



GEOSPORT FOR SOCIETY

Scientific Journal founded in 2014 under aegis of University of Oradea (Romania),
University of Debrecen (Hungary), University of Gdansk (Poland)
ISSN 2393-1353

Edited by Oradea University Press
1, University Street, 410087, Oradea, Romania

Journal homepage: <http://geosport.uoradea.ro/geosport.html>



The appearance of sport as a travel motivation in traveling habits

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Citation: Tütümkov-Hrisztov, J., Müller, A., Molnár, A. (2020). The appearance of sport as a travel motivation in traveling habits. *Geosport for Society*, 12(1), 31–43. <https://doi.org/10.30892/gss.1204-056>

Article history: Received: 20.01.2020; Revised: 10.02.2020; Accepted: 20.03.2020, Available online: 25.03.2020

Abstract: Traveling habits and tourism motivations are constantly changing and re-shaping. Because of this reason their examination is indispensable for the tourism industry, as the response to these changes is one of the defining elements of competitiveness and product innovation. In our research, we examined the traveling habits of young workers (average age=29,1 yrs, sd=24,00) in the context of destination choice and sport tourism motivations (N=1182). The survey found that the most popular destination was the European continent, with 71.5% of respondents choosing an EU country and 7.5% choosing a non-EU but European destination. 9.3% of the respondents have chosen only domestic (Hungarian) destination for their holiday in the past 2 years. The results show that only 36.3% of the respondents have taken part in a holiday without sport purposes, while the majority of them (63.7%) have taken part in a sport holiday with some frequency in the last 2 years. There was a difference regarding gender, with significantly more men reporting that they took part in sporting holidays than women (P=0.000). The most typical sporting activities of these types of holidays were swimming and water sports (22.2%), cycling (19.4%) and hiking (11.6%). In tourism product development, the development of leisure sports is of great importance, as it provides the health, entertainment and active recreation that guests demand, thus influencing the choice of destination.

Keywords: travel habits, tourist motivation, sport purposed holidays, sport tourism

Introduction

Nowadays, nothing illustrates better the steady rise of the tourism industry than the increasing number of tourist arrivals around the world. According to data from the

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2019), the demand for tourism is growing steadily. World tourist arrivals in 2018 were 1.326 billion, up with 86 million from 2016, an increase of 7% (UNWTO, 2018), and the 672 million tourists arriving on the European continent in 2017, an 8% increase over the previous year. In 2018, the world's tourist arrivals already exceeded 1.4 billion, an increase of 5% compared to 2017. The most popular tourist destination is still the European continent, with 710 million tourist arrivals, with the majority of them arriving in EU countries.

The UNWTO's long-term prediction also indicates a positive trend in the number of tourist arrivals around the world, with an average annual growth rate of 3.3% per year over the period from 2010 to 2030 and an estimated 1.8 billion tourist arrivals worldwide by 2030 (Tourism Towards, 2030). Several studies report on the importance of the tourism sector in the national economy and its role in stimulating the economy and increasing employment rate (Darabos, 2015; Herman et al., 2017, 2018; Ilie et al., 2017).

Demand is not only expanding but re-shaping as well. The needs of travelers are changing, instead of passive travel, active leisure time activities are getting more prevalent during travel (Smith and Puczkó, 2010; Michalkó et al., 2011; Csirmaz and Pető, 2015; Bíró and Müller, 2017; Lövei and Kalmár, 2017; Lenténé et al., 2019a), as health awareness is appreciated more and more in leisure and travel trends as well as in travel motivations (Sörös et al., 2012; Müller et al., 2005, 2009; Müller and Szabó, 2009; Lengyel, 2015; 2019; Kalmar et al., 2016; Gödény et al., 2018; Laoues et al., 2019; Lengyel et al., 2019). Several national and international studies report that sport plays a dominant role in travel motivations (Müller and Bácsné, 2018). There are studies that analyze the link between passive sports consumption that is, traveling and spectating sporting events, and travel. Travelers to mega-sport events are found to be highly prone to spending, have a high average length of stay and require a variety of leisure services, with some target groups preferring the packages (Bottero et al., 2012; Bíró et al., 2017; Dansero and Puttilli, 2010; Gibbson et al., 2012; Borbély and Müller, 2015; Bánhidi, 2015; Müller et al., 2016).

