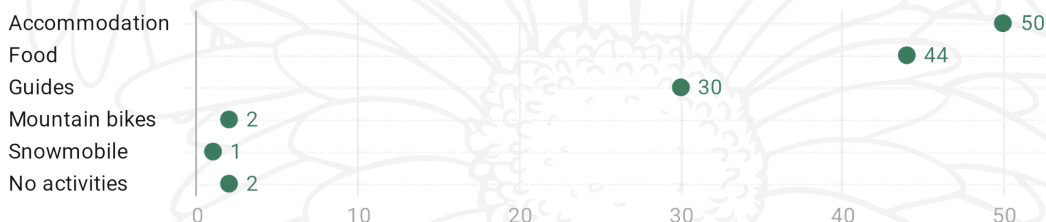


Figure 4. 5 Tourism activities

Regarding the accommodation capacity of the katuns, 18 respondents stated that their katuns can accommodate 10-15 people, 13 respondents said that they can accommodate 1-9 people. 7 respondents indicated that they can accommodate 16-20 people, 6 respondents can accommodate 21-30 people, and 1 respondent can accommodate 31-40 people. There were also those who had the capacity to accommodate many people, where 5 respondents are able to accommodate up to 50 people, 2 other respondents can accommodate up to 60 people, and 2 others up to 80 people. However, there were respondents present who could not accommodate any person, but were willing to work in this direction if there is a demand from tourists and develop accommodation activities.

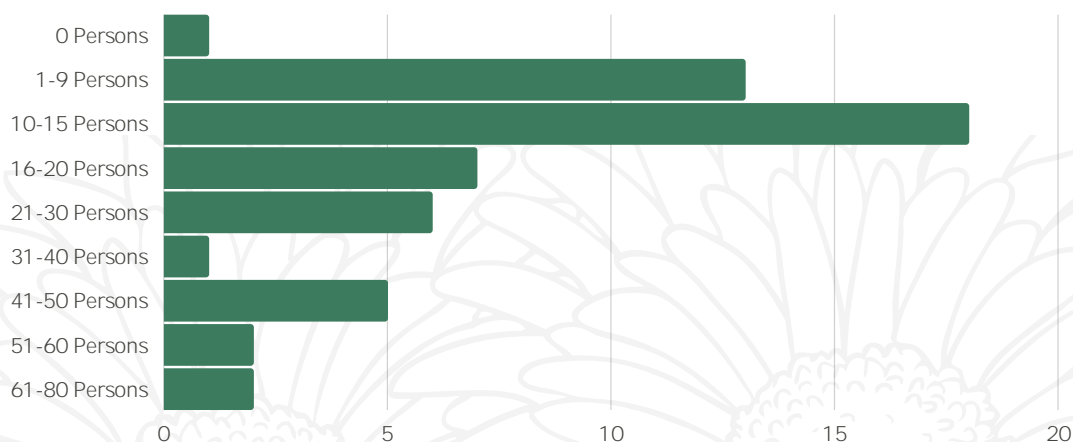


Figure 4. 6 Accommodation capacity

Based on the research, we see that the katuns in the municipalities of Peja and Istog do not have many domestic tourists on an annual basis. 4 respondents stated that they received 51-70 persons per year, 5 respondents had 31-50 persons, and 5 respondents had 1-15 persons per year. There were also 7 respondents who do not have mountain tourism as their primary activity and have not received any person per year. However, from the respondent we had those who receive hundreds of domestic tourists, 6 respondents stated that they have more than 1000 people on an annual basis, 4 respondents had 500-1000 people per year, 5 respondents had up to 400 people, and the majority, 9 respondents, stated that they receive 101-200 persons per year. On an annual basis, 8 respondents have 91-100, and 1 respondent has 71-90 visitors.

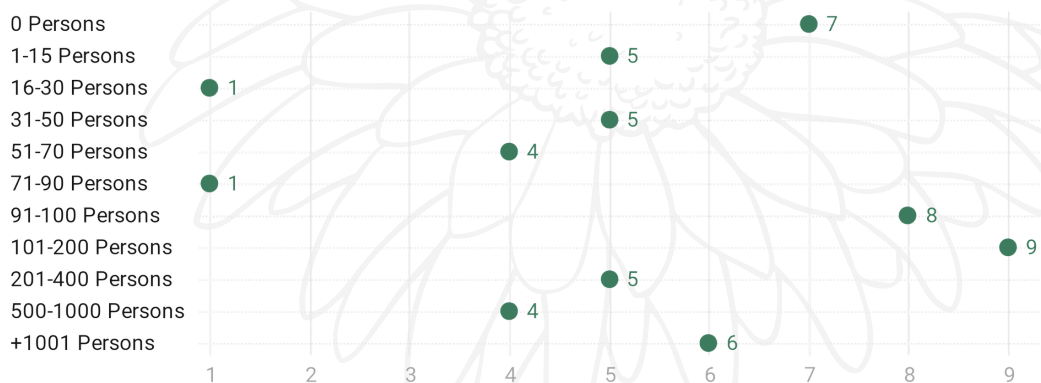


Figure 4. 7 Number of domestic visitors in katuns per year

These katuns often have foreign visitors in addition to domestic visitors. However, the vast majority of respondents (25 respondents) did not have foreign visitors which can be said to be due to the conditions created by the SARS-COV-2 pandemic and travel bans. On an annual basis, 12 respondents indicated that they had over 100 foreign visitors, and 1 respondent indicates that it had up to 100 foreign visitors. Moreover, 3 respondents said they had 51-70 foreign visitors, 6 respondents had 31-50 foreign visitors, and 4 respondents had 16-30 foreign visitors. Some respondents had a relatively small number of foreign visitors, with 2 respondents having up to 15 foreign visitors, and 2 other respondents having up to 9 foreign visitors per year.

