



# A Study of Rural Tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina



- 1<sup>st</sup> version: July 2009 – a few modifications in September -

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## Executive Summary

Bosnia-and-Herzegovina is not a so-called tourist destination. It suffers particularly from prejudices linked to the recent 1992-95 war: in many foreigners' mind the country is still unsafe.

But it is: the war ended a long time ago. Specialists from the national to the World Tourism Organization levels agree on its potential and on the opportunities that the development of sustainable forms of tourism would offer to its inhabitants and national economy as a supplement industry.

The main tourist activities corresponding to Bosnia-and-Herzegovina (BiH) assets and context are rural tourism, cultural and ethno tourism, gastronomy and ecotourism, nature-based and adventure tourism. There could be a wellness offer too, but the spas are still designed for a medical use.

In this study we discuss about Bosnian assets for rural tourism, especially its rich natural and still alive cultural heritage, traditional farming and home-food processing, and the warm hospitality.

Weaknesses are highlighted, such as the lack of local initiatives, the only few actions for preserving the fragile heritage, the low support of representatives or the poor offer in tourist facilities.

There are also some threats, generally in the line of the weak points: the tourist sites are not yet equipped to receive visitors without risks of damages, some instability in the government system that cannot help the tourist development, various pollutions due to the lack of standards, etc.

Nevertheless, the opportunities to enter the tourist market and to benefit from funds support are very interesting: nowadays tourist trends tend to look for similar elements as what BiH can offer, and the country and even the private initiatives will easily receive financial and technical support.

The association *Alterural* has just been created in the purpose to contribute at the national level to the development of rural tourism in BiH. They have already elaborated a part of their action plan and started to set actions in place in order to develop their expertise and support the stakeholders.

### Context of the study:

This *Study of rural tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina* is the final work realised at the end of the four-months-long internship period of a “*Tourism and Environment*” Master's degree French student within Caritas International Belgium – Balkan mission's team (who initiated and supported the creation of **Alterural** in partnership with Caritas Bk BiH).

### Method:

The author's acknowledgment results from her contribution to the activities of Caritas International Belgium – Balkan mission's and future *Alterural*'s teams: data bases realization, attending meetings and seminars, field visits in Fojnica and various regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, meeting stakeholders at different scales and project owners, conception of the *Fojnica's rural tourism map* tourist brochure, and thanks to her background in the tourism domain and the reading of reference studies about the subject and the field, with the support and advices of Caritas' team.

The last period of her internship focused especially on the writing of the present study, along with visits on the field in very various Bosnian areas, in order to see existing and planned rural tourism projects in the surroundings of Trebinje, Blagaj, Pale, Zenica, Travnik... and to meet their initiators. These visits allowed her to complete what she found out during the previous months of her stay in Bosnia & Herzegovina, and to confront it to the met stakeholders' points of view.

There is more information about the places visited and our observations in appendixes 5, 6 and 7.



# Map<sup>1</sup> of Bosnia and Herzegovina



<sup>1</sup> Source: United Nations, <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/bosnia.pdf>, July 13<sup>th</sup> 2009

## Introduction

Tourism is a dynamic industry in Europe, which has continuously grown: it was born in Europe and the European region keeps being the world's top tourist destination with *“over 54% of all international tourist arrivals and 51% of international tourism receipts”*<sup>2</sup>.

Tourism is a cross-cutting sector involving very various services and professions, linked to many other economic activities. *“Mainly dominated by [Small and Medium-sized Enterprises], it accounts for 4% of the Community's GDP, with about 2 million enterprises employing about 4% of the total labour force (representing approximately 8 million jobs). When the links to other sectors are taken into account, the contribution of tourism to GDP is estimated to be around 11% and it provides employment to more than 12% of the labour force (24 million jobs).”*<sup>3</sup>

So, when tourist dynamics develop in an area, it is not only benefiting to the tourist activities in themselves but the whole economy is also concerned. When the stakeholders are locals or local scale-oriented, it is a very interesting and lasting support to the local development. *“According to forecasts by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the number of tourists in Europe is expected to double in the next 25 years. By 2020, there will be more than 700 million cross-border tourist arrivals a year. In economic terms, this corresponds to an annual growth rate of 3% and an increase of 100,000 new jobs a year, as experienced in the past few years.”*<sup>4</sup>

The experts say that *“forecasts for international tourist arrivals 2010–2020 favour South-East Europe [SEE] in increased market share of European arrivals”*.<sup>5</sup>

Already, *“From 1995-2004 the part of the SEE Region of which BiH is a part, was the fastest growing region in Europe (+6.5 % of GDP growth - 1995-2004).”*<sup>6</sup>

*“The [Europe's 5%] growth in arrivals in 2007 was due in significant part to Southern and Mediterranean Europe's strong performance (+7%). In particular, the Balkan states were among the stronger players – Serbia (+48%), Montenegro (+160%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (+20%), and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (+14%).”*<sup>7</sup>

Ecotourism, rural tourism, adventure tourism, cultural tourism, solidarity tourism... are some examples of “alternative forms of tourism”, versus the massive “Sea, sand, sun” tourism.

Nowadays, more and more tourists look for new destinations and for more sustainable forms of holidays. The European Commission's report highlights that: *“‘Alternative' forms of tourism [...] are booming. According to 1999 figures they are growing almost three times (8%) as fast as the classic tourism market. Recent market surveys reveal that more and more people are interested not only in trying out new places but also in discovering different forms of tourism. They are also placing greater emphasis on quality products, more environmentally conscious forms of tourism.”*<sup>4</sup>

Bosnia-and-Herzegovina is one of these “new destinations” that can develop their tourism in a sustainable way by targeting “alternative forms of tourism”.

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<sup>2</sup> World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), 2008, p.5

<sup>3</sup> European Commission, [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/index_en.htm), July 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.

<sup>4</sup> European Commission – Enterprise and Industry – Tourism, 2002, p.1

<sup>5</sup> Emerging Markets Group, 2006a, p.4

<sup>6</sup> Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM, 2007, p. 14

<sup>7</sup> UNWTO, 2008, p.5

Numerous studies of the current tourist situation of Bosnia-and-Herzegovina have already been realised, by various donor organisations and with different perspectives, so much so that some specialists say that *“further analysis will not uncover anything new.”*<sup>8</sup>

But, if this comment seems accurate, as these analyses studied the past, present and forecasted BiH's tourism industry with appropriate advises, no one concerned rural tourism specifically.

**Alterural** aims to be **the association for the development and the professionalization of rural tourism in BiH.** (see appendix n°1) Therefore, it has to develop and offer a specific expertise contributing to the Bosnian stakeholders in the rural tourism sector (families, tourist offices, small-sized businesses, municipalities...). Its creation has been initiated by Caritas Bk BiH and the Caritas International Belgium – Balkan mission's team who focuses its actions for the development of sustainable agriculture and eco-agrotourism in Fojnica municipality (Central-Bosnia Canton).

Since 2007, this territory has served for the team as a “laboratory” for pilot projects in the rural tourism field: advices and support for creation of guest-houses, *“Fojnica's rural tourism map”* published with the implication of the Tourism Association of Central Bosnia Canton, *“Food and medicinal plants”* interpretative panel realised with Miraglobal (consulting agency specialised in environment), about 100 km of hiking paths marked in the Vranica Massif by the mountaineering association PD Vranica, support to producers... all actions that have been very useful for developing an accurate experience, well-fitting to BiH's context, stakeholders, potentials, domestic and international markets, etc. and a strong basis for extending such projects and expertise.

Their conscience of the need for a sustainable national reference structure appeared very fast, because of the deficiency in organization and expertise in the rural tourism sector in BiH. **Alterural** aims to fulfil these tasks, to make the sector visible and to reinforce and support the professionals' skills and initiatives (stakeholders network, resource-centre of expertise, pilot projects, trainings...).

BiH's great assets for rural tourism are very numerous and obvious, at the local as well as at the national levels, and it is evident that the rural tourist activities represent a good opportunity for Bosnian economy and development, at the individual as well as at the country's scales.

Indeed, *“besides growth and jobs creation, tourism plays an important role in the development of the vast majority of European regions. Infrastructure created for tourism purposes contributes to local development, and jobs are created or maintained even in areas in industrial or rural decline, or undergoing urban regeneration. Sustainable tourism plays a major role in the preservation and enhancement of the cultural and natural heritage in an ever expanding number of areas, ranging from arts to local gastronomy, crafts or the preservation of biodiversity.”*<sup>9</sup>

### - Trends and overview of tourism in Bosnia-and-Herzegovina (BiH)

Bosnia-and-Herzegovina (BiH) is one of these countries emerging in the tourist market, with an considerable forecasted growth: *“the World Tourism Organization (WTO) has ranked BiH among the group of countries with the highest anticipated annual growth, estimating annual growth rate at the level of 10,5 %. [...]; it is projected that BiH, in terms of the growth of tourism, will have the third highest growth degree in the world until the end of 2020”*<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Emerging Markets Group Ltd., 2006b, p.1

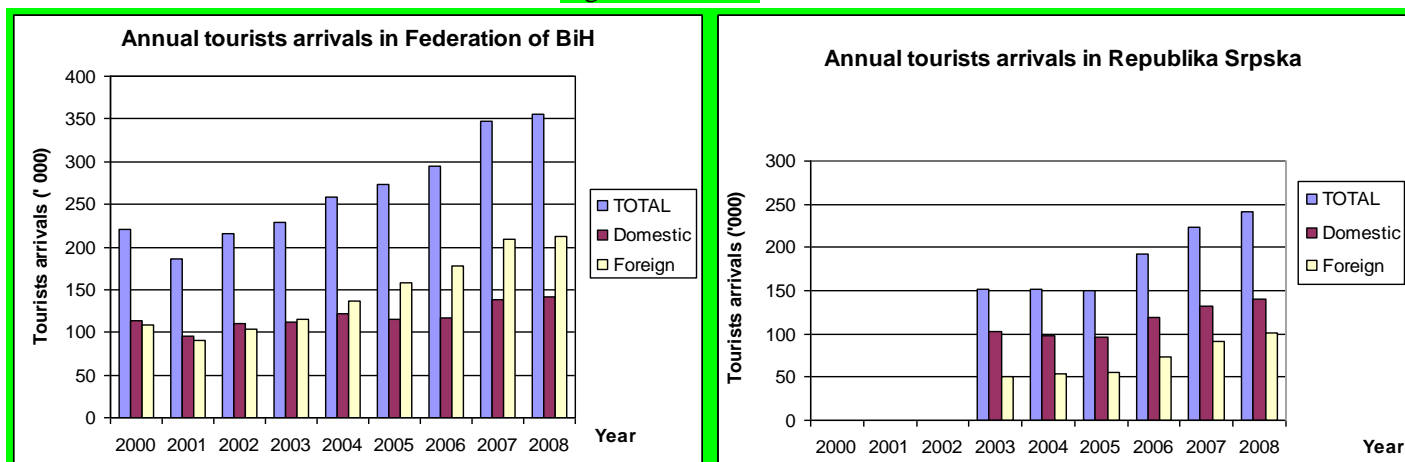
<sup>9</sup> European Commission, [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/index_en.htm), July 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.

<sup>10</sup> WTO, *Annual growth projections 1995-2020* in FIPA BiH, 2005, p.10

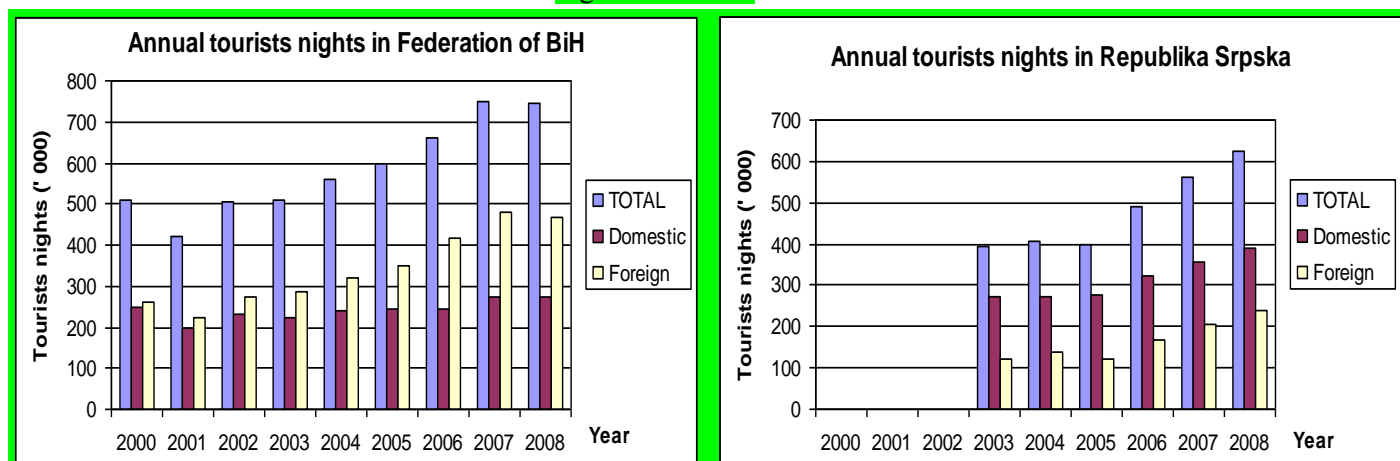


The steady raise of BiH's tourism, forecasted by the World Tourism Organization, seems very plausible, since the tourist arrivals and nights have quite steadily increased since 2000, especially for the foreign tourists part, as show the following graphs <sup>11</sup>:

Figures 1 and 1':



Figures 2 and 2':



Plus: *“BiH tourist destination, with its diverse and unspoiled nature, rich historical and cultural heritage, closely matches the new trends of market travel. As a result, tourism has a potential for development and, if adequately planned, can play a significant role within the country economy. The country has major tourist assets to offer for those people who seek different experiences, away from the crowd, whether they are lovers of skiing, rafting, [...] or patient bird-watching.”* <sup>12</sup>

NB: The official tourist data (arrivals and nights) are collected *“on the basis of monthly reports submitted by business entities or parts of business entities that provide accommodation services to tourists or act as agencies”*. Like the World Tourism Organisation's criteria, is considered as a tourist *“every person who, outside his place of permanent residence spends at least one night in a hotel or some other accommodation facility for reasons of rest, recreation, health, study, sport, religion, family, business, public tasks or meeting”* <sup>11</sup>. The foreigners only passing through BiH, even if they take their lunch in a Bosnian restaurant, seem to not be considered. People spending their holidays at their family's or friends' home are not counted; **neither the ones camping or sleeping in private guests accommodations.**

<sup>11</sup> Graphs realised thanks to the official data: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Federal office of statistics, 2008 and 2009 ; Republika Srpska - Institute of statistics, 2005 and 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM, 2007, p. 19

The four previous figures illustrate the great rise in BiH tourism during the nine past years. We can estimate that this rise is even greater in reality, since the huge part of people camping, staying at relatives' homes or in private guest rooms are not considered by these statistics, when these practices are not negligible regarding what people (domestic as well as foreign tourists) actually do.

Plus, we want to recall that in 1995 the tourist rate was of 0. Consequently, we must keep a critical look on the WTO's previsions: an overage 10,5% growth from 1995 to 2020 when a country starts from 0 is not comparable with a similar rise but starting from a certain amount of tourists!

So, this impressing 1995-2020 predicted average annual growth in Bosnian tourism rates does not necessarily mean that the tourists amount will reach a remarkable rate compared to other countries in the world, but that it will significantly grow away from its 0 tourist situation in 1995.

As a matter of fact, the tourist sector in BiH has until now encountered some difficulties compared to its neighbours, as for instance the Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM's study reports: *"In spite of the growth in the foreign market, Bosnia-and-Herzegovina's visitor numbers are amongst the lowest in the region. The country still has difficulties to find its place in the international market (due to the access limitations; road and air routes and the negative image of the country). The openings that have appeared for its neighbouring countries (Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovenia) have not materialised in BiH. The absence of a clear tourism policy [in particular] does not encourage foreign tour operators, investors and individual visitors."*<sup>13</sup>

During the conference about tourism development taking place in Belgrade, in May 2009, Goran Brčkalović, BiH Foreign Trade Chamber's Department of Tourism, said that: *"In the gross social product (GDP) of BiH, tourism participates only with 2.85%, due to which the BiH can not be considered as a tourist country. To be called a tourist country, tourism must be about 10% of share in GDP of BiH. Basic problem for the development of tourism in BiH is that the country has no single national strategy, an institution for the development of tourism and unique legal rules. Without a strong regional cooperation in this domain, countries in the region can not meet in the world tourist market, which is why it is necessary to create a regional tourist product."*<sup>14</sup>

Mr Brčkalović made clear that the lacks of a "single national strategy" and of an "institution for the development of tourism" are important questions and obstacles to Bosnian tourism growth.

We can see that he confirms in a more general perspective what Alterural's initiators found out concerning rural tourism and aim to fill in with this association.

***"BiH [is] « (Europe's) last great undiscovered tourism destination »"***<sup>15</sup>

The recent studies about tourism in the country **all highlight Bosnia-and-Herzegovina's great but underdeveloped potential for tourism.**

<sup>13</sup> Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM, 2007, p. 14

<sup>14</sup> BiH RSS, [http://www.bih-rss.net/article\\_bih\\_ove\\_godine\\_o%EB8ekuje\\_pad\\_turizma\\_1856041.htm](http://www.bih-rss.net/article_bih_ove_godine_o%EB8ekuje_pad_turizma_1856041.htm), June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009

<sup>15</sup> Paddy Ashdown (former High Representative) in Emerging Markets Group, 2006a, p.2



According to these reports, the main tourist activities concerning BiH are:

- **Winter tourism:** especially ski (Bjelasnica and Jahorina mountains, with the two main ski resorts, but also smaller ski resorts like RC Brusnica nearby Fojnica), but new activities are being developed, like ice climbing (Extreme Sports Club Scorpio, in Zenica) or snowboard (Snowboard club Underboard, in Travnik).
- **Religious tourism:** pilgrimages, especially in Međugorje for Catholics (worldwide famous site dedicated to Virgin Mary), Ajavatovica for Muslims (over five centuries of existence) and for example the monastery of Tvrdoš (nearby Trebinje) for Orthodox.
- **Cultural tourism:** thanks to its localisation, BiH is at the cross-roads of western and eastern cultures, reinforced by the fact that it belonged to various cultural entities during its history (for example: Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires both influenced Bosnian culture and architecture). Cultural events are organised and attract much public (ex: Jazz Fest in Sarajevo).
- **Spa and wellness tourism:** Bosnian spas are very famous in the Ex-Yugoslavian region. Most of the spas are state medical centres, but many tend to develop leisure and wellness offers (ex: Reumal and Aquareumal state and private structures are building an Aquapark (Fojnica)).
- **Sport and adventure tourism:** the mountaineering, rafting, and other extreme or adventure sports associations are very dynamic, and these activities can still be much more developed. Plenty of tourist agencies integrate their services in their offer.
- **Eco- and Rural tourism:** all experts agree on BiH's great assets for ecotourism and rural tourism, and on the fact that these underdeveloped sectors are of great interest.

- **Alterural's definition of rural tourism**

*“Rural tourism is, within the global tourism economy, the tourist promotion of countrysides, their natural resources, the cultural heritage, the rural architecture, the arts and crafts, the village traditions and the regional products, which illustrates the regional identities.*

*It covers the customers' needs concerning hospitality, accommodation, catering, leisure activities, preserved environment, events and various services.*

*Being developed in areas with a low population density where natural environment predominates, it aims a sustainable local development, ensuring social and economic benefits to the local communities and the maintenance of the rural heritage.*

*It is grounded on a look for the authentic experience allowing an interaction and an exchange with the territory and its inhabitants.”*

Tourist practises evolves, with new tendencies, and rural tourism is concerned: *“So far, the sea is the most popular choice (63%), but a significant number of Europeans also cite the countryside (23%) as a preferred destination.”* <sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> European Commission – Enterprise and Industry – Tourism, 2002, p.4

This interest for rural tourism is directly linked to nowadays lifestyles which are mostly urban.

Indeed, unlike the ones looking for holidays in famous and generally crowded urbanized places such as beaches in summer or ski resorts in winter, the rural tourists expect a real change from their usual environment and rhythm of activities. They also, more or less consciously, want to meet again with the shared memory of traditional lifestyle and activities in rural areas that are commonly associated with the idea of a healthy and “natural” life, versus their urban “artificial” life.

*“Expressions of Rural tourism, agro tourism, and village tourism are used [...] as synonyms by experts and developers”*<sup>17</sup>. We could add the terms of “green tourism”, and even “ecotourism” for instance. Actually, tourism in rural area is considered as a whole, a panel of activities taking place in the countryside, including accommodation, farming and farm products selling, natural and agricultural surroundings, outdoor activities, as well as village lifestyle, architectural heritage, etc.

It aims a sustainable development at the local scale, and offers a great opportunity to rebalance the economy and to slow down the rural exodus phenomenon thanks to the possibility to valorise these lifestyle and environment which were still recently depreciated and now regain interest in city-dwellers’ eyes, at least as a destination for their holidays.

Considering that the main target for rural tourism is tourists from urban areas (the majority of nowadays citizens), some specialists talk about a “*new city – country solidarity*”<sup>18</sup>.

In Bosnia & Herzegovina, Rural tourism can even meet very closely the definitions and practises of fair and solidarity tourisms, especially on foreign visitors’ point of view, because they can see in their tourist activity the occasion for giving some support to the families still living in the countryside with traditional activities and low incomes. Indeed, agrotourism offers interesting possibilities for a complementary income besides farming.

*“Tourism based on solidarity aims at leading the tourist to a form of concrete solidarity with the local host populations. It can have various aspects, such as supporting a development project, envisaged in the long run since it is a guarantee of achievement and durability of the solidarity actions. [...]*

*Fair Trade tourism is inspired by fair trade principles. It focuses more particularly on the participation of host communities in democratic decision making, in eco-friendly production systems and in fair wages for local services”.*<sup>19</sup>

The first definition emphasizes the positive role which can be played by responsible tourists during their visit or stay, especially for helping projects with a solidarity dimension. This is the general definition, mostly concerning tourism in developing southern areas such as Africa, Asia, South-America. In the situation of Bosnia & Herzegovina, we have to retain that the simple facts of buying the food products directly at the farm or on the market instead of in the store, or sleeping in a guest-house rather than in a hotel, are very positive actions, which present the advantages of being a direct support to the hosting population, without requiring huge investment from the visitor. Plus it enhances the tourist experience by favouring meetings and interactions with the local people.

