

ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM TYPES IN THE KESAN REGION

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This analysis has been prepared by the Keşan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the frame of “Alternative types of tourism – a prerequisite for increasing the sustainability of the tourism business in the cross-border region” project number CB005.2.22.010, within the scope of the work defined as “The preparation of the analysis of potential opportunities for alternative tourism types in the Keşan regions”.

The aim of this study is to identify and develop potential alternative tourism types that will contribute to the diversification of touristic goods and products offered together with the tourist activities carried out in the districts of Keşan, Enez and İpsala, which are the business district of the Keşan Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This analysis will also provide a basis for the preparation of guidelines that will serve to develop specific tourist routes tailored to the real opportunities offered by the two cross-border regions.

In this framework, the district tourism master plans, academic articles, books, internet resources, reports prepared by public and private institutions related to the region, scientific theses and newspaper news related to the tourism sector of Keşan, İpsala and Enez districts were scanned and researched. This analysis aims to reveal nature and culture-based alternative tourism types that can be alternative and complementary to sea, sand and sun mass tourism in the Keşan region, and to turn them into touristic products and to introduce them to two countries (Burgas and Keşan).

As a result of these researches, the content of the analysis was formed in three parts by the deductive method. In the first part, tourism trends in the world, the emergence of alternative tourism, its definition, features, the differences between mass tourism and alternative tourism, alternative tourist features are included. In the second part, the geographical, historical, cultural, gastronomic and touristic features of Keşan center and villages, Enez and İpsala districts that covering Keşan region and the alternative tourism types that can be applied in the Keşan region are discussed in detail. As a result, in addition to the sea, sand and sun mass tourism in the Keşan region, alternative tourism potential of Keşan has been revealed and applicable touristic products have been created.

SECTION 1

1.1. TOURISM IN THE WORLD

Today, the tourism industry is a rapidly changing sector, renewing itself and continuously developing all over the world. According to the predictions of the World Tourism Organization, the tourism sector is seen as the sector that will grow the fastest and develop itself in the next twenty years.

Tourism continues to develop rapidly in the world since the 1950s. According to the world tourism organization, the tourism sector grows by 5% every year. The number of tourists, which was 25 million in 1950, reached 1.5 billion in 2019. Tourism is an economic, social, cultural and ecological locomotive for developed and developing countries in the world.

Despite the economic stagnation in the world, the tourism sector has continued to increase this development more rapidly, international tourist arrivals reached 1 billion in 2019 and achieved a growth of approximately 10% compared to 2013.

Contribution of tourism to the economy in 2019; It provides 10% of total employment and 12% of global GNP by creating 300 million job opportunities. Every 1% growth in the tourism sector means 1 million new jobs and investments with a national income of 10 billion dollars.

Recently, the tourism sector is an important leverage in the development of countries and regions, which has been shaping development, playing an active role in eliminating inter-regional imbalances. However, in addition to the positive effects of tourism activities, it is observed that developing countries have difficulties in increasing their share in tourism markets. Today, people's expectations, demands and preferences from tourism activities change due to reasons such as living standards, income and urbanization.

The changing demand for tourism has led to diversification in tourism preferences and types of tourism and the search for new regions. For this reason, it is possible for developing countries to increase their tourism shares only by developing and diversifying tourism services and products. This diversification is provided by the development of alternative tourism activities. Countries that develop alternative tourism types are stronger and survive against their rivals.

The development of tourism in Turkey in parallel with developments in the international tourism sector has also accelerated. The cooperation and the leading the private sector, local governments, NGOs, public institutions and the universities is very important to evaluate the potential the tourism sector in Turkey. Tourism sector has a priority place in the 9th Development Plan and the Tourism Strategy (2023) of Turkey.

Keşan, Enez and İpsala regions are also important in terms of tourism opportunities. The Keşan region has been serving intense sea, sand and sun tourism activities in recent years. Especially in summer, sea tourism is faced with the excessive tourist demand of the region.

During these periods when the summer population reaches 100,000 people, serious infrastructure and superstructure problems are experienced in the region. The Keşan region has many advantages in which alternative tourism types can be made in contrast to this type of tourism that does not provide enough added value to the region and causes environmental pollution.

It is certain that alternative tourism will replace mass tourism in the world, especially after the Covid-19 virus, which took place in 2020 and shook the whole world. In this case, Thrace and especially the Keşan region will benefit more from the advantages of alternative tourism with their geographic, natural, social and cultural potential due to its proximity to Istanbul, which is a source of tourism demand with its population of nearly 20 million. In addition to the existing types of tourism, alternative tourism will create a regional added value throughout the year.

The tourism industry has great development potential internationally. Tourism will continue to grow economically in the future. The tourism sector, which developed as mass tourism until the 1990s, started to cause great damage to the environment in the face of excessive demand.

Picture 1: Hiking Tourism



Eliminating the negative effects of mass tourism in environmental, cultural and social aspects is seen as the main reason for the emergence of alternative tourism. In addition, alternative tourism types are needed in terms of using natural, cultural and touristic resources effectively, spreading tourism to four seasons, providing permanent employment and benefiting from tourism revenues all year. In many emerging nature and culture-based alternative tourism types, it is essential to include local people in tourism activities, to respect local people, local culture and to adopt sustainability in the tourism movement.

The Covid-19 epidemic, which negatively affects the world and causes changes in our social lives, will cause a change in people's understanding of vacation. The new tourist profile will be shaped within the framework of sustainable alternative tourism policy, in touch with nature and away from the crowds, with the principle of "healthy tourism".

1.2. SUSTAINABILITY AND EMERGENCE OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

The consumption and failure of renewal of natural and cultural resources with the rapid industrialization that has taken place in the last century poses a great danger for future generations. The concept of "sustainable development" emerged in the early 1970s with the realization of the current and future dangers created by the rapid and unplanned use and consumption of these resources. Sustainability has changed the understanding of production and consumption, also drawn attention to the tourism sector, where natural and cultural resources are used extensively. The tourism sector uses not only natural and environmental resources but also social and cultural resources in an excessive way. Most of the natural resources used by tourism are non-renewable resources.

Especially in the 1990s, overcrowding caused by mass tourism (sea-sand-sun) fuelled by large tour operators consumes especially water and electricity resources in a non-renewable way. Excessive water and electricity consumption caused by mass tourism especially in the sea coasts, destruction of natural ecological areas for tourism investment, and insufficient treatment systems of hotels create environmental pollution.

Picture 2: Biking Tourism



Mass tourism causes the destruction of the social and cultural wealth in the region. The traditions and customs of the region, traditional production methods and life style are gradually disappearing. Local modes of production and values leave to the modes of production and values that tourists demand more.

Especially starting to develop from the second half of the twentieth century; Seeing the necessity of minimizing the negative effects of mass tourism on natural and cultural resources, which reached its peak with the economic (tourism credits, early booking, etc.) and aggressive marketing policies implemented by tour operators in the 1990s, brought new searches to the current tourism agenda.

The decrease and deterioration of natural and cultural resources in these regions, the increase of environmental awareness, the understanding of sustainable development, the spread of tourism throughout the year rather than seasonal, the ordinaryization of mass tourism and the boring of consumers from classical mass tourism, the differentiation of consumers' expectations from their travels and increasingly individualizing products and services and many other reasons such as the desire to spread the economic value to all areas, to increase economic prosperity in rural areas and to prevent migration have brought up diversification in tourism activities.

In this way, the effects of tourism on the coastal areas will decrease, the income and employment created by tourism will be distributed not only to the coastline but also to other regions, and income and welfare levels will increase. In this way, alternative tourism has entered the agenda of national and local governments, investors and tourism practitioners.

1.3. ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

Globalization, digital developments, individuals 'search for difference, individuals' having different sources of motivation and pollution on natural systems cause the emergence of new trends in tourism and the emergence of alternative tourism. On the other hand, countries and destinations try to increase demand by differentiating touristic products, especially in their marketing activities. Alternative tourism types and new touristic products are very important in terms of ensuring the sustainability of regions in tourism.

Mass tourism harms the nature in tourism destinations, forces the carrying capacity, concentration in space and time, rapid and uncontrolled development, large-scale accommodation in accordance with international standards, generally turning to the coast, tourism architecture that excludes local architecture, the relationship between local people and tourists is disconnected. Separated tourist areas, dependence on multinational tour operators, and the standardization of local touristic products by losing their characteristics direct to alternative tourism diversity.

Alternative tourism aims to use natural, social and cultural values in a destination and offer different options in contrast to seasonal concentration. With alternative tourism, tourism is no longer just a holiday, travel, seeing-learning and cultural exchange; it has turned into an action where human beings integrate with nature, meet with civilization values, recognize and produce themselves, and get rid of the yoke of alienation caused by modern society.

