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DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL-HISTORICAL TOURISM THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIONS

AUTHOR'S ABSTRACT

of a dissertation for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", Professional field 3.8. 'Economics', PhD program 'Economics and Management (Tourism)

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The dissertation work was submitted for defense by the Department of Tourism Economics and Management at the Faculty of Industry and Commerce of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov. The author of the dissertation is a full-time PhD student in the Department of Tourism Economics and Management within the higher education field 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8. “Economics”, PhD program “Economics and Management (Tourism)”. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography, and appendices. The dissertation comprises a total of 221 pages, including: an introduction – 8 pages, main text – 153 pages, conclusion – 2 pages, references – 32 pages, and appendices – 19 pages. The dissertation includes 7 tables, 14 figures, and 7 appendices. The bibliography comprises a total of 151 literary sources in both Cyrillic and Latin scripts (53 in Bulgarian, 95 in English, 2 in Italian, and 1 in Russian), 78 strategic documents, 18 legal sources, and 44 internet sources.

The defence will take place on June 11th, 2025 at 11 a.m. in the Rectorate Conference Hall of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov.

All materials related to the defence shall be available at the Department of Doctoral Studies and Academic Staff Development of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov.

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance and significance of the topic

Tourism has a key role as a sector in the Bulgarian economy. Cultural tourism, which includes cultural-historical tourism, is an important element not only in the tourism industry but also in the social and economic development of countries. It accounts for about 40% of all European tourism (European Commission, n.d.).

The development of cultural tourism has been defined as one of the priorities in the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2014-2030. The diverse and abundant natural environment, along with the country's rich cultural heritage, constitutes a solid basis for the development and promotion of cultural-historical tourism. Until now, large-scale studies of this kind have been almost entirely absent, despite the fact that the rich cultural heritage creates significant opportunities for innovation in cultural-historical tourism, with tourism mentioned in the strategic planning documents of municipalities.

Considering the potential of a region for its sustainable and integrated development, participation in projects, attraction of investments, and external funding, the topic is becoming increasingly relevant. The use of various technologies could offer significant opportunities for the development of cultural-historical tourism. The state of this tourism is also influenced by the engagement of the public sector. New opportunities for the development of this type of tourism could be sought through various forms of collaboration. In academic research and practical approaches, there is an increasing relevance of studies on the topic of the dissertation.

The author's motivation is also based on the fact that the research of several established authors, including Richard Butler, Greg Richards, Dimitrios Buhalis, Melanie Smith, Hilary du Cros, Carlos Costa, Maria Vodenjska, Maria Grozeva, and Irina Bokova, who have worked on the outlined issues, could receive natural detailing in new national aspects, specifically tailored to the Danube tourist region. There is a lack of sufficient

research on this region related to cultural-historical tourism and the innovations within this field.

The significance of the topic corresponds to the need for unified approaches to the management of this type of tourism by public administrations.

Object, Subject, Main Aim, Objectives, Main Thesis, and Research Methodology

The object of the research encompasses the municipalities within the Danube tourist region that offer cultural-historical tourism products.

The subject of the research is the measurement of the potential for the implementation of innovations in cultural-historical tourism in municipalities.

The growing demands of the tourism market necessitate the adoption of measures to achieve high competitiveness and sustainability. The introduction of various innovations should be carried out after a thorough analysis of the state of cultural-historical tourism, taking into account the elements that would have a significant impact on its development. In order to achieve optimal results, it is essential to undertake specific and targeted actions by all stakeholders, which constitutes the central focus of the author's main efforts.

The main aim of the study is to theoretically and practically examine the potential for the development of cultural-historical tourism in the municipalities within the Danube tourist region through the implementation of innovations, and to propose an appropriate model with an algorithm for its measurement.

Achieving the set aim requires fulfilling the following research **objectives**:

- conducting a conceptual analysis of the specifics and scope of cultural-historical tourism;
- extracting the fundamental and classificatory characteristics of innovations as a means of facilitating their implementation in cultural-historical tourism based on a critical analysis;
- performing a definitional analysis of the innovation cycle and its connection to open innovation;

- developing a model for measuring the potential for the implementation of innovations in cultural-historical tourism;
- proposing a model for the implementation of innovations in cultural-historical tourism;
- testing the presented model in municipalities within the Danube tourist region, while providing specific recommendations for measures and guidelines for implementing innovations.

The *main thesis* of the dissertation is that innovations play a key role in the sustainable development of cultural-historical tourism, and therefore, suitable models can be proposed for implementation concerning the municipalities within the Danube tourist region, with the aim of introducing innovations into this type of tourism.

Research Methodology

In the development of the dissertation, a set of research approaches and methods have been applied, including induction, deduction, comparative analysis and synthesis, SWOT analysis, content analysis, statistical methods, the Likert scale, survey and interview methods, empirical research, historical method, methods of cognition and observation, among others.

Research Limitations

According to the Concept for tourism zoning of Bulgaria, the main types of tourism for which the Danube tourist region is intended are cultural and cruise tourism. More specifically, the goal is to develop cultural-historical tourism, river cruise tourism, adventure tourism, urban, entertainment, wine and culinary tourism, religious and pilgrimage tourism, shopping tourism, and ecotourism. Although it is the largest tourism region in Bulgaria in terms of area, it is the least developed according to various economic indicators and studies. For this reason, the author considers it pertinent to investigate it.

This dissertation does not claim to address all possible aspects related to the discussed issue. Emphasis is placed on the development of cultural-historical tourism, specifically related to tangible immovable cultural-historical heritage.

During the collection and availability of primary data, especially in the survey conducted among municipalities, some challenges were encountered. Although the initial sample included all possible respondents from the municipalities, only some of them responded to the survey questions. The analysis was complicated by the fact that the statistical data from the National Statistical Institute (NSI) are grouped by regions that do not correspond to the tourism regions as defined by the Concept for tourism zoning of Bulgaria.

The sources of secondary information used are in various languages, primarily Bulgarian, English, and Italian. A range of monographs, scientific papers, legal regulations, as well as sub-legislative acts in the field of tourism, studies, articles, and strategic documents have been reviewed. Several concepts are presented, followed by a critical analysis. Primary data was gathered through survey research, the results of which have been synthesized and analyzed.

II. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

1. *General description*

The dissertation consists of 221 pages, of which 153 pages are the main text, including 7 tables, 14 figures, and 7 appendices. Structurally, it includes: an introduction, a body divided into three chapters, a conclusion, appendices, a bibliography and internet sources in both Cyrillic and Latin scripts, as well as a declaration of originality and authenticity.

2. *Table of Contents of the Dissertation*

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III. SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter One presents the conceptual aspects related to the researched issue. Key concepts that form the foundation of the current study are examined. A critical analysis is conducted, and definitions are proposed which, according to the author, accurately describe

the mentioned terms in the context of the dissertation topic. Major challenges regarding the implementation of innovations in cultural-historical tourism (CHT) are systematized. Good practices in this area are also highlighted.

In the first section, the main principles related to relevant terminology are explored in order to clarify the conceptual framework used. Cultural-historical tourism can be viewed as a system consisting of various elements that exist as concepts. For this reason, defining the essence of this type of tourism requires clearly outlining these concepts. Given the diversity of existing definitions for the terms in use, the focus is placed on those that best illuminate the aim of this research.

Based on definitions from various sources of the terms '**tourism**', '**cultural tourism**', '**cultural heritage**', '**cultural asset**', '**cultural-historical heritage**', the author proposes definitions that, in accordance with the objectives of the dissertation, reflect the essence of these concepts (see Table 1).

