

# THE PRESENTATION OF EASTERN CROATIA - ŽUPANJA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

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Undergraduate thesis / Završni rad

2017

Degree Grantor / Ustanova koja je dodijelila akademski / stručni stupanj: **Polytechnic of  
Sibenik / Veleučilište u Šibeniku**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://um.nsk.hr/um:nbn:hr:143:585313>

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-09-01**

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**VELEUČILIŠTE U ŠIBENIKU**  
**ODJEL MENADŽMENTA**  
**PREDDIPLOMSKI STRUČNI STUDIJ MENADŽMENT**

**Darija Ilić**

**THE PRESENTATION OF EASTERN CROATIA – ŽUPANJA  
AND ITS SURROUNDINGS**

**Završni rad**

**Šibenik, 2017.**



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**Završni rad**

**Kolegij: Poslovni engleski jezik IV**

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**Šibenik, rujan 2017.**

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## **PREZENTACIJA ISTOČNE HRVATSKE – ŽUPANJA I NJEZINA OKOLICA**

DARIJA ILIĆ

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Svrha ovog završnog rada bila je da se kroz prezentaciju Istočne Hrvatske predstavi njezin postojeći potencijal te da se kroz njega istaknu mogućnosti za daljnji razvoj turizma ove regije. Slavonija je bogata kulturno-povijesnim naslijeđem, šumama, rijekama i netaknutom prirodom, brojnim kulturnim i zabavnim događanjima i manifestacijama, a može se pohvaliti i odličnom te raznolikom gastronomskom ponudom koja je zasnovana na tradicionalnim receptima i domaćim namirnicama. Sve ovo su faktori koji ukazuju na bogat potencijal ove regije za proširenje turističke ponude.

(32 stranice / 21 slika / 0 tablica / 15 literaturnih navoda / jezik izvornika: hrvatski)

Rad je pohranjen u: Knjižnici Veleučilišta u Šibeniku

Ključne riječi: Slavonija, turizam, kulturno-povijesno nasljeđe, manifestacija, gastronomija

Mentor: Ivana Bratić, prof.,pred.

Rad je prihvaćen za obranu:

## **PRESENTATION OF EASTERN CROATIA – ŽUPANJA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS**

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The purpose of this final paper was to present its present potential through the presentation of Eastern Croatia and to highlight opportunities for further development of the region's tourism. Slavonia is rich in cultural and historical heritage, forests, rivers and untouched nature, with numerous cultural and entertainment events and manifestations, and boasts a great and varied gastronomic offer based on traditional recipes and homemade groceries. All these are factors that point to the rich potential of this region to expand the tourist offer.

(32 pages / 21 figures / 0 tables / 15 references / original in Croatian language)

Paper deposited in: Library of Polytechnic of Šibenik

Keywords: Slavonia, tourism, cultural and historical heritage, manifestation, gastronomy

Supervisor: Ivana Bratić, prof.,pred.

Paper accepted:

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The final work will include the history of Eastern Croatia and the presentation of the Slavonian towns of Županja, Vinkovci and Vukovar. All these towns and their surrounding villages have many factors that attract tourists, but are underdeveloped and insufficiently refined, but with the effort and investment all these potentials can be maximally used for the purpose of enriching the tourism of Slavonia and thus of whole Croatia.

The first part of the paper describes the history of Eastern Croatia. The area bounded by rivers Drava, Sava and the Danube has been inhabited since the late Stone Age, and this is evidenced by numerous archaeological findings in these areas.

After that, the paper will talk about the town of Županja, which was mentioned for the first time in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Županja is located on the river Sava and the nearest neighboring towns are Vinkovci and Slavonski Brod. Županja has many potentials for tourism development, and the greatest advantage of this city is the richness of cultural and historical heritage and a multitude of events organized with the aim of preserving Slavonian culture and customs from oblivion.

Furthermore, the towns of Vinkovci and Vukovar will be treated in the work, both located in Vukovar-Srijem County. Vinkovci is located on the river Bosut and Vukovar, even on two rivers, the Danube and the Vuka. Both cities are rich in cultural and historical sights attracted by many tourists, and also have many green areas and rivers that open up opportunities for specific forms of tourism such as recreational and fishing tourism.

The concluding part of this paper discusses how to broaden and expand the tourist offer of entire Slavonia and which specific forms of tourism have the potential for development in this tourist underdeveloped region.



## 2. HISTORY OF EASTERN CROATIA

Throughout its entire history, Croatia has formed the boundary on which worlds have been broken and joined. Here the East melts into the West, North into South. Islam and Orthodoxy ends at the borders of Croatia, and the Mediterranean grows organically into Central Europe. The eastern part of Croatia became the most vulnerable and exposed dividing line, where all the values of the contrasts of Europe were concentrated. This area has been shaped by rivers, in every sense. Danube, the Drava and the Sava are at the same time the borders of Slavonia, Baranya and Srem, and their most vital connection linking them with the world.

The area bounded by the Drava, Danube and the Sava has signs showing life in continuity from the early Stone Age to the present, and the general characteristics of that earliest period are common with what is seen in the entire area of Pannonia, Central Europe and the Mediterranean.

