

# **DESTINATION MARKETING APPLICATION AS AN INNOVATIVE INSTRUMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**(ACCORDING TO THE EXAMPLE OF T. PLEVEN)**

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## **Introduction**

Destination marketing is one of the key instruments in regional marketing, which allows a particular 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 behavior of the target market.

Makens (2006, p. 78) 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. The increased competitiveness of the local tourism industry, based on innovation in the creation and marketing of a diversified, high quality tourist product, is one of the main tools for sustainable urban development.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the applicability of the destination marketing to create a sustainable local cultural and heritage tourist product in the town of Pleven. The main tasks are: 1) to explore and define the role of destination marketing in the sustainable urban development process; 2) to analyze and evaluate the tourism potential of the sights related to the cultural and historical heritage of the town of Pleven; 3) to define and analyze the factors, which favor and restrict the organization of the marketing of destination

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for t. Pleven through territorial segmentation of the local visitors' market in the field of cultural and cognitive tourism; 4) to propose concrete measures for the sustainable development of cultural tourism in the city by clustering local attractions and developing special programs for their marketing.

From a methodological point of view, the study is based on a strategic, inductive and deductive approach. Actual analysis and synthesis are accomplished by applying a system of methods that includes: methods of observation, comparison, interview, descriptive method, statistical methods for multidimensional analysis, etc., realized by statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 19.

### **Destination marketing – a catalyst for a sustainable 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 (2009) Molina-Azorin, Periera-Moliner (2015) and Claver-Cortes (2012), and Hays, Page and Buhalis (2014) tracked the relationship between the destination and the tourism business, emphasizing four key factors, namely: 1) most aspects of tourism are implemented according to the specifics of the relevant locations; 2) the destination is considered as the basic unit of analysis for tourism; 3) the destinations are emerging as major brands in the travel industry; 4) at present, countries, regions and cities are much more willing to allocate funds for destination marketing, recognizing it as a tool to attract the visitors' market.

The concept of sustainable urban development (URBACT Study, 2015) sees cultural tourism as a sector with great growth potential but which also implies a few challenges. The sector promotes the cultural resources of the city, provides the necessary financial resources for the restoration of local landmarks, helps to build special infrastructure and other amenities required from both tourists and the local population. Trends in the sector's development indicate its progressive increase worldwide (Richards, 2013), which entails the development of specialized marketing campaigns to increase the added value of urban cultural attractions. The goal is to increase revenue from tourism and local trade as well as to rise the value of land and local properties, over the number of costs made for maintenance, restoration and renovation. This makes local authorities aware of the need to respond to the dynamics of tourism demand by using new, unconventional methods to make a place more attractive and desirable than other territorial units.

Regional marketing research highlights the contribution of consumer-oriented strategies to increasing the visibility, attractiveness and competitiveness of a given location, respectively for sustainable urban development, as they address different issues including: finances, housing policy, jobs, communications, facilities, the environment, etc. Tsvetanova (2013) stresses that regional marketing helps to

solve issues such as the effective exploitation of local resources, key initiatives to develop the city's endogenous potential, the active involvement of local stakeholders in the city's development process, the building of a positive local image to promote the comparative advantages of the city to its visitors.

In this regard, we can emphasize the important role of destination marketing for sustainable urban development as it helps to build a positive perception of the city in the various contact audiences, respectively to increase the economic success of local tourism initiatives. Ashworth and Voogd (G. J. Ashworth, H. Voogd, 1993) 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.

Pike, S., and Page (2014) 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. Despite the significant role of destinations in the tourism system modeling, there is still no widely accepted uniform definition of the term. The UNWTO (2014) World Tourism Organization issues a travel destination management guide that summarizes the experience of many countries. Although it is not explicitly related to a particular territorial level, this handbook provides a number of principles and guidelines that are relevant to the present work. The more important of them is that it defines the term "local tourist destination" as an alternative to the view that the destinations have no clearly defined size and boundaries: "The local tourist destination is a physical space where the tourist spends at least one night. It includes tourist products as well as additional services and attractions and travel resources within a one-day trip. It has physical and administrative boundaries that define its management, as well as the images and perceptions that determine its competitiveness on the market." The handbook also emphasized the importance of the regional level: "the optimal level of destination management is in most cases sub-national." 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 (2016) emphasizes 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: 1) local authorities experience difficulties to implement the appropriate functional recommendations in field of destination marketing, as they go beyond their competence; 2) they usually have lack of knowledge and finances to organize tourism related researches and to create useful databases for the tourism industry; 3) there is strong necessity of local level institutions to provide unified management, financing and information support for tourism development, such as the destination management and marketing organization. The later can play a significant role in arrangement of the rather conflicting interests of different stakeholders, public bodies, agencies, departments, and others on national, regional and local level.