Travelers require unique services, entertainment attractions and novel features that also influence the motivation of destination choices (Boda et al., 2018; Ráthonyi et al., 2018; Ráthonyi et al., 2019).

Systematic Review

In 2018, the Hungarian population spent 347 billion HUF on domestic multi-day tourist trips, an increase of 5.7% at current prices compared to 2017. Last year, Hungarians spent 888 billion HUF abroad, 8.7 percent more than in 2017 (KSH, 2018).

According to the KSH's (Hungarian Central Statistical Office) Tourism and Hospitality Analysis of 2018, Hungarians traveled within Hungary in the same number as in the previous year, but for a longer period of time: 14.4 million domestic multiday trips in 2017, the average duration of these increased by 4,1 percent to 60.3 million. According to the data of the domestic tourism trips, with regard to the purpose of the trip, the main travel motive is mostly entertainment, relaxation (61%) (Bíró et al., 2019a).

In 2018, the Hungarian population made 23 million trips abroad, 12% higher than in the previous year. Time spent increased by 8.7 percent to 62 million days. The most popular destinations for overnight trips were the neighboring countries, as well as Germany, the Czech Republic and the Mediterranean countries, Italy and Greece.

Many tourism studies have long been concerned with motivation of travel with a considerable amount of research studying leisure tourism (Gnoth, 1997; Chen, 1998; Buckley, 2012; Chang et al., 2014; Bansal and Eisel, 2004; Mahika, 2011).

Several domestic tourism researches confirm the popularity of active tourism products, the demand for which is constantly evolving, that requires the continuous development of services (Sulyok and Magyar, 2014; Michalkó, 2002; Michalkó and Vizi 2002; Müller et al., 2019).

Among the definitions of sports tourism, many authors emphasize that the main purpose regarding travel motivation is to live through the experience of sporting activities, coupled with the purchase of tourism services. The definitions distinguish between active and passive variations of sports motivation, which may be aimed at recreational or competitive sports, or participation in sporting events where the tourist is passive in sporting activities but enriched by the experience of cheering (Hall, 1992; Hudson, 2003; Weed and Bull, 1997; Hinch and Higham, 2001; Kurtzmann, 2005; Gibson, 1998, 2003, 2006; Robinson and Gammon, 2004; Bánhidi, 2007; Dobay et al., 2011; Hudson, 2012; Borbély and Müller, 2015).

Dobay et al. (2018) examined the traveling habits and previous experiences at sports camps of 2965 Slovak and 2404 Hungarian adults. 84.5% of Slovaks and 92% of Hungarians participated in summer swimming and water camps, where more than 60% of respondents (in both nations) gained positive experiences. The survey proved that the destination chosen by the respondents is waterfront, lakeside, with water-based services, which shows a strong correlation with positive travel experiences during childhood. Those who enjoyed participating in these activities during their childhood still seek to plan their holidays near waterfront, and the sea, where swimming, hiking, and sporting activities dominate. Müller et al. (2007) found and demonstrated that positive attitudes and positive experiences with sports camps will continue to determine sports travel habits and motivation.

Müller (2009) studied the recreational sports habits of 260 major college students, 43% of whom stated that they regularly hike during the holidays, which is one of the most typical activities of young adults. Müller and Kórik (2009) examined the leisure habits of bathers in the Northern Great Plain region (N = 457), with 66.5% of respondents associating exercise (swimming, water sports) with time spent in the spas.