Table 1. Definitions of Key Concepts

CONCEPT	DEFINITION
Tourism	It is necessary to consider three main characteristics: the type of activity performed, duration, and purpose. Regarding the duration, according to the conducted analysis, a distinction should be made between Bulgarian citizens, citizens of other EU countries, and foreigners from non-EU countries. Based on the definitions from the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 and the Bulgarian Tourism Act, the following definition of 'tourism' is derived: <i>'Tourism involves travel and/or visiting a destination outside of the usual place of residence for a period of less than one year for business, leisure, or other personal purposes, excluding employment by a permanent entity in the country or place of visit.'</i> It should be clarified that the duration of stay for non-EU citizens differs from that stated in the definition. From an economic perspective, this activity is characterized by the presence of a tourism product and can be regarded as a type of commercial activity, during which the trade of goods and services takes place.
Culture	The definition included in the 2022 UNESCO declaration is considered the most accurate and comprehensive, namely:

	<i>“Culture is a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (World Tourism Organization, 1995).</i>
Cultural asset	For the purposes of this study, the definition in Article 7 of the Cultural Heritage Protection Act (CHPA) is adopted, namely: <i>“An immovable or movable testimony of human presence and activity, a natural feature or phenomenon, which is of significance to the individual, community, or society and holds scientific or cultural significance”.</i>
Cultural heritage	The definition provided by the Cultural Heritage Protection Act (CHPA) is adopted, which states: <i>“Cultural heritage encompasses both immovable and movable tangible and intangible heritage as a collection of cultural values that carry historical memory, national identity, and has scientific or cultural significance”.</i>
Cultural-historical heritage	The definition provided in § 1, item 6 of the Additional Provisions of the CHPA is adopted, which states that 'cultural-historical heritage' is a collection of cultural assets that carry historical memory."
Cultural tourism	The definition provided by the Ministry of Tourism is adopted, according to which the concept of 'cultural tourism' refers to <i>'any movement of people outside their usual place of residence, with the aim of satisfying their cultural needs, which may include passive visits to cultural landmarks and attractions (movable and immovable tangible and intangible cultural heritage, traditions, and arts), as well as active participation and engagement in cultural events and creative processes'</i> (Ministry of Tourism, n.d.).

Source: Compiled by the author

The conducted research and analysis reveal a lack of consolidation in the definitions of commonly accepted terms. What distinguishes CHT from other types of cultural tourism is its primary purpose and the motivation for travel, which is related to experiencing tangible and intangible cultural-historical heritage (CHH). A classification of the types of CHT as part of cultural tourism is presented (see Figure 1).

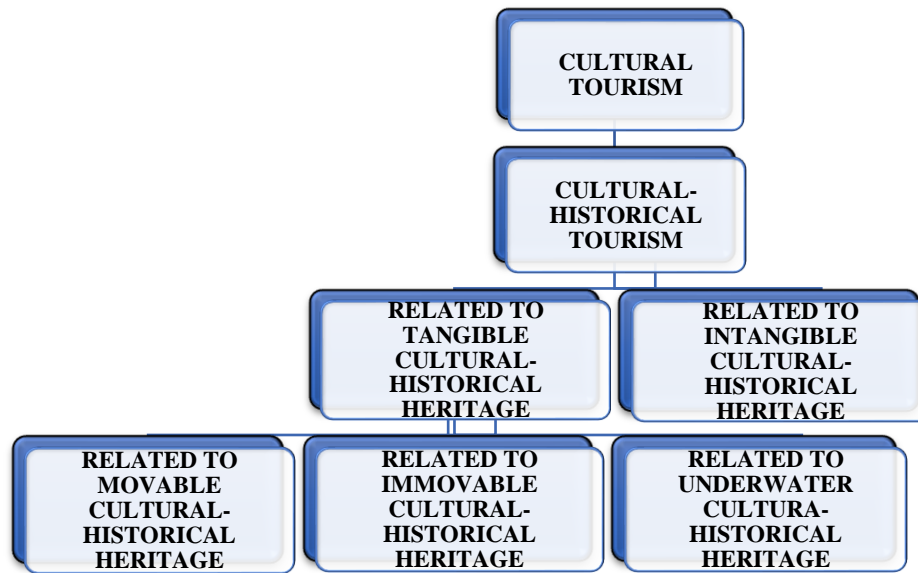


Figure 1. Classification of types of cultural-historical tourism

Source: Compiled by the author

In the second section, the scope of the tourism product is outlined. According to § 1, item 66 of the Supplementary Provisions of the Tourism Act, a “tourism product” is defined as the combination of specific economic activities and natural and anthropogenic conditions and resources within a given territory. The Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and its two protocols (European Commission and Council of Europe, 2020) systematize the tourism resources related to cultural tourism. These resources can also be applied to CHT, as shown in Figure 2, and they represent the core element of the tourism product in this type of tourism.

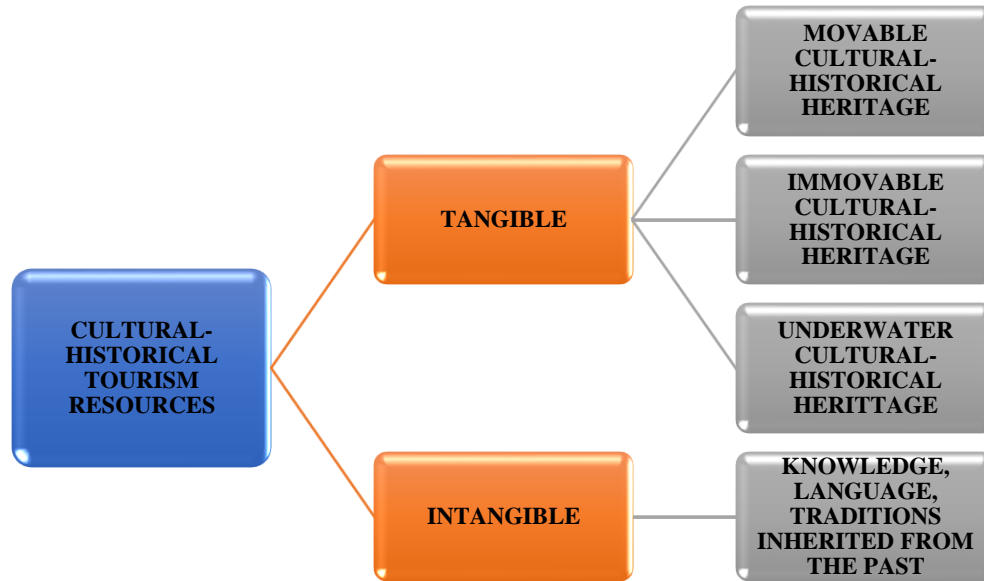


Figure 2. Systematization of cultural-historical tourism resources

Source: Adapted from the types of cultural heritage identified in the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and its two Protocols (European Commission and Council of Europe, 2020).

It is noted that the focus of this dissertation is on anthropogenic tourism resources, and in particular, on CHH. These are cultural and historical sites, including all types of buildings, facilities, and architectural monuments associated with the history and culture of a given society. Among them are museums, cathedrals, churches, historical monuments, palaces, castles, fortresses, old houses, synagogues, city quarters, public buildings, archaeological findings, and others. These sites also represent a core element of the CHT product. It is emphasized that the tourism product does not exist in isolation but within a specific environment and contributes to its development by creating competitive advantages. In this context, definitions of tourist destination and tourism region are also presented.

In the third section, innovations in the context of CHT are examined. Innovation in this type of tourism is defined as a set of activities related to the renewal, enrichment, and improvement of a given process, product, or service within CHT, with the aim of generating various benefits (economic, educational, etc.).

The current dynamics of supply and demand, changes in consumer culture, intense competition, and market instability drive the need for new and different approaches to enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism product. It is essential that the implementation of innovations be linked to an emphasis on national identity and the uniqueness of CHH, which serve as sources of added value and competitive advantages (Vodenska & Popova, 2015). The main areas where innovations can be implemented within the context of CHT are outlined. Based on the classification of types of innovation in the Oslo Manual (OECD/Eurostat, 2018), a grouping of innovation opportunities in CHT is proposed (see Figure 3).