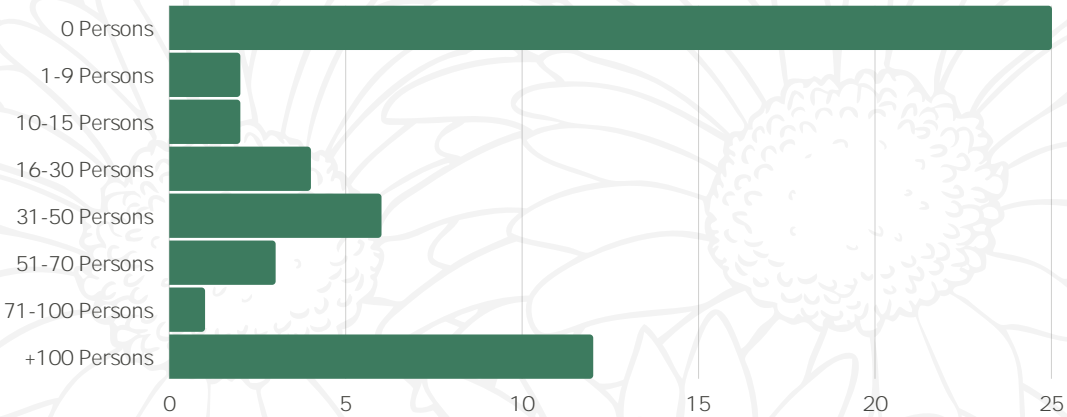


Figure 4. 8 Number of foreign visitors in katuns per year

According to the research, there is a variety of offers in terms of food that are produced and sold in katuns, respondents stated that at the same time offer different products not only from the kitchen but also from handicraft products, wine and alcohol, etc. Most of the respondents, 59 people, as part of their tourist offer, are able to produce milk and its by-products such as cheese, yogurt or boiled cream. Various traditional products such as fli, legenik, pogage, various pies, 48 people stated that they can produce them without any difficulty. Another product that is in particular the tradition of these two areas is specialty bread, where 40 people showed that they are ready to produce and sell it. 15 people stated that they can offer different agricultural and preserved products to tourists, 13 people offer different canned food, 7 people produce different wines and alcohol in their katuns, and 6 people are ready to produce handicraft products for tourists. Among the respondents were persons who produced honey (3 persons) and those who also sell meat products (3 persons). Also, there were 5 people who do not currently have the means to produce food for tourists.

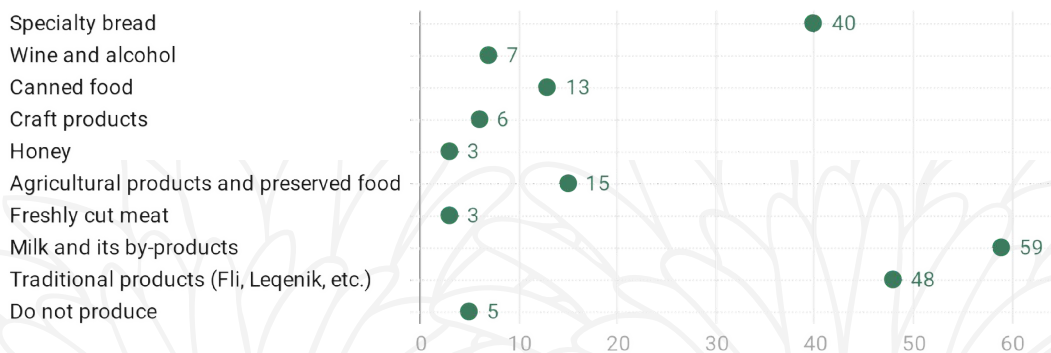


Figure 4. 9 Products that are (or can be) produced and sold at katuns

Most of the respondents, 44 people, produce their own products for tourists, some of which at the same time buy them from the surrounding villages. 21 people secure food products from the surrounding area, and 9 people secure food products from shops or self-services. Of these persons, most those who produce themselves also buy in the surrounding area or in supermarkets as needed. Finally, 4 people do not serve tourists food at all.

