



# Challenges and changes in the development of Wellness destinations in the recent days /Bulgarian case study/

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# Wellness tourism and crisis

## **Scope of investigation**

The interaction between Wellness/SPA tourism destination management and different kinds of crisis including Covid-19 has been studied 03.2020-02.2021

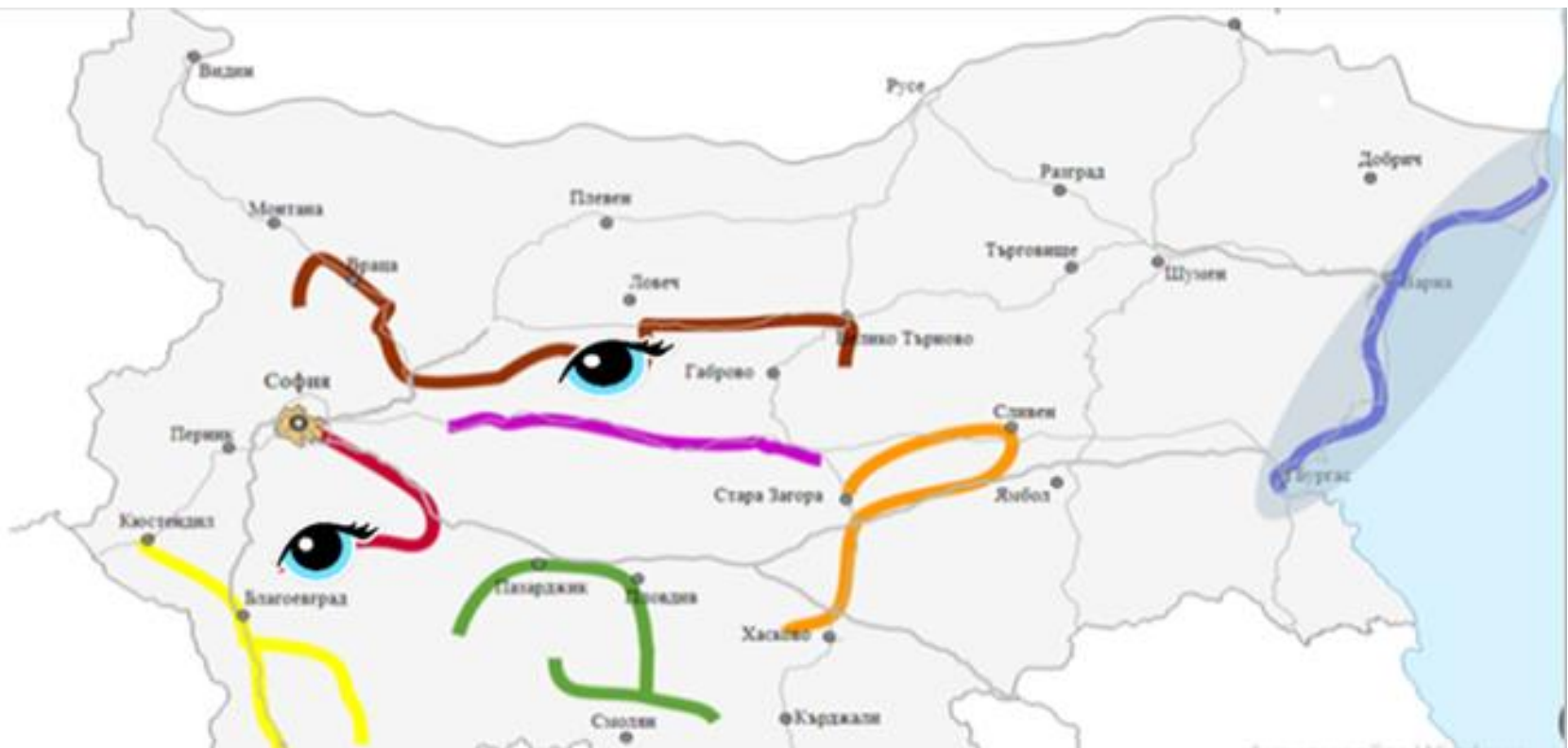
# Wellness tourism and crisis research

## Objects

Bulgarian representative Balneo and SPA destination:

1. The Thermes of Constantine the Great /12 thermes and 12 resorts/ Sofia district
2. Stara planina Balneo and SPA destination /6 thermes and 6 resorts/

# Map of Bulgarian balneo and SPA destinations



# Methods

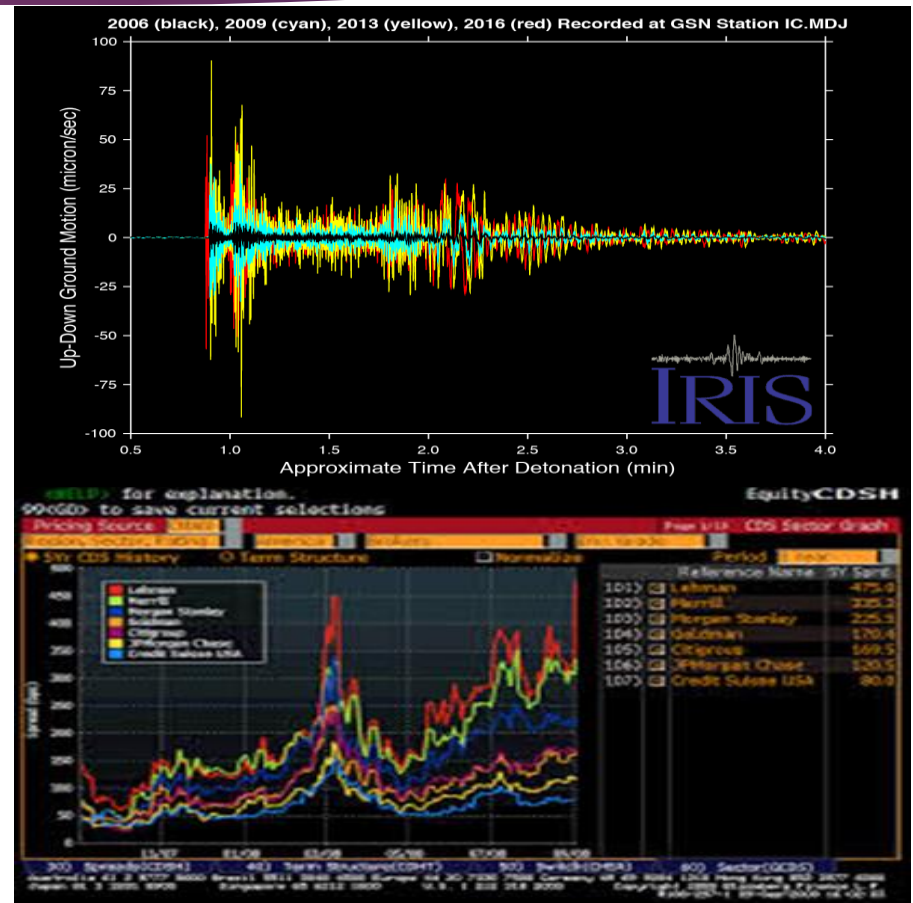
- ▶ Identification and evaluation of nature - based tourism resources
- ▶ Identification and evaluation of anthropogenic tourism resources

# The face of crisis

- A. Natural- earthquakes, floods, volcano's eruption, climate changes, technogenic ...
- B. Political – social and terrorism
- C. HEALTH
- D. Economical

$$A+B+C+D=E$$

- E. SAFETY and SECURITY



# Our changed World

- ▶ New demographic characteristics
- ▶ New economics situation
- ▶ New sensitivity to the World
- ▶ New psycho emotional comfort

# Outcomes

## Our response to keep our life

CORE occurred **problems:**

**Key 1:** HEALTH CRISIS became to SECURITY CRISIS

**Key 2:** NEED OF SAFETY and SECURITY

CORE **solution:**

BACK TO NATURE through DIDGITAL TRANSFORMATION of  
Wellness destinations



# RESULTS

## Impact on Society

- ▶ All crises impacted on society
- ▶ New profile and dimension of social crisis
- ▶ Health crisis influenced on stress level of human