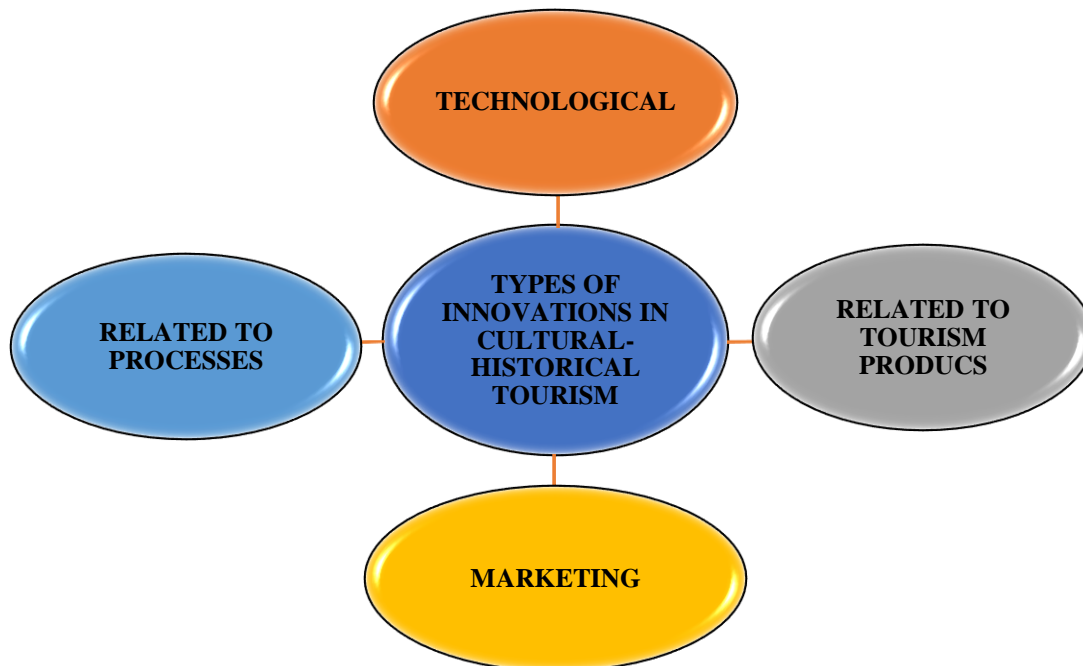


Figure 3. Types of innovations in cultural-historical tourism

Source: Adapted by the author based on the Oslo Manual

Technological – innovations and improvements in the field of technology aimed at analysis, acceleration of processes, and timely and adequate decision-making. In the tourism sector, these include the use of new or significantly improved technological methods for delivering tourism products (Ilieva & Todorova, 2023).

Innovations related to tourism products – these aim not only at introducing new innovations and improving existing ones but also at preserving CHH. This type of innovation is not related to minimal changes to the product (Ilieva & Todorova, 2023).

Innovations related to improving processes – these include various areas such as: economy, human resources (education, training, staff changes, etc.), collaboration with different institutions, and more.

Marketing innovations – aimed at increasing competitiveness through the promotion of tourist destinations and CHT in general. They are also connected with improving the relationship with consumers (Ilieva & Todorova, 2023).

In the fourth section, opportunities and challenges related to the implementation of innovations in CHT are discussed. The development of this type of tourism, related to tangible immovable CHH, stimulates the local economy, partnerships, and industry cooperation, enhances competitiveness, provides unique experiences for tourists, introduces sustainable and innovative approaches to tourism management, and creates educational tourism experiences. As with any other economic activity, it is necessary to consider the potential challenges related to the preservation and socialization of CHH, financial and resource constraints, inequalities in providing tourism products, job loss or transformation, the need for staff training, and regulatory-legal aspects.

Some good practices related to digitalization, opportunities for creating unique tourist experiences, sustainable and innovative approaches in the management of CHT, educational tourism experiences, and collaboration are highlighted, which the author considers relevant to the research.

In summary of the discussion in Chapter One, the following **conclusions** have been drawn:

First, cultural-historical tourism is a system consisting of different elements that exist as concepts, namely: "tourism", "culture", "cultural heritage", "cultural asset", and "cultural-historical heritage".

Second, the primary goal and motivation for tourists in cultural-historical tourism is to familiarize themselves with tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which

necessitates the inclusion of anthropogenic tourism resources, particularly tangible immovable cultural heritage, in the core of its tourism product.

Third, innovation in cultural tourism can be defined as a set of activities related to the renewal, enrichment, and improvement of a given process, product, or service, aimed at extracting various benefits (economic, educational, etc.).

Fourth, in the context of cultural tourism, innovations can affect several key areas, and depending on their field of application, they are divided into the following groups: technological innovations, innovations related to tourism products, innovations related to process improvements and marketing innovations.

Chapter Two outlines the approaches for analyzing CHT with the aim of implementing innovations. A review of key methods and models for analysis in tourism is presented. Based on the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, two models are proposed: a Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT at the Municipal Level and a Model for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT.

In the first section, various methods that could be applied in the analysis of CHT are described. An overview of the main methods for analysis in tourism is provided, with a focus on those that are applicable for studying the opportunities that innovations offer for the development of CHT. Each of the described methods has its specific purpose in order to achieve the desired results.

The implementation of innovations is connected not only with the selection of appropriate models for data processing and analysis but also with following specific steps. For the purposes of the dissertation, information on two phenomena – the innovation cycle and open innovation – is selected. The theoretical frameworks of both concepts are established, and an analysis of their application in the field of CHT is conducted. The available data is used as a basis for creating a model for analyzing the development of this type of tourism through the implementation of innovations.

In the second section, a **Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT at the Municipal Level** is proposed. Considering

the structure of public administration, the municipality serves as the primary administrative unit that makes strategic decisions regarding the development of tourism, specially in the field of CHT. This provides the basis for measuring the potential for the implementation of innovations in CHT at the municipal level.

The main goal of the model is to measure the potential for the implementation of innovations in CHT at the municipal level through a specific algorithm, thereby aiding their practical implementation. The scope of the model's application includes the tourist regions of Bulgaria and the municipalities that constitute them, and it can be used repeatedly.

The Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT at the Municipal Level allows for determining how prepared and willing a municipality is to implement innovations in this type of tourism. The model consists of **five stages** (see Figure 4):

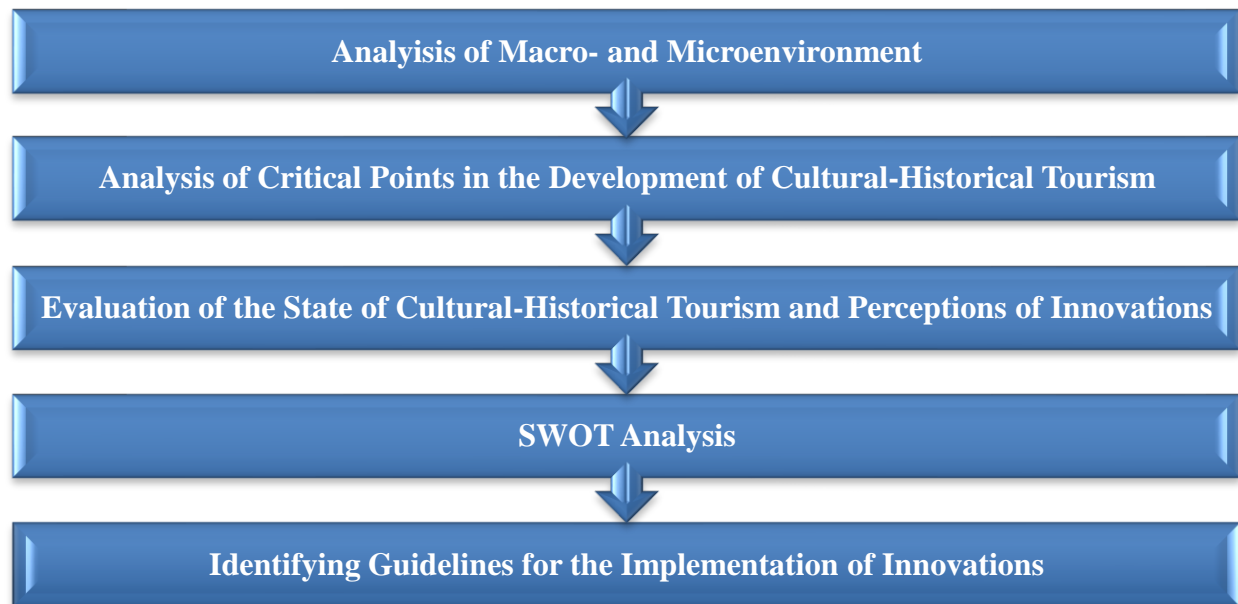


Figure 4. Stages of the Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in Cultural-Historical Tourism at the Municipal Level

Source: Compiled by the author

Stage 1: Analysis of the Macro- and Microenvironment.