Alternative tourism is a type of tourism that has been created to reduce the negative effects of traditional and classical mass tourism and city tourism spread to coastal areas such as sea-sand-sun, and where new touristic products are brought together (such as bird watching, plateau, health, faith tourism).

The factors that reveal the concept of alternative tourism can be listed as follows:

- Alternative tourism types, the spread of tourism throughout the year, and regions outside the coastline see tourism as a tool of economic development,

- Local governments see tourism development as a tool to overcome the infrastructure and superstructure deficiencies,
- Activities of organizations such as the United Nations, World Tourism Organization and UNESCO to encourage alternative tourism types,
- Financial support for small entrepreneurship policies of important actors in the world economy such as the World Bank and the European Union.

1.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

Alternative tourism, unlike mass tourism, which creates a global uniformity in the understanding of vacation and pacifies the recreational needs of modern people with all-inclusive or ultra-all-inclusive systems, it suggests recreational models that actively rest the participant. Alternative tourism offers its participants the opportunity of active entertainment and rest within a wide range of products, from a cultural element to natural beauty, from a metropolis to a small village, from rainforests to the desert, from belief to wine or gambling. Therefore, although the market share of each alternative tourism type is small, it is quite large in total.

It is possible to summarize the features of the alternative tourism market as follows:

- The alternative tourism market provides an active recreation opportunity for its participants in line with its aims.
- The needs of the participants are organized during their visits; but the use of time is left to them.
- It allows to be in contact with local tradesmen and the public, not only with the staff of the hospitality business and the welcoming travel business as in mass tourism.
- It allows the participant to experience the attraction that is subject to visit, not artificial, in an authentic way.
- The alternative tourism market offers the consumer different alternatives and product variety.
- Every settlement provides economic benefits by generating income from tourism.
- It prevents tour operators from manipulating the market as they wish by providing product variety.
- It contributes to small, local businesses and local economies.
- It enables tourism revenues to be spread throughout the year and to be distributed evenly. It causes the development of areas outside the coastline.
- It prepares the ground for the development of the infrastructure and superstructure of the areas outside the coastal line in accordance with the local aesthetic.

- It prevents the seasonal concentration of tourism and the damages of mass consumption.
- The resulting competition creates consequences in favor of the consumer.
- Takes into account the needs of future generations by trying to protect natural and cultural values with a protective approach.
- By contributing to the welfare level, it contributes to the protection of social structure by trying to prevent migration from rural areas to big cities.
- Helps to revive local authentic values that are about to be lost. While mass tourism is generally stuck on the coastline, alternative tourism can be developed in all areas.

Alternative tourism envisages the construction of small and medium sized enterprises and facilities instead of large accommodation facilities or businesses built in accordance with economies of scale. In accordance with this understanding, it foresees to provide services in small accommodation units and facilities where local and cultural elements are emphasized, far from the effect of globalization, operated by small entrepreneurs or capital owners and where the local people are mainly employed, and in this way meet the basic needs of the visitors. Travels should be provided by scheduled voyages or smaller land, air and sea transportation instead of charter voyages. In this sense, although it is more expensive than mass tourism, alternative tourism participants are consumers who can afford to pay more.

The differences between mass tourism and alternative tourism are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Differences Between Mass Tourism and Alternative Tourism

MASS TOURISM	ALTERNATIVE TOURISM
Alternative Tourism pushes the carrying capacity.	It takes into account the carrying capacity.
It is concentrated in place and time.	There is a spread in terms of place and time.
Development is fast and consumption oriented.	Development is slow and sustainable.
Tourist businesses are large-scale and comply with international standards.	Tourist businesses prioritize small-scale and local entrepreneurs.
It is generally concentrated on the coasts.	It can be improved in any region.
There is a general architectural understanding that destroys the local architecture.	The understanding that takes into account the original and local architecture is dominant.
It does not allow interaction with local people and its contribution to the economy of the region is very low.	Interaction and communication between local people and tourists is harmonious and intense.
Dependent on large tour operators run by large capitals.	It is under the control of small-scale specialist tour operators and travel agencies.
Products and services that adhere to global standards are more predominant rather than local products.	It values the preservation and production of traditional, local and original products.
Development depends on the economies of scale desired by large capitals.	Development is planned and based on local policies.

Source: Akođlan Kozak, M., And BahçeDetay Publishing, 2nd Edition, Ankara, p.102.

Alternative tourism seems to be of increasing importance. Tourism activities, which started as an alternative to sea tourism after the 80's, are increasing gradually in the world. The fact that it spreads throughout the year and appeals to different target groups has also increased the interest in alternative tourism types. Especially in Turkey in the 90s alternative tourism has started to show its importance and in recent years the Turkish tourism industry has realized the importance of alternative tourism.

The tourism sector plays a key role in the development of the region in terms of human, economic and social inputs. In regions rich in tourism activities, with the increasing number of tourists, the marketing dynamics at regional and local level will be mobilized. Diversification of tourism will allow new fields of activity in the region and contribute to the increase in the income of current businesses. With new business opportunities and increased employment, the development difference between the regions will decrease and the region will take an important position in subjects such as entrepreneurship, branding, investment and marketing.

1.4. BENEFITS OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

In the researches, it is revealed that the alternative tourism types, whose added value has been noticed, is shown to be of great interest and more importance is being given. Interesting conclusions were reached in one of these studies. In the aforementioned research, the following table came up in terms of alternative tourism forms and tourism orientations defined as sun-sea-sand: The share of sun-sea-sand holidays in tourism activities decreased from 62% in 2002 to 39% in 2004. The rate of cultural activities increased from 12% in 2019 to 23%. The increase in health tourism has also risen from 3.7% to 7%. Again, in the same research, weekend tourism activities increased from 2% to 6%. These changes show that the masses are turning towards alternative tourism. In other words, it is seen that the traditional tourism trend 3S (Sea-Sun-Sun) has been replaced by the types of tourism increasingly known as 3E (Entertainment, Education, Excitement).

It is possible to understand from the results of various studies that the tourism activities around the world are shifting to different areas day by day and the interest in new places and alternative tourism types has increased. As a result of this, new regions are preferred by people participating in tourism, and the increase in demand for new tourism products develops in parallel.

Alternative tourism, which is becoming more and more widespread, has many benefits, different from the type of tourism that is defined as sun-sea-sand tourism and concentrates only on the coasts. We can list the main benefits as follows:

- Alternative tourism prevents the unbalanced and unhealthy accumulation of the population on the coastal areas with traditional tourism, preventing the country's population distribution from being adversely affected by artificial forcing and causing unstable and unstable migration.
- Cultural trips are at the forefront in alternative tourism. These tours are indispensable except for extraordinary situations.

- It has an unstable structure known as the sun, sea, sand and realized in a limited area, aiming to have more fun and relaxation, often passing between the hotel and the sea. Therefore, it may lose its importance and be abandoned due to unfair competition and political reasons. Alternative tourism, on the other hand, has a more stable structure aiming at different activities for learning, social and cultural activities.
- Alternative tourism is less affected by occasional negative social environments and global capital fluctuations.
- Alternative tourism expands tourism to wider areas by increasing the effectiveness of local, natural and cultural heritage. Thus, it raises the social, economic and cultural levels of the wider masses.
- Alternative tourism activities are not limited to a certain period, that is, they are not temporary and have a permanent feature that is not dependent on time and place.
- This kind of tourism is providing new business opportunities and additional contribution to tourism activities as well as is covering the social security insurance in Turkey.
- It creates the supply-demand balance by turning to alternative activities in demands. It protects tourism values and prolongs their life by preventing the destruction of tourism resources that are constantly used.
- Promotes and makes the countries love with all their aspects, and makes their people closer.
- In alternative tourism, tourists are more sensitive to nature, environment, historical and cultural heritage.
- The world's countries are more willing and inclined to learn and protect their common heritage.
- Those who tend towards alternative tourism provide high added value to different regions due to their high purchasing power and generally being more educated.
- Alternative tourism types, when developed with sustainability principles and policies, have a feature that prevents the destruction of tourism values in the face of globalization.

1.5. WHO IS AN ALTERNATIVE TOURIST?

Those who prefer alternative tourism activities are more social, educated, curious, able to act more independently, have the spirit of research and investigation, spend more money and time in the places they visit; they are people who adopt and prefer more to be interested in and collective trips to the local community. The social status of those who participate in these activities is higher than those who participate in other touristic activities.