The research into archaeological findings show clearly organized settlements and households, along with the cultivation of cereals, which were ground in stone mills to obtain flour to make bread. A variety of utensils, such as flint knives and shell pendants tell of the respect for categories of goods. The oldest inhabitants of this region, which stretched from the Danube to Greece, which included Srem and Slavonia, were the Thracians and the Illyrians.

„After the fall of Rome, which ruled the area of modern-day Slavonia until the 5th century, Ostrogoths and Lombards controlled the area before the arrival of Avars and Slavs, when the Principality of Lower Pannonia was established in the 7th century. It was later incorporated into the Kingdom of Croatia and, after its decline, the kingdom was ruled through a personal union with Hungary.“<sup>1</sup>

The Ottoman conquest of Slavonia took place in 1536 to 1552. In 1699, after the Great Turkish War, Slavonia was transferred to the Habsburgs. Reform of the empire through the Compromise of 1867 assigned it to the Hungarian part of the realm, and a year later to the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia. In 1918, when Austria-Hungary dissolved, Slavonia was a part of the short-lived State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs which in turn became a part of the kingdom later renamed Yugoslavia. During the Croatian War of Independence, Slavonia saw a fierce fighting,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavonia> (2017/08/15)

including Battle of Vukovar. The war effectively ended in 1995 with Croatia achieving a decisive victory over the Republic of Serbian Krajina in August 1995. The remaining occupied areas – Eastern Slavonia – were restored to Croatia pursuant to the Erdut Agreement of November 1995, with the process concluded in January 1998.

Figure 1. Slavonia and Baranya



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavonia>

### 3. CITY OF ŽUPANJA

River, soil and woods – these three words could be used to begin a presentation of the Vukovar-Srijem County's easternmost part, Županja. It is a small town in eastern Slavonia, whose name was first mentioned in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and it is located 254 kilometers east of Zagreb, the capital city of Croatia. It is administratively part of the Vukovar-Srijem County and is inhabited by 12,090 people according to the population census conducted in 2011<sup>2</sup>, which makes Županja the third most populous city in county.

Županja is the hub of the main road traffic routes in the direction of west-east and north-south. Along the city, one side crosses the highway linking Europe and the Middle East, and on the other side there is a road bridge which is also an international border crossing towards Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The nearest neighboring towns that are located in Croatia are Vinkovci in the north and Slavonski Brod in the west, and other two are Orašje in the south and Brčko on the south-eastern side (these two neighboring towns are located in Bosnia and Herzegovina, across the river Sava).

Županja's inhabitants cherish their love for tradition, nature, horses and carriages and they have been trying to incorporate these into rural tourism. They are also well known for the excellent gastronomic delicacies such as „kulin“ (a kind of high quality dried sausage), „čobanac“ (a kind of goulash), „fiš-paprikaš“ (a fish stew), all kinds of sausages, „šljivovica“ (plum brandy) and many more different kinds of pastry.

After visiting Županja people will carry a picture of the peaceful and friendly town that has a lot to offer to their tourists and visitors.

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<sup>2</sup> Population by Age and Sex, by Settlements, 2011 Census: County of Vukovar-Sirmium". *Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2011*. Zagreb: Croatian Bureau of Statistics. December 2012.

Figure 2. Panorama of the city of Županja



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/foto-galerija/>

Figure 3. Geographic position of the city of Županja



<http://www.zagrebsped.hr/podruznice.html>

### **3.1. Tourism of Županja**

Županja is a town settled on the bank of the River Sava, which has determined its life's course, and is a town of fertile plains, unique rural architecture, surrounded by ancient oak forests, a board town that is proud of the first games of football and tennis in Croatia.

People who visit this town get to know the beauty of the original Slavonian customs, costumes, cultural heritage, folklore, folk creation, Slavonian soul and everything else that for centuries the people of Županja have proudly created, and which is woven into numerous events (such as Šokačko Sijelo, harvesting and threshing, etc.)

#### **3.1.1. Sights and attractions**

- **Native Museum**

Of all architectural landmarks, the most interesting in the county is the Border watchtower (originally named „čardak“) – now the headquarters of the Native Museum Stjepan Gruber. It was established in 1953 and is the only preserved example of military-frontier defense architecture in Croatia. Next to the watchtower is the second museum building, the so-called „Agency“ – former steamship station, built in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Today there is set up the permanent ethnological exhibiton.

Native Museum is the organizer of pedagogical and educational workshops, numerous exhibitions and also organizes the manifestation „Kod konjarskih vatri“ in cooperation with the horse breeding association „Stari Graničar“ from Županja. In the courtyard of the Native Museum and on the Sava walkway in the organization of Tourist Board of Županja City since 2009 a fair named Savski sajam is organized, within socially responsible project „Lijepa Naša Sava“<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> A national project devoted to the promotion of economic, ecological and tourist potential of the Sava River

Figure 4. Native Museum Stjepan Gruber



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/zavicajni-muzej/>

- **Veliki Kraj Gallery**

„Veliki Kraj Gallery was opened in spring in 1991 in an old renovated traditional family house („Šokačka kuća“) as the first private gallery in the Vukovar-Srijem County.“<sup>4</sup> It is located in the center of town and it gathers many art and culture enthusiasts. Numerous academic creators and amateurs represented their works in this gallery.