The analysis of the macro- and microenvironment creates the framework in which the potential for implementing innovations could be realized. At this stage, key factors of the macroenvironment (geographical and environmental; social and demographic; political;

economic; technological; legislative) and the microenvironment (tourist infrastructure; tourism industry; employment) are examined, specifying whether they have a stimulating or restrictive effect on the potential of municipalities to introduce innovations. These factors determine the conditions for innovation and highlight both the opportunities and barriers to their implementation. To this end, aspects related to the tourist region to which the municipalities belong are considered.

Stage 2: Analysis of Critical Points in the Development of CHT. Appropriate methods for studying critical points in the development of CHT include both quantitative and qualitative methods. The analysis is carried out on secondary data extracted from strategic documents. The critical points from Stage 2 provide valuable information on the current challenges in the tourism sector and can serve as a basis for optimizing the potential for implementing innovations.

Stage 3: Evaluation of the State of Cultural-Historical Tourism and Perceptions of Innovations. The evaluation of the state of CHT and the perceptions of innovations is conducted with the aim of measuring the potential for their implementation. This evaluation is based on key criteria and indicators that account for the status of this type of tourism and the perceptions of the municipalities regarding innovations. For this purpose, a questionnaire is prepared for representatives of the municipal administration. The combination of evaluations based on criteria and indicators of the state of CHT and the perception regarding innovations shows the potential of the municipalities for implementing innovations in this type of tourism. Some of the indicators presented in Table 2 are specifically related to CHT, while others are related to innovations. For initial structuring of the survey questions for the municipalities, the established Likert scale approach can be used, adapted to the needs of the study. This approach subsequently serves as the basis for summarizing the information and conducting statistical analysis of the primary data obtained.

Table 2. Criteria and Indicators for Evaluating the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in Cultural-Historical Tourism at the Municipal Level

Criterion	Indicator	Evaluation
1. Evaluation by the municipalities regarding the state of cultural-historical tourism	1.1. Evaluation of the potential for the development of CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.2. Evaluation of the visitor attendance at tourist sites	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.3. Evaluation of the level of promotion of CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.4. Evaluation of the level of event organization in the field of CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.5. Evaluation of the condition of the tourist infrastructure and superstructure	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.6. Evaluation of the level of cooperation with other municipalities in the field of CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.7. Evaluation of the level of cooperation with tour operators and travel agents	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	Score according to Criterion 1	From 0 to 1
2. Perceptions by the municipalities	2.1. Perception of the implementation of innovations in CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral

towards innovations in CHT		Rather positive Positive
	2.2. Perception of the innovations implemented in CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	2.3. Perception of the effectiveness of planned future innovations in CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	Score according to Criterion 2	From 0 to 1
Overall score:		From 0 to 1

Source: Compiled by the Author

The proposed indicators are based on theoretical and expert data from Stage 1 and Stage 2 and can be adjusted according to the objectives of the research.

Values ranging from 0 to 1 are assigned to each level of the scale to enable better interpretation of the results and greater reliability of the conclusions. The meaning of each point is as follows: 0 – Negative; 0.25 – Rather negative; 0.50 – Neutral; 0.75 – Rather positive; 1.00 – Positive.

An **overall average score** of the municipalities' potential for implementing innovations in CHT is suggested based on the scores of the indicators for both types of criteria, ranging from 0 to 1. This score can be qualitatively measured in degrees, including: "Low" (0-0.24), "Moderate" (0.25-0.49), "High" (0.50-0.74), "Very high" (0.75-1.00).

For municipalities with a "Low" or "Moderate" score, solutions based on the analysis conducted using the model and the results from the individual parameters are suggested. The goal is to improve their status concerning CHT and bring them to a state of readiness for the implementation of innovations. Municipalities with a "High" or "Very High" score can take steps toward the implementation of innovations in CHT.

In addition to the studied criteria and their corresponding indicators, attention is also focused on two groups of parameters. The first is related to the insufficient revenues of the municipalities, which slow down the processes of renewing material, immovable CHH,

and thus limit the opportunities for creating sustainable CHT. In this regard, three types of parameters are proposed, reflecting revenues from programs and projects, tourist taxes, entrance fees to sites.

The second group of parameters includes “Specific ideas for future innovations in CHT” and “Specific innovations implemented so far in CHT,” for which an analysis should be conducted to obtain information on the types of innovations already introduced by the municipalities and their ideas for future innovations.

Stage 4. SWOT Analysis. Through the SWOT analysis, based on information from the previous three stages, the opportunities and strengths for innovations related to the development of CHT are highlighted, as well as the future effects in the short and long term. This analysis serves as a basis for formulating specific measures and proposals to address the identified challenges and increase the potential for implementing innovations.

Stage 5. Identifying Guidelines for the Implementation of Innovations. Based on the previous stages, key guidelines for the implementation of innovations in CHT can be outlined. This is a logical continuation of the model’s algorithm, as it translates the identified potential into practical application guidelines. In this way, the ultimate goal of the model is achieved - to assist in the implementation of innovations in a real environment.

At this stage, an analysis of consumer perceptions regarding CHT and innovations in the sector is carried out, and the results serve as a guide for local authorities and as a basis for them to decide whether or not to take steps towards the development of CHT through the implementation of innovations. The proposed criteria and indicators provide the opportunity to track consumer attitudes (see Table 3). Given the goal of the research, the indicators are distributed according to different criteria, related to CHT, the tourist product as a whole, and innovations in this field.

Table 3. Criteria and Indicators for Determining Consumers' Perceptions of CHT and the Implementation of Innovations

Criterion	Indicator	Evaluation
1. Perception of CHT	1.1. Perception of CHT and its importance for the development of destinations	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.2. Perception of the importance of promoting the tourist destination for its development	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	1.3. Perception regarding culture, history, and archaeology as factors for destination choice	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
2. Perception regarding tourist products	2.1. Perception of the importance of courtesy and competence of staff in CHT for tourist satisfaction	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	2.2. Perception of the importance of the quality and variety of tourist products for tourist satisfaction	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	2.3. Perception of the importance of staff qualifications in tourist facilities for tourist satisfaction	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	2.4. Perception of the importance of innovation in tourist sites	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	2.5. Perception of the importance of sustainability and environmental friendliness of tourist sites	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive

	2.6. Perceptions of the organization of events and festivals in CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
3. Perceptions of innovations in CHT	3.1. Perceptions of the introduction of innovations in CHT	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive
	3.2. Perceptions of the implementation of a specific innovation	Negative Rather negative Neutral Rather positive Positive

Source: Compiled by the Author

Values from 0 to 1 (0 – negative, 0.25 – rather negative, 0.50 – neutral, 0.75 – rather positive, and 1.00 – positive) are assigned to each level of the scale. Based on the results obtained, an average score can be given for each indicator, which will range from 0 to 1. This score can be qualitatively measured in degrees, including: “Negative” (0-0.20), “Somewhat negative” (0.21-0.40), “Neutral” (0.41-0.60), “Somewhat positive” (0.61-0.80), and “Positive” (0.81-1.00).

In summary, based on the results obtained from the analysis of information from the individual stages of the model, specific innovation ideas are proposed for municipalities with a "High" and "Very High" score. For other municipalities with "Low" and "Moderate" scores, guidelines for improving their state, considering the challenges they face regarding the development of CHT, are proposed. The model could be tested in practice, as it provides information on how municipalities could develop this type of tourism in a given area through the implementation of innovations, in line with the main goal of the dissertation.

