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Protected areas in the Stara planina tourist region – current state and prospects for tourism development

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Abstract: *Bulgaria is a country with an extremely diverse nature. Unlike a number of European countries, Bulgarian nature is relatively well preserved. For the purposes of its protection, a network of protected areas was created, which occupy 5.3% of the country's territory. Bulgaria also participates in a number of international initiatives, which put about 1/3 of the territory of Bulgaria under protection of the natural environment. According to the Protected areas Act in Bulgaria, 6 categories are distinguished - national parks, natural parks, reserves, maintained reserves, protected localities, natural attractions. Among them, important resources for the development of tourism are national parks, natural parks, protected localities and natural attractions. They represent unique sites for the development of alternative forms of tourism such as ecological, cultural-cognitive, route-cognitive tourism, etc. On the other hand, reserves and maintained reserves prohibit tourism activities. The network of protected areas is unevenly developed throughout the country. It is better represented in the mountainous areas, and in the plain parts of the country it is more limited due to the strong anthropogenic changes and the pressure from various human activities. In connection with the preserved nature, the mountains are preferred sites for tourism. The contribution of the protected areas in this regard is significant.*

Stara planina tourist region is among the country's tourist areas with well-defined mountainous characteristics. This is an important prerequisite both for the preservation of nature and for the formation of a suitable environment for recreation and tourism, and the mentioned directions are mutually bound.

The purpose of this article is to valorize the protected areas in Stara Planina tourist region and to highlight the possibilities for their current and future use for the development of tourism.

Keywords: protected areas, tourism, Stara planina tourist region, natural resources

Introduction

Protected territories in our country aim at protecting unique and threatened ecosystems and preserving Bulgarian nature for future generations. They are legally regulated and differ in status and mode of protection. Their main purpose is ecological. In addition, a large part of the protected areas is of interest to tourists and are important for the development of tourism. The preserved natural environment greatly increases their attractiveness compared to the surrounding territories subjected to anthropogenic pressure. On the other hand, the protection of the natural environment in them also acts as a limiting factor for tourism, due to the presence of a number of prohibitions and restrictions. Toncheva [1] notes that since the 1980s there has been a worldwide increase in the use of protected natural areas for recreation and leisure, which has led to negative social and environmental consequences for many of them.

In 1998, the National Assembly adopted the Protected Areas Act (PAA) - the first specialized nature protection law [2]. It defines the relationship between the institutions responsible for the protected areas and ensures more effective conservation of nature and protection of local interests [3]. The Protected Areas Act of the Republic of Bulgaria aims to protect these areas as national and common human wealth and property and as a special form of native nature protection, contributing to the development of culture and science, and to the well-being of society. Thus, nature protection in our country has a centuries-old tradition.

As is known, Bulgaria is a country with an extremely diverse nature. Unlike a number of European countries, Bulgarian nature is relatively well preserved. For the purposes of its protection, a network of protected territories was developed, which occupies 5.3% of the country's territory. In connection with the participation in a number of international initiatives, about 1/3 of the country's territory is under some type of protection of the natural environment. They represent unique sites for the development of alternative forms of tourism such as ecological, cultural-cognitive, route-cognitive tourism, etc. On the other hand, reserves and maintained reserves prohibit tourism activities. The network of protected areas is unevenly developed throughout the country. It is better represented in the mountainous areas, and in the plain parts of the country it is more limited due to the strong anthropogenic changes and the pressure from various human activities. In connection with the preserved nature, the mountains are preferred sites for tourism. The contribution of the protected areas in this regard is significant.

The purpose of this article is to valorize the protected areas in Stara planina and to highlight the possibilities for their current and future use for the development of tourism. The focus of the study is the current state of the protected areas and their contribution not only to the protection of natural environment, but also to the development of recreation and tourism.

Conceptual apparatus and methods of study

Protected areas are a modern national and global approach to the protection of flora and fauna, as well as cultural and historical heritage. They are used for various purposes: educational, scientific, touristic, etc. In recent years, the protection of nature and world cultural heritage has acquired a global character.