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<sup>17</sup> Pakurar M., Olah J., 2008, p.777

<sup>18</sup> Euroter, 1992 on [http://www.source.asso.fr/index.php?id=tourisme-rural\\_definition](http://www.source.asso.fr/index.php?id=tourisme-rural_definition), March 16th 2009

<sup>19</sup> ÉVEIL - Responsible tourism and leisure time, <http://www.eveil-tourisme-responsable.org/uk/responsible-tourism-definition.php>, July 12<sup>th</sup> 2009

The fair-trade tourism definition concerns even more the places where human rights are really not respected, and where tourism activities usually exploit the local populations and resources. But what is underlined and interesting in our case, is that tourism must be developed with the hosting population and not regardless to their will, and in the respect of the environment in its broad sense.

These perspectives are good guarantees for a sustainable development of tourism, thanks to the look for the balance between the three “social”, “economic” and “environmental” dimensions.

Since BiH is an emerging tourist destination, it has the opportunity to observe the others destinations’ development feedbacks in order to start with strong basis by avoiding others’ previous mistakes. Bosnia-and-Herzegovina also has the chance to be able to choose the image(s) which it wants to develop on the tourism market:

The BiH Federal Ministry’s *Tourism Strategic Plan 2009-2018* considers that the **top priority sectors are: Rural tourism, Cultural and ethno tourism, and Gastronomy**, before Sport and adventure tourism.<sup>20</sup>

The video advertisement campaign *Enjoy LIFE – Bosnia-and-Herzegovina* on the TV-CNN channel highlighted all main tourist assets of BiH.  
A lot of these great features also concern rural tourism.

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<sup>20</sup> According to conferences at Mostar’s international tourism fair, April 2009

**PART 1:**

**An overview of  
rural tourism in BiH**





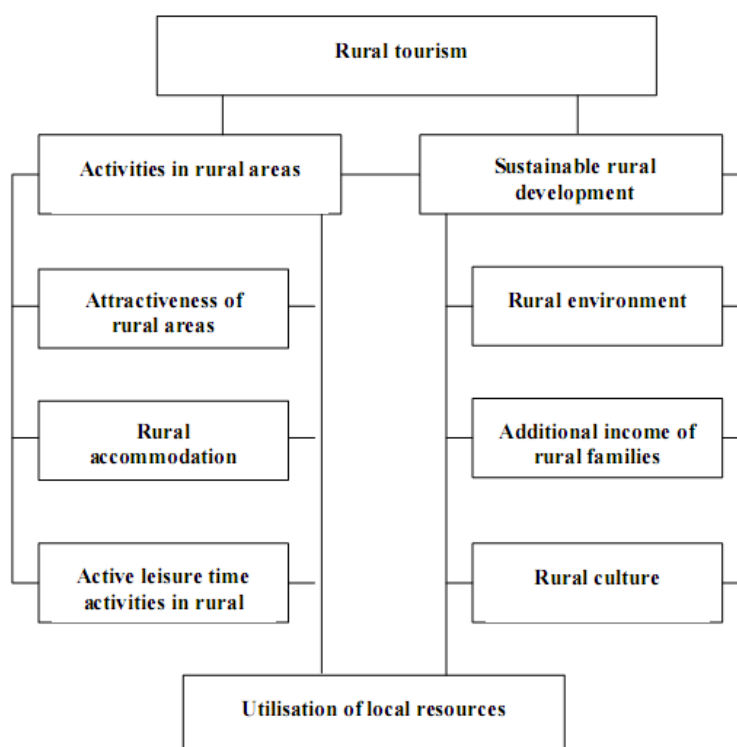
## 1. Bosnia & Herzegovina's main assets for rural tourism

As we have just pointed out, rural tourism takes place in countryside areas, and aims a true meeting between the tourist, the territory with its own “personality” and activities, and the people there, in order to enhance the sustainability of life in the countryside and the local development.

Plus, in Bosnia-and-Herzegovina, rural tourism can get close with solidarity and fair tourism.

*“Rural tourists want to learn about local culture and habits, including cuisine, professions and customs. [...] They wish to diversify their holidays and combine several activities, cultural circuits, walking or biking hikes, sport, contacts with the families, in a nice atmosphere.”*<sup>21</sup>

So, rural tourism includes all the activities *“of a person travelling and staying in rural areas (without mass tourism) other than those of their usual environment for less than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (excluding the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the places visited).”*<sup>22</sup> and can be schematized as a complex system of definitions:



Source: Kónyves, 2001

Fig.3<sup>23</sup>

*“Examples of micro businesses and SMEs\* involved in rural tourism are:*

- *Accommodation including Bed and Breakfasts, holiday cottages and flats, camping and caravan sites;*
- *Recreation including nature trails, wildlife watching, water sports and other outdoor pursuits and activities;*
- *Farm shops selling farm produce and locally crafted goods.”*<sup>24</sup>

\* SMEs: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

<sup>21</sup> Translation <http://www.ecotourisme-magazine.com/la-bulgarie-mise-sur-le-tourisme-rural-et-sur-le-cotourisme>, 2009

<sup>22</sup> European Environment Agency, [http://glossary.eea.europa.eu/terminology/concept\\_html?term=rural%20tourism](http://glossary.eea.europa.eu/terminology/concept_html?term=rural%20tourism)

<sup>23</sup> in Pakurar M., Olah J., 2008, p.779

<sup>24</sup> The Scottish Parliament – The Information Centre, 21 August 2002, p.3

Ecotourism, nature-based tourism, adventure tourism, outdoor sports... can be considered as rural tourism activities since they participate to rural areas tourist dynamism.

As simple visitor, one can easily notice how obvious it is that BiH presents great assets for the development of these activities. So we can understand that specialists and studies emphasize that the country has much to offer for each component of the rural tourism system:

### - Agriculture and Nature

Bosnia-and-Herzegovina's landscapes are sculpted by mountains and valleys, abundant springs, waterfalls and lakes, forests...: untouched "*wildlife and scenery within touching distance*" <sup>25</sup>.

They have also been modelled by human traditional rural activities, since most of BiH's territory is of rural type and "*60% of the population is involved in agriculture and rural based activities*" <sup>26</sup>. There is no doubt that the landscapes perfectly correspond to the "ideal" rural scenery that one's imagination has kept from previous century's memories and common tales.

Landscapes, vegetations and natural wild species are very diverse for such a small territory, in particular thanks to the variations of the rocks and substratum and the actions of tectonic or erosion phenomena, that created diverse milieus which are exposed to different climatic conditions and use.

Wild predators such as wolves and bears still live in Bosnia & Herzegovina, while they are very rare or disappeared from most of the European countries. Very rare endemic plants also grow here.

Despite the land mining and de-mining due to the recent war, the pollution due to the non-awareness of the people who still throw away their garbage anywhere, and the non-well standardized industry, one can notice that BiH's nature is pretty well preserved.

In particular, since the agriculture is not yet too much modified by the agrochemical productivity methods, it helps preserving a very diversified and balanced natural environment.

Natural assets of BiH in comparison to the rest of Europe are perhaps its main richness.

*"The NEAP [National Environment Action Plan] emphasises Bosnia and Herzegovina's rich biodiversity, [...] due in principle to the 3 distinct climatic and geological zones, from the Mediterranean to the Alpine-Nordic regions. The high diversity of landscapes includes the following:*

- *Mediterranean (Neum-Klek)*
- *Supra-Mediterranean (lower Neretva, southeast and southwest Herzegovina)*
- *Mediterranean highland (eastern and western upper Herzegovina)*
- *Pannonian (Posavina)*
- *Highland (central, eastern and western Bosnia)*
- *Mountain.*

*[...] The NEAP stipulates that protection of vulnerable areas can be best implemented if they are given protected area status.*

*Following are categories of nature currently protected in Bosnia and Herzegovina:*

<sup>25</sup> Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM, 2007, p. 24

<sup>26</sup> Caritas International Belgium – Balkan mission, February 2009, p.5

<i>Group</i>	<i>Protection Category</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Sub-group</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>Strict natural preserve</i>	<i>3</i>		
<i>II</i>	<i>Managed natural preserve</i>	<i>2</i>		
<i>III</i>	<i>National Park</i>	<i>2</i>		
<i>IV</i>	<i>Special preserves</i>		<i>Geologic</i>	<i>2</i>
			<i>Botanic</i>	<i>5</i>
			<i>Ornithological</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>V</i>	<i>Natural landscapes preserve</i>	<i>9</i>		
<i>VI</i>	<i>Herbal species</i>	<i>7</i>		
<i>VII</i>	<i>Animal species</i>		<i>Songbirds</i>	<i>153</i>
			<i>Wading birds</i>	<i>66</i>
			<i>Birds of pretty</i>	<i>38</i>
			<i>Other</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>VIII</i>	<i>Monuments of nature</i>		<i>Geologic</i>	<i>3</i>
			<i>Geomorphologic</i>	<i>65</i>
			<i>Paleontologic</i>	<i>1</i>
			<i>Individual trees</i>	<i>21</i>
			<i>Tree</i>	<i>1</i>

Fig.4

*The NEAP calls for a strategy for eco-tourism development in Bosnia and Herzegovina.”* <sup>27</sup>

For sure, rural tourism organised and run in a responsible way responds to this “call” of the National Environment Action Plan for environment-friendly tourism.

### **- Traditions**

One of the most impressing experiences in BiH is that a lot of traditional habits are still alive, especially in countryside areas. This is for sure a great asset for rural tourism.

Indeed, tourists who are interested in rural tourism mainly come from urban areas, and they generally wish to re-discover the traditional techniques and way of living, especially if they are foreigners to Bosnia & Herzegovina.

These kept traditions concern:

- **Agriculture**, for instance the farmers seasonally establishing their home in the mountain during the migration of their livestock to summer pasture, work with plough horses, hand seedling, home-made products with tendency to self-sufficiency, etc.
- **Knowledge in medicinal home-grown and wild plants;**
- **Events**, like village festivities, religious ceremonies...
- **Popular beliefs** and sayings;
- **Markets**, with for example small-sized home-grown or collected production sold along the street or the road, with or without a stand;
- **Arts and crafts**, for instance hand-made carpets, woollen socks...;
- **the Environment and landscapes**, especially through traditional agriculture;

<sup>27</sup> Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM, 2007, pp. 57-59

- **Catering**, with famous or less known traditional dishes;
- Etc.

Nowadays tourism trends highlight personal genuine experience and rediscovering traditional lifestyles. As most of the traditions disappeared from daily life in the other European countries, this is really a good advantage for Bosnia & Herzegovina, especially compared to the other rural tourism destinations' offers in Europe which generally cannot present authentic lifestyles anymore.

Plus, any citizen of the European continent can feel concerned by this offer, since BiH is located at the crossing of influences between western and eastern cultures and traditions.

It may favour the opportunity for BiH to create its special place in the rural tourism market.

### - Gastronomy/ Regional products

The most famous Bosnian dish is certainly pita, a traditional meal since Ottoman times. The different sorts of "pitas" are: Burek (meat-filled), Zeljanica (filled with spinach and cheese), Sirnica (fresh cheese-filled) and Krompiruša (filled with potatoes and spices).

But there are lots of other typical Bosnian dishes from different cultural influences (Turkish, Austrian, Hungarian, etc.), most of which are only prepared at home or in the countryside inns.

We mentioned previously that the agriculture in BiH, especially in mountainous rural areas, is still mostly run in a very traditional way: horse-ploughing, hand-seedling, hand-harvesting, home-production of the seeds, farm-manure spreading, home-transformation of the raw ingredients, and very often a tendency to self-sufficiency at least for some food products.

Thanks to these practises, one can try in BiH quite exceptionally tasting food, in particular concerning meat (veal, lamb, chicken, pork...), cheeses (smoked, fresh...) and other milk products, but also vegetables and fruits naturally produced in an organic way.

It is especially in the countryside that one can find the most diverse and tasty food products whether they are bought raw on the market or in farms, or prepared by restaurants, inns, or hosts.

### - Culture

We said it already, Bosnia & Herzegovina is geographically and historically located at a cross-road between Western and Eastern cultures and civilizations.

It has known very various regimes like empires, communism and, presently, democracy.

BiH also presents the particularity to be populated by three main communities with three main religions: Bosniaks mostly Muslims, Croats mostly Catholics and Serbs mostly Orthodox.

There are minorities too, like Roms, who are more or less well integrated, but surely influenced the culture in a way, for instance concerning music, *via* their centuries-long presence.



*“The museums and galleries in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not filled with renaissance or romantic paintings but rather with the living forms that represented everyday life. Contemporary art has been a key influence in the cultural revolution that has taken place in the last half of the 20th century. Culture in the centuries leading up to this revolution can be visited today as **a living museum through the architecture, traditional dress, stone carvings, pottery and jewellery, and sacral places**. The culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be found hanging from the walls of a museum but can be seen in the intricate paintings of the mosques, the beautiful woodwork of traditional furniture, or the magnificent stitch of the highlander’s attire. It is this mix of old and new creative forms that sets Bosnia and Herzegovina apart from its European neighbours.”*<sup>28</sup>

In the preliminary SWOT analysis of the *Cultural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina – preliminary findings* study, the author noticed as strengths the following Bosnian characteristics:

- “ - *The BiH asset base includes a distinctive cross-cultural architecture and a multi-cultural traditional population. There is no comparable cross-cultural portfolio of tourism assets in all of Europe.*
- *The Ottoman influence makes BiH unique in Europe.*”<sup>29</sup>

### **- Architecture**

In the countryside, and even though the recent war caused destruction in a lot of areas, there are cities and villages presenting a very homogeneous traditional architecture, or at least some traditional buildings (houses, barns, religious buildings), and vernacular heritage (bridges, stone walls...).

Some villages are considered as unique, like Lukomir, this very famous village in Bjelašnica Mountain which is year-long inhabited, or the mountain houses around Prokoško Jezero.

*“**Lukomir** is Bosnia’s highest village at 1,469 meters, with its ancient stecci (medieval tombstones), where villagers stick to the “old way” of doing things. Traditional dress, the occasional turban and fez are still worn and go hand in hand with the more contemporary bliss’ of everyday life, electricity and running water. [...] Here you will have a peek into the lifestyles traditions of the Bjelasnica highlanders that have survived since ancient times.”*<sup>30</sup>

This built heritage is very often not in good conditions and is threatened by becoming ruins or destroyed: if it is not because of rural exodus or the consequences of battles, it is because people prefer to construct modern brick houses or do not have enough money to maintain the old houses.

<sup>28</sup> BH Tourism, <http://www.bhtourism.ba/eng/culture.wbsp>, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2009

<sup>29</sup> Emerging Markets Group, 2006a, p.4

<sup>30</sup> Greenvisions, <http://www.greenvisions.ba/gv/clanak.php?lang=2&ids=95>, June 25<sup>th</sup> 2009

It seems that most of Bosnian people are not very conscious of the quality and the interest, even the importance of preserving this heritage. It is important for their history and their identity, though.

It can also be seen as an opportunity for tourist business. Indeed, rural tourists (especially if they are foreigners) generally seek accommodation in traditional buildings, and would give priority to the typical hosting, particularly in BiH's context with still alive traditional activities.

### - Outdoor activities

The Bosnian environment and relief offer perfect opportunities for all kinds of outdoor activities, whether the activity uses it as support, or simply as frame.

- The numerous rivers and canyons offer great opportunities for rafting, swimming, canoeing...

In 2005, BiH hosted the European Rafting Championship, and very recently, in May 14-24<sup>th</sup> 2009, the World Rafting Championship took place in Banja Luka on the Vrbas river and in Foča on the Tara river. These rivers present very technical assets for the competition that was divided into four parts (downriver, sprint, head-to-head (H2H) and slalom).

This world championship was not only a successful sport event; it was also a good opportunity in a tourism perspective. Indeed, *“several thousand spectators attended the event in Banja Luka and in the town of Foča. [...] Banja Luka Mayor Dragoljub Davidovic [said:] ‘We have really shown our rich diversity, and we will have this event in our hearts and minds for a long time to come. [...]’ The beautiful countryside and the warmth of the locals painted a much different picture for participants who may have only known about the country through news broadcasts that highlight its political and economic hardships. [The Canadian female competitor D’Astous was very enthusiastic:] ‘We were particularly surprised by the colours of the rivers here. The canyon is beautiful and so are the surrounding mountains. But it is the people that I like the most’.*<sup>31</sup>

The President of the International rafting federation thinks that it will stay one of the most impressive championships in the discipline; with more than 600 competitors from 35 countries, it was *“the highest number of participants in all the rafting championships that have been organised until now”*<sup>32</sup> – all participants who can give witness of their good experience in BiH once back home.

- Bosnian mountains are accessible by walk or even by car.

During the winter, they are ideal for ski, snowboard, snowshoes trekking, ice-climbing, etc.

*“The Sarajevo region, surrounded by mountains covered in deep snow for more than 100 days a year, could never escape the attention of winter sports fans. Even in the Ottoman Empire, the sport of »liguranje« — the predecessor to the luge — was popular, and the Austro-Hungarian occupation brought skiing, skating and contemporary luge. Between the two wars, the nearby mountains were filled with ski enthusiasts who built mountain lodges and ski jumps, and who, in 1937, organized the first Yugoslav Ski Rally at Pale and Mt. Jahorina.”*<sup>33</sup>

Other major winter sports events have been organised since, especially the XIV<sup>th</sup> Olympic Winter Games, that took place in February 6-19<sup>th</sup> 1984 in Sarajevo (at that time, Bosnia-and-Herzegovina was still part of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia).

The famous massifs at Sarajevo's hand were support of the various events: alpine ski events were in Bjelasnica (2067 m above sea level) and Jahorina (1913 m) mountains; the Igman Mount

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2009/06/23/feature-02](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2009/06/23/feature-02), June 16<sup>th</sup> 09

<sup>32</sup> Translated from Courier des Balkans, <http://balkans.courriers.info/article12966.html>, June 16<sup>th</sup> 2009

<sup>33</sup> Organising Committee of the XIVth Winter Olympic Games 1984 at Sarajevo, 1984, p.4

(1502 m) was equipped for cross-country skiing, Nordic combined and biathlon (with Ski Jumping platforms); bobsleigh and luge were organised on Trebevic mountain (1627 m).

During the nice weather seasons, these mountains are ideal for pedestrian hikes, rock climbing, mountain biking... and even for paragliding.

- In the areas where mountains are not that high and steep, plenty of other outdoor activities might find perfect support and surroundings: biking, horseback riding..., any outdoor sport in fact!

Trails are not always practicable nor forming a network: the numerous macadam roads are good alternative ways for all forms of hiking.

- Nature-based activities can also find in Bosnia & Herzegovina the perfect field for various activities: bird-watching, eco-tours, caving, environmental education, fishing, mushroom picking...

### - Arts and crafts

Like traditions lasting through centuries, Bosnian arts and crafts are perpetuated in a lot of domains and crafts such as hand-made clothes, carpets, tools, copper dishes, furniture, painting, etc.

It is very surprising that this asset is the least highlighted in the studies, and so rarely evoked, because this is another great advantage for BiH: arts and crafts have not been revived after getting forgotten, but have rather simply kept being perpetuated through centuries...

### - Sense of hospitality

This might be some Slavonic, Turkish or any other Eastern or Southern influence heritage, but Bosnian people are very warm and welcoming. Visitors feel it very fast, as the Canadian female Rafting competitor's testimony brought to light: "...But it is the people that I like the most".<sup>34</sup>

In the city, Bosnian people will very naturally take time to offer and share a coffee with friends or even with totally strangers, at any time of the day.

*"Local people will almost always be very friendly. This is common to the region but Bosnian hospitality is something special. **Bosnians will go out of their way to assist you in finding something and often invite someone to their home for a coffee.** Once you enter someone's home as a guest, expect the red carpet treatment. Rich or poor, your host will most certainly serve you coffee [...]. More than likely the host will bring out sweets (biscuits or chocolate) and if the energy is right out come the local spirits and food. Coming from the west, one might see it as going a bit overboard, but **the tradition of treating guests like one of their own is taken seriously.**"*<sup>35</sup>

In rural areas, this sense of hospitality is even stronger. You do not need to speak the language to be and feel very welcome by your hosts, whether it is the first time that you meet or not. They do not ask for anything in return, except maybe for a visit the next time you happen to pass by...

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/setimes/features/2009/06/23/feature-02](http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2009/06/23/feature-02), June 16<sup>th</sup> 09

<sup>35</sup> BH Tourism, <http://www.bhtourism.ba/eng/interactingwithlocalpeople.wbsp>, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2009

For rural tourism, this sense of hospitality is a very important asset. Indeed, tourism is based not only on discovering new territories and things, but also on interacting with people and experiencing other countries' rituals of welcoming and lifestyles. This is even truer concerning rural tourism, where a very special meeting with the hosts, their lifestyle and traditions is wished.

This first part could have been much more developed, since we have not really ranged over each subject very much. But this presentation already makes us able to notice Bosnia-and-Herzegovina's evident assets for rural tourism.

One can also make its own further opinion on these great advantages and settings even by a simple look in the internet, and for sure they are very obvious when you come to BiH, look beyond the prejudices entertained by medias, and of course meet the people...

Nevertheless, "innate" assets are not enough for a territory to become a tourist destination. This evidently requires a set of supplies fulfilling the visitors' demands and expectations.

We are now going to see what Bosnia-and-Herzegovina presently offers to rural tourists.

## **2. The Bosnian current offer in the rural tourism sector**

As it is major for the whole services sector, it is essential to recall that there is no agrotourist offer without a whole quality system of "customers-oriented" production and services.

### **- Regional products selling**

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, markets are still taking place at least weekly, and generally every day and day-long in cities. For example: in Sarajevo, markets are held every day whereas in Fojnica (Central-Bosnia Canton) the "market day" is on Wednesday.

Markets are the ideal place for the farmers to sell their own production, and for the tourists to try the locally grown products and to buy directly to the producers at a reasonable but fair price. One can find on the markets seasonal and very tasty regional food.

In contrary to most of the other Europeans, Bosnians cultivate their own garden very often. In fact, the most part of the rural population is linked to agricultural activities. Their purpose is to tend to self-sufficiency for at least a part of their alimentation. Also, farms or home-products are generally not developed in the goal to sell as the first reason: most of the time, only the excess production is for sale. Since this is anyway the case in any farm, people use to ask around for specific farm products when they cannot go or find it on the market.

One can also see on the roads bordering farms some signs mentioning "eggs", "cheese", "flour" or other home-grown and home-made products when the producers use to sell directly at the farm.

