

## **INTERREG-IPA CBC BULGARIA-TURKEY PROGRAMME**

### **THE BEAUTY OF STRANDJA - TO EXPLORE, DISCOVER AND SPREAD THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN BULGARIA-TURKEY CROSS-BORDER REGION PROJECT CB005.1.22.105**

### **STUDY AND ANALYSES REPORT ON POTENTIAL TOURISM RESOURCES IN STRANDJA REGION IN TURKEY (PROVINCE OF KIRKLARELI)**

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### **THE BEAUTY OF STRANDJA - TO EXPLORE, DISCOVER AND SPREAD THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN BULGARIA-TURKEY CROSS-BORDER REGION PROJECT CB005.1.22.105**

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### **1.1 POSITION OF ISTRANCA REGION IN THE TOURISM STRATEGY OF TURKEY**

Turkey is a country endowed with a large variety of possibilities in terms of not only coastal tourism, but also alternative tourism (historical tourism, culture tourism, winter sports, mountain, tableland, and nature tourism, rural and ecological tourism, health and thermal spa tourism, fair and convention tourism, and yacht tourism, etc.). However, such possibilities are not being utilised at a rational level. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism prepared the 2023 Tourism Strategy Action Plan for Turkey with the aim of enabling such resources to be utilised in the most efficient manner through the provision of the necessary protections, thereby allowing Turkey to increase its share in world tourism.

The **Vision** prescribed in the 2023 Activity Plan for Tourism Strategy of Turkey is that with the adoption of sustainable tourism approach, tourism and travel industry will be brought to a leading position for leveraging rates of employment and regional development and it will be ensured that Turkey becomes a world brand in tourism and a major destination in the list of the top five countries receiving the highest number of tourists and highest tourism revenues by 2023.

Actions to realise the vision are defined there as:

- To contribute to the objective of sustainable development by eliminating the interregional differences in levels of development;
- To help increase the competitiveness of the tourism sector through creation of regional tourism brands rather than relying upon cheaper products;
- To reconsider and plan the existing tourism sites within a sustainability perspective and thus, create high-quality, viable environments;
- To support the social and economic objectives of central government with tourism development;
- To support tourism development with sustainable environmental policies;
- To harmonise sectoral development policies and targets with those of national development schemes;
- To closely trace global trends and demands and build up plans and conduct practices accordingly;

- To extend the season throughout the year by diversifying tourism products;
- To promote tourism and raise awareness in the public, private companies, and NGOs especially on ecotourism, plateau and agricultural tourism;
- To make both domestic and international promotions and marketing efforts effective;
- To ensure integration of various types of tourism specific to region or locality, thus establishing tourism cities with a focus on alternative tourism (health, thermal, golf, winter sports, and nature trips, etc.), capable of offering an ample variety of tourism facilities along with such utilities as health and education, etc.;
- To create tourism products based on tourist profiles;
- To use tourism as an effective tool for fostering social and economic development of backward regions and disadvantaged groups;
- To alleviate the burden on the public by encouraging active involvement of the private sector enterprises in tourism infrastructure and transportation projects;
- To ensure that appropriate governance mechanisms are used, in which central and local government and civil actors can collaborate and cooperate in decision-making processes concerning tourism;
- To ensure coordination between central and local governments and integral treatment of managerial organisation and means of financing, within an integral planning approach, when drafting plans on tourism;
- To enhance labour quality with instructional courses on tourism and to enforce the effective operation of a sector-specific certification system;
- To help infrastructure-related and environmental problems occurring at locations where tourism activities get denser be solved with joint efforts and contribution of local governments and private sector enterprises; and
- To provide full support for extraordinary accommodation facilities brought into tourists' service by conserving regional architectural assets.

### **Strategies for Strengthening the Tourism Industry:**

- 1- **Planning:** To exhibit a planning approach that supports economic growth, is physically applicable, and socially oriented, and fairly reflects the principle of sustainable tourism;
- 2- **Investment:** To boost tourism investments by designing incentive schemes that would make tourism investment projects economically feasible and viable;
- 3- **Organisation:** To achieve institutionalisation through councils to be established at national, regional, provincial and local levels within the context of "Good

- Governance” to ensure full and active participation of tourism sector, as well as all related public and private entities and NGOs, in relevant decision-making processes;
- 4- **Domestic Tourism:** To provide alternative tourism products based on acceptable quality and affordable prices to various groups in the society;
  - 5- **Research and Development:** To ensure top prioritisation of R&D efforts in tourism industry among public and private sectors and tourism organisations;
  - 6- **Transportation and Infrastructure Strategy:** To eliminate transportation and infrastructure problems of densely populated and fastest growing tourism centres;
  - 7- **Marketing and Promotion Strategy:** To commence with marketing and promotion activities at each destination in addition to the national marketing and promotion campaigns with the ultimate objective of branding on national, regional, and local scales;
  - 8- **Educational Strategy:** To set up and introduce an education programme in tourism which would yield measurable outcomes;
  - 9- **Strategy of Service Quality:** To activate Total Quality Management in every constituent of the travel industry;
  - 10- **Strategy of City Branding:** To manage branding of cities rich in cultural and natural heritage to convert them into points of attraction for travellers;
  - 11- **Strategy of Tourism Diversification:** To develop means for alternative tourism types led particularly by health, thermal, winter, golf, sea tourism, ecotourism, and plateau tourism, and convention and expo tourism activities;
  - 12- **Regions to Host Rehabilitation Efforts for Tourism Areas:** To make arrangements for handling in the first place and then strengthening the infrastructure in areas where mass tourism activities grow intense and for extending the tourism season throughout the entire year in these regions;
  - 13- **Tourism Development Zones:** To use tourism as a key tool for local and regional development in tourism development areas encompassing more than one city to be transformed into destinations;
  - 14- **Tourism Development Corridors:** To develop a certain route for tourism on definite themes by rehabilitating historical and natural texture;
  - 15- **Tourism Cities:** To plan tourism settlements capable of competing with global examples by becoming a global brand; and
  - 16- **Ecotourism Zones:** To develop nature tourism with reference to development plans.

The paper in question contains provisions for the improvement of the tourism sector with strategy based on specific plans and programmes and through effective cooperation between public and private sectors. It prescribes that tourism resources should be addressed from a more generic and integrated approach (tourism corridors, tourism regions, tourism cities, and eco-tourism areas, etc.) rather than small-scale planning for individual destinations and the promotion and utilisation of these resources should be governed by specific rules, thereby improving the attractiveness of regions with touristic potential through the use of alternative forms of tourism.

The 2023 Tourism Strategy Action Plan for Turkey supports the creation of integrated routes that gather together stronger and more attractive alternatives and multiple destinations instead of the individual consideration of venues that offer a variety of touristic possibilities at dispersed locations throughout the country. In this manner, relatively weaker points in such regions will be strengthened with culture and handicrafts and accommodation and food & beverage amenities.

The Thrace Region, which also covers Istranca (Yıldız Mountains) Region, is addressed under various headings within the 2023 Tourism Strategy Action Plan for Turkey. The first of these headings envisage the Thracian Culture Corridor to be established as one of the 7 thematic tourism development corridors designated under the heading of tourism development corridors in the Action Plan. The Thracian Culture Corridor covers the provinces of Edirne, Tekirdağ, and Kırklareli. Situated on the European side of Marmara Region, this corridor represents the basin extending from the Black Sea to the north and the Aegean Sea to the south. Along the corridor, there are establishments allowing for camping in addition to boutique hotels and special-class accommodation facilities. The region is quite favourable for culture and eco-tourism. Especially, Edirne is home to significant resources for culture tourism, while Kırklareli is rich in eco-tourism resources. The paper aims to secure an increase in the available bed capacity and to promote the utilisation of residential buildings as boutique hotels and hostels.

The 10 Tourism Cities designated again by the 2023 Tourism Strategy Action Plan for Turkey include İğneada-Kıyıköy Eco-Tourism City, Kilyos Tourism City ve Saroz Bay Tourism City from the Thrace Region. Tourism cities were designated with the aim of creating and developing large-scale and high-quality tourism areas boasting more than one form of tourism within the framework of the strategy targeting “globally competitive branded tourism settlements”.

## **1.2 POSITION OF ISTRANCA REGION IN THE REGIONAL PLAN FOR THRACE**

The Thrace Regional Plan, prepared by Trakya Development Agency established in TR21 Level-2 Zone with contributions from regional agencies and institutions, offers information and forecasts on tourism in Istranca Region for the years between 2014 and 2023.

Priority 18 in the Development Axis of the Report states that “sustainable development in tourism will be secured through cooperation”. The plan also specifies that individual and economic input generated through the tourism sector support regional development and regions with highly developed touristic activities enjoy further improvements in infrastructure and education and health services, wider access to local products along with an increasing number of tourists, and a wider range of motion in regional marketing dynamics.

The positive impact created by tourism on development and employment has brought along a process of awareness-raising on tourism in the Thrace Region and local people and investors have started to become more interested in the region. Thrace Region is favourable to 10 out of 17 forms of tourism recognised by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The region boasts the geographical, cultural, and historical fibre that befits the new forms of tourism adopted by the EU and OECD, namely rural, natural, and gastronomical tourism.

The North Thrace Tourism Corridor, one of the 3 tourism corridors in the Thrace Region, covers Istranca Area. This corridor is compatible also with the role assigned to the Region by the Tourism Strategy for Turkey. The North Thrace Tourism Corridor spans an area ornamented with the Districts of Saray, Vize, Kofçaz, and Demirköy, and prominent coastal localities including Kastro, Kıyıköy, and İğneada. This corridor is considered to have a potential for eco- and agro-tourism with its pristine coasts, floodplain forests, rich flora and fauna, natural products, and fresh air.

Priority 18 in the Plan provides for:-

- Strengthening the tourism corridor designated around the Region with a thematic and integrated approach to tourism;
- Preserving and developing touristic and cultural assets in the Region;
- Promoting the touristic possibilities in the Region effectively; and
- Improving the human resources capacity in the tourism area.

In this scope, plans have been put into place for the development of eco- and agro-tourism, coast, nature, cave, food and beverage, and culture tourism within the framework of a balance between preservation and utilisation through the consideration of the Districts of Saray, Vize, Kofçaz, and Demirköy, and prominent coastal localities including Kastro, Kıyıköy, and İğneada together with forest villages. In this scope, provisions were made for the creation of a historical route through the restoration of historical and cultural structures (castles, walls, mosques, and churches, etc.) situated in the region and the construction of the landscape and road works as necessary for this purpose; the development and implementation of a promotion strategy to allow the region to become a tourism destination; and the provision of educational infrastructure as required for the development of human resources for the tourism sector under the coordination of provincial directorates of culture and tourism.

## 2- GENERAL INFORMATION ON ISTRANCA REGION

### 2.1 KIRKLARELİ

The border province is situated at 203 metres above the sea with an area of 6.550 square kilometres in the Thrace Istranca (Yıldız) Mountains and Ergene Plains within Marmara Region and is surrounded by Bulgaria to the North, the Black Sea to the North-East, Istanbul to the South-East, Tekirdağ to the South, and Edirne to the West. The province has a land border of 180 kilometres to Bulgaria and a sea border of 60 kilometres to the Black Sea. It is 55<sup>th</sup> among 81 provinces in terms of size. Its north-eastern part is mountainous and forested, while the remaining area is generally flat. The region is dominated by continental climate with rough and rainy winters and hot and dry summers. In terms of vegetation, the province is covered with forests and steppes.

Having hosted a number of civilisations throughout history, the Province of Kırklareli was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1363 during the reign of Murad 1. The province was subject to Bulgarian and Greek occupation between 1911 and 1912 and 1920 and 1922 during the Balkan War and World War 1, respectively. Kırklareli was relieved of enemy occupation on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1922.

Kırklareli was administered as a *sanjak* for long years following its conquest and then became firstly a governorate and then a brigade of the Province of Edirne. Kırklareli became a province in itself in the year 1924.

The province with a population of 351.684 has eight Districts, namely Babaeski, Demirköy, Kofçaz, Lüleburgaz, Pehlivanköy, Pınarhisar and Vize, along with 21 municipalities and 179 villages. It ranks 53<sup>rd</sup> among all provinces of Turkey in terms of size.

Situated along the pass between Anatolian and European sides, Kırklareli is one of the provinces that boast a rich Ottoman cultural heritage with its historical works including mosques, baths, fountains, martyrs' ceremony, social complexes, bridges, and tombs.

Significant examples of historical works include Hızırbey Mosque and Bazaar (1383) at the provincial centre, Sokollu Complex in Lüleburgaz (1570), and Cedid Ali Pasha Mosque (1555), Demirköy Foundry, Vize Ancient Theatre, Vize Castle, and ancient excavation sites in Babaeski.

The highest number of groups of tumuli in Turkey are located within the borders of Kırklareli and especially in the District of Vize. In addition, Kırklareli is home to numerous dolmens. Remains of castles and towers also add to the cultural richness of the province.

There are 155 protected areas in total in Kırklareli including 134 archaeological, 14 natural, 4 historical, and 3 urban sites. Excavations are on-going for burial mounds and tumuli to uncover new information concerning the early periods of Kırklareli, which has remained unknown until recent times. The excavation works undertaken in Vize Çömlektepe has revealed the only ancient theatre known to exist in entire Thrace until now.

A part of the cannons and shots utilised during the conquest of Istanbul had been manufactured at the Foundry located in the District of Demirköy. Excavations initiated here are revealing quite a significant historical work. During the archaeological excavations conducted in Aşağı Pınar to the south of the provincial centre since the year 1993, archaeologists found remains of the oldest farming communities of the region, who had brought agriculture and village living from Anatolia to Thrace 8200 years ago. These findings were welcomed with great enthusiasm in scientific circles as they represent the initial foundations of the civilisation that has grown until today in the European Continent. The Aşağı Pınar settlement was maintained without any interruptions for approximately 2000 years until it was abandoned around 6200 years ago.

The province is home to 12 libraries and 1 museum.



## 2.2 BABAESKİ

Currently a District of Kırkkale, Babaeski used to be known as Bulgarophygon during the Byzantine times. Babaeski was named Bulgaros by the Greek, Phygon by Bulgarians, and Baby-i Atik by Ottomans.

There are only a limited number of research studies concerning the prehistoric periods in Babaeski. The research activities implemented by Arif Mufid Mansel in the year 1936 revealed monochrome pottery from the early bronze age. Some of these have geometric spots on them and are observed during the same time period in Aegean and Balkan cultures, as well. Similar pieces of pottery are known to represent “Toce” culture in Hungary.

The area was inhabited originally by Thrakians. A research study conducted in Tilki Burnu mound situated along the road between Kırklareli and Babaeski by Mehmet Özdoğan in the year 1980 revealed ceramics from the late chalcolithic period and structural remains from Greek and Roman periods.

The routing of historical roads through Babaeski during the Roman period allowed this locality to become an important hub. Babaeski maintained such importance also during the Byzantine period.

The great harbour walls extending from Marmara to the Black Sea constructed by Byzantine Emperor Anastasios I (491-518) used to lie close to the city. Even though the walls were repaired by Justinian I (527-535), no remains thereof are visible today in the locality.

Babaeski was employed as a fortress and an episcopate situated within Thrake Region of the Byzantine Empire in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Invaded by Bulgarian Khan Krum in the year 812, the city was annexed as “Babay-ı Atik” to the Ottoman territory by Prince Murad (Murad I) in 1359. Babaeski was under the Central Sanjak of Edirne initially, but was later attached to Kırklareli, which had then become a Sanjak itself.

The Ottoman government permitted churches to be repaired and constructed for Christian communities living in this locality in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

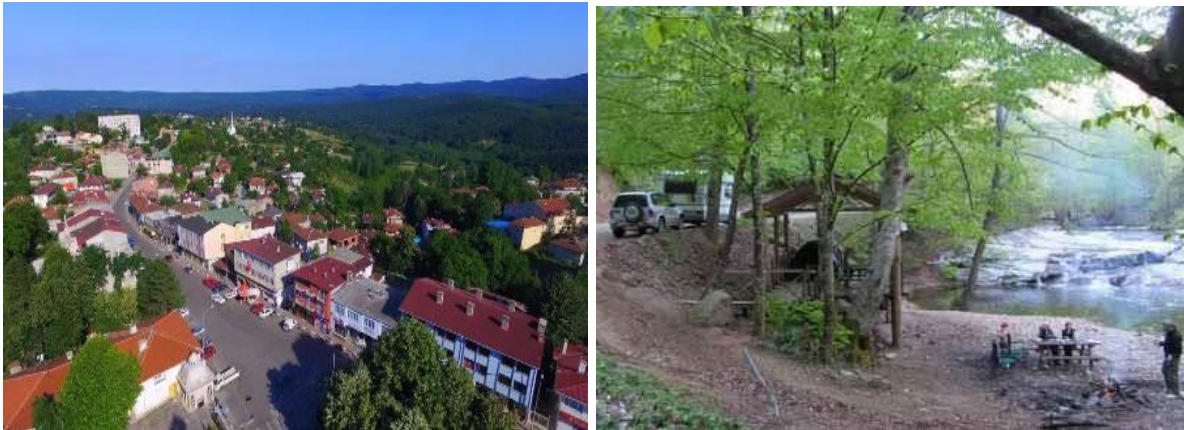
The documents available in *Hazine-i Evrak* (Ottoman Public Archives) indicate that Greek churches Virgin Mary and Hagios Atanasios were permitted to be rebuilt after being destroyed by fire in the year 1883 and H. Georgios Church in Natali Bridge to be constructed in the year 1847. Babaeski consisted of six neighbourhoods and forty-three villages as of the

early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and had a population of 1968 according to a census compiled in the year 1919.



### 2.3 DEMİRKÖY

The exact date of the establishment of Demirköy is not known and it is believed to have been chosen as a settlement by Thracian tribes in 4200 to 4000 BC. Having remained under Byzantine rule before 1369, the locality was annexed to Ottoman territory by Murad I in this year. Demirköy was the centre for the District of Samakocak of the Hamlet of Midye in Kırklareli in the Province of Edirne until 1891, when it gained the status of a Hamlet of Kırklareli of the Province of Edirne. Demirköy was then proclaimed as a District centre of the Province of Kırklareli in the year 1924. Occupied by the Greek on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1920, the district was relieved of such occupation on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1922.



### 2.4 KOĞÇAZ

Annexed to Ottoman territory in the year 1369, the district had been established at a currently unknown date. Situated within administrative divisions as the district centre of Keşirlik during the Republican period, the locality was established as the District of Kofçaz on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1959. Its total area is 530 km<sup>2</sup>.

Even though the locality is not home to significant historical works, defence positions constructed during the World War II years are situated at a location close to a village here (Terzidere).