Protected areas is a broad concept with specifics depending on the specific legislation of each country and the international legislation. UNESCO places under the name "objects of world importance", both natural geological ecosystems and their species diversity, as well as a large part of cultural monuments around the world. In this way, the very concept of "protected territories" acquires an even wider meaning on an international scale. In most developed countries, the system of protected areas shows great diversity both in terms of the names of the categories and regarding the purpose and extent of their permissible use [4].

According to the Protected Areas Act (PAA) in Bulgaria, 6 categories are distinguished - national parks, natural parks, reserves, maintained reserves, protected areas, natural attractions. They differ in their status, objectives and conservation regime. Among them, important resources for the development of tourism are national parks, natural parks, protected areas and natural attractions. Protected areas have also been declared under the International European Initiative NATURA 2000.

In the present study, the authors for the first time make an attempt to valorize and characterize natural-geographic sites (protected territories) based on tourist-geographic regionalization. Official data from the Ministry of the Environment and Water, the Regional Inspections for the Environment and Water, the Association of Parks in Bulgaria, and the Bulgarian Information Business Portal were used to collect the information. This research studies the tourist functions of the large protected areas, as well as some of the natural attractions and protected areas over a long period of time. The methods of analysis, synthesis and summary were used to interpret and present the collected information regarding the number and type of protected areas in the researched tourist region.

Territorial scope of the Stara planina tourist region

The Stara planina tourist region covers the central part of the country along Stara planina (Balkan Mountains). It includes 32 municipalities from 10 districts (Table 1).

The Danube region is to the north. To the east are the tourist regions of Northern Black Sea and Southern Black Sea. To the south are the Valley of Roses and Trakia area, and to the southwest is the tourist area of Sofia. To the west, Stara Planina tourist region reaches the state border with Serbia.

The Stara planina tourist region is divided into two sub-regions: Western Stara planina sub-region and Eastern Stara planina sub-region. The main office of the organization for the management of the tourist area is in the town of Veliko Tarnovo.

Present condition of the protected territories in Stara planina tourist region

There are 168 protected areas on the territory of the Stara planina tourist region (Table 1). The impressive number corresponds to the fact that the territory of the region is mostly mountainous. From the point of view of biogeographical zoning, the territory of the considered tourist region overlaps almost completely with two biogeographical regions - the Pre-Balkan biogeographical region and the Stara planina biogeographical region [1, 3]. In the east, it reaches and partially enters the East Stara planina biogeographic region (the municipalities of Sungurlare, Kotel and Varbitza). Through the municipalities of Strazhitsa and Gorna Oryahovitsa, it partially penetrates the Danube biogeographic region. Therefore, the tourist-geographical zoning only partially coincides with the biogeographical zoning of Bulgaria, because it is tied to a number of factors, not only of a natural, but socio-economic too. From the point of view of natural capital, the protected areas in the considered tourist region perform conservation, regulation and support functions. From the point of view of tourism, the cultural ecosystem services that some of them provide are important, because are interesting and attractive tourist sites. Therefore, they are an important natural capital for the needs of recreation and tourism.

Table 1 shows that the Stara planina tourist region has the largest number of protected areas - 85, which is 14.9% of the protected areas in Bulgaria. The natural landmarks are also numerous, 66, and their share is 19.2% of the total number in the country. Although there is only one national park (National Park "Central Balkan"), its contribution to the protection of the natural environment is the most significant, because it has the largest area and is 1/3 of the national parks in Bulgaria. The number of the reserves in the region is 10, or 18.9% of the reserves in Bulgaria. There are 4 maintained reserves, which make up 11.4% of this type of protected areas in the country. Although there are only 2 natural parks, they make up 18.2% of the total number in the country. These are Vrachanski Balkan Natural Park and Bulgarka Natural park. It is necessary to specify that many of the remaining protected areas fall within the group of the national and natural parks. Therefore, the total of the protected areas is not a simple sum of their surface.