### **Empirical analysis of the potential of the town of Pleven as a destination for cultural and heritage tourism**

In this section a brief analysis and evaluation of tourism potential of the town of Pleven, Bulgaria is given. Moreover, the results of analysis of territorial segmentation of the visitors' market of Pleven are presented and discussed; as well as the main measures and recommendations for development of Pleven as a destination for cultural and heritage tourism are determined.

#### ***Assessment of the tourist potential of sights and objects related to the cultural and historical 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 of March 15, 2017 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 surprising 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. According to the report on the implementation of the Program for Tourism Development in Pleven Municipality (2017), tourists both, Bulgarian and foreign citizens, who visited the Pleven municipality in 2017, are – 19 278 people and 7177 people, respectively. Tourist tax collected on the territory of the municipality paid for accommodation in the places of accommodation by 31 December 2017 is 34 996 BGN, the fees for categorizing tourist sights for the period are 24 725BGN. Or, the total amount of money collected from tourism tax and fees from the categorization of tourist sights during the year was 59 721 BGN, according to National statistics institute data for 2017. The total amount of visits to museums (including galleries), which were realized during the year, are 206903.

Under the proposed of the Tourism Ministry Concept for tourist zoning of Bulgaria (2015), 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 t. Pleven, (see. Fig. 1)

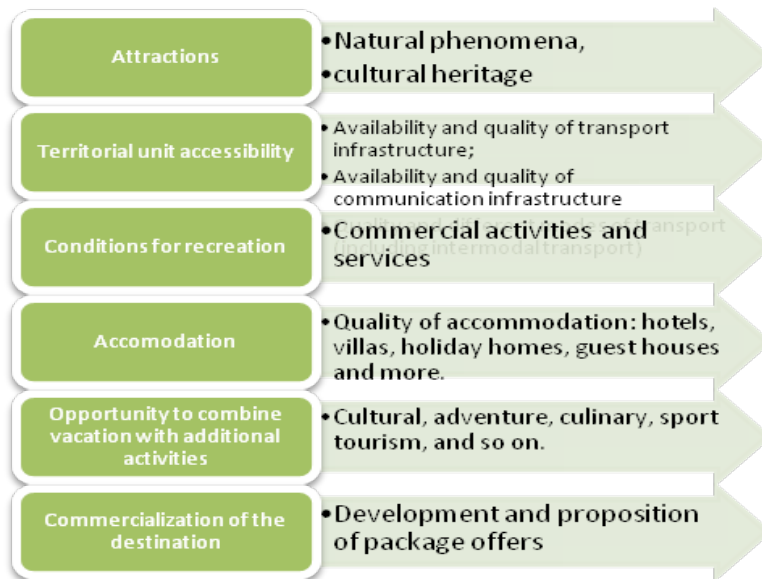


Fig. 1. Key components of the destination's competitiveness

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 from Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism indicates 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 (2017). 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 further to allow city to compete for the visitors’ market preferences.

### ***Analysis of the attitude, awareness and commitment of the residents and visitors toward town of Pleven as a destination for cultural and heritage tourism.***

The objectives of the study are in the center 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. In the conducted electronic poll have participated 117 respondents both, residents and guests of the town of Pleven. The resulting random sample does not claim for representativeness but allows the extraction of extremely useful information about the debated issue and the analysis of its specificity.

The outlined characteristics of the potential of t. Pleven as a destination for cultural and heritage tourism provoke the next basic research questions: 1) who are our visitors, according to the level of the complex cultural tourism product

of the city; 2) geographically speaking who are our customers; 3) which are their attitudes towards Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism; 4) will a probable change in the local tourism strategy increase consumers satisfaction with the product.

The most recognizable sights of the cultural and historical heritage in Pleven are "Kaylaka Park" and the "Panorama", which are mentioned in more than 80% of the answers, and respectively -- the museum houses are the least recognizable - 3%. The additional creative activities that 54% of respondents would recommend being organized in their favorite cultural attraction are concerts, theatrical performances, performances, street art that are outdoors. moreover, respondents recommend that these events should not only focus in the urban center, but also in the summer theater of the town. About 29% said they wanted to have more sporting events in which citizens and city guests could get involved, 21% of respondents wanted to see more activities for children to allow them to learn new knowledge, entertain and build local identity.

Improvements in the services provided by the town of Pleven related to the cultural and historical heritage are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Answers of the question: "What must be improved in the area of services that local authorities offer in relation to the cultural and historical heritage of t. Pleven?"