## Impact on Tourism

- ▶ Ubiquitous digitalization
- ▶ Reorganization of social tourism
- ▶ Total invasion of virtual tourism

# Results 1

## New content of Wellness tourism

- ▶ **ANTISTRESS CONTENT**

- ▶ Main focus is Forest recreation

- ▶ New tourists' profile - changed wish list

- ▶ Small family/closed friends wellness destinations

- ▶ HEALTH AND SAFETY ENVIRONMENT

# Environment



## Results 2

### Tourists profile

- ▶ Free time management belongs to tourists
- ▶ Number of former clients of tourist companies is growing
- ▶ Customers prefer calm environment, fresh quality air, impressive landscape, protected area
- ▶ Customers choose safety and healthy places

## Results 3

# Restart of forgotten Bulgarian places

- ▶ Forgotten guest houses have been discovered by young generation
- ▶ They restart in specific health requirements
- ▶ Obtain a real recreation and health efficiency

# Results 4

## Additional tourist services

- ▶ Cultural heritage - open place objects
- ▶ Ethnographical villages
- ▶ Historical monuments with focus on children - eco playgrounds, adventure parks

# Results 5

## Technology of restart

- ▶ Renovation of former socialist balneological resort
- ▶ Digital marketing and new brand strategy creation
- ▶ Application of well developed DIGEMs (Digital Innovation Eco-systems)

# Thermal springs and balneological centres in Bulgaria





# Roadmap of new Wellness destinations impacted of Corona 19 V

## **General nature prerequisites:**

- ▶ Green environment
- ▶ Mineral springs/thermal springs
- ▶ Forest areas with high recreation potential
- ▶ Moderate landscape
- ▶ Climate conditions with thermal comfort

# Roadmap of new Wellness destinations impacted of Corona 19 V

## **General anthropogenic prerequisites:**

- ▶ Small closed villages (final destinations)
- ▶ Local natives' traditions in forest tourism, ecotourism, health culture and social responsibility
- ▶ Monasteries, archeological places
- ▶ Forgotten balneological places/former socialist sanatoriums

# Troyan Balkan Wellness destinations

- ▶ Thermal SPA centres Shipkovo and Chiflika with long balneological traditions
- ▶ National Nature Park “Central Balkan”
- ▶ Ecological reserves 'Steneto', 'Kozyata stena' and North Jendem
- ▶ Well developed 20 ecotourism trails
- ▶ Dam Sopot - attractive resort for fishing and swimming
- ▶ Troyan monastery since 16th century - the symbol of spirituality and freedom

# Troyan Balkan Wellness destinations



# Dam Sopot



# Troyan Balkan Wellness destinations Krushuna waterfalls



# Sapareva banja - Belchin banja

- ▶ National park Rila, between the mountains Verila, Vitosha and Plana - a unique place
- ▶ "7 Rila lakes" complete the unique spirit of Thracian time to recent day /energy buster/

# “Panceurythmy” Wellbeing since 1927! Peter Danov - The Teacher





# Sapareva banja - Belchin banja

- ▶ Sapareva banja - former socialism balneological resort since 1950
- ▶ The hottest geyser in Europe 103 °C



# Sapareva banja - Belchin banja

- ▶ The attractive winter resort Panichishte
- ▶ Numerous waterfalls
- ▶ Impressive eco trails
- ▶ Historical attraction: since 3rd century, Thracians, Romans culture
- Christian cult complex
- Expositions
- Fortress