The major activity of the gallery is the presentation of works of art, as well as the organizations of different work promotions and art workshops (such as making dolls and Christmas decorations, recycling paper and making artworks of it which is called „Art of used paper“). The gallery hosted numerous generations of folk writers and contributed greatly to the enrichment of the cultural life of the city on the river Sava.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/en/galerija-veliki-kraj/> (2017/08/16)



Figure 5. Veliki Kraj Gallery



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/galerija-veliki-kraj/>

- **City Library**

The inhabitants of Županja were early aware of the strength and effectiveness of the written word and the importance of reading and to prove that in 1838 Croatian reading room already existed in Županja which brought to the development of their cultural life in general.

The City Library in Županja was founded in 1861 and it is a local cultural and educational information center that provides access to cultural and intellectual capital. The work of this library is intended for the entire population in order to raise the level of general education, awareness and culture, stimulate professional and scientific work, and personal creativity especially in children.

The library offers a large number of different titles, both in children and adults sections and it also has a reading room where you can read daily newspapers. Presentations of different literary works are often organized there as well as different programs like concerts and workshops, various programs, concerts as well as different kinds of workshops. Library also takes part in

organizing „Šokačko sijelo“ (a traditional event of folk groups dancing, singing, presenting old customs...), „Actor's festival“ (Festival glumca), „Summer in Županja“ (Županjsko ljeto), „Town's day“ (Dan grada)<sup>5</sup>, „A month of Croatian books (Mjesec hrvatske knjige)...

The library was and remains the center and focus of cultural life, enlightenment, education and national consciousness in this turbulent border area where different religions and civilizations are encountered.

Figure 6. City Library



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/gradska-knjiznica/>

### 3.1.2. Events

- **Šokačko sijelo**

Šokačko sijelo is a cultural and entertainment event founded in 1968 and traditionally held every year in February. The theme is focused on fostering the rich culture and tradition of Slavonia, from the life and customs of the people of that region.

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<sup>5</sup> It is held every year on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August



The entire profusion and richness of Šokadija, as well as the beauty of the original Slavonian customs, garbs, cultural heritage, folklore, national opus, Slavonian soul and everything else which the people of Županja are proud of for centuries, is woven into this cultural, entertaining and tourist manifestation.

„The programme of the manifestation includes evenings of folklore, various exhibitions, nativity plays, the most beautiful girl in a native costume pageant called „Šokački cvit“, as well as the other performances.“<sup>6</sup> The greatest number of visitors come to the carnival procession, which has lots of participants and is a real tourist attraction in the open space.

The customs that go along with this manifestation, such as the carnival procession, making of the plum brandy, the horsemen march and others, are part of the rich tourist offer of the county Posavina and city of Županja, and it is even richer when there are visiting folklore groups from Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary and others. Every year this event brings together about 2,500 performers and more than 11,000 viewers.

Figure 7. Šokačko sijelo



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/dogadanja/sokacko-sijelo/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/en/events/sokacko-sijelo/> (2017/08/18)

- **„Our daily bread – harvesting and threshing in the past“**

The project Our daily bread – harvesting and threshing in the past („Kruh naš svagdašnji – žetva i vršidba u prošlosti“) comprises the three traditions of this region: culture, folklore and gastronomy. „This project presents the way people used to cut the wheat with a scythe and a sickle in the past, long before the modern machines; it shows how children played in fields while looking after the herd of pigs, as well as the competition of reapers and hand binders, and performance of the scythe forging.“<sup>7</sup>

The rich tourist offer also includes numerous stands with folk handicrafts, the review of traditional handicrafts, rich gastro offer of the Županija region, appearances of cultural – artistic associations, driving in horse-drawn vehicles, dancing, reel and singing. It is held annually in the first Saturday in July.

Figure 8. Threshing and harvesting



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/dogadanja/zetva-i-vrsidba-u-proslosti/>

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/en/events/our-daily-brad-harvesting-and-trashing-in-the-past/> (2017/08/21)

- **The Road of the Golden thread („Cesta zlatne niti“)**

The Road of the Golden thread is a new and unique tourist content. It combines history, cultural heritage and many traditional values, richness of nature and gastronomy in one whole.

This tourist attraction is a good choice if you want to get away from everyday life, see the beauty of nature and enjoy local food and specialities.

The Golden thread is the backbone of the touristic pathway linking Županja and the surrounding places Štitar, Babina Greda, Kruševica, Cerna, Šiškovci, Gradište, Bošnjaci, Drenovci and Vrbanja, to a unique tourist destination. Each of these places has its specifics and specialties related to life in the fertile plain, and can tell their unique story to each visitor.

Apart from the place, quietness and abundance of fresh air, the Road of the Golden thread offers traditional homemade pastries, refreshing plum brandy, and all that with the story of cheerful and always welcoming hosts.