Travelers participating in alternative tourism are not the only type like mass tourists. In this type of tourism, those involved in the trip travel in small groups or individually. These travellers are educated and wealthy people, they are sensitive to nature, they want to establish relations with the local people and they look after the interests of the local people. Alternative tourists are divided into various categories as novice, curious, expert and fanatic according to criteria such as their interest in the tourism activity they participate in, their experience, type and intensity of participation in the activity, and the degree of risk taking. It is possible to list the features of all these categories below. Alternative tourist;

- Better educated
- Higher income earner
- Member of higher social classes
- More confident
- More respectful and conscious to the environment and cultural values
- Who knows what s/he wants
- More active
- More social
- Have higher level needs
- People who demand more quality products and services.

SECTION 2

2.1. TOURISM IN KEŞAN REGION

Keşan is located in north-western Turkey, and a district of Edirne province which is border neighbour of Greece and Bulgaria. Keşan District; It is located on the Istanbul-Tekirdag-Greece transportation road. Keşan District is the largest and southernmost district of Edirne Province.

Tourism plays an important role in eliminating interregional imbalances. Developing countries such as Keşan can increase their share in the tourism market only by diversifying the tourism services and products they offer. What is meant by the diversification of tourism services and products is the development of alternative tourism activities and the removal of obstacles preventing the development of these tourism activities, which are more beneficial in every way.

Picture 3: Keşan general view



The transitional climate type and precipitation characteristics of the Mediterranean climate peculiar to Marmara enabled the region to develop agriculturally and brought agriculture to the first place in the economy of the Keşan region. Due to irrigated farming

opportunities, especially wheat, sunflower and barley, vegetable and fruit growing, paddy, sugar beet production has increased, and developments have been made in greenhouse cultivation and viticulture. Vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, eggplant, apples, pears, almonds, plums and peaches are among the most grown products.

Another feature that increases the importance of Keşan is its forests and Saros Gulf, the coast of Thrace in the Aegean Sea. While it creates the oxygen reservoir of the Koru Mountains region with hundreds of plant species and more than 40 animal species, Saros Gulf enables the development of tourism in the region.

Keşan is also located in a special place geographically. In terms of transportation, there are daily bus services to the Balkans in the district, which is located at the intersection point of Tekirdağ, Istanbul and Edirne.

Cattle and sheep breeding has an important share in the economy in Keşan. Milk production has a special place in the sector, which has been developed in parallel with the prevention that ensure the supply of animal feed and the development of the animal breed.

Cheese producers in the Keşan region are expected to contribute to alternative tourism movements, which are becoming more and more important in the world, with the advantage of being close to both megacity Istanbul and Europe.

The fact that Keşan region is at the transition point of eastern and western civilizations has led to the establishment of various civilizations in the region. The artefacts from these civilizations have also brought Keşan and its region to an important position in terms of historical value. The richness of natural, historical and cultural resources, climate and geographical conditions, tourism diversity, hospitality, tourism infrastructure, the importance professional and non-governmental organizations to tourism is among the advantages that accelerate the development of the tourism sector.

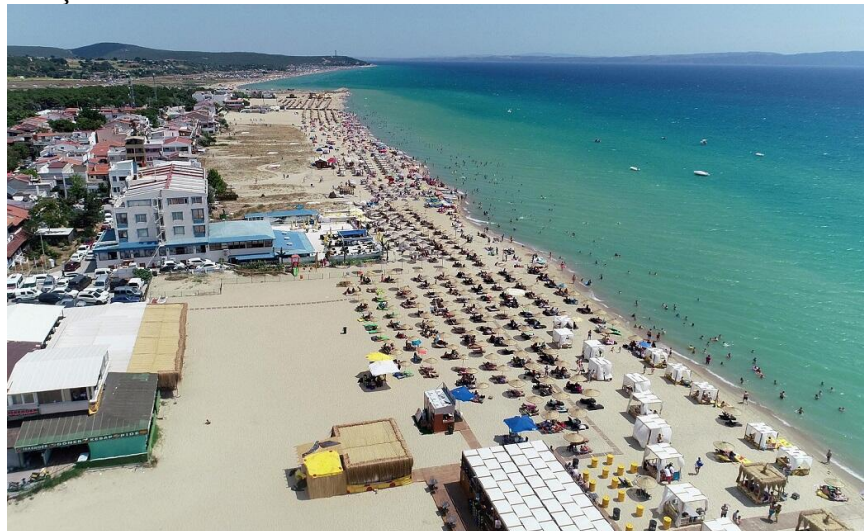
The population of Keşan is 83,373 according to 2019. Keşan is Surrounded by Malkara in the east, Enez and İpsala in the west, Uzunköprü in the north, Gelibolu and Saros Gulf in the south, has 5 towns and 44 villages. In general, Keşan villages, which have an immigrant culture, have their own characteristics. In these villages, which have an important potential in terms of rural tourism, local products are among the important tourism activities.

Keşan is on an important route connecting Anatolia to Europe. It is a touristic area due to its historical and natural features. 70 km long Saros Gulf in the Keşan region; starts from the village of Sazlıdere, which borders the Adilhan village of Gelibolu in the south, and extends towards the southwest, including the regions of Gökçetepe, Mecidiye, Erikli, Danişment, Yayla and Enez. There are 144 kinds of fish and 170 kinds of underwater creatures in total 378 sea creatures in Saros Gulf, which is a self-cleaning sea. Besides sea tourism, it is also rich in underwater tourism. There is an underwater museum in Saros Gulf. In many parts of the bay, the forest and the sea are united. The blue flag Saros beach is one of Turkey's three major beaches. Keşan, Enez, İpsala region serves approximately 3 million tourists in summer season.

The northern shores of the Saros Gulf, located in the north of the Aegean Sea, form the southern borders of Keşan. The length of these coasts between Adilhan Village and Enez District is 75.787 meters. This coastline, which is suitable for swimming from many points, is known for its long sandy beaches. Saros coastline is very suitable for tourism activities such as sea, nature, camping, diving and windsurfing. This region, which is rich in terms of flora and fauna, has been declared as a “Culture and Tourism Protection and Development Area” with the official newspaper dated 08.12.2006 and numbered 26370.

Gökçetepe and Danişment nature parks, which are located in the Culture and Tourism Protection and Development Zone, attract great attention with their proximity to Istanbul, sea, sand and easy transportation as well as their natural beauties. With its three uninhabited islands, coasts covered with red pine forests, clean waters, and harbors in Enez and İbrice, the Gulf of Saros constitutes an important potential for yacht tourism in the North Aegean. Erikli and Enez beaches of Keşan, which are the closest Aegean coasts to Istanbul, are more preferred with the Tekirdağ-Keşan divided road completed in recent years.

Picture 4 : Keşan- Erikli beach



Some of the historical artifacts in the center of Keşan are:

Hersekzade Ahmet Pasha Mosque was built by the Ottoman Grand Vizier Ahmet Pasha in the 16th century. The mosque was built in a square plan and has a lead-covered dome. The mosque draws attention with its interior and exterior architecture. Especially the hand-drawn decorations on the inner walls of the mosque should be seen.

Picture 5: Keşan Hersekzade Ahmet Pasha Mosque



Stone Houses: The stone houses in the neighbourhoods around Hersekzade Ahmet Paşa Mosque are among the structures that best show the historical texture of Keşan. Most of these stone houses, which are in danger of extinction today, are from the Ottoman period. The Historical Hospital building and Teacher's House are also historical buildings that should be seen with their architectural features and are historical stone buildings registered by the monuments board built in the 1900s.

Picture 6: Keşan Stone Houses



One of the works that defying time in Keşan is the historical stone bridge in Mercan Village. Bearing the distinctive features of Ottoman bridge architecture, the bridge has three arches and was effective against floods.

Picture 7: Keşan Mercan Village stone bridge



2.2. SAROS GULF

Surrounding the Keşan and Enez districts, Saros Gulf is a coastal strip of the northern Aegean Sea covered with clean, triangular shaped beaches that extend along a 60 km coast. Saros Gulf is one of the self-cleaning seas in the world. Offering alternatives in sea, camping, diving, sailing and cultural tourism with its beaches such as Erikli, Ibrice, Yayla, Karaincirli, Gülçavuş, Sultaniçe, Küçükevren, Vakıf, Sazlıdere, Enez, Danişment, Mecidiye and Gökçetepe, Saros Gulf is the among tourism centres preferred choice of neighbouring provinces especially Istanbul residents.

Picture 8: Saros Gulf



144 species of fish, 78 species of marine plants and 34 types of sponges can be seen in the Gulf of Saros. Captain Cousto, who came in the 1970s, was fascinated by the Saros Gulf at

the end of his dives and defined Saros as the "northern version of the Red Sea". Saros Gulf also; It is accepted as one of the most suitable seas for windsurfing in the world.