Kofçaz is in Kırklareli and its distance from the province is 26 km. It is a quaint little district with a central population of 1538 according to the 2000 census surrounded by forested areas on the outskirts of Yıldız (Istranca) Mountains.

The generally mountainous District is neighbours with Bulgaria to the North, Kırklareli to the South and East, and the Province of Edirne and the District of Lalapaşa to the West.

The district lies on an area of 530 square kilometres with 2 Neighbourhoods and 16 Villages. Its total population is 4166, which makes the settlement rather sparsely populated at 10-15 persons per kilometre.

As rather a mountainous district on the outskirts of Istranca Mountains, the district is at an altitude of 460 metres.



## **2.5 LÜLEBURGAZ**

The history of Lüleburgaz dates back to 4500-4000 BC along with the history of Thrace. Among Thracian tribes, who coined Thrace, Odryssians are observed to have settled in the District during that period and named the settlement Bergule. Then, the area was ruled by the Persians, Athenians, Macedonians, and Romans.

Lüleburgaz was conquered and annexed to Ottoman territory by Murad I in 1361. The city was referred to as Burgaz during the Ottoman period and as Lüleburgaz following the proclamation of the Republic.

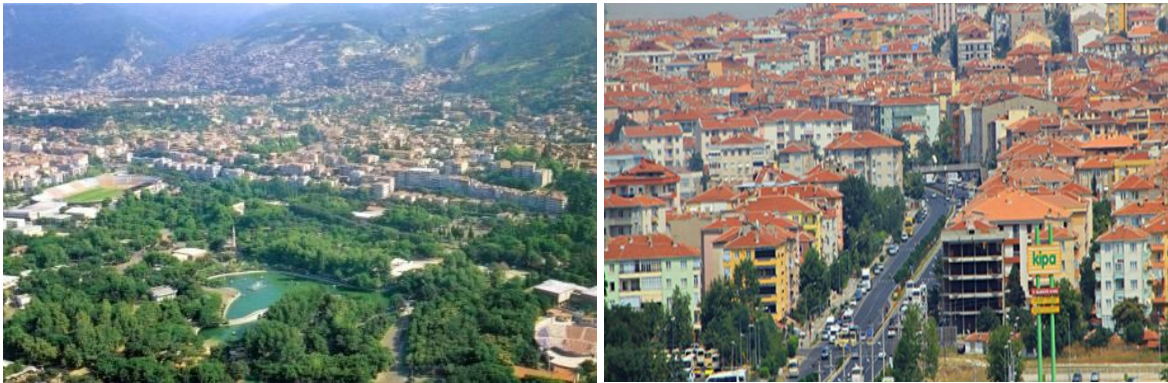
Occupied by Bulgarians on 29<sup>th</sup> October 1912 and firstly by the French and then by the Greek during World War I, the district was relieved of enemy occupation on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1922. It became a district in the year 1923.

Lüleburgaz is situated to the south of the Province of Kırklareli surrounded by the Districts of Saray and Ergene of the Province of Tekirdağ to the East; the District of Babaeski of the Province of Kırklareli to the West; the District of Pınarhisar of the Province of Kırklareli to the North; and the Districts of Hayrabolu and Muradlı of the Province of Tekirdağ to the South.

As the largest settlement in the Province of Kırklareli, the District has a total area of 984 km<sup>2</sup> and lies at an altitude of 30 metres.

In terms of climate, the district is hot and dry during the summer and rainy and cold during the winter with waves of cold air from the Balkans affecting the area during the winter.

The total population of Lüleburgaz is 140.236, 108.576 of whom live at the district centre and 31.660 in villages.



## 2.6 PEHLİVANKÖY

The history of the district starts with its annexation to Ottoman territory along with Turkish moving into Rumelia. Its exact date of establishment is not known.

The people currently inhabiting the district centre and connected villages settled down in the locality as migrants from the Balkans following the 1877-1878 Russo-Turkish War, also known as the War of '93.

### **Pavli – Pavlu – Pehlivanköy**

**Pavli-Pavlu:** The name was derived from the Christian Saint St. Paulos.

**Pehlivanköy:** The name was established after the proclamation of the Republic. The name was used by reason of the locality being inhabited by renowned wrestlers (*pehlivans*).

The known history of Pehlivanköy starts with the movement of Ottomans to Rumelia. Notable families from the Ottoman dynasty settled down on the fertile lands irrigated by Ergene River.

The first village to be established was Çenge Village in the year 1361. This village is currently known as Çengerli Village. The establishment of the other villages corresponds with the post-Russo-Ottoman War Era. Turks from Izvera and Lovech region in Bulgaria migrated to the region and settled down in this locality. The Circassian tribes living in the locality before the migration abandoned the area following the Turkish movements. The Region used to be denominated as “Pavli” or “Pavlu” by Circassian tribes.

The renowned wrestlers of the time are reported to have been married to royal concubines and domiciled around Büyükmandıra and Pehlivan köy with land granted to them by the government, since Ottoman Sultan Abdulaziz was keen on wrestling as a wrestler himself. The training of renowned wrestlers in the locality led the area to be known as Pehlivan köy after the proclamation of the Republic.

Surrounded by the District of Havsa to the North, Hayrabolu to the South, Uzunköprü to the West, and Babaeski to the East, the District lies on generally even flatland.

Extending at an altitude of 25 metres from the sea level, the district is hot and dry during the Summer and cold and rainy during the Winter in terms of its climate.



## 2.7 PINARHISAR

Pınarhisar boasts a history that dates back to the Antiquity. It was known for its cold and hot springs at the time. Pınarhisar was established by the Feudal Landlord of Semendirek of the time in the year 425 within the borders of the Eastern Roman Empire under the name Virisis, meaning springs in Latin.

Recovered from the Byzantines by Köse Mihal in 1368 during the reign of Murad I, Pınarhisar is one of the historical cities in Kırklareli. Pınarhisar is also among the localities that were occupied during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78. Bulgarians occupied

Pınarhisar in the year 1912. A Clan Mounted Regiment under the command of Fahrettin Altay recovered Pınarhisar from the enemy on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1913.

Pınarhisar is among the localities that had supported Mustafa Kemal Pasha from 1919, the starting year of the War of Independence. Bahaeddin Bey, the Chairman of Pınarhisar Branch of the Union for the Defence of Law pledged alliance to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey established by Mustafa Kemal Pasha on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1920 and Pınarhisar was relieved of enemy occupation on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1922.

Pınarhisar was a sub-district under Kırklareli until 1911, when it became a district by itself. However, it was reverted back to being a sub-district in 1915. Its district status was reinstituted on 01.03.1953.



## 2.8 VIZE

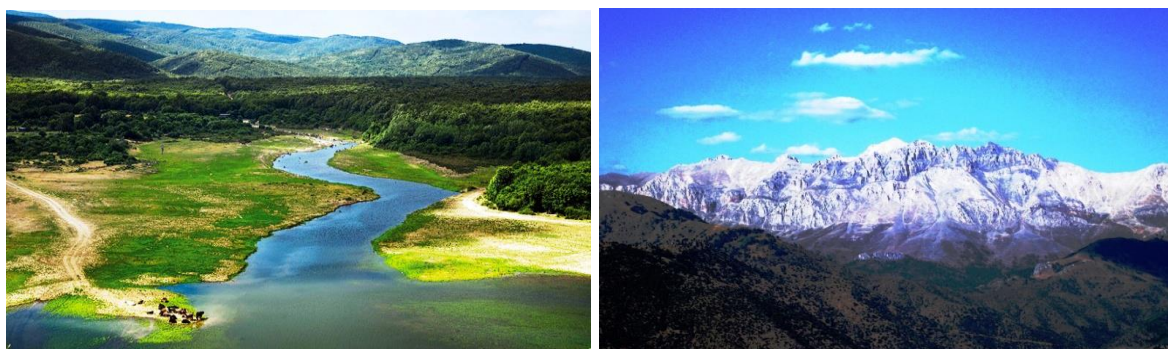
Extending on a wide area along the northern outskirts of Istranca (Yıldız) Mountains to the North of Ergene River, Vize Plain is considered to be more important than the other parts of Eastern Thrace in terms of both its high water potential and the richness of its other natural resources. Despite such importance, there were an extremely limited number of research studies conducted in the region until recently. The findings revealed in Vize Plain as artefacts from prehistoric times were scientifically analysed by Prof. Dr. M. ÖZDOĞAN, an academic member from the Department of Prehistory under Istanbul University, during surface research in Thrace and Eastern Marmara in the year 1982. Before this activity, Prof. Dr. Arif Müfit MANSEL excavated out a number of tumuli on the plan and drilled the area to uncover Çömlektepe Mound that constitutes the actual Thracian centre in Vize between 1936 and 1939.



### 3- TOURISTIC RESOURCES IN ISTRANCE REGION

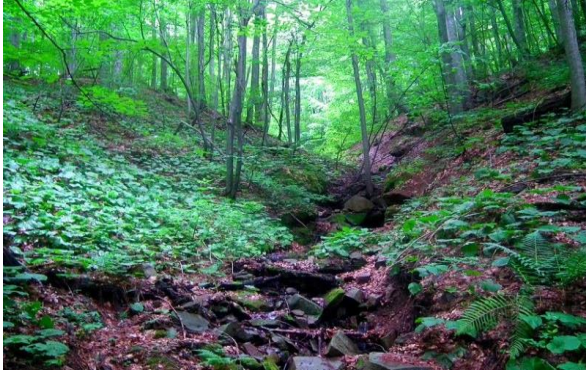
The Istranca (Yıldız) Mountains situated in the region are known as “Strandja” in Bulgaria and as “Istranca” or “Yıldız” Mountains in Turkey. Istranca Mountains extend along a line of 70 km between south-eastern Bulgaria and the European side of Turkey. Situated partly in Turkey and partly in Bulgaria, Istranca Mountains cover an area of 1970 square kilometres with their section in Turkey including the coastal area of the Black Sea. Its highest hill of 1031 metres is Mahya Hill located in Turkey. This is also the highest point of Turkey in the European side.

Istranca Mountains is defined as one of the 5 most important areas in Central and Eastern Europe in terms of the preservation of European natural heritage at the international level. The area is dominantly covered by forests extending along a continuous arch of vegetation starting from Strandja Natural Park in Bulgaria.



#### 3.1 NATURAL VALUES

**3.1.1 Forests:** Istranca Mountains, situated to the North of Thrace, overlook the Black Sea on one side and are covered with dense deciduous forests. The oak forests located in the valley sections closer to the coast also contain small groups of other trees including ash trees, hornbeams, elms, alders, willows, linden trees, walnut trees, beeches, silver birches, and poplars. The only black pine forest in Thrace is situated in the Western part of Kastro Cove. Proclaimed as a nature protection zone, Lake Saka boasts a rich flora in addition to its coverage of floodplains, ash trees, common oaks, and alders.



İğneada and its surroundings represent one of the rare localities that consist of a chain of ecologically interlinked ecosystems in Turkey and is home to rivers, freshwater and saltwater lakes, coastal dunes, freshwater and brackish swamps, floodplain forests, and mixed forests of deciduous trees. Coastal dunes constitute the most sensitive ecosystem of İğneada together with floodplain forests. Coastal dunes situated within the area are among the exceptional ecosystems that have been able to survive to our day without being significantly affected or deteriorated by environmental conditions. The areas to the East and South of İğneada are ornamented with occasional reed beds and marsh plants in lakes and swamps contained by coastal cordons. This zone also accommodates a group of floodplain forests that cover humid alluvial grounds.



İğneada floodplain forests were formed as a result of Lakes Erikli, Mert, and Saka supported by streams flowing from Yıldız (Istranca) Mountains to the Black Sea overflowing backwards with water rising during the spring by reason of the dunes in front of them, thereby covering the nearby flatland. These forests of a floristic composition of mixed forests with quite tall trees (8-15 metres in height) are covered wholly by water during winter and spring months with the water receding during summer and autumn months. These mixed forests consist of ash trees, beeches, common oaks, sessile oaks, field maple trees, sycamores, rowan trees, linden trees, white alders, elders, cornel trees, elm trees, and hornbeams, etc. With a rich sub-forest flora, these forests are at higher temperatures with trees and other plants growing here

commencing vegetation earlier than their surroundings due to the intensive microorganism activity in alluvial soil. These forests depend on a high water table in order to maintain their existing features.



Once the necessary arrangements have been put in place, İğneada Floodplain Forests may offer a favourable platform to their visitors for trekking, orienteering, ornithology, bicycling, and mushroom gathering.

### **3.1.2 Vegetative Cover:**

#### **3.1.2.1 Plants in floodplain forests:**

Kırklareli, İğneada floodplain forests are covered wholly by water during winter and spring months with the water receding during summer and autumn months supported by streams flowing from Yıldız (Istranca) Mountains to the Black Sea. These forests are home to such trees as ash trees, beeches, common oaks, sessile oaks, field maple trees, sycamores, rowan trees, linden trees, white alders, elders, cornel trees, elm trees, and hornbeams.



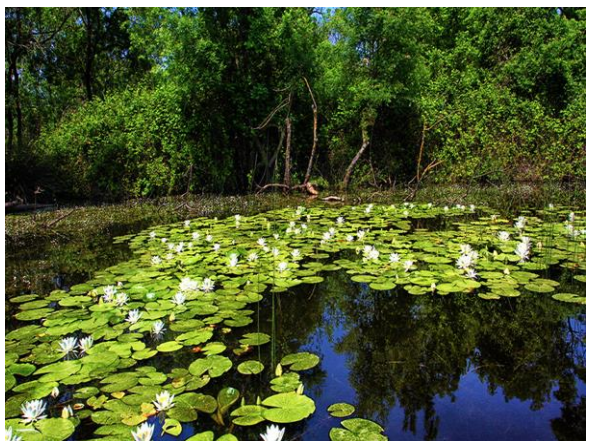
**3.1.2.2 Bulbous plants:** The large number of bulbous plants present in the area blossom in two separate seasons, i.e. spring and autumn. The most common ones among such plants are cyclamen and *scilla bifolia*. Blue iris and snowdrop are observed more in open spaces within forests, while varieties of orchids and reverse tulip are common in the sub-forest area. It is possible within floodplain forests to see groups of loddon lilies in watery sections.



**3.1.2.3 Dune plants:** Coastal dunes represent significant areas of vegetation as they create a band between lakes and swamps surrounding floodplain forests and the sea. 46 varieties have been identified in Igneada dunes as a result of research studies conducted until now. Among these varieties, *silene sangaria*, white knapweed, and *crepis macropus* are endemic plants observed in Europe only along the Black Sea coasts of Thrace. Commonly present in the area, *aurinia uechtritziana*, white knapweed, crambe, and sea daffodil are rare plants under protection as per Bern Convention.



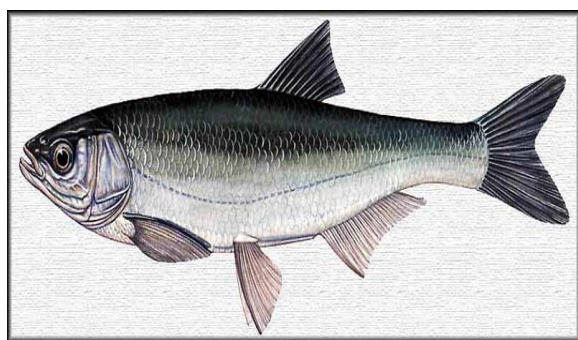
**3.1.2.4 Wetland plants:** Lakes in Iğneada and the swamps surrounding them provide habitats to a large number of aquatic plants. Observed in areas with a water depth of 50 to 100 cm within lakes and at times covering such grounds 100%, such plants are exemplified by the dominant varieties of *schoenoplectus lacustris*, *phragmites australis*, *thypha domingensis*, and *t. angustifolia*. Brackish swamps situated at a higher tableland with a richer floristic composition are observed to be covered by such plants as *bolboschoenus maritimus*, *cladium mariscus*, *juncus heldreichanus*, *sparganium erectum*, *atriplex patula*, *chenopodium chenopodioides*, *spargularia bocconii*, *leucojum aestivum*, *limonium gmelinii*, *cirsium creticum*, *polypogon viridis*. The freshwater swamps surrounding Lakes Hamam and Pedina are of great significance by reason of their European-Syberian freshwater flora which is rather rare in Turkey. The presence of the endangered water caltrop (*trapa natans*) and water lily (*nymphaea alba*) in such swamps is considered to be an indicator of high water quality. The sandy meadows extending along natural barriers along streams are home to *logfia minima* as a new variety for Turkey and certain rare varieties of *trifolium*.



The region has the potential to attract the attention of eco-tourists interested in botanic tourism owing both to its floodplain forests and to its rare and endemic plant varieties.

### 3.1.3 Animal Species:

**3.1.3.1 Fish:** There are 30 known species of fish inhabiting a variety of wetlands in Iğneada including lagoons, lakes, and streams. 8 of these species were announced as “protected species”, namely danube bleak (*Chalcalburnus chalcoides*), narrow-snouted pipefish (*Syngnathus abaster*), monkey goby (*Neogobius fluviatilis*), wolffish (*Aspius aspius*), spirilin (*Alburnoides bipunctatus*), bitterling (*Rhodeus amarus*), spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*), and common nase (*Chondrostoma nasus*). Holding the richest diversity in the species of fish, Lagoons Mert, Erikli, and Saka also accommodate such fish species as grey mullet (*Mugil cephalus*) and silverside (*Atherina boyeri*), which migrate from the sea to freshwater or vice versa for the purposes of food and protection. Freshwater Lake Hamam is home to crawfish and the springs emanating from the streams feeding the area at Istranca Mountains to brown trout (*Salmo trutta*).



**3.1.3.2 Birds:** Iğneada lies on important bird migratory routes in Western Palearctic in terms of ornithology. The region is of great value for biodiversity by reason of a number of plant varieties and plant species inhabiting its sections. In addition, the region is of international significance with respect to the protection of natural heritage in the European Continent and around the world by reason of its nature as a critical ecosystem and hotspot with rare features in the European Continent.

Coastal dunes, coastal meadows, forested areas, and rocky coasts – listed here in the order of size – render Istranca Mountains an important habitat for both birds living there and migratory birds. Nearly half of the 454 bird species that represent the bird existence in Turkey (94 species) can be spotted in Iğneada during the year. The area stands out as the passageway for a large number of water fowls and birds of prey and especially storks (white and black storks). Some water fowls (herons, geese, ducks, water hens, ringed plovers, etc.) and birds of prey (eagles, hawks, falcons, harriers, etc.) also breed in the area.

Nine bird species observed in the area were identified as indicator species to confirm the healthy functioning of the Iğneada ecosystem. Among these species, grey-headed woodpeckers only inhabit Northern Thrace in Turkey. On the other hand, pygmy cormorant, white-tailed eagle, and lesser kestrel represent endangered and/or threatened according to the European Red List.