Figure 9. Map of the Road of the Golden thread



<http://www.tz-zupanja.hr/turisticki-put-cesta-zlatne-niti/>

## 4. CITY OF VINKOVCI

Vinkovci is a town in the eastern part of the Slavonia, in the Vukovar-Srijem County. The city lies in a flatland on the Bosut river. The area has been inhabited since ancient neoliths, and as the first significant settlement in the monuments mentioned is the Roman city of Colonia Aurelia Cibalae. Today's city of Vinkovci was created in the medieval village called „Sv. Ilija“.

In the 2011 census the total population of the city was 35,312, making it the largest town of the county.<sup>8</sup> Surrounded by many villages, it is a local transport hub, particularly because of its railways. Also, in 2011 it was the 17th largest city in Croatia. It is located 19 kilometers southwest of Vukovar, 24 kilometers north Županja and 43 kilometers south of Osijek.

Vinkovci is the main railway junction of eastern Croatia, of railroads leading from Bosnia and Herzegovina toward Hungary and from the capital city of Zagreb toward Belgrade. The large railway junction, after Zagreb the second largest in Croatia, underlines the importance of transit in Vinkovci.

Vinkovci is also the meeting point of the Posavina and Podravina roads and the intersection of the main road 055 Županja-Vinkovci-Vukovar and several regional roads.

The City has significant and high-quality natural resources as well as developed infrastructure, and it is through this that one may notice that it is an economically and strategically important part of Croatia. All of this resulted in the traditional agricultural/cattle raising production and developed forestry, the development of industry and trade and lastly, a very rich traditional culture.

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<sup>8</sup> "Population by Age and Sex, by Settlements, 2011 Census: Vinkovci". *Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2011*. Zagreb: Croatian Bureau of Statistics. December 2012.



Figure 10. City of Vinkovci



<http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=259127&page=7>

#### **4.1. Tourism of Vinkovci**

Vinkovci with its attractions and its variety of establishment to furnish food and lodgings for visitors could easily develop a growing tourist trade.

Rural (country) tourism is represented in the surrounding villages like Otok, Ivankovo, Rokovci, Andrijaševci and Lipovac. The Tourist Union has included these villages into the tourist trade. At nearby Otok, near the beautiful location Otočki Virovi, which is a phenomenon in itself and next to the virgin forests, country tourism surpasses everyone's expectations. What it offers is hunting, rambling through the woods, fishing, participation in farm work, fresh air and Slavonian cuisine. The beauty of the landscape, traditional customs, feasts, national costumes, merry songs and relaxed rural atmosphere make perfect holidays.

#### 4.1.1. Sights and attractions

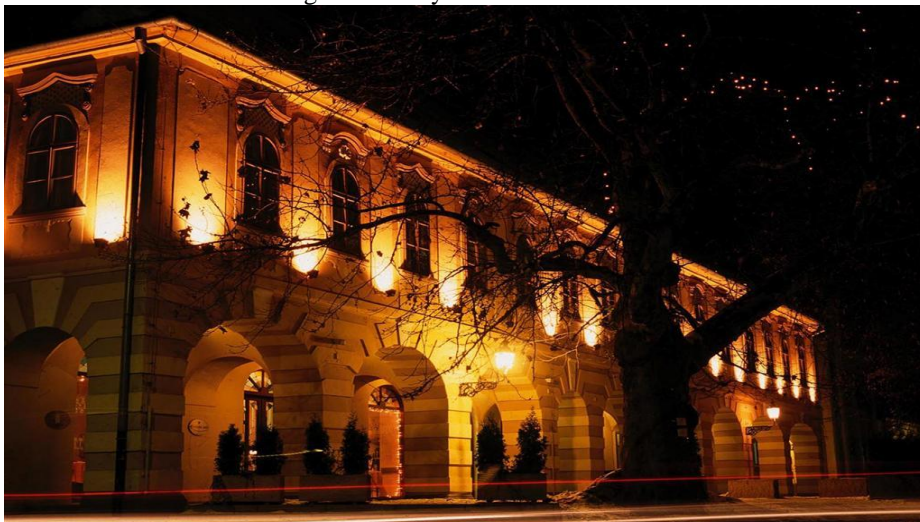
- **The City Museum Vinkovci**

The City Museum was founded in 1946, and since 1950 it is located in late-baroque building, built for military purposes in the early 1780s. The permanent exhibition presents archaeological and ethnographic material.

The Archaeological department exists since the foundation of the Museum, and from all findings that are exposed in this department it is especially valuable material from the extremely rich archaeological sites in Vinkovci and its surroundings. Among the Roman findings are the tombstones with the characters of Poseidon and Heracles, and in the medieval collection is particularly valuable Old Slavic ceramics.

A permanent ethnological exhibition in the attic of the Museum, with about 1,500 items, gives a cross section of the traditional heritage of the Vinkovci region from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. The exhibition is conceived in three parts: in the first are „Šokačka kuća“ (traditional house built by Šokci) and garden, which present the lifestyle of the local population; the other are showcases with an ethnographic structure and the reconstruction of former shops and craft workshops; and the third is a central multimedia communication space where different cultural events are held.