It is very common too, to see people selling their production on the border of the road on a little stand: honey, jams, beans, home-made syrups... are often sold by the children or elderly people.

High quality alimentary and medicinal fruits and plants are collected in the wild by the people who sell it directly or to wholesalers. One can buy it fresh or dried, cooked in jam, frozen, etc.



“Regional products roads” are very famous in rural tourism field. Wine roads, Cheese roads, etc. accompany with more or less success most of rural tourist development initiatives. If the tourists’ response is not always as great as what was expected, it is still a tourist equipment valorising the local richesses, which is interesting in itself. In the Alsace region in France, for example, the wine road is very famous. Tourists come from worldwide to visit vineyards and châteaux, and their presence benefits to the whole local economy.

In the south part of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Herzegovina’s wines are very famous. Tourists can now follow the Herzegovina Wine Route (<http://www.wineroute.ba>).

### - Accommodation and catering

The supply for accommodation and catering in the countryside is generally very low, and might not always meet nowadays rural tourists’ expectations.

Indeed, the structures offering such services are mostly hotels, motels and pensions in modern buildings, and this is not really what concerns rural tourism. Plus, according to the previous studies, this supply does not always meet foreign customers’ criteria.

There used to be a very great and popular supply in private rooms and flats until before the war.

If the offer could be quite easy to set again in activity, it is slow to restart. In particular, there is no organised network or real advertising concerning this offer despite the good potential.

But one can always ask around and easily find this kind of “good value for money” accommodation. It is most of the time offered in the main villages, in modern houses which are bigger than the traditional ones and were often constructed with a part dedicated to this purpose.

In Blagaj, Semir Milavić offers Bed&Breakfast in his family’s very famous Ottoman House.

Tourist guest-houses and cottages are not very common yet. There are also a few mountain houses for rent, like around Prokoško Jezero in Fojnica. In any case, it is working mostly by word-of-mouth; there is generally no real organization or connection with local tourist offices.

Rural tourists, especially foreigners, would rather like to rent a bed & breakfast room linked with their hosts’ home or an independent traditional cottage than a room in a hostel. A part of them would ask for equivalent comfort to what they know at home, but most of them are ready to experience the “real life” of local people, with less comfort but more authenticity (a concept they particularly like) and, why not, with the opportunity to learn and give a hand to farm work.

Campsites are not very numerous: only 24 are in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Campsites 2009 tourist brochure. There might be other campsites not present in this national brochure, but not much more as we have seen on the field.

It is another kind of accommodation with a great potential of development, and which fits perfectly to rural tourism (campsites can be a separated structure or within a farm), and for the other tourists seeking cheap accommodation closer to the nature.

From the owners’ point of view it is a good investment: for a little initial amount of money and work, it can be fast profitable and it is a little risk since the campsite can be developed progressively (in comparison to a building which must be totally finished to start any activity and so requires huge investments immediately at the beginning. The risk is much more important in this case, and even though it works well, the expenditure can only be balanced a long time later).

Surprisingly, there are not so many country inns and, most of the time, tourists have to finally go to the restaurant or the Bosnian fast-foods. For sure, tourists are not only looking for dinners in restaurants; rural tourists in particular generally prefer to eat in country inns or with their hosts.

In some places, it can be organised with the farmers (in summer mountain villages for instance) that they will cook a traditional home-made meal, but one has to speak Bosnian to make it possible.

Nearby Trebinje, a country inn is very famous for its traditional dishes made from regional products, in a warm and traditional-like atmosphere. Individual tourists, local people and buses stop especially over for a meal at this place. This is an example which would be worth to be reproduced.

Other example: in Fojnica, the Franciscan monastery opened an inn, which is become quickly very appreciated by local people and visitors: for the drinks (of which one can order home-made juices) served all day long, but also for the meals prepared on demand for individuals or groups, and simply for the very warm atmosphere. It is the only place of that kind in the area.

### - Natural areas

We have previously seen that BiH's nature is very interesting and diverse, with rare endemic animal and plant species. But *"Bosnia and Herzegovina has only 5% of protected lands, compared to the European norm of 6-8%. Experts say 16% of BiH would need to be protected in order to maintain its biodiversity."*<sup>36</sup> And it is far less than Bulgaria where 34% of the land is protected.

Plus, only a few of these protected areas have adequate equipment for visitors. It would be a piety if tourist activities would deteriorate this nature of great interest for tourists and local people.

Despite all great assets for nature-based activities in BiH, there is not much tourist offer yet. It is common to recognize Bosnian advantages for ecotourism and all forms of nature-based tourism, but the supply is not well developed yet, in particular concerning Bosnian agencies. For example: Greenvisions is the most famous ecotourist structure in BiH, but it has been created by foreigners.

Furthermore, environmental education activities are only at their infancy.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), as part of their Technical Cooperation project for the *"sustainable regional development through Ecotourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina"*, introduced two ecotourist initiatives: EcoVelez based in Blagaj, and Eco Pliva in Jajce. These projects are monitored since February 2006 until December 2009, in relation with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (Central Government), the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Ministry of Physical Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology (Republika Srpska) and the Ministry of Trade and Tourism.<sup>37</sup>

### - « Ethno » villages

The villages still presenting traditional habits and/or appearance are very popular and visited by all tourists looking for "authentic" experiences. They are also integrated in many tourist tours.

Most of them are mountain villages. They are inhabited all the year long like Lukomir, or only while the cattle are brought to the summer pasture like at Prokosko Jezero or Umoljani. In parallel

<sup>36</sup> Greenvisions, <http://www.greenvisions.ba/gv/clanak.php?lang=2&ids=78>, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2009

<sup>37</sup> JICA, <http://www.jica.go.jp/balkan/english/introduction/bos02.html>, August 1<sup>st</sup> 2009

with their daily tasks, some of the inhabitants have developed a few tourist offers such as sale of hand-made souvenirs, local guiding, accommodation... in response to the visitors' demands.

But the main part of tourists' expenditure goes to the tourist agency that organised the tour.

In Vranduk (nearby Zenica), European funds helped to renovate the fortress and to create a simple but very well done museum inside the tower. This has been realised in a style common to other European countries' tourist historical places, so corresponds to foreign tourists' expectations.

The few private initiatives deserve to be highlighted. For examples: Nisvet Mujkić has created by himself an ethno-museum in his backyard in Klokotnica (nearby Doboj), which is becoming more and more famous and visited; During our visits, we visited in Cerovać (nearby Trebinje) another ethno-museum which is being created thanks to the objects offered by the villagers.

Another kind of ethno-project: the "Ethno village Stanišići" has been constructed especially in a tourist goal, but its success could be an example for encouraging the restoration in "real" villages.

But, even in very tourist villages, such as Pocitelj nearby Mostar, a UNESCO classified site for its exceptional architecture, accommodation of guest-house/ bed & breakfast type is missing, as told us a host in the village. The result is that most of the tourists come only for the visit, then leave.

### - Sport activities (rafting, mountaineering, fishing, extreme sports)

Bosnian mountaineering, fishing and rafting associations cover the whole territory and are very dynamic. They are the main offer for outdoor and adventure tourism in BiH.

Rafting clubs are amongst the most dynamic and the most numerous sport structures. The water sport activities rise, thanks to leisure time and tourism, and even for competitions as we have already seen.

*"Many buildings built during the Winter Olympics in 1984 were destroyed during the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995)"* and not all of the infrastructures have been reconstructed yet because of the huge work and the lack of fund<sup>38</sup>, but the winter activities in BiH are very famous and active, especially in Bjelasnica, Jahorina and Vlasica ski resorts.

The other sports are not as well developed, but one can punctually find structures which offer very various outdoor and adventure activities, such as snow-boarding, ice and rock climbing, biking, caving, paragliding, and other nature-based activities...

A good example of that kind of agency is the Extreme sports club Scorpio in Zenica. Their offer even covers nearly all sports that one can practise in Bosnia & Herzegovina, with very skilled instructors and a great knowledge of the country. It is also a private and individual initiative.

Pedestrian hiking trails are re-marked in many areas now, especially in the mountains.

Thanks to the funds it has received from Caritas International Belgium's, the PD Vranica mountaineering association in Fojnica marked more than 100km of trails in the Vranica Mountain. In other places, the marking and mapping processes have been supported by other organizations.

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<sup>38</sup> ZOI'84 Olympic Center Ltd. Sarajevo, <http://www.zoi84.ba/index.php?lang=ba&sel=2>, June 17<sup>th</sup> 2009

But there is poor or non-existing marking and mapping for other activities requiring it (for instance for biking, horse-riding...), even though some structures start to develop other tourist itineraries like the Green Tour association which plans to mark cycling paths <sup>39</sup>.

Plus, 1:25000 scaled maps seem to not be available for sale (like in France with the National Geographic Institut's (IGN) 1:25000 hiking maps that anybody can buy in various common shops).

Horseback hiking in BiH is very rare, really underdeveloped whereas the country presents wonderful assets for this activity. It might meet a demand from strangers looking for new riding experiences, which is a great tendency in France, and in other "West-European" countries at least.

Horse-riders wishing to try riding in other places do not hesitate to travel to Mongolia, Argentina, Jordan, Rajasthan... but also closer: Poland and Bulgaria are very famous as new destinations. With these two examples, we are very similar to BiH's case, and it makes the hypothesis of a great potential very plausible, not only regarding the opportunity of developing an interesting horse-back tourism offer, but also concerning the possibility to meet or initiate a good demand from foreign outdoor horse-riders.

While talking about outdoors activities, we have to recall that *"Despite the efforts made and significant improvements in mine action management, mines still represent one of the main obstacles for the safety of citizens and economic and social development of BiH. [...] Mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina began in 1996, with the establishment of United Nations Mine Action Centre –UNMAC. [...] In July 1998, national structures took over the responsibility for demining activities, but with continued financial, expertise and technical assistance from international community. [...] The adoption of the Law on Demining in 2002, established a central structure, BHMAC at the state level, immediately under the Ministry of Civil Affairs. In the same year the first Mine Action Strategy was made for the period 2002-2009[...]."* <sup>40</sup>

Following up, the new 2009-2019 Mine Action Strategy *"will help attain the goal set by the National Mine Action Strategy of ridding the country of the mine threat by 2019. The submissions cover mine clearance, the strengthening of national institutions to undertake mine action operations over the long term and mine risk education"* <sup>41</sup>. (3.35 % of the land are still concerned)

The priority zones are now cleared of mine, and all mine-fields are mapped and indicated on the spots with specific red signs. There is no major risk anymore if one does not enter these zones, reasonably not venture in ruins, non-used paths or fields, etc. and simply ask in case of any doubt!

### - Package offers

One of the main weaknesses in Bosnian tourism is the lack of networking, organization and communication regarding the tourist offer, and it is even more obvious for the rural tourism field where one can think that no offer exists yet.

As a result, visitors cannot easily organize their global stay and activities from away and often have to go through tourist agencies and their package offers. But, if they propose cultural or sport (adventure) holidays for instance, they rarely include rural tourist activities.

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<sup>39</sup> Green Tour, [http://www.greentour.ba/p\\_marking.php](http://www.greentour.ba/p_marking.php), August 1st 2009

<sup>40</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina Council of Ministers, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008, p.3

<sup>41</sup> Electronic Mine Information Network (E-MINE), <http://www.mineaction.org/country.asp?c=4>, August 1<sup>st</sup> 2009

Concerning ecotourism, the main agency in BiH is Greenvisions, as we already mentioned.

Besides the mountaineering associations, who do not really organise holidays but hikes, we have not heard about other Bosnian structures that really proposes ecotourist services.

During our visits, we have visited the project held in Dubrava (<http://seoski-turizam-bosna.com>) which, if it is realised, will be a very complete rural tourism offer: accommodation in the hosts' house, home-made food products, participation to the farm daily tasks, and leisure activities. The initiator plans to open later a country campsite and to guide sport activities in Pale-Romanija region.

On the Herzegovina Wine Route website, one can also find information about accommodations, restaurants... It is a good example of a project linking other activities for the local development.

From a foreigners' point of view, rural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina can be seen as solidarity tourism, as we said in the introduction. With the support of the French non-governmental organization Enfants-Europe-Bosnie, the association Zdravo Prijatelji has been created in Sarajevo and has organised since 2008 some fair and solidarity tourism tours for French tourists.

Some foreign agencies or tour operators also begins to include Bosnia and Herzegovina in their circuits for ecotourist, solidarity tourism or similar purposes. For example the Italian association Viaggi Solidali for responsible and solidarity circuit, Teledom and Eastern Trekker giving support for backpacking trips or the British tour operator Exodus for adventure holidays.

### **3. Support programs for tourism development in BiH**

#### **- Legal mandates for tourism development in Bih.**

This part will be developed during the autumn 2009:

- Repartition of responsibilities and competent structures in RS and Federation.
- The stakeholders analysis is necessary.

#### **- International programmes**

Several studies about tourism in BiH, have been realised by or for:

- USAID Cluster Competitiveness Initiative (studies in various tourist domains)
- JICA (2004, *The study on sustainable development through ecotourism in B. & H*)
- GTZ (2003, *Tourism potentials of Bosnia & Herzegovina*)
- TEMPUS project in 2004
- European Union Regional Economic Development (five reports in 2006)
- BiH Inbound Travel Agencies.



- Consortium ORGALIS and BCEOM (2007, *Investment opportunities for sustainable tourism businesses in Bosnia & Herzegovina*)
- Etc.

These studies are generally part of the support programs implemented by international organizations. Here are the main ones focusing on the tourist development in BiH:

(This part and the information missing will be completed later)

Implementer	Dates	Area covered and actions	Amount	Partners and donors
USAID Cluster Competitiveness Initiative		-BiH : studies in various tourist domains including rural and cultural tourism - promotion of the destination BiH (Enjoy Life Bosnia & Herzegovina advertising campaign) - expertise - Sarajevo, Herzegovina, Krajina		
JICA	- 2004 - February 2006 to December 2009	- BiH, 2004, <i>The study on sustainable development through ecotourism in Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</i>  - The project for sustainable regional development through Eco-Tourism (Technical Cooperation Project): EcoVelez based in Blagaj and Eco Pliva in Jajce		- Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations - Ministry of Environment and Tourism (F- BiH) - Ministry of Physical Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology (RS) - Ministry of Trade and Tourism
SNV Balkans	Since 2005	Not very precise on this site: <a href="http://www.snvworld.org/en/regions/balkan/ourwork/Pages/tourism.aspx">http://www.snvworld.org/en/regions/balkan/ourwork/Pages/tourism.aspx</a>		
UNDP		Cannot find anything specific to tourism on their website even though they have actions		
UCODEP	Since 2007	Development of environmental tourism in: Sarajevo canton (Municipality of Trnovo), Herzegovina-Neretva Cantons (Municipality of Konjic, in Drežnica and Hutovo Blato Park)		Numerous partners: <a href="http://www.ucodep.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=blogcategory&amp;id=342&amp;Itemid=802">http://www.ucodep.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=blogcategory&amp;id=342&amp;Itemid=802</a>
Catalogna		Sabici: no information found		
Caritas International Belgium	2007, since 2005 in the region	Development of sustainable agriculture and eco-agrotourism in the municipality of Fojnica : guest-house, interpretive panels, hiking trails, <i>Fojnica Rural Tourism map</i> , funds and advices + projects in Central Serbia and Kosovo		Fondation Abbé Pierre - Conseil regional d'Auvergne - Secours catholique/ Caritas France - Caritas I. Belgium - SCAC French embassy in BiH
Caritas Switzerland		Rural tourism development around Gorazde : funds for guest-houses, products, ads...		
GTZ	since 1996	Not clear on: <a href="http://www.gtz.de/en/weltweit/europa-kaukusus-zentralasien/1188.htm">http://www.gtz.de/en/weltweit/europa-kaukusus-zentralasien/1188.htm</a>		

## **PART 2:**

# **What is the demand for rural tourism in BiH?**



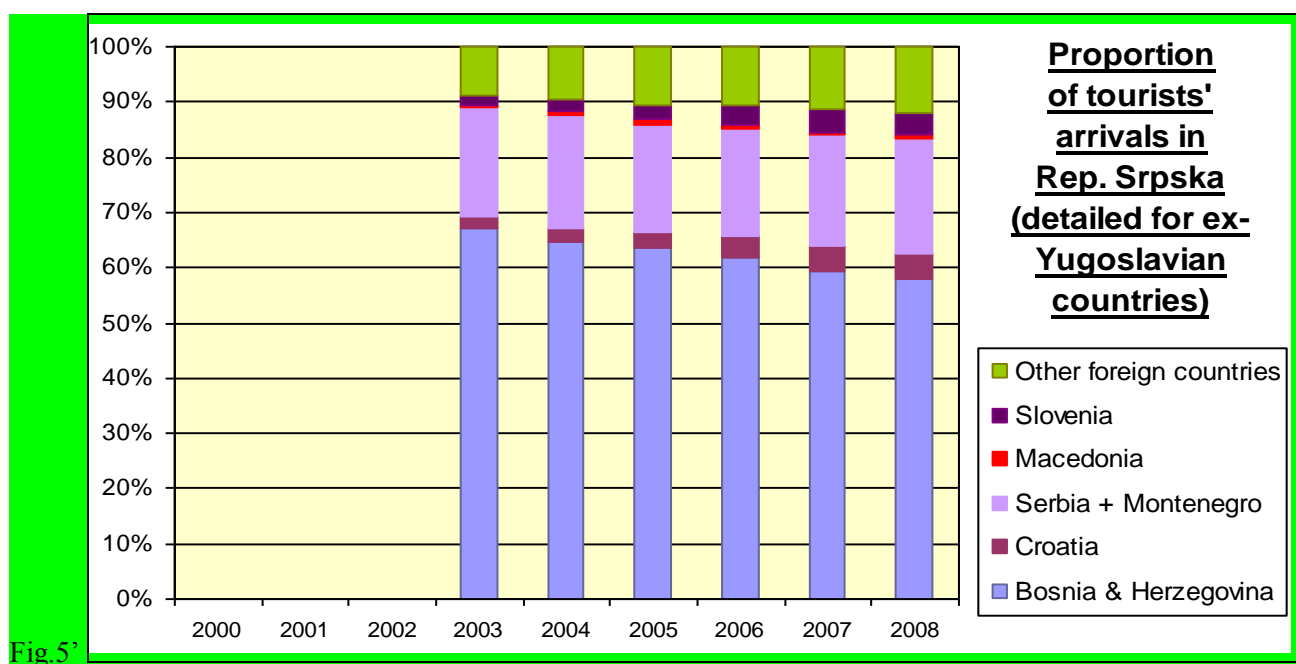
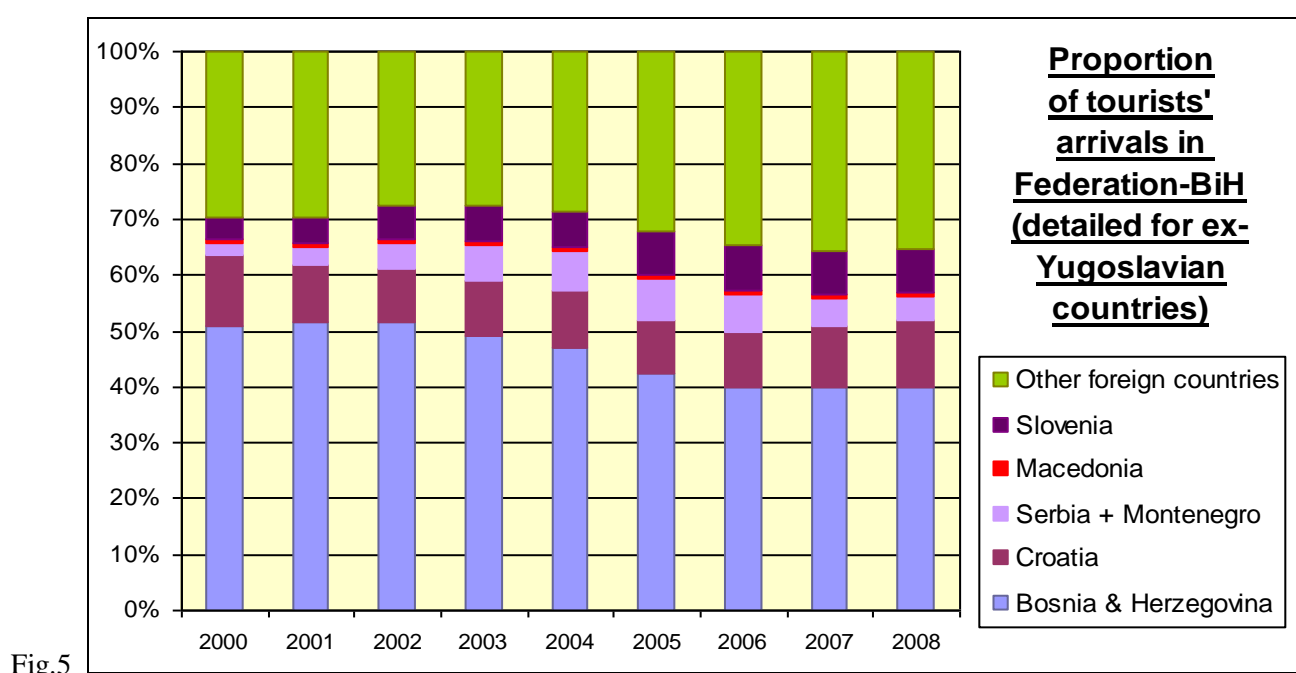
It is not very easy to find data on this subject which has not been much studied yet.

So, we will have to add global impressions developed thanks to our visits and meetings to the general trends for tourism in BiH, for rural tourism and testimonies from the stakeholders we met.

## 1. Bosnian and neighbouring countries' demand for rural tourism in Bosnia-and-Herzegovina

In the introduction, we noticed that tourist arrivals in BiH have continuously risen since 2001.

From the official statistics<sup>42</sup>, we have realised the following graph which shows these arrivals in a proportional approach, and details the parts corresponding to the Ex-Yugoslavian countries:



<sup>42</sup> data from: Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federal office of statistics, 2008 and 2009

We can see that these three last years (2006 to 2008), the proportions in arrivals are quite constant and tourists in Bosnia & Herzegovina clearly still come mainly from the Balkan region:

- In the Federation of BiH, tourists from the ex-Yugoslavia region represent about 65% of the arrivals, with Bosnians themselves counting for 40% and the neighbours, of which the half come from Croatia, completing this regional part with about 25% of the total arrivals in 2008.