Lenténé et al. (2019c) studied the recreational needs of guests arriving in the North Great Plain region (N = 140). Their research confirmed that recreational facilities are important to guests during their stay, as 23.4% of the respondents are influenced by the existence of a recreational program in hotel accommodations and 19.1% by the existence of sports facilities. 62.4% of guests found it important to have a recreational program during their stay, and 70.2% of them participated in it as well during their stay. Hiking and bicycle tours were, according to the guests' answers, the two most important program alternatives to offer guests during their stay. Music and dance-based activities and fitness room offerings were also popular, where the authors clearly pointed out the gender difference. Women preferred yoga, and the treadmill, while men preferred to use free weights.

Lenténé Puskás and colleagues (2019d) also confirmed that the offerings of the hotels in the North Great Plain region (N = 39) are in line with active holiday trends, with 35.7% of 4-star hotels and 37.5% of 3-star hotels offering some type of recreational activities to their guests.

Material and Method

A questionnaire survey was conducted in Budapest to examine the travel habits of young workers. The questionnaires were filled out on paper and the snowball method was used for sampling. Tourism and Catering students had to fill out a questionnaire with 10 of their friends, which were followed by a short interview. The criteria for participating in the study was that they had to take part in some kind of travel in the past 2 years, ie they could answer questions and travel motivations as tourists. Of the 1,200 completed questionnaires, 1182 were evaluated after data cleaning. We chose Budapest for the survey because the KSH's Tourism and Catering Survey of 2018 showed that the participation of people living in Budapest and Pest, as well as in Central and Western Transdanubia, exceeded 50%, while data from people living in other areas of the country lagged behind (KSH, 2018). We targeted young adults, as Gibbson et al. (1998), when segmenting sports tourists, found that active sports tourism motivation is the most characteristic of early adulthood.

After the digitalization of the questionnaires, the data were processed using SPSS software. In addition to the basic statistics (mean, standard deviation, median,

mode) we also performed a correlation study. Due to the sufficiently large number of items a gender connection was examined using the Chi2 test.

The questionnaires were filled out by 1182 person, whose average age was 29.1 years (sd = 24.00), of whom 41.3% (488 person) were men and 58.7% (694 person) female.

Results

As the respondents have been on holiday as a tourist in the past 2 years, we were interested in finding out what are the most popular tourist destinations that Hungarian tourists have preferred. The results are illustrated in figure 1. As multiple choice was possible, the results are presented in percentages. 9.3% of the respondents had chosen only a domestic destination as their destination in the last 2 years. The European continent was the most popular destination, with 71.5% of respondents choosing an EU country and 7.5% choosing a non-EU but European destination. 5.7% of Hungarian respondents chose the American continent, 3.1% the Asian, 2.3 % the African, while only 0.6% the Australian for their destination.

Destination rankings and KSH 2018 database showed that the US has become a less attractive destination for Hungarians, as the popularity of the United States as a destination has declined compared to previous years. This is due to the fact that prices for overseas flights have not fallen, while flights to European countries have become more favorable, and in the United States the price of accommodation and hospitality is much higher than we have seen in European destinations. Hungarian consumers are price sensitive, which is also true in the products and services market (figure 1).

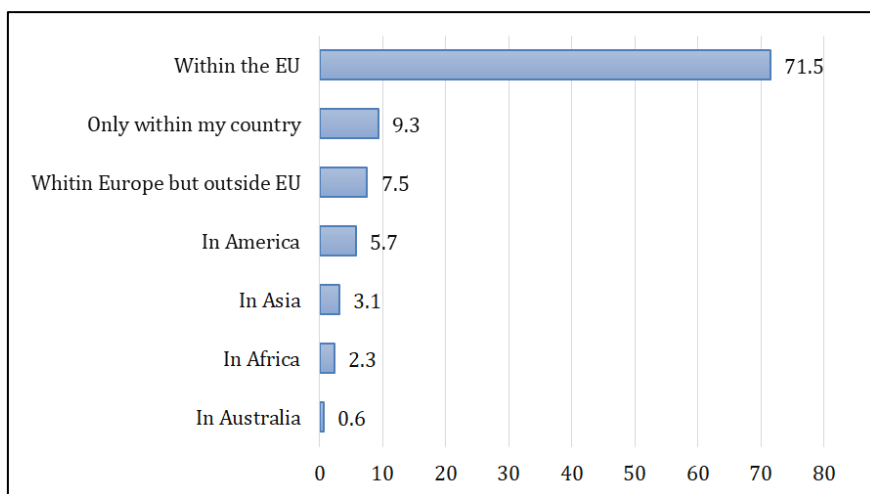


Figure 1. The proportion of trips made in the last 2 years in regard to tourist destinations
Source: Own editing, 2020