Figure 11. City Museum Vinkovci



<http://cibalia.hr/2016/02/15/gradski-muzej-vinkovci-i-muzej-vucedolske-kulture-najcesce-pretrazivani-muzeji-u-2015-godini-prema-google>

- **The baroque center of Vinkovci**

The Baroque is marked by Vinkovci, and especially its central square, which is an exemplary example of baroque urbanism and represents the area of high cultural, historical, urbanistic, architectural, stylistic and aesthetic values of Vinkovci.

The center of the square is dominated by the city park, which was built in 1868, with a monument to the Holy Trinity in its center. In the park there is the baroque parish church of St. Eusebius and Polion built in 1777. The park is surrounded by one side of the Building Complex of the Brod Estate Community<sup>9</sup> and on the other side of one of the oldest buildings in Vinkovci, and that is the building of the City Museum. Not far from the center of the city, in so-called Mine Park, there is one of the most valuable monuments of Vinkovci, the gothic church of “Sv. Ilija” on Meraja<sup>10</sup>, built in the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Vinkovci is a town with several green squares and parks, among which the largest one is “Lenije”. The architectural heritage of Vinkovci is rich, as well as the history of the city.

- **Archaeological park Sopot**

The Sopot archaeological park is connected to the city center by a three kilometers long infantry-bicycle trail. The park is located next to the Sopot resort and it combines six Sopot houses that were once built along the swamps, steams or as in this case along the Bosut River. The houses were reconstructed according to the finds from that locality, and they were called “Sopot houses” because of the culture they belonged to, which they bear since 1971.

- **The Birthplace of Ivan Kozarac**

Along Bosut, in Krnjaš, the oldest part of Vinkovci is a replica of Ivan Kozarac birthplace. The exterior of the house is like the original built at the beginning of the last century and inside the

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<sup>9</sup> One of the most important monuments of pro-fane neo-gothic architecture of historicism in Slavonia, built according to projects of Herman Bollé.

<sup>10</sup> A medieval site in Vinkovci where archaeological excavations were carried out



house there is furniture for 150 years old, from the age of Ivan Kozarac, which was expertly restored.

Visitors can see Ivan's time on the ground floor, through original furniture, information boards about his life and work, on the photographic notes are Ivan's manuscripts, audio and video projections.

Figure 12. The Birthplace of Ivan Kozarac



<http://www.etnoportal.com/galerija/ivan-kozarac-sa-krnjasa/>

#### 4.1.2. Events

- **Vinkovačke jeseni (“Autumns of Vinkovci”)**

Vinkovačke jeseni are a traditional folklore festival in Vinkovci. The festival was founded in 1966, and is considered one of the major cultural events in Slavonia, and even whole Croatia and Europe. In the foreground of this festival is the care of folk dances, folk clothing and folk customs, so that traditional values from folk life of Slavonia would be kept.



Vinkovačke jeseni are held each year in September, which is also the beginning of autumn, after which this festival got its name. The reason for establishment of this festival is that the autumn is that season that awards the most people of Slavonia for their hard labor. This festival has soon started to bind all of those who are lovers of cultural heritage, dialects and old customs.

In the days of the Festival the audience finds out everything about the diversity of the folklore in Slavonia, and about the foreign folklores that also participate in Vinkovačke jeseni. For the duration of the festival the stage is provisionally made, and is designed as an open-air stage.

There are several big attractions on this Festival, and some of them are:

*The Opening Ceremony* (“*Svečani mimohod*”), one of the most visited events during Vinkovačke jeseni. It is actually a mass of people that goes along the streets of Vinkovci and observes the progress of parade. In this event it is significant to mention the procession of the Horsemen on the horses that move in front of the procession of the people.

*The Review of Original Croatian Folklore* (“*Smotra izvornog hrvatskog folkloru*”), the Review begins after the Opening Ceremony and lasts for two days. On the Review, at first, enter the two most successful Folklore Associations, first the ones from Vinkovci, and then the other Folklore Associations from all over Croatia.

*Folklore Evenings* (“*Folklorne večeri*”), on this event are sung songs from around Croatia. The Folklore Evenings are thought for the restored, and for newly launched folklore societies.

*Small Talks of Šokci* (“*Šokački Divani*”), this is an event whose task is to represent the former way of life of the people of Slavonia, and to remember how one used to live in Slavonia.

*Hip-hop on Orion* (“*Hip-hop na Orionu*”), the event organized by the Hip-hop Vinkovci Association, which represents an urban leap in the sea of cultural events, featuring breakdance groups, performers, DJs and dancers from all over Slavonia.

Figure 13. Vinkovačke jeseni



<http://www.nacional.hr/vinkovacke-jeseni-pod-geslom-vecer-oprostajna/>

Figure 14. Vinkovačke jeseni



<http://vijesti.hrt.hr/255588/pocinju-49-vinkovacke-jeseni>

- **The Roman Days**

The Roman Days are an example of a manifestation that represents an excellent view of the history and influence of Rome in the area of the city of Vinkovci, a way of life, beliefs and other characteristics. Vinkovci had a significant role in history as a town where Valentines I. and Valens were born, brothers and the only Roman emperors born in today's Croatia.

