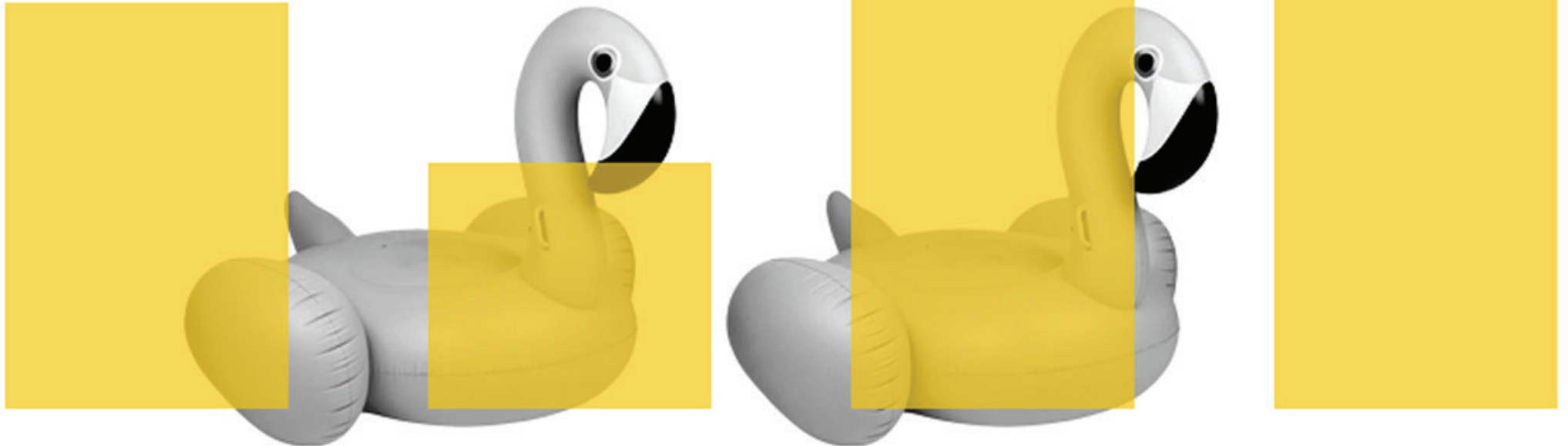


Bulgaria as a tourist destination

Media analysis



Contents

3	Methodology
4	Natural and cultural landmarks
5	European Capital of Culture
6	Sunny Beach in the media

Methodology

Analysed period:

June 2018 - June 2019

Type of media:

Traditional media, Twitter, forums, blogs, Facebook, specialised tourist review websites

Reach potential:

Measured via Twitter & Facebook tools

Natural and cultural landmarks

The table on the right features 23 natural and cultural landmarks in Bulgaria evaluated according to their popularity among local and foreign tourists. For the purpose of this analysis, we evaluated specific sites rather than entire resorts or settlements, for which it would have been difficult to determine whether the conversation was about the whole settlement or resort, or about a specific tourist attraction within or in proximity to them.

The popularity rating among Bulgarian tourists was based on social media posts and news in Bulgarian media, combined with ratings on Bulgarian tourist sites. The popularity rating among foreign tourists was measured on the basis of TripAdvisor comments and social media posts in English. In comparison, **even the Rila monastery -- the most popular cultural landmark -- has less reviews (1,660) on TripAdvisor**

than a single Sunny Beach site -- the Aquapark (1,944).

It is noteworthy that the more difficult to access and distant from the main destinations landmark is, the more likely it is to remain unknown to foreign tourists. So, while landmarks like the Wonderful Bridges, the Canyon of Waterfalls, the Eagle's Eye viewpoint and Perperikon are very popular among local tourists who know how to reach them, they remain unknown to foreign visitors.

It is therefore no coincidence that negative comments about Bulgarian natural and cultural landmarks most frequently centre on insufficient directions and signage to and within landmarks. A further obstruction for foreign tourists is the language barrier; with information at many sites only available in Bulgarian. With natural landmarks in particular, information and services are rarely available in English.