The third paragraph represents a logical continuation of the previous statements and conclusions. The determination of the potential for implementing innovations in CHT in municipalities serves as the basis for modeling the process of innovation implementation in this type of tourism. For this purpose, a **Model for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT** is proposed. The specificity of this model encompasses a step-by-step algorithm,

presented figuratively. It is adapted according to the concepts of the innovation cycle and open innovation, introduced in the previous sections of the dissertation, and has a universal character. The main goal of the model is to identify, develop, and implement innovations through a defined algorithm of steps, in order to achieve sustainable development of this type of tourism. The model's scope of application includes the tourist regions in Bulgaria and the municipalities that compose them. It consists of six stages, describing the specific steps for its application, sources of information, possible platforms and programs to support data processing and analysis, proposals for specialists to participate, and ideas for cooperation (see Figure 5)

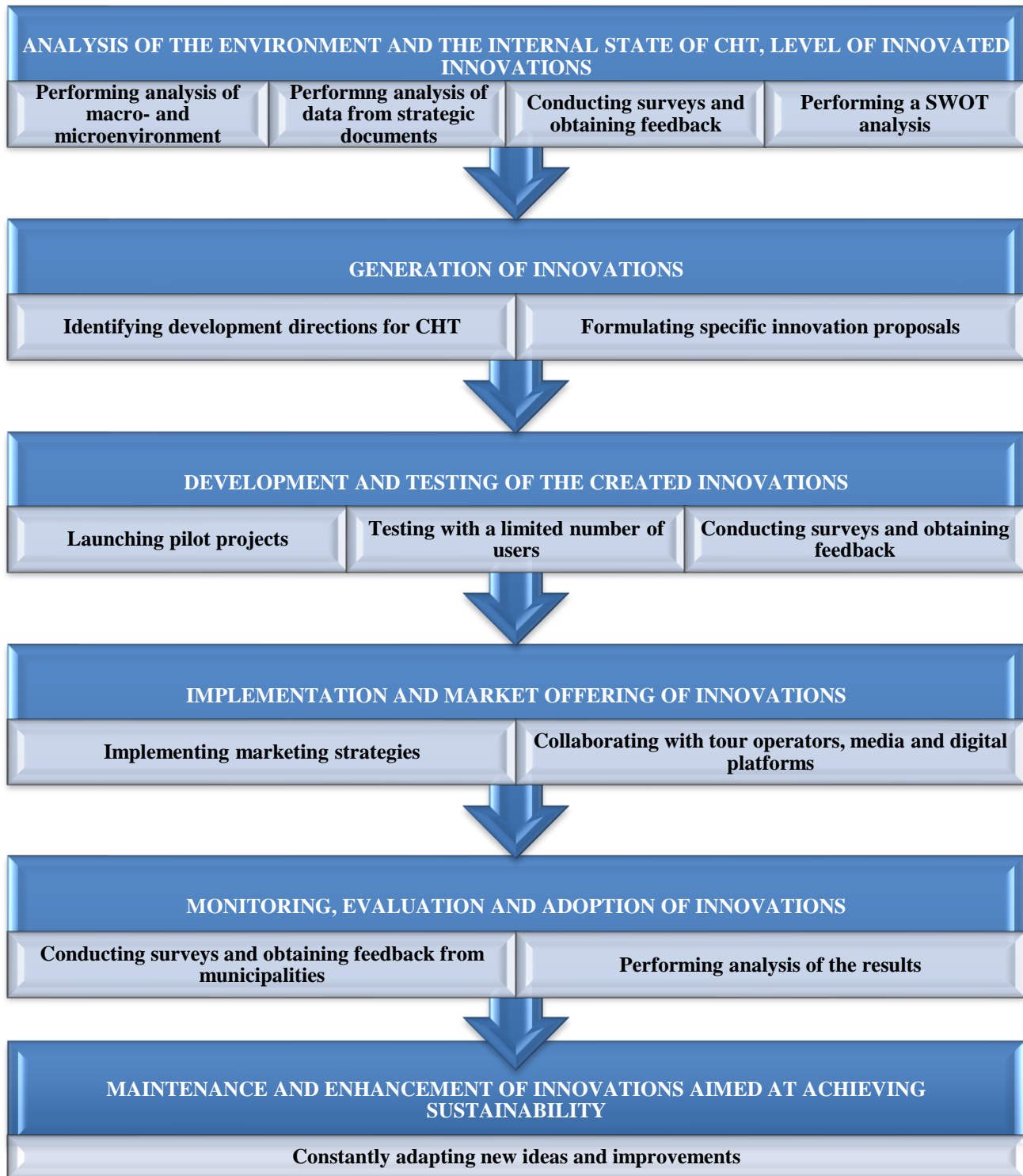


Figure 5. Stages of the Model for the Implementation of Innovations in Cultural-Historical Tourism

Source: Compiled by the Author

The proposed stages can be characterized as follows:

Stage 1: Analysis of the Environment and the Internal State of CHT, Level of Implemented Innovations. The process of innovation implementation is influenced by the state of the environment for which it is intended. The first stage is related to analyzing the environment and the external state of CHT, as well as researching the opinions of tourists and municipalities from the respective tourist area.

Stage 2: Generation of Innovations. The second stage involves researching and sharing good practices from different municipalities or organizations in Bulgaria and other countries, with the collaboration of their experts. In the field of CHT, it is necessary to utilize both internal and external resources.

Stage 3: Development and testing of created innovations. The third stage is focused on testing the innovations with a limited number of users. At this stage, modifications and improvements may be made in order to better meet the needs of the stakeholders.

Stage 4: Implementation and market offering. For this purpose, cooperation with necessary organizations and authorities is established, thereby spreading and promoting the innovations. Staff is trained to use the innovations. The successful development of CHT is related both to strategic positioning and to selecting a relevant strategy.

Stage 5: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Adaptation. Monitoring the effectiveness of the implemented innovations is carried out, along with feedback from stakeholders. The adaptation of the innovation should be flexible and aligned with the needs of the stakeholders.

Stage 6: Maintenance, Improvement, and Expansion of Innovations. This stage is related to the continuous improvement of innovations and achieving sustainability, considering the market needs.

The process presented in the model is iterative and involves receiving feedback from tourists, thereby tracking the real needs of the market. The model provides the opportunity to adjust the proposed innovations early on. This way, the impact of innovations on the environment and on tangible cultural heritage sites can also be assessed. In the field of CHT, an important aspect is the issue of ownership of tangible cultural heritage sites. The

legal regime of ownership for objects that are part of tangible cultural heritage is significantly complex and all-encompassing, which is why there are certain challenges in regulating these sites. In this regard, the dissertation tracks the regulatory framework and presents various legal options for organizing the property rights of these sites.

The model enables the assessment of the effectiveness of embedded innovations in both economic and social aspects, as well as for improving the overall tourist experience. It could serve as a tool for managing and fostering innovations in CHT in Bulgarian municipalities and its universal nature regarding its application across different tourist regions. This model suggests continuous improvement, which is at the core of the success of any activity. The established stages ensure the sustainability of the innovation process.

A key factor is the cooperation between stakeholders at each stage. Due to the exchange of large data sets, it is recommended to use suitable platforms for sharing them.

In summary of the content presented in Chapter Two, the following **conclusions** are drawn:

First, due to the specificity of cultural-historical tourism and the existing regulations regarding tourism management at the national, regional, district, and municipal levels, it is appropriate to assess the potential for the implementation of innovations at these levels.

Second, due to the complex nature of the cultural-historical tourism product for innovation implementation, a thorough analysis should be conducted, taking into account the environment in which cultural-historical tourism develops.

Third, for the development of the Model for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT, a definitional analysis of the innovation cycle and its relationship with open innovation is necessary.

Fourth, the proposed Model for measuring the potential for the implementation of innovations in cultural-historical tourism at the municipal level provides an assessment of the state of cultural-historical tourism and the attitude toward innovations that can be implemented, taking into account consumer attitudes.

Fifth, the proposed MVIKHT model outlines the steps by which innovations can be implemented by the Ministry of Tourism, in collaboration with stakeholders.

Sixth, the applied models are aimed at strengthening the participation of local authorities and communities in the innovation processes in cultural-historical tourism.

In **Chapter Three**, the proposed Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT at the Municipal Level has been tested for the Danube Tourist Region (DTR) and the municipalities that are part of the region. The study aims to identify specific weaknesses and opportunities for the development of CHT, assess the degree of development of this type of tourism, evaluate the readiness for innovation within it, and propose innovations that could be implemented and have a favorable effect.

In **the first paragraph**, an analysis is carried out on the macro- and microenvironment affecting CHT in specific municipalities. Based on the analysis of the most influential factors, an overall assessment of the environment is made, showing that it is stable, relatively constant, with low dynamism and the presence of preconditions for innovation processes in the municipalities of the DTR. Additionally, the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) of all municipalities are examined, and critical points in the development of CHT in the region are highlighted.

The strategic goals described in the IDPs do not differ from those set in the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in Bulgaria for the period 2014-2030. These include improving the quality of natural and anthropogenic tourist resources and infrastructure. The focus is on developing a marketing strategy for cultural tourism, as well as introducing innovations in this field.