The Roman Days are a historical, tourist and educational event by which Tourist Board of Vinkovci in cooperation with the City Museum and other partners' wishes to present Vinkovci through the live pictures of Colonia Aurelia Cibalae. This is accomplished through various workshops for children, a small gladiator school, making of ceramic dishes, gladiator combat, displaying legionary formations, telling stories, depicting historical battles, juggling games with fire, making of Roman jewelry, etc.

The manifestation is always given a humanitarian note, which means that there is a continuous involvement of the organizations that take care of needy persons, in this event.

As part of the Roman Days, there is entertainment for all ages because along with the mentioned, visitors can enjoy the festival of craft beer, concerts and parties.

Figure 15. The Roman Days



<http://hrturizam.hr/iv-rimski-dani-od-13-20-svibnja-u-vinkovcima/>

## 5. CITY OF VUKOVAR

Vukovar is located in the Eastern part of the Republic of Croatia and is the centre of the Vukovar-Srijem County. Its location places it at the border of historical provinces Eastern Slavonia and Western Sylvania. The city is positioned on important transport routes. Since time immemorial transport routes from the northwest to the southwest were active in the Danube Valley through the Vukovar area.

After steam ships were introduced in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and with the arrival of present day tourist ships, Vukovar is connected with Budapest and Vienna upstream and all the way to Romania downstream. The Vukovar harbour is an important import and export station.

The Vukovar area has always been an intersection of roads, the place where different cultures meet, but also a battleground in wars. The continuity of population in this area can be followed for five thousand years through numerous archaeological sites. The Vučedol Culture, which was named for the location Vučedol holds particular importance for this area. The Vučedol Dove, found in 1938, became the symbol of the city.

Vukovar is located 20 kilometers northwest of Vinkovci and 36 kilometers southeast of Osijek, and it lies on two rivers: the Vuka river and the Danube. The city's registered population was 26,468 in 2011 census, with a total of 27,683 in the municipality (the administrative municipality area of the city contains following settlements – Grabovo, Lipovača, Sotin and Vukovar).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> "Population by Age and Sex, by Settlements, 2011 Census: Vukovar". *Census of Population, Households and Dwellings 2011*. Zagreb: Croatian Bureau of Statistics. December 2012.



Figure 16. City of Vukovar



<http://www.geografija.hr/hrvatska/razvoj-turizma-u-gradu-vukovaru-primjena-swot-analize/>

## **5.1. Tourism of Vukovar**

Anyone who wants to meet some new surroundings and people, and experience something new and different should visit Vukovar. Walking through the streets of this city you will see that it is a city of rich cultural heritage and tradition.

There is also the Memorial Vukovar, which represents the entity that is visited in one breath and is united under the name Vukovar Nocturne. That is a touching story about love and courage, strength and pain, and human dignity and the victory of life that will awaken strong emotions in every visitor and will surely stay in their constant memory.

Many different events take place throughout the year, which can satisfy almost everyone's taste and are also one of the many reasons to visit this city.

### **5.1.1. Sights and attractions**

- **Water Tower**

„The Vukovar Water Tower, 50 meters tall and with a volume of 2,200 cubic meters of water, was built in the late 60s in the then existing city park and picnic site, the so called Najpar-bašča, at the entrance to the Vukovar quarter called Mitnica“<sup>12</sup>. Its volume and size made it one of the largest structures of that type in Europe at the time. Until the war, the top of the Water Tower housed a restaurant with a view of Vukovar, the Danube and the surrounding vineyards of Srijem. During the Serbian aggression on Vukovar, the Water Tower was one of the most common targets for enemy artillery which caused over 600 points of damage and today it represents a symbol of victory and new life. The structure will not be restored to its original function, instead it will become a memorial to remind about suffering and pain lived through by the city of Vukovar.

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<sup>12</sup> [http://www.turizamvukovar.hr/vukovar\\_eng.php?stranica=171](http://www.turizamvukovar.hr/vukovar_eng.php?stranica=171) (2017/09/01)

Figure 17. Water Tower before the Homeland war



<http://www.igre123.net/tomislav00/slike/vodotoranj-prije-rata/1131>

Figure 18. Water Tower after the Homeland war



[http://os-brestje-zg.skole.hr/?news\\_id=417](http://os-brestje-zg.skole.hr/?news_id=417)

- **Vukovar Memorial**

Vukovar Memorial or the Vukovar Nocturne is a story of love, courage, human dignity and after all the victory of life. This name encompasses all the memorial locations in Vukovar:

- *Place of Remembrance – Vukovar Hospital 1991*
- *Ovčara Memorial Centre*
- *Ovčara Mass Grave Site*
- *Memorial Cemetery for the Casualties of the Homeland War*
- *Homeland War Memorial Centre*
- *Memorial Hall for Croatian Defenders Trpinjska Cesta*
- *Cross at the place where the Vuka enters into the Danube*