We asked how many times during the past 2 years their holidays were related to sports motivation (table 1). The results show that only 36.3% of the respondents have not taken part in a sporting holiday, while the majority of them did (63.7%). The response of young workers with regards to gender differs, with the Chi2 test showing a significant difference in gender responses. 46.4% of women (288 people) and only 30.6% of men (141 people) stated that they did not take part in sporting holidays. Thus, greater activity of men in the field of sporting holidays can be recognized. Men prefer active holidays and some form of sport during their stay. This result coincides with the fact that by examining the recreational sport activity of different target groups, similar results can be obtained, ie in their spare time, men spend more time participating in sporting activities than women (Herpainé et al., 2017; Boda et al., 2019; Kovács, 2011).

Table 1. The evolution of sports vacations in the last two years

Source: Own editing, 2020

Participating in sporting holiday (/times)	Male person (%)	Female person (%)	All person (%)
Once	116 (25,2%)	121 (19,5%)	237 (20,1%)
Twice	93 (20,2%)	104 (16,7%)	197 (16,7%)
Three times	32 (6,9%)	32 (5,2%)	64 (5,4%)
More	79 (17,1%)	76 (12,2%)	155 (13,1%)
I didn't participate	141 (30,6%)	288 (46,4%)	429 (36,3%)
All	461 (100%)	621 (100%)	1182 (100%)

chi2=1212,7, df=10, p=0,000

The next question examined the frequency of sporting vacations (figure 3). The results show that most respondents chose the annual frequency (once, twice a year and several times a year) for domestic or foreign destinations. It can be stated that the active form of leisure time, the integration of sport into the lifestyle means that these consumers not only demand it every day, but they do not give up sporting or active recreation even during their holiday or vacation.

We asked about the most typical sporting activities on holiday (figure 4). As more than one answer could be given to this question as well, the results are presented in percentages. Swimming, water sports (22.2%) are the most common sporting activities. The reason for this may be that most of the vacations are scheduled for the summer period, where water (lake, river, sea, bath) appears to be a central element of motivation. Studies focusing on Spas and Baths also confirm that pool services are one of the most popular elements during spa visits, where the role of swimming as a sport or activity is dominating (Müller et al., 2009; Müller and Kórik, 2009; Bíró et al., 2019b; Lenténé et al., 2019b). Another reason is that recreational swimming is a preventive exercise that supports health (Bíró et al., 2007; Bíró, 2011; Bíró et al., 2015).

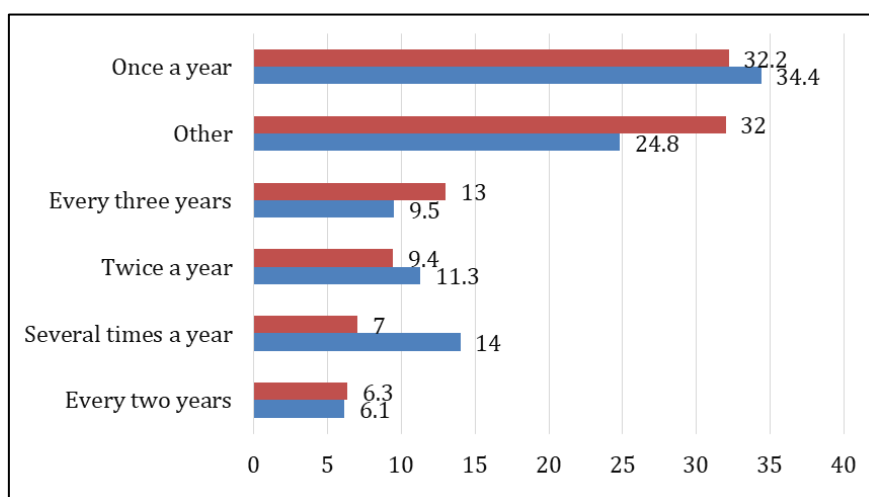


Figure 2. Frequency of participation in sports holidays (%)