In the PAA, it is stated that characteristic or remarkable objects of inanimate nature, such as rock formations, rock outcrops of scientific value, earthen pyramids, caves, sinkholes, waterfalls, fossil and mineral deposits, etc., are declared natural landmarks. of exceptional value because of their inherent rarity, representativeness, aesthetics, or of significance to science and culture. Natural attractions are managed

with the aim of preserving their natural features and are declared with an adjacent territory necessary for their preservation. Territories with characteristic or remarkable landscapes, including those resulting from the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature, as well as habitats of endangered, rare or vulnerable plant and animal species and communities, are declared protected areas. Protected areas are managed not only to protect the biotic and abiotic component of ecosystems, but also to provide opportunities for scientific research, educational activity, ecological monitoring, tourism and spiritual enrichment. As for the nature of the protected areas, it is striking that many of the sites are caves in connection with the karst terrains, especially in the Vrachanska and Kotlenska mountains, as well as waterfalls in connection with the rugged relief and the mountain water. A small part of the protected areas has an anthropogenic nature (eg monasteries). Nationally and internationally known are the natural landmark "Belogradchishki skali", the Emenski Canyon Natural landmark known for the eco-trail of the same name, which is one of the first in Bulgaria, the Vola protected area, Devetashka cave, Prokhodna cave, Saeva Dupka cave, Ledenika cave, which have the status of natural landmarks, etc. Despite their large number, most of the protected areas and natural attractions are not used for the needs of tourism, although they would be of interest to tourists. A number of municipalities are developing and gradually implementing projects for their beautification and appropriate exposure through the construction of eco-paths, protective facilities, observation decks, etc. Protected areas and natural attractions are mainly suitable for ecotourism and nature tourism. Often, they do not expect a long stay of tourists.

The PAA states that samples of natural ecosystems, including typical and/or remarkable wild plant and animal species and their habitats, are declared reserves. Reserves are managed to preserve their natural character, genetic resources, natural habitats and populations of protected rare, endemic and relict species. Scientific and educational activities and environmental monitoring are carried out there. They also serve to develop a network of ecosystems and endangered habitats representative of Bulgaria and Europe. In contrast to reserves, maintained reserves are permitted to carry out supporting, guiding, regulating or restorative measures.

In the Stara planina tourist region, the largest reserves in Bulgaria are located. These are following: Dzhendema (4,220.2 ha), Steneto (3,578.7 ha) and Tsarichina (3,418.7 ha). The only site of white mulberry in Stara planina is in the Tsarichina Reserve. The smallest reserve here is Elenova Gora (53.7 ha). Due to their specific nature protection importance, we should mention Orlitsa Reserve in Kotlenska Planina, which protects primary ecosystems of Mysian beech, as well as the maintained Ardachlaka Reserve including a natural fir forest, which due to the low altitude needs maintenance activities.

Five of the reserves are recognized as biosphere reserves. Biosphere reserve are following: Chuprene (Chiprovskia mountain), Boatin (Zlatishko-Tetevenska mountain), Tsarichina (village Ribaritsa, Teteven area), Steneto (Cherni Osam r., Troyanski Balkan), and Dzhendema (Kalofer Balkan) are

recognized as biosphere parks. According to the original concept, the Biosphere Reserve is a strictly protected territory with unique flora and fauna and other natural values of great importance, which serve as a benchmark for the primary state of the ecosystem. On their basis, an assessment is made of the influence that the human species has on nature.

Today the term biosphere parks are used, which should become an example of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, demonstrating good practices and policies, both in the field of protecting biological diversity and natural ecosystems, and in the field of sustainable development of local communities. In accordance with the Seville Strategy, modern biosphere parks must fulfill the following three mutually complementary functions:

- Conservation - contributes to the preservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic diversity;
- Developmental - promotes socio-cultural and ecologically sustainable economic and human development;
- Logistical – supports demonstration projects, conservation training and qualification, research and monitoring related to local, regional, national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development.