184 bird species in the region are in the category of endangered species pursuant to Bern Convention including 133 bird species designated as strictly protected fauna species (SPFS) and 51 bird species designated as protected fauna species (PFS).

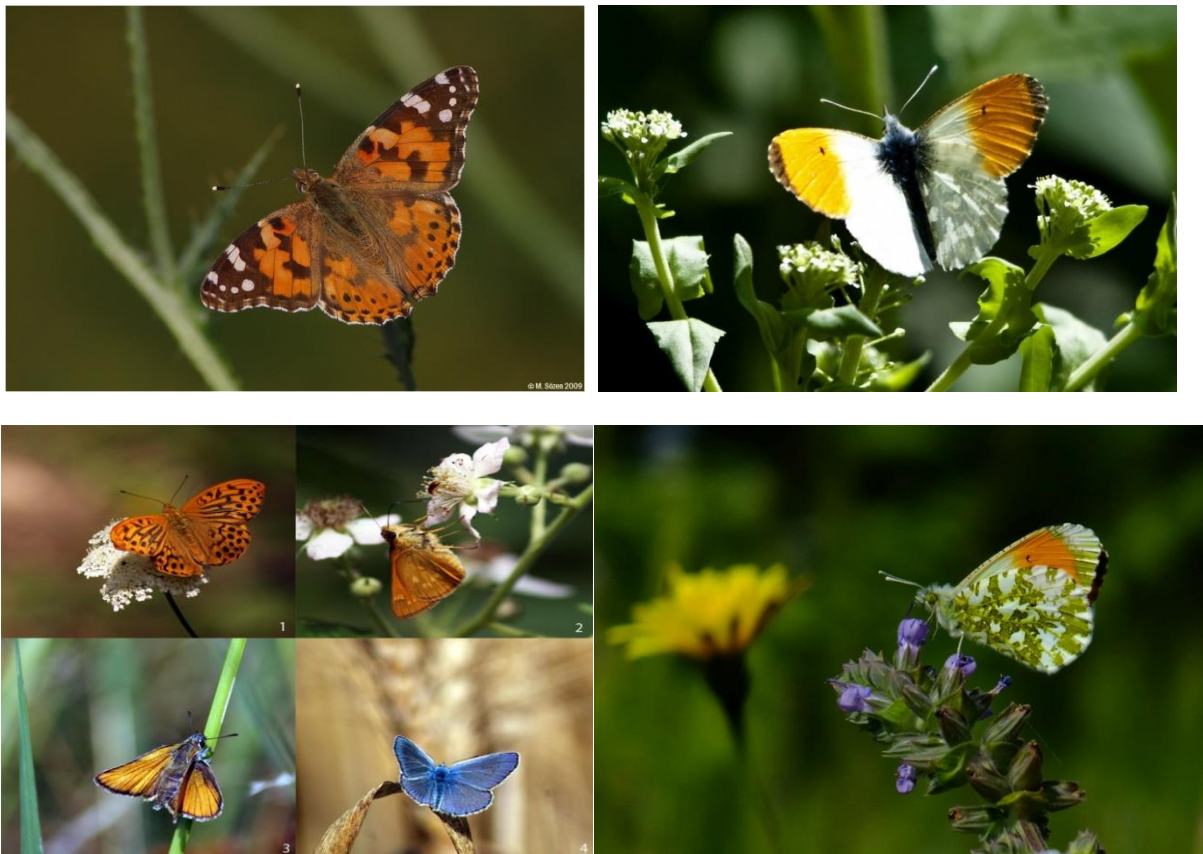
Specifically, Lakes Mert and Erikli in Iğneada offer important wetlands for water fowls for the purposes of food, shelter, habitation, and nesting. Birds here enjoy prominent advantages with the area being surrounded by forests on both sides and supported with a wide reed bed.

Keen bird watchers can visit the wetlands in İğneada and their surroundings in all seasons owing to such potential.

**3.1.3.3 Butterflies:** Istranca Mountains and their surroundings are quite rich in terms of butterfly species. Karaca (2008) reported the total number of butterfly species in Kırklareli as 114. 5 species out of these are *Papilionidae*, 13 species *Pieridae*, 28 species *Nymphalidae*, 20 species *Satyridae*, 32 species *Lycaenidae*, 1 species *Riodinidae* and 15 species *Hesperiidae*. The types of habitats designated for butterflies in the region are as follows:

1. Floodplain forests
2. Cultivated areas
3. Open spaces in forests
4. Mixed forests
5. Bushes along streams
6. Pine plantation area

Butterflies specifically prefer open spaces in forests, meadows, roadsides, and open spaces along stream banks.



Keen butterfly watchers can spot a wide range of butterfly species in their natural environment in Iğneada and its surroundings.

**3.1.3.4 Mammals:** Hosting a large variety of mammal species, Iğneada and its surroundings are home to 34% of all mammals in Turkey and 57% of all mammals in Thrace. The area offers a habitat to prominent wild animals including deer, roe deer, wild boars, wolves, foxes, jackals, wildcats, weasels, wood mice, badgers, and bats, as well as sea otters, which are considered to be an indicator of clean waters. Wood mice have been observed throughout the area and are considered as an indicator species as they provide feed to accipiteriformes and strigiformes.

**3.1.3.5 Amphibians and Reptiles:** Iğneada and its surroundings accommodate more than half of the amphibians and reptiles in Thrace with 6 amphibian and 11 reptile species. This stems from the fact that the wetlands and especially freshwater environments here create an attractive habitat with rich feeding possibilities for amphibians and reptiles. The strictly protected amphibian species as per Bern Convention of southern crested newt (*Triturus karelini*) and green toad (*Bufo viridis*) and reptile species under the same level of protection of European legless lizard (*Ophisaurus apodus*), green lizard (*Lacerta viridis*), and European copper skink (*Ablepharus kitaibelii*) inhabit the area. In addition, 17 amphibian and reptile species including snake and tortoise species are also accommodated here as quite a favourable living environment.



**3.1.3.6 Invertebrates:** The studies conducted in Iğneada and its surroundings established the number of insect species in the area to be 310 and the richest region in this respect to be the land between Lake Pedina and Lake Hamam with 123 species. The open spaces in forests constitute favourable habitats for insect species. Capricorn beetle and small copper have found a good environment for them here as species designated to be protected by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Among these species, Capricorn beetle lives on trees in forests and is under monitoring for the maintenance of the species in this habitat. As the insect species that rests at the top of the food chain, dragonfly has been designated as the indicator insect species for Igneada and its surroundings. This common species inhabiting wetlands and easily observed here plays an important role in the control of the insect population by feeding on the other insect species. Istranca Mountains represent quite a rich variety in fauna. Keen wildlife (fauna) watchers can visit the region in all seasons to observe animals in their natural environment.

### **3.1.4 Caves**

There are a large number of caves within the borders of the Province of Kırklareli. Some of these caves are of touristic value as one of them had been inhabited by humans in prehistoric times and certain others by Christians in Early Christianity. In addition, there are 4 other caves with striking natural features and on-going work for the purposes of tourism, namely Dupnisa Cave, Yenesu Cave, Domuzdere Cave ve Kıyıköy Cave.

**3.1.4.1 Dupnisa Cave:** Dupnisa Cave is located in the District of Demirköy in Kırklareli. With a length of 3150 metres, the cave is the only one that contributes to tourist activities in Thrace. Distinguished with its underground passage, Dupnisa Cave owes its name to the Bulgarian word for “black hole” and can be entered through 3 different gates.

The initial one thousand metres into the cave, which is known to be approximately three thousand metres in length, constitutes an entrance in water. The titles of the caves to Dupnisa Cave are named Dupnisa Dolin, Dry Cave, ve Kız Cave. Dupnisa Cave becomes quite scary with its dense population of bats.





Dupnisa Cave is known to have formed 180 million years ago. Situated within a forest, Dupnisa Cave has a cool atmosphere and is one of the caves that assume an important role for the improvement of the ecosystem. Specifically, the possibility for a large number of bat species to breed in the cave gave way to the formulation of a decision by the tourism management in Kırklareli to close Dupnisa Cave for business during winter months with a view to allow bats to survive. This decision represents an important example of environmental sensibility.

Characterised as an underground paradise with its unique features, Dupnisa Cave attracts interest as the first cave opened for tourism business in the region. Having been visited by domestic and international tourists every year since 2003, the cave spellbinds all visitors with its features. One of the most important characteristics adding distinction to Dupnisa Cave is its role as the source of Rezve Stream situated along the border between Turkey and Bulgaria.

Dupnisa Cave opened its gates for tourism in Thrace as a result of the arrangements put in place by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism with its depth up to only 500 metres opened for visitors for safety despite its actual depth of thousands of metres. Further depths can only be accessed by adrenaline-addicted mountaineers. Dupnisa Cave is a wonder for visitors every year with its interesting characteristics, as well as its population of approximately thirty-three thousand bats. The cave has been equipped with adequate indoor lighting to allow visitors to tour around Dupnisa Cave with ease.

Dupnisa Cave is a must-see for tourists visiting Kırklareli and attracts great attention from tourists with its features and appearance. The lakes within the cave and fringes on cave walls above lakes lend Dupnisa Cave quite an interesting appearance.

**3.1.4.2 Yenesu Cave:** This is the third largest cave in Thrace. The inside of Yenesu is covered with extremely beautiful dripstones of every form (stalactites, stalagmites, column wall dripstones, dripstone ponds, and macaronis). These forms descend onto dripstone ponds

or lakes or rise from the cave ground, thereby adding an enchanted atmosphere to the cave. It is situated in Balkaya Village and has a length of 1620 metres.



**3.1.4.3 Domuzdere Cave:** Domuzdere Cave is situated within the borders of the District of Vize in the Province of Kırklareli. The cave has a length of 300 metres.



**3.1.4.4 Kıyıköy Cave:** This cave is situated 2 km to the South of Kıyıköy Town in the District of Vize. It has a length of 305 metres. Kıyıköy Cave has favourable features for use in tourism.



### 3.1.5 Protected Sites:

**3.1.5.1 National Parks:** İğneada Floodplain Forest situated along the border between Turkey and Bulgaria on the Black Sea coast is one of the rare ecosystems that accommodate seasonal floodplain forests, swamps, freshwater lakes, and coastal dunes together. An area of 31,5 square kilometres at the border of Kırklareli was proclaimed as a national park in 2007. Floodplain forests are rare at the international level, as well. Despite the presence of such forests in certain parts of Turkey, this national park is distinct from the other areas by reason of both its size and its characteristics. Therefore, these forests are “internationally rare”. There are floodplain forests in three separate regions in İğneada, namely Lake Saka, Lake Erikli, and Lake Mert Floodplain Forests.



The coastal dunes in İğneada represent the most sensitive ecosystems in the area along with the floodplain forests. İğneada is among the rare dune ecosystems that have maintained their characteristics without significant effects from environmental conditions. The coastal dunes in the area provide habitats for a large number of rare and endemic plants varieties. Therefore, the coastal dunes are prominent among the areas to be preserved.

İğneada floodplain forests are home to mammals including deer, roe deer, wild boars, wolves, foxes, jackals, wildcats, weasels, badgers, and bats, as well as sea otters; 194 bird species such as lesser kestrels and grey-headed woodpeckers; reptiles and amphibians such as southern crested newt, green toad, European legless lizard, green lizard, European copper skink, snakes, and tortoises; insects such as Capricorn beetle and small copper; and fish species including narrow-snouted pipefish, monkey goby, wolffish, spirlin, bitterling, spined loach, and common nase.

The typical mixed forest of ash trees, oaks, and white alders specific to the south-eastern part of Europe is dominated by white alders and ash trees in the wateriest sections and by various varieties of oaks notably including common oaks in relatively dry parts. In addition, climbing

plant varieties represent the most distinctive characteristics of the forest. The area is of great importance by reason of its rich flora including plant varieties protected by international conventions. This area offers a habitat for endemic and rare plant varieties designated to be under a threat at the global and European dimensions.

### **3.1.5.2 Natural Reserves:**

Kasatura Bay Natural Reserve: An area of 3.3 square kilometres within the borders of Kıyıköy Village of the District of Vize in Kırklareli was designated as a Natural Reserve. It is the only area featuring a natural Black Pine Stand in the Sub-Thracian Region. The most notable tree varieties in the area are Black Pine, Hungarian Oak, Sessile Oak, Common Oak, Alder, Ash, Beech, Whistlewood, Linden, and White Alder, which provide a habitat for roe deer, wild boards, wolves, jackals, weasels, foxes, badgers, and hares. The area also represents a habitat favourable for endangered Mediterranean Monk Seals with its pristine coast, clean and brilliant sea, and occasionally rocky grounds.



Saka Lake Floodplain Forest Natural Reserve: The reserve has an area of 13,5 square kilometres and is situated within the borders of Sivrilir Village of the District of Demirköy in Kırklareli at a distance of 26 km to Demirköy.

The area constitutes a rare and unique example of floodplain forests at danger of extinction, which are dispersed around the world in limited areas, for Europe. The area is complemented with aesthetic beauty specifically with its pristine natural environment, as well as the presence of Lakes Saka, Pedina, and Hamam.

The main tree varieties are white alder, elm, and ash with small numbers of oak, alder, beech, black poplar, silver poplar, willow, linden, and walnut trees.

The fauna consists of deer, roe deer, foxes, wolves, hares, boards, wildcats, swans, wild geese, wild ducks, curlews, woodpigeons, adders, blind worms, sea snakes, carp, common seabream, bass, and crawfish.



**3.1.5.3 Natural Protected Areas:** The natural protected areas situated on and around Istranca Mountains are specified below:

- Demirköy Sivrilir Village, Pedina Tepe, Lake Pedina and its surroundings, Grade 1 Natural Site + Grade 1 Archaeological Site. (registration decision No. 24.08.1990/759)
- Demirköy, İğneada Lake Mert and its surroundings, Grade 3 Natural Site
- Demirköy İğneada Lake Erikli and coastal surroundings, Grade 2 Natural Site (registration decision No. 11.07.1991/944)
- Demirköy Sivrilir Village, Hamam Lake and its surroundings, Grade 1 Natural Site. (registration decision No. 24.08.1990/759)
- Demirköy, Dupnisa Cave, Grade 1 Natural Site (registration decision No. 11.07.1991/944)
- Vize, Kıyıköy Kazandere, Papuçdere beds (registration decision No. 20.06.1990/717)
- Saka Lake Floodplain Forests, Grade 1 Natural Site (registration decision No. 11.07.1991/944).

### 3.1.6 Water Resources

**3.1.6.1 Lakes:** Kırklareli does not feature any major lakes. Smaller lakes mostly connected to the sea are gathered in İğneada rift valley that occupies quite a wide area to the east of Istranca Mountains.

The wetlands in the area are represented by lagoons of varying sizes between floodplain forests and dunes and lakes within forests. Lake Erikli, Lake Mert, and Lake Saka are lagoons and Lakes Hamam and Pedina are forest lakes extending from the North to the South. Lakes Mert and Erikli are two lagoons situated to the northeast of Thrace at a distance of 15 km to the Bulgarian border within the borders of Iğneada in the District of Demirköy in the Province of Kırklareli.

**Lake Mert:** Also known as Lake Koca, this lake is a lagoon situated 1 km to the South of Iğneada in the District of Demirköy and was formed through Deringeçit Stream filling in the sea in time. The lake is separated from the Black Sea to its east with a sand wall. However, along with high tides, the lake occasionally connects with the sea. The forested areas in this region submerge especially during spring and autumn months characterised by heavy precipitation. Therefore, the region is also known as Mert (Koca) Floodplain Forest. With a reed bed covering a part of the lake, the lagoon is fed by Deringeçit Stream situated at its North-western side and delivers excessive water directly to the Black Sea. 2/3 of the lake is covered by a reed bed and swamps. The lake is fed by Deringeçit Stream flowing through Istranca Mountains, as well as a large number of streamlets, which dry during summer months. Lake Mert is surrounded by Iğneada settlement to its North and Istranca Mountains to its South and West. Its eastern side forms the Black Sea coast.



**Lake Erikli:** It is a lagoon within the borders of the District of Demirköy formed with Efendi Stream located at the Black Sea coast and to the North of Iğneada filling in the sea in time. The eastern side of the lake rests on the Black Sea, its southern side Iğneada settlement, and northern and western sides forested areas. Surrounded by reed beds for the most part, the lake is fed by Efendi Stream flowing to its north-eastern side and delivers its excessive water directly to the Black sea. Approximately 2/3 of the lake is covered by a reed bed and swamps.

Lake Erikli is surrounded by Istranca Mountains to its North and South and İğneada settlement to its South. 36 aquatic plant varieties and 62 bird species inhabit Lake Erikli.

The decision dated 11.07.1991 and No. 944 of Edirne Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Board Registered Lakes Mert and Erikli situated within the borders of the Municipality of İğneada in the District of Demirköy in Kırklareli as “Grade 1 Sites”.



**Lake Saka:** The lake is located to the South of İğneada and in the District of Demirköy and was formed through Bulanık Stream filling in the sea in time. The lake and the reed beds and forested areas around it represent floodplains forests that are rare for Europe and Turkey. Therefore, the region is also known as Saka Floodplain Forest. The main tree varieties are white alder, elm, and ash with small numbers of oak, alder, beech, black poplar, silver poplar, willow, linden, and walnut trees. The area was proclaimed as a Natural Reserve in 1988.



**Lake Hamam:** Situated at 20 km to the South of İğneada and surrounded entirely by forested areas, the lake is at a distance of 2 km to the Black Sea and at an altitude of approximately 20 m from the sea. Its area is 19 hectares and its deepest point is at 2.6 metres. Fed by a large number of streamlets flowing through forests, the lake discharges its excessive water to Bulanık Stream through a canal situated to its southeast. Perch and crawfish are of significance for the fauna in the lake.



**Lake Pedina:** Situated 25 km to the South of Iğneada and 5 km to the West of Lake Hamam, this lake is entirely in a forest as is the case with Lake Hamam. Its area is 10 hectares and its deepest point is at 2.10 metres. The lake is fed by a large number of streamlets flowing through forests, as well as Pedina Stream and discharges its excessive water to Bulanık Stream through a canal. The lakes of Iğneada on Istranca Mountains and their surroundings are favourable to a large number of recreational activities including picnicking, sport line fishing, and camping.



**3.1.6.2 Sea:** Visitors can swim along the coastal band in Iğneada, which is situated at a distance of 25 km to Demirköy and 97 km to Kırklareli. It features a beach of approximately 10 km in length and 40-50 metres in width. The sea is mostly windy by reason of the coast overlooking the Black Sea. June, July and August are the most favourable months for swimming. Visitors who swim here are generally from Thrace and Istanbul. Iğneada is home to a 4-star hotel and numerous hostels and motels available for visitors.