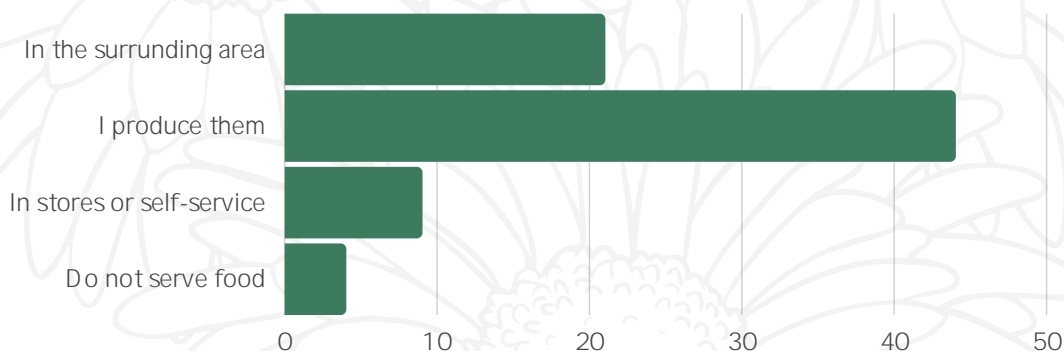


Figure 4. 10 Places where the food products are secured so as to serve tourists

In this research we have asked the question whether any MAP and NWFP are collected in these mountainous areas, at what time of year and how common this activity is. Based on the research, we learned that this practice is common to most respondents. Of the respondents, only 7 people indicated that they do not engage in this activity. Most of the respondents, 45 people, mentioned that among others they collect blueberries which are collected during the season, and use them for their own needs, their restaurants or sell them in the domestic market. Raspberries and blackberries are collected by 19 people, which are also collected during the month of August and some are sold at collection points. 14 people indicated that they deal with collecting mountain tea, and 14 people collect mushrooms. MAP and NWFP collect 12 people, 12 people gather rosehip and 10 people collect wild apples and strawberries. Hawthorn and cornelian cherry gather 6 people, and 2 people showed that they collect so-called blood flowers and/or tea flowers.

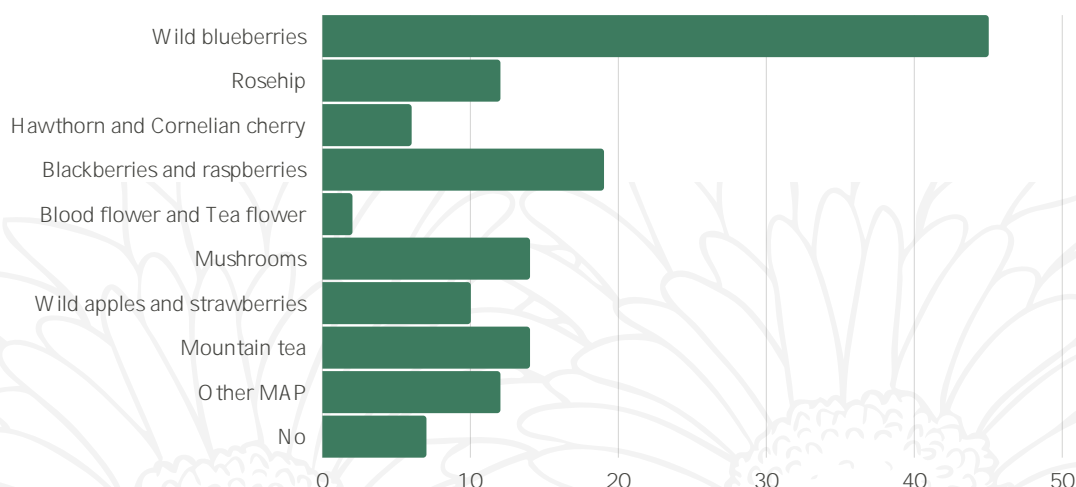


Figure 4. 11 Collection of MAP and NWFP in the mountainous area

During the conversations with the respondents we noticed that these areas have many attractions, below we have presented the most mentioned attractions. Among them we have: Hajla, Black peak, a plant with healing properties called Kleku, Dyna Hill, Blerimi cliff, Shtedimja, a suitable place for activities such as skiing, visits to waterfalls and caves. There were many other attractions such as Qyqe valley, Belegu valley and peak, Vojdulli peak, and many old peaks and monuments such as old churches that add value to these areas.

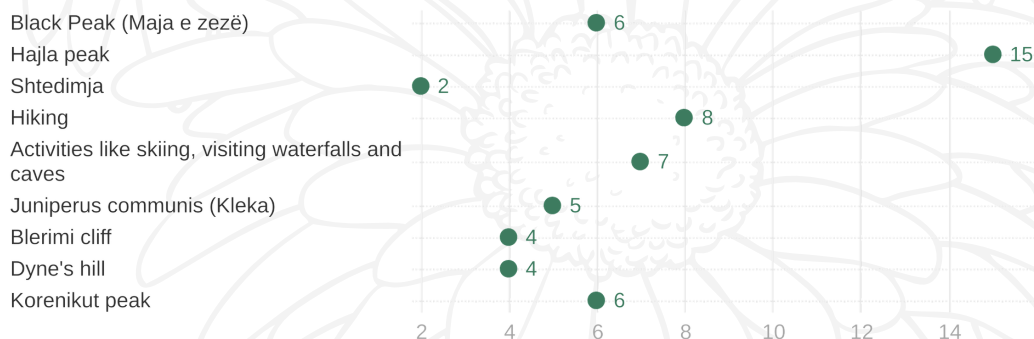


Figure 4. 12 Main attractions

The same goes for trails, where respondents mentioned many different trails which pass near their katuns. Among the most important we mention: Via Dinarika, mountain trail Peaks of the Balkans, trail to Hajle, trail for motorcycles, trail Alpinistat Podguri, trail that leads to Lugu butë, trail to Broqi valley, etc.