- In the Republika Srpska, the ex-Yugoslavian tourists count for almost 90% of the tourist arrivals with the Bosnian tourists rating 60%, and for this entity the main strangers are Serbs and Montenegrins representing an average of 20% of the arrivals during these three years.

In a general perspective, BiH is a very rural country as we saw in the previous chapter, and Bosnian people enjoy spending time in the nature.

This graph only shows the arrivals of the part of Bosnians who spend their holidays in paying accommodations; we can nevertheless see that it is already a great number: 140.000 in 2008.

But a lot of Bosnian people own a “vikendica” (“week-end” home) in the countryside, the mountain or nearby the coast, where they go as often as possible. They also like to visit their family. These Bosnian tourists are not considered in the statistics, which are consequently under-evaluated.

Bosnians appreciate “roštilj” (barbecue) very much, and organise it generally in a nice natural/rural area. They also use to regularly buy farm products on the market or directly at the farm, and appreciate outdoors and sport activities: fishing and mountaineering associations’ members are mostly Bosnian, and these associations are generally very dynamic.

All these practises are usually done in very familiar places, known sometimes from the childhood by the family or friends; there is not often the discovering dimension of tourist activities (except for hikers who use to travel to other mountains and even abroad).

As a result, and even though Bosnia & Herzegovina is not that big, many Bosnian people do not know their country very well. They often ignore the possibilities for activities such as rafting, paragliding, ethno-museums, new kinds of accommodation (different from hostels), etc. and have not always been to the great famous places, certainly because of the lack of organization and advertising about these activities, even within the country.

Since Bosnians practise tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina and since they appreciate the activities corresponding to rural tourism field but often do not know their country very well, we can estimate that a great part of the Bosnian people can be concerned by a wider choice and better organized rural tourist offers in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Because of the rural exodus phenomenon, more and more people lose their links with the countryside and rural activities and habits. Plus, the modernism and communication technology in Bosnian cities are comparable to other European towns: mobile phone and internet are part of the daily life at work as well as at home, and of course everybody use electric household appliances. Like in other countries, traditional recipes and techniques are forgotten by nowadays urban generations; industrial food with artificial taste is replacing the home-produced natural food; static life and indoor sport replace outdoors work and leisure times.

Then, it seems evident that Bosnian city dwellers may meet very closely with the general tendencies that we presented when defining rural tourism, and the people we met confirmed this hypothesis, whether they were project owners or potential rural tourists.

Nevertheless, they might not ask for as high standards as foreigners would, because it is a new supply for them in BiH. This is something project creators have to be conscious: they should not think with nowadays Bosnian standards but with better and eco-friendlier ones, in order to be interesting for a broader clientele and to prepare the future evolution of the local people's criteria.

The second most numerous tourists in Federation of BiH (after Bosnians) come from Croatia.

Their country has become in a few years a very famous tourist destination, in particular thanks to the coast along the Adriatic Sea with cheaper tourist offer than in Italy or Greece for example.

But the neighbouring Bosnia-and-Herzegovina has got the mountains and ski resorts, spas, very various countryside assets, for even cheaper prices. There is also the famous Catholic pilgrim site, Medjugorje in Herzegovina. Plus, Croats might have some family in BiH that they like to visit, and they appreciate the same leisure activities as Bosnians.

The Herzegovina region in particular develops tourist projects in close partnership with Croatia, as some participants mentioned during the conferences of the International Tourism Fair held in Mostar at the beginning of April 09.

The development of rural tourism in the Istria region (Croatia) thanks to the association Ruralis ([www.ruralis.hr](http://www.ruralis.hr)) is seen as an example to take inspiration from.

The other bordering countries are Serbia with Kosovo and Montenegro (the statistics are cumulated since their independence is recent).

They are the most numerous foreign visitors in Republika Srpska.

We can estimate that the reasons for Serbian and Montenegrin tourists to come to BiH are similar as the Croats' ones:

A part of them certainly travel to Bosnia & Herzegovina for winter tourism and spas, and another great part come to visit family and friends. The second ones can be considered as rural tourists since BiH is a mostly rural country and leisure times often take place in outdoor areas.

Macedonia is also an ex-Yugoslavian country, a little bit further from Bosnia & Herzegovina.

There are only a very few tourists in BiH coming from there.

This might be in part due to the difference of language since Macedonian comes from Bulgarian whereas Bosnian languages are considered as belonging to the Serbo-Croatian languages family.

Anyway, we can estimate that Croatian, Serbian, Kosovo, Montenegrin and Macedonian trends for rural tourism are very similar to Bosnian ones: they were all part of the Yugoslavian territory and regime, so they shared similar history and lifestyle during some decades. Nowadays, they have still kept some common characteristics. Their languages are very similar too (except Macedonian), so it does not correspond to a real barrier and difficulty for tourism, even in the countryside.

As we said for Bosnian people, we can generalize our observation and say that the European trends for rural tourism also concern the Balkan countries: nowadays lifestyle, which is globally urban-tinted, induces a reaction in tourist trends towards a look for more adventure and authenticity. Bosnia & Herzegovina is a perfect ground for this kind of tourist experiences.



Still as we estimated concerning Bosnians, we can say that tourists from these countries do certainly not have as high criteria as other Europeans concerning standards. Indeed they “know” the context in the area and then do not expect as much as if they would travel to another part of Europe.

But they would for sure appreciate a wider choice and a better organized, more professional and standardized offer.

Slovenia is the last country that we wish to observe from the ex-Yugoslavian entity.

We see on the graph that Slovenian tourists’ arrivals are quite significant: it is the second incoming source in the Balkan region after Croatia, even though their language is a bit different.

In Slovenia, rural tourism is very well developed and organized. In a few years it has become one of the best and most famous places for rural tourism in Europe. Slovenian stakeholders have looked at the other European organizations for rural tourism and have elaborated a well advised strategy thanks to national great experts in the field. Their system and expertise now represent a very good example to follow for the development of rural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Slovenian experts recognize BiH’s attractivity and potentials, but highlight in particular the need in networking and good planning, trainings for all stakeholders and creation of national quality standards corresponding to the European level in rural tourism.

So, Slovenian people know much about rural tourism as they can experience high quality offers in their own country or in the nearby Austria or Italy for instance.

But they keep travelling to BiH even though the supply is not comparable. Do they come for winter sports? For the spas? For nature-based activities? Attracted by the cheaper prices?

In any case, they might be interested in other accommodations than hotels and would appreciate a better supply. They probably look for higher quality offer than Bosnians do. We can also suppose that they might soon expect comparable tourist range than what has been developed in Slovenia.

In brief, we can estimate that there is an interest for rural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina in the eyes of the tourists from the ex-Yugoslavian countries. Everybody recognize BiH’s assets for these activities. Everybody speak about the great Bosnian nature, mountains and home-produced food. And all of them enjoy their holidays in the country.

But they also talk about the lacks of good quality tourist offers and of choice; they would expect these negative points to be improved.

However, we have to observe that the data we have, even though they have been set in place according to the W.T.O. criteria, do not help us to observe the real tourists movements, especially concerning these regional tourists: many of them come only for professional reasons (and do not consume rural tourist activities at all) and an other great part of them would come and stay in other accommodations than the “officially” tourist ones: personal holiday homes, family and friends’ homes, camping in the wild are generally preferred but are not considered by these statistics.

Hopefully, the data is more representative concerning the other foreign tourists.

## 2. Other foreign and especially French tourists and tour-operators' possible demand

Since 2001, the foreign tourists' arrivals have risen from 90.086 to 212.749 in 2008.

The Ex-Yugoslavian countries that we have just considered play a great role in the tourists' arrivals in BiH: on these proportionality graphs<sup>43</sup>, we can clearly notice that the tourists coming from these countries represent more than 40% of the foreign tourists visiting the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina, **and more than 70% of the foreigners visiting the Republika Srpska:**

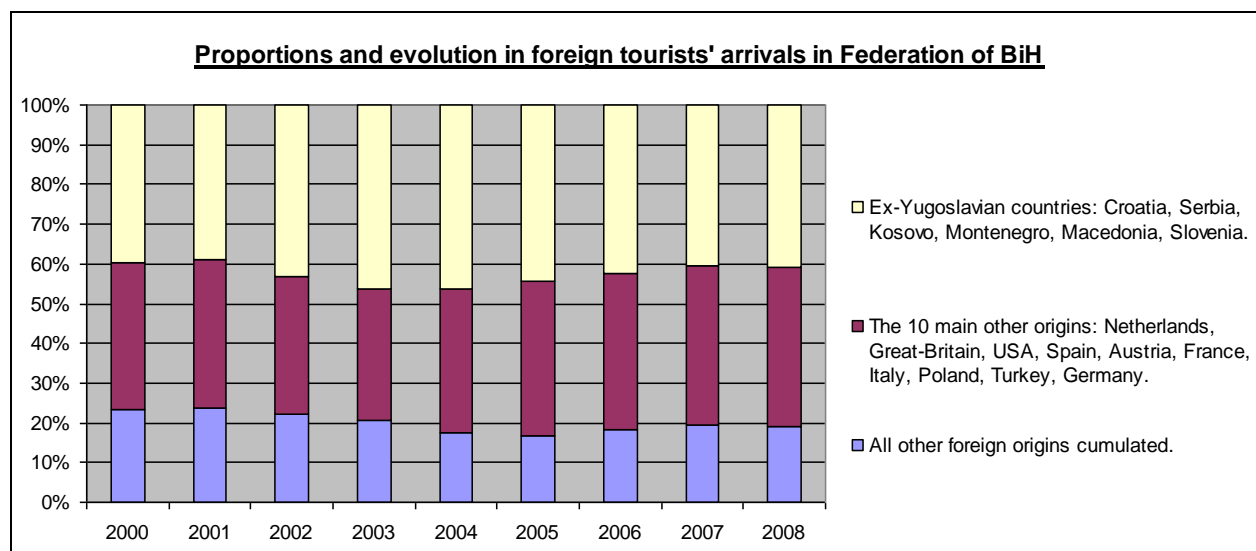


Fig.6

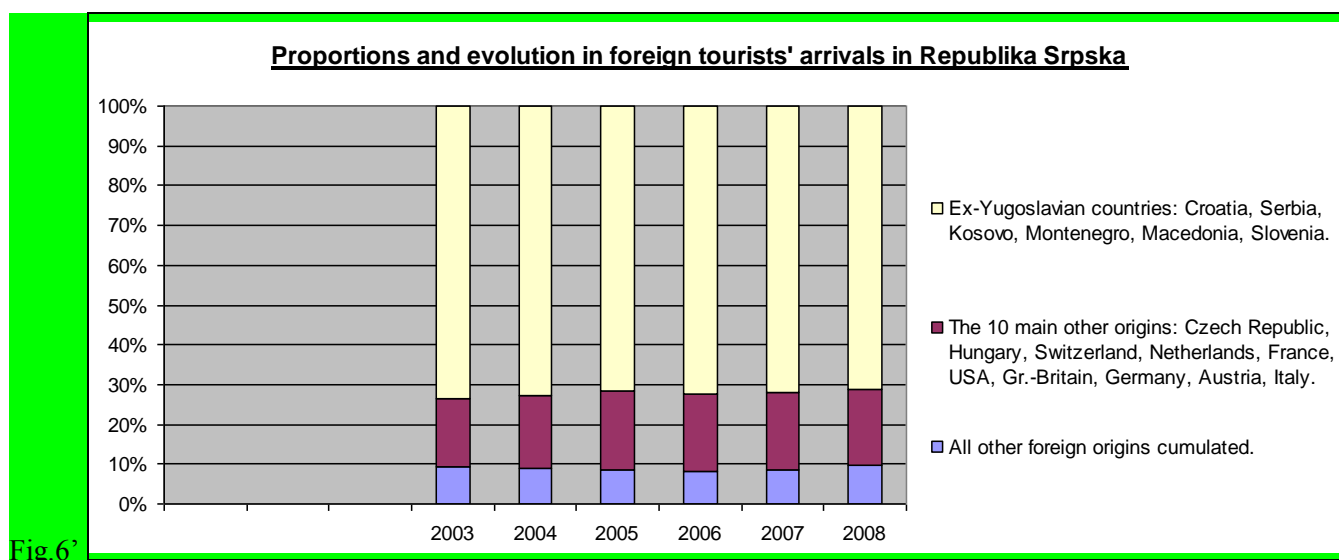


Fig.6'

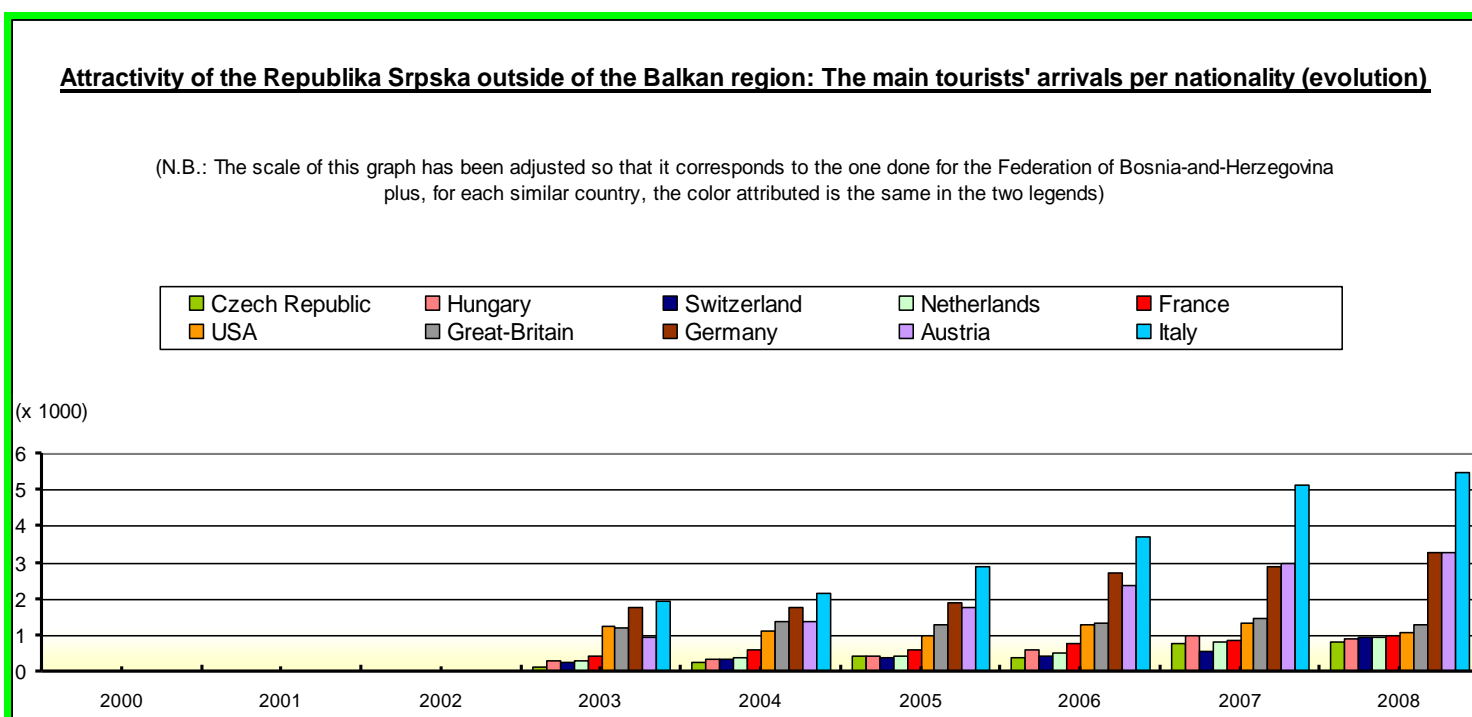
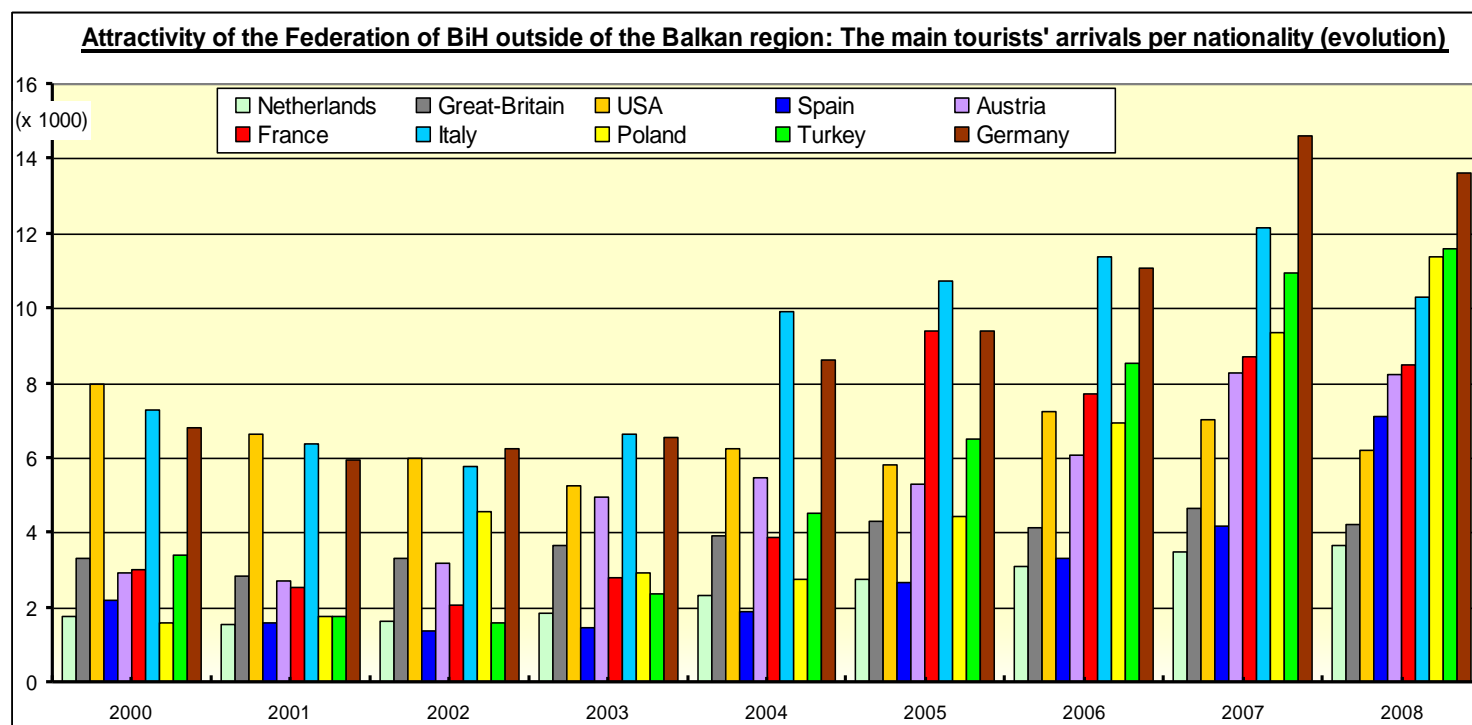
But we also see that other countries' citizens are attracted by BiH: the "top 10" tourists' origins located outside of the Balkan region represent another 40% of the foreign tourists in the Federation of BiH **and almost 20% in Republika Srpska.**

**NB: Amongst these ten main "outside of Ex-Yugoslavia" origins, we find in both entities these seven ones: Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Great-Britain, the Netherlands and the United States.**

<sup>43</sup> From data in: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federal office of statistics, 2008 and 2009 and Republika Srpska Institute of statistics, 2005 and 2009.

So, we will now detail the tourists' arrivals from these ten countries on the following graph<sup>44</sup> :

Figures 7 and 7':



The influence of the Diaspora on these statistics seems obvious: Germany, Italy, France, Austria, Turkey... all these countries have hosted and still host Bosnian emigrants from the 1992-95 civil war, who regularly travel to Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Sweden is not represented on this graph but, with 3099 arrivals in Federation of BiH and 653 in Republika Srpska in 2008, we can estimate that a huge part of the people coming from Sweden are Bosnians who make the trip to BiH to visit their family and friends.

<sup>44</sup> From data in: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federal office of statistics, 2008 and 2009 and Republika Srpska Institute of statistics, 2005 and 2009.

But all the foreigners' visits in BiH do not come down to the only phenomenon of Diaspora. We can tell that a part of these visitors are volunteers and employees for foreign administration or humanitarian actions but there must be more and more tourists too since the statistics keep growing.

And, even though all the visitors do not initially come for tourist purposes, most of them are potentially concerned by rural tourism activities. All the foreigners who spend time in BiH visit it and enjoy skiing, hiking, going on the market or at the farm, visiting traditional villages, etc.

In their study for USAID <sup>45</sup>, the Emerging Markets Group highlighted that the following activities: walking/ trekking, cycling/ mountain biking, rafting/ canyoning/ kayaking, climbing, caving, and more generally rural tourism in BiH, mainly correspond to these marketing targets: Great-Britain, Germany, Italy, France, Benelux and Eastern Europe.

Indeed, a sizeable part of these people look for adventure and rural activities during their holidays. Concerning BiH, the cheaper prices are for sure a point of interest, but the main strength of BiH toward these potential tourists is that this country responds to what they generally seek: a new destination which presents so many great assets for outdoor and rural tourist practises. And Bosnia & Herzegovina is at both Europe's and East's doors, and that make it very accessible.

The previous Fig.7 and 7' graphs confirm that these countries count among the "top 10" of foreign tourists coming to BiH from out of the Balkan region.

We also see on these graphs, that, even if the total foreign tourists' arrivals have kept rising, there have been huge variations when we consider each country of origin individually.

The most impressive growth is the one of Polish tourists in Federation of BiH: they were the less numerous of these ten countries in the entity in 2000, and were finally at the third place in 2008. They probably come specifically for tourist purposes, attracted by the cheap prices of the Balkan region compared to the other Mediterranean countries. But nothing indicates that they are not interested in rural tourism too.

Nevertheless, the previous graphs do not reflect the reality in terms of length of the stays: are these foreign tourists spending long holidays in Bosnia & Herzegovina or are they only passing while travelling in the region?