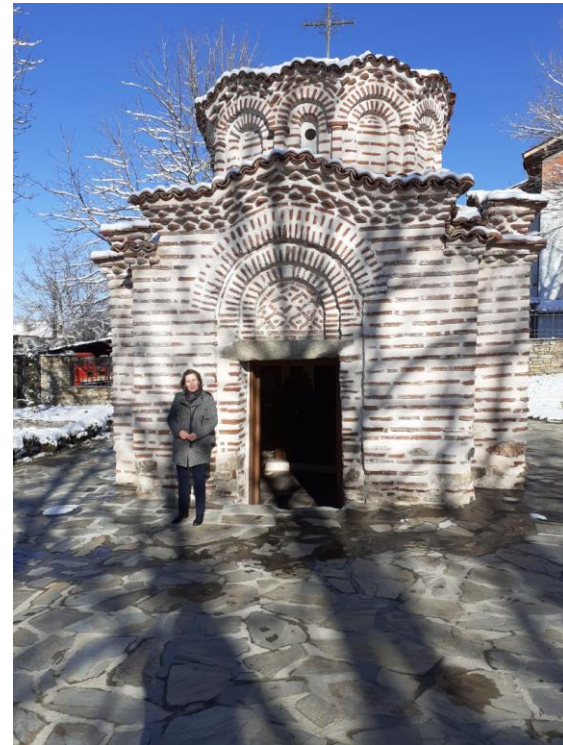
# Historical complex Tsari mali grad



# National park Rila nearby balneo resort



# Sapareva banja city walk



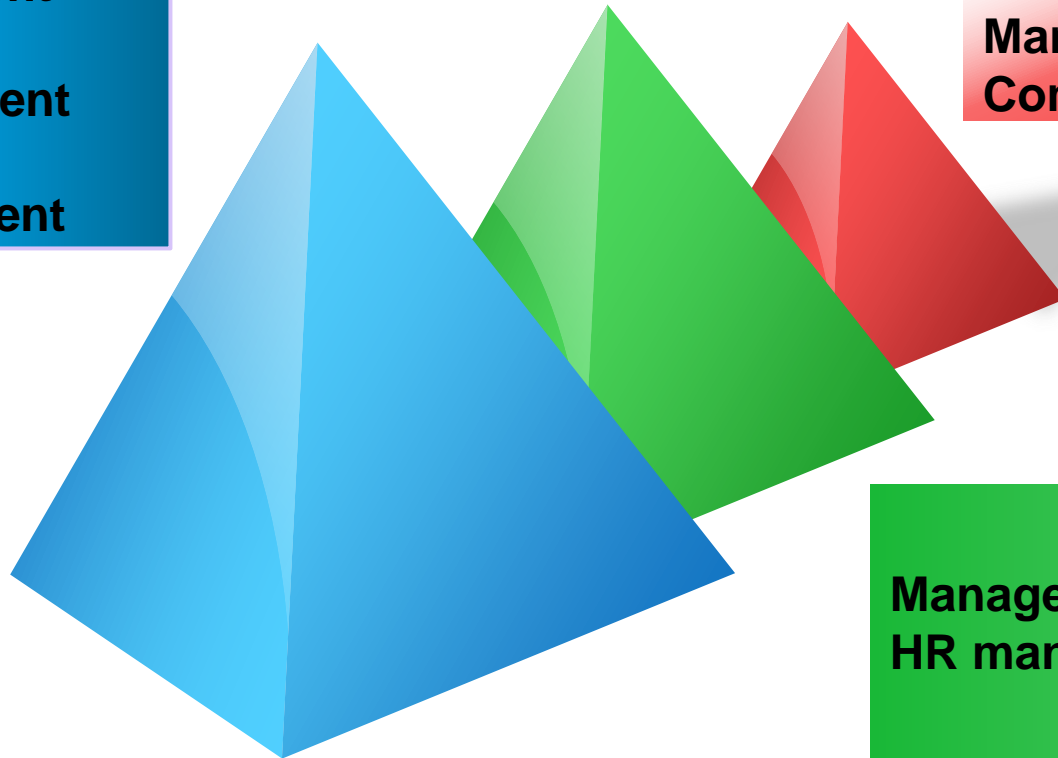
# Church St Petka – 16th century



# Our choice – traditional branding or Synergy of elements

**Assessment  
Planning  
Development  
Product  
development**

**Promotion  
Marketing  
Communication**



**Management  
HR management**

# New Brand strategy

## Safety Innovative Security Tourism

- ▶ Health prevention and implementation of occupational health and safety management system ISO 45001:2018
- ▶ Development of Digital innovation Ecosystems on local places - booster for SMEs start-ups
- ▶ IoT - improving the efficiency of presented tourist services
- ▶ AR/VR - a new TRAVEL ASSISTANCE OF RECENT CLIENT