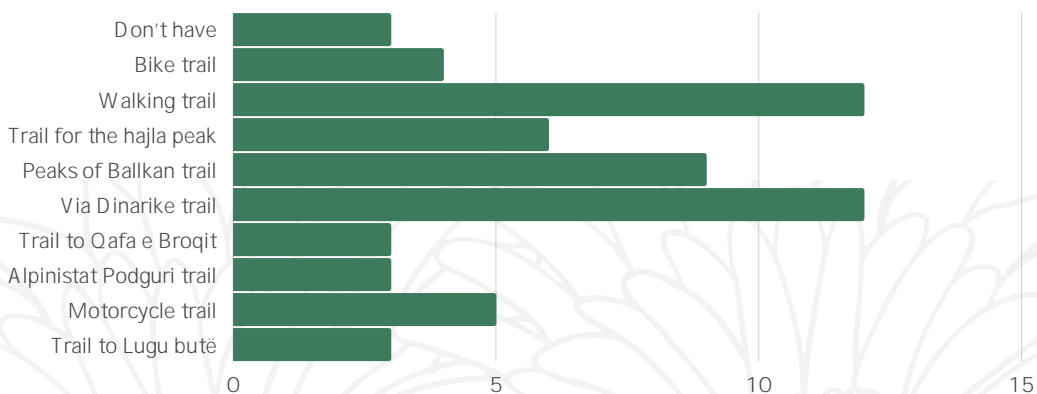


Figure 4. 13 Trails that pass near katuns

All respondents, except one, were of the opinion that there is potential for the development of mountain tourism in their area.



Figure 4. 14 Opinions on the potential for mountain tourism

Most of the respondents thought that there is not enough promotion of mountain tourism in their area. 7 people thought that there is enough promotion of tourism, while 1 person refused to express his opinion on this matter.

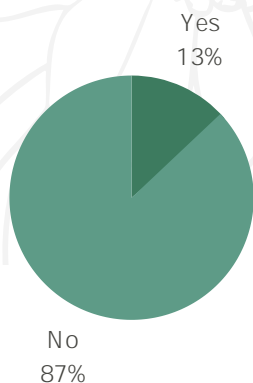


Figure 4. 15 Opinions on whether there is enough promotion of mountain tourism

Regarding the main challenges faced by the respondents, they were numerous and many of them mentioned one or more challenges they had at the same time. Among the most significant challenges were the lack of adequate infrastructure, lack of investment and electricity, promotion of mountain tourism, adequate roads, water supply, migration of the population in urban areas, environmental pollution from waste and the need for solar panels for production of electricity.

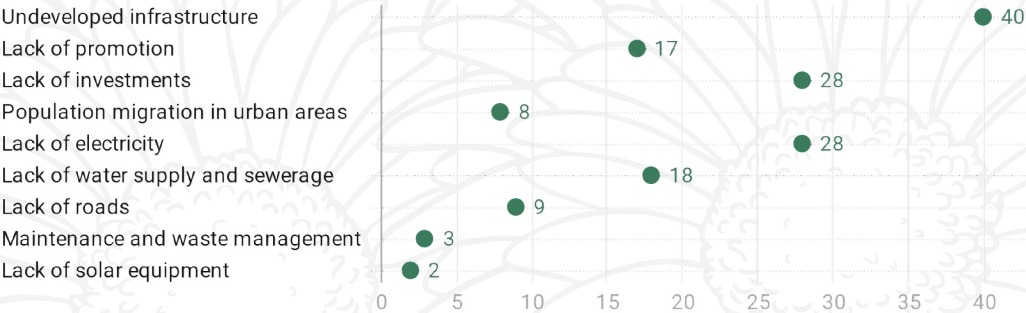


Figure 4. 16 Main challenges of katun owners for developing mountain tourism

According to the majority of respondents, the interest of domestic and foreign tourists in mountain tourism will increase significantly if there happens to be an investment in the development of rural tourism, 50 people were of this opinion. 2 people did not think that the investments would increase the interest of tourists as it will be overloaded, and 3 people refused to give their opinion.

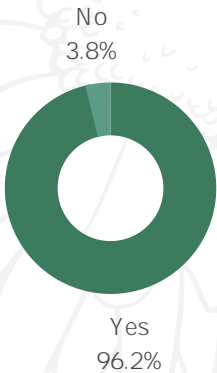


Figure 4. 17 Opinions on whether there will be interest of domestic and foreign tourists if investment in rural tourism development begins

The reasons of 50 people for thinking that the interest would increase were different. Many of them (24 people) said that the area where they have katuns are attractive parts of the mountain, the place is quiet and has privacy, good climate, and natural beauty of the area. Good tourist services, was another reason for an increased interest of tourists according to 12 people. The various attractions of the place like Hajla or Koreniku peak were another reason according to 12 people. According to 6 people, traditional local products and natural products of the area represent another reason for the increase in interest, as well as the traditional katuns and livestock (according to 5 people). The attractive mountain tourism itself and various activities such as hiking or rock climbing will attract more tourists according to the 5 people surveyed. While 3 people mentioned the possibility for camping, skiing, using the cable car as reasons for increasing the interest of tourists.

