


Name and address of university	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" Address: 15 Tzar Osvoboditel blvd., 1504 Sofia, BULGARIA https://web.gea.uni-sofia.bg/
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Short description of university	Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is the oldest HEI in Bulgaria established in 1888. It has been consistently ranked as the top university in the country according to national and international rankings. The Geography of Tourism Programme at Sofia University was set up in 1967 within the Faculty of Geology and Geography. In 1972 a dedicated department was established to organize the education of a growing number of Bulgarian and foreign students, and to conduct research in tourism territorial planning and management. In 1997 the Geography of Tourism Programme transferred into a Tourism Programme offering interdisciplinary education with stronger orientation to the tourism business.
Relevant Faculty/ department	Faculty of Geology and Geography / Geography of Tourism Department
Study programme(s) in (sustainable) tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism (BSc) - Tourism Destinations Management (for students holding a Bachelor's degree in Tourism); - Tourism (for students who do not hold a Bachelor's degree in Tourism); - Cultural Tourism (in cooperation with the Faculty of History); - Ecotourism (in cooperation with the Faculty of Biology)
Duration and ECTS of programme(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism (BSc) - 4 years / 8 semesters (full-time); 240 ECTS - Tourism Destinations Management – 1 year/ 2 semesters (part-time); 60 ECTS - All other MSc Programmes – 2 years / 4 semesters (part-time); 120 ECTS
Language(s) of instruction	Bulgarian; Selected courses are taught in English for Erasmus students
Keywords describing programme(s)	<p>Tourism (BSc) - natural and social environment for tourism development; tourism industry sectors; tourist behaviour, marketing in tourism, human resources managements in tourism; sustainable development; development and current issues of tourism in Bulgaria; world tourism regions and destinations.</p> <p>MSc Programmes - sustainable development, destination management, tourism policy & planning, tourism impacts; tourism research</p>
(Sustainable) tourism research/transfer institute (if any)	n.a.

<p>Research/transfer topics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable destination management - Climate change adaptation and mitigation - Tourist behaviour in vulnerable / protected areas - Stakeholders' perceptions and tourism impacts assessment - Measuring sustainability in tourism - Corporate responsibility and certification
<p>Selected research projects on sustainable tourism</p>	<p>Impact of Social Networks on the Visitation of Vulnerable Mountain Destinations (2022-2023)</p> <p>This ongoing project is funded by the National Scientific Programme “Young Scientists and Post-doctoral Researchers” of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to study the influence of the most popular social networks used in Bulgaria on the visitation of vulnerable mountain destinations (based on a case study of the Urdine Lakes). The following key activities are in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting an in-depth literature review on the topic; • Preparation of an online questionnaire and conducting a survey among the members of selected interest groups in FB; • Collection of photo and text material from Facebook and Instagram platforms • Analysis of the collected quantitative and qualitative information; • Systematization and dissemination of research results among the scientific community and interested parties. <p>European Tourism SME Going Green 2030 report (2021-2022)</p> <p>Our team prepared the national report for Bulgaria as part of the European Tourism SME Going Green 2030 report describing the current situation of the development of sustainable tourism and giving recommendations for boosting Sustainable Tourism for SMEs. This national review covered information regarding relevant stakeholders, policies and strategies as well as activities and instruments linked to sustainable tourism development at national level. Core achievements as well as challenges and opportunities regarding the development of sustainable tourism in Bulgaria were addressed, taking into consideration the implications of the Covid-19 crisis.</p> <p>Development of methodology for socio-economic assessment of climate change vulnerability and possibilities for sustainable adaptation of ski resorts (2020-2021)</p> <p>The tasks conducted by a team from the Geography of Tourism Department at Sofia University were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing literature review on the theoretical statements and available empirical studies on the subject; - Analysis of the experience from already conducted empirical research of tourists, residents, tourism business representatives, and other key stakeholders in the Pamporovo ski resort, Bulgaria; - Development of a mixed methodology (comprising both quantitative and qualitative methods) for assessing socio-economic vulnerability of ski resorts to climate change and possible sustainable adaptation strategies. <p>The methodology was developed under the project <i>"Development and testing of a model for monitoring and evaluating the sustainable development of tourism in Bulgaria (on the example of national resorts)"</i>, funded by the National Scientific Research Fund, contract No. KP-06-H25-3 / 13.12.2018.</p>

