

# RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL GEOTOURISM DESTINATIONS

## Geoturistic Potentials of Medvednica

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Position of Medvednica as the hinterland of Zagreb ordered the further development of this natural pearl of northwestern Croatia. Turbulent geological past caused the development of a number of geological sites that represent basic attraction of geotourism. Starting from a number of paleozoic schist outcrops, quartzite and various karst forms, which typically attract only a narrow part of the population, to Vetrnica cave, Zrinski mines, many protected plant and animal species make a basic attraction for all types of tourists.

Since Zagreb is located in the foothills of the mountain, Medvednica has for a long time been a destination of many tourists from Zagreb, especially its upper part Sljeme. Many climber's lodgings in the area witness a primarily hiking excursion function of the mountain. However, in recent times there is a stagnation in number of tourists hikers, and a substantial increase in the number of visitors of various mass events on the mountain, skiers in the first place, but even more visitors of World Cup races. Therefore, although Medvednica is a traditional tourist destination, it requires considerable profiling and attracting tourists who want a holiday in harmony with nature, including geotourists.

The aim of this paper is to determine what are the advantages and peculiarities attractions of Medvednica that are able to extract Medvednica as a geoturistic destination. The next issue is the question of the potential hazards in the area, such as adequate tourist infrastructure, noise pollution, illegal quarries, considerable exceeding of carrying capacity of individual sites and illegal construction. Although, most of the mountain is protected as a nature park, there is a need for further protective measures to preserve this unique natural landscape of the predominantly urbanized area. These protection measures are imposed by the EU, which brings new protection systems such as ecological network Natura 2000, and inclusion in the European network of Geoparks.

Although geotourism is a relatively undeveloped sector in Croatia, it should be seriously considered as a direction for further development, in line with the commitment to sustainable tourism and protection of geological, ecological and cultural heritage.

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