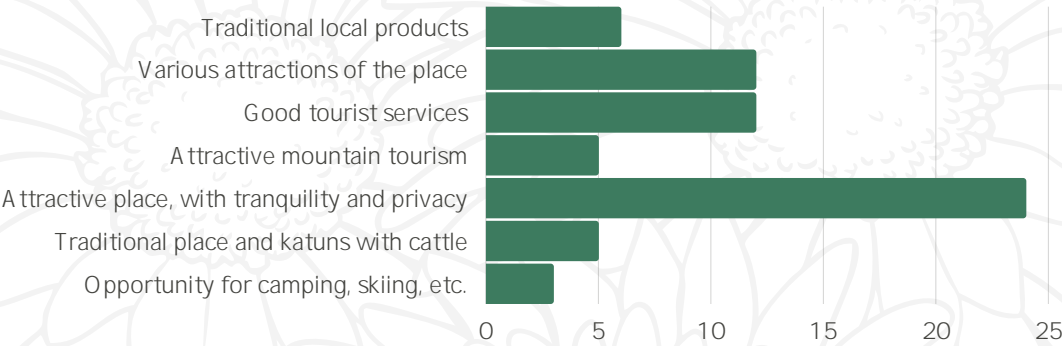


Figure 4. 18 Reasons for an increased interest of tourists

What is important to know is whether the respondents have ever had any kind of financial support for the development of rural tourism (international donations, loans, or support from the municipality). From the research we learned that a high number, 47 people, had never had any support, and only 8 people had received support.

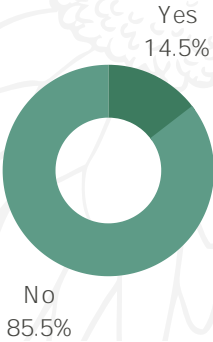


Figure 4. 19 Financial support

Of these 8 people who had financial support for the development of rural tourism, most indicated that that support came from various local and foreign organizations, but there were cases from the relevant municipality and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD).

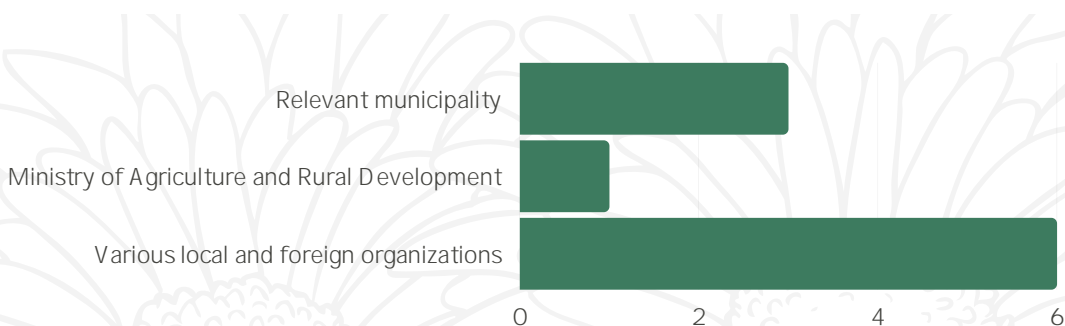


Figure 4. 20 Financial support for developing rural tourism

Another important matter is whether the respondents had received training in the tourism sector. According to the results we found that, 41 persons had not completed any training in the tourism sector, while 14 persons had completed. From these 14 people, we learned that the completed trainings were different, where there were trainings from various local and foreign organizations, trainings for mountain rescue, trainings from the National Association of Kosovo Forests, some showed that they were mountain sports administrators, Lecturer in Mountaineering Skills, and Mountain Trail Guide. And some had completed high school tourism or had a university degree in tourism.

Respondents were also asked if they were willing to participate in the trainings to be organized by IADK, where the vast majority responded positively.

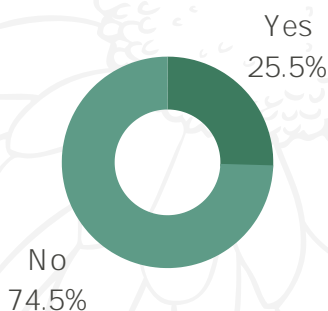


Figure 4. 21 Training completed in the tourism sector

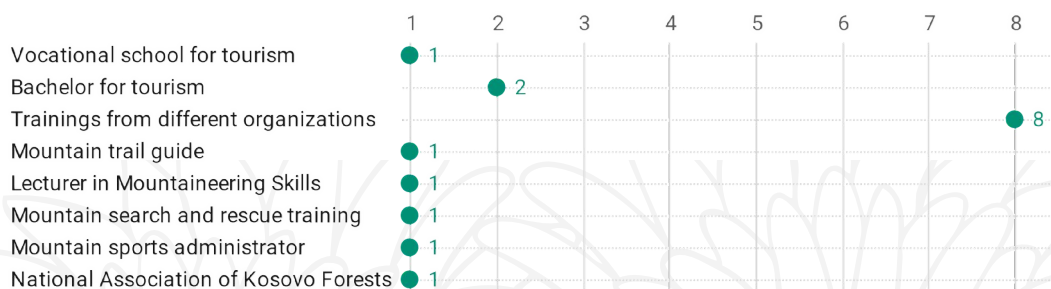


Figure 4. 22 Financial support for developing rural tourism

The last part of the research aimed to identify the improvements needed to strengthen rural tourism. Among the most important improvements were the improvement of the electricity network, water and sewerage, the placement of signs and information boards, the opening of the road and the maintenance of roads and trails. Other necessary improvements were also infrastructure improvements, the construction of resorts along trails, increased accommodation capacity, the promotion of mountain tourism and the digitization of data, the set up of camping sites, the construction of trails, and the support of katun owners and farmers in provision of tourist services.

