

# Attitudes of Local Community about Revitalization of Hunting Tourism in Hunting Ground “Karadjordjevo”

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## Abstract

*Hunting activities were considerably developed on the territory of hunting area “Karadjordjevo”, but the development stopped due to economic and political instability at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This research aims to evaluate support of the local community in the previously well-known hunting destinations nowadays when hunting tourism are under the pressure of different groups who underestimate their importance. The survey was conducted in the municipality of Backa Palanka in 2018, and the results show that the local population is generally prone to the revitalization of hunting tourism. According to the results analysed in this research, local population on the territory of Mladenovo and Karadjordjevo generally supports development of hunting tourism. Local people do not have negative attitude about hunting, and, in most cases, are prone to hunters and hunting regardless of being hunters themselves or having a hunter in their family.*

**Keywords:** hunting tourism, hunting, revitalization, Karadjordjevo, local community

## Introduction

In the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Serbia represented one of the most famous hunting destinations in the region (Ristić et al., 2009), and hunting activities were mostly present in Vojvodina, northern part of Serbia. Convenient geographical position, big number and variety of wild animals, long hunting tradition and hospitality culture contributed to the development of mass hunting tourism in Vojvodina with 3-4 thousand hunters per year on average. They came from Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, the UK, Belgium, France, Hungary and Russia (Dragin, 2006; Marković et al., 2017). At some periods, up to 10 000 foreign hunters stayed at the territory of Serbia (Prentovic, 2004).

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Hunting area "Karadjordjevo" is located in Vojvodina, around 50 km from Novi Sad, the main city of the region. It lies along the left bank of the Danube, between 45°15' and 45°22' of the north geographical latitude and 19°13' and 19°22' of the east geographical longitude. The species of wild animals that live in this area are: red deer, fallow deer, white-tailed deer, mouflon, roe deer, wild boar, hare, pheasant, grey partridge (Jovanovic, 2001). This hunting area is part of military institution "Karadjordjevo" which has long tradition. The president of ex Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, used this hunting area as his residence where many important meetings took place. Josip Broz Tito organised numerous "diplomatic" hunts in the hunting area "Karadjordjevo" and this is the place where he hosted many great world leaders (Brezhnev, Causesku and others). Until 1980 the hunting area was closed for public and from that year it became open and more commercial.

Hunting area "Karadjordjevo" kept its most important characteristics and qualities, for example big number of wild animals which is the most significant attraction of this area. The fund consists of 250 deer, 200 fallow deer, 250 wild boars, 10 mouflons and the same number of white-tailed deer. Hunters are mostly interested in hunting trophy specimens of deer and in group hunts of wild boars. Foreign and domestic hunters appreciate good organization and successful hunts. Every year around 40 deer, from 30 to 50 fallow deer and over 100 wild boars get hunted. "Karadjordjevo" could become the main factor of hunting tourism development nationally, with adequate investments and programme (Tufegdzcic, 2005).

## Literature review

In many societies hunting is important economical activity, but also very important part of cultural heritage (Stedman, Heberlein, 2001; Bauer, Herr, 2004; Rutanen et al., 2007; Willebrand, 2009; Hunter, Watts, 2010). Hunting tourism represents travelling and tourist activities whose basic motives are hunting and shooting game (Brainerd, 2007; Lovelock, 2008; Leader-Williams, 2009; Nygard, Uthardt, 2011), and as such, considerably contributes to valorization of peripheral or insufficiently used areas where tourist activities are poorly developed (Baker, 1997; Lindsey et al., 2006; Gunnarsdotter, 2006; Samuelsson, Stage, 2007; Matilainen, 2007; Willebrand, 2009; ). Hunting tourism can have significantly positive effect on the local community (Chardonnet et al. 2002; Bauer, Herr, 2004; Samuelsson, Stage, 2007; Sharp, Wollscheid, 2009; Mbaiwaa, Stronza, 2010; Naidoo et al., 2016) and bring it considerable economic benefit (Barnes 2001; Bauer, Herr 2004; Hull et al., 2007).

Some of the most important conditions for the successful development of all types of tourism, hunting tourism as well, are support of a local community and positive attitudes of local people (Gursoy, Rutherford, 2004; Blešić et al. 2014; Williams et al. 1995; Teye et al., 2002; Oviedo-Garcia et al., 2008). Local population forms different opinions about economical, sociocultural and ecological effects of tourism on local community and environment (Andereck et al. 2005; Wang, Pfister, 2008; Styliadis et al. 2014, García, et al., 2015). The attitudes towards hunting and hunting tourism are influenced by environment's ethical attitudes towards the consumption of wild game (Willebrand, 2009). The opinion of local people about hunting is often more positive if hunting activities are conducted in order to manage the population of wild animals, and it is more negative about sport and trophy tourism, that is hunting tourism (Campbell, MacKay, 2003).