### **3.2 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL VALUES**

#### **3.2.1 Cultural Values**

The region is quite rich in cultural terms. Local people mainly consist of Gadzhals, Pomaks, Immigrants, and Bosniacs and this richness in identity has been reflected upon traditions and customs. The Thracian Culture is predominantly observed in celebrations after births, draft send-offs, deaths, weddings, and culinary activities, but examples of Rumelian and Balkan cultures are also present.

Kofçaz Trak is a town dominated by the Byzantine and Anatolian cultures. Kofçaz has a large number of villages mostly established during the Ottoman-Turkish period. Turkmen communities from the Alawi-Bektashi faith were placed in the locality in the leadership of Anatolian dervishes and they have managed to maintain their presence until today. Certain villages were enriched with the presence of Turks and Tatar-Circassian migrants arriving here from the Balkans in terms of their demographics.

##### **3.2.1.1 Festivals**

A large number of festivals are organised at different times and for different occasions in Kırklareli including 9th of March (Nawruz) Celebrations (22<sup>nd</sup> March); Hıdırellez Celebrations – Karagöz Festival of Culture, Arts, and Kakava (third week in May in Central Kırklareli); Topçubaba Festival; Elmacık Spring Festival; Demirköy Strawberry Festival (30<sup>th</sup> June, Demirköy); Büyükmandıra Traditional Kavaşoğlu ve Şamdancıbaşı İbrahim Greased Wrestling Festival; Horse Racing and Music Festival (25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> May); Karahıdır Cherry Festival (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> June); Kırklareli Highlands, Abundance, and Harvest Festival (25<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September); Kofçaz Walnut and Honey Festival (17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> September); First Sugar Factory of Alpıllu Festival of Culture and Music; Babaeski Festival (28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> August); Lüleburgaz Municipality 1<sup>st</sup> International Folk Dances Festival (July, Lüleburgaz); and Kaynarca Festival of Culture and Water (May, Kaynarca).

### 3.2.1.2 Local Tastes

Kırklareli has plenty to offer not only in terms of geographical and historical beauties, but also local tastes, natural vegetables, fruits, meat, and dairy products. The local drink of *hardaliye*, Kırklareli cheese, Kırklareli meatballs, Poyralı beet molasses, Demirköy Honey, pumpkin in syrup in lime, kid roasting on coal, turbot, and other seasonal fish varieties, buffalo yoghurt, horticultural products, strawberry and Kırklareli black cherries are among such delicacies. Information on certain local tastes is provided below.

**Hardaliye:** Hardaliye is a non-alcoholic refreshing drink indicated with the cuisine of Kırklareli on the local tastes map of Turkey and produced from local grapes through traditional methods. Prepared with the use of vine leaves, mustard seeds, and grapes, Hardaliye is specific to Thrace and has beneficial effects for strength, appetite, fever, blood pressure, and regulation of circulatory and immune systems. It is consumed as a depository of vitamins in this regard. *Papazkarası* grapes (local grapes of bluish hue) are selected with care to obtain a dark coloured drink and then, pressed just hard enough to break their peel. Mustard seeds are crushed just so as to break their crust in order to avoid wine or vinegar. Both ingredients are then placed into barrels coated with vine leaves. Once it has reached the necessary consistency, the mixture is filtered to be ready to drink.



**Poyralı Molasses:** This product is a type of beet molasses specific to Kırklareli. Beet molasses is commonly produced in Kırklareli, while Tekirdağ and Edirne prefer the production of grape molasses. Kırklareli has a favourable climate and soil structure for the cultivation of sugar beet. Beet molasses produced through traditional methods in Poyralı Village has become nationally renowned. Poyralı Molasses has a thicker consistency and a sharper aroma than other types of molasses.



**Turbot:** Turbot is a fish species living at depths of 20 to 70 metres in the Mediterranean, Aegean, Marmara, and Black Sea. These small-sized fish living at the bottom of the sea feed on small marine animals and crabs. They are commonly consumed in the town of Kıyıköy, situated along the Black Sea coast of Thrace. Kıyıköy is famous for its turbot and visited frequently by tourists from neighbouring provinces specifically to taste the fish. Turbot is generally fried on pan and the buttons on the fish should be removed before consumption. The fish is quite popular owing to its less fatty meat.



**Kırklareli Cheese:** The specific cheese is produced from the milk of animals bred in Kırklareli. Kırklareli is famous for its cheese like Edirne and Tekirdağ in Thrace. A wide variety of cheese is produced with natural yeast by reason of the ovine and bovine husbandry activities common in the area.



**Pumpkin in Syrup in Lime:** The famous pumpkin dessert cooked all around Anatolia is complemented with a sauce prepared with lime, which adds crunchiness to the outer crust of the dessert and results in a pumpkin dessert with a crunchy peel, but a soft core. With its refreshing taste, the pumpkin dessert in lime can be consumed more commonly after the start of the pumpkin season at the end of October every year.



**Kırklareli Meatballs:** This dish ranks the first among the local delicacies of the province. The meatball dishes offered in Edirne and Tekirdağ as the other provinces in Thrace are also famous, but each one of these dishes has a specific taste of its own. These meatballs are prepared with the meat of animals bred on Istranca Mountains in Kırklareli. The meatballs owe their taste to the meat of animals raised with natural feed and in their natural habitat. Grilled meatballs are served with roasted green peppers and tomatoes and pepper sauce on a separate plate and, if preferred, sheep yoghurt.



**Kid Roasting on Coal:** This is a specific dish for Kırklareli and is available in April and May. Famous kid roasters are only open for service during April and May as these mark the kid season. Roasted kid is prepared with a slaughtered kid tied from its front and hind legs to a tree on both sides with coarse salt inside and cooked in tandoori for approximately three hours. The dish is served with yoghurt, fresh garlic, and onions on wax paper instead of a plate.



**Thracian *Kıvırcık* Meat Products:** The *kıvırcık* breed of sheep is kept pure under the “*Kıvırcık* Sheep Breed Gene Bank” and “Public Improvement for Kırklareli *Kıvırcık* Sheep Breed” projects implemented in Thrace by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock and therefore, the meat products from this breed are preferred by reason of their meat quality and taste.



**Boza:** Boza is a commonly produced and consumed winter drink that offers protection and energy during cold days in Thrace and especially in Kırklareli. It is produced with polenta, sugar, and water and contains a high quantity of minerals and vitamins. Categorised as a nutritious and healthy drink, boza is rich in physically necessary nutrients including iron, phosphor, zinc, calcium, and Vitamin A. It can be served with dried chickpeas, cinnamon, or crushed hazelnuts. Boza has become a brand with Kırklareli.



**Buffalo Yoghurt:** This yoghurt is quite famous in the town of K1y1k1k1y in Kırklareli. Buffalo yoghurt is prepared with the milk of water buffalos. Buffalo breeding used to be quite common in the past but has been undertaken only in the north-eastern part of Thrace in recent years. Buffalo breeding is generally observed in the District of Saray in Tekirdağ and in Kırklareli. The milk obtained from water buffalos raised here is used to produce buffalo yoghurt and cream (*kaymak*). The most natural form of yoghurt can be tasted in K1y1k1k1y as a hotspot for buffalo breeding.



**Kırklareli Black Cherries:** Kırklareli Black Cherries have become a symbol for Kırklareli, which has come to be known as the “City of Black Cherries” in recent times. Black cherry festivals have been organised with the most beautiful black cherries displayed during “Karahıdır Festival of Black Cherries” and a variety of competitions held every year since 2013. Kırklareli black cherries have become a brand in time and are quite popular by reason of their taste.



**Strawberry:** The strawberries cultivated in Kırklareli has a special place in Thrace and have become a brand with their quality. Kırklareli has the most favourable natural conditions for strawberries and the best fields for strawberries by reason of soil pH. Having been organised since 1982, the Strawberry Festival promotes the famous strawberries with cultivation and tasting activities.



### 3.2.2 Historical Values

Istranca Mountains and their surroundings have been inhabited by a large number of tribes and states from the past to our day. The history of the region dates back to 4200-4000 B.C. The first known settlement belonged to the Thracians. Having remained under Byzantine rule until 1369, the region was then annexed to the territory of the Ottoman Empire. The main historical values situated in the region are specified below:

In central Kırklareli: Hızır Bey Complex, Kapan Mosque, Beyazıt Mosque, Karakaş Bey Mosque, Kadı Mosque, Üsküpdere Mosque, Church, Kayalık Fountain, Büyük Mosque Fountain, Gerdanlı Fountain, Kocahıdır Fountain, Kayyumoğlu Fountain, Kapan Fountain, Boyacı Fountain, Karaumurbey Fountain, Söğütlü Fountain, Kadı Fountain, Pasha Fountain, Hapishane Fountain, Kırklar and Kırklareli Martyrs' Cemeteries, Niğdeli Ethim Onbaşı Monument, Karahıdır Monument and old Kırklareli houses.

In Demirköy and its surroundings: Dolmens and Tumuli; in Avcılar Village: Ottoman cemeteries and tombs; in Armutveren Village: a windmill; in Yiğitbaşı Village: a mill from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century; in Hamdibey Village: Greek houses; in Demirköy Sefaköy: Adriya Castle, Genoese Arap Castle, Twin Peaks Castle, and Şeytan Castle; in Sivrililer Village: Çingene Castle; and in Gölyaka Village: Kılıçtepe Castle and Sislioba Castle.

In Vize and its surroundings: Hagia Sofia Church, Megalithic Sacred Grounds, Gazi Süleyman Pasha Mosque, Şerbetdar Hasan Bey Mosque, Sergen Mosque, Sadri Bey Mosque, Kıyıköy Mosque, Yeni Mosque, Fatma Hatun Masjid; in Karakoçak Hills and Soğucak Village: Rock Altars, Ancient Theatre, Vize Castle and Walls, Kıyıköy Castle, Ferhat Bey Bath ve Fountain, Cemilzade Mahmut Ağa Fountain, Kıyıköy Fountain, Asmakayalar Cave Monastery, Hagia Nicola Monastery, Yenesu Cave, Çakıllı Historical Sycamore, Tumuli; in Pazarlı Village: Rock Graves, and Byzantine aqueducts fed by water resources of Ergene Stream with arched water bridges in valleys extending up to Istanbul.

In Kofçaz and its surroundings; Tumuli, menhirs, dolmens, Kocayazı Kalebayırı Castle, Ahmetler Castle, Lower and Upper Kanara Castles, Hasar Castle and Beypınar Castle, mounds, Ottoman graves (Ahlatlı Village), Çeşmeköy, Erikler, and Yoğuntaş; in Topçular Village: Kanlıkaya Babası Tomb, Erenler Bayırı Babası Tomb and Ahmet Baba Tomb; in Kocatarla Village: Deliklikaya grounds; in Tatlıpınar Village: Kalfa Baba Tomb; in Malkoçlar Village: Höyük Baba Tomb; and in Ahmetler Village: Kızıl Deli Tomb, Kara Baba Tomb, Yağmurlu Baba Tomb, and Kuru Baba Tomb.

In Babaeski and its surroundings: Cedid Ali Pasha Mosque, Fatih Mosque, Dördüzlü Fountain, Municipality Fountain, Bath, Babaeski Bridge, Alpıllu (Sinanlı) Bridge, and Alpıllu Sugar Factory Complex.

In Lüleburgaz and its surroundings: Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Complex, Vaulted Shops, Sokollu Mosque and Madrasah, Dürüta'lim, Sokollu Bath, Caravanserai, Kadı Ali Mosque, Bazaar (Midpoint) Fountain, Zafer Fountain, Aqueducts and Canals, Zindan Baba Tomb, Sokollu Mepmet Pasha Bridge, Minor Bridge, and Burgaz Water Walls.

In Pınarhisar and its surroundings; Hundi Hatun Mosque (Cami-i Kebir), Sadıkağa Mosque, Çukur Fountain, Balıklı Fountain, Haydar Baba Tomb, Binbir Oklu Ahmet Baba Tomb, Examples of Civillian Architecture, castles, Church Remains, Rock Monastery, Poyralı and Balkanköy Martyrs' Cemeteries; in Pehlivan köy and its surroundings: Mosque, Kuştepe Village Mosque, Akarca Bridge, and official buildings.

Photographs and brief information concerning some of the aforementioned historical and cultural structures are provided below.

### **3.2.2.1 Mounds, Tumuli, Dolmens, and Menhirs**

#### **Mounds:**

Mounds are ancient villages or towns mostly shaped into small hills today that have been inhabited by humans for various times in the past. In Kırklareli, in addition to Kırklareli Aşağıpınar and Kanlıgeçit settlements still in excavation, surface studies have been conducted on Tilkiburnu, Helvacı Şaban, and Koyunbaba mounds. There are remains of prehistoric settlements in various caves along with settlements on flatlands. The most important one of these settlements is in Bedre Cave situated close to Kayalı Village of the central district in Kırklareli.



#### **Tumuli:**

Until now, approximately 200 tumuli have been identified within the provincial borders of Kırklareli. These mausolea are currently in a rapid process of destruction but are estimated to have been more than 400 in number until recent times. The excavations undertaken revealed that the range of tumuli in Kırklareli is able to represent the entirety of Thrace in general and was constructed in a wide space in time extending from late Bronze Age (14<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.) to early 3<sup>rd</sup> Century A.D.

With a striking categorisation of small, medium, and large (range of dimensions: 1.5 x 10/20 x 70 m) sizes, tumuli actually exhibit varying content in five groups. There are regular mounds in the form of flat tombs, as well as tumuli constructed as sarcophagi and chamber tombs of various forms. The artefacts uncovered through scientific excavations performed on Çakıllı, Yündolan, and Dügüncülü Tumuli include armours belonging to the deceased (if they had been a warrior) and their horse in addition to ceramic and metal belongings of daily use and vessels utilised for religious ceremonies. The findings obtained from Yündolan Village

Tumulus give way to the understanding that the deceased had been a Thracian Chief and his body had been buried (the findings of these three excavations are now displayed at Kırklareli Museum). Within the provincial borders of Kırklareli, there are tumuli in the surroundings of the Central District of Kırklareli, Eriklice, Kayalı, Dokuzhöyük Village, Üsküp Town, Karahalil Town in Babeski District, Demirkapı Village, Sivriyer Village in Demirköy District, Devletliagaç Village in Kofçaz District, Ahmetbey and Sakızköy Towns in Lüleburgaz District, Yenibedir, Umurca Village, Pehlivan köy District, İslambeyli Village in Pınarhisar District, Kadıköy, Çakıllı, Okçular, Akıncılar, Çavuşköy, Müsellim, Hasbuğa and Kıyıköy Town in Vize District.



### **Dolmens (Covered Rock Graves):**

The word “dolmen” is Celtic with “tolmen” referring to rock tables. Dolmens are expressed to be megalithic monuments in the archaeological literature. The great majority of dolmens are simple rectangular boxes constructed of four or more rock plates and covered by a rock plate of a greater size. All of them were covered with earthen tumuli during the time of their construction. The dolmens in Eastern Thrace are dated with the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of Early Iron Age, but some of these are known to have been in use until the 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Centuries B.C. In terms of design characteristics, dolmens in Eastern Thrace are divided into two main groups, i.e. those with a single chamber and those with two chambers. The front façade in both groups exhibit an entrance in the form of a dromos. Regarded to represent the early stage for the commonly observed tumuli in Thrace, dolmens are observed on the northern and north-western mountainsides and outskirts of plains that lie close to such mountainsides. Also referred to as covered ones or covered rocks in the region, dolmens are mausolea constructed of monolithic, flat and coarse rocks in the form of simple chambers. The relevant research undertaken until now indicate that dolmens had been extended to the

surroundings of Demirköy District in Kırklareli as a line centred around Lalapaşa District in Edirne and they had been in use during Early Iron Age (1300-800 B.C.).



### **Menhirs (Obelisks):**

Menhirs are megalithic obelisks for mausolea. There are a large number of such structures in and closely around Kırklareli. Despite the observation of similar obelisks mostly in recently constructed tombs, their main period of use is represented by Early Iron Age. Examples of stalagmites with an average height of 3 metres can be seen in the Central District of Kırklareli, Erikler, Değirmencik and Ahmetçe Villages, and Lüleburgaz District. However, some of the obelisks situated around Muslim tombs mostly observed in districts and villages and notably in Central Kırklareli are considered to have been employed as menhirs after being dismantled from their original locations and brought to such localities.



### **3.2.2.2 Castles, Towers, Amphitheatres, and Wall Remains**

#### Vize Ancient Theatre:

Vize Ancient Theatre is dated as a structure from 2<sup>nd</sup> Century A.D. Uncovered through excavations conducted in three seasons between 1995 and 1998, the structure was revealed with its caveas, paradoses between such caveas, skene, and orchestral chamber. The findings obtained from the relevant studies include stage reliefs and statues depicting embossed scenes from Dionysos on marble in addition to glass, metal, and ceramic pieces belonging to Roman,

Byzantine, and Ottoman periods. These are complemented with the identification of a large number of coins belonging to emperors. Efforts are on-going to uncover the entirety of the theatre and transform the area into an archaeological site. The theatre will be added to the touristic richness of Kırklareli through a large-scale scientific excavation to be undertaken in forthcoming years.



#### Yoğuntaş (Polos) Castle:

The castle is located on a commanding height situated 500 metres to the northwest of Yoğuntaş Village. Constructed in 4<sup>th</sup> Century B.C. during the reign of Philip II of Macedonia, the castle was utilised during the periods of Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Greek and Persian Empires.



#### Koyva Castle:

Situated close to Kuzulu Village of the Central District, the rather derelict castle is estimated to have been constructed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. The only parts remaining from the castle today are foundation remains and galleries. There is a high possibility for this structure to have acted as an observation tower rather than a castle. There are cave monasteries dated approximately with the same period 500 metres to the South of the remains.



#### Pınarhisar Wall and Castle Remains:

Even though the exact date concerning the construction of the respective castle and walls is not known, the structure is agreed to have acted as a group of structures from the 5<sup>th</sup> Century Byzantium. It is assumed to have been commissioned for construction by Kozmos Dimitriadis, one of the prominent knights of Byzantine Emperor Theodosius II. Also known as virisis (spring), the castle and walls are situated close to springs of mineral water that coined the District located adjacent to the hills bearing the structure (now designated as Ali Özer Park).

In addition to these castle and wall remains that have survived to our day in Central Pınarhisar, there are similar castle and wall remains including Çayırköy Castle in Çayırdere Village; Hisarcık Hill Castle in Erenler Village; Mahya Hill and Manastır Hill Castles in Evciler Village; and Yeniceköy Castle in Yeniceköy Town which have not been able to survive due to significant destruction, but give themselves away by reason of their remains.