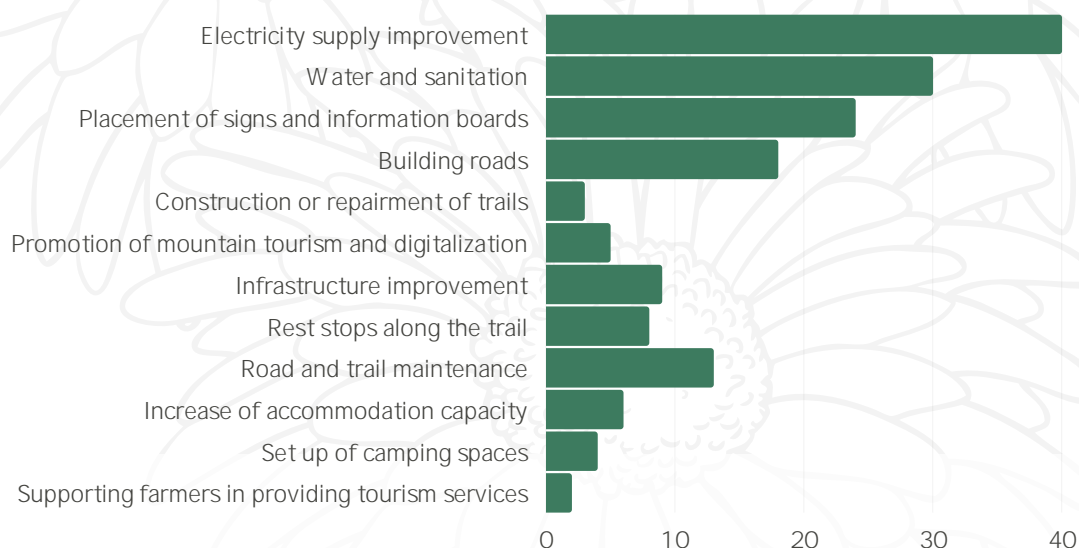


Figure 4. 23 Necessary improvements for strengthening rural tourism

Another matter discussed was whether attractions in the respondents' community needed to be improved, and 47 people felt that improvements were needed. Among the most needed improvements were standardized signage and information boards, arrangement of shelters, improvement of trails, and maintenance. There were also those present who felt the need to set up camping sites, fix roads, fix traditional katuns, create new trails, preserve the heritage of mountain cultures, as well as the need for a cable car and ski slope.

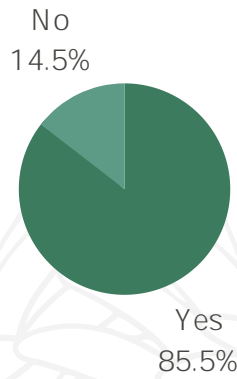


Figure 4. 24 Opinions whether there is need to improve attractions



Figure 4. 25 Most necessary improvement of the attractions

According to the data, we see that a combination of print media, television and social media is the best method for promoting rural tourism. Of these methods, the most promising and inexpensive way is promotion through social media. Successful methods of promotion include online booking travel agencies such as booking and word-of-mouth promotion.

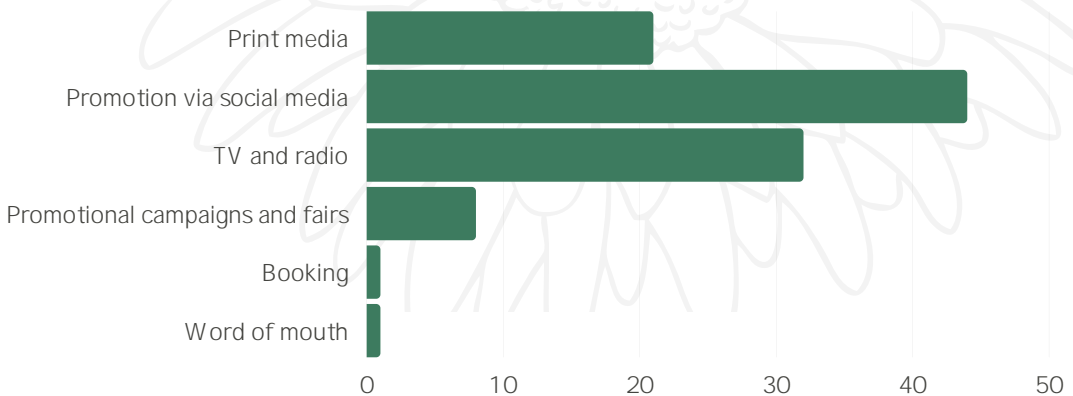


Figure 4. 26 Best method for promoting rural tourism

Respondents when asked what changes they thought would bring the development of mountain tourism in the community from an economic, personal and socio-cultural point of view, were all of the opinions were that it would have positive impacts. As for the changes that will bring the development of mountain tourism in the community from the environmental aspect, 10 people thought that there will be negative impacts where the flora and fauna will be damaged, and 2 people suggested to be extra careful and tourism to be exercised according to European standards, and find a kind of balance.