Saros Gulf, because the submarine is quite generous richness attracts amateur or professional divers from Turkey and from around the region. The areas where underwater wealth is most intense and suitable for diving are located around Erikli, Mecidiye, İbrice, Uzunkum, Toplarburnu, Kömür Harbor and Enez Harbor settlements within the borders of Keşan and Enez.

The water currents in the Saros Gulf provide a clear view and a wide variety of coral reefs attract the attention of underwater photographers.

Picture 9: Saros Gulf beach



2.3. KEŞAN REGION VILLAGES

The villages of Keşan district also have a rich potential in terms of alternative tourism diversity. Along with the common characteristics of the villages, which are mostly formed by those who migrated from the Balkans, each village has its own unique food, historical, natural and cultural values. Alternative tourism types that will be formed by creating touristic products in these villages will activate the tourism of the region.

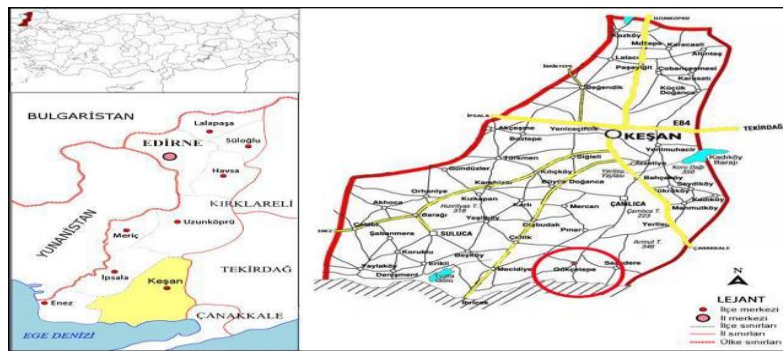
For example, the famous Bocuk night festival of Çamlıca village, Çamlıca Dwarf Diamond with geographical sign registration, Bahçeköy Breakfast, Sokoko waterfall of Pınar Village, Orhun Cheese Factory of Mahmut Village, Nature Park on the seashore of Gökçetepe and Danişment village, İzzetiye village's potential to become a "tourism village", Keskek festival of Yenimuhacir village, Geographical Indication Keşan Line Meat, Bosnian Pastry of Yeniceiftlik village, Okya with Siğilli registered with Geographical Indication, cherry of Enez Çavuşköy, strawberry of Çeribaşı village, sourdough bread of Şabanmera village, buffalo milk and milk products of Karaincirli, İpsala rice, Gala Lake and many more creates a great potential for alternative tourism in

its region. In addition, the indispensable game of village weddings, “Keşan Folk Dance”, highlights the cultural characteristics of the region.

Some of the villages that have the advantage of alternative tourism types in the Keşan region are explained below.

2.3.1. GÖKÇETEPE VILLAGE, KEŞAN

Gökçetepe is 25 km away from Keşan District center. Gökçetepe Village can be reached from Keşan district center, through İzzetiye, Bahçeköy, and Çamlıca villages road route.



Picture 10: Gökçetepe, Map

Gökçetepe Village, located on the coast of Saros, is a characteristic rural settlement area with its historical background, natural and cultural landscape features. Garden walls are usually built with stone material. The streets are narrow, curved and curved. Grain production, husbandry and tourism during the summer have shaped the economic life. General access to the village is provided by asphalt and stabilized roads. The village also has a coast to Saros Gulf, which has important potentials for Edirne's summer tourism, and has beaches. The settlement area has been established with a view of the sea.

Gökçetepe Village, formerly known as “Maris”, can be ethnically defined as Immigrant Village (Selvi, 2018). Gökçetepe is a village that preserves its historical texture, built on a hill, 2 km from Saros seaside. In Gökçetepe village, which is a combination of different cultures, marriage wedding, circumcision wedding, and holiday celebrations are important and have their own characteristics.

Celebrated as the arrival of spring at the beginning of May every year, Hıdırellez entertainments are celebrated in Gökçetepe village pasture with a picnic with food prepared in the evening, cookies and pastries. In the village of Gökçetepe, where traditional village weddings are still held, special local music is danced and meals are cooked. Wedding Soup, Keskek, Zerde are the most important of these.

There is a nature park in Gökçetepe, which is 3.5 kilometers long and consists of 6 different bays. Keşan Nature Park, which has its own fauna and flora, has opportunities for both sea, sand, sun tourism and alternative tourism such as tents, caravan camps and recreation areas.

Outdoor activities such as paint ball; survivor or nature sports can also be done in the nature park.



Picture 11: Gökçetepe Nature Park

2.3.2. MAHMUTKÖY, KEŞAN

Mahmutköy is 17 km away from the town of Keşan. The economy of a village depends on agriculture and husbandry. Wheat, sunflower, beet, paddy, dried beans, tomato, pepper, eggplant, cucumber, watermelon, melon, pumpkin, grape, plum, apple, pear and cherry are grown by the villagers.

Approximately 450 people live in Mahmutköy, an old Greek village. In terms of ethnicity in the village, Pomak, Gacal and Bosnian families maintain their unique traditions and customs.

In 2016, Keşan Saros Outdoor Sports Club (SARDOS) created a destination that will determine Mahmutköy as an important cycling route.

Traditional weddings continue to be held in Mahmutköy. Chicken soup, baked beans, tas kebab, tahini halva and zerde are among the dishes prepared at weddings and holidays. Mahmutköy dried beans are famous for their taste, easy cooking and durability. Dry beans, which are produced close to 100 tons annually, have a geographical indication.



Picture 12: Mahmutköy dry beans menu

Husbandry, hence milk and dairy products are also very common in Mahmut village. There is a cheese factory in the village.



Picture 13: Mahmutköy Cheese

2.3.3. PIRNAR VILLAGE, KEŞAN

The old name of the village is Varnitsa. The villagers from the Greek town of Drama changed the name of the village to Pirnar, which means oak.

Village people live on agriculture and husbandry. Wheat, sunflower, corn, pumpkin seed, grape and strawberry are grown in the village. Pirnar village soil conditions are also suitable for growing medicinal, aromatic and ornamental plants.

The population of the village is around 450. The traditions and customs of the village are in line with the Pomak traditions and customs. Pomak language is still used by the villagers in daily life. In addition to the daily life of the village, there are special celebrations and food culture in weddings and holidays. Wedding soup made with offal, and also getaway, bulgur,

cut pastry, noodles and couscous are among the important dishes. The historical flour mill in the village is still used by the villagers. Village bread made with sourdough is very delicious.

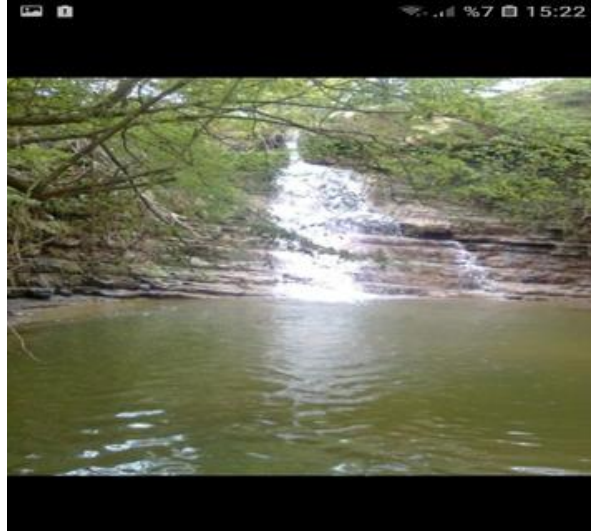


Picture 14: Pınar Köy Traditional Bread

Pınar village has been a frequent destination for both tourists and nature lovers in recent years. Natural products grown in the village, especially strawberry, contribute to the economy of the village. Original wooden tables and chairs are produced in the carpentry shop at the entrance of the village. Women of Pınar village, who took part in projects to become a tourism village, are engaged in ecotourism with the products they produce in their gardens. Pension management is also developing in Pınar village, which has historical and natural artifacts with its old houses, monastery and İskoko waterfall.

İskoko waterfall, which is the largest and only waterfall in the Keşan region, is located in the village of Pınar. Pınar village, which is located on the Çamlıca and Gökçetepe road, is an indispensable place for both summer residents and ecotourism enthusiasts. A small lagoon is formed at the place where İskoko waterfall, which means "Little lake" in Pomak language, spills and remains in the form of a lake for a long time.

The trekking and cycling route, including the İskoko waterfall, which is an important route preferred by nature and bicycle lovers, is one of the alternative tourism types.