#### Vize Castle:

The walls situated in Kale Neighbourhood in Vize surround the northern and western sides of the city. The initial construction is estimated to date 72 – 76 B.C. Then, the structure were repaired again in 527 – 565. The construction was completed with coarse cut Stones placed on top of each other and bound with robust mortar. The old walls were constructed with soft, yellowish stone blocks, while uniformly cut, bluish rocks were used in the body of walls situated to the North of the city. The castle is understood to have been reconstructed during Late Byzantine Period. The castle consists of two sections, i.e. a bailey and a keep. The construction of the high bastion and the commanding bastion situated along the riverside situated to its southeast part started in late 12<sup>th</sup> Century during the reign of Comnenus and was completed in Late Byzantine Period. The western and southern parts of the walls surrounding old Vize Town are still intact. There are a few bastions on the walls situated on the western side and one more bastion in front of them constructed to protect aqueducts. The southern walls of large stone blocks have been preserved for up to 3-4 metres in height.



#### Kiyıköy Castle:

Kiyıköy Castle surrounds a significant part of Kiyıköy Town in Vize District and was constructed during the reign of Iustinianus in the Byzantine Period (6<sup>th</sup> Century). The mortar on the structure indicates that it has been repaired in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The castle is established on a mountain side extending towards the sea between Kazandere to the south and Pabuçdere to the north. The western façade of the castle rests on a flat land, while its eastern façade has been destroyed to the ground. The currently intact parts show that the walls were covered with uniformly cut stones with rubble filling inside. Here, the wall thickness is 2.20 metres and its height 2.50 metres. The height of the walls situated next to the second gate goes up to 5 metres. The second bastion no longer exists today. The walls here go as high as 6 metres. A secret gate is situated to the south of the southern walls and the gate can be reached from the castle after a descent of 180 steps. The Palace Gate has been preserved well until

today. The cut block on brick is coated with stones. There is a defence ditch with a width of 12 metres from the third to the sixth bastion. Vize Gate was covered with stone and brick beams and was restored in 1991.

Furthermore, certain castle and tower remains are also present in certain villages of Vize. Those that have been identified as of now from among such remains include four tower remains in Akpınar Village; castle remains in Hamidiye Village; Kızılağaç Çingene Castle in Hamidiye Village; and castle/tower remains close to Pazarlı.



#### Demirköy Historical Fatih Iron Foundry:

The structure is situated at a distance of 3.800 metres along the south-eastern direction towards Demirköy District in Kırklareli. Considered to be the most modern foundry of its time and referred to as Demirköy State Armoury Enterprises, Demirköy Foundry used to produce certain war materials for Ottoman armies and some of the iron sections utilised in the manufacture of cannons and weapons. Specifically, some of the cannons and shells used by Mehmet the Conqueror to conquer Istanbul in 1453 had been cast here. Another point worthy of consideration is the fact that the energy needed for his foundry from the Ottoman Period was generated with water. Identified to have been quite significant for mining during the Iron Age, Demirköy and its surroundings are understood to have been even more important along with the development process of the Ottoman State. This complex cast iron with the state-of-the-art technology of the time and is considered to have been in sustained production from mid-15<sup>th</sup> Century to late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

A prominent industrial facility from the Ottoman Period was recovered, although partially, after the research study and excavation conducted in 2000 and 2001 and was turned into an area that lends itself to scientific studies. Starting from this stage, the “Kırklareli Demirköy Ottoman Iron Foundry Research-Excavation and Restoration Project” was implemented under the joint efforts of the History of Science Institution of Turkey and our Museum Directorate

between 2003 and 2006. These excavations uncovered 34 archaeological artefacts including cannonballs and glassworks and 14 coins, which were then accepted into the Museum. During the excavation work held in 2011, 2012 and 2013, a large number of findings were obtained in consistency with the functions of the Foundry. Iron pieces found as a result of excavations in the canal extending in between are important as they may have been parts of a mechanical system. Some of these parts are in good condition as concrete data that document the industrial archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, while some have been reduced to unidentified small iron pieces. The findings obtained from the Foundry during these two seasons include shells, pieces of nozzles, and porcelain and ceramic artefacts, while excavations conducted in previous years uncovered numerous examples of slag and domestic and imported (English) firebricks. From among the findings from the 2011, 2012 and 2013 excavations, five large iron artefacts considered to be important for the industrial archaeology of the Ottoman Empire were delivered to the museum as inventory items. Currently, there are plans for the restoration of the facilities uncovered as a result of such work and the addition of the functioning foundry to tourism in Kırklareli as an outdoor industrial museum.



#### Seyfioğlu Fort and Stone Fort:

Seyfioğlu Fort is situated 3 kilometres in the northeast and Stone Fort 3 kilometres in the northwest of the provincial centre of Kırklareli. Seyfioğlu Fort and Stone Fort were constructed for the purposes of security after the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878. Seyfioğlu Fort and Stone Fort are similar to Edirne Forts in terms of construction style, but different with their purpose of defence.



### **3.2.2.3 Bridges, Aqueducts, and Fountains**

#### **Babaeski Bridge:**

Located within Babaeski District in the Province of Kırklareli, Babaeski Bridge was constructed on a military and trade route from Anatolia to the Balkans during the reign of Murad 4. With a masonry bridge structure covered with cut Stones, Babaeski Bridge was structured with 6 arches. Babaeski Bridge is still in active use today.



#### **Alpullu (Sinanlı) Bridge:**

The bridge with a pointed arch was constructed during the time of Sokollu in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. It is the most magnificent monumental bridge by Sinan the Architect, who used the surrounding stones of 76 cm as monoliths. Its arch stone of 76 cm cannot be seen in any other bridge. Its moulding profile is identical, and the guard stone was bound to the outer surfaces.



#### Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Bridge:

Situated along Lüleburgaz Stream at the exist of Edirne from Lüleburgaz on the road between Istanbul and Edirne, Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Bridge was constructed in 1569-1570 along with Lüleburgaz Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Complex commissioned by Sokollu Mehmet Pasha to Sinan the Architect. It is still in use, but now has less traffic load after the road between Istanbul and Edirne has been carried out of the District.



#### Small Bridge:

The bridge is situated around Atatürk Elementary School. It was commissioned by Sokollu Mehmet Pasha to Sinan the Architect in the year 1569. The robust, single-arched and classical bridge has a width of four metres.

#### Akarca Bridge:

The bridge is situated along Ergene River at the entrance to Pehlivan köy from Uzunköprü on the road between Uzunköprü and Edirne. With 7 arches in total including the round arches placed around the large arch in the middle, the bridge is still in use. The top half of its undated inscription has been broken off and thus does not provide a specific date for the construction of the bridge; but its construction style, materials, and purpose of use indicate the bridge to have been constructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century during the Ottoman Period.



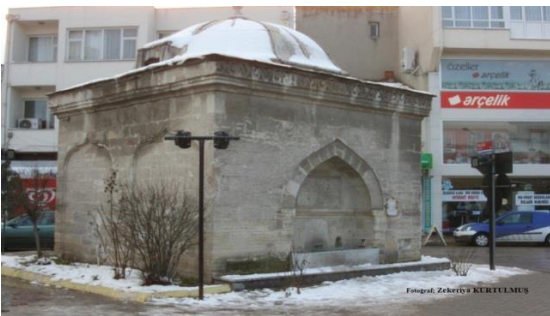
#### Lüleburgaz Büyükkarıştıran Aqueducts:

The aqueducts are located in Büyükkarıştıran Town in Lüleburgaz District and was commissioned by Sokollu Mehmet Pasha to Sinan the Architect. Its two towers (water gauges) are still intact.



#### Babaeski Dördüzlü (Four-Sided) Fountain:

The fountain of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century is on asphalt road right across a Turkish bath. The fountain supplies municipal water and its inscription was scratched off during the Bulgarian invasion. The four-sided and domed square fountain was constructed with cut tartar stone. Only one of its sides is currently active and the fountain is an example of the classical fountains in Edirne.



#### Babaeski Municipal Fountain:

The prism fountain sits on a square pedestal with a height of 3.5 metres. Its top was constructed with tartar stone in the form of a dome and the square fountain has four sides.

#### Lüleburgaz Bazaar (Centre) Fountain:

The fountain was commissioned as a square fountain along Turgut Bey Avenue in the District by Mehmet 4 of the Ottoman Empire in 1667 (H. 1078) and therefore, it is also known as Mehmet 4 (Avcı) Fountain or Central Fountain. It is still intact and active and its construction inscription of five lines in italic script is located on the façade mirror. With four corners and four sides, the square fountain has square façades on all sides. It is covered with a dome and its walls are of cut tartar stone. According to rumours, Mehmet 4 was keen on hunting and liked the water here during his rest in the locality and decided to have this fountain constructed in this neighbourhood.



#### Lüleburgaz Zafer Fountain:

The fountain was constructed in 1917 (H.1333) during the World War I. Having been damaged during the Greek occupation between 1920 and 1922, it was restored in consistency with its original form in 1962, but it collapsed as a result of a traffic accident in 1990 and was reconstructed following the incident. There used to be troughs on four sides of the fountain and a basin with running water, but these features were lost in 1944. The fountain is in the shape of a rectangular column of tartar stone and its main body consists of a pediment and a small dome on its pedestal. Constructed also as a token of joy for the recovery of Lüleburgaz from the enemy, the enemy abandoning the town, and the return of soldiers to their barracks after the Balkan War, this fountain is one of the prominent structures in the town with its monumental and graceful standing with epitaphs.



#### Pınarhisar Çukur Fountain:

The fountain is situated in Beylik Neighbourhood on Istanbul road. Constructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the fountain features a single arch, a single façade, and a trough.



#### Pınarhisar Balıklı Fountain:

The fountain is situated in Beylik Neighbourhood on Istanbul road. Constructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the classically constructed fountain features large troughs specifically used for animals.

#### Vize Sultan Fountain:

The fountain is situated on Asmakaya Road in Bulaca Neighbourhood. Constructed in 1770, the fountain features running water and an Ottoman inscription of six lines on its façade, as well as a pointed arch and three troughs.

#### Kuru Pasha (Kayalık) Fountain:

Situated in Karacaibrahim Neighbourhood, the fountain was constructed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The currently active fountain offers ample water running continuously.



#### Grand Mosque Fountain:

The fountain is located at the side of the Grand Mosque that overlooks Cumhuriyet Square. Constructed in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, it is mostly known as Alman Fountain.



#### Gerdanlı Fountain:

The fountain is situated on Acem Geçidi Street on Tırnova Avenue. Constructed in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the fountain is still in active service.



#### Kocahıdır Fountain:

The fountain is situated on Old Istanbul Road. Constructed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the fountain is still in active service.



#### Kayyumoglu Fountain:

The fountain is situated on Old Istanbul Road and was constructed in 1768 (H.1182). Its original construction and repair inscriptions are intact, and the fountain is still in active service.



#### Kapan Fountain:

The fountain is located in front of Kapan Mosque next to the New Municipality building. Constructed in 1771, the fountain features a construction inscription in six lines in Ottoman Turkish. Although it has lost its original features, the fountain is still in active service.



#### Boyacı Fountain:

Situated on Namazgah Avenue, the fountain was constructed in 1771. Also known as Kolancı, the fountain is still in active service.

Karaumbey Fountain:

Situated on Karaumur Avenue, the fountain was constructed in 1844. Also known as Kara Hasan Fountain, it is still in active service.



**3.2.2.4 Culture Centres, Museums, Monuments, and Martyrs' Cemeteries**

Kırklareli Museum:

Constructed in 1894 and used as the Municipality Building for a long time, the structure was opened for viewers on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 1994. The museum features sections for culture and nature, ethnography, and archaeology. As of the year 2014, the museum has 2767 archaeological artefacts, 876 ethnographic artefacts, 2867 coins, and 34 stamps and stamp prints, i.e. 6544 artefacts in total.



Kırklareli Culture Centre:

As one of the provinces with the highest literacy rate and cultural level, Kırklareli is home to a contemporarily equipped culture centre that is able to accommodate all forms of cultural and

artistic activities. The culture centre sits on a construction area of approximately 4000 m<sup>2</sup> on a land of 23.000 m<sup>2</sup> and has three separate sections connected to each other with passageways. The first section represents a theatre hall, the second section a fine arts gallery, and the third section a library and administrative rooms.

#### Kırklar Martyrs' Cemetery:

The Monument of Forty Martyrs was constructed for Forty Raiders who fell martyrs during the retrieval of Kırklareli by Turkish armies commanded by Demirtaş Pasha (during the reign of Murad I) from Byzantium occupation. Surrounded by marble columns, the cemetery has two more graves with marble edges, soil at the centre, and planted flowers on both sides of the rectangular monument which also features a marble tomb displaying the names of the forty martyrs.



#### Kırklareli Martyrs' Cemetery:

Situated on Old Istanbul Road, the cemetery started in 1926 in construction and was completed in 1930. It was renovated by the Society for the Construction of Martyrs' Cemeteries in Turkey in 1963.

#### Poyralı Martyrs' Cemetery:

The cemetery is located in Yenibağlık Locality close to Poyralı Village at a distance of 5 km to Pınarhisar. It was constructed in 1981 to commemorate the heroes who fell martyrs during the Balkan War of 1912.

#### Cevizköy Balkan Martyrs' Cemetery:

The cemetery is located in Cevizlik Locality at the northeast side of Cevizköy at a distance of 13 km to Pınarhisar. It was constructed in 1981 to commemorate 85 Turkish Troops who were martyred with a trap during the Balkan War of 1912.

### Niğdeli Ethem Corporal Monument:

The monument is located in front of the Stone Front. It was constructed to commemorate Corporal Niğdeli Ethem who fell martyr in Stone Fort during the Balkan War of 1912.



### Karahıdır Monument:

The monument is located in Karahıdır Neighbourhood in Central Kırklareli. It was commissioned in 1914 by Governor Ibrahim Süreyya to commemorate Karahıdır, who won the war for Turks by beheading the enemy king during the Battle of Varna in 1444.



[www.kirklarelibilgisayar.com](http://www.kirklarelibilgisayar.com)

### Old Kırklareli Houses:

The architectural examples situated around the city with a gravity observed in Yayla Neighbourhood in the Central District mostly date back to early 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Some of them were constructed by Greek masters in the neo-classical style and are still used as residential buildings.



### **3.2.2.5 Religious Structure**

#### Hızırbey Complex and Mosque (Grand Mosque):

Situated at the centre of the province, this Mosque was constructed by Mihalzade Hızır Bey in 1383 and has since then hosted a large number of civilisations. In fact, it is known as the first mosque to have been constructed in Anatolia. Resting on a 1470 square metres with a size of 15 x 15 m, this mosque has religious service grounds sufficient for 1000 people. The mosque collapsed as a result of an earthquake and was rebuilt in rectangular form. Half of its minaret was destroyed by Bulgarians during the Balkan War, but the minaret was repaired again after the war. Atatürk is said to have visited here and instructed for its restoration in 1930. Repaired for a number of times, the mosque was last restored to its original form by the Directorate-General of Foundations in 2007. The mosque comes to life with hand carvings by Calligraph Tevik Pasha of Kastamonu. Its structure bears the impressions of early Ottoman architecture. There is also a rumour that Hızır Bey's tomb is also located within the mosque complex.



#### Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Complex:

Situated in Lüleburgaz District in Kırklareli, Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Complex lies along the Old Istanbul-Edirne road. The most important factor for the construction of this complex during the reign of Sultan Selim II was Lüleburgaz serving as both a trade centre and an accommodation venue for troops on campaigns in Rumelia. Known as the largest one of

classical Ottoman complexes, this structure extends on an area of 40.000 m<sup>2</sup>. As a work constructed by Sinan the Architect, the Mosque consists of a madrasah, a bazaar, a poorhouse, a caravanserai, a bathhouse, a primary school, a bridge, and a tomb. Sinan the Architect is considered to have started the construction of this complex before 1568. Sinan the Architect applied an innovative design here by addressing the structures constituting the complex as a whole and opening large arches on both sides, which are gathered around a central dome. The main entrance to the complex also lies below this dome. A large part of the complex is in good condition; however, the caravanserai and poorhouse were destroyed in 1935 and the destruction of the bathhouse was stopped by Atatürk in response to a relevant article written by Architect Sedat Çetintaş. The bathhouse has been preserved well until today.

The caravanserai, madrasah, mosque, and library are situated along the same design axis. There is a bazaar situated between the caravanserai and the madrasah. The gates to the mosque and the caravanserai are covered with a large dome resting on four arches. A large yard is situated between the mosque and the madrasah with cloisters on three sides and madrasah rooms behind such cloisters.



#### Kadı Ali Mosque:

The mosque was commissioned by Hacı Ilbeği for his son, Veteran Ali Bey, in 1360-1363 during the reign of Murad I. It is situated at the Edirne entrance to Lüleburgaz right across Lüleburgaz Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Bridge. It was constructed with stones brought in from Pınarhisar on a square design with a single minaret. It is still open for religious service.



### Babaeski Cedid Ali Pasha Mosque:

Also known as “Grand Mosque” among the people of Babaeski, this mosque was commissioned by Grand Vizier Semiz “Cedid” Ali Pasha in 1560 with Sinan as its architect.

The mosque has a single dome, two cloisters, smooth cut stone on outer walls, and a single minaret. The narthex with two cloisters sits on six columns. The structure has five sides and the gate entrance has cross vaults at the top and domes on the sides. The second narthex is covered with wood and opens to a yard with 16 columns. In the front part, there is a fountain yard without cloisters and with a twelve-edged fountain. The altar axis of the yard features the main entrance gate and the side door on the right displays a repair inscription. The mosque was repaired upon the orders of Mahmud II in 1832. The internal decorations must have been created during such repairs.

Its dome lies on a hexagonal base and is supported by five half domes with two domes on both sides and one dome on the altar projection. The half dome covering the altar is at the same dimensions as the other four domes. The hexagonal foundation of the mosque was carried over the edges and buttress arches were placed on the edges to support the frame of the dome in the middle. There are two buttress arches on the east and West sides and single buttress arches on the other four corners, i.e. eight buttress arches in total, which emphasise the round frame of the dome. The five half domes also feature high and round frames. There are heavy towerlets with lobed domes at the top at the four corners of the main dome. The single minaret on the right has six balconies which have six stalactites.

This mosque represents one of the model mosques from Sinan the Architect before his construction of Selimiye Mosque. It has a similar design to Molla Çelebi Mosque in Fındıklı, Istanbul.



#### Kırklareli Kadı Mosque:

Situated at the city centre in Kırklareli, Kadı Mosque was constructed by Emin Ali Çelebi in 1577. The mosque is quite striking with its architecture. Having been repaired for a number of times until now, the mosque is still open for religious service today.