Landmark

Popularity ranking

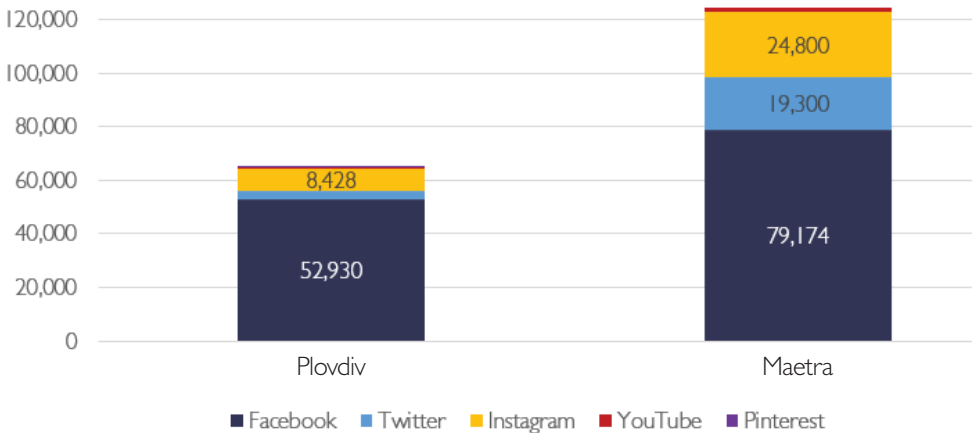
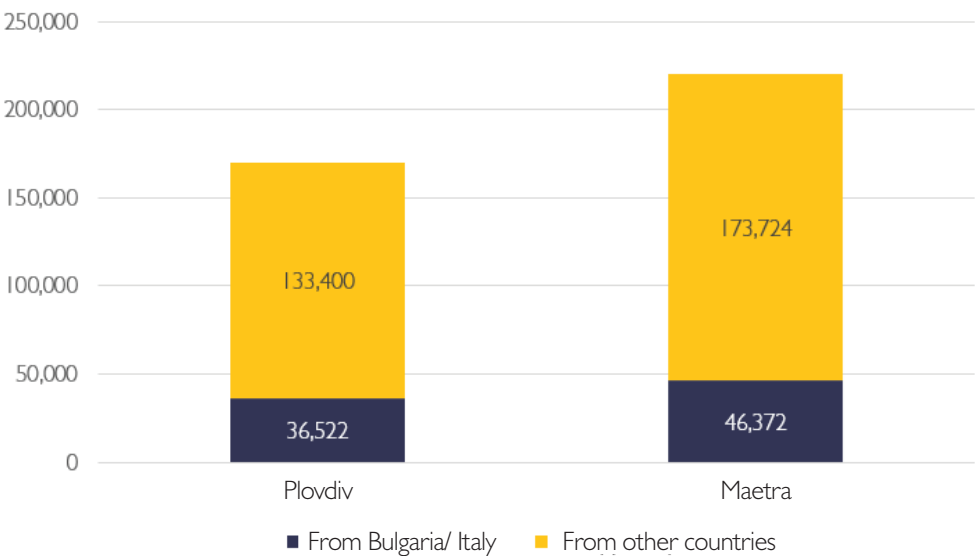
Abroad In Bulgaria

Ravadinovo Castle	3	14
Rila Monastery	1	2
Tsarevets	2	1
Asen's Fortress	6	22
Madara Horseman	7	23
Etar	4	9
Devetashka Cave	8	11
Yagodina Cave	11	13
Krushuna Waterfalls	10	8
Devil's Throat Cave	9	7
Belogradchik Rocks	14	16
Magura	13	15
Seven Rila Lakes	5	3
Saeva Dupka Cave	16	17
Tsari Mali Grad	19	20
Perperikon	12	6
Emen Canyon	20	18
Prohodna Cave	17	10
The Wonderful Bridges	18	12
Canyon of Waterfalls	15	4
Hotnitsa Eco Trail	22	21
Eagle's Eye Viewpoint	21	5
Raysko Praskalo	23	19

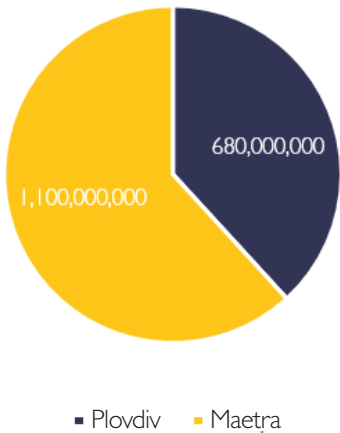
More popular abroad

More popular in Bulgaria

European Capital of Culture



Mentions of the European Capitals of Culture



In 2019, Plovdiv, Bulgaria, and Matera, Italy, were the European Capitals of Culture. Despite the fact that Plovdiv is considerably bigger and among the world's oldest settlements, Matera was more popular as Capital of Culture over the June 2018 - June 2019 period, based on publications in news outlets and social media posts globally. For both, 27% of mentions came from locals

Social media followers

(Bulgarians or Italians), with almost three quarters of the conversation coming from foreigners.