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Improvements to tourism services <sup>a</sup>	More efficient use of Tourist information centre in Pleven	67	18.8%	60.4%
	More polite staff in museums and more adequate working time	56	15.7%	50.5%
	Organize more festivals, concerts, billiards	71	19.9%	64.0%
	Establishment of a tourist information centre for orientation of the children, aimed at their specific needs	57	16.0%	51.4%
	Designation of areas for children to play that are aesthetically pleasing style location	57	16.0%	51.4%
	Creating a cluster of attractions that are geographically concentrated will squeeze the time of tourists who have chosen to visit the city	49	13.7%	44.1%
Total		357	100.0%	321.6%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

*Note: The percentages in the table exceed 100 because the respondents gave more than one answer!*



From table 1 we can conclude that it is important for both, the city's residents and guests that the tourist informational center works more effectively. Moreover, respondents expect a significant increase in the professionalism and working ethics of service staff, the geographical concentration of the local tourist product and the development of specialized events for children.

According to respondents, the main factors that favor the development of the Pleven cultural and heritage tourism destination are: the increased interest in the domestic tourist market and the opportunities for European and state funding of cultural tourism projects and the rich cultural and historical heritage. As unfavorable factors, the respondents identified the insufficient investment in the development of cultural tourism as well as the lack of equal co-operation between the local stakeholders for the establishment and recognition of the Pleven destination.

The most frequently mentioned answer for the sights of cultural and historical heritage, with which the respondents associate the town of Pleven are the "Kayluka Park" - 53% of the answers and the "Panorama of the Pleven Epopée 1877" - 39% of the answers. Despite the latter proportion the "Panorama of the Pleven Epopée 1877" is the sole leader according to the respondents as a place, which necessarily means "one has to see at least once in his/her life" with over two thirds of the respondents' answers.

Respondents' ratings on the attractions offered by the town of Pleven are as follows: for one quarter of respondents they are insufficient, 28% identify them as rather sufficient and the rest cannot judge or have not expressed their opinion. Still positive is the fact that almost half of the respondents define the town of Pleven as one of top destination for cultural and heritage tourism in Bulgaria. The main motives of tourists to visit the sites of cultural and historical heritage of the town of Pleven are presented in Table 2.



**Table 2**

Main motives of tourists to visit the sights of cultural and historical heritage of the town of Pleven

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Main reasons for visiting the destination for cultural and heritage tourism Pleven <sup>a</sup>	Special interest and attitude to the history of the city	53	29.6%	52.0%
	To have fun	30	16.8%	29.4%
	To learn through experience	23	12.8%	22.5%
	To accumulate new emotions and knowledge to inspire and enrich my life	43	24.0%	42.2%
	To rediscover my identity	18	10.1%	17.6%
	Research interest in professional development	12	6.7%	11.8%
Total		179	100.0%	175.5%

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

*Note: The percentages in the table exceed 100 because the respondents gave more than one answer!*

The refinement of marketing efforts to promote the unique comparative advantages of the Pleven destination requires that its visitors' market be thought of as a combination of smaller groups, for which to consider whether it is appropriate to apply special programs to attract them (i.e. whether they are target to the territorial unit).

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. In the article they are presented as seven market segments, outlined by two main criteria: an opportunity to gain satisfaction in the "quality-price" relation of the destination and their main motivation to indulge in cultural and heritage tourism in Pleven.

Further, differentiated initiatives and measures for their attraction are systemized (see Table 3).

Table 3

Main groups in the "Visitors' Market" for t. Pleven

Segment	Motivation	Satisfaction by relation "price - quality"	<b>Differentiated initiatives and measures in order to attract the segment</b>
Children aged 5 to 10 years	Entertainment, identity building, education	Satisfactory ( <i>This decision is taken by parents or teachers</i> )	<p>Accessible and attractively built programs to familiarize children with rich historical and cultural heritage of the t. Pleven;</p> <p>Creative attractions, historical re-enactments, games of orientation, workshops and so on.</p> <p>Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.</p> <p>Safe access to sites of cultural heritage.</p> <p>Opportunity to buy souvenirs.</p> <p>Organization of RPGs and separation of place to play in line with the aesthetic style of the site.</p> <p>Design Brochures, virtual games design; section or employee at the tourist information centre that meets their specific needs.</p>
Teens (aged 11 to 19 years)	Identity building, education, creativity	Satisfactory ( <i>This decision is taken by parents or teachers</i> )	<p>Attractive program focusing educational needs of teens.</p> <p>Creative attractions, historical re-enactments, games for orientation, competitions, quizzes.</p> <p>Convenient transport access to sites, information boards and signs</p> <p>Preferential price package for visiting cluster of attractions.</p> <p>Free Wi-Fi access, advertising, information page on social networks, internet advertising.</p>