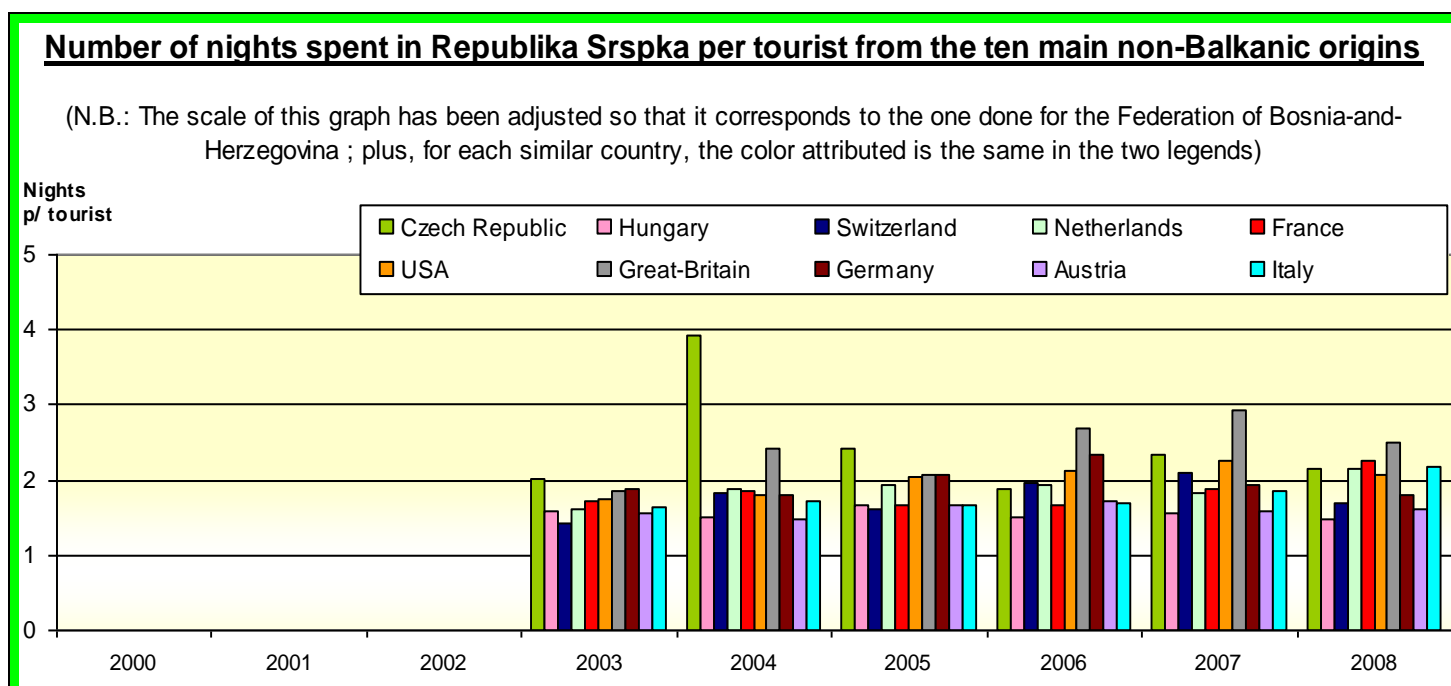
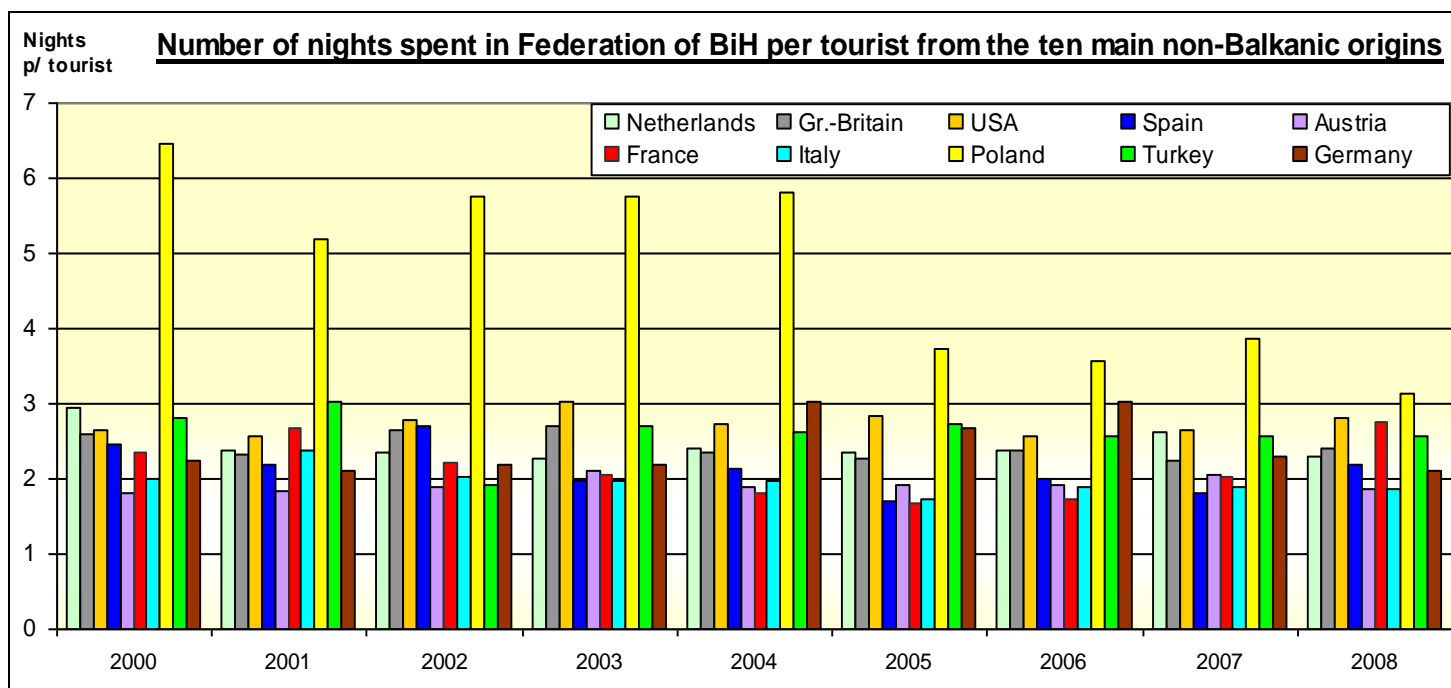
If we consider rural tourism, we are to wish the people to stay, at least a few days if not one week and more. Indeed, the presence of tourists can benefit to the local activities and development only if they stay enough to participate to the local economy by consuming local tourist offers. It is not worth it if they make a long trip, bringing their own food etc. and if they leave just after that.

On the next graphs, we will look more precisely over the average lengths of tourists' stay in the two entities of Bosnia-and-Herzegovina:

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<sup>45</sup> Emerging Markets Group Ltd., 2006b, pp.18-19 and 21.

Figures 8 and 8':



(NB: The figures used to realise these graphs are averages obtained by dividing the annual number of tourist nights by the annual arrivals (per nationality of origin)<sup>46</sup>). The graph shows general tendencies according to the country of origin and consequently do not reflect the particular practices.)

These Figures 8 and 8' are very interesting and speak by themselves: tourism in BiH faces a great issue which is that **the main foreign tourists do not even stay three nights** in the country.

(Except Polish visitors who used to stay almost a whole week long in Federation of BiH until a few years ago, and Czechs who stayed almost 4 days in Republika Srpska. It is interesting to notice that whether they travel in the Federation or in the Republika Srpska, British tourists stay ~2,5 days).

<sup>46</sup> data from: Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Federal office of statistics, 2008 and 2009



Since we are considering averages, and that it is known that a great part of the tourists who enter Bosnia & Herzegovina only come for a one-or-two-days excursion (generally from Croatia), we can suppose that the average lengths of the stays are reduced by the one-night visits. There must be some long stays. However, this situation is symptomatic of a country which is not well considered, or simply unknown by its visitors, who pass through or do not stay long.

It can also bring to light an unattractive or insufficient tourist supply that does not incite to stay.

As a matter of fact, we can notice that only the tourists from far away countries spend more than two nights in Bosnia & Herzegovina. Austrian and Italian ones, who come from countries from where BiH is very accessible, have less than two nights here: they come, and go.

Concerning rural tourism, it is sure that the offer is under-developed, and that it is a real pity. At the present state, it can mostly only target people from the nearby countries, strangers who stay for professional reason in the country, and adventurous backpackers. The purpose is to develop offers that incite them and other tourists to stay longer, and to venture out of the main tourist places.

We can say that the demand for rural tourist activities exists: let's not forget that these foreign people travel to BiH, which is mostly a rural country, and they generally practise outdoor sports during their stay (hiking is famous). They appreciate the Bosnian hospitality and good food. And they also enjoy discovering the countryside landscapes and preserved agriculture and heritage.

Even though they are generally ready to experience during their short stay a lower level of quality or comfort than what they usually know, they often regret to not have much more advertising information and a greater choice of better organized and standardized activities.

This is certainly one of the reasons why they stay so short: when one cannot find information about the "alternative" forms of accommodation and activities he/she is looking for, one will generally not venture randomly in a foreign country of which he/she does not speak the languages.

Furthermore, if there is no good advertising campaign done once the offer will be better, the country will continue on being associated to its dramatic past:

*"A Survey of French Tour Operators showed that the travel agents in France know very little about Bosnia. It can't be considered yet as a product on the French tourism market. Those agents specialised for the Western Balkans, deal from time to time with hotel bookings for one day trip to Sarajevo, Mostar or Medjugorje for visitors going to Croatia or Serbia. Namely, one medium sized Agency (Rivages du monde) organising the Cruise on the Croatian coast includes one day trip to Mostar. The way of advertising of Mostar is significant for the perception of Bosnian market: "day 7: visit to Mostar, the city symbol of the after war reconstruction". Another tour operator, specialised in "cultural travel" organises a day trip to Sarajevo describing it as a "City rich with Ottoman heritage" with an accent on its interesting past and History full of incident. **Bosnia is still marked by the war images: one of the first questions of any person wishing to visit Bosnia is about the landmines.**"*<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> ORGALIS and BCEOM, 2007, p. 22

In most of the foreigners' minds, the prejudices linked to the 1992-95 war are still present: Bosnia & Herzegovina is often believed to be an unsafe country, even for a simple visit. The images of the recent and nearby battles have not been replaced by the one of a stable and peaceful country, in part because not enough communication has been done about nowadays better situation.

This, added to the poor tourist supply and the marks of the war present all over in the country, cannot contribute to a good image.

For the tourist development of BiH, it has to be changed.

Otherwise, neither individuals nor tourist agencies would come in appreciably greater number.

These considerations are concerning the general tourist tendencies, but also rural tourism, since it is seen as one of the best development potential along with cultural tourism and gastronomy by the Bosnian *Tourism Strategic Plan 2009-2018*, and also by strangers (by French tour operators for instance, according to the testimonies in Appendix n°3 of the Orgalis and BCEOM (2007) study).

Concerning the French market, if we focus on rural tourism and if we keep in mind that the country was very recently in war, we can estimate that the main markets must be the ones of the "alternative" tourists: solidarity and fair tourists, adventure tourists, ecotourists, responsible tourists.

It might also concern tourists looking for cultural holidays and, in the future, a wider profile of French tourists looking for rural tourist holidays who would plan to spend them in BiH as well as they would have spent it the previous year in Slovenia, Poland or Bulgaria.

In 2002, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) published studies about the main emitting markets in terms of ecotourism: Canada, Germany, Spain, USA, Italy, Great-Britain and France.

It is interesting to highlight that all are among the main nationalities of the tourists in BiH, except Canada (1,043 Canadian visitors only in 2008).

The *French Ecotourism Market*<sup>48</sup> study reveals that:

- According to the French tourists who participated in the study, *"the combination of discovery of wildlife, flora and fauna and other civilizations and cultures is the first consideration when choosing [a nature-based or more specifically an ecotourist] holiday"*. They very often also wish to practise sport. They rate as of major importance the quality of the landscapes and a preserved (or even better: protected) environment, along with meeting the local people and learning about their culture (gastronomy, arts and crafts, customs...) and heritage. If possible they will rather choose a travel including various activities than a too specialised or mono-activity trip.

Even though this report were specific to ecotourism, more recent studies stated that these tendencies dwell on a growing part the French nature-based tourism market, and more generally on the rural tourism field and French practises.

- *"The number of package holidays booked with tour operators in France is lower than in neighbouring countries."*

[But] *Respondents to the study rely somewhat more on tour operators (28.5%) for ecotourism products than the national average"*. What they highlight as important in the choice of the tour-

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<sup>48</sup> World Tourism Organization (WTO), 2002, Special Report n°16.

operator is its ability to give information concerning the environment and the local cultures, plus recommendations (regarding the respect of the local traditions, cultures and nature).

It is also very important for them to know in which way their trip will not damage, and on the contrary will benefit to the local environment and people (directly and indirectly thanks to funds).

*“Other types of visitors that participated in the study were independent travellers, who organize their holidays themselves with the help of specialist tour operators, travel associations or brochures provided by the destination host”.*

We can see that the amount of information is very important for a (French) tourist when comes the time to choose the destination and to organize his/her trip whether they plan it through a tour-operator or by themselves.

In ecotourists' eyes, it is important to know how their trip will support the sustainable local development, in the respect of both nature and humans and a help to the local economy.

- *“The global profile of this type of customer (package holidays or independent travellers) is as follows: half the travellers are between 35 and 50 years of age, 55% are women and half hold managerial positions or are professionals. They are comprised of average to high earners and are mostly from provincial areas”.*

There is no doubt, “alternative” forms of tourism are more expensive than mass package trips. Because of that, the market is much more targeted and limited, even though it is growing quite fast.

A few years later, the French National Union of Tourism and outdoors activities Associations (UNAT) published its study: *Solidarity tourism seen by French travellers – Reputation, image and perspectives*<sup>49</sup>, realised in 2002-2003 in response to the Foreign Affairs Ministry's wish to question French people about *“the fame and interest for “different” forms of travels”*. The UNAT also created in 2006 the French Association for Fair and Solidarity Tourism (ATES).

The alternative travellers are a small part of French tourists: with a number of 100,000 a year, they represented a few years ago about 1% only of the French tourists having holidays in foreign countries, according to the Act for a Responsible Tourism (ATR) French association.

But they are more and more numerous: in between 2005 and 2008, the number of French people travelling through ATES' members has doubled.

Plus, “alternative” tour-operators and tourist associations are not all members of ATR or ATES, so certainly much more French tourists progressively change their habits.

It is interesting to learn in this study that in 2003, 30% of the people questioned answered spontaneously that they had already heard about Solidarity tourism, Fair tourism or Ecotourism.

When asked more specifically about Solidarity tourism, the profile of people interested in this form of tourism is very characteristic, and similar to what we saw for French ecotourists:

- High socio-professional category, generally associated to high education level and high salary.
- They often participate as volunteer to humanitarian, sport, environment... associations.
- It seems that *“The more they travel, the more they are interested in this form of travel”*.

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<sup>49</sup> translated from Union Nationale des Associations de Tourisme et de plein air (UNAT), 2005, *Le tourisme solidaire vu par les voyageurs français - Notoriété, image et perspectives*.

- They expect to be in contact with the local people, learn about and know how to respect the nature and local heritage, know exactly how is divided and who earn part of the money they paid for the trip, feel useful to the country they visit and travel in rather small groups.
- They often like to have also some activities such as hiking, visiting monuments and natural sites, participating to the local traditional activities... The trip might be a circuit or a stay.
- During their trip, they are ready to experience less comfort as what they are used to, in order to adapt to the local situation.

The main difference in the target population is that it seems that when ecotourists tend to be provincials, solidarity tourists seem to rather be city-dwellers.

The fact that these customers did high studies is very important: they might speak English. Otherwise, Frenchs are well-known for not speaking foreign languages and need a French guide.

“Alternative” tourists often favour distant and poor destinations such as South-America, Africa, Asia, but the (eco-friendly) tendency is to travel to closest countries: Poland, Serbia, Bulgaria...

They can be interested in Bosnia & Herzegovina as well, as confirms the very new Zdravo Prijatelji solidarity tourism association, created in Sarajevo in partnership with the French humanitarian association Enfants Europe Bosnie (EEB) ([www.tourisme-equitable-bosnie.com](http://www.tourisme-equitable-bosnie.com)).

Since two years, they have organised solidarity trips to BiH especially for French tourists. They designed the circuits together but shared out the main tasks: for the moment, the members of EEB realise the promotion through their website and directly in France during specialised tourism fairs, and the Bosnian team organises everything in BiH for the experience to be as perfect as possible.

They mix hosting in Bosnian families, sharing lifestyle and activities, to visits of famous cities and natural areas, to places where EEB have had humanitarian projects.

The guiding is in French, and the trip is limited to a small group: five to ten people.

Their main motives for a solidarity trip in BiH seem to be curiosity towards these *“multicultural country and inhabitants [...], curiosity towards the Balkans region, some knew Bosnian refugees living in France and wanted to discover where they were coming from, etc...”* said Sejad Smajlović, Zdravo Prijatelji’s treasurer and guide during the trips, during our interview (see appendix n°2).

Greenvisions, the ecotourist structure in Bosnia & Herzegovina, mostly work with foreigners, of which a part are Frenchs who came in BiH for tourist purposes, or are here for professional reasons.

So, we can see that there is a potential in France for rural/ solidarity /ecotourists to Bosnia & Herzegovina. French people like the nature, they like the traditions, they like to meet people, they like outdoors activities and they like good food: they might like their holidays in BiH very much.

The points are that they know only little about this country, which they still associate to the war, and this cannot favour their attraction for holidays in BiH.

Even if it was the case, they have little possibilities to organise their holidays there: there are only a few French tour-operators and associations who program this destination, and there is little documentation for independent travellers. French people do not speak “Serbo-Croatian”. Plus, in a general perspective of Bosnian tourism strategies, the French market has not been targeted yet.

Furthermore, as we know, there is little “alternative” offer in Bosnia & Herzegovina yet and it does not encourage the tourist structures to design by themselves and organise travels to BiH because it would be much work with presently no certainty to have enough French tourists interested.

### **3. General weaknesses for rural tourism development**

This part will give an overview of Bosnian present main weaknesses in a tourist point of view:

#### **- Transportation:**

If the air access is easier and easier, the road traffic is not quickly improved: the north-south highway is not finished, and many roads are in poor condition. Consequently, the time spent on roads (by car or by bus) is longer than it could be.

In the countryside, many roads are non-asphalted; it is certainly better for the maintenance (it is more resistant to frost). But these roads sometimes lead to very nice places in a rural tourism point of view, and they are not always very practicable depending on the kind of car one has.

There are only a few train-lines in BiH, with not very many journeys scheduled and slow speed. They pass through amazing landscapes, and it is very nice to use it, but not very convenient for the one who would like to travel a lot within the country.

The bus network is quite good, especially in comparison to the trains, and cheap; but there are numerous places where they do not drive too. Even though they are the best transportation for tourists without a car, they would need improvement and renovation.

Finally, the easiest way for travelling in BiH remains cars, if the driver is able to adapt his/ her driving to the local habits which are not as formal as in Austria or France for instance. The car is the only way to reach villages and mountains without walking kilometres long to reach the spot.

#### **- Accommodation and catering, sports and outdoor activities, agrotourist offer:**

We developed these points previously: the main problems, especially when talking about rural tourist offer, are the poor choice, non-standardised supply, lack of advertising concerning what is already existing, lack of networking, lack of knowledge about similar activities in other parts of the country and abroad... but also the lack of support from the institutions according to the project owners we met, and consequently the low level of initiatives.

The hiking tracks would deserve to be developed, so that people could more easily travel by hiking, mountain-biking, horseback-riding...

#### **- Tourist information:**

We also said some things about the weak tourist advertising, which is symptomatically brought to light by the fact that it is still thought in other European countries that BiH could be unsafe, and that they often barely can locate the country on a map.

Only a few foreigners know about BiH's great environment and opportunities for outdoor and rural activities, culture and heritage and high quality farm products.

For sure not enough efforts have been done yet for changing this state of facts, the *Tourism Strategic Plan* is very new, and the statesmen must still agree on a common strategy.



**PART 3:**

**Recommendations  
for the development  
of rural tourism in BiH**



# 1. SWOT analysis of the rural tourism sector in BiH

The previous chapters were quite developed. We will now try to summarize the main Strengths/ Weaknesses // Opportunities/ Threats for rural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina, in order to be able to give some recommendations for its lasting and sustainable development.