- **Vukovar Municipal Museum – Castle Eltz**

It was founded in 1948 by a donation of Roman money, furniture, weapons and paintings given to his city by doctor Antun Bauer<sup>13</sup>. The museum started in the Coach Post Building in the old baroque centre, but was moved to Castle Eltz in 1966. Up until 1991 the Museum had about 50 thousand exhibits in four separate divisions:

- *Heritage Museum*, displayed the history of Vukovar from prehistory to today and provided an authentic display of the life of citizens of Vukovar and the Eltz family
- *The Bauer Collection* contained the most complete overview of modern Croatian art from the end of 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with special emphasis on the period between two world wars
- *Memorial Museum of the Nobel Prize Winner Lavoslav Ružička*, located in the house where he was born, it displayed original documents and medals from the life and work of this famous Nobel Prize winner, who received this prestigious award in 1939 for chemistry.
- *Memorial Museum of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia*, was located in the Workers' Hall Building, where the congress was held in 1920. The materials connected to the development of the labour movement and the founding of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was exhibited and presented here.

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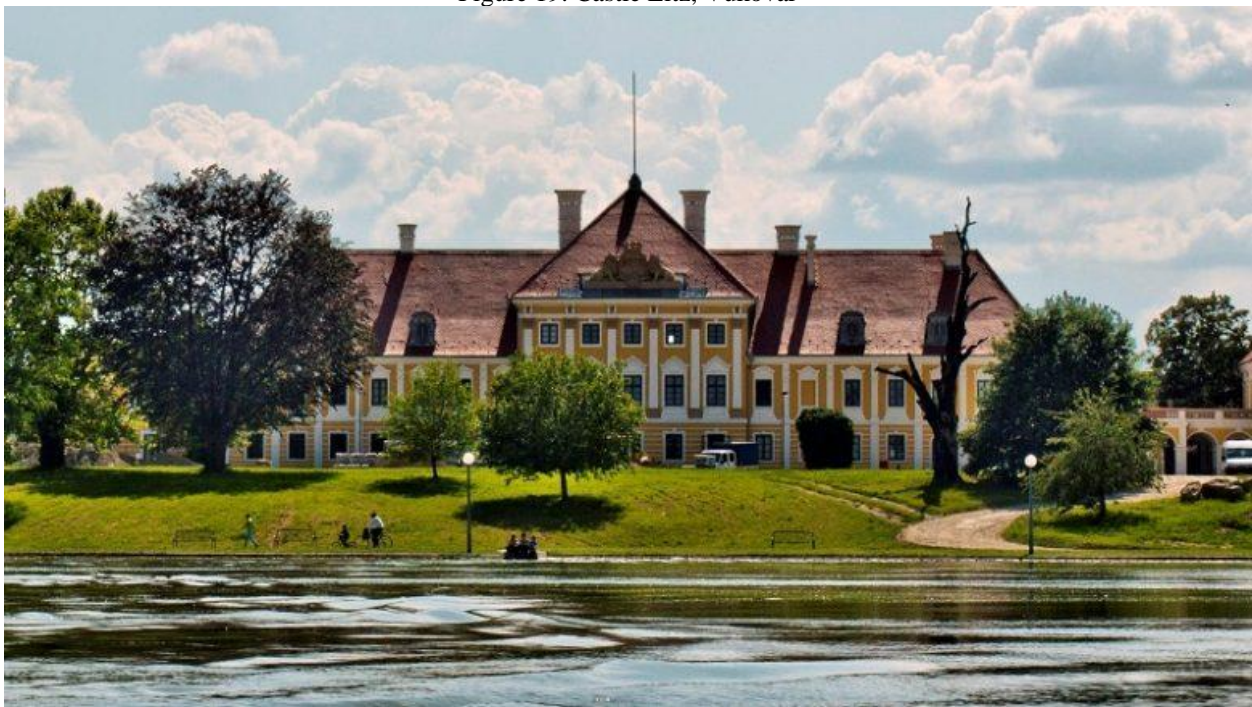
<sup>13</sup> Croatian art historian, collector and curator from Vukovar



During the Homeland War, Castle Eltz suffered significant damage and the collections which were kept there were also damaged: some of the exhibits were completely destroyed, some have disappeared and cannot be recovered and some of them were taken to Serbia. After years of effort and diplomatic activity by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia that part of the collection was returned to Vukovar.

Near the end of 1992 a collection was founded with the name Vukovar Museum in Exile which began the creation of a collection of donations by Croatian, and soon after also European artists for the city of Vukovar. This collection represented the beginning of the cultural restoration of Vukovar and it is displayed at the restored Castle Eltz today. Now that is renovated, Castle Eltz complex represents a unique museum and gallery, science and multimedia centre, which preserves and presents cultural heritage as an element of national identity and the continuity of life in this area.

Figure 19. Castle Eltz, Vukovar



<http://hotspots.net.hr/2016/12/setnjom-kroz-vukovar-upoznajmo-glasoviti-dvorac-eltz/>

- **Archaeological location Vučedol**

Vučedol is located along the Danube bank (5 kilometers downriver from Vukovar) and is one of the most important locations from the Eneolithic period. Due to its extraordinary geostrategic position, Vučedol was a place of constant inhabitation. It was a settlement of farmers, cattle herders, hunters and copper workers.