<p>History, archaeology, anthropology students and other history related enthusiasts</p>	<p>Learning, creativity, professional development, increasing knowledge, self-improvement</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Families with small children</p>	<p>Entertainment, identity building, creativity</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Pensioners</p>	<p>Respect, diversity, entertainment, identity</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>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".</p>

<p>Foreign tourists and local people who have emigrated from the country/town;</p>	<p>Entertainment, Expand knowledge, self-improvement.</p>	<p>Acceptable / unsatisfactory</p>	<p>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 Wi-Fi access, advertising, information page on social networks, online advertising, and presentation of the destination by tour operators and on various information portals for tourism.</p>
<p>Business visitors</p>	<p>Entertainment, self-improvement.</p>	<p>Acceptable / unsatisfactory</p>	<p>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, theatres and so on. Free WiFi access, advertising information page on social networks, internet advertising.</p>

## **Measures and recommendations for development of Pleven as a destination for cultural and heritage 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 Center - 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", 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. Neighboring 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 center. All these sights 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 (i.e. our survey shows clearly that respondents expect hotel and restaurant owners to maintain a certain level of service quality; in terms of citizens-- being more involved with the cleanliness of sites of cultural and historical heritage, etc.); 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.

"Kayluka Park" is the most recognizable attraction of the town of Pleven, according to the respondents, but unfortunately, they do not attribute it to the places that one must necessarily visit in his/her life. 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 (i.e. the zoological garden needs a reconstruction, which is the responsibility of the local authorities. They have traditionally sought European funding, but in the meantime, they can come to an agreement with local owners of hotels, restaurants and cafes to offer free of charge discount coupons for visiting the zoo, so that to increase the interest of visitors to this attraction. Greatest number of visits will allow the reconstruction project to prove its priority and importance for the city.

## **Conclusion**

Currently, urban economies face several challenges that impose new standards and require a change in consumer culture, which in turn implies a change in the structure of the economic system. Such fundamental change cannot happen quickly. It takes time and is a subject to the spatial economic interaction of numerous factors. The article analyses the destination marketing as an innovative tool to support the sustainable urban development of Pleven, contributing to the stronger engagement of local stakeholders towards endogenous development, enhancing regional competitiveness and attractiveness by creating a positive image and branding of the city as a destination for cultural tourism. Moreover, by clustering the local attractions and differentiating the measures for their promotion, strategic vectors for the development of the town of Pleven as a destination for cultural tourism are outlined. The visitors' market of the town of Pleven is segmented in order to define strategic measures for development of the local tourist potential and selection of target consumers. 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 for destination marketing allows increasing the administrative capacity of the local authorities in t. Pleven; helps building identity and improves the image of the town.

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# ПРИЛОЖИМОСТ НА МАРКЕТИНГА НА ДЕСТИНАЦИЯТА КАТО ИНОВАТИВЕН ИНСТРУМЕНТ ЗА УСТОЙЧИВО ГРАДСКО РАЗВИТИЕ (ПО ПРИМЕРА НА ГР. ПЛЕВЕН)

Ева Цветанова\*

## Резюме

В статията е изследвана и определена ролята на маркетинга на дестинацията в процеса на устойчивото градско развитие, анализиран и оценен е туристическия потенциал на обектите, свързани с културно-историческото наследство на Плевен и са дефинирани факторите, препятстващи и благоприятстващи организацията на маркетинга на дестинацията за града. В резултат от проведения емпиричния анализ са дефинирани конкретни предложения за подпомагане и насърчаване на сътрудничеството, икономическите инициативи на местните заинтересовани страни и постигането на устойчив растеж в областта на културно-познавателния туризъм в града.

**Ключови думи:** маркетинг на дестинацията, устойчиво градско развитие, културно-познавателен туризъм, териториално сегментиране.

**JEL:** R58, Z32, O18

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## **DESTINATION MARKETING APPLICATION AS AN INNOVATIVE INSTRUMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**(ACCORDING TO THE EXAMPLE OF T. PLEVEN)**

### **Abstract**

The article investigates the role of destination marketing in the process of sustainable urban development. The tourism potential of sites related to the cultural and historical heritage of Pleven is analyzed as well as the factors preventing or favoring organization of destination marketing activities in Pleven. As a result of empirical analysis, the specific proposals are defined to assist local authorities in creating a favorable local environment for enhancing entrepreneurial activity to achieve sustainable growth in the field of cultural and heritage tourism.

**Key words:** destination marketing, sustainable urban development, cultural and heritage tourism, territorial segmentation.

**JEL:** R58, Z32, O18