Picture 15: Pınarköy Sokoko waterfall

2.3.4. İZZETİYE VILLAGE-KEŞAN

İzzetiye village is 2 km away from the town of Keşan. It is said that the name of the village comes from İzzet Bey, who saved the village people from the Greeks. The economy of a village depends on agriculture and husbandry. Most of the Ayçicek and wheat planted in the Keşan region are planted in this village. In addition to modern agriculture, sickles are still used in the village to reap the fields, dowels to beat sesame seeds, and beaters for wheat. This forms the basis for traditional agriculture and farm tourism, which is an alternative tourism based on nature and culture.



Picture 16: İzzetiye village

İzzetiye village is located at the crossroads of Saros Gulf, which connects Istanbul, Çanakkale and Europe to Anatolia and is a tourism resort. İzzetiye village makes attempts to

get the share it deserves in regional tourism with this location. The “İzzet-Catering Market” offers local products produced by village women at home to incoming guests. These products made in the village also made İzzetiye village a tourism and breakfast place in the region.

İzzetiye village is rich in local product variety. The historical, geographical and cultural characteristics of İzzetiye village have increased the variety of local products.

Within the framework of the "Tourism Village" of İzzetiye, the introduction of house pensions and village breakfast places in order to provide income and to contribute to the promotion and branding of the village also increases the diversity of alternative tourism.

Picture 17: Preparing for İzzeti ikram Bazaar



2.3.5. ÇAMLICA VILLAGE, KEŞAN

Çamlıca village is under the influence of the Marmara type of Mediterranean climate and is surrounded by pine forests. Especially the valleys between the mountains and hills extending towards the sea have micro-climate characteristics, and the spring effect starts 2 or 3 weeks before other areas in these valleys. All these geographical advantages enriched Çamlıca in terms of flora and fauna in the region.

For example, Çamlıca Dwarf Apple (Grabuna) received a geographical indication in 2011, and branding entries were initiated for “Çamlıca Cherry” in 2012. Especially pine and gorse honey is produced in the village. It is a suitable destination for Api (beekeeping) tourism.



Picture 18: Çamlıca Apple

Bocuk Night, which is a Balkan tradition, has been celebrated with the participation of local and foreign tourists, which has been increasing every year since 2004.



Picture 19: Çamlıca Bocuk Night

Bocuk Night has been a symbol that the transformation of the seasons, the behavior of human communities, nurtures their anxiety or hopes. In the Bocuk Night, which is held in January every year, entertainments that keep the villagers together and socialize are organized. Tales are told, riddles are asked, poems and folk songs are sung. Folk dances are performed accompanied by darbuka and tambourine. Young people play various games in disguise. Pumpkin dessert, the symbol of the Bocuk Night ritual, is cooked in every home. It is believed that evil will not come to the house where the pumpkin is cooked that year. In addition, thin crepe specific to the village, boiling corn in snow water, flax halva, snow halva, seeds, chickpeas, rusks, börek, flour halva etc. such dishes are prepared and served.

In addition, local dishes such as Loznik, "Fangir-fingir" ravioli, Liver Sarma, Köbete, Umaç Soup, Kaçamak, Milk Pastry, Leek Pastry, Sweet Zucchini Pastry, thin cerepe are still made.

Because Çamlıca is an old Greek village, it is the place with the most stone houses in the Keşan region. This architectural feature of the village has opened international gates to Çamlıca Village. The "Painter's Way Art Route" project of Çamlıca Headman Office implemented in 2017-2018 includes cultural and touristic works drawn by the artists who set out from the city of Ivaylovgrad, Bulgaria. This project caused many painters and art lovers to come to the village and become known. The journey of painting the streets and houses of the youth, children and women in Çamlıca Village started with this project. This activity of the village continues in 2019 with the "The Colors" project.

The fame of Ivaylovgrad and Çamlıca villages spread all over the world when the project was featured in the international press as well as in the Turkish and Bulgarian press. The village, which has become a colorful village by drawing beautiful figures on the street walls, has become a frequent destination for tourists.



Picture 20: Çamlıca Colorful houses

Different destinations have been created in every street by drawing flowers, trees, and animal figures, taking into account the historical and cultural characteristics of the streets and houses in civil architectural studies. There are also pictures reflecting alternative tourism opportunities in the village, which is an important bicycle route. The streets of the village have also been an attractive area for wedding and outdoor photography. These activities, which are carried out by using the historical and touristic potential of Çamlıca village, both create added value for the village and turn it into an alternative national and international tourism route.

Picture 21: Çamlıca cherry



2.3.6. YENİMUHACIR TOWN, KEŞAN

Yenimuhacir town is located in the east of Keşan district. Küçükdoğanca village is located to the north and Danişment village to the northeast. It is known that it is a center due to the caravan road passing around Yenimuhacir and that the 7 villages around it are connected to this center. The climatic characteristics of Thrace are seen in Yenimuhacir town. Summers are dry and hot, winters are cold and rainy, and spring is moderately rainy. Vegetable and fruit growing, especially husbandry, has also developed in the village. There is a place famous for its geographically indicated Keşan meat.

Picture 22: Keşan Meat menu



Yenimuhacir Keskek Festival is also one of the important gastronomic features of the town. It has been organized by Yenimuhacir Culture and Solidarity Association (YENKÜLDER) every year in Yenimuhacir Town since 2016. Within the framework of the festival, the Keskek dinner show performed by village women attracts a lot of attention. Traditional Keskek meal has a feature that symbolizes the solidarity in the society by being at the same table in a crowded environment. The Keşkek festival includes activities such as folk dance performances, telling of poems, local dances, local music events, concerts, and offering Keşkek to the guests. This historical tradition creates a culture-based alternative tourism potential.



Picture 23: Yenimuhacir keşkek dish

2.4. ENEZ DISTRICT

Enez district was established on the ancient city of Ainos with two ports, where the Meriç River, the most important river of Thrace, flows into the sea. Enez, which is located between İpsala and Keşan districts, has a history of 8000 years. In the district of Enez, which has a rich history belonging to the Hellenistic Age, Roman and Byzantine periods, there are historical ruins such as Enez Castle and walls, Necropolis, Fatih Mosque (Hagia Sophia church), Has Yunus Bey Tomb, Roman period spirit level, small family churches (Chapel), Roman period villa, Roman road ruins (Via Egnatia) and coastal caravanserai.

Enez is bordered by the Aegean Sea and Greece in the south and west, with a total sea coast of 30 km. The total population of the Enez region is 8356, and its area is 473 km².

Enez is important in terms of nature, culture, history and faith tourism with its natural, historical, cultural and touristic features, clean sea and beach and fish variety. In addition to many summer residences in the region, there are also accommodation facilities such as hotels, apartments, pensions, food and beverage establishments and entertainment venues. Alternative tourism opportunities compete with existing tourism activities in Enez, where industrial and horticultural cultivation is also carried out in its villages. The Enez Hunting and Fish Festival, held in July every year, is one of the important promotional and tourism activities for Enez.

Picture 24: Enez Castle



Picture 25: Sunset in Enez beach



Enez is one of the most important diving tourism region in Turkey. Underwater diving tourism on the shores of Enez shows a parallel development with sea, sand and sun tourism. In addition to underwater archaeological findings, the Enez region has coasts rich in marine flora and fauna and has become an international underwater diving tourism destination with a sustainable approach.

With the "TREASURE" project carried out by the Enez District Governorship, an underwater museum was created with artificial reefs in an area of 300 square meters with a depth of 18 meters and 2 km from the Enez coast, 4 kilometers from the port. Enez is preferred by underwater diving tourists with the lion figure, the goddess Nike statue, the Enez Castle wall replica, the reliefs copied from the original in the Edirne Museum and many sea creatures built within the scope of the project and immersed in the specified location.



Picture 26: Birdwatching in Gala lake

Picture 27: Underwater diving in Enez



Gala Lake creates an important potential for bird watching tourism, which is one of the alternative nature-based tourism types and has been preferred in recent years.

Picture 28: Enez Gala lake



The adoption of the sustainability approach in the Enez region contributes to the development of the region primarily in the economic and social field and ensures its cultural enrichment. Protection and development of the existing values in the region and offering them to the consumers are among the main goals.

2.4. İPSALA DISTRICT

İpsala, located in the Southwest of Edirne, has a fertile İpsala Plain that joins the Meriç River. Altınyazı Dam in Keşan, Yeni Karpuzlu Pond and Sultanköy Dam are also within the borders of İpsala. İpsala plain is one of the largest and most productive agricultural areas of Edirne. İpsala economy consists of agriculture and agriculture-based production. Turkey's most important rice, wheat and sunflower production of the agricultural industry in İpsala the place is quite advanced.