Of greatest importance for tourism are the national and nature parks. As noted in the PAA, territories are declared as national parks, the boundaries of which do not include towns and villages and which include natural ecosystems with a wide variety of plant and animal species and habitats, with typical and remarkable landscapes and objects of inanimate nature. Territories including diverse ecosystems with a variety of plant and animal species and their habitats, with typical and remarkable landscapes and objects of inanimate nature are declared natural parks. Within the boundaries of the natural parks, the law allows for the presence of towns, villages and resorts, as well as for production and activities that do not pollute the environment. In addition to combining a variety of flora and fauna, as well as other unique natural attractions (caves, rock formations, waterfalls, etc.), the conservation regime is not too strict and within certain limits various economic activities are permissible, including tourism. The national and natural parks offer a variety of opportunities to practice different types of alternative tourism - hiking (mountain trekking, trekking), different types of sports tourism such as rock climbing, horse riding, cycling, as well as speleological tourism, ecotourism, nature-knowledge tourism, for observation of plants, birds, large mammals, photo hunting, etc. Bulgarian national parks are among the largest and highly valued in Europe, which is why they are famous in the international conservation circles [7]. Most of them are relatively well developed for tourist purposes.

The Central Balkan National Park was established in 1991 and today it is the second largest national park in Bulgaria with an area of 72,021.07 ha. It is part of the nature protection network of PAN parks, which is related to the fact that the largest protected massif of old beech forests in Europe is

preserved in the park. They occupy about 40% of the territory. The average age of the forests in the Central Balkan National Park is impressive - 111 years, and that of the deciduous trees - 121 years. The beech communities have an average age of 135 years. In this regard, the forests in the park are recognized by UNESCO as a world natural heritage of humanity. Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe. This is the newest site in Bulgaria included in the prestigious list, albeit it crosses the border.

A characteristic feature of the Central Balkan National Park is the great unevenness of the relief - over 1700 m. This is a prerequisite for different altitude zones and for the formation of a great diversity in the flora and fauna. For the high parts, characteristic relief forms are the flattened ridges and the massive peaks. The deep canyons and rock walls are very typical and specific to the park. Most of them are hard-to-reach or inaccessible reserve territories. There are 9 reserves within the park. These are following: Tsarichina, Boatin, Steneto, Dzhendema, which have the status of biosphere, as well as Kozyata stena, Stara reka, North Dzhendema, Sokolna, Singing rocks. Here is the deepest abyssal cave in Bulgaria with a height of 377 m - Raichova dupka. The highest point of the park, Mount Botev (2,376 m) is one of the windiest and foggiest places in Bulgaria. In the high areas, the snow lasts for about 6 months. Its thickness at the end of March can reach 180-220 cm. However, skiing sports are practiced only near Pleven hut. The highly rugged relief is a prerequisite for the formation of numerous waterfalls, which have the status of natural attractions or protected areas. Such are Vidimsko Praskalo (80 m) and Kademliysko Praskalo (72 m), as well as the champion in Bulgaria, Raisko Praskalo (124.5 m).

Forests occupy 56% of the park's territory. Of the established 2,340 species and subspecies of plants of conservation importance, there are 143 species and subspecies (6.1%), including 10 local, 10 Bulgarian and 67 Balkan endemics. Medicinal plants are represented by 166 species, which are $\frac{3}{4}$ of those traditionally used in folk medicine. Invertebrates are represented by 2,387 species. Of these, 19 are globally endangered species, 36 species are included in global and European lists of endangered species, and 10 species are protected in Bulgaria, for example the caterpillar beetle, Apollo butterfly, purple willow butterfly, etc. The mammals and birds in the park are of high conservation importance. Central Balkan National Park is recognized as an ornithological place of world importance. The territory of the park is an important habitat for a number of birds of prey. There is a great variety of diurnal birds of prey - 16 species. Over 5% of the Bulgarian golden eagle population lives in the Park and over 5% of the owls in Bulgaria nest there. Central Balkan National Park is of world importance for the golden eagle. The white-tailed buzzard, the little eagle, etc. are also internationally protected. There are 17 species of small and 16 species of large mammals, as well as 18 species of bats. The otter is included in the World Red Book.

The total area of the tourist zone in the park is about 3,350 ha. or 4.7% of its total area. The tourist infrastructure includes 670 km in 16 tourist routes, as well as recreation areas and observation decks. The tourist superstructure includes 25 shelter sites, including 21 tourist lodges, shelters and holiday houses.