In the National Concept for Spatial Development of Tourism for the period 2013-2025, the strategic goals are aimed at improving tourism infrastructure, preserving, protecting, and improving the quality of tourist resources, enhancing cooperation between ministries regarding tourism, achieving territorial connectivity, and enhancing competitiveness through the introduction of innovations.

The integrated territorial development strategies for the three regions (North Central, North-Western, and North-Eastern), parts of which coincide with the DTR, emphasize the lack of financial resources related to the research, socialization, and

promotion of cultural heritage sites, the need to improve tourism infrastructure, and the lack of skilled workforce.

In these strategic documents, similarities can be found regarding the identified weaknesses in the development of tourism, despite the differences in the time periods they cover, which indicates insufficient real actions taken in this regard. Given that these strategic documents cover several years, it is necessary to periodically conduct research and analysis aimed at tracking the actions and results of each of the stated goals. The results related to the challenges in the development of tourism in the examined IDPs of the DTR are summarized by the author in Figure 6.

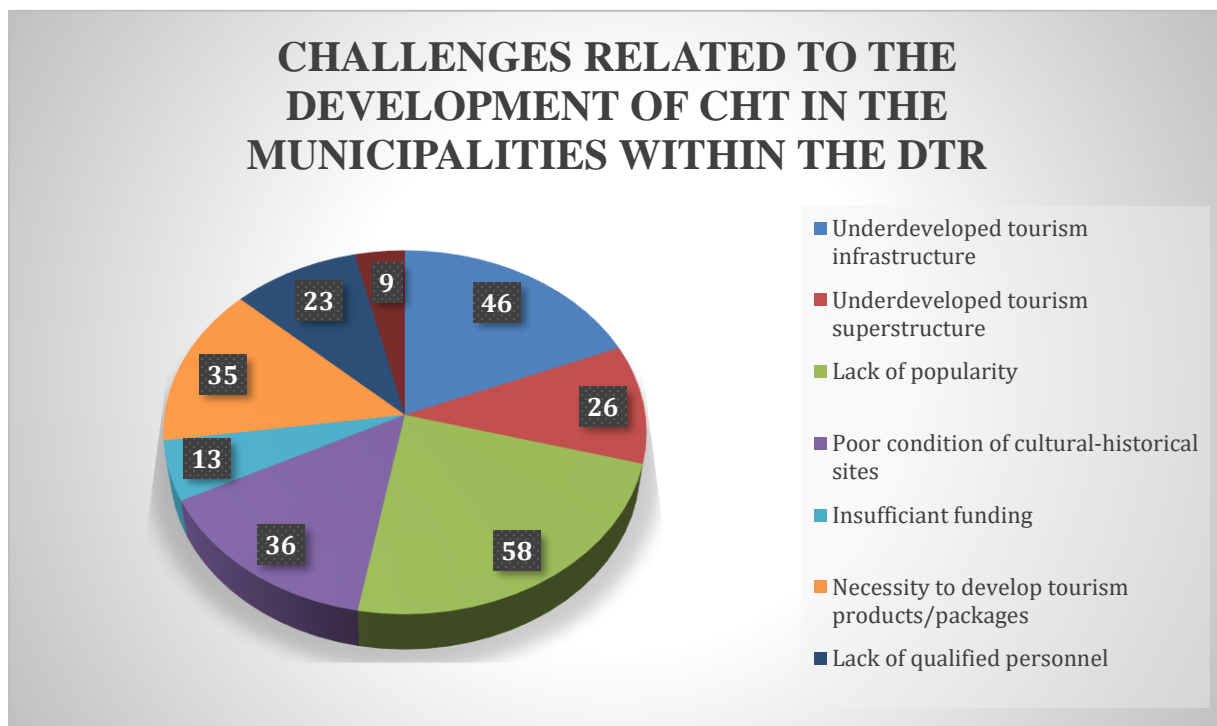


Figure 6. Challenges related to the development of CHT in Municipalities of the DTR

Source: Compiled by the Author

The main critical points identified from this analysis are:

- *Lack of popularity* – For the largest number of municipalities (58), the lack of popularity is pointed out as the main obstacle to tourism development in their area.

- *Underdeveloped infrastructure* – For 46 municipalities, the state of infrastructure is the primary challenge to the development of CHT.
- *Poor condition of cultural-historical sites* – In 36 municipalities, the condition of cultural heritage sites is identified as a major problem hindering the development of CHT.
- *Necessity to create tourist products/packages* – According to 35 municipalities, products based on cultural heritage are either insufficient or absent.
- *Underdeveloped tourism superstructure* – In 26 municipalities, the state of the tourism superstructure is highlighted as a problem for the development of CHT.
- *Insufficient funding* – 13 municipalities report insufficient funding for these sites and activities related to improving tourism products connected to cultural heritage as a barrier to CHT development.
- *Lack of qualified personnel* – For 23 municipalities, the issue of a lack of qualified staff required to maintain sites (material cultural heritage) and provide tourism services is a significant obstacle to the development of CHT.
- *Insufficient collaboration* – 9 municipalities identify insufficient cooperation between the different stakeholders as a problem for the development of CHT.

These points highlight the various challenges faced by municipalities in the Danube Tourist Region when it comes to developing CHT. Addressing these issues will be crucial for fostering innovation and improving the sector.

The results include data from representatives of small, medium, and large municipalities in the region. The data from the survey show the level of readiness for the implementation of innovations by municipality (see Figure 7).

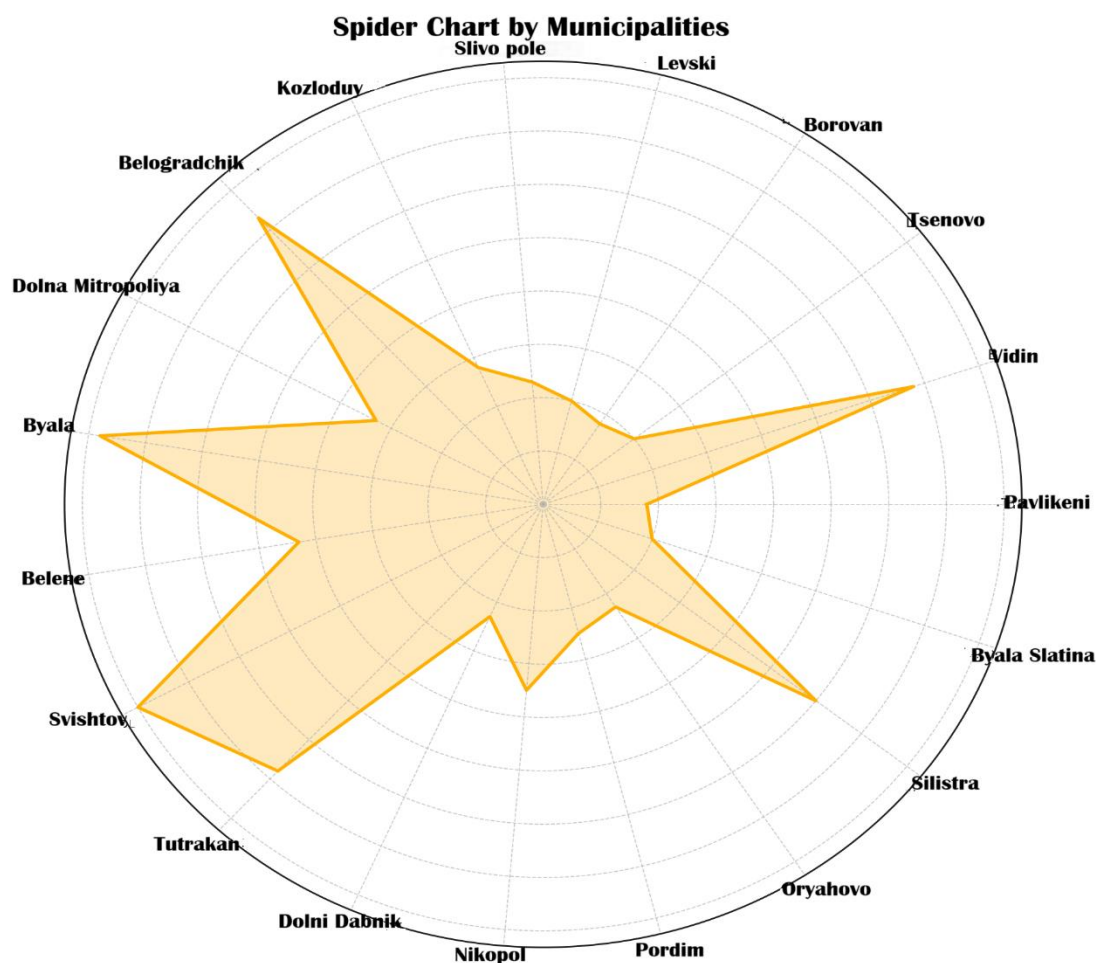


Figure 7. Readiness for Innovation Implementation by Municipality

Source: Compiled by the Author

The criteria and indicators used in the survey to measure the potential for implementing innovations correspond to the methodology of the Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in CHT, proposed in Chapter Two of the dissertation. The obtained results allow for the identification of guidelines for addressing the identified challenges in CHT, which are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Guidelines for addressing the identified challenges in cultural-historical tourism by municipality