Lake Gala which is located in Enez Edirne and Ipsala border district, has been announced as Turkey's 36th National Park and become an indispensable part of people in place with the provincial environment very diverse flora and fauna. Gala Lake National Park is one of Turkey's most important wetlands. It consists of a total of 6,090 hectares of land, including 3,090 hectares of wetland and 3,000 hectares of forest. The fact that the region consists of wetlands allows especially paddy (rice) production. Gala Lake, located on the migration route of birds from Europe, hosts a wide variety of bird species. 163 bird species can be seen in the national park. 46 of these species are native, 27 are winter migrants and 90 are summer migratory birds. This situation also provides an opportunity for hunting tourism around Gala Lake.

Hunting tourism is among the most profitable tourism activities in the world. Spain earns 6 billion dollars from hunting tourism, Germany 150 million dollars, France 90 million dollars and Hungary 25 million dollars. When the profile of those who participate in hunting tourism, which is considered as special interest tourism, is evaluated, hunting tourism is in the luxury tourism category.

During the hunting season between October and March, Gala Lake is known as the most popular place in terms of hunting sports and tourism. In particular, hunting enthusiasts from Istanbul and the surrounding provinces flock to the area of Gala Lake to hunt duck with the lifting of the hunting bans. This hunting time coincides with the period when the rice harvest ends. It is seen that these participants stay in the barracks during their hunting in that region where the paddy producers stay, albeit for a short time, for a certain fee and meet their food and beverage needs. This situation causes important problems in terms of protecting the ecosystem of the region and sustainable hunting tourism. Problems such as overfishing, unconscious hunting, illegal (poaching) hunting, hunter safety, environmental pollution (such as leaving garbage and plastic cartridges in nature) and unfair profit in the region threaten the Gala Lake National Park ecosystem.

Developing controlled and sustainable hunting tourism around Gala Lake, which has a very important hunting tourism potential, is of vital importance. Illegal and uncontrolled land hunting is carried out in Gala Lake and its surroundings. For hunting enthusiasts, especially those who come to duck hunting, to use the Gala Lake ecosystem by protecting it and create added value for the economy of the region, opportunities for controlled hunting activities should be provided.

SECTION 3.

3.1. ALTERNATIVE TYPES OF TOURISM IN KEŞAN REGION

The importance of alternative tourism types, which emerged as a reaction to mass tourism, is increasing day by day. Tourists, who prefer mass tourism centers, also searched for new tourism opportunities. With the Covid-19 pandemic, which surrounded the whole world and turned their tourist preferences from mass tourism to alternative tourism, tourists who do not want to spend their holidays by swimming or sunbathing have turned to places where alternative tourism types are made. At this point, the Keşan region has an important advantage in terms of its location, natural structures, sea, lakes, rivers, forests, climate, and landforms as well as its geographical, historical, cultural and touristic features.



Picture 29: Keşan region alternative tourism map

According to the results of this study, alternative tourism types based on nature, culture and hobby are among the alternative tourism types that can be made in the Keşan region. The types of tourism that can be done in order to turn this potential into a touristic product and to create added value for the region are examined below.

- **Keşan Region Nature-based Alternative Tourism Types:**

Sea Tourism, Eco-Agro Tourism, Farm Tourism, Nature Tourism, Youth Tourism,

- **Culture-based Alternative Tourism Types:**

Cultural Heritage Tourism, Festival Tourism, Gastronomy Tourism, Via Egnatia Road Tourism

- **Hobby-based Alternative Tourism Types:**

Underwater diving tourism, Bird Watching Tourism, Hunting Tourism, Photo Safari Tourism, Shopping Tourism

Within the framework of this information, potential alternative tourism types in the Keşan region were discussed in detail.

3.2. KEŞAN REGION NATURE-BASED ALTERNATIVE TOURISM TYPES

3.2.1 Sea and Sun Tourism

The shores of Saros Gulf, which are located along Erikli and Enez in Keşan region, are among the cleanest regions of the Aegean Sea. The absence of a large settlement and industrialization in the Saros region, which has a self-cleaning sea in the world, is very advantageous in terms of sustainable sea tourism.

Sea tourism activities are carried out on the beaches of Sazlıdere, Gökçetepe, Mecidiye, Danişment, Erikli, Yayla, Karaincirli, Vakıf, Büyükevren, Gülçavuş, Sultanıçe and Enez, along the Saros gulf, which has a coastal line of 75 km. In 2019, over 10,000 summer residences and social facilities belonging to public institutions and organizations in the Keşan region offer holiday opportunities to approximately one hundred thousand people from Istanbul, Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli provinces and districts.

Saros coastline is also very suitable for tourism activities such as sea, nature, camping, underwater diving, windsurfing and bird watching. This region, which is also rich in terms of flora and fauna, was declared a “Culture and Tourism Protection and Development Area” in 2006 and in 2015, the Keşan Coast Public Beach received the Blue Flag international environmental award.

Gökçetepe and Danişment nature parks, which are located in the Culture and Tourism Protection and Development Zone, attract great attention with their proximity to Istanbul, sea, sand and easy transportation as well as their natural beauties.

3.2.2. Eco-Agro Tourism:

In the villages and settlements located in the Keşan region, which is an important passage route on the Istanbul-Çanakkale road, agriculture, animal husbandry and gardening activities are intensely carried out.

Vegetables, fruits and local products which are produced in İzzetiye, Yenimuhacı, Yeniceçiftlik, Bahçeköy, Çamlıca, Mahmutköy, Pınar, Gökçetepe, Kılıçköy, Sigilli villages, attract the attention of local and foreign tourists. When these products are evaluated together with natural wealth, they will provide significant economic and social added value to the region. In addition, it will lead to the development of house boarding and food and beverage venues in the villages. In the tourism villages to be established in the Keşan region, it becomes important in terms of creating farmhouse and village house concept food and beverage venues, promoting and marketing local products.

61% of the Keşan region consists of agricultural lands and a significant part of the livelihood of the local people is provided by agricultural products. In this context, it is aimed to integrate these two sectors and contribute to regional development in the region, which has high potential in terms of agriculture and tourism. In line with this goal, it is necessary to develop agrotourism in the region within the upper scale plans.

The evaluation of areas where activities such as tourism products, gastronomy and recreation related to agricultural products can be carried out will enable the development of the economy in rural areas by opening the way for new business areas and will reduce the socioeconomic development difference between rural and urban areas. In addition, the

development of tourism and agriculture sector in cooperation will set an example for other regions and this will contribute to the increase of the national development level by increasing the development of the regions.

3.2.3. Farm Tourism

Farm tourism, which is considered as a special type of rural tourism or a niche market is a sustainable development model applied to increase income sources in rural areas and stimulate the local economy. Within the scope of rural tourism, the concepts of holiday farms, farm tourism, agricultural tourism, and farm-based tourism are used in the same sense. Farm tourism is generally expressed as touristic activities carried out with farm owners in farms where there is the opportunity to do farm work. In other words, it is defined as "a type of tourism that allows visitors to carry out both agricultural and livestock breeding and various ecotourism activities together, as well as providing additional income to the local people in economic terms, and also contributing to the cultural promotion of the region". In summary, farm tourism can be considered as a type of tourism based on agriculture and animal husbandry, where guests can relax in nature and at the same time find the opportunity to watch or learn about farm work.

In the world, in Austria, Britain, Germany, North America and New Zealand tourist farms are often made, and in recent years it has become important also for Turkey.

3.2.4. Outdoor Sports Tourism:

Mountains, lakes, rivers and streams in the Keşan region constitute a important nature tourism potential. Kesan region is suitable for many nature sports such as trekking, hiking, nature observation, sky observation, orienteering in nature with the help of maps, (orienteering), bird watching (Ornithology), nature photography, paragliding, cycling, camping, caravan, windsurfing, canoeing, underwater diving. As a matter of fact, there are nature sports associations such as Sardos and Doçek in the region and they organize nature tourism activities with various activities. Routes such as Gala Lake-Hisarlı Mountain, Çamlıca-Gökçetepe-İbrice are important hiking routes in the Saros region. Saros beaches allow windsurfing. Çandır and Hisarlı mountain, located in the Keşan region, are among the areas where mountain trekking and trekking can be done.



Picture 30: Keşan District Hiking Route

Especially in Saros Gulf lagoon lakes (Dalyan, Taşaltı, Bücürmene, Tuzla), lakes (Gala Lake, Tuz Lake, Karagöl), forests, streams (İncirli, Platin, Gökgür creeks), Hisarlı Mountain, Ergene Plain, Meriç Delta, channels, the existence of natural waterways and the fresh air, bird, fish and plant species in this region provide advantages for nature tourism.