The international mountain route E-3, known for its section in Bulgaria as "Kom - Emine", passes through the park. In addition to hiking routes, there are specialized routes for observing birds, plants and large mammals, photo hunting routes, general informational, cultural-historical, caving, alpine routes, ski rally routes, cycle tours, horse tourism, extreme sports, etc. Starting points on the south are the cities of Kalofer, Karlovo, Klisura, Sopot, etc., and on the north - the villages of Ribaritsa, Chiflik, Apriltsi, etc. [8].

The Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park is located in the mountain of the same name. The park is unique with the wide variety of surface and underground karst formations formed on limestone terrain. Here are some of the most interesting karst caves and chasms in Bulgaria, of which there are more than 600 in total. The most visited is the Ledenika cave, which has the status of a natural landmark and is part of the 100 National Tourist Sites of Bulgaria. The Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park was established in 1989 as a national park, and in 1997 it was recognized as a park of international importance. In 2003, it was recategorized with the status of a natural park. The area of the park is 28,803.9 ha, i.e. the Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park is among the most wide natural parks, the second largest in the country. The altitude of the territory varies from 237 m to 1482 m. The relief forms are diverse, eg rock ridges, rounded peaks, valleys, saddles, whirlpools, sinkholes, etc. Karst terrains are a prerequisite for a shortage of surface water, as well as deforestation, characteristic of large areas. However, due to heavy rains in the spring, 176 waterfalls are formed, most of them with a small height. There are 1,082 species of higher plants and 373 species with medicinal properties. The oak and beech belt are well expressed. There is a great variety of mosses. They are represented by 186 species, which is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the moss species found in Bulgaria. The diversity of mushrooms is also great - 184 species, 15 of them are of conservation importance. Amphibians and reptiles are represented by 23 species, which are 44% of the herpetofauna in Bulgaria [8]. The rocky terrain is a suitable home for birds of prey. In this regard, the park is among the ornithologically important places in the country. 139 species of birds nest on the territory of the park, 27 of which are included in the Red Book of Bulgaria, 58 are of European nature protection importance, and 3 species are globally endangered [9]. The Vrachanski Balkan Natural Park is extremely important for the protection of the populations of the goshawk */Pernis apivorus/*, the white-tailed buzzard */Buteo rufinus/*, the peregrine falcon */Falco cherrug/*, the peregrine falcon */Falco peregrinus/* and the owl */Bubo bubo/*. The Vrachanski Karst Reserve falls within the boundaries of the park. The reserve was established to protect a karst area with interesting rock formations. It contains the highest limestone cliffs (over 400 m) on the Balkan Peninsula and in Europe, which are located at a low altitude (Vratsata locality). The Ritlite Natural landmark is emblematic, which includes four rock walls parallel to each other, located on the left bank of the Iskar River next to the village of Lyutibrod. The main departure point is the city of Vratsa. The Vrachanski Balkan National Park is particularly suitable for rock climbing, speleotourism, mountain trekking, hang gliding, etc. 116 routes are marked for rock climbing in Vratsata area.

The Bulgarka Natural Park is one of the new parks in Bulgaria, established in 2002. It covers landscapes of Gabrovo and Tryavna sections in Central Stara planina and is in close proximity to the Central Balkan National Park. Its area is 23,691.63 ha, with 80.2% covered by forests. The park also contains rock faults, open herbaceous meadows, river valleys, caves, hills and saddles. The highest point in the park is Karadjova Kula Peak (1,511 m), the average altitude is 940 m, and the elevation is about 1,200 m. The Bulgarka Natural Park protects extensive beech and oak ecosystems including cer, blagun, winter and summer oak, etc. Over 360 species of higher plants have been identified. Nearly 70% of the medicinal plants officially recognized in Bulgaria are found here. On the territory of the park there is a natural yew forest, with an area of 0.6 ha. including the conservational important habitat that is found only here and has three floors - beech-yew-laver [8]. The fauna is diverse and well preserved, in connection with which the territory of the park is a protected area under NATURA 2000, in accordance with the Directive of the habitats and the Directive of the birds.