The difference, however, is more striking when set against the size of Plovdiv and Matera's potential audiences that social media posts reached.

Potential reach for social media posts

Sunny Beach in the media



Between 15 June 2018 and 15 June 2019 Bulgarian online media published over 3,000 articles about Sunny Beach. Over two thirds of them (2,044) were negative in sentiment and were detrimental to the seaside resort's image.

Publications about or mentioning Sunny Beach generally focused on criminal activity within the resort. In summer, several articles appeared daily reporting on robberies, theft, brawls, rape, drug dealer or bootlegger arrests. **Media coverage of Sunny Beach gives an impression of a “sin city” rather than seaside resort.**

This is just one facet of Sunny Beach's negative coverage. Media reported, among other issues, of numerous incidents involving tourists, fires, floods, illegal construction work and, generally, over-construction within the resort. Deputy Prime Minister Valeri Simeonov's “crusade” against noise from bars and clubs garnered further negative press.

In contrast, topics that received positive coverage were mostly related to events, such as concerts, plays and shows. Media outlets also focused on the much-publicised start of the summer season and the assurance that tourists' safety within the resort was guaranteed. The latter messages, however, were quickly contradicted by fresh and widely reported on cases of violence. Only a quarter of Sunny Beach's media coverage was positive.

Sunny Beach in the media

Eight arrested in Sunny Beach for possession and dealing of drugs

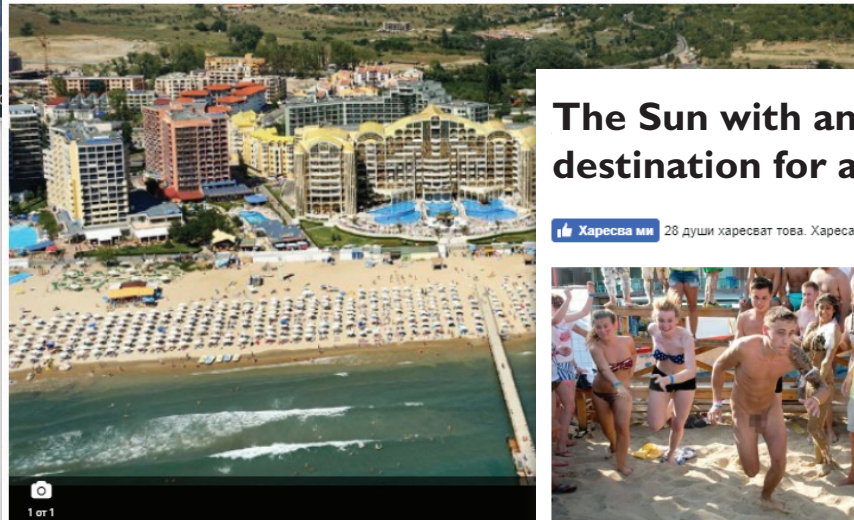
публикувано на 05.08.18 в 17:57



Great dangers lurk for tourists at Sunny Beach hotels

Внимавайте какво пиете, за да не си идете обратно вкъщи, в най-добрия случай - слепи и потропвайки с тояжка

София, България · 24 Юли 2018, 16:00 · 5481 прочита · 0 коментара



The Sun with anti-ad for Sunny Beach: No. One destination for alcohol, drugs and prostitutes

Харесва ми · 28 души харесват това. Харесайте го преди приятелите си.



16 Април 2019, Вторник, 20:01 ч.

Британци разказват шокиращи истории от курорта

Хиляди любители на разюздани партита от Великобритания, търсещи евтина пиячка, дрога и проститутки, наводняват Слънчев бряг – място, обявено за „новия Магалуф“, пише „Сън“. Разположен на българското черноморско крайбрежие, курортът е известен с дивия си нощен живот и водни спортове, които привличат пиещи туристи в търсене на парти ваканция.

Британците, които са работили в развратния балкански курорт през лятото, разказват, че са ставали свидетели на невероятно диви изцепки, включително групово събличане, побои на обществени места и откачени пиянски изстъпления. Половин литър бира може да се купи за по-малко от паунд в курорта, а двама души могат да вечерат с включена бутилка вино за около 20 паунда.

**This report was produced
for the purposes of the Comms Talks:
Tourism discussion, held on 28 June 2019.**

**Need a more in-depth analysis?
Get in touch at sales@perceptica.com**