#### Kırklareli Karakaşbey Mosque:

Located in Yeni Hükümet borough, the mosque was commissioned by Karakaş Hacı Mehmet Bey in 1628. Currently open for religious service, the mosque is a structure with a wooden roof and a tile coating constructed on a square design from rubble stone. The minaret of the mosque is of regularly cut tartar stone with a single balcony and a lead-covered tip. Its minaret has been destroyed up to its pedestal and was rebuilt at a later date. A narthex was also added later to the mosque.



### Kırklareli Beyazıt Mosque:

The mosque is situated in Kocahıdır Neighbourhood in Central Kırklareli. It was originally constructed in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The second series of construction work was commissioned by Güllabi Ahmet Pasha. It is still in service and rests on a square design and an indoor space of 105 m<sup>2</sup> on a land of 489 m<sup>2</sup>. It has the capacity to accommodate 210 persons praying at the same time. The outer surfaces of the walls are of tartar and brick beams placed tightly together with alternating bricks. The internal ornaments and roof are wooden with four ridges and a tile cover. The minaret is woven in tartar starting from the pedestal. The single-sided classically arched fountain located outside the yard is also significant.



### Kapan Mosque (Karaca İbrahim Mosque):

Situated next to Kırklareli Municipality Building, this mosque was commissioned by Karaca İbrahim Bey in 1640 (H.1050).

Known also as Karaca İbrahim Mosque among the public, this structure was constructed of cut stone on a square design and with a roof. The outer surfaces of the walls are of tartar and brick beams placed tightly together with alternating bricks. The minaret rising next to the building has a square pedestal of cut stone with a round body, a single balcony, and a stone tip. A mufti's office was placed adjacent to the building at a later date.



#### Üsküpdere Mosque:

The mosque is situated in Üsküpdere Village of the Central District. Commissioned in the year 1904, the mosque has a rectangular design. There are a gathering place and a narthex specifically available to women. Its ceiling is of wood with windows with pointed arches on four façades and a minaret with a single balcony. It is still open for religious service.



#### Fatih Mosque:

The mosque is located behind the historical fountain on the asphalt road in the District of Babaeski. Constructed in 1467, the mosque is still in use today. Its walls are of rubble stone and its narthex is wooden with a tile cover. Its minaret has been destroyed and the part rising above the balcony was rebuilt of wood at a later date. There is a construction inscription of two lines above the interior door.



#### Hundi Hatun Mosque (Cami-i Kebir):

The structure dates back to the 15<sup>th</sup> Century and is located in Cami-i Kebir Neighbourhood. It used to have a square design, but the narthex was closed at a later date to give the mosque a rectangular outlook. The walls were constructed entirely with cut stones. The surrounding walls feature large blocks, which reinforce the belief that there used to be a dome here. The altar, pulpit, and ambo are of wood.



#### Sadıkağa Mosque:

Situated on Pınarhisar-Istanbul road, the mosque was constructed in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and is still open for religious service as a semi-wooden building sitting on a square design.

#### Sadri Bey Mosque:

The structure dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and is located in Kale Neighbourhood of Vize District. The only remaining parts are three walls and an arch. The fountain next to the building also belongs to the same century. It was constructed of regularly cut tartar stone. The fountain in the mosque's yard is ornamented with Byzantine Stones. There is also a bathhouse dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century next to the mosque. With a minaret featuring a single balcony, the mosque is still open for religious service.



#### Small Hagia Sofia (Gazi Süleyman Pasha) Mosque:

The mosque lies between the keep and bailey in Kale Neighbourhood in Vize District. It was constructed as a church during the reign of Justinian in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century. It was rearranged as a mosque in the second half of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century and it is still open for religious service as a mosque. It has a rectangular design that is close to a square. The structure has three apses and its dome is placed upon a tanbur with sixteen corners. The structure is divided into three sections with legs with a diameter of 1.30 or 1.40 cm holding the dome up and columns situated next to (between) such legs. These marble columns have Corinthian tips. The columns and mosaics are no longer intact, but they are similar to those found during the excavation between Hagia Sofia and St. Irene in terms of shape. The main building used to be accessible through the narthex with a door with three marble frames completely structured in the Byzantine style. The building of stone and bricks used to accommodate scripts and statues of women. Its dome is with cross and tunnel vaults. The altar was added later in concrete and the structure does not feature a pulpit.

The building is dominated completely by a church atmosphere. The structure was subject to numerous changes and was left to its fate for a long period of time. This was followed by unprofessional people attempting to restore the structure arbitrarily, but their efforts were left unfinished. A joint initiative of Kırklareli Museum and Department of Archaeology and History of Arts of Trakya University provided maintenance and cleaning services at the structure in the year 1997 and was restored with good loyalty to originality by the Directorate-General of Foundations in the year 2007.



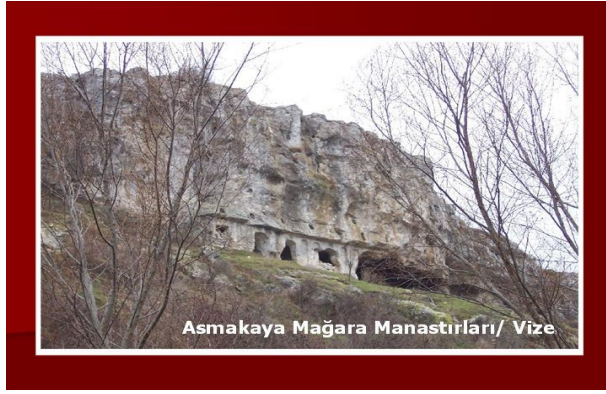
#### Kıyıköy Hagia Nicola Monastery:

Kıyıköy Hagia Nicola Monastery is situated on the southern mountainside along the road to Pabuçdere at a distance of 700 metres from the town. It is one of the best examples of rock monasteries from the Byzantine Period (6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Centuries). Its ground floor is home to a church and the floor below to sections specific to monks. A staircase to its north can be used to descend to a holy spring. There is a second entrance to the east of the church. The front part of the rock galleries was completed with a wooden entrance by Greeks in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, but this section was later removed.



#### Vize Cave Monasteries:

The monasteries are located in Asmakaya in Vize District in Kırklareli. It is a work from the Byzantine Period. The structure was formed with certain adjacent natural caves shaped by stonemasons.



#### Vize Synagogue (Şerbettar Hasan Bey Mosque):

The structure is situated in Kale Neighbourhood in Vize District. The structure used to serve as a synagogue in late 14<sup>th</sup> Century, but a person named Hasan Bey from Gallipoli transformed it into a mosque. The then derelict structure was restored in consistency with its originality and reopened for religious service by the Directorate-General of Foundations in 2007.



#### Koyunbaba Church:

The partially intact church with a collapsed roof is situated in Koyunbaba Village in the Town of Inece in the Central District.



#### **4- TOURISM SERVICE INFRASTRUCTURE IN ISTRANCA REGION**

##### **Accommodation and Catering Facilities (Hotels, Hostels, Restaurants, Café, etc.):**

Kırklareli has 3 hotels with 5 stars, 4 hotels with 4 stars, 3 hotels with 6 stars, 1 hotel with 2 starts and 1 boutique hotel for the use of tourists for their stays in Kırklareli. Bed capacity of these hotels is approximately 2000.

Accommodation in lodging house is becoming widespread in the province and the districts especially along the coastal strip. The province hosts a capacity of around 5000 beds including house lodging.

Istranca Region densely visited especially by tourists and the province itself have a wide range of food and beverage facilities. There is a myriad of restaurants selling seafood on the coastal strip.

##### **Transportation Infrastructure:**

Kırklareli is our province benefiting from the road, rail and sea transport. Provincial borders of Kırklareli have 65 km of highway, 342 km of state way and 200 km of provincial way. The total length of the highway within the province is 607 kilometres. D-100 and Edirne-Kınalı Highway constitute the main arteries. Interconnecting Turkey with Europe via D-100 way providing İstanbul-Edirne connection, TEM Highway is the most important ways of the province. 79 km of D-100 way and 65 km of TEM Highway pass through the province. On this axes are Babaeski and Lüleburgaz district centres and provincial city centre lies at the north.

Another axis in the province is Çerkezköy-Visa-Pınarhisar-Kırklareli and Edirne connection way parting from Silivri.

There are two access axes with the north-south connection. Highway of Dereköy-Kırklareli-Babaeski-Pehlivan köy extending up to Aziziye border provides the connection with Bulgaria. Another axis is İğneada-Demirköy-Pınarhisar-Lüleburgaz highway providing a connection with the Black Sea.

That the province has two north-south access axes and two east-west direction access axes in grid shape enables all residential areas to make use of these axes. In addition to this, the link of Büyükkarıştıran-Visa-Kıyıköy is connected to the Black Sea in the northeast. This axis is again connected to Pınarhisar slightly in the north of Büyükkarıştıran. Kofçaz district has a

direct connection with Kırklareli. Access to Pehlivanköy district is provided with a way parting from D-100 highway. A way parting from D-100 highway in the vicinity of Kırklareli-Alpullu is connected to Tekirdağ over Hayrabolu.

Apart from this, the province has a total of 1.932 kilometres village roads as 1.123 km asphalt, 701 km stabilized road, 24 km graded road and 84 km raw road. The road of our 172 villages out of 175 villages, i.e., 98 percent, have asphalt road.

Rail transport is the second important transportation system in the Thrace region. The line from Büyükkarıştıran to Türkgeldi into the provincial borders reaches Edirne over Alpullu-Pehlivanköy and provides the connection with Europe. Another line parting from Alpullu is connected to Kırklareli city centre. Babaeski and Lüleburgaz districts also use this railway with one service line around six kilometres. The portion of railway within the provincial borders is 110 km.

İğneada and Kırıkköy located on 60 km Black Sea shores of the province are two important hubs for sea transport. The connection of Kırklareli with the Black Sea is established from İğneada Port in 100 km distance to the city centre. İğneada Port was constructed as a fishing port and was put into service in 1972. İğneada Port Facilities are operated by İğneada Port Authority of the Undersecretariat of Maritime Affairs. The port has two docks. Shipment discharge dock is 150 m and fishing dock is 60 m length. Shipment discharge dock is capable of performing five vessels loading and unloading with 150 gross tonnes.

Kırklareli has no airport. However, the province is close to İstanbul-Atatürk Airport and Tekirdağ-Çorlu Airport. The distance between Atatürk Airport, İstanbul and Kırklareli is approximately 205 km. The distance between Çorlu and Kırklareli is 115 km.

Local transport within Kırklareli and transport with the district are carried out by private-public buses, minibuses and taxis.

Besides being rich in geographical and cultural infrastructure, the region has no infrastructure in order for these works to be fully implemented for tourism. (road, environment landscaping, accommodation and food-drinking facilities, social facilities, etc.) As the province is an area with added significance in national and regional strategical areas and plans, these gaps in this regard are attempted to be closed.

### **Tour - Rental Companies:**

The province has 17 tour companies with tourism certification. The vast majority of them are the companies dealing with inter-provincial and inter-district bus services. Some of which also travel to the Balkans. Tour companies boosting tourism activities in the province are the large tour companies with centres in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir. There are also small firms offering service in this area. Tours with stay or day trip can be organized in Thrace Region and the Balkans and European Tours can also be included in these trips. In Thrace Tours, Istranca Region is included in tour program together with Edirne. In this sense, the province is a region with rapidly increasing recognition.

Situated on the border with Bulgaria, Kırklareli is an important point for the region in terms of transportation by bus. In fact, Kırklareli Bus Station is a departure point not only for intercity bus lines. Bus lines are available at Kırklareli Bus Station to Bulgaria and Greece in addition to bus lines to prominent cities and remote areas of Turkey. The station is equipped with strict pre-customs clearance searches and duly careful luggage searches as it is one of the border gates of Turkey. With mostly local and regional companies serving in bus lines, Kırklareli Bus Station is home to nearly 20 tourism companies. Bus and minibus lines to districts and closeby provincial centres are complemented with frequently running lines to Marmara, Mediterranean, and Black Sea Regions. Access to Kırklareli Bus Station is provided with minibuses. The same minibus service can be used to reach any point in the city from the bus station.

Access from Kırklareli to İstanbul is also pretty easy with buses from a variety of companies departing to İstanbul at an interval of approximately one hour. Similarly, there is no issue with transportation between the provincial centre and districts. It is possible to reach districts from the bus station at any hour during the day. There are also bus companies offering lines to other provinces. There are a few lines departing every day to large cities such as Ankara and İstanbul with a smaller number of daily trips to other provinces.

## **5- TYPES OF TOURISM IN ISTRANCA REGION**

2012 Thrace Region Tourism Potential Research explained the concept of tourism and provided examples of definitions concerning types of tourism.

G. Blochberger divides tourism into three groups and defines certain sub-groups under such headings (Özgüç, 1994:9):

1. Nature Tourism:
  - a. Relaxation
  - b. Sports Tourism
2. Cultural Tourism
  - a. Cultural Meetings
  - b. Visits to Historical, Cultural, and Educational Centres
3. Relationship-Building Tourism
  - a. Individual and Collective Tourism
  - b. Domestic and International Tourism
  - c. Politically Motivated Trips
  - d. Business Trips

Doğanay lists the main types of tourism and their determining criteria as shown in Table 1 (Doğanay, 2001:11).

	<b>Determining Criterion</b>	<b>Type of Tourist Activity</b>
1	Relaxation, recreation, and treatment	Climatism Thermalism Uvalism Alpinism (plateau tourism) Coastal tourism (dune tourism)
2	Cultural tourism	Visits to prehistoric settlements Visits to historical settlements Visits to historical works Visits to battlegrounds Visits to museums
3	Sports	Watersports tourism (surfing, rafting,

	tourism	<p>and canoeing)</p> <p>Mountain tourism: Winter sports tourism</p> <p>Mountaineering (Alpinism)</p> <p>Skateboarding tourism</p> <p>Cave tourism (Spelaeology)</p>
4	Religious tourism	<p>Visits to religious locations</p> <p>Visits to sacred cities</p> <p>Participation in religious meetings</p> <p>Participation in religious ceremonies</p> <p>Visits to religious monuments</p>
5	Commercial tourism	<p>Participation in joint fairs</p> <p>Participation in industrial fairs</p> <p>Participation in exhibitions</p> <p>Participation in business and trade meetings</p>
6	Political tourism	<p>Visits to cities and locations marked by historic agreements</p> <p>Visits for the execution of political agreements</p> <p>Participation in political meetings</p>
7	Convention tourism	Congress, conference, and seminar meetings
8	Family tourism	Visits to loved ones, relatives, and friends

Istranca Region is one of our regions where tourism is developing rapidly. In charge of both developing tourism and protecting the assets, local authorities support new investments for enhancing tourism diversity. The number of tourists staying in Kırklareli in 2017 is around 393.000 according to the data of Kırklareli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism. The number of tourists for day trip purpose is more than 5 times of this figure. Foreign tourists account for a significant part among the tourists with accommodation. It is observed that foreign tourists usually come especially from the Balkans and Central Europe. This is because of physical proximity and historical kinship relations.

### ***BORDER CROSSINGS ARRIVALS-DEPARTURES***

<b>Dereköy Border Crossings Arrivals-Departure Statistics</b>		
<b>Years</b>	<b>The Number of Arriving Passengers</b>	<b>The Number of Departing Passengers</b>
2012 year	289,604	288,223
2013 year	380,277	386,570
2014 year	416,028	412,594
2015 year	434,068	431,099
2016 year	348,113	344,919
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,868,090</b>	<b>1,863,405</b>

**Coastal Tourism** Kırklareli is our province with 60 km coastal strip having a qualified coast in the Black Sea. Districts bordering the Black Sea are Vize and Demirköy districts. Its beaches favourable to coastal use are the areas between İğneada, Beğendik, Limanköy, Kıyıköy and Kasatura. There are particularly suitable hotels and lodging houses for accommodation especially in the vicinity of İğneada and Kıyıköy. There are appropriate areas for dining-drinking facilities and camping. Coastal tourism is very common in the region.

**Culture Tourism:** Kırklareli is a rich province in terms of historical and cultural artefacts. With the traces of many civilizations, the province has a lot of castles, towers, walls, mosques, churches, bridges, fountains, tumulus, mounds and amphitheatres etc. Within this context, Kırklareli is our province that can come under the spotlight for domestic and

international tourists. As a matter of fact, there are a day trip and stay tours within the scope of culture tourism.

**Day trip Tourism:** The region has an appropriate natural and environmental infrastructure for day trip tourism usually organized at the weekends for spending free times in local and regional scale. Picnic areas are used at full capacity especially between May and September.

**Gastronomy Tourism:** Even if gastronomy tourism is not an independent activity in Istanca Region, it is a type of tourism attracting tourists together with other types of tourism. The region offers a myriad of flavours to tourists with its fish restaurants in İğneada and Kızılköy and meatball, fermented sausage, cheese and yoghurt and traditional Hardaliye drink.

**Cave Tourism:** What comes to mind first when the cave is referred in the Region is Dupnisa Cave. Attracting a great number of domestic and foreign tourists, the cave is qualified as a wetland and hosts underground habitat for some species. Besides Dupnisa cave, there are other caves opened for tourism and prepared for opening.

**Trekking (Hiking) Tourism:** The region has many places for this type of tourism. These places are where natural diversity is densely observed. It is one of the most suitable places for trekking with its sea, forest, lakes, streams and fresh air. It is possible to take a walk in the region other than designated 6 walking paths. Trekking tourism is expanding rapidly across the region.

**Hunting Tourism:** Observing rare birds and marine animals, land and underwater hunting and scientific specific species make the area attractive for tourism in the region. The province offers habitat for interesting animal species thanks to its natural structure. Hunting tourism is a known and widely-performed type of tourism in the region.

Kırklareli is located within an important area in terms of both land and water hunting. The province enables habitation of various animal species thanks to its natural structure and being on a migration route.

The province has certified Demirköy-Vize Karamanbayırı, Demirköy Sislioba, Kofçaz Kocayazı, Vize Kızılköy State hunting sites, Babaeski Ergene, Lüleburgaz Ahmetbey, Kırklareli Kayalı general hunting sites and Çukurpınar exemplary hunting sites. As you can go out hunting here, you can also hunt in the areas such as state forests within the borders of the province, soil conservation and forestation sites, state agricultural enterprises, dam lakes and safety zones, lake, lagoon, swamps and reeds.

**Sports Fishing:** Fishing is a passion of human beings from their hunting motives. Sports fishing refers to a fishing activity performed as a sport in forest rivers and lakes/ponds for spending non-commercial and pleasant time, commune with nature.