The network of marked tourist routes has been developed. The international mountain route E-3 (Kom - Emine) passes through the Bulgarka Natural Park. The starting points in the foothills are a considerable number. The main road (Shipchenski prohod) and the railway line (Gorna Oryahovitsa - Tulovo) connecting North and South Bulgaria run there, which makes the park easily accessible. The park also provides excellent opportunities for practicing cycling, hang gliding, paragliding, rural tourism, horse riding, photo hunting, cultural and educational tourism.

The idea of developing a transnational protected area with the status of a park along the western border has not yet been implemented. On the Serbian side of the border, the Strana planina National park has already been established. On the Bulgarian side of the border, the territory of the park would cover the territory of the municipalities of Chiprovtsi, Chuprene, Georgi Damyanovo and Berkovitsa [10]. This would contribute both to the better protection of nature in this part of the mountain and to increasing the tourist interest in it.

Conclusion

According to Mihailov [11], in Bulgaria landscapes still are not sufficiently recognized as a main resource for the tourism business, except in the case of resort construction. The same author emphasizes that "the economic effect of tourism must be the result of the social and natural balances in the destination countries".

The protected areas in the Stara planina tourist region are a valuable natural tourist resource due to the unique combination of flora, fauna and attractive elements of non-living nature. Nevertheless, the development of tourism in them should not become an end in itself. Excessive anthropogenic pressure on protected areas contradicts the concept of their protection. On a global scale, and increasingly in our country, there are a number of examples of a harmonious combination between tourism and the protection

of the environment and, in particular, of protected areas. According to Mihailov [11] over 2000 are the natural phenomena in the country, which are waiting to be accepted in international and national tourist programs and included in specialized tours.

Stara planina tourist area offers a wide variety of natural tourist resources. All categories of protected areas mentioned in the Protected Areas Act are acknowledged. Most of them are of global importance. They offer excellent opportunities for the development of a number of alternative forms of tourism such as ecotourism (eco-trails, geotrails), educational tourism, various types of sports tourism, bird and other wild animal watching, weekend tourism, etc. Based on this, the relevant tourist infrastructure is developed. Nature utilization in protected areas must be carried out with particular care. The number of tourists must be regulated and their behavior should be responsible. The tourism industry must also be developed cautiously so that environmental contradictions and conflicts do not arise. A large part of the natural tourism resources is still not fully utilized for the needs of tourism. The income they bring to the local economy is insignificant, as they are mostly visited by individual tourists. It is necessary to renew and maintain the available tourist infrastructure, to build eco-trails and access markings to protected areas and natural attractions, to complete the renewal of the general infrastructure, tourists should use resources responsibly and sparingly. Last but not least, we need to create a variety of tourist packages and carry out adequate marketing and advertising activities to promote the offered tourist packages in order to cover specific market niches and improve the income of the local economy.

Table 1. Protected territories in Stara planina tourist region

District/ Municipality	National parks	Natural parks	Reserves	Maintained reserves	Protected areas	Natural landmarks
Vidin district - Chuprene municipality	-	-	Chuprene	-	Midgur, Chuprensky buky	Belogradchishki skali, Levi suhi pech and Desni suhi pech caves, Gardata
	-	-	1	-	2	3
Vratsa district - Vratsa, Krivodol, Mezdra, Roman	-	Vrachanski Balkan	Vrachanski karst	-	Borov Kamak, Vegdata, Vola, Padinite, Rechka, Tepeto, Kalna Matnitza, Sareshinova	Bogite mostove, Vratzata, Govedarnika, Galabarnika, Ledenika cave,