Fig.9:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All the assets for rural tourism exist in BiH and some are very rare in Europe; such as perpetuated traditions, family “organic” agriculture, preserved nature, home-products...;</li> <li>- Bosnian surroundings are ideal for various outdoor/ adventure sports: biking, ice and rock climbing, paragliding, caving, horseriding...</li> <li>- Within the Balkan region, these assets for rural and eco-tourism in BiH are very famous for decades (in fact, this fame suffered from the war which destroyed the existing facilities and damaged some sites (+ landmining)).</li> <li>- It is very common for farmers to sell their products (at least when they have it in excess);</li> <li>- Bosnian people have a natural great sense of hospitality, and are open to contact;</li> <li>- The present rural tourism offer and supply in BiH is clearly underdeveloped, so there is a gap “waiting for” being filled;</li> <li>- The existing offer needs to be diversified; this will allow many self-employ generation possibilities.</li> <li>- The present rural projects owners are often very dynamic and skilled people, who know very well their field and are ready to participate developing the sector.</li> <li>- The new Bosnian <i>Tourism Strategic Plan</i> enhances the development of rural tourism and of the tourist activities linked (gastronomy...);</li> <li>- The advertising campaign “<i>Enjoy Life - Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</i>” (videos on CNN and internet), even though it was not its main goal, highlighted the elements characterising BiH’s assets for rural tourism;</li> <li>- Since BiH is not a tourist country, one can experience there to feel like a “pioneer tourist”; there are only a few countries where it is still the case, especially at Europe’s hand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BiH carries prejudices of war and unsafety, the country itself has not been cleared of evidences.</li> <li>- Rural and especially mountainous areas are the most concerned by uncleared landmines-fields;</li> <li>- If the tourist offer often meets Ex-Yugoslavian people criteria, it does not always correspond to foreigners’ expectation: modern accommodation, hygiene in cheese processing, for instance;</li> <li>- The agricultural methods change and use more and more agro-industry techniques, which will change the quality of the rural products;</li> <li>- Until the recent creation of Alterural, there was no structure providing information, support or education for the people that might open a rural tourism activity;</li> <li>- Lack of local initiatives (due to poverty, ignorance about this opportunity or how to do?);</li> <li>- Rural tourism components (nature, agriculture, culture, traditions...) preservation and valorisation are some must-be in Bosnian politicians’ speeches, but what has been said has rarely been set in facts and actions until now;</li> <li>- Even though this “<i>Enjoy Life - Bosnia&amp;Herzegovina</i>” campaign brings to light all advantages and attractiveness of BiH, especially for eco-, adventure, cultural and rural tourism, there is a huge difference between what is promoted and what is the situation in BiH: no real offer yet;</li> <li>- It seems that the public authorities’ awareness about economic opportunities offered by developing rural tourism is quite low, despite the numerous studies underlining the interests for BiH to develop nature-based tourism.</li> <li>- In the countryside, even among stakeholders, only a few people speak English. Reversely, foreigners very rarely learn “Serbo-Croatian”.</li> <li>- Some sites are difficult to reach, not served by bus and sometimes not suitable even for cars.</li> </ul>

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some neighbouring countries are very famous for their rural tourism supply, this fame can benefit to BiH;</li> <li>- Nowadays tourism trends, evolving towards a growing sustainability awareness and environment and traditions discovering, underline criteria that fit perfectly to BiH, especially in regards to its rural tourism potential;</li> <li>- Foreign tourists arrivals steadily raised since 2001, and so did the domestic tourism;</li> <li>- The low price level for accommodation and catering is very attractive for tourists;</li> <li>- Tourism in BiH is just starting, which means that it will keep the attractivity of new destinations for a while still;</li> <li>- As BiH is presently building its tourist image, it can choose what to enhance: they make the choice of very trendy and sustainable activities (rural tourism and similar offers).</li> <li>- Great chances for exchange of expertises in Europe (like the Slovenian- Austrian example) because of experienced neighbouring countries;</li> <li>- Decentralized cooperation, that is to say cooperation between European territories, can play a major role. It is already the case with Italian partners;</li> <li>- For supporting Bosnian tourism development, and especially for sustainable forms of tourism, there are various funding possibilities. The EU pre-accession programmes can also help.</li> <li>- Because the price of oil rises, and thanks to the growing eco-friendly awareness, more and more people will prefer to travel nearer, and still wishing to experience new destinations.</li> <li>- Even though still a big part of Bosnian youngsters wish to leave abroad, more and more become aware of the activities they could start in their country (sport, tourism...).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On the other hand, because of the fame of its neighbours, BiH encounters difficulties to enter the tourism market in general. It might also be the case for rural tourism market;</li> <li>- All the exceptional assets that BiH present for rural tourism are threatened by Bosnian often non-sustainable activities (non-standardized industry, domestic pollution, sandpits...);</li> <li>- Bosnian people are not yet conscious of the importance of preserving their environment, and if it gets spoiled there will be no more interest for strangers to come for rural tourism in BiH;</li> <li>- Most of tourist sites are not equipped to avoid the damages caused by visitors, particularly in natural sites.</li> <li>- A great part of the built heritage is threatened to ruin or be destructed. Since BiH is not rich in architectural, cultural or natural protected heritage, BiH should engage more actions of preservation and must develop a very attractive tourist offer perfectly fitting to nowadays trends.</li> <li>- Tourism can develop only in stable countries where tourists can feel safe: if the Bosnian situation does not continue on improving, its tourist attractiveness will not grow.</li> <li>- The present macadam roads are criticized but it would be a piety if everything was accessible by asphalt road, and more difficult to maintain.</li> <li>- Rural tourism cannot develop without locals' wish to receive tourists and local initiatives.</li> <li>- Tourism, and especially rural tourism, is an interesting supplement dynamics for Bosnian and Bosnians' economy. But if it can help the country's development, they must be careful that the whole economy will not lay on tourism: indeed, tourism is a fragile economy: tourists might not always come.</li> </ul>

We will not discuss long about this table, since we did develop most of the points previously.

What is to highlight is, once more, that developing rural tourism and other nature-based forms of tourism in BiH is very worth it, even if this potential is presently under-developed and somehow threatened mostly by the non-consciousness of the advantages that such an alternative and eco-friendly supplement economic activity represents for the Bosnian economy and employment.

There are good opportunities for the rural tourism in BiH to develop, such as nowadays tourist trends and the funds that could be received at national and private levels to help the initiatives.

## 2. Recommendations and strategies proposed for the sector

Natural and cultural heritage, assets of interest for rural tourism, are seen as good supports for sustainable new tourist dynamics, as enhances the study *Using natural and cultural heritage for the development of sustainable tourism in non-traditional tourism destinations* (European Commission, 2002), but they are not sufficient in themselves.

Tourism is a system in which each element has some importance, as it is here summarized <sup>50</sup>:

- The key ingredients of a sustainable tourism product are:***
1. *Original offerings:*
    - ⇒ *Natural attractions (landscape, climate, water, wildlife, ...)*
    - ⇒ *Cultural attractions (both material and immaterial)*
  2. *Derived offerings (required to make the attractions available for tourism use)*
    - ⇒ *Holiday facilities (accommodation, food, shops, entertainment, events, etc.)*
    - ⇒ *Mediating facilities (tourist information offices, tour operators, internet services)*
  3. *Market research*
    - ⇒ *To identify who the potential customers are and what they want*
    - ⇒ *To find out the right market segments*
  4. *A marketing strategy*
    - ⇒ *To inform about the product/destination*
    - ⇒ *To make people want to come*
  5. *Service delivery*
    - ⇒ *Provision of facilities, services and information*
    - ⇒ *Maintenance of the above*
    - ⇒ *Customer satisfaction*
    - ⇒ *Adequate infrastructure and supporting services*
  6. *Pricing policy*
    - ⇒ *Setting a competitive price*
    - ⇒ *Ensuring sufficient profitability to repay investments*

Fig.10

In other words: you can have the best landscape and traditional agriculture in the world, you will never become a rural tourist destination if you do not try your best to fulfil all these points at the targeted level (linked to the market segment and strategy chosen).

In the same study, the authors underline *ten key success factors* <sup>50</sup> that we will only summarize:

1. Significance: a main attraction;
2. Distinctiveness: uniqueness in the area or compared to other similar offers, etc.
3. Clustering: “In union there is strength” idea: several offers working together;
4. Branding and networking: branding a destination and its products/ creating a known network label for instance;
5. Access: tourists rather go where it is easy to go, and especially want to find it (signs...);

<sup>50</sup> European Commission - Enterprise and Industry - Tourism, 2002, p.28 and pp. 29-32

6. *Seasonality*: tourist peaks are winter and summer and the rest of the year is very low, it is interesting to look for a way and products to attract people all the year long;
7. *Partnership*: support and motivation factors;
8. *Strategic planning*: “Developing an overall tourism strategy involving all key players is an essential tool for developing a successful and sustainable tourism product.”
9. *Accessibility*: a synonym could be “interpretation”, that is to say that people wish to have information on the sites about what they discover in order to understand and enjoy it;
10. *Sustainability*: conserving the heritage is fundamental to sustainable tourism.

The sixth chapter of the European Commission’s study (2002, pp.33-44) is particularly interesting and gives very useful tools for the whole process from the assessment of the potential, tourism supply and stakeholders, to the policies, the current and potential demand, to the final assessment with a SWOT analysis and participatory approach ([http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/docs/studies/using\\_natural\\_cultural\\_heritage/ecosystems\\_en/tourism\\_potential\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/docs/studies/using_natural_cultural_heritage/ecosystems_en/tourism_potential_en.pdf)) (July 2009).

It would be useless to copy here all what they say, since the file is in free access on the internet, but they present a very practical tool for the evaluation of the tourist potential of an area, which is an assessment inventory guide (see appendix n°3).

The tourist elements are quantified in order to have a precise overview of the assets and the already existing facilities.

Plus, and this is a point we wish to underline, an assessment is done about the vulnerability and potential carrying capacity, so that special measures can be set in place in case of specific fragility of a site or not enough accommodations for example, in upstream and according to the evolution.

There are other tools very interesting: the ones setting in a graphic way what is observed.

For instance, a very new tool developed in 2008 by a French searcher in tourism: “**La cible du développement durable**” (the Target of sustainable development) (see appendix n°4) is, according to its author, “*a tool which permits to analyse the state of a project in its context, either in upstream in order to evaluate the risks and to orientate the actions for the negative points to evolve, or in downstream in order to measure the reasons of a success or a failure*”<sup>51</sup>. It concerns especially quite big projects which benefit from the support of a representative at least, but it is interesting.

Through the evaluation of five major elements: Project in itself, Stakeholders/ Project owners, Territorial entities support, Place and Local society, it helps understanding how the project is good and where are its predictable weak points.

The author points out that, of course, a project can not be ideal, so if the risk is acceptable it is worth it to set it in place whatever shows the “target”. What is major is to have a good pertinence. Some other points are anyway difficult to predict: all what implicates humans are quite hardly predictable, especially the reaction of the tourists towards the new project!

What we want to bring to light is that, like for any project in general, there is a need for diagnosis at different scales in the rural tourism field too.

It is important to know the potential and weaknesses, the opportunities and threats at a national level, as well as at the lower scales, and at the individual one for a specific project creator.

<sup>51</sup> translated from Violier Philippe, 2008, p.176



And it is good to follow regularly how it evolves at the different levels (especially the threats).

It is also of major importance to recall that not all places can become a tourist destination, and that tourist destinations do not correspond to administrative boundaries: in a municipality or in a canton there are some tourist spots and others that will not interest tourists. It is not always predictable or understandable; “it is the way it is because tourists have decided so”, but studies can reveal it before a project breaks down or meets difficulties to keep lasting.

The same principle must be applied to projects: some work, others do not meet their customers, and it is not only depending on a lack of quality or upstream strategy, it is much more complex. That is why studies are important, in order to try to avoid failures, or to understand what happened.

It is also important to learn from experts and other projects.

For instance, several big French tourist projects who have succeeded (Le Puy du Fou, le Futuroscope) or who did not have had as much success as what was forecasted (Vulcania, Cap'Découverte) give huge lessons that can be applied to smaller projects.

One of the main things to retain is that the two ones which have been successful developed progressively (and surely), whereas the two others invested so much money to make everything big from the opening that they have huge difficulties to balance their accounts even years later and still exist for the only reason that they have benefited from funds support.

Smaller investors do not always have as high capital for their project and as many opportunities to receive funds to help their project to be lasting, especially in the rural tourist field. So, it is advised to develop a rural tourist offer progressively.

If one has already some activity (farming for example), the new offer (for instance guest-rooms) shall be integrated into the usual functioning. If it is a new activity, it is better to develop step by step: starting with the obligatory expenditures and construction for a quality offer from the beginning. Then, progressively, it can be developed, with a stronger basis than with too many debts.

It is securer to visualise the project in a middle- or long-term perspective and to imagine it growing than to “ante everything” for its opening and to be confronted to huge expenses that will be very difficult to rebalance.

For developing a new tourist destination, a local structure of expertise is needed.

If it is at the national level, there must be a national structure corresponding to the field concerned.

That is why Alterural has been created, in order to fulfil the lack in the rural tourism sector of a national reference and of experts dedicated to develop rural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Some actions have already taken place, such as what has been done in the municipality of Fojnica, or the organisation of the *Seminar of rural tourism and international cooperation*, held in Fojnica on June 9-10<sup>th</sup> 2009 and organised in partnership with the Service of Cooperation and Cultural Action of the French embassy in Sarajevo.

Field visits have been started, in order to meet and evaluate some project owners or planned projects (see appendixes n°5 and 6). This has to be continued, in order to know more precisely what is going on and what are the potentials (or non-potentials) in the whole Bosnian territory.

Plus, it will help creating a network through the country; and improve the team's expertise.



Other actions should be set in place for the development of rural tourism in BiH, such as:

- Defining a strategy at a national level, and giving advises for local rural tourism development.

- “Raising consciousness and interest” campaigns through seminars: what is rural tourism, what are the strengths of BiH and the weaknesses, what are the good practises and the things to avoid (regarding the level of money investments, the kind of building, the building materials, but also the furniture, the way to welcome, etc.), what are the lessons from other countries’ experience, etc.

These seminars should be for potential project creators, but also for the people just curious about the subject, and of course for tourist organizations and people involved in local politics.

- Working with national and foreign networks and experts in the rural tourism field, particularly with the ones knowing about the Balkan context or about non-traditionally tourist countries.

- A national and international network: to rely on the people having activities, knowledge or concrete projects, and create some network between all, plus with the people they know and the new ones being interested in rural tourism; and to interact with the tourist institutions/organisations.

- Field visits, for all kind of stakeholders and representatives: first in BiH, then in other countries.

- Theoretical and practical trainings: specific for foreign languages, service, cleanness, etc.

- Making deeper diagnosis of the places which has been seen as interesting, with the “destination” vision; thanks to the great variety in BiH environment, many places have got their own “personality” and could have some potential, but they will not always correspond to administrative boundaries (they are more luckily to be linked to geographical or cultural characteristics).

- Continuing and going deeper in the present study, with regular updating.

- Creating national standards for rural tourist activities.

- Keep creating databases of the Bosnian offer in terms of rural tourism. This is important for the team and network members to know what exists and how the situation evolves, but also for other people who would need this information (such as students, consulting offices...).

It might be interesting to create a website at a given moment, in order to help promoting the existing offer and destinations.

- The countryside still suffers from plenty of consequences of the war. Some evidences could shock the tourists, such as ruined houses, some actions should be set in place for ameliorating it.

- Etc... There are a lot of things to do, since nothing really exists yet.

The study published by the European Commission gives very good advices and useful tools and examples about how to create tourist attractiveness in destinations that were not usually tourist.

As we said, this study is accessible for free on the internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/documentation/studies\\_and\\_publications/cultural\\_heritage/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/tourism/documentation/studies_and_publications/cultural_heritage/index_en.htm) (July 2009).

It is certainly of great importance to work with the existing initiatives, in order to support them, to connect them and to benefit from their experience and networks.

For all this things to be done, Alterural must also define its own strategy in order to see what the team must do, what they can do, and what must and can be done on other levels by other people.

### 3. How can *Alterural* support and enhance this development?

Alterural aims to be the association for the development and professionalization of rural tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), in order to “develop and offer a specific expertise contributing to the stakeholders concerned by rural tourism (families, tourist offices, small-sized businesses, municipalities) in BiH”.<sup>52</sup> It has been officially presented on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 during the seminar.

In Alterural’s eyes, rural tourism is the sustainable way to:

- *“Improve the living conditions of rural populations by diversifying their sources of income,*
- *Promote and Protect the BiH’s natural, cultural and architectural heritage,*
- *Revitalize the economy in rural areas and reduce the rural exodus”.*

Alterural plans to set in place numerous and needed services and actions:

- *Offering practical information by creating a centre of expertise in BiH (newsletter, semi-annual journal, website, projects outlines..);*
- *Support for tourist pilot actions (accommodation, gastronomy, arts and crafts, and leisure activities);*
- *Locating and federating private initiatives of quality corresponding to the definition of rural tourism;*
- *Spreading and exchanging good practices at local, regional and European levels;*
- *Practical trainings and accompaniment for the projects holders;*
- *Mobilisation and animation of a stakeholders network;*
- *Helping local and European cross-border projects creation.*

As we said in the introduction, Alterural benefits from the experience gained through Caritas International Belgium – Balkan mission’s projects in Fojnica (Central Bosnia) (more details in the introduction), and the similar actions that they have set in place in Central Serbia and Kosovo.

By now, Alterural’s team has already started the field visits and networking, they were involved in the organization of the seminar where numerous Bosnian mayors and stakeholders were present, and are in contact with various experts in the country, in Slovenia, Istria -Croatia, France, and other.

They started databases, such as the definitions existing in tourism field in order to agree on their definition of rural tourism; other categorization systems in Europe; (see appendixes n°7 and 8); existing outdoor activities, accommodation and catering offer; etc.

During next autumn 2009, they will lead a comparative study on the existing resource centres and associations working in the rural tourist sector in the region. (Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia), in particular about the accepted definitions and provided services. This will allow them to draw a strategy for the coming 2 years according to available funds and human resources.

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<sup>52</sup> Alterural’s flyer, 2009.

## Conclusion

Bosnia-and-Herzegovina presents evident assets for rural tourism, in every domain that are needed: nature and agriculture, traditions, gastronomy / home-made and regional products, culture, architecture, outdoor and nature-based activities, arts and crafts and a great sense of hospitality.

As it is already the case in other forms of tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), the rural tourist supply is under-developed: a low choice in outdoor activities (besides mountaineering and rafting), a quasi non-existing rural accommodations offer, no real agrotourism, only a few country inns, no equipment of the tourist natural sites, and only a few stakeholders who speak English.

Consequently the tourist statistics are very low compared to the neighbouring countries.

Plus, there are some threats against this development, such as the increasing pollution because of low eco-friendly sensitivity, the fact that BiH has no fame on the tourist market yet, or the apparent non-awareness of Bosnian politicians concerning the opportunities that sustainable forms of tourism could represent as a supplement source of income and the needs in setting up actions to support the initiatives and to favour the preservation of the essential elements for its development.

But some good quality activities exist already and these stakeholders are ready to share their experience and to get involved in the development of the sector. There are also very interesting projects, which will fulfil gaps in the offer range.

Plus, the weaknesses and threats' influence is reduced by the great opportunities turning up in favour of a Bosnian rural, cultural and nature-based tourist dynamics: the new tourist trends tend towards more authenticity, a look for new destinations through "alternative forms of tourism", and to travel nearer. But even "alternative" tourists appreciate having access to communications.

Bosnia & Herzegovina responds to all these points: at the same time it is a new destination at Europe's as well as at East's hands, with great assets for "alternative" tourism, authentic traditional activities and lifestyle, and offering all modern comfort such as mobile phone network, or internet access even in the countryside. BiH is probably the least country in the European continent presenting such a profile without being considered as a tourist destination yet.

The opportunities also concern the support that BiH can benefit from for developing rural tourism, in financial and technical terms, and at the different scales: national as well as individual projects, from various international funds.

For the development of rural tourism in BiH, there must be a national reference structure. The association *Alterural* aims to fulfil this role, through the development of a real expertise in the rural tourism field, specialised in the Bosnian context; networking with Bosnian stakeholders as well as Bosnian and international experts and representatives; technical and designing-a-strategy support to present and future project owners; finding fund sources; supporting or developing pilot projects, etc.

There is a huge work in prospect, and it will certainly not be easy regarding the numerous weaknesses and threats, but there is little doubt that if the wills and the efforts converge, Bosnia-and-Herzegovina will be able to enter the rural tourist market and make its mark, which is already predicted to grow according to the World Tourism Organization's forecasts.

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UDRUŽENJE  
ZA RAZVOJ  
RURALNOG  
TURIZMA

**A few projects  
we have supported...**



Josip Tuka family open their guest-house in Lužine (Fojnica).



More than 100km of mountain pedestrian hiking trails marked by the association PD Vranica.



The interpretative panels realised in partnership with Miraglobal, consulting agency in environment, are installed in Fojnica.



The rural tourism map of Fojnica promotes the quality of production and services offered by small-scaled farms, accomodation, restaurants,...

**Contact**

[alterural@yahoo.com](mailto:alterural@yahoo.com)

**OFFICE in SARAJEVO :**

Mehmed b.k Ljubušaka 6  
71000 SARAJEVO  
Phone : +387 (0)33/ 279-940  
Mobile : +387 (0)62/ 296-859

**OFFICE in FOJNICA :**

ZAVNOBIH bb  
71270 FOJNICA  
Phone : +387 (0)30/ 544-451  
Mobile : +387 (0)63/ 369-419





ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF RURAL TOURISM  
IN BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



## What is rural tourism ?

**Rural tourism** is, within the global tourism economy, the tourist promotion of countryside, their natural resources, the cultural heritage, the rural architecture, the arts and crafts, the village traditions and the regional products, which illustrates the regional identities.

It covers the customers' needs concerning hospitality, accommodation, catering, leisure activities, preserved environment, events and various services.

Being developed in areas with a low population density where natural environment predominates, it aims the sustainable local development ensuring social and economic benefits to the local communities and the maintenance of the rural heritage.

It is grounded on a look for the authentic experience allowing an interaction and an exchange with the territory and its inhabitants.



## Alterrural ?

An association for the development and professionalization of rural tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

To :

« Develop and offer a specific expertise contributing to the stakeholders concerned by rural tourism (families, tourist offices, small-sized businesses, municipalities) in BiH ».



To improve the living conditions of rural populations by diversifying their sources of income,  
Promote and Protect the BiH's natural, cultural and architectural heritage,  
Revitalize the economy in rural areas and reduce the rural exodus.

## What are Alterrural's services and actions ?

Offering practical information by creating a centre of expertise in BiH (newsletter, semi-annual journal, website, projects outlines..);

Support for tourist pilot actions (accommodation, gastronomy, arts and crafts, and leisure activities);

Locating and federating private initiatives of quality corresponding to the definition of rural tourism;  
Spreading and exchanging good practices at local, regional and European levels;

Practical trainings and accompaniment for the projects holders;

Mobilisation and animation of a stakeholders network ;

Helping local and European cross-border projects creation.



## Appendix n°2: Our interview of Sejad SMAJLOVIC of Zdravo Prijatelji

(March, 24<sup>th</sup> 2009, Translated in English from French)

Name:	<b>Zdravo Prijatelji</b> (= "Hello Friends")
-------	--

### **Identity:**

- Status: Association
- Main field of action (ex organisation of events): Fair and solidarity tourism
- Date of creation: Beginning of 2008 (process started in 2007).
- What is the area that your actions cover in BiH? Sarajevo, Mostar-Blagaj, Natural Park Sutjeska, Gorazde, Srebrenica, Skakavac waterfalls ...
- Number of association members and evolution: Just at the beginning.
- Name of board representatives: Hasan ŠABETA, President.  
myself: Sejad SMAJLOVIC, Treasurer.
- History of creation: why this field of action, etc...?

The French humanitarian association Enfants Europe Bosnie has had actions in BiH since 1996. It proposed a few years ago the idea of creating a fair and solidarity tourism association in BiH, so that the team is already in the area (less fees, etc... and easier contacts with the local hosts), and that it involves more Bosnian people as if the association was in France. It is also the idea of a sustainable action of development.

### **Concrete description of your activities linked with the subject:**

---

#### **Actions**

---

- What are your past actions concerning tourism and/or rural fields?

The first circuit (with French tourists) was realised last year, in June 2008. It has been designed both by the *Enfants Europe Bosnie (EEB)* and the *Zdravo Prijatelji* teams.

The advertising has been done especially by EEB via their website and during specialised tourism fairs.

They were directly paid by the tourists. Then the money had been transferred to *Zdravo Prijatelji* who organized the whole thing.

- The ongoing ones?

3 trips are planned in 2009: end of May, July-August, and September.

- Have you got planed projects?

Other circuits are planned.

One is being prepared; it will take place in the north and north-east areas, including Bihac.

---

## Further comments

---

- Contact person who supported your activities?