Municipality	Average score	Qualitative assessment	Guidelines for addressing the identified challenges in cultural-historical tourism
Svishtov	0,80	Very High	It is necessary to consolidate the existing progress through investments in digitization and international partnerships.
Byala	0,78	Very High	It is necessary to strengthen the implementation of innovations and active collaboration with tour operators and other municipalities.
Belogradchik	0,73	High	It is necessary to strengthen the implementation of innovations and active collaboration with tour operators and other municipalities.
Tutrakan	0,68	High	It is necessary to strengthen the implementation of innovations and active collaboration with tour operators and other municipalities.
Vidin	0,68	High	It is necessary to strengthen the implementation of innovations and active collaboration with tour operators and other municipalities.
Silistra	0,60	High	It is necessary to strengthen the implementation of innovations and active collaboration with tour operators and other municipalities.
Belene	0,43	Moderate	It is necessary to invest in tourism infrastructure and promote cultural heritage sites.
Nikopol	0,35	Moderate	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Dolna Mitropolia	0,33	Moderate	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Kozloduy	0,28	Moderate	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Pordim	0,25	Moderate	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.

Slivo pole	0,23	Law	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Dolni Dabnik	0,23	Law	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Oryahovo	0,23	Law	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Tsenovo	0,20	Law	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Byala Slatina	0,20	Law	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Levski	0,20	Law	Strategic planning is required, including organizing events and seeking external partnerships.
Borovan	0,18	Law	An urgent need for capacity building: training, infrastructure, and basic conditions for the development of cultural-historical tourism.
Pavlikeni	0,18	Law	An urgent need for capacity building: training, infrastructure, and basic conditions for the development of cultural-historical tourism.

Source: Compiled by the author.

The municipalities that received "High" and "Very High" scores can take steps toward implementing innovations to develop CHT.

The following municipalities with the highest potential for innovation implementation are outlined:

- Svishtov (0.80 – Very High score)
- Byala (0.78 – Very High score)
- Belogradchik (0.73 – High score)
- Tutrakan (0.68 – High score)
- Vidin (0.68 – High score)

- Silistra (0.60 – High score).

These municipalities stand out due to their strong activity in tourism initiatives, CHT development, well-established infrastructure, active events, and partnerships with external organizations.

The remaining municipalities (Kozloduy, Dolna Mitropolia, Belene, Nikopol, Pordim, Pavlikeni, Tsenovo, Borovan, Levski, Sliovo Pole, Dolni Dabnik, Oryahovo, and Byala Slatina), which received "Low" or "Moderate" score, demonstrate a low level of development or limited activity in the field of CHT and innovations. This may be a result of a lack of events, low levels of partnerships, a lack of implemented innovations, or underdeveloped tourism infrastructure.

The results from the summarized average scores for each municipality show that the potential for implementing innovations in 68.42% of the respondents is insufficient.

Regarding the parameters accounting for revenue from programs and projects, tourist taxes, and entrance fees for sites, a total of 36.84% of the responding municipalities do not generate any revenue. The percentage of municipalities that generate revenue from only one or two of these sources is also 36.84%. The lack of sufficient revenue slows down the processes of renewing the material immovable cultural heritage (CIN) and limits the possibilities for creating sustainable CHT.

A total of 53% of municipalities have presented a vision for future innovations in CHT. Their ideas for innovations are focused on creating networks of partnerships with other municipalities for the purpose of sharing best practices, establishing museums, setting up a tourist information center, offering attractions for learning about local crafts and the production of locally-branded products, as well as developing a unified tourist product and offering it through a specially designed app. Some municipalities have focused on creating an integrated local tourist product, combining local heritage with typical regional products and foods. One municipality has ideas for creating investment projects for an Ancient Ceramics Center, while another has plans to develop a project that includes research on fading old traditions and crafts, as well as activities aimed at their restoration and

development, including 3D exhibitions to recreate an authentic historical atmosphere and digital models.

Regarding the already implemented innovations in CHT, only 16% of the municipalities have highlighted their innovations, which include the construction of an innovative Visitor Center and signs with QR codes for digital stamp collection. One municipality responded that its innovation activity is related to the development of the museum sector and cultural heritage, but did not specify the type of innovations.

The results from additional parameters show the desire of a larger number of municipalities to engage in innovative activities and the presence of specific ideas in this regard. The variety and lack of repetition in the ideas are notable, indicating different visions for the development of CHT. Building innovation networks and stimulating cooperation would lead to the sharing of experience and concepts. In this way, each municipality would be beneficial to the others.

From the perspective of the innovations implemented so far, it is noticeable that only a small number of municipalities have introduced innovations in CHT, indicating the need for specific measures to be taken. Municipalities have a positive attitude towards the introduction of innovations in this field of tourism, but not all of them have initiated actions in this direction.

Based on the conducted research on the internal and external factors influencing the development of the Danube tourist region, as well as the results from the assessment of the state of CHT and the innovation readiness of the municipalities in the area, a SWOT analysis has been carried out to identify the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the implementation of innovations (see Table 5). The data is based on the research conducted up to this point.

Table 5. SWOT Analysis of Municipalities in the Danube Tourist Region

Силни страни	Слаби страни
Rich cultural heritage	Poor condition of a large number of cultural heritage sites

Strategic location	Underdeveloped tourist infrastructure
Favorable climate	Poorly developed tourist superstructure
Cultural-historical tourism is combined with other types of tourism	The municipalities are unpopular tourist destinations
Utilization of the existing port infrastructure for municipalities bordering the Danube River	Lack of sufficiently developed tourist products and services
Availability of water resources	Lack of sufficient financial resources for tourism development
Recognized significant importance of cultural-historical tourism, and in particular of cultural values, for the development of the Danube Tourist Region	Peripheral location of some municipalities in relation to the network of settlements in Bulgaria
Възможности	Заплахи
Introduction of innovations aimed at optimizing processes and increasing revenue from cultural-historical tourism	Lack of qualified personnel in tourism
Creation of an information system regarding tourism opportunities in the municipalities	Negative impact of climate change on cultural heritage in some municipalities
Implementation of various innovative solutions aimed at preserving cultural heritage and preparing future professionals in tourism	Depopulation of municipalities due to demographic issues and lack of opportunities for local population integration
Establishing cooperation both among the municipalities of the Danube Tourist Region (DTR) and with other municipalities from the country and abroad (mainly those located within the Danube Macro-Region). Stimulating collaboration with various organizations,	Vulnerability of the sector in case of a crisis

the private sector, educational institutions, etc.	
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Source: Compiled by the author

The analysis shows that the strengths are mainly related to the tourist resources and natural features of the respective destinations. The weaknesses are associated with low popularity, poor condition of the sites, underdeveloped tourism infrastructure and superstructure, financing issues, and the geographic location of the municipalities. The opportunities for the implementation of innovations are linked to the product and processes. The identified threats, directly related to the introduction of innovations, mainly concern depopulation of the municipalities and the lack of qualified personnel.

In the third paragraph, guidelines for the implementation of innovations are defined. After evaluating the state of CHT and the innovation readiness of the municipalities, it is important to examine the consumer attitude towards CHT and the introduction of innovations in this type of tourism. This survey answers the question of whether municipalities should take steps to develop this type of tourism through the implementation of innovations and how much this would increase consumer interest and tourist traffic in the area.