Those desiring to experience this passion can have a pleasant time in Pabuçdere, Kazandere, Velika, Erikli Lake, Mert Lake, Pedina Lake, Hamam Lake flowing between green forests within the borders of our province and İğneada Floodplain Forests National Park, Kasatura Gulf Nature Protection Area, Kanara Stream, Kırklareli Dam, Kayalı Dam, Armağan Dam and village dams/ponds constructed for utilization of 3/5 villages in recent times. (These ponds are: Merkez Üsküp, Dolhan ponds, Babaeski Sofuhalil Pond, Lüleburgaz Turgutbey, Sarıcaali ponds, Vize Serpen Pond)

**Photo Safari Tourism (Nature Photography):** Our province has many places where people can wander and take a photograph while taking a walk. İğneada Floodplain Forests National Park, Kasatura gulf Nature Protection Area, Dupnisa Cave, Vize Fair Stream, Vize Tekkaya, Balaban (Velika) Stream, Mutlu (Rezve) Stream, Picnic Areas, Yenesu and Domuzdere Cave in Vize Balkaya, Kızılköy and Captain Cave in Vize Kızılköy holding unique diversity and fauna and flora are the places where people can have these activities.

**Botanic Tourism:** Kırklareli is a significant region for those interested in botanic tourism thanks to its flora richness within its borders. 670 species of around 10.000 plant species of our country are grown in Kırklareli Forests. The region has 27 endemic plant species. These are predominantly total 1 endemic 7 plants in blackthorn communities and clay pastures, 2 endemic 39 plants in humid sycamore and thermophilic oak forests in Istranca Region, 4 endemic 11 taxon Terkos-Kasatura coasts fresh water and swamps in İğneada Floodplain water flooding forests. Total 73 taxons with 13 endemic species in sand dunes, oak Baltic forests, scrub and heathlands, calcareous meadows are endangered species and must be urgently conserved. This touristic activity to be held in our province can also be organized with pleasure in other open areas with all forest sites of the region and Kasatura Nature Protection Area as well as İğneada Floodplain Forests.

**Bird Watching (Ornithology) Tourism:** Although bird watching is known by a small number of people in our country, it is quite common in Europe and North America. 194 species out of 454 bird species that make up bird presence in our country can be observed within the borders of İğneada of our province throughout the year. The area is a transition route of many water birds and predatory birds and especially storks (white stork and black stork) in autumn migration transition. Some water birds (heron, goose, duck, water hen,

ringed plover, etc.) and predators (eagle, falcon, hawk, hobby, etc.) reproduce in the areas. This bird richness in our province attracts the attention of addicts of bird watching that is one of the types of alternative tourism.

The areas in which these activities can be performed other than İğneada area are Kasatura Gulf Nature Protection Area, Vize District Çavusköy Pond Locality, Dupnisa Cave Wetland Area.

**Wild Life Watching Tourism:** Kırklareli enables habitation of various animal species thanks to its natural structure and being on a migration route. Source section of Vize Kazan Stream and Pabuç Dere is the important habitat of trout and the rocky area between İğneada and Kastros the areas with underwater caves are the habitat of endangered Mediterranean Seal. Watching these rare species of animals makes our province attractive in terms of scientific studies. It is possible to observe various living species especially in Wetlands of İğneada Floodplain, Dupnisa Cave Wetland, Kasatura Gulf Nature Protection Area, Karahıdır Wood, Kanara Stream, Sakızköy Wood, Kavaklı Wood, İnce Wood, Karahıdır Wood, Balkaya, Ergene and Mert Lake.

## **6- DIVERSIFICATION WORKS OF TOURISM OF ISTRANCA REGION**

### **Eco-Agro Tourism:**

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) has defined eco-tourism, in simple terms, as travelling sensitive natural areas, observing welfare of locals and conserving the environment. Ecotourism has emerged as a reaction to sea-sun-sand. Agro-Eco Tourism incorporates integrated elements of nature, culture and rural tourism.

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) have gathered with non-governmental organizations, private company enterprises, states, academicians and local communities and have set the eco-tourism principles as follows as a result of multi participatory discussions.

- Minimizing natural and cultural impacts that could damage the destinations,
- Revealing the requirements for visitor management plans and tourism development areas for natural areas or the zones contemplated to be destinations of eco-tourism; promoting utilization of social and environmental based studies,
- Making an endeavour for boosting economic benefits of communities, local enterprises and hosting organizations living within and around nature and conservation areas and emphasizing the significance of a responsible operator that can work within cooperation with local administrations and society,
- Procuring development of an infrastructure compatible with the natural and cultural environment in a manner that will conserve local vegetation and wildlife and reduce the use of petroleum sources,

### **Types of Eco-Agro Tourism:**

- Eating with Organic Products
- Nature Photography
- Highland Tourism
- (Ornithology) Tourism (Bird Watching Tourism)
- Butterfly Watching Tourism
- Wildlife Watching Tourism
- Sports Fishing
- Bicycle Tourism

- Balloon Tourism
- Diving Tourism
- Agro-eco-tourism
- Hunting Tourism
- Botanic Tourism
- Camping Caravan Tourism
- Cave Tourism
- Trekking
- Mountaineering
- Paragliding
- Eco-Gastronomy Tourism
- Orienteering

### **Eco-Agro Tourism in Istranca Region:**

There are some studies promoting the implementation of eco-agro-tourism in the region.

- 1) İğneada - Kıyıköy is considered an Eco-tourism city in 2nd Action Plan of 2007-2013 Action Plan in Turkish Tourism Strategy 2023 prepared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. TR21 Level 2nd Zone Thrace Region Plan 2014-2023 mentions several arrangements in regard to this region with Northern Thrace Tourism Corridor.
- 2) 2 comprehensive Projects facilitating infrastructure studies of eco-agro-tourism have been completed within the last 10 years in the region. Eco-agro tourism is promoted in all these projects. The first one of these projects is Biological Diversity and Natural Resources Management Project (GEF-II) in the region conducted by the General Directorate of Environmental Protection and National Parks, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, the World Bank. In this project, vegetation and animal assets of the region have been defined, opportunities and threats in the issue of resource utilization have been listed and it has been recommended to create conservation-utilization balance with those living in the locality.

The second one of these projects was started to be implemented in December, 2008, as the Project of Conservation of Biological Diversity and Sustainable Development in

Yıldız Mountains applied in Yıldız Mountains constituting the area facing the Black Sea of Kırklareli Province executed by the General Directorate of Natural Conservation and National Parks and General Directorate of Forestry, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, funded within the scope of the Bulgaria-Turkey Cross-Border Cooperation Program of European Union and was completed in December 2009.

- 3) Some national and international sanctions pose significance for conserving the region. Kırklareli has sub regions defined as the areas that need to be conserved both nationally and internationally. These sub-regions have 1 national park located in and in the vicinity of Floodplain and 2 nature protection area and 2 wetlands. In addition to this, many districts and municipalities in the region have been specifically designated and supported for developing eco-agro-tourism, yacht tourism, nature and sport, health and archaeological tourism.

## **7- SWOT ANALYSIS OF ISTRANCA REGION (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES and THREATS)**

SWOT analysis pertaining to Istranca Region contained in the Conclusion Report of "2013 Istranca and Vicinity Eco-Tourism Workshop" conducted under the coordination of Kırklareli Provincial Directorate of Tourism and Culture. Results of this analysis are of utmost importance for better understanding the region and generating solution recommendations.

### **Strengths:**

- Having the biggest single piece Floodplain (floodplain forestland) forest of the world and the biggest Floodplain forest of Europe
- Presence of National Park of İğneada Floodplain Forests
- Presence of Saka Lake Nature Protection Area and Kasatura Gulf Nature Protection Area
- Presence of 7 natural protected areas
- The inclusion of İğneada and Kıyıköy as eco-city capacity in "Turkey Tourism Strategy 2023" held by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.
- Having rich flora and fauna as well as region-specific endemic plants and invertebrates (red ant, Thrace bee, etc.)
- Bordering with Bulgaria.
- Ornithologically being on important bird migration routes of Western Palearctic
- 87% of the region covered with natural forest vegetation
- Having total 30 fish species, 8 of which are announced to be protected in Bern Convention
- The region having 310 insects, 46 mammals, 194 birds, 17 reptiles and 114 butterfly species
- The region having approximately 670 plant species.
- The area hosting 57% of mammal species in Thrace
- The existence of Dupnisa cave that is the only cave paving the way for tourism of Thrace
- Having coast to the Black Sea and long coasts
- Being one of the safest travelling points for domestic and foreign tourists
- Performing many eco-touristic activities in the region
- Presence of a rich Thracian Cuisine culture

- The possibility of house lodging
- Performing GEF II and Yıldız Mountains Biosphere Projects in the area
- Presence of Vize that has the single title of Cittaslow city of Thrace
- Having 5 natural ponds
- Presence of historical heritage such as Demirköy Fatih Foundry, Vize Hagia Sophia, Vize Amphitheatre, Pınarhisar Castle
- Presence of the highest point of Turkey in Europe, Mahya Hill
- Istranca Region Mountain in Bulgaria and Turkey is considered as a whole within the scope of "Europe Green Belt" by European Union.
- Having diversity of hunting animals
- Conservation of habitat integrity
- Thrace Kivırcık Lamb included in the most delicious meat list of the world raised in the region

#### **Weaknesses:**

- Decline of young population as a result of migration
- Lack of entrepreneurship of the locals
- Lack of collective working among the institutions and organizations and non-governmental organizations in the region
- Lack of formations in number such as union, cooperatives that are required for converting local products into economic value and ineffectiveness of those available
- Underdeveloped village lodging houses
- Lack of guide for visitors in İğneada Floodplain Forests National Park
- Lack of electrical infrastructure
- Beğendik and Malkoçlar border crossings not opened yet
- Lack of transportation infrastructure
- Haphazard and uncontrolled hunting
- Lack of budget and personnel by local administrations
- Incapacity of the regional universities to offer Tourist Guiding, Recreation Management, Gastronomy and Culinary Arts departments
- Lack of advertising, promotion and marketing
- Lack of bed capacity in Hospitality Industry
- Absence of a certified Tourism Master Plan of the region

- Failure of local handicrafts to be converted into touristic product
- Insufficiencies in mobile communication
- Occurrence of insufficiency of qualified personnel as a result of emigration of qualified personnel in tourism sector to outside cities
- Lack of eco-tourism infrastructure
- Absence of Tourism Information points of public and private sector
- Insufficiency of branding works
- Failure to produce sufficient projects of grant programs such as EU Cross-Border Cooperation, Thrace Development Agency, ENPI Black Sea Basin Cross-Border Cooperation etc.
- Aesthetic disorders in buildings.
- Lack of recreational areas
- The absence of port custom in İğneada
- Lack of healthcare services
- Local municipalities not included in the list of tourism priority local municipalities

#### **Opportunities:**

- Having completed sub-scientific studies in preparation of Environmental Layout Plan with 1/100 000 scales by Trakya University
- Having filed an application to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey, for announcing the region as Cultural and Tourism Conservation and Development Zone (KTKGB)
- Wetlands in the region meeting all criteria contained in RAMSAR Convention
- The possibility of organizing eco-tourism activities throughout 12 months in the region
- The region meeting the criteria stipulated for UNESCO World Natural Heritage Sites
- Presence of educational/academic institutions offering tourism education in graduate, associate degree and high school level
- Training of Forestry Management Certification to be applied in Forestry Enterprises for obtaining timber and non-timber forest products without damaging biological diversity, efficiency and ecological processes to be commenced
- Being the best area holding the suitable conditions for organic agriculture in Thrace
- Having a high Eco-tourism potential

- Declarations of researchers that there will be a high increase in demand for eco-tourism in the forthcoming years
- The incremental demand of tourists for nature
- EU Cross-Border Cooperation and Thrace Development Agency grant programs
- Proposal file prepared for announcing Istranca Region as Tourism Region having submitted to the Ministry
- Soil structure of the region being suitable for diversification of agricultural products
- Geographical proximity with a metropolitan city such as İstanbul
- Presence of favourable climate and geographical structure for healthcare tourism
- Presence of former Balkan architecture
- Potential of Gastronomy Tourism.
- The region being rich in endemic, medical and aromatic plant species.
- Presence of Yenesu, Domuzdere and Kırıkköy caves that are potential for cave tourism.
- The absence of the industry in the region
- The breadth of areas suitable for organic farming

#### **Threats:**

- Initiatives related to constructing a nuclear and thermal power plant in the region
- Presence of quarries and their increasing number
- Moving the water resources in Istranca mountains outside the area
- The possibility of wind power plants on migration routes of birds
- Road construction works damaging the environment
- Failure to comply with EIA reports and lack of inspection system
- Increasing secondary housing leading to concretion
- Illegal digging activities of treasure hunters
- Incorrect zoning planning
- Initiatives related to constructing port for freight shipment to İğneada
- Making zoning amendments for increasing floors and concretion to meet the demand since İğneada and Kırklareli city centres are satisfied with housing and settlement

## **8- CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Kırklareli has 30th development level in 81 provinces according to social and economic development data in Turkey in 2015 and is in 53rd place in terms of export volume. Drawing more adverse line each year, Kırklareli has first-class agricultural lands exposed to environmental pollution and high tourism potential intended for employment and creating added value and sensitive to the environment as an alternative to heavy industrial facilities.

That Kırklareli has proximity to one of the largest metropolitan cities of the world, İstanbul, border to Bulgaria and coast to the Black Sea puts it in a very advantageous position in terms of potential tourism supply. That current tourism potential does not have adequate advertising and marketing activities, accommodation and supply of eating-drinking facilities is insufficient and failure to reveal and recognize alternative types of tourism does not turn this advantage into an added value.

However, Kırklareli province has all brand destination conditions holding the international position. Besides traditional sea, sand and sun summer holiday, it holds all peculiarities of Rural Tourism that is one of the most developed world tourism trends. Kırklareli province hosts different human habits dating back from the past, unique geography, high mountains, forest, unprecedented floodplain and Dupnisa Cava that is the unique and biggest cave of Thrace open for tourism and it has a capability of organizing a myriad of rural tourism activities with its trait. Different traditions and customs brought along by migrant culture enable organization of different types of tourism such as cultural tourism, nature tourism, gastronomy Tourism, eco-tourism, special interest tourism, recreation tourism, trekking, bird watching, coastal tourism and cave tourism.

Solving the problems of Kırklareli province can be achieved with a good evaluation of advantages the city holds inside. To this end, local development plans, policies and projects that will consider all potential of the province should be implemented for preventing unemployment and increasing employment and ensuring local economic development within Kırklareli province. Today, industrial development programs applied for especially transforming the provinces into a brand and the strategies focusing on tourism and other natural advantages are successfully implemented for boosting the welfare.

Kırklareli has a relatively competitive edge among several tourism centres as it has floodplain forest with extraordinary beauty and richness in our world where nature and green space are gradually diminishing above all. The Forest is conserved with GEF II project executed with

the funds of the World Bank and announced as a national park. (aid is targeted in the issues relating to global warming to the developing countries for protecting global environment across the world, pollution of international waters, destruction of the ozone layer, permanent organic contamination, land reduction and destruction of biological diversity). It is attempted to protect the natural environment without disruption as there are protected sites in Demirköy and Kıyıköy and some areas herein are protected. Protection of this area is extremely important for leaving the future generations an intact environment.

Given the tourism activities realized in global scale in our time, nearly 60% of these activities are considered as touristic visitors based on nature (IES, 2005) and would singly suffice as tourism activity. Kırklareli destination is a place of the alluring centre for people that would like to get rid of big cities and get some fresh air. Besides acquiring different knowledge and experience by visiting cultural, historical and natural beauties other than the classical holiday concept, people would like to have a rest in a natural ambiance by meeting new people and experiencing different traditions, customs and lifestyles.

For this reason, Kırklareli is a city of nature, history and culture in a real sense. Given the existing potential and to the extent required investments are made, rural tourism poses the good potential for the locality. Rural tourism in Kırklareli is realized in both natural environments and in the areas with the sea.

Improving rural tourism preferred by many travellers in the world will be initiated by the adoption of the locals living in rural areas. For this purpose, the locals should be informed and trained in coordination by local administrations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations and environmental awareness should be raised and especially the locals should be ensured to participate in the training programs. In addition to this, cooperation should be established with tourism enterprises and information and support should be provided to the local in each phase. These values should be adopted and protected for transferring intact historical and natural beauties to the future generations. Protection-utilization balance should be the key element required to be considered herein as in each sector.

Given the all resources owned by Kırklareli regarding sustainability, it is observed that there is a myriad of natural resources for diversifying the tourism and this case poses the potential for nature-oriented touristic visits. Co-existence of forests, lakes and sea with unique beauties and the ability of visiting them each season make the province distinguished from other provinces. Tourists arriving here for utilizing from these places generally organize day trip visits.

The most important advantage of the proximity of İstanbul that will bring to Kırklareli province is that tours that will attract the people desiring to spend their weekends comfortably and to have a rest to Kırklareli which is very close to İstanbul should be organized. In this way, the province will become more recognized and the people visiting here with day trip purpose will desire to stay in their forthcoming visits and tourism demand will be boosted. Tourism activities such as organizing tours by travelling agencies in Kırklareli and other provinces to these areas are not sufficient. Given the tours organized by many agencies for the weekend in İstanbul, the number of tours organized for Kırklareli is very little or none. This is because Kırklareli is not known well with its values ranging from natural beauties to cultural assets of Kırklareli.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Given the weaknesses of Kırklareli province regarding tourism potential, there is a lack of facilities and infrastructures in the areas of touristic values. Especially lodging houses and boutique hotels should be opened on the coastal regions. There are some problems such as bad roads for accessing some points, lack of direction signs and issue of environmental cleanliness. Hygienic conditions are of utmost importance for the development of tourism. The locals and artisans should display sensitivity for the frequently visited coastal regions and other visiting areas. The locals should be trained in the issue of opening lodging houses and nature tourism.
2. That Kırklareli is a province sharing a border with the Black Sea can be construed as having day trip visitors. This is the most important power that a province holds for the development of its tourism and economy. Various festivals organized for developing cross border relations as it is a border city such as Kakava festivals can be carried out by involving cooperation with bordering country; "sister cities" should be created and cultural contacts and economic cooperation should be provided.
3. As Kırklareli is a border province, tours in which Kırklareli province can be visited, local food can be eaten, and shopping opportunities can be introduced can be organized by employing qualified personnel fluent in the foreign language in tourism information offices at the border gates. By starting from the guides that will introduce the city, the manpower to be employed in each level of the tourism sector and trained in its field is not sufficient. Guides and other sector employees should be trained by being specialized as to the type of tourism. In this sense, gastronomy tourism where food of Kırklareli, especially Hardaliye that is a drink peculiar to Kırklareli province

and another traditional Turkish cuisine can also be introduced can be developed besides other tourism alternatives.