Christophe SURMONNE: [christophe.surmonne@orange.fr](mailto:christophe.surmonne@orange.fr)

Vice-president in the Enfants Europe Bosnie association and responsible for the Fair and Solidarity Tourism project in partnership with Zdravo Prijateljji.

- Relation and possible support from institutions? [Hoped](#)

➔ Could you provide me please some documentation about your former projects, and your brochures? [Still in project.](#)

---

---

### **Zdravo Prijateljji: Further interview** (with Sejad Smajlovic, March 24<sup>th</sup> 09)

---

- I suppose that the circuits you propose are mainly targeting French tourists?

[Sejad Smajlovic](#): Yes, in a first step. We all speak French.

- Do your travellers correspond to the particular travellers profile in the solidarity and fair tourism field, or are they different from solidarity tourists in Africa, Asia or South America?

BiH is still very much associated with images of war, some people think that there is still a war going on, they don't know that BiH is located within the geographical Europe, and is almost an EU country.

But actually, BiH has got remarkable assets: especially a preserved nature and biodiversity, but also water and thermal water springs, warm welcome.

- What are their main motives, guiding their choice for a solidarity travel in BiH?

The tourists from last year (first trip) said: multicultural country and inhabitants (Sarajevo was the cultural capital of Ex-Yugoslavia), curiosity towards the Balkans region...

Some knew Bosnian refugees living in France and wanted to discover where they were coming from, etc...

- What is the group size?

5 to 10 tourists.

- How did you decide your circuit, which takes mainly place in the south, south-east and south-west of Sarajevo areas, and less more in the north?

How did you select the sites (visits) and the stages in contact with the inhabitants (overnights, tasting...)? Is it functions of your knowledge of the area (in which contexts)?

Enfants Europe Bosnie (EEB) first had humanitarian actions exclusively. They particularly helped the people in the municipality of Pobudje (Bratunac). They helped for a school, etc... So the circuit stops in this place and the tourists visit the memorial, the thermal sources... plus they spend a day helping the inhabitants in their daily life. It gives a continuation to the previous actions and avoids this municipality and its people to be forgotten. They also had actions in Srebrenica for example. The circuit goes through spots where EEB team was previously involved.



But the trip includes tourist areas also, like Sarajevo, where a student was the guide last year. They stop by in Blagaj in Semir Milavic's Ottoman guest house (he speaks French). They also go to the village of Curevo (my father was born there [Sejad Smajlovic's father]), and stay at my cousin's home. The following day, they visit the Natural Park Sutjeska with its primary forest (my cousin and I are the guides).  
This year, I will mainly be the guide during the whole circuit.

- How do you travel inside the BiH?

With cars; we also have a minibus.

- Which kinds of accommodation(s) have you chosen (guest houses and B&Bs, or with a homestay family)?

With a homestay family; with the idea that the guests will feel like "at home", like part of the family. Conviviality is a very important background of the circuit.

- Which kind of restaurants do you include in the circuit (local inns and table d'hôte, or restaurants)?

With the locals (where guests sleep), and at local restaurants.

- Who organises/ realises formations, the network animation,... for the local actors invested in the circuit (guides, hosts, cooks,...)?

It is mainly Sejad and Hassan who interact with the local actors, but also Christophe SURMONNE (of Enfants Europe Bosnie association).

By now, what has been done is providing advices about how to welcome French tourists, which kind of services to provide, etc. Some materials (ex: towels) has been lent or given.

- Who gives you some support besides Enfant Europe Bosnie, and for what?

No one else for the moment.

- Who are the members of Zdravo Prijatleji association?

No one more than a President and a Treasurer for the moment.

- How is divided the price paid by the guests between hosts, restaurants, guides, transports... Zdravo Prijatleji and Enfant Europe Bosnie?

EEB receives the money from the tourists, since it organises everything (advertising, communication, meetings with the tourists...) which takes place in France. Then the money is sent to Zdravo Prijatelj, which spread it for paying the fees to the local actors, the gas for transports... The tourists pay for their extra-consumptions (ex: extra drinks...)

- What do you, Zdravo Prijatleji, could forecast concerning the demand evolution, new circuits, etc?

We give our best for everything to be great and without any problem (objective = high quality experience).

The main goal we have is to make our tourists feel very satisfied with their trip and with what they have seen, so they will spread the information, they will promote our activity and the BiH destination by word-of-mouth.

Then, there will certainly be more and more tourists wanting to come to BiH.

NB: In France, before the departure, a special meeting is organised by Christophe SURMONNE with the travellers in order to present the country, the circuit, etc. And to answer to questions, prejudices, etc.



### Appendix n°3: Determining tourism potential through assessment analysis

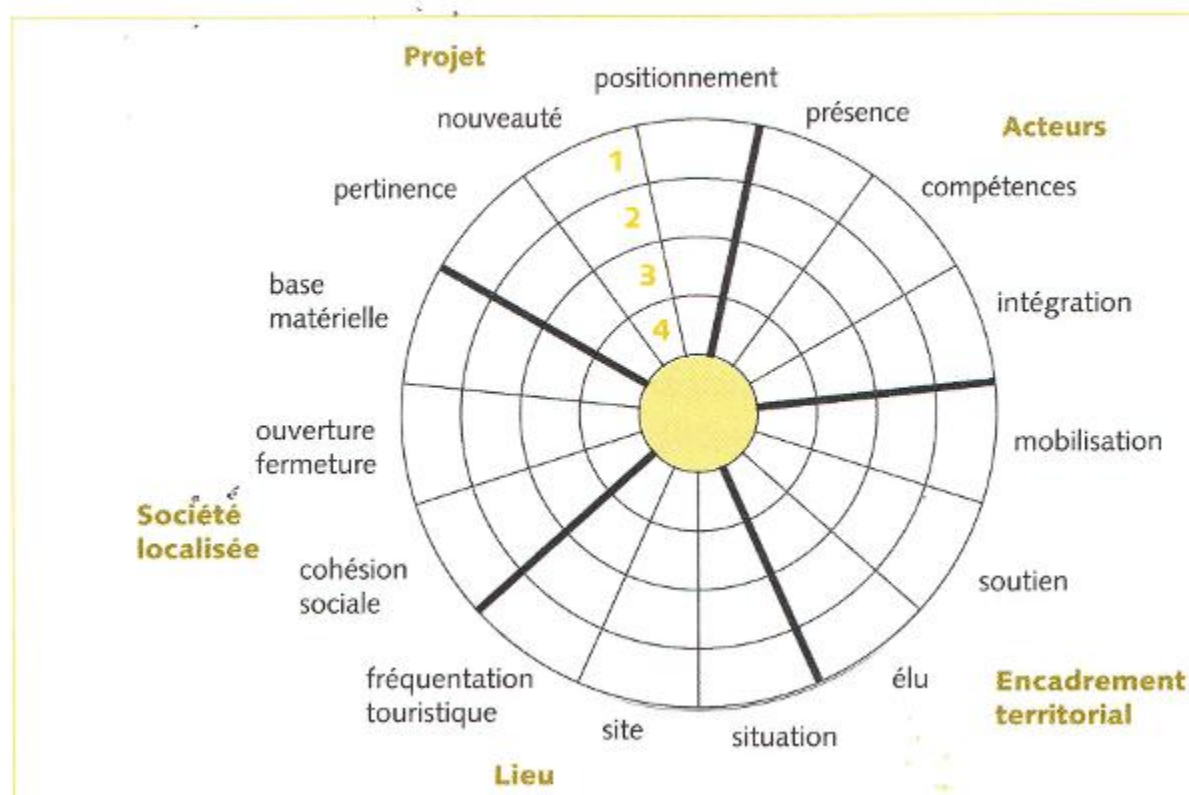
(European Commission - Enterprise and Industry - Tourism, 2002, *Using natural and cultural heritage for the development of sustainable tourism in non-traditional tourism destinations*, p.35)

<b>Situation analysis for determining tourism potential</b>		
QUANTIFICATION	ASSESSMENT	
	capacity	vulnerability
<p><u>Natural features</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characteristic and attractive landscapes</li> <li>• Flagship species or habitats (e.g. bears, bogs)</li> <li>• Other interesting, unusual or representative wildlife</li> <li>• Diversity of ecosystems</li> <li>• Geological features such as lakes, rivers, cliffs</li> <li>• Protected areas: nature reserves, national parks, ...</li> </ul> <p><u>Cultural features</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Built heritage (monuments, ruins, castles, churches, etc...)</li> <li>• Small heritage features (fountains, chapels, walls, etc...)</li> <li>• Vernacular buildings</li> <li>• Heritage objects (tools, clothes, furniture, tapestries, ...)</li> <li>• Traditions (skills, know-how, customs, ...)</li> <li>• Gastronomy (local products, recipes, production methods, ...)</li> <li>• Events and festivals</li> </ul> <p><u>Area as a whole</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrounding landscape</li> <li>• Main land uses</li> <li>• Location and land tenure re potential attractions</li> <li>• Climate</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Stakeholders (who, views, capacity)</u></li> <li>• Public bodies</li> <li>• Interest groups</li> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> <li>• Land owners and other economic sectors</li> <li>• Local residents</li> </ul> <p><u>Infrastructure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation, restaurants, existing attractions</li> <li>• Access and proximity to cities, airports, other destinations</li> <li>• Transportation within destination</li> <li>• Other facilities and services (shops, etc. ...)</li> <li>• Current channels of information and marketing</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Legal and policy context</u></li> <li>• National or local tourism strategy and NTA priorities</li> <li>• Legislation relating to SMEs</li> <li>• Policy priorities</li> <li>• Planning laws and zoning according to economic interests</li> <li>• Environmental legislation</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Tourism demand</u></li> <li>• Use of existing resources</li> <li>• Market segment surveys</li> <li>• Benchmarking competing destinations</li> </ul>		

## Appendix n°4: The target of sustainable development

(translated and adapted from Violier Philippe, 2008, *Tourisme et développement local*, p.176)

### La cible du développement local



“The target is divided into 5 sectors, which are subdivided into 3 subsectors. Each subsector has 4 qualitative or quantitative levels. As in all target, levels are distributed from the lowest in the periphery to the highest in the center. This target is used to measure the feasibility of a project and the actions needed to improve it. Then, the evaluation obtained is specific to a project at some point in the history of a company. It is not a measuring instrument designed to classify companies.

#### The first sector concerns the Project (« **PROJET** »):

##### 1.1) sub-sector « **Pertinence** »: How pertinent is this project regarding the targeted tourists?

- 1 – scientific and educational, or sharp cultural project, no-pertinence to very low one;
- 2 – scientific and educational or cultural project with a fun component;
- 3 – project with a fun or festive component (scientific, cultural or educational dimensions are possible but the purpose is clearly to enlarge the market);
- 4 – fun and festive project.

##### 1.2) sub-sector « **Innovation** » (**Nouveauté**): innovation and monumentality, what brings the project?

- 1 – reproduces projects already existing in the region without input;
- 2 – reproduces but it was needed regarding the demand;
- 3 – new in the region, it diversifies the offer;
- 4 – innovative and monumental at a national, or even international scale.

##### 1.3) sub-sector « **Positioning** » (**Positionnement**) of the project regarding the targeted clientele:

- 1 – non-targeted, vague and general project;
- 2 – lowly targeted, the clientele is identified but it does not imply effects in the project;
- 3 – targeted: the project is designed regarding identified market segment(s), it aims the satisfaction of the well identified clientele's expectations;

4 – very well positioned, all the expectations of the targeted clientele are perfectly satisfied.

**The second sector concerns the stakeholders identified as project owners (« ACTEURS »):**

**2.1) Are potential project creators present? (Présence)**

- 1 – no, action is necessary for inciting initiatives; this situation is not rare and actions can be engaged in order to « create » future project owners by interesting people from outside of the region to come and create something here... or in giving the wish to create something amongst the locals;
- 2 – the project owners present can diversify their activity, for instance a bike-seller can start renting bikes for tourists, a kayak sport club can launch kayak-hiking activities...;
- 3 – a part of the project owners present are already involved in tourist activities;
- 4 – numerous project owners of different kinds are present and involved.

**2.2) The project creator(s)'s « Competences ». The absence of competence may reveal the need for training actions.**

- 1 – absence of clear competences;
- 2 – general competences in economic and social fields which can be used for tourism;
- 3 – presence of relational competences;
- 4 – presence of relational and technical competences in the tourist field.

**2.3) The project creator(s)' « Integration » within the area concerned.**

- 1 – exogenous people: non-integrated, barely known or known but disliked;
- 2 – endogenous people;
- 3 – transitional people (exogenous in the way of integration);
- 4 – transitional or endogenous well integrated people.

**The third sector measures the territorial entities' support (ENCADREMENT TERRITORIAL)**

**3.1) The territorial entities' « Mobilisation » level in favour of the project.**

- 1 – the project is not supported;
- 2 – the project is known and supported at the municipality or a few municipalities level;
- 3 – the project is identified and benefit from a support at several municipalities or cantonal level;
- 4 – the project benefits from a support at the national or even the European level.

**3.2) Scale of the support (Soutien) :**

- 1 – the project is not supported by the territorial entities;
- 2 – it benefits from technical advices and support;
- 3 – it receives funds;
- 4 – it is considered as a priority project at the cantonal scale.

**3.3) (Elu) The representative who gives his support to the project is elected at which level... (There are complex situations where the local elected representative is involved in networks which support the project at higher institutional levels; in this case it is the higher level which is considered):**

- 1 - local ;
- 2 – local representative linked with other municipalities;
- 3 – cantonal representative, or linked with the cantonal or even national level;
- 4 – cantonal representative linked with the national level, or national representative or even international fame.

**The fourth sector evaluates the place where the project is established (« LIEU »):**

**4.1) The location (Situation):**

- 1 - remote;
- 2 – place linked with the road (close to the highway?) and rail networks;
- 3 – place connected to several networks (highway, rail, internet...);

4 – close to a major point (city, airport, crossroads of good transportation networks).

**4.2) The « Site »:**

- 1 - ordinary;
- 2 – nice surroundings and place;
- 3 - quality
- 4 – very interesting (« worth to come to see it »).

**4.3) The number of tourist visitors before the project (*fréquentation touristique*):**

- 1 – null or very low;
- 2 – on the road to or nearby a visited site (3 to 5000 visitors a year) or isolated accommodations;
- 3 – on the road to or nearby a famous accommodation (at least 5000 nights a year, a cottage or flat for five people rented 20 weeks represent about 700 nights);
- 4 – nearby or inside a very famous tourist area, the notion of proximity depending on the interest and the size of the project.

**Finally the fifth sector concerns the local society (« *SOCIETE LOCALISEE* »):**

**5.1) The « material basis » (*Base matérielle*):**

- 1 – the society is focused on other purposes in contradiction with tourism : driving activity or annuity (military base insuring incomes...);
- 2 – the society is busy but diversification is possible; or system/ society questioning its durability;
- 3 – society facing a crisis, negative net migration;
- 4 – society declining, means available.

**5.2) « Openness or closeness » (*ouverture – fermeture*):**

- 1 – openness but temporary inhabitants (tourists) hold the place and are against any change;
- 2 – temporary inhabitants present but the place is held by the permanent inhabitants;
- 3 – the temporary inhabitants are in favour of the project and/or the permanent inhabitants are open-minded, in contact with the temporary visitors;
- 4 – the temporary inhabitants are a link with the global and the permanent inhabitant are used to host temporary visitors (for instance: location along a busy road).

**5.3) « Social cohesion » (*Cohésion sociale*).**

- 1 – the society is divided because of latent or evident conflicts;
- 2 – peace established in the society but it keeps being not very bound together;
- 3 – bound together society;
- 4 – united society, strong shared identity.

**-> How to use it**

This target makes possible to validate a project during the upstream design or to make it evolve in order to increase its chances of success.

It is clear that if the situation was favourable or even very favourable in every sectors, there would be no question of a project supported by public representatives.

The situation is more likely to be contrasted with some favourable sectors and some others totally unfavourable. So, by pointing out the weaknesses and threats, this tool aims to help making the project evolve towards its best chances of success.

However, if the bad mark obtained in some sectors is not insurmountable, or if one cannot change it, in the sense that if one wait for all conditions to be perfect one will never do anything, the marks must be high in the sector 1 « Pertinence of the project ».

## Appendix n°5: Alterural's questionnaire to stakeholders and tourist organizations



We represent **Alterural**, the association for development of rural tourism in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

*Our actions concern the tourism which is developed **in the countryside and villages** of BiH, and aim:*

- *the preservation of rural natural and cultural heritage, pointing especially out the **preservation of rural architectural heritage, traditional gastronomy, technical knowledge and arts & crafts**.*

- ***direct social and economical benefits** to the hosting population. This form of tourism is mostly at a **familial or associative scale** (SMEs).*

- *at giving priority to **authentic interactions** between the tourist, the area and its inhabitants.*

*We presently are in the phase of identification of the **remarkable natural and cultural sites**, and of the **stakeholders that already play or may play an interesting role** for rural tourism in BiH.*

That is why we sincerely thank you for your contribution through answering to this questionnaire.

### Identity of the structure you represent

- Name of your structure: \_\_\_\_\_
- Status: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of creation: \_\_\_\_\_ (in BiH since: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Your name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Main **field of action** (ex: ads; managing local project owners; etc): \_\_\_\_\_
- What is **the area** that your actions cover in BiH? \_\_\_\_\_
- Name of board representatives: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of members/employees and evolution: \_\_\_\_\_

### Characteristics of the area you cover, and your contribution to rural tourism

#### 1 – About the identity of your area

What make this area unique as a tourist destination? And as a rural tourist destination?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 2 – Rural architecture

In the area you cover, are there villages presenting a homogeneous ancient rural architecture, where traditional architecture and buildings has been preserved? (ex: Lukomir, Prokosko Jezero,...).

Name of the village: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the village: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the village: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4- Rural accommodation

Do you know approximately the number of private rooms and guest-houses in the area you cover (“officially” recorded and not ; except hotels, motels, RC...)? \_\_\_\_\_

Does a local categorization exist for private accommodation? \_\_\_\_\_

Do your actions concern rural accommodation? In which way? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **5- Rural Arts and Crafts**

Are there specific, characteristic arts & crafts in your area? If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you or did you support arts & crafts activities? How? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **6- Natural heritage**

Are there remarkable natural sites in your area? If yes, what are they? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there a protected area or a natural park in the area you cover? \_\_\_\_\_

Do some of your actions concern natural areas? (equipment for tourist access, preservation...) \_\_\_\_\_

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### **7 - Strategy for tourist development**

Does a strategic plan or “Master plan” for tourist development in the area exist? YES / NO

If yes, when has it been realised, by whom, and what are the main tourist orientations and the priorities for development? \_\_\_\_\_

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How many tourists come each year in your area? Where do they come from? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **8- Other actions and projects you initiated or supported**

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### **9 – Which places and people would you advise us to visit?**

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## Appendix n°6: Alterural's observation guide while visiting projects



- Name of the place/ project:
- (Contact person):
- Address, phone number, etc.:

What to observe → Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark attributed (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. First impression when arriving on the site		
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host		
3. Cleanness of the surroundings		
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc		
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... → precise)		
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depending on the offer, precise)		
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)		
8. Lasting post-impression		
Further comments:		

**Appendix n°7: The places visited on 29<sup>th</sup> June-1<sup>st</sup> July and 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> July**  
**and our corresponding observations for the main places**



Background map source: United Nations, <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/bosnia.pdf>, July 13<sup>th</sup> 2009

Visited on: Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **selo DJIVAR** (nearby Trebinje)
- (Contact person: Jovo Runjevac (Predsjednik), 065 665 767
- His address, etc.: Agricultural Cooperative “Petrovo Polje”, [pzpetrovopolje@yahoo.com](mailto:pzpetrovopolje@yahoo.com) )

What to observe → Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	4	Very homogenous buildings forming the village in a great environment.
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	4	Good, smiley people (but we met only 2,3 people from the village).
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	2	No plastics, bottles... But a lot of farming garbage.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	/	
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )	4-5	Wine, rare and high quality poljak beans, cherry syrup, walnuts rakija, pomegranates, kiwis...
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)	Their own labels?	The guy we met has got a good idea about how to initiate a guest-house activity in the village: he will create one by his own.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)	/	Not started yet, but it might be well done: people present great assets of professionalism, and this Djivar village is a lively village.
8. Lasting post-impression	3-4	It is diminished compared to the first impression because of seeing the garbage (farm, materials...) and the “building with concrete” logic (it is a pity for such a beautiful place).
Further comments:		Cooperative + Rural Tourism association linked; A very famous monastery nearby; A village still living; A thematic could be developed around the wine, wine yards and the archaeological wine yard site; Remote but well connected to the main roads.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		These people are very motivated and with a lot of initiatives. They know about rural tourism and have good ideas about how to develop it. It would be interesting to follow their projects and maybe to involve them into the Alterural project. There might be a need for trainings (English ++).

Visited on: Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **Restaurant (nearby Trebinje)**
- (Contact person:
- His address, etc.: )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	3	A place looking very well, but along a big road.
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	3-4	The waiter was nice even though not very smiley.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	4	We have not seen the backyard and surroundings.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	4-5	It was clean.
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )	4-5	Tasty, of quality, from the region, regional specialities, well presented, and in quantity.
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)	4-5	The service was a bit long.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)	5	It is a very famous restaurant. Even though we went there on a Monday, there were a lot of guests.
8. Lasting post-impression	4-5	Very nice. But maybe the prices are not for all budgets. This is certainly linked to the quality level.
Further comments:		Place very well restored and designed. I am not sure I have seen road sign localising it.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		Might be considered as a good example of a restaurant which succeeds.  I am not sure if they spoke English?



Visited on: Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009

- Name of the place/ project:     **selo Cerovać (nearby Trebinje)**
- (Contact person:
- His address, etc.: )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	4	The village is very beautiful with restored stone houses, gardens, farms...
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	4	Our hostess was welcoming, non-counting her time.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	4	The whole village is under renovation, but the places are very clean once finished.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	5	It was not a guest-house, but the place where we slept was very clean.
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )	4-5	We have tried very good quality farm products (tasty, sustainable way of production, home-made cake and bread at one farm were very good).
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)	(4)	There is no tourist activity yet, but it will for sure be good (people with high standards of living). The "museum" is very nice.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be "strong" (lasting)	(4)	As we said there is nothing yet, just the ideas, but it will certainly be.
8. Lasting post-impression	4	This is a beautiful place with welcoming people. But there is a lot of concrete used for renovation (this is a pity cause it is not valorising the stones). It is mostly retired people who live here seasonally.
Further comments:		There is no activity in the village besides farmers. Not enough road signs: not really easy to find. Nearby Trebinje and nearby the coast. People we met are mostly family relatives, with no money problem, so will not need high grants.
Comments cf Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		These people have travelled a lot, so they have a quite good idea of foreign standards, etc. In this village we can consider that the rural tourist offer could be "other European countries-like" (it looks pretty much like the French Provence) There would be a need in trainings in English: the lady offered that it could be done in her school.