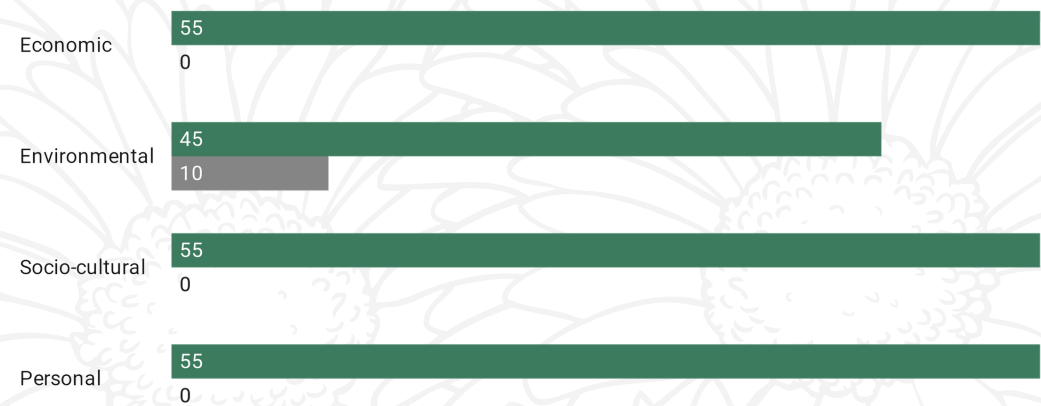


Figure 4. 27 The impact of changes in terms of the economic, environmental, personal and socio-cultural aspect

According to the respondents, the advantages of mountain tourism are a combination of some positive changes which come along with the development of mountain tourism. Among these advantages we mention the possibility of engaging in rural activities by allowing farmers to provide services or accommodation to tourists while caring for agriculture, at the same time. The extra profit gained through tourism activities can be used to improve electricity supply, communication equipment and update the condition of roads. The production of local food and handicrafts also helps to capitalize on the community's cultural heritage. As well as some were of the opinion that the number of employees will increase and the youth in mountain tourism will be more active.

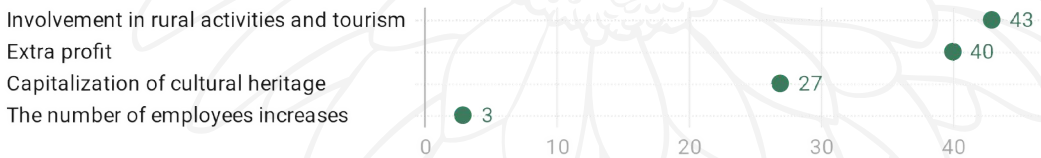


Figure 4. 28 Rural tourism advantages

5. Discussions

Based on the results of the research, we can say that in the municipality of Istog farmers and katun owners still practice the tradition of migrating with their livestock or transhumance. The vast majority of respondents from the municipality of Istog keep hundreds of livestock, of which they mentioned sheep, cows or goats. Many kept different categories of animals at the same time, some kept chickens which they took to their katuns in the deep mountainous areas, moreover some also kept horses as a tourist attraction. At the same time, these farmers plant various vegetables near their katuns, where they mentioned that they plant potatoes, onions, garlic, and peppers, among others. Hence, they have fresh local products so they do not need to purchase food from the market, just in case they have a higher demand from tourists. In the Istog area, road infrastructure was lacking and many katuns did not have telephone or internet access. Also the katuns were more traditional compared to those of Peja.

On the other hand, tourism in the municipality of Peja is already much more developed compared to that of Istog. Most of the respondents from the municipality of Peja did not carry out agricultural activities and did not keep livestock. To meet customers' demands with traditional foods, they provided raw materials (eg. milk) from the surrounding area. In this municipality, hotels, villas and accommodation houses developed quite well and rapidly. Also in terms of infrastructure this municipality had invested more, they had a relatively well developed road infrastructure, they also had access to electricity, telephone or internet and remote mountainous areas.

According to the results, we see that both municipalities serve traditional food, the respondents of the municipality of Istog also produced many types of cheese, while many of the respondents of Peja also produced wine and alcohol. However, according to research results, the production of handicraft products is slowly declining.

The practice of collecting MAPs and NWFPs is not very common for these areas, given the fact how rich these areas are in these products.

In terms of traditions such as Rugova's traditional games, the Lama Dinner, the sheep shearing, we see that they are not as common and popular as they should be, 17 people indicated that they have no specific tradition that they take part or organize in their katuns. It is therefore important that these values are further preserved and promoted so that we do not lose our national customs.

We observed that there are different trails but many of them did not have a specific name, and what was missing from these trails were mostly standardized signage and information boards. Respondents also mentioned that there is a need to set up resting areas that have roofs both nearby their katuns and along the trails. Some respondents mentioned that there is also a need to put up signs prohibiting gunfire.

The attractions of these two municipalities were many, from the most important we mentioned the peak of Hajla which has a height of 2403 m above sea level, also had the peak of Korenik with a height of 2393 m above sea level and many others. All these make the mountain tourism of these two municipalities attractive, as well as their geographical position and the border area with Montenegro and Serbia and the history of this area adds value that these katuns.

In terms of education and training held in the tourism sector, there is a strong need for most respondents. Their willingness and eagerness to participate in such trainings was high and everyone was more than willing to improve their current tourist offer or to create a new tourist offer.

Based on the research, we also notice a significant lack of promotion of mountain tourism in these two municipalities. Consequently, it is extremely necessary to promote mountain tourism and the katuns of these areas.