River tourism within the framework of "green tour" activities on the Meriç river, "blue tour" from the Enez harbor to the Aegean in order to benefit from the diversity of the sea and blue of Saros Gulf, and water sports such as canoeing and surfing are important alternative tourism types that can be done in the Keşan region.

Identifying suitable areas in the Keşan region, building eco-parks, creating a museum of flora and fauna, creating recreation areas and daily facilities around natural lakes and dams, determining routes for the development of trekking and cycling tourism, organizing competitions, marking the routes on introductory maps, preparing introductory brochure, posters, books and websites, completing infrastructure and superstructure studies (WC, recreation area, food and beverage units, signage), promoting these routes in travel agencies and social media will activate these activities in a short time.

3.2.5. Youth tourism

Youth tourism plays an important role in world tourism. It is seen that 25 percent of domestic tourist movements in 2019 and 20 percent of international tourists were made by young people. In 2019 close to 3 million foreign students made their holiday in Turkey. The number of 'young' tourists, defined as between 15 and 35 years old, is expected to reach 300 million in the world in 2020.

It is stated that the most important purposes of young tourists in the world in traveling are to meet local people, to experience daily life and to increase their knowledge about the region. Global young tourists travel longer, spend more, travel and recommend a country they have gone to. It is considered to be the most effective age group in terms of reaching more people who are interested in discovering new destinations, using technology and sharing their experiences instantly on social media.



Picture 31: Gökçetepe Nature Park

The fact that Keşan region is suitable for nature activities such as tents, scouting, caravans, camping, Enez Istanbul University Education camp in the region, Trakya University Enez Student Education and Recreation Facilities, Gökçetepe Nature Park, Danişment Nature Park, Vakıf Başakşehir youth camp, Mecidiye camp area and caravan opportunities cause young people to prefer this region. In addition, the festivals organized in the Saros region also attract the attention of young people. By contacting youth clubs of national and international universities, making the promotional maps of the camp sites on social media and organizing international youth camps and activities will create added value for the region.

3.3. CULTURE BASED ALTERNATIVE TYPES OF TOURISM

3.3.1. Cultural Heritage Tourism:

Cultural heritage tourism is defined as visiting historical buildings and sites, museums, art galleries and also traveling to different destinations for contemporary painting, sculpture and performing arts. According to another definition, cultural heritage tourism is expressed as all of the cultural values related to the economic, social and political aspects of societies from past to present.

The desire of tourists to know the cultural assets belonging to different cultures increases their experience on this issue, and also affects the development of cultural tourism positively.. Cultural heritage tourism contributes significantly to the economy and social life of destinations with this potential.

Keşan region is an important treasure of cultural assets, especially Enez. Hocaçeşme Mound, located within the boundaries of Enez District, is known as the oldest settlement in Thrace, reflecting the Neolithic culture with its history dating back to 6500 B.C.

The historical artifacts, church, necropolis, castle walls and chapel unearthed as a result of excavations in the ancient city of Ainos, located in the Enez district, are visited by local and foreign tourists. The restoration of these cultural assets will make a significant contribution to the development of other tourism activities. In addition, the construction of a museum where artifacts from different historical periods (such as the Neolithic period, the Thracian Kingdom, the Roman and Byzantine period, the Ottoman period, the Republic period) will be exhibited and the cultural heritage route will increase the tourism attraction of the region.

3.3.2. Gastronomy Tourism:

Gastronomic elements play an important role in a region's competitive advantage and gaining competitive advantage. Local dishes are highly preferred by tourists. Gastronomy tourism can also be considered as an attractive factor in destination marketing. Food and drinks belonging to the region are important for the promotion of touristic destinations and their differentiation from similar ones. Tasting new flavors and trying foods belonging to different cultures is among the first reasons why some tourists prefer a region.

Gastronomy contributes to the local community in terms of strengthening local identity, increasing intercultural interaction and ensuring the development of the economy. On the other hand, gastronomy also has contributions such as increasing the number of tourists, extending the duration of stay, increasing tourist expenditures, developing tourism types and offering alternative products.

Gastronomy can be a tool for tourists to discover local culture, offer the opportunity to experience and buy different foods, contribute to the satisfaction of tourists, and can be an important element in the choice of tourists and their return to destinations. In addition, it contributes to the development of agriculture and animal husbandry in the region, the increase in the variety of products and services, and the participation of local people in the tourism industry.

The richness of the Keşan regional cuisine and local foods provide important advantages in the promotion and marketing of the region. The historical, social and cultural characteristics of the Keşan region and its villages have led to the differentiation of local dishes. In the region, there are different flavors such as Keşan meat, liver wrap, baked beans, keşkek, Bosnian pastry, thin crepe, loznik, ravioli, milk pastry, boiled kid, pumpkin dessert, pumpkin pastry, cheese dessert, zerde.

Cheese is the leading product in the Keşan region. There are many companies actively producing cheese in Keşan, İpsala and Enez. Cheese producers operating in the Kesan Region are especially specialized in the production of Edirne white cheese produced from cow, sheep and goat milk. In addition, they also produce old and new cheddar cheese, yoghurt, ayran, butter, cream, curd and milk cream.

While tourists who prefer the region are getting familiar with the local cuisine, they can see the production process of local products such as noodles, tarhana, pickles and cheese production, taste, collect strawberries, cherries, peaches, melons, watermelons, beans, okra and visit the village markets.

There are restaurants on the coast of Keşan Saros where fish and seafood are also served. In these restaurants, it is possible to eat local fresh seafood, as well as regional products such as eel, chub mullet and frog legs.

3.3.3. Festival Tourism:

Festivals and events spread throughout the year in the Keşan region make significant contributions to the tourism of the region. Erikli Rock Fest, Trakya Fest, Keşan Saros Gulf Mountain Bike Festival, Çamlıca Çocuk Night Festival, Trakya Music Festival Erikli and Enez, İpsala Paddy Festival and Agriculture Fair, Enez Hunting and Fish Festival are preferred by both local and foreign tourists. Hidirellez and Dallık festivals, the harbinger of spring, are celebrated with enthusiasm every year in every village. The development of these festivals as a tourism product will add vitality to the region's tourism. Festivals are important in terms of promoting the region and contributing to the local people.

3.3.4. Via Egnatia Route tourism:

The Keşan region has become a bridge for the Byzantine and the Ottoman empires from continent to continent and from culture to culture. Enez and İpsala are located on the Egnatia road route, which connects Western Rome with Istanbul.

The historical Roma-Egnatia Road, which is one of the routes that attracts the attention of many foreign and local tourists in the world, also provides opportunities for cycling and nature walks.

A part of the 1120-kilometer and 6-meter wide Egnatia Road, which starts from the town of Durres in Albania and extends to Istanbul, also passes through Ipsala and Enez located in the provincial borders of Edirne. Via Egnatia, which led to an intensive cultural exchange between Albanian, Slavic, Bulgarian, Roman, Jewish, Pontic, Turkish, Pomak, Vlach peoples, draws attention with its side dating back to the 2nd century BC. Via Egnatia, which joins the Appia Way in the west and the Silk Road in the east thanks to a short sea voyage, has been connecting the east and the west for more than 2 thousand years since the Romans built it. Egnatia has also been the road of all times, from the Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans to our times.

Albanian, Slavic, Bulgarian, Roman, Jewish, Pontic, Turkish, Pomak, Vlach peoples on the Egnatia road have been in contact for centuries with the intense exchange of culture, language, religion, ideas and trade among them. Even today, despite more than a century of nationalism, isolation and wars, the Egnatia Road reflects the rich culture of the Balkans with the people's traditions of music, food, stories and traditions.

Routes such as Egnatia road, Silk road, and spice road attract tourists. The arrival of the peoples of the countries on this route to this region will increase the recognition of the Keşan region and create added value.

Picture 32: Via Egnatia Route in Enez





Picture 33: The map of Via Egnatia Route

3.4. HOBBY-BASED ALTERNATIVE TYPES OF TOURISM

3.4.1. Underwater Diving Tourism

Underwater diving tourism is a tourism activity carried out to explore important wrecks and underwater caves. The fact that Saros Gulf is one of the rare seas that can clean itself in the world plays an active role in attracting especially divers to the region. The wrecks around the gulf and the diving center of four different spots make this area an ideal place for diving tourism. Therefore, it is seen as a training field by diving schools in Thrace. The gulf, which has potential in underwater diving sports, swimming, underwater photography, fauna and flora study, adds attraction to the region. Having a great advantage geographically, the gulf provides rich biodiversity for underwater diving with its fish and algae varieties.