Visited on: Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **UNESCO selo Pošitelj** (nearby Mostar)
- (Contact person:
- His address, etc.: )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	4-5	Very beautiful village, it is a UNESCO site and the castle is classified as Bosnian monument.
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	?	We have been very well welcomed by a man offering bed & breakfast.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	3	It is a tourist site, quite clean in the streets.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	?	The guest-house we have visited was clean but quite modern-like.
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )	?	
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)	2	The castle is not valorised at all: tall weed, very dirty stairs in the tower which is not equipped for visitors (very dangerous for kids or elderly people)
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)	4	It is a very visited place, but tourists come only for the visit then leave cause there is no place to sleep.
8. Lasting post-impression	3-4	The offer is not enough developed yet, but there is a potential: a great amount of visitors in a beautiful place well located.
Further comments:		The inhabitants encounter difficulties for auto-financing the renovations: private hosting might be of great help and motivation for them.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		They would certainly need grants and trainings (English especially, but also in tourism).  The bed & breakfast owner we met is very interesting because he worked in the tourism field.

Visited on: Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **Seoski Turizam Dubrava**
- (Contact person: Mitar Koroman, 065 690 273)
- His address, etc.: )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	3-4	The totally traditional farm with all its interests and imperfections. It is a very beautiful site, but the trail to drive there is very long.
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	5	A very warm and spontaneous welcoming.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	4	Like a traditional farm in activity, but quite ok.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	3	For guests it has to be cleaner: a too big difference with city standards, even for Bosnian people.
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )	4-5	Excellent quality (produced transformed in a traditional way), wide choice and very tasty. But guests might be questioning hygiene?
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)		For the moment, nothing organised for guests at all.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)	3	There is a lot to do for the place to be ready to welcome paying guests. Mitar’s grand-ma lives alone here, but she is 83. As long as she will be in good health, the farming activities will be lasting, and the interesting assets of the offer that Mitar plans to develop too.
8. Lasting post-impression	4	A very great place and a remarkable initiative, with nice people. But there is a lot of work still.
Further comments:		Mitar is very motivated for developing this activity, he is able to propose and guide extra-farm activities such as hikes, horse-riding, fauna & flora... But the access is very difficult (for cars) and long.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		Project to be surveyed to see how it goes on. Mitar would certainly need grants and trainings (English especially, but (even though he has a good vision of what could be done and what could find a place on the tourist market) also in tourism because he has never travelled: importance of study visits).  It could be interesting to involve him in some way in Alterural’s team (like Semir Milavic in Blagaj).

Visited on: Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **Extreme-sports club Scorpio** (nearby Zenica)
- (Contact person: Edin Durmo, 061 608 130
- His address, etc.: info@scorpio.ba )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	3-4	The place is very nice, but after having seen the website I imagined much more equipments.
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	5	Edin is nice and professional. He knows very well what he talks about. His enthusiasm is “contagious”
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	4-5	Well looked after. Some construction work.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	?	We have not really visited indoors.
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )		
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)	4-5	We have not tried his sport activities, but as we said he is very professional. He is also very experienced, with high quality equipments. The activities he offers are of high quality and very various and rare.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)	4-5	Good quality in his offer, a lot of ideas for more development. He is renowned. But he is mostly alone running the structure.
8. Lasting post-impression	4-5	This is a very good structure with a great offer and a great person who is full of initiatives and knows very well his domain and the context in terms of tourism in BiH and in Zenica area.
Further comments:		This structure has been self-developed, and is continuously developing. Its fragility I see is that he is mostly alone involved in the project, so it goes more slowly and with less money than it would be with a permanent team.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		It could be interesting to involve him in Alterural project as an “expert”.

Visited on: Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **Leisure activities and sports – Campsite – Guest-house**
- (Contact person: Mitar Koroman and one of his friend, 065 690 273
- His address, etc.: Romanija area     )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	3	Two nice places. But there is really nothing yet!!
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	4	Both are nice.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings		Clean sites (which is not always the case in BiH).
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc		
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )		
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)		Mitar is a sport teacher. He and his friend know very well the area.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)		They have a lot of ideas for complementary activities which could create a complete and appealing offer. But there is everything to be done.
8. Lasting post-impression	3-4	Not even one building existing: they start from zero except for the fact that they have the grounds. But they seem very enthusiastic and courageous.
Further comments:		Both friends wish to develop something lasting. The two places are not too too far away and the roads and trails are quite good. It is very accessible to go to the Romanija ski resort, and from/ to Sarajevo.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		These projects are interesting to follow, because they are very innovative.  Regarding their age (young), these guys might need grants and technical support. They would need trainings in tourism and English: study visits would be very important for them.

Visited on: Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **Leisure activities and sports – Campsite – Guest-house**
- (Contact person: Mitar Koroman and one of his friend, 065 690 273)
- His address, etc.: nearby Pale: Romanija mountain area )

<b>What to observe</b> <b>➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures</b>	<b>Mark</b> <b>(1= bad, 5= great)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	3	Two nice places. But there is really nothing yet!!
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	4	Both are nice.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings		Clean sites (this is not always the case in BiH).
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc		
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )		
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)		Mitar is a sport teacher. He and his friend know very well the area.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)		They have a lot of ideas for complementary activities which could create a complete and appealing offer. But there is everything to be done.
8. Lasting post-impression	3-4	Not even one building existing: they start from zero except for the fact that they have the grounds. But they seem very enthusiastic and courageous.
Further comments:		Both friends wish to develop something lasting. The two places are not too too far away and the roads and trails are quite good. It is very accessible to go to the Romanija ski resort, and from/ to Sarajevo.
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		These projects are interesting to follow, because they are very innovative.  Regarding their age (young), these guys might need grants and technical support. They would need trainings in tourism and English: study visits would be very important for them.



Visited on: Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2009

- Name of the place/ project: **Area of Travnik: Vlasić mountain farmers**
- (Contact person: association for agriculture in Travnik
- His address, etc.: visits of a few farms and of a guest-house )

What to observe ➔ Take 2-3 representative pictures	Mark (1= bad, 5= great)	Comments
1. 1 <sup>st</sup> impression when arriving on the site	4	The area is very beautiful and “ideal” for rural tourism. The region is very well known for cheese.
2. Hospitality, niceness of the host	4-5	Warm people, offering to taste their products, etc.
3. Cleanness of the surroundings	4	It was clean even in the farms, but muddy.
4. Cleanness of the rooms, offices/premises, etc	4-5	The guest-house is very clean, the cheese-rooms were quite (and even very) clean too.
5. Quality of the products/ food (taste, appearance, way of production... )	5	We have tasted various cheeses, jams... very good. As we said the sheep-cheese of Vlasic is famous.
6. Quality of the service (professionalism, wrapping... depends on the offer)	4-5	Concerning the farm products, the association for agriculture gives advises, and the farmers we have visited are known for their good products. The guest-house has got years of experience.
7. The offer/ activity seems to be “strong” (lasting)	4	Like the guest-house has done, the others would like to complete their farming income through agro-tourism activities.
8. Lasting post-impression	4	Everything has to be done in the farms interested.
Further comments:		
Comments of Alterural:  (what kind of workshop would be needed, why, on which subject... Should we return there to check the evolution, Could they be partner of Alterural...)		It might be interesting to keep in touch with the association in Travnik, since they know very well the farmers in the area and can say who could be interested in advices/ support for developing a tourist activity.  Like everywhere else there is a need for trainings in English and more specifically concerning tourism. These people generally do not have travelled much so field study visits would be important.

## MASS TOURISM

*Mass tourism is the “large-scale tourism, typically associated with ‘sea, sand, sun’ resorts and characteristics such as transnational ownership, minimal direct economic benefit to destination communities, seasonality, and package tours”.*

(CHAFE, Zoe, 2005, *Interest in Responsible Travel*, Grows Vital Signs (The Worldwatch Institute), p.101) which sources: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, National Geographic Traveller, TIES, World Tourism Organization, Pro-Poor Tourism, Encyclopedia of Ecotourism and Responsibletravel.com)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, updated edition September 2006, *Fact sheet: Global Ecotourism*, Ecotourism\_Fact\_Sheet\_-\_Global.pdf, on [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

### 1. Definition of the concept of “sustainable development”:

*Sustainable development implies “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.*

(World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org) (12th march 2009).

### 2. Definitions of the concept of “sustainable tourism”:

*“Tourism that meets the needs of current tourist and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future”.*

(CHAFE, Zoe, 2005, *Interest in Responsible Travel*, Grows Vital Signs (The Worldwatch Institute), p.101) which sources: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, National Geographic Traveller, TIES, World Tourism Organization, Pro-Poor Tourism, Encyclopedia of Ecotourism and Responsibletravel.com)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, updated edition September 2006, *Fact sheet: Global Ecotourism*, Ecotourism\_Fact\_Sheet\_-\_Global.pdf, on [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

*“Sustainable tourism is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.”*

(United Nations World Tourism Organization)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org) (12th march 2009).

### “Sustainable tourism” is a concept, not a form of tourism:

*“The concept of sustainable development should be applied to all [...] forms of tourism. If the principles of sustainability are applied, then the type of tourism can be called sustainable tourism - therefore it can apply to all tourism activities.”*

Source: European Commission Travel’s website, <http://www.etc-corporate.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&cat=Ecotourism>. (13<sup>th</sup> March 2009).

## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

*“Responsible tourism:*

- minimises negative economic, environmental and social impacts*
- generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well being of host communities*
- improves working conditions and access to the industry*
- involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances*
- makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage embracing diversity*
- provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues*
- provides access for physically challenged people*
- is culturally sensitive, encourages respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence”.*

(Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations, 2002)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

Responsible tourism is a *“Tourism that maximizes the benefits to local communities, minimizes negative social or environmental impacts, and helps local people conserve fragile cultures, habitats, and species”.*

(CHAFE, Zoe, 2005, *Interest in Responsible Travel*, Grows Vital Signs (The Worldwatch Institute), p.101) which sources: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, National Geographic Traveller, TIES, World Tourism Organization, Pro-Poor Tourism, Encyclopedia of Ecotourism and Responsibletravel.com)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, updated edition September 2006, *Fact sheet: Global Ecotourism*, Ecotourism\_Fact\_Sheet\_-\_Global.pdf, on [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

## NATURE-BASED TOURISM and WILDLIFE TOURISM

*“Any form of tourism that relies primarily on the natural environment for its attractions or settings”* is considered as nature-base tourism.

(CHAFE, Zoe, 2005, *Interest in Responsible Travel*, Grows Vital Signs (The Worldwatch Institute), p.101) which sources: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, National Geographic Traveller, TIES, World Tourism Organization, Pro-Poor Tourism, Encyclopedia of Ecotourism and Responsibletravel.com)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, updated edition September 2006, *Fact sheet: Global Ecotourism*, Ecotourism\_Fact\_Sheet\_-\_Global.pdf, on [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

*“Wildlife tourism: Within the larger category of ‘nature tourism,’ wildlife tourism is travel specifically focused on wildlife viewing”.*

Source: Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2009, <http://www.adventuretravel.biz/glossary.asp>.

## ECOTOURISM

*"Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." (TIES, 1990)*

*"Ecotourism is about uniting conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. This means that those who implement and participate in ecotourism activities should follow the following ecotourism principles:*

- minimize impact*
- build environmental and cultural awareness and respect*
- provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts*
- provide direct financial benefits for conservation*
- provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people*
- raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate."*

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

*"Eco-tourism is often defined as a form of tourism with a purpose. Whilst in general terms it means 'environmentally-friendly' tourism, there is not a universal definition for eco-tourism, and the specific definition as to what this actually means in practice can vary greatly from one country to another.*

*Although it lacks one clear definition, it has been classified by the International Ecotourism Society (1991) as: "... responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people".*

*In addition, the World Conservation Union defined it (1996) as "...visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas ...has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations".*

*Although the concept of eco-tourism is difficult to define, it does, however, have some consistent features:*

- The destination itself is usually an unpolluted natural area.*
- Its attractions are the flora and fauna, and its entire bio-diversity.*
- Eco-tourism should support the local economy and its indigenous atmosphere.*
- It should contribute to the preservation of the environment, and promote the importance of conserving nature.*
- 'Eco-trips' often include a learning experience.*

*Eco-tourism is often confused with sustainable tourism. [But] eco-tourism is a form of tourism (like sports, health, beach, cultural or adventure tourism) [...]."*

Source: European Commission Travel's website, <http://www.etc-corporate.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&cat=Ecotourism>. (13<sup>th</sup> March 2009).

## ADVENTURE TOURISM

Adventure tourism is *“A form of nature-based tourism that incorporates an element of risk, higher levels of physical exertion and the need for specialized skills”*.

(CHAFE, Zoe, 2005, *Interest in Responsible Travel*, Grows Vital Signs (The Worldwatch Institute), p.101) which sources: Merriam-Webster Dictionary, National Geographic Traveller, TIES, World Tourism Organization, Pro-Poor Tourism, Encyclopedia of Ecotourism and Responsibletravel.com)

Source: The International Ecotourism Society, updated edition September 2006, *Fact sheet: Global Ecotourism*, Ecotourism\_Fact\_Sheet\_-\_Global.pdf, on [www.ecotourism.org](http://www.ecotourism.org).

Adventure tourism is:

- *“Historically characterized by activity type (“hard” vs “soft” adventure activities), the term ‘adventure travel’ is often associated with high levels of physical activity by participants, most of it outdoors.”*
- *“Based on consumer and industry supplier research in which respondents emphasized the importance of cultural learning in adventure travel, the Adventure Travel Trade Association advances the following definition of adventure travel: adventure travel may be any tourist activity including two of the following three components: a physical activity, a cultural exchange or interaction, and engagement with nature”*.

Source: Adventure Travel Trade Association, 2009, <http://www.adventuretravel.biz/glossary.asp>.

## RURAL TOURISM

Rural tourism is mainly defined by his specificity of being organized and realized in the countryside. It is a form of tourism which includes many other forms of tourism (sports, cultural tourism, etc... even ecotourism and nature-based tourisms might be included).

Henri Grolleau (1993) : le tourisme rural est un « *tourisme d'échelle locale, il est d'initiative et de gestion locales, il vise des retombées locales, il valorise les ressources naturelles, les paysages, les patrimoines et la culture locale* ».

**Henri Grolleau (1993): rural tourism is a “tourism at a local scale, it emanates from local initiative and it is controlled/ managed/ handled locally, it aims for local benefits, promotes natural resources, landscapes, heritage and local culture”.**

Source: Association Source - Centre national de ressources du tourisme et du patrimoine rural, France, [http://www.source.asso.fr/index.php?id=tourisme-rural\\_definition](http://www.source.asso.fr/index.php?id=tourisme-rural_definition) (16th March 2009).






Euroter (1992) : « *Le tourisme rural se définit dans l'économie globale du tourisme comme la valorisation touristique des espaces agrestes, des ressources naturelles, du patrimoine culturel, du bâti rural, des traditions villageoises, des produits du terroir, par des produits labellisés, illustratifs des identités régionales, couvrant les besoins des consommateurs en hébergement, restauration, activités de loisirs, animation et services divers, à des fins de développement local durable et de réponse adéquate aux besoins de loisirs dans la société moderne, dans une nouvelle solidarité sociale ville-campagne* ».


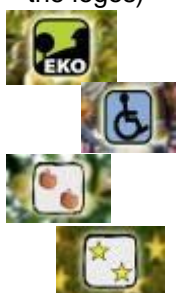

**Euroter (1992): “Within the global tourism economy, rural tourism defines itself as the promotion and development of the agricultural areas, natural resources, cultural heritage, rural built heritage, village traditions, local products, thanks to certified products, illustrating the regional identities, supplying consumers needs in accommodation, restaurants, leisure activities, animation and various services, for sustainable local development purposes et for an appropriate answer to the nowadays needs in leisure activities, in a new city-country solidarity”.**

Source: [http://www.source.asso.fr/index.php?id=tourisme-rural\\_definition](http://www.source.asso.fr/index.php?id=tourisme-rural_definition) (16th March 2009).



## Appendix n°8: Examples of categorization systems for rural tourism

Type concerned	Developer's Name	Symbol	Country /area	Website	Comment
Accommodation, activities	BAAT - Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism	Only charter?	Bulgaria	<a href="http://www.baatbg.org/welcome.php?page=21">http://www.baatbg.org/welcome.php?page=21</a>	Very interesting website, BAAT project and actions are very similar to what aims Alterural
Accommodation	Ruralis		Croatia/Istria	<a href="http://www.ruralis.hr">http://www.ruralis.hr</a>	Currently developed. Concerns: Farm holidays (Agro tourism), Self catering house (cottages), Rural B&B (bed and breakfast), Rural family hotel, Wine road accommodation, Stancija (villa).
Accommodation	Union of Rural Tourism / Svaz venkovske turistiky	Stars only?	Czech republic	<a href="http://www.svazvt.cz/files/standardy.htm">http://www.svazvt.cz/files/standardy.htm</a>	Categories: small camp (lease land for temporary accommodation of guests (tent, caravan), or with the separate housing units or rooms), apartment (flat summer) with their own cooking (separate building (cottage), or housing unit with one or more residential rooms (rooms, bedrooms), bathroom, kitchen and other self-equipped. Rented as a whole), accommodation with food (accommodation facilities, which provide accommodation (usually in different rooms, up to 4) and catering services (at least breakfast) + Classification according to confort.
Accommodation	Gîtes de France		France	<a href="http://www.gites-de-france.com/gites/uk/rural-gites/know-more/rating">http://www.gites-de-france.com/gites/uk/rural-gites/know-more/rating</a>	since 1955. Concerns: Country self-catering cottages, B&B, campsites, cabins, gîtes d'enfants
Accommodation, activities	Accueil Paysan	no symbol besides their panel? - Charter. 	France	<a href="http://www.accueil-paysan.com">http://www.accueil-paysan.com</a>	since 1987. Concerns: Auberge paysanne, Accueil d'enfants, Camping paysan, Chambre paysanne, Produit paysan, Gîte paysan, Relais paysan, Table paysanne, Accueil à la journée/animations, Accueil social
Accommodation, activities	Quality standards of the Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft für Urlaub auf dem Bauernhof und Landtourismus (The German organization for holiday on the farm and rural tourism)		Germany	<a href="http://en.bauernhofurlaub-deutschland.de/informationen/qualitaet.php">http://en.bauernhofurlaub-deutschland.de/informationen/qualitaet.php</a>	"Recognized holiday in the country", "recognised holiday farm", "recognized holiday on a vineyard", "recognized riding ranch", "recognized fish farm"
Accommodation, activities	The DLG Quality Marker in Rural Tourism (Landtourismus)		Germany	<a href="http://www.landtourismus.de/445.html">http://www.landtourismus.de/445.html</a>	<a href="http://www.landtourismus.de/445.html">http://www.landtourismus.de/445.html</a>
Accommodation	Polish Federation of Country Tourism	Standard, one sun, two suns, three suns	Poland	<a href="http://wbn.agroturystyka.pl/kategoria_dwa_sloneczka_id_63.html">http://wbn.agroturystyka.pl/kategoria_dwa_sloneczka_id_63.html</a>	Categorization of the accommodation only

Accommodation (mostly), activities	Privetur - Portuguese association for accommodations in rural areas	Classification per category (see the "comment" column)	Portugal	<a href="http://www.turismorural.pt/casas_main.php">http://www.turismorural.pt/casas_main.php</a>	Turismo de Habitação (family-style accommodation service for tourists provided in manor-houses or palaces), Turismo Rural (family-style accommodation service for tourists provided in private cottages part of the typical regional architecture), Agro-turismo (family-style accommodation service provided in private farmhouses, enabling guests to accompany and discover more about farming activity or take part in the work), Casas de Campo (accommodation service for tourists provided in private houses in rural areas, whether or not these are inhabited by the owners or legal proprietors), Hotéis Rurais (hotels situated in rural areas, keeping with the predominant characteristics of the region in which they are located), Turismo de Aldeia (A group of at least five houses situated in a village, historic village or rural centre, managed in an integrated manner by one single managing body).
Accommodation	ANTREC - National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism	Flowers 	Romania	<a href="http://www.antrec.ro/Quality_Assessment_Standards_Rural_Accommodation.pdf">http://www.antrec.ro/Quality_Assessment_Standards_Rural_Accommodation.pdf</a>	Not found the criteria nor the classification with flowers
	CenORT - Centre for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development		Serbia	<a href="http://www.cenort.rs">http://www.cenort.rs</a>	Website had some problems
Accommodation and context of the offer	Association of Tourist Farms of Slovenia	(These are only some of the logos) 	Slovenia	<a href="http://www.farmtourism.si/en/kvaliteta.asp">http://www.farmtourism.si/en/kvaliteta.asp</a>	Classification of bed&breakfast and guest-houses for rural tourism offer. + Themed holidays with corresponding logos: ecological tourist farm, tourist farm with a healthy lifestyle offer, family-friendly tourist farm, tourist farm with program for children unaccompanied by parents, bicycle-friendly tourist farm, winegrowing tourist farm, invalid-friendly tourist farm
Accommodation, activities	The association for the development and the promotion of rural tourism in Switzerland	no symbol? - There is a Charter.	Switzerland	<a href="http://www.tourisme-rural.ch">http://www.tourisme-rural.ch</a>	very various
Accommodation, activities	Association of Swiss Holiday Farms		Switzerland	<a href="http://www.agrotourismus.ch">http://www.agrotourismus.ch</a>	



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UDRUŽENJE  
ZA RAZVOJ  
RURALNOG  
TURIZMA

## Contact

[alterural@yahoo.com](mailto:alterural@yahoo.com)

### OFFICE in SARAJEVO :

Mehmed b.k Ljubušaka 6  
71000 SARAJEVO

Phone : +387 (0)33/ 279-940

Mobile : +387 (0)62/ 296-859

### OFFICE in FOJNICA :

ZAVNOBIH bb  
71270 FOJNICA

Phone : +387 (0)30/ 544-451

Mobile : +387 (0)63/ 369-419



# Alterural

Association for the  
Development of Rural Tourism  
in Bosnia – and – Herzegovina