Material culture, in which the production of ceramics is especially prominent, points to a highly developed civilization due to the extraordinary quality of technology and its aesthetic value. Its features are an expressed artistic inspiration and a creative power which started a new flow of civilization. The ceramics from Vučedol attracts attention with its perfect harmony of shapes and the placement of decorations. The most famous ceramic vessel is the Vučedol Dove, a cult vessel in the shape of a bird, richly decorated by incrustations, found in 1938 at the location Gradac<sup>14</sup>.

Figure 20. Vučedol Dove



<https://www.starapovijest.eu/posuda-u-obliku-ptice-iz-vucedola/>

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<sup>14</sup> Archaeological site in Vukovar

### 5.1.2. Events

- **Saint Vinko's Day in Vučedol**

An event held traditionally every year on January 22nd, on Saint Vinko's Day, at the Goldschmidt farm grounds.

This event marks the beginning of the year's work in the vineyards and it starts with a blessing of the vineyards. "Sausages and other cured meat products are hanged on the vines, because a saying goes – if the hanged meats are large, the grape vines will be more fruitful and the grape clusters will be large. The same legend claims that if on that day, before noon, icicles or snow melts and creates puddles in which a sparrow can bathe, the year will be fruitful and there will be so much wine that we can bathe in it."<sup>15</sup> It is nice to keep traditions and preserve them for future generations. Along with an accompanying culture and art program, this event represents a true vineyard experience, with mulled wine and delicacies that the visitors may taste or prepare for themselves, on the fire.

Figure 21. Saint Vinko's Day



[http://www.turizamvukovar.hr/vukovar\\_eng.php?stranica=180](http://www.turizamvukovar.hr/vukovar_eng.php?stranica=180)

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.turizamvukovar.hr/vukovar\\_eng.php?stranica=180](http://www.turizamvukovar.hr/vukovar_eng.php?stranica=180) (2017/09/06)

- **Vukovar Film Festival**

Danube Region Film Festival - Vukovar Film Festival is unique due to many things. It is the only film festival of the community of Danube region countries and the only one held literally on the Danube. It is designed to promote and spread the creative development of filmmakers from the region and it is organized with the intent to contribute to cultural restoration in the city destroyed in the Homeland War. The theme of the festival, the films from the Danube region countries, is logically connected to Vukovar as a centre of the Croatian part of the community of the Danube region. Cultural influences have always been spreading along the Danube. Since Vukovar Film Festival is the only film festival featuring this region, on the international level it seeks to connect filmmakers from the Danube region countries, whose film making industries are some of the most vital in the world.

- **Vukovar Advent Festivities**

The month of December in Vukovar is traditionally reserved for Vukovar Advent Festivities which prepare the citizens and all visitors to Vukovar for Christmas, the holyday of peace, light, and love. During the four weeks of Advent there are many musical performances based on traditional culture, with the lighting of an Advent candle. During the festivities of the first Sunday all participants carry the light through the streets of Vukovar as part of a glowing river of flaming torches, from the church of Saint Filip and Jakov to the City Museum and the Castle Eltz, where the light is brought in and the first Advent candle is lit.

As part of Vukovar Advent Festivities, every year there is a traditional concert of the Croatian Radio-Television in the church of Saint Filip and Jakov, called Silent Night in Vukovar. In a warm, tender, and joyous ambient of Christmas, a medley of traditional Christmas songs is performed.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Below average growth compared to the rest of Croatia, the Eastern Croatia region is predominantly agricultural and manufacturing-oriented. But its tourist and traffic significance is growing. Slavonia has great tourist potential to be utilized. One of the main advantages of this region is its rich historical legacy. Also, all three towns of this region covered in this paper are located on rivers (as well as their numerous surrounding villages), and all these rivers provide great opportunities for expanding the tourist offer. Fishing, river cruising and paddling opportunities are available for exploring the particularities of these rivers. Also, all these cities and surrounding sites have a large number of parks and green areas, and many of them are also featured by large forests suitable areas for recreation, sports activities, as well as for family gatherings that, in today's fast-paced way of life, have become very important for today's tourists. The potential increase in the number of visits and tourist nights can be achieved only by planning and implementation of the planned activities, which should be done by all levels of government. At the level of the entire region should be encouraged to develop specific forms of tourism such as rural, hunting, fishing, cultural-historical, recreational, manifestation and gastronomic tourism. Rich tradition, culture and history, and preserved natural beauty and gastronomy are an attractive factor for tourists. The whole of this region needs more accommodation because the existing ones do not meet the needs of tourists. Accompanying facilities such as various catering facilities (nightclubs, bars, etc.) would also affect the retention of tourists and the wider tourist offer of the towns of Slavonia. Local and regional authorities should note the importance of tourism for this region and encourage its development. An additional advantage of this is the positive impact of tourism on all economic activities which would contribute to the overall progress of entire Slavonia.

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