# Elena Balkan Wellness destinations

## An authentical Bulgarian houses

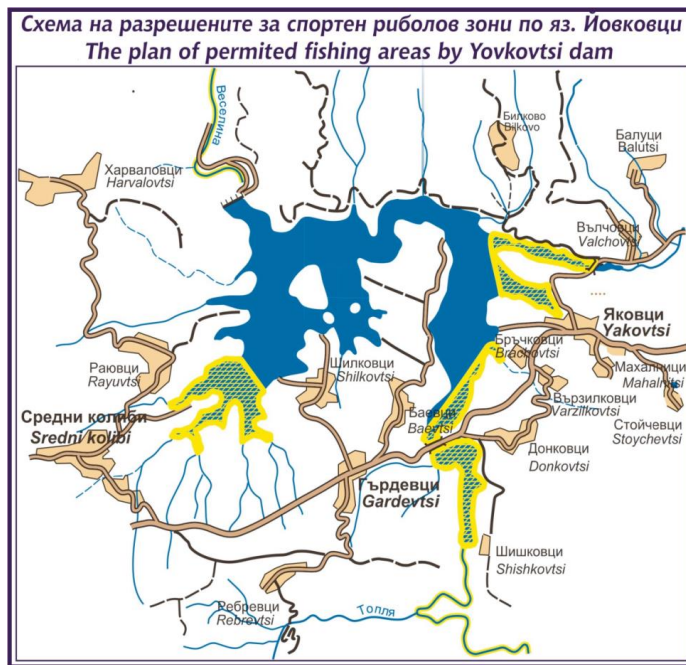
- ▶ Fresh water rivers
- ▶ Forest family rest areas
- ▶ Fresh forest fruits
- ▶ Amazing waterfalls
- ▶ Mountain panoramic view
- ▶ Dams fishing
- ▶ Hiking, biking, walking routes

# An authentic Bulgarian houses

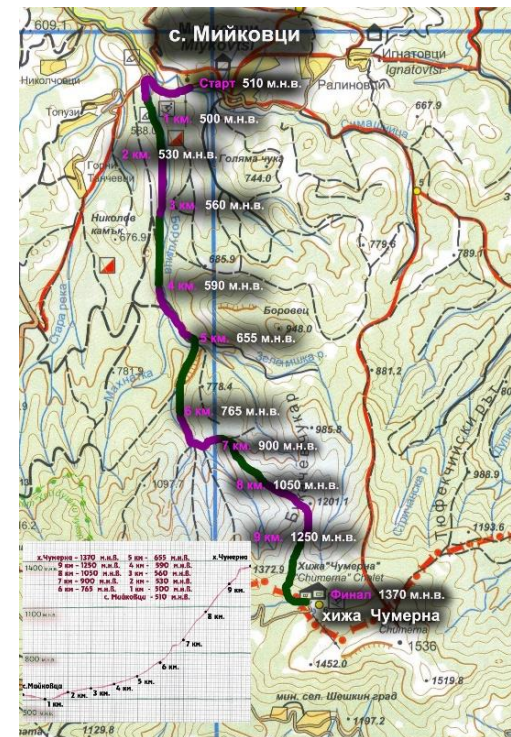


# Elena Balkan Wellness destinations

## Free fishing places



## Bikes trials



# Family tourism on Mijkovtsi river



# Hiking paths



# Conclusion

## **Safety Innovative Security Tourism**

HOW?

- ▶ New philosophy
- ▶ New chain Tourist services- DIGEMs and IoT
- ▶ AR Antistress Wellness destination development
- ▶ VR Antistress Wellness destination creation



Thank you!

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