In 2014, a Nusret Mine Ship and statues of Seyit Corporal, Anzac and Turkish soldiers were made for the memory of the Çanakkale War and were sunk into the sea. In 2019, in an area close to the Enez harbor, the lion figure, the goddess Nike statue, the Enez Castle wall replica and the relief copied from the original in the Edirne Museum which are the historical works of Enez, were left to the sea to revitalize the diving tourism. In this way, the world's first underwater history museum was established. In addition, the Saros region has become an underwater diving center for diving enthusiasts with the plane and ship wreck in İbrice harbor.

Picture 34: Diving points in Saros



3.4.2. Bird Watching Tourism:

Bird watching tourism is an alternative form of tourism for observing and recognizing birds. Gala lake, located in the Keşan region, has a rich potential in terms of biodiversity. Gala Lake is located on very important bird migration routes with its wide wet and moist areas. They are very suitable areas for feeding, sheltering, breeding and resting birds during their migration. Approximately 200 bird species and 50 thousand bird populations have been observed in the wetlands around the Meriç Delta especially in the Gala Lake.



Picture 35: Gala lake bird species

In the Meriç Delta, there are especially dwarf trees, wide reeds, white and gray herons in wetlands, black terns, sword beaks, swans, cormorants, duck and goose varieties, birds such as flamingos and many songbird species. Bird migration, which is mostly seen in spring and autumn, is an important point for both bird watching and photo shooting activities of local and foreign tourists. Establishing bird watching areas in Gala Lake and its surroundings in 2019 also enables bird watching tourism to spread even more.

The richness of the bird species living in the Saros Gulf and the surrounding lakes increases the attractiveness of the region. Within the scope of the Gala Lake National Park Development Plan, it is aimed to contribute to the tourism sector by creating a visitor center, nature museum, view point, bird watching tower without harming the nature of the lake.

3.4.3. Hunting tourism:

Hunting tourism is defined as all of the trips made for hunting activities. The geographical and natural formation, flora and fauna in the Gulf of Saros offer suitable opportunities for hunting tourism. In the wide plains between the south of Ipsala and the northern regions of Enez, in the wetlands and ponds around Gala Lake, duck, goose, woodcock hunting, wild boar and other land animals are hunted in forest areas. In the Gulf of Saros, which has a rich variety of fish, both saltwater and freshwater fishing has developed due to the mixing of the sea and lakes.

Meriç River, Dalyan, Bücürmene Taşaltı lakes and Sütçüler pond, Umurbey pond and Çavuşköy ponds have a great potential in terms of sport fishing. Amateur fishermen from the Saros region use these places to fish, especially on weekends.

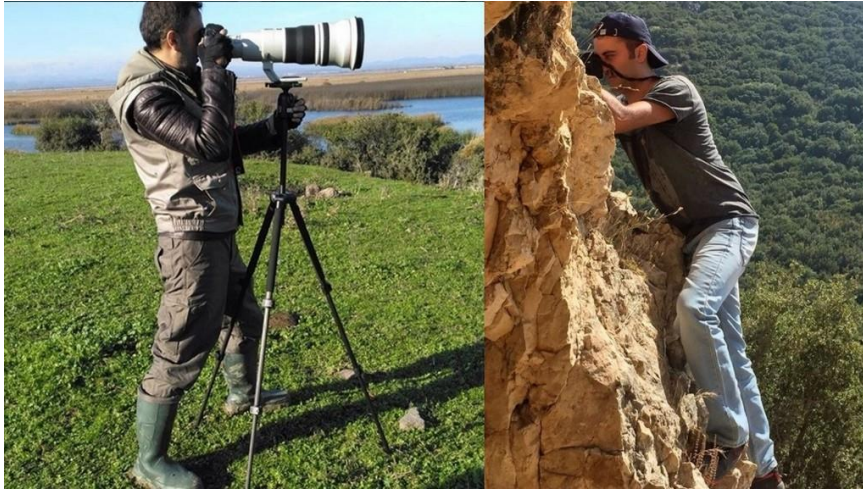
Bass, mullet, horse mackerel, eel, sardines, catfish, carp, pike and mullet are the main fish species that are suitable for professional fishing and have high economic value. Domestic and foreign high-income hunting enthusiasts will make hunting tourism as an alternative tourism within the framework of the basic principles of sustainability, which will both protect nature and contribute to the country's economy.

Within the scope of hunting tourism, it will be important to provide services such as the preparation of brochures on the hunting tourism capacity and rules of the region, the preparation of hunting tourism package tours (local guides, equipment) by travel agencies, and professional photography and video shooting, in order to protect the hunting and wildlife and ensure its sustainability.

3.4.4. Photo Safari Tourism

It is a type of alternative tourism realized by photography enthusiasts in natural, cultural, historical and social life areas. The Keşan region and the coasts of Saros Gulf are very suitable places for taking pictures. Natural beauties, ecotourism areas, wildlife, fauna and flora species in the region, flamingo, stork, eagle, etc. migratory birds, sunset and sunrise, magnificent sea views, local people's images, cultural and folkloric features are places preferred by photography enthusiasts.

Picture 36: Enez Photosafari



In addition, photo safari tourism, which can be done within the scope of bird watching, trekking, canoeing, sailing, culture, art, history and archaeology tourism, can be carried out in the Keşan region.

3.4.5. Shopping tourism:

Shopping tourism is a factor that motivates visitors of shopping venues and opportunities to participate in city tourism activities. In recent years, the use of shopping opportunities as a tourist attraction has led to the creation of alternative touristic destinations in the world. As in the Keşan region, the difference in the price of the product or service offered orients tourists to the destination where the products are offered at more affordable prices.

The Keşan region is located in the province of Edirne, where six (4 road + 2 rail) border gates are opened to Greece and Bulgaria. Thanks to this geographical location, the Keşan region has the advantage of being an important shopping tourism center. The close border connection with Bulgaria and Greece makes the region attractive for foreign tourists in terms of shopping tourism. These foreign visitors find the opportunity to shop much cheaper in TL in their home country than in Euro-based prices. First of all, shopping tourism, which increases the potential of daily foreign visitors, is important in terms of introducing and marketing the cultural values in the region to the tourists coming to the region for this purpose. Making good use of the potential of shopping tourism will create an opportunity to increase the number of tourists coming to the Keşan region and to extend the overnight stay.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Alternative tourism is increasingly getting popular around the world. New trends in the world, environmental pollution, extreme urbanization, the Covid-19 pandemic process have led to the emergence of new trends in tourism and the emergence of alternative tourism. Alternative tourism types and new touristic products are very important in terms of sustainability in tourism.

The fact that mass tourism harms tourism destinations to a great extent reveals the necessity of alternative tourism. In recent years, the emergence and spread of alternative tourism types besides coastal tourism in regions with natural, historical, cultural and archaeological values has been accelerating. For this reason, it has become very important to determine the alternative tourism potential of countries, regions and precincts, and to implement these tourism types, taking into account the sustainability.

Keşan region has many alternative tourism diversities with its geographical, natural, cultural, historical and social structure. In the Keşan region, it is important for sustainable tourism to make a separate planning for each alternative tourism type and to act in line with these plans. Local people, local businesses and other tourism stakeholders will benefit from alternative tourism activities at the maximum level. Agricultural production, activation of tourism activities by preserving ecological and historical values, turning villages towards tourism activities, increasing alternative tourism activities and strengthening tourism infrastructure will ensure that tourism in the region will create more added value.

ALTERNATIVE TOURISM TYPES	KEŞAN CENTER and VILLAGES	ENEZ	İPSALA
Sea Tourism	X	X	
Eco-agro tourism	X	X	X
Farm tourism	X	X	X
Outdoor Sports	X	X	X
Youth Tourism	X	X	X
Cultural Heritage Tourism	X	X	X
Egnatia Road Tourism		X	X
Gastronomy Tourism	X	X	X
Festival Tourism	X	X	X
Underwater Diving Tourism	X	X	
Bird Watching Tourism	X	X	X
Photo Safari Tourism	X	X	X
Hunting Tourism	X	X	X
Shopping Tourism	X		X

Table 2. Tourism Diversification in Thrace Region

The alternative tourism types based on nature, culture and hobby that can be done in Keşan center and villages, Enez and İpsala districts are shown in Table 2. These types of tourism have been revealed considering the current situation as a result of researches in the region. In addition to these types of tourism, other types of tourism also have potential.

Keşan, Enez and İpsala regions are in an important position in terms of historical, touristic and natural wealth. The region has a high potential for a wide variety of tourism activities besides sea, sand and sun tourism. Within the scope of sustainable tourism, it is important to properly structure the tourism businesses in the region for tourism types that create higher quality and added value.

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