Source: Own editing, 2020

The second most popular activity is cycling (19.4%) the third is hiking (11.6%). Several studies have confirmed the increasing motivation for cycling and hiking (Ritchie et al., 2010; Sulyok and Magyar, 2014; Lenténé et al., 2019d).

9.7% of respondents said that what they do depends on the destination. Winter sports (7.7%) were also mentioned relatively high. It is true that Hungary has limited opportunities due to the lack of high mountains and low snow cover days, but the surrounding countries offer good opportunities for winter sports and the KSH 2018 publication proved the popularity of this as well. Ball games were marked by only 4.5% of respondents. As a new type of exercise extreme sports was chose by 3.7%. While 3.4% of respondents mentioned running, jogging, 2.3% of fishing and only 0.8% of horseback riding. 11.7% of the respondents stated that they were resting passively and did not engage in any sporting activities.

Mosonyi et al. (2013) studied the recreational activities and traveling habits of college students (N = 140) and found that young adults prefer swimming (76%) during their travels, as 86% of their trips are tied to the lakeside or water. 24.7% of the students go cycling, 46% hike during the holiday and only 10% go fishing. These data show that the most typical sporting activities for students were similar to our findings, except that they had a much higher rate of participation in these activities. Winter sports did not appear in responses of the students, probably because it is a costly sport that requires a high discretionary income that most students do not yet have. In high altitude countries in Europe, due to the favorable conditions, winter sports play a much larger role in both recreation and tourism (Alexandris et al., 2009; Matter-Walstra et al., 2006; Dobay and Bánhidi, 2013).

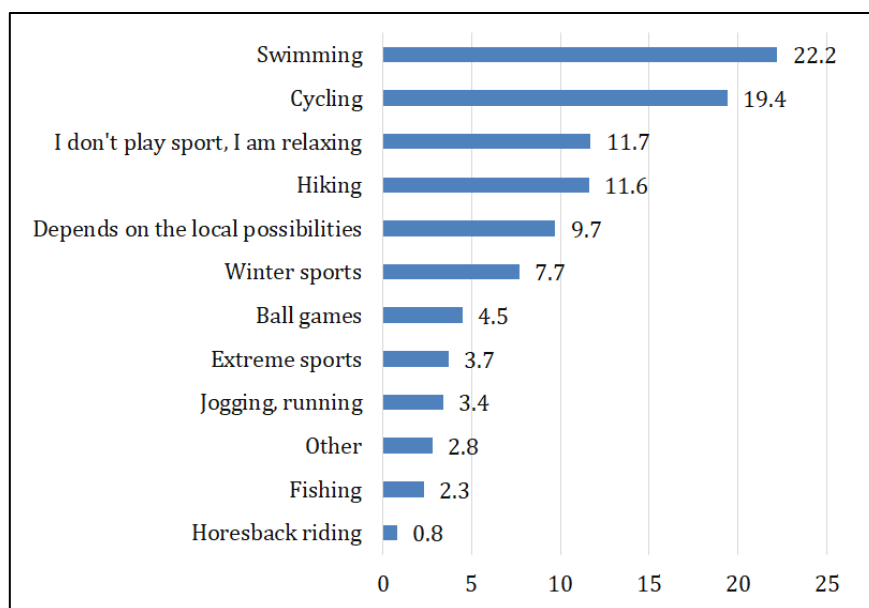


Figure 3. Frequency of participation in sports holidays (%)

Source: Own editing, 2020

In order to examine the motivation of sport tourism, we made various statements, which had to be rated on a 1-5 Likert scale. For example: "To what extent do the following statements apply to you? During the holidays I try to try active, sporty programs."