6. Conclusions

In general, Kosovo needs a genuine tourism development strategy where a strong importance is given to the preservation, revitalization and opening to the public of places and katuns with a cultural and natural value. Also, in terms of tourism data, there is a significant lack of such data.

Through this research it has been achieved to a considerable extent to fill the lack of information from the mountain tourism sector for the municipality of Peja and Istog.

Taking into account the challenges faced by the owners of katuns in these areas on a daily basis, it is vital to invest more in these two municipalities to strengthen rural tourism, especially in road infrastructure. Another challenge was the supply of electricity as well as drinking water and a proper sewerage system.

Necessary investments include the increase of accommodation capacity, the construction and repairment of traditional katuns, and the financial support of the owners of these katuns as well as the increase of service capacities.

Katuns that Kosovo has are attractive to international tourists and beyond because of the traditional values they represent as well as the favourable prices of overnight stays and other tourist services they offer.



7. Suggestions

Based on the findings of this report, the following suggestions are proposed which will be important for the development of the tourism sector:

- Developing a national strategy for the development of the tourism sector;
- Develop policies to promote competition and develop sustainable tourism;
- Production of official statistics, related to Kosovo tourism, how it affects the country's GDP and how many individuals are employed in this sector;
- Build roads and access points to places that are attractive to tourists;
- Invest more in the promotion of the country, in visibility and to have an official website for tourism optimized for use in various devices;
- Develop marketing strategies for the tourism sector;
- Invest in video marketing of the country;
- Support and promote locally produced products;
- Invest more in the preservation of buildings that represent heritage values;
- Allocate sufficient funds to support festivals, events, and revitalize specific traditions such as Rugova traditional games, Sheep Shearing, Lama Dinner.



Annex A: Mountain tourism questionnaire



This project is funded by
the European Union



MNE-KOS

IPA CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION PROGRAMME
MONTENEGRO-KOSOVO 2014-2020

This questionnaire will be used to research about the population operating in the mountain tourism sector and having the potential to provide services in the mountain tourism sector. The research will be conducted within the project "Transhumance - a new tourism offer of Kosovo and Montenegro". We guarantee that your identity and this information will not be published anywhere and will not be used for any other purpose.

****PLEASE CIRCLE AN ANSWER TO ANY QUESTION. IF THERE ARE TWO ANSWERS, CIRCULATE BOTH. ****

Questionnaire for mountain tourism

Questionnaire code: _____

Date of interview: ____/____/2020

General information:

1. Respondent _____ Sex: • M, • F.
2. Year of birth _____, No. of family members _____
3. Tel no. _____, E-mail: _____
4. Village _____, Municipality _____

5. What is your level of education?

- Primary education
- High school or vocational school
- Bachelor
- Others, specify: _____

6. What is your main family income?

- Mountain tourism
- Agriculture
- Employed in the private sector
- Employed in the public sector
- Crafting
- Others, specify: _____

7. Do you have any specific traditions that you realize in the katuns?

8. What tourist activities do you realize?

- Accommodation
- Food
- Tourist guides
- Others: _____

9. What is the accommodation capacity of your katun? _____

10. What is the number of visitors per year to your katun? Domestic _____, Foreign _____

11. What you can produce and sell in katuns?

- Specialty bread
- Cheese
- Vine and alcohol
- Canned food
- Craft products
- Others, specify: _____

12. Do you collect any MAP, wild fruits in the mountainous area where you operate? At what time of year? How common is it to collect those plants in your area?
If so, which ones, at what time and in what quantity?

13. Please list the main mountain tourism attractions in your area?

14. What trails pass near your katun?

15. Where do you buy the products that you serve tourists?

- Surrounding area
- I produce on my own
- In stores or supermarkets
- Other _____

16. Do you think there is potential for development of mountain tourism in your area? Yes • , No • .

17. Do you think that there is enough promotion of mountain tourism in your area? Yes • , No • .

18. What are the main challenges for the development of rural tourism in your area?

- Undeveloped infrastructure
- Lack of promotion
- Lack of investment
- Population migration in urban areas
- Others, specify: _____

19. Do you think that there will be an interest of domestic and foreign tourists if investment is started in the development of rural tourism? Yes • , No • .

If so, why?

20. Have you ever had any kind of financial support for the development of rural tourism (international donations, loans, or support from the municipality)? Yes • , No • .

If so, from whom?

21. Have you completed training in the tourism sector? Yes • , No • .

If so, what kind of training?

If not, are you ready to attend trainings that will be organized by IADK?



22. Can you please suggest the necessary improvements that can be introduced to strengthen rural tourism in the area?

23. In your opinion, what is the best method of promoting mountain tourism?

- Written media
- Promotion through social media
- TV and radio
- Promotional campaigns and fairs
- Others, specify: _____

24. Do you think attractions in your community need to be improved?

If so, list the three most needed improvements:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

25. What changes do you think the development of mountain tourism will bring to your community?

	Positive impact	Negative impact	Suggestions
Economic aspect			
Environmental aspect			
Socio-cultural aspect			
Personal aspect			

26. What do you think are the advantages of mountain tourism?

- Involvement in rural activities by allowing farmers to provide services or accommodation to tourists while caring for agriculture, at the same time.
- The extra profit gained through tourism activities can be used to improve electricity supply, communication equipment and update the condition of roads.
- The production of local food and handicrafts also helps to capitalize on the community's cultural heritage.
- Others, specify: _____

27. Additional comments from respondent:



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