However, the research conducted in Sweden showed that the support of local people for hunting and hunters is very important (up to 82%) with higher percent in rural areas compared

to the urban ones (Heberlein, Ericsson, 2005; Ljung, 2014). Mostly younger respondents and women support hunting and hunting tourism less, while positive attitudes appear in respondents whose family members or close friends are hunters (Ljung et al., 2012; Gamborg, Jensen, 2017; Byrd et al., 2017).

The aim of this paper is to determine attitudes of local people, hunters and non-hunters towards re-development of hunting tourism in one of the most attractive tourist areas in Serbia. This research comprises the analysis of influence of sociodemographical variables (sex, age) on forming of the attitudes towards hunting tourism. The main aim was to determine whether the local community has an understanding for re-development of hunting tourism in the region which had significant economic benefit from this tourist activity in the end of the last century.

## Methodology

### Research instrument

In order to evaluate the attitudes of the local community towards hunting tourism development, we used a questionnaire with three parts. The first part contains sociodemographical characteristics of respondents (sex, age, education, income). In the second one, respondents were asked about their opinion on hunting and hunting tourism. Respondents, that is local inhabitants, gave their answers in the form of Likert scale (1=I completely disagree, 2=I mostly disagree, 3=I am not sure, 4=I mostly agree, 5=I completely agree). In the third part, respondents were asked whether they participate in hunting activities, how much they know basic hunting rules, whether they have hunters in their family. Respondents scaled the importance of family tradition, love for nature, hunting usefulness etc.

### Questionnaire

Research was conducted in 2018 in the rural areas of Mladenovo and Karadjordjevo (municipality of Backa Palanka). Questionnaires were distributed in towns by the authors of this article. The sample of the local inhabitants consists of 200 residents who wanted to participate in the survey. With 27 questionnaires that were not complete and in the end dismissed, the final sample consisted of 176 filled in questionnaires.

## Results and discussion

### Characteristics of respondents

When the sex structure is concerned, male respondents make up the majority (N=113) which is 64,2%, while women (N=63) make up 35,8% of respondents. In the category of age, majority of respondents were between 40 and 60 years old, which represents 42% respondents, while 20% of respondents were older than 60, and 18,8% of them were between 30 and 40 years old. The smallest group of respondents were people under 30 years old (18,7%). In the category of educational structure majority of respondents (46,6%) finished secondary school, while the second biggest group consists of people with higher education (28,4%). The third group make up respondents with finished elementary school (15,9%). Only 2,3% hold PhDs and 6,3% are people with Master's degree.

After analysing the factor of monthly income, the most dominant are respondents who earn between 200-400 euros (44,3% of respondents), then those who earn less than 200 euros (34,7% of respondents), while 17,6% of respondents earn between 400-600 euros. Only 3,4% of respondents earn more than 600 euros, 23,9% of respondents are hunters, and 27,8% of them have a hunter in their families.

## Results

In the analysed population sample, the biggest number of respondents (70,5%) have basic conditions for becoming a hunter, which is hunting permission, passing hunting exam and passing exam for weapon handling. The results show that most of the local population think that hunters like hunting activities because of spending time with others (88,64%), and because of being in nature (88,64%). Most respondents thinks that shooting of animals represents the least important or irrelevant aspect of hunting (43,18%).

Analysis of the respondents' answers shows that, generally speaking, local population supports hunting tourism. According to the results of descriptive statistics (table 2) it can be noticed that local population, on average, has positive attitude towards hunting and hunting tourism. Statements that the respondents agree on positively describe this economy branch.

However, there are differences in attitudes depending on the respondents gender, family relations to hunters and their participation in hunting activities.

Normality test showed that there is variable normality "Gender", "whether a respondent is a hunter" and "family connections with a hunter", which indicates that the survey was successfully conducted (table 1).

**Table 1.** Normality test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Gender	,414	176	,000	,606	176	,000
Do you hunt?	,473	176	,000	,528	176	,000
Does any in your family hunt?	,454	176	,000	,561	176	,000

Most respondents agree (81,2) with the following statement "*Hunting tourism can contribute development of local community and economy*", with 63,07% of the respondents who completely agree with this statement. Only 4,54% of respondents consider this statement not true. Thus, this statement has high average values of  $M=4,3864$ , ( $SD=,93114$ ). However, there are statistically important differences in attitudes between sexes ( $\text{sig}=0,018$ ) and between the respondents who are and who are not hunters ( $\text{sig}=0,017$ ). Men (88,48%) generally speaking agree that hunting tourism can contribute the economy of the local community, which can be said for the female population of respondents as well (74,6%).

Women are less certain than men on the question of contribution of hunting activities to local community (only 22,2% of female respondents and only 7,9% of male respondents). Hunters believe that hunting tourism can considerably contribute the development of economy of the local community (97,6%), while smaller number of non-hunters states the same (79,1%). There are, also, the differences in attitudes between the respondents who are related to hunters and those who are not related to hunters ( $\text{sig}=0,029$ ). The respondents who have a hunter

in their family support this statement to a higher extent (87,7%) compared to those who do not have a hunter in their family.