This statement is more typical for men who prefer a sporty program during their stay. 32.1% of male respondents stated that this statement is mostly common and 14.1% that it is completely true, while 20.8% of female respondents stated this is mostly common and 11.8% that the statement is completely true. The holiday activity of men is significantly higher than that of women ($\chi^2 = 1209.7$, $df = 10$, $P = 0.000$).

The statement: "I choose a tourist destination that is suitable for sports and has sports facilities" is also more typical of men. 22.1% of them said that this statement is mostly true, while 10.4% that it is completely true. At the same time 16.7% of women respondents stated this is mostly common and only 7.2% answered that this is completely true. Men tend to choose a destination that offers opportunities for sport ($\chi^2 = 1202.2$, $Df = 10$, $p = 0.000$).

The statement: "Visiting sports as a spectator, during the holidays" is also more typical of men than of women. For 12.4% of male respondents stated it is mostly true, while for 6.1% them that it is completely true. 6.8% of the female respondents stated that this statement is mostly true, while 2.9% of them that it is completely true. 52.5% of female respondents that the statement does not apply to them at all, while only

39.7% of men said the same. The difference between the sexes is significant ($\chi^2 = 1211.3$, $df = 10$, $P = 0.000$), the passive sporting holiday, when traveling is supported by men rather than spectating.

Next statement: "In the summer, I prefer water sports during the holidays" is also more typical of men, as 28.2% of men, 24.1% of women fully agree, 24.8 % of them states this is mostly true and 21.4% that it is completely true, which is a significant result ($\chi^2 = 1186.5$, $df = 10$, $p = 0.000$).

The statement "I take part in a winter skiing holiday" is also more typical for men, as 11.9% of respondents answered with "mostly true", 22.3% of them with "completely true". At the same time 8.9% of women answered with "mostly true", and 16.3% of them with "completely true" ($\chi^2 = 1195.8$, $df = 10$, $p = 0.000$).

Contextual studies have shown that sporting activities during holidays and sporting leisure activities also tend to dominate men's travel motivation over women. This result may not be surprising, as studies of leisure or sporting habits have found in different populations that men are more active, that is, they will be more active during the holidays (Herpainé et al., 2017; Boda et al., 2019; Kovács, 2011, 2017, 2019, Laoues et al., 2019; Eurobarometer, 2014, 2018) and passive sports consumption, that is, spectating sport events is also a dominant trend among men (Bácsné et al., 2019).

Conclusions

The needs of travelers are changing, instead of passive travel, active leisure time activities are getting more prevalent during travel. As health-conscious behavior increases, guests will also need recreational activities during their travels, where sport plays a central role.

The survey found that the European continent remains the most popular destination for Hungarian travelers, with 71.5% of respondents choosing to travel to an EU country and 7.5% to a non-EU but European destination for their holiday. The strengthening of domestic demand was confirmed by the fact that 9.3% of the respondents have chosen only domestic destination as a tourist destination in the last 2 years. The results of our study also confirmed that the majority of young adults (63.7%) had participated in sporting activities with some frequency during the past 2 years, which showed different results by gender. In this aspect the greater activity of men can be justified in the field of sporting holidays, as they prefer active holidays and some form of sports in the chosen tourist destination ($P = 0.000$). Thus, in men's preference system, active holidays are more prominent. Men are more interested in active and passive forms of sport tourism than women. The most characteristic sporting activities of sporting holidays are swimming and water sports (22.2%), cycling (19.4%) and hiking (11.6%). In tourism product development, the development of leisure sports supply is extremely important, as it

offers opportunities for health preservation, entertainment and active recreation (Ráthonyi et al., 2016), which is demanded by the guests, thus influencing the motivation for choosing a destination.

Acknowledgment

This study was supported by the EFOP-3.6.2-16-2017-00003 project which is financed by the European Union and the European Social Fund.

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