municipalities					caves, Borovanska mogila, Romania	Novata peshtera (cave), Ponora, Ritlite, Samuilitza 1 and 2, Chervenitza, Chuklite, Dedova dupka cave, Chernia izvor cave, Camarata
	-	1	1	-	10	14
Montana district - Berkovitsa, Varshets, Georgi Damyanovo, Montana, Chiprovtsi municipalities	-	Vrachanski Balkan	Gorna koria	-	Usketo, Uruchnik, Copren gora, Ravno buche, Deianitza, Kalimanitza, Kaleto, Kitkata, Ravnensko gradishte, 100 ovtze, Samarite, Koritata, Gluharche- Vodna galtitza, Shabovitza, Vodnia skok, Durshin vodopad (waterfall)	Mishin camak cave, Mramornata peshtera (cave), Levi and Desni suhi pech caves, Belogradchishki skali, Haydushkite vodopadi, Durhin vodopad (waterfall), Vodnia skok, Stakevska reka's waterfall
	-	1	1	-	16	8
Lovech district - Apriltsi, Lovech,	Central Balkan	-	Severen Dgandem, Steneto, Kazia	-	Zlievtzi, Lulyakata, Chernia rut, Batilovetz,	Peshtera Prohodna (cave), Svirchovitza,

Lukovit, Teteven, Trojan, Ugarchin, Yablanitsa municipalities			stena, Tzarichina, Boatin		Dragoychev kamak, Mikrenska usoyna, Usoynata, Anomir, Byalka, Korkuk, Krivatzite, Petko bunar, Shumnatitza, Dragoitza	Devetashka peshtera (cave), Saeva dupka, Loposhnitza (waterfall), Banovsky skok (waterfall), Brambar skok (waterfall), Koman (waterfall), Toplya (waterfall), Karstov izvor (spring)
	1	-	5	-	14	10
Veliko Tarnovo district - municipalities of Veliko Tarnovo, Gorna Oryahovitsa, Elena, Zlataritsa, Lyaskovets, Strazhitsa	-	-	Biala krava	Savchov Chair Haydushki chukar	Slona, Preobragensky monastery, Nikolinsky kladenetz, Bogur polyana, Dgulun g'ol, Lesoparka, Kosovo, Mastirskoto, Derventa, Derventa, Gelezartzy, Belokravishtnica, Glavite, Markov buk, Bukova gora, Veselina (river), Pregrada, Studen kladenetz	Emenski canyon, Kapinovski vodopad (waterfall), Mihalkovska's river waterfall, Kaya bunar, Dryamkov halm (hill)
	-	-	1	2	17	5

Gabrovo district - municipalities Gabrovo, Dryanovo, Sevlievo, Tryavna	-	Bulgarka	Peeshtite skali	-	Bozhentzi, Studenya kladenetz, Lagat (juniper field), Varenite, Bostanchetata, Stolishta, Drianovski monasteri, Sokolski monasteri, Lyulyatzite, Dederitza, Batoshevski monasteri, Mahchenitza, Yovovtzi, Laftin	Vikanata skala (rock), Bilyakovetz lake, Mahnatite skaly (rock crown), Bacho kiro cave
	-	1	1	-	15	4
Targovishte district - Antonovo, Omurtag municipalities	-	-	-	-	Rimskia most (Roman bridge)	Garbavata cheshma, Kostadin tepe (rock)
	-	-	-	-	1	2
Shumen district - Varbitsa municipality	-	-	-	Momin grad	Cherven bojur	-
	-	-	-	1	1	-
Sliven district - Kotel municipality	-	-	Orlitzata	Ardachlaka- Kersenlik	Vida, Demir kapiya, , Korenik, Medvensky karst, Orlova skala, Harsov grad	Bajayu Kaya, Bilernika, Dryanovska peshtera (cave), Zlostten, Izvorite, Karvavo pole (cave),

						Ledenata peshtera (cave), Maarata (cave), Malkata Maara, Orlovi peshteri (caves), Rakovski (cave in Zlosten area), Cave in Tsarevets area, Fairy (cave), The Roman Castle, Sveti 40 machenitzi (cave) Sini Vir (waterfall), Urushki skali (rocks), Chernite izvori (springs)
	-	-	1	1	6	18
Burgas district - Sungurlare municipality					Lalkoto (Urum tulip field), Orlitzite	Koriyata, Probitia kamak (rock), Chiflikova niva, Blackberry field
	-	-	-	-	2	4
Total	1	2	10	4	84	66
Share of total for the country in %	33,3	18,2	18,9	11,4	14,9	19,2

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