4. High summits of Istranca Mounts covered with dense forest are the habitats of large hunting animals and plains are the habitats of winged hunting animals. (Data of Kırklareli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2006-2008). Pigs and wolves are observed in Kocayazı and Kula villages of Kofçaz districts and in Dereköy, Demirköy, Vize and the forests close to the border of Bulgaria and deer and roe are observed in İğneada Fair Pier, Kıyıköy and Kastros Bays. Foxes, rabbits are observed in the valleys and hillsides in Ergene basin and badgers are observed in streamside. Partridges are observed in the vicinity of Bedre, Handere, Ahmetçe and Şeytandere of Merkez district and the cliffs and bushes in Lüleburgaz, Pınarhisar and Babaeski districts; hazel grouse can be observed in Meadowlands and vineyards and goose, duck, woodcock and quails are observed in reeds and swamps and coastal forests where rivers in İğneada flow into the sea. "Hunters and Shooters Club" established in 1955 in Kırklareli organize battues. The areas appropriate for hunting tourism should be designated for developing hunting tourism in the province and required facilities should be constructed. Land hunting, as well as water hunting, are carried out in the province.
5. Marketing issue should be emphasized for increasing tourism potential of Kırklareli province. Marketing covers a wide range of activities ranging from development of touristic products to its pricing, advertising and distribution. First of all, it should be started with the question of "What are the touristic products with the potential to be developed for Kırklareli?" As indicated above, the region is appropriate for nature tourism, cave tourism and sea tourism. These products should be evaluated and priced regarding demand, rivals, seasonal factors etc. Introduction of products is extremely important because the consumer will purchase the products and services that he is aware of its presence and does not naturally demand the products he does not know; in other words, the consumer would like to wander if he is aware of the places and characteristics he will explore. For this reason, Kırklareli province should be introduced effectively with advertising tools such as an advertisement, public relations, personal sales, sales development, direct marketing.
6. Today, Internet has a fairly significant place as it enables advertising of goods/service and accessing the persons even if it is another place in the world. The persons desiring to visit this region should obtain information from the websites regarding where to go,

where to stay and what to eat together with images as well as price and transport information. In addition to this, recommendations from mouth to mouth are of utmost importance for tourism sector and these recommendations are disseminated traditionally and in virtual environments by being adapted to technology; the persons start to express where they have visited, what they have observed and where they have stated in forums and networking sites by creating blogs in virtual environments. This means that significance of Internet will increase more and more in the issue of advertising in the future days.

7. Our current tourist profile changes. Many people now prefer holiday plans that are designed almost for them and they can designate by themselves instead of holidays offered in the package and they tend to have a holiday in peaceful and tranquil environments by themselves other than the masses. This issue should be emphasized and permitted in the advertisements related to the region and should be planned by considering these points of the tours to be organized. Kırklareli is very suitable for special interest tourism thanks to its tourism potential and its geographical features. Organizing boutique tours intended for groups or persons in specific numbers and personalizing these tours and routes will yield better results in terms of tourist satisfaction.
8. With around 30.000 students, Kırklareli University should raise minimum 5.000 tourism envoys each year. This case will substantially contribute to the recognition of the province and increase of tourism potential. Universities are quite important educational institutions developing and enriching their areas in all aspects and carrying every element to the future. For this reason, other organizations within the province should be in cooperation with universities for advertising and promoting Kırklareli.
9. A wide variety of flora and fauna of the region, a variety of natural beauties, picnic areas, natural protected sites, monuments trees, natural caves formed hundred years ago, and its historical and cultural values are included among eco-tourism and the local should be informed regarding preservation of these values. Excavation works are still ongoing within the scope of Open Air Industry and Archaeological Museum project in Kırklareli, Aşağıpınar Village. This project aims to evaluate urban-rural protected sites and monumental structures as a whole. While historical and cultural values in rural areas are protected in this way, guests visiting this locality will be able to visit varied cultural assets as to a particular trip route.

10. Traditional artistic centres and courses should be opened in order for handicrafts performed in the locality to be performed in our time, transferring handicrafts to the future generations and arts that are almost extinct are implemented into economic life. In this case, additional income will be provided to those dealing with handicrafts and added value will be provided to the local economy.
11. The significance of festivals (such as different festival celebrations), rituals and celebrations specific to the locality in Kırklareli is undeniable in terms of domestic and foreign tourism. Although these activities are carried out in specific time and periods, it provided added value and mobility of the economy of the province, district and village. Furthermore, the region is quite suitable for trekking. Designating many trekking routes for trekking adventurers and developing alternatives to this tourism by way of mapping here and spending pleasant time are quite possible. Demand can be increased by establishing farms for touristic purpose by ensuring tourism integration with agricultural and animal facilities. (Vintage festivals and Hardaliye such as Palivor Farm, Arcadia, İrem Çamlıca, Vino De Sara)
12. Kırklareli has a position that can create a difference in the issue of hospitality and this is the most important feature of the locals in terms of tourism. Even this case can be a reason for preference in day trip, weekend or holidays to the locality. Old Kırklareli houses and typical village houses located within various points of the city can be considered within the framework of "house lodging" and this can be an attractive offer for undergoing this locality likewise for the visiting tourists and local economic value. House lodgings will offer the possibilities of suitable accommodation for those desiring to with forest and having sea holiday on Kıyıköy and İğneada coasts and Kastros gulf.
13. In cases where historical houses in the highland locality are restored, significant historical tissue will be maintained in Kırklareli and substantial contributions will be acquired for tourism. Highland quarter has a significant place for Greek tourists among Bulgarian and Greek citizens coming for visiting and shopping in Kırklareli. Cooperation can be initiated, and projects can be generated within the framework of EU grant programs with Greece for the restoration of highland houses. Historical restaurants and boutique hotels where local and traditional delicacies are offered can make a large contribution to tourism and economy of the city. This existing tourism potential to our economy will be substantially boosted by increasing the number and quality of the hotels and accommodation facilities in our province and its vicinity.

14. Local handicrafts such as pottery, hand broom, weaving are developed in Kırklareli and this case will enable the tourists to gain the taste of "experience tourism" in small factories by participating the process and to make "their goods". Tours of cooking and tasting tarhana, umaç and papara soups constituting the basis of Kırklareli cuisine, manca, cabbage stew, meat and shallots stew seasoned garlic vinegar and cumin, chicken stew, kalle meal, various fish grills, leek pastry, immigrant pastry, kalın kıyı bun, kartalaç, hoşmelim, baklava, saffron and rice dessert, pumpkin with syrup and walnuts, various halvah, cheese varieties and hardaliye as a drink can be organized.
15. As sea, lake, mountain and forest in Kırklareli are together, tourism potential of this coastal strip is not limited to only summer and coastal tourism and Kıyıköy perimeter announced as a national park and Floodplain forestland characteristics, ecological tourism in four seasons, botanic and bird watching, hunting tourism and mountain hotel management contribute added value to the region. These natural beauties and wildlife should be considered in terms of tourism. Dupnisa Cave located within our province is very important for our province and attracts the attention of domestic and foreign tourists. Moreover, Aşağıpınar and Kalıgeçit Excavation dating back to BC 8500, Vize Antique Theatre, mounds dating back to Thracians in Dokuzhöyük constitute the values of Kırklareli in the issue of history and culture tourism.
16. Kırklareli destination should categorize its target market for designating domestic and foreign tourism market potential it has aimed and existing tourist potential within the framework of sustainable tourism. (such as families, honeymoon couples, businessmen, congress participants, retirees, women, children, young people, professional chambers, national and international non-governmental organizations, celebrities born in Kırklareli, bride and grooms of Kırklareli, etc.) Information bank should be created in relation to the target market (the number of tourists visiting Kırklareli, tourism income, studies conducted in the area of target market, studies conducted in our region), observation and survey results (habits of target market, lifestyle) should enable to get to know our customers and should designate the demands and requirements of the target market. (how will the guests visiting Kırklareli meet their requirements of eating-drinking, accommodation, resting, entertainment, etc.)
17. Rival destinations in Thrace, Marmara and cross borders should be introduced in detail. To what other destinations the targeted tourism market has travelled should be identified; with what destination it has been encountered while preferring Kırklareli

destination should be studied and goods, service and experiences offered by rival destinations to tourists should be compared and whether or not they are alluring should be investigated and these products should be taken into consideration while carrying out brand advertising of Kırklareli destination. For instance, natural, historical, geographical, cultural and social events, handicrafts, festival, fair, museum, exhibition, local food culture, city life, shopping facilities, the hospitality of the local, tolerance, legends, stories, cross-border attraction in Kırklareli should come to the fore.

18. Advertising, publicity, public relations, personal sales activities should be emphasized for evaluating the potential of this competitive advantage and coordinated study should be provided by local administrations, non-governmental organizations, tourism enterprises and lack of infrastructure and superstructure and investment of accommodation enterprises should be completed. For reinforcing the tourism infrastructure and superstructure in Kırklareli province, some of the projects of Street Improvement and Square Arrangement Project, Hamdibey Village, Istrancalar Local Products Production and Sales Centre Centres Design Project, Opening Vize District Yenesu Cave for Tourism and Kıyıköy Municipality Street Improvement and Square Arrangement, Environment Arrangement of Aya Nikola Cave and Opening it for Tourism have been completed and some of which are ongoing. (Kırklareli Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism).
19. Destination brand loyalty should be created in Kırklareli. In what extent the lifestyle that Kırklareli has acquired for old ages to our time and to what extent this has been reflected and experienced to the tourist gains significance. This creates a parallel process especially as to how stakeholders living in destination distinguish this case, how they have felt and adopted, and they have organized destination brand management. Brand management process of touristic destinations is not generally easy, and many stakeholders are living by acting based on its own purpose and motivation in small geography can be involved with different initiatives. In fact, central and local administrations in the cities, non-governmental organizations, professional organizations and locals should be in communication and coordination with one another. It is aimed to apply institutionalization on the basis of councils in a manner that will ensure tourism sector, relevant public and private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations to be involved in decision-making processes in national, inter-regional, provincial and point level within the framework of good governance principles where a planning approach incorporating applicable,

society oriented and sustainable tourism planning principles is revealed in physical level, supporting economic development.

20. Entitling those living in rural areas to receive the highest economic share from this type of tourism is their natural right. For this reason, it should be ensured that real estate such as house, land owned by those in the village should be inherited to the real owner of the village by virtue of law. Tourism facilities to be opened should be small facilities complying with the local zoning and architecture. Local people should be under the management of these facilities. Otherwise, incomes to be acquired from tourism shall be transferred to other regions. If rural tourism activities are managed well, as it will provide additional revenue with employment possibilities to the locals, they may ensure that emigration outside the locality is prevented, the local will increase their living quality and welfare and it can be positively contributed to rural development. Rural tourism also has positive contributions in the agricultural sector. However, an increase of the value of real estate in the locality should not cause the persons living in these regions to move away from agriculture.

## **9- CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION FOR DESTINATIONS TO BE RECOMMENDED FOR ISTRANCA REGION TOURIST GUIDE**

Today, people involved in touristic activities travel to visit the natural environment and to observe local cultural assets. Countries/destinations that approach their cultural assets and natural resources with due care are able to attract tourism demand. Natural and cultural assets attract the attention of today's tourists and move them towards further involvement in touristic activities. These values attract tourists to destinations and can also be utilised as important marketing tools. Destinations endowed with specific cultural assets and natural resources are able to maintain their attractiveness (Uygur and Baykan, 2007: 44).

Tourists select a destination by taking into consideration its cultural areas and distinctive aspects of such areas. Traditional activities, different lifestyles in culture, and natural beauties bring forth competitive advantage in the selection of destinations and are preferred by tourists.

A destination can be a country at the macro level or a city, a town, an island, or a neighbourhood at the micro level. A tourism region denominated as a destination can be interpreted as a perceptual concept based in the minds of consumers with a basis on their

travel itineraries, cultural background, purposes of visit, educational levels, and past experiences. As an example, Dubai stands out as a destination for business people, while Africa can be offered as a destination for weekly excursions or mountains as destinations attract tourists who wish to see a flower in bloom for only a specific period during the year.

In other words, places to be visited by tourists upon leaving their place of residence for the purposes of a holiday or a business trip are defined as “destinations” (Bahar and Kozak, 2005: 77).

Tourist destinations can be divided into six groups (Ülker, 2010:73):

1. Ethnic tourism and ethnic destinations: Ethnic tourism refers to excursions aimed at observing the lifestyle and cultural values of interesting communities.
2. Cultural tourism and cultural tourist destinations: Cultural tourism involves excursions for people to revisit nostalgic sites and observe and be present in almost extinct lifestyles. In this type of tourism, individuals generally wish to eat at rural venues, take part in clothing festivals and folklore of the locality, or see old handicrafts.
3. Heritage tourism and historical tourist destinations: Heritage tourism involves excursions for individuals to visit touristic sites and values of historical importance, take part in audio-visual and light shows re-enacting important events in history, visit churches and cathedrals in guided tours, and see historical monuments, etc. Heritage tourism specifically provides mass excursions and attractions arranged at easily accessible urban locations or centres.
4. Ecotourism and eco-tourist destinations: Ecotourism refers to excursions for individuals to return to nature, understand the human-soil relationship, and raise their sensitivity towards such relationship. The notable elements in this type of tourism that motivates people to visit remote locations are natural and environmental attractions rather than ethnic ones. Ecotourism generally has a geographical aspect. Here, people wish to see national parks and natural wonders, take long walks, climb mountains, or do canoeing and camping.
5. Recreational tourism and recreational tourist destinations: Recreational tourism consists of excursions by individuals to develop social relations in comfortable environments, take part in a variety of sports activities, have healing baths, and enjoy nice and relaxing environments. The main objective in recreational tourism is to allow individuals to relax.

6. Business tourism and business tourism destinations: Business tourism refers to tourism for the purposes of conventions notably including congresses, symposia, seminars, conferences, and courses. Business trips generally involve one or more of the other types of tourism. A tourist destination mostly offers opportunities in more than one type of tourism. As an example, a tourist destination basically offering recreational opportunities is also a notable destination for business (convention) tourism (Alkan, 2015: 223).

Destinations can create advantages in the face of their competitors if they develop tourism products that are compatible with their natural and cultural assets through their tourism product diversification policies of preference. The diversity and capacity of supply resources are considered to be important elements that guide the development of tourism with respect to the diversification of the tourism product. The main point of consideration here is the transfer of such resources to future generations, while there is another point of importance in the proximity of such destinations with original natural resources and cultural values to their markets, i.e. the accessibility of destinations in terms of time and money.

Sociocultural attractions of a destination create as important an effect as natural and economic attractions in the selection of a destination for prospective travels. Sociocultural elements are represented by traditions and customs (births, weddings, marriage, death, etc.), cultural assets (museums, monuments, religious places, historical cities, etc.), political structure, educational status, and level of urbanisation.

These elements are of a content that supports natural aspects, but can also act as attractions by themselves. Cultural and artistic assets brought forth by a variety of factors in time constitute national cultural heritage while also allowing for social development.

In coastal regions where tourism is based on sea, sand, and surfing, tourists also look for an attractive value in cultural heritage in addition to such resources. In their choice of travel destinations, they prefer those with unparalleled and authentic attractions not available in others. The long-term survival of tourist destinations along the coast depends on their ability to put on the market new tourism products based on cultural heritage and natural resources in such a way as to satisfy the expectations of tourists with the ultimate aim of being able to compete with other destinations.

Relevant research studies emphasise the importance of not only traditions and customs, but also local heritage and culture for tourists among the factors that attract them to a destination (Lacher *et al*, 2013: 535-543).

Natural assets include sceneries that diversify on the basis of mountains, plains, forests, rivers, lakes, seas, climate, and geological conditions. The main raw material for the tourism sector is represented by a combination of values concerning history, folklore, civilisation, and culture created by nature and climate (Çelen, 2008: 299).

Characteristics of destinations are specified in items below in general.

1. Attractiveness – The series of natural or man-made works and special events organised for a specific purpose and maintained today as elements of heritage from past civilisations;
2. Accessibility – The transport system composed of all means of public transport, routes, terminals, and relevant services.
3. Facilities – Accommodation, food & beverage, shopping, and other tourist services.
4. Affordable Packages – All excursion or travel packages prepared in advance by intermediaries and tourism authorities.
5. Activities – All activities available to customers during their visit.
6. Ancillary Services – General reference to such services as banking, communication, post, newspaper booths, and hospitals, etc. which may be necessary for tourists at any moment (Bahar and Kozak, 2005:78).

The branding of a destination with a specific image and significant tourist attractions is of great importance for it to be preferred by tourists (Özdemir, 2008). **The following characteristics are striking among the reasons for tourists to find such destinations attractive and preferable:**

1. Natural resources: Climate (temperature, precipitation, humidity, and the number of sunny hours in a day, etc.), beaches (quality of seawater, sandy or rocky beaches, length of beaches, and crowded or quiet beaches, etc.), and richness in seaside attractions (protected natural reserves, rivers, mountains, and uniqueness and diversity of flora and fauna);

2. General infrastructure: Quality and development level of streets, airports, and seaports, private and public transport possibilities, development level of healthcare services, development level of telecommunication, development level of commercial infrastructure, and development level of buildings;
3. Tourist infrastructure: Hotels and accommodation (number of beds, categories, and quality), restaurants (number, categories, and quality), pubs, discos, and clubs, ease of access to the destination, excursions available at the destination, tourist centres, and tourist information network;
4. Leisure activities and recreation for tourists: Theme parks, entertainment and sports activities (golf, hunting, fishing, waterparks, zoos, trekking, adventure activities, casinos, nightlife, and shopping, etc.);
5. Culture, heritage, and arts: Museums, historical buildings, monuments, festivals, concerts, handicrafts, gastronomy, folklore, religion, traditions, and lifestyle.
6. Political and economic factors: Political stability, political tendencies, economic growth, security (crime rate, terrorist attacks), and prices;
7. Natural environment: Beauty of sceneries, attractiveness of cities and towns, cleanliness, overcrowding, air and noise pollution, and traffic congestion;
8. Social environment: Hospitability and friendliness of the local people, deprivation of basic social rights and poverty, quality of life, and language barriers.
9. Ambient atmosphere: Luxury, fashion, good reputation, family-oriented destination, and exotic, mystic, relaxing, stressful, entertaining, joyful, nice, boring, attractive or interesting qualities (Buhalis, 2000: 98).

Consequently, a consumer wishing to have a holiday engages themselves in research on possible destinations and obtains more information on destinations that are able to satisfy their needs. In this process, they take into consideration a large number of qualities concerning their destination of preference and make their holiday decisions in this framework.

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