The survey among users of tourist products aims to establish their preferences regarding tourism products in general, the development of CHT, and the popularity of the largest municipalities in the DTR as tourist destinations. The results related to consumer opinion show a neutral attitude towards the importance of staff qualifications in CHT, as well as towards the sustainability and environmental friendliness of tourist sites. In all other indicators, consumer attitudes are either positive or strongly positive. Respondents support the introduction of innovations in CHT and the implementation of a unified information system in this type of tourism.

As an overall summary of the conducted study, guidelines for the development of CHT in municipalities with "High" and "Very High" scores have been proposed in order to increase their competitiveness through innovations in the following areas:

Implementation of innovative technological solutions aimed at optimizing processes by periodically analyzing and updating data related to the development of CHT, which will allow for timely actions when necessary;

Inclusion of cultural values in tourist routes by establishing connections between municipalities in the DTR and other rapidly developing destinations;

1. Creation of internal and external innovation networks;
2. Use of tourist zoning for monitoring, planning, and setting the direction for tourism development;
3. Creation of marketing strategies aimed at promoting the destination and the tangible immovable cultural heritage (TICH) in its area;
4. Introduction of modern standards for applying energy-saving technologies in tourism activities, while adhering to standards for preserving and protecting the environment;
5. Unlocking local potential by implementing innovative methods for the development of CHT in the DTR, bringing high added value;
6. Creation of ways to diversify the tourism product in the destinations;
7. Taking innovative steps aimed at creating a competitive advantage through continuous exchange of experience and best practices.

For municipalities with "Moderate" and "Low" scores, it is recommended to take steps to improve the tourist infrastructure, secure funding for activities related to the development of CHT, and improve the condition of tangible immovable cultural heritage through restoration activities.

Based on the results of the conducted study and the analysis of the available data, the need for the creation of a new marketing strategy for the Danube Tourist Region (DTR) has been identified. This strategy should be linked to real policies and actions applied by all stakeholders. In this regard, the state and local municipal authorities play a significant role, as they should be directly involved in the development of tourist destinations.

In **the Fourth paragraph**, specific measures for the development of CHT in the DTR through the implementation of innovations are proposed, including:

- **Establishment of a Unified Information System for CHT.** The identified issue of the lack of available and accessible organized information on immovable CHT in the municipalities of the DTR hinders the ability to track the region's development in this area, which creates limitations for addressing emerging issues in the examined sector. This is a challenge that arose during the development of the dissertation in the attempt to access certain data necessary for the research. One of the main technological innovations should be related to ensuring more timely awareness regarding the tangible immovable cultural heritage in the municipalities of the DTR. The proposed information system should be created and maintained by the Ministry of Tourism. Given that cultural assets can be state, municipal, or privately owned, the Ministry should cooperate with the municipalities and all legal entities who own the CHH objects in the DTR.

- **Creation of a detailed digital map of tangible immovable cultural heritage in the DTR.** It has been noted that since the beginning of 2024, there is already a digital map of Bulgaria, which currently does not contain all immovable cultural assets.

- **Implementation of innovative approaches in offering tourist products.** It has been proposed to combine different activities aimed at increasing the flow of tourists, provoking greater interest, and extending their stay, which would have a positive economic effect.

- **Building internal and external innovation networks.** Research shows that tourist destinations where networks have been created, including participants from different geographical locations and with different typologies, develop successfully (Brandão et al., 2018). For each Tourism Region Management Organization in Bulgaria, these networks are based on cooperation between the public legal entities and structures from the state administration, scientific organizations, and schools in the field of tourism, as well as any private legal entities whose headquarters and activities are located within the region.

In summary of the content presented in Chapter Three, the following **conclusions** have been made:

First, the proposed Model for Measuring the Potential for Implementing Innovations at the municipal level can easily be implemented in real conditions and can assist municipal leadership in taking steps toward the development of cultural-historical tourism through the implementation of innovations. The conducted research shows that the model can be implemented for the Danube Tourist Region and the municipalities that comprise it.

Second, the assessment of the state of cultural-historical tourism and the innovation readiness of municipalities allows for the identification of directions for optimizing existing practices in this type of tourism. Actions should focus on improving both the core tourist product and the additional elements influencing it.

Third, the results show that 31.58% of municipalities have high or very high potential for implementing innovations in cultural-historical tourism.

Fourth, a study of consumer attitudes reveals that consumers are entirely positive toward innovations in cultural-historical tourism.

Fifth, successful collaboration among all stakeholders is a key factor in the development of the local economy, as innovations not only contribute to increasing tourist flows and enhancing destination recognition but also stimulate the local economy and ensure sustainable development of the region. These innovations should be directed towards the areas identified as priorities for the

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results achieved from the conducted research are presented. The first chapter is of a theoretical and foundational nature. The second chapter focuses on approaches to the analysis of cultural-historical tourism with the aim of implementing innovations. The third chapter is of a practical and applied nature. The proposed Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in Cultural-Historical Tourism at the Municipal Level could be integrated into various analytical and strategic processes to support innovation policies and pioneering solutions related to the sustainable development of the tourism sector. The results from the research conducted in the first,

second, and third chapters demonstrate the successful achievement of the objectives and the main aim of the dissertation, while simultaneously confirming the developed thesis.

Future research could focus on further developing the theoretically described Model for the Implementation of Innovations in Cultural-Historical Tourism, confirming its practical applicability. Additionally, the adapted Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations at the Municipal Level could be applied to municipalities in other tourism regions across the country, to demonstrate its universality and effectiveness.

IV. REFERENCE TO THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS DEVELOPED IN THE DISSERTATION

First, the enrichment of existing knowledge about cultural-historical tourism and the scope of its product, as well as the specifics of innovations in the context of cultural-historical tourism, through in-depth consideration, summarization, and critical analysis of fundamental scientific-theoretical propositions.

Second, the research, summarization, and critical analysis of the main theoretical and applied models and methods for analysis in tourism, taking into account the concepts of the innovation cycle and open innovation, as the basis for the development of the author's models.

Third, the development of the Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations at the Municipal Level and the Model for Implementing Innovations in Cultural-Historical Tourism, with specified step-by-step algorithms, the execution of which is linked to achieving the most effective results.

Fourth, testing the proposed Model for Measuring the Potential for the Implementation of Innovations in municipalities from the Danube Tourist Region.

Fifth, the formulation of specific measures and guidelines for implementing innovations for the development of cultural-historical tourism in the Danube tourist region.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

Articles:

1. Konstantinova, Y. A. (2024). Application of innovations in cultural tourism, e-JOURNAL VFU. – Varna, 21, pp. 762-775, ISSN (online): 1313-7514
2. Константинова, Й. А. (2024). Strategic marketing potential of the danube tourist region, JOURNAL VFU. –Varna, 21, pp. 774-788, ISSN (online): 1313-7514

Conference papers:

1. Konstantinova, Y. (2024). Innovation Networks of Tourism Regions Management Organizations. Proceedings of the National Round Table on the Topic: "Formal and Informal Innovation Networks," held on May 27, 2024, at D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov, Academic Publishing House "Tsenov," 2024, pp. 131-139, ISBN: 978-954-23-2493-5, pp. 122-131.
2. Konstantinova, Y. (2022). Benchmarking: Types, Stages, and Opportunities for Its Application in the Study of Cultural-Historical Landmarks. International Scientific and Practical Conference “Economic Activity in a Special Legal Period” – Veliko Tarnovo, Kharkiv, Publisher: ACCESS PRESS, 2022, pp. 82-90.

**DECLARATION
OF ORIGINALITY AND AUTHENTICITY**

by Yoana Angelova Konstantinova
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In connection with the procedure for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" under the PhD program "Economics and Management (Tourism)", I declare that:

1. the results and contributions in the dissertation on the topic: "Development of Cultural-Historical Tourism through the Implementation of Innovations" are original and have not been borrowed from research and publications in which the author did not participate;
2. the information presented by the author in the form of copies of documents and publications, personally composed reports, and other materials, corresponds to the objective truth;
3. the scientific results obtained, described and/or published by other authors are duly and thoroughly cited in the bibliography.

This dissertation has not been submitted for the acquisition of a scientific degree at another higher education institution or research institute.

April 4th, 2025
Svishtov

Declarer:.....
/PhD student Yoana Konstantinova/