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics**

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hunters are killers of wild animals	176	1,00	5,00	1,9659	1,32621
Hunters are people who love weapons	176	1,0	5,0	3,170	1,4907
Hunting tourism destroys flora and fauna	176	1,00	5,00	1,8182	1,19087
Hunting tourism can contribute to development of the local community and its economy	176	1,00	5,00	4,3864	,93114
We should invest in hunting tourism because it is one of the leading generators of nature	176	1,00	5,00	4,2955	1,01034
Hunting tourism is one of the most expensive types of tourism	176	1,00	5,00	3,7898	1,37159
The numbers of deer, roe deer, pheasants and other wild animals would be smaller if people did not feed and protect them in winter.	176	1,00	5,00	4,1932	1,19387
Development of hunting tourism in this municipality affects general development of nature and other economical activities	176	1,00	5,00	3,0795	1,55818
Valid N (listwise)	176				

The biggest number of respondents believe that the development of hunting tourism is very important for the local economy ( $M=4,4602$ ,  $SD=.86758$ ), due to the fact that it can contribute to the development of other economic activities ( $M=3,0795$ ,  $SD=1,55818$ ). Majority of local population (76,71%) thinks that hunting tourism represents economic activity that should be invested in ( $M=4,2955$ ,  $SD=1,01034$ ) and that this is one of the most expensive type of tourism ( $M=3,7898$ ,  $SD=1,37159$ ). There are statistically important differences in the attitudes of hunters and non-hunters ( $\text{sig}=0,042$ ,  $\text{sig}=0,007$ ). The bigger number of respondents who are hunters (85,7%) believe that we should invest more in hunting tourism, compared to non-hunters (73,8%) who share the opinion. Whereas, only respondents who do not take part in hunting activities, that is who are not hunters, do not agree with this statement (only 8,9%).

Big number of respondents (78,4%) agree that the number of wild animals would be considerably smaller if hunters did not actively feed and protect them ( $M=4,1932$ ,  $SD=1,19387$ ). However, there are statistically important differences in the attitudes of men and women ( $\text{sig}=0,002$ ). Most men agree and completely agree that hunters actively keep the numbers of wild animals (84,9%), while smaller number of women has the same opinion (66,6%). In most cases, women disagree with this attitude, considering the fact that 17,4% of female and only 5,3% of male respondents disagree with that statement. There are, also, the differences in the attitudes of hunters and non-hunters ( $\text{sig}=0,038$ ). Almost all the respondents who are hunters (95,2%) consider that hunters maintain the numbers of wild animals, which is also the opinion of smaller percent of non-hunters (73,1%). The difference in attitudes of the respondents who have a hunter as a family member and those who do not have a hunter ( $\text{sig}=0,028$ ) shows that the respondents with a hunter in their families considerably support this statement. This result was confirmed by the answers to the question in which 63,07% of respondents said that the number of wild animals would be lower if the hunters did not do their activities. The local population thinks that hunters save the biggest number of animals in cases of storms or natural disasters (86,36% of respondents) and only 11,93% of respondents think that in natural disasters the biggest number of wild animals get saved by farmers and non-government organizations.

Lower number of respondents have a negative attitude to hunting, because the majority of local population (68,75 %) thinks that hunters are not only killers of wild animals ( $M=1,9659$ ,  $SD=1,32621$ ), and 52,27% of respondents consider hunters as people who like weapons ( $M=3,170$ ,  $SD=1,4907$ ). However, there are statistically significant differences in the attitudes of the respondents who are and who are not hunters ( $\text{sig}=0,006$ ). Namely, 63,3% of respondents who are not hunters think that hunters are not only killers of wild animals, while 85,7% of hunters share that opinion. Also, majority of local population (72,16%) does not believe that hunting tourism destroys flora and fauna ( $M=1,8182$ ,  $SD=1,19087$ ). The opinions of hunters and non-hunters are statistically different ( $\text{sig}=0,033$ ). Higher percent of hunters (85,7%) compared to non-hunters (67,9%) think that hunting tourism does not destroy flora and fauna, that is wild animals habitat.

## Conclusion

According to the results which were analysed in this research, local population on the territory of Mladenovo and Karadjordjevo generally supports development of hunting tourism. Local people do not have negative attitude about hunting, and, in most cases, are prone to hunters and hunting regardless of being hunters themselves or having a hunter in their family. Hunters and those related to them consider hunting and hunting tourism useful for the possible development of the community. The main reason is the fact that this group of respondents is directly involved in hunting activities or it is indirectly connected to them through family members. Thus, they accept hunting as an economic activity. Women support development of hunting tourism less than men, because women are less likely to do it or their participation in hunting activities is rare. Despite widespread opinion about hunting in the modern world, and especially hunting tourism, the results have shown that the local community is aware of the advantages of the hunting tourism and that it is interested in reactivation of this type of tourism. Taking into consideration the fact that hunting and tourist activities were rather developed in the end of the last century, it can be easily presumed that the local population still remembers the benefits that these activities bring.

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