	<p>Pilot testing and implementation of the European System of Sustainable Tourism Development Indicators (ETIS) in the Danube Region of Bulgaria and in Sofia Municipality (2014-2015)</p> <p>Three projects aimed to test the implementation of ETIS in the specific destinations by completing several tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of ETIS indicators and determination of appropriate sources of information; • Development of questionnaires for surveys and interviews; • Collection of statistical information from official sources; • Conducting surveys and interviews with tourists, business representatives, and other key stakeholders; • Statistical data processing and entering the data into the ETIS data matrix; • Analysis of the results and preparation of reports. <p>Above activities were carried out by a team of lecturers and students at Sofia University with the support of the Focal Point Destination Danube, financed by the German Agency for International Cooperation - GIZ (for the Danube Region), as well as by contract with the Tourism Municipal Enterprise of Sofia Municipality, Bulgaria.</p>
<p>Transfer activities with the tourism industry (with selected examples)</p>	<p>The Geography of Tourism department maintains active connections with the tourism business and various destination management organisations. Partnerships include SMEs from the accommodation and the intermediary sectors of the tourism industry, governmental and municipal administrations, as well as tourism NGOs and cultural institutions.</p> <p>In 2022-2023 eleven SMEs from the accommodation sector of Bulgaria were consulted for Green Key certification within the ETGG 2030 Project.</p> <p>In 2014-2015 a team of lecturers and students at the Geography of Tourism department conducted testing and implementation of the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) in the Danube region of Bulgaria as well as in Sofia Municipality.</p> <p>Our students go through a compulsory internship lasting for minimum 4 months / 16 weeks in the 6th semester of the BSc Tourism Programme. It is an integral part of the curriculum.</p>
<p>Network of partners in the field of sustainable tourism</p>	<p><u>Membership in scientific / educational organisations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ATLAS - Regional Studies Association - La Fondation pour le Formation Hoteliere - SEEmore Research Network (part of the Mountain Research Initiative for SE Europe) - STR SHARE Center <p><u>Erasmus partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Estoril Higher Institute for Tourism and Hotel Studies (Portugal) - Vilniaus Kolegija / University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania) - Universidad Autonoma de Madrid (Spain) - Universitatea din Craiova (Romania) - Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj Napoca (Romania) - University of Eastern Finland (Finland) <p><u>Other partner HEIs / research institutions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences - Geographical Institute "Jovan Cvijic" - Serbian Academy of Science and Arts - University of Bucharest, Romania

Tourism associations and other NGOs:

- Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism (BAAT) - <https://www.baatbg.org>
- Bulgarian Association for Rural and Ecological Tourism (BARET) <http://www.en.baret-bg.org>
- Association of Bulgarian tour operators and travel agents - <http://www.abtta.com/>
- Future for Tourism union of tour operators and travel agents - <https://futurefortourism.org/>
- Burgas Regional Tourism Association - <https://www.brta-burgas.org>
- Slow Food in Bulgaria - <http://www.slowfood-bg.com>
- Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation - www.bbf.biodiversity.bg

Individual companies:

- Traventuria Ltd. - <https://www.traventuria.bg>
Balkan Trek Ltd. - <http://balkantrek.com>
Eco-village "Debeli dab"/Big oak/ - <https://debelidab.eu/en>
The Five Elements SPA Hotel - <https://thefiveelementshotel.com/>
Orpheus SPA & Resort - <https://orpheus-spa.com/en/>