TRENDS IN WORLDWIDE TOURISM IN 2020

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Abstract: Tourism development and management continues to be at the forefront of global conversations about how the tourism industry can contribute to the sustainability process; specifically with an objective of adaptability, innovation and impact. However, the speech about how, when and to what extent the industry is making positive, measurable progress toward these impacts is still being debated intensively. What innovations, developments or trends will most likely influence tourism sustainability activity this year, especially those related to development and destination management? This is probably the question that first comes to many people's minds when we talk about the tourism industry, but especially about sustainable tourism and ecotourism. This article reviews some possible answers to this question.
Keywords: trends in tourism, sustainability, generations, ecotourism, overtourism, technology

INTRODUCTION

Every industry has innovations and trends, and the tourism industry is no exception. In a rapidly evolving landscape, new trends emerge and are maintained all the time. Changing demographics, technological advances, changing social morals: these and other influences contribute to the emergence of important new tourist and eco-tourist trends.

In recent years, both sustainable tourism and ecotourism have become new trends themselves. This is because we are becoming increasingly aware of the complexity, fragility and invaluable value of our planet. Their tendency to make greener choices, to be more present and to "take it slower", to venture away from the general system and put our decisions in the hands of technology, all of these are at the top of the list.

People are increasingly looking for experiences that fulfill the desire to explore different cultures, as well as to convey little of their own culture to the communities they visit. The attraction of travel philanthropy or impact tourism is that tourists return home after having a unique experience and feel fulfilled, they feel that their trip was significant.

At the beginning of the new decade, it is not only about a new generation of mature travellers (Generation Z, between the ages of 10 and 25 years), but also about a mass awareness of climate change; and how each person must respond for their own carbon footprint (if that means flying less and less and planting trees, let it be so!).

Given the growing interest in green travel in the last period, it is no wonder that the forecasts for 2020 have increased to include perspectives on emerging sustainability trends.

The first to launch the forecast for 2020, is the tourism company Responsible Travel, which has just made public its first options for travel trends in sustainability, we will probably see them become more prominent in the coming months.

„2019 has been the year of responsible tourism" say those from Responsible Travel. „As issues of sustainability have come to the boil, we have seen everyone from David Attenborough to Prince Harry getting in on the act. From Greta Thunberg and flyskam – or 'flight shaming' – to Extinction Rebellion and the global youth climate strikes, travellers worldwide are taking stock of their environmental impacts", they claim.

METHODOLOGY

This paper introduces the method of bibliographic analysis, in parallel with statistical analyzes to identify research topics of tourism trends. The main analytical steps made in this study are:

☞   keyword identification;
☞   source document selection;
☞   use of identified keywords to obtain research articles on tourist trends;
☞   applying the overall analysis and the breakdown analysis to analyze the references and content of articles with tourist trends.

TOURISM TRENDS IN 2020

1. Overtourism

For decades, most tourist destinations have been trying to attract as many tourists as possible, without believing that there may be limits beyond which the lives of local people and the experiences of tourists are starting to suffer.

Various tourist points now face what has become known as "overtourism".

Overtourism is a symptom of delayed or non-existent management strategies, accompanied by a lack of long-term awareness of the impact of destination marketing on a destination; it has become a truth that many destinations face, as well as the desperate attempt to avoid it.

Tourism is not a panacea; it always brings negative as well as positive impacts. With global tourism data set to accelerate at an even faster pace, "overtourism" will become a growing problem.
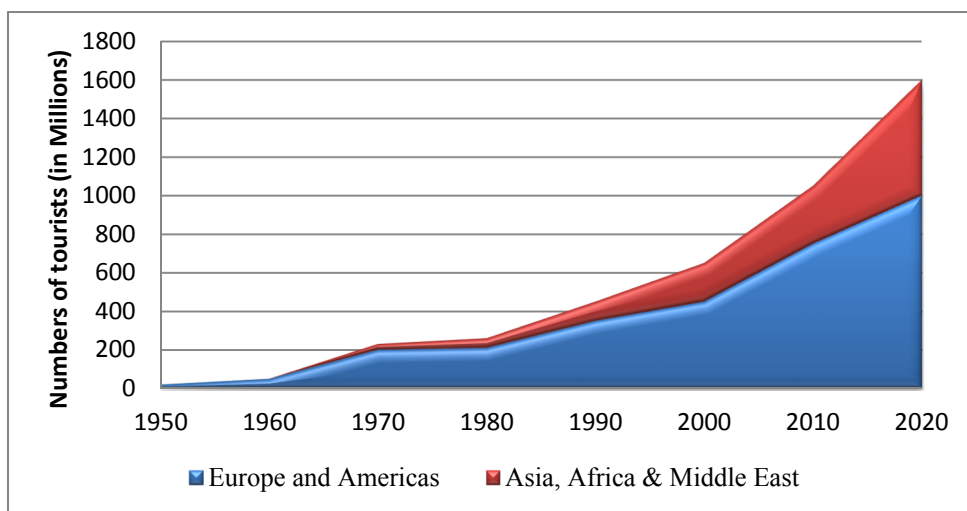
Fig. 1 The approximate number of tourists in millions
Source: processed data from coolgeography.co.uk

The chart above shows the last 60 years of tourism growth, rising from only tens of millions in 1950 to 1 billion in 2011, with the number of tourists expected to reach around 1 billion 600 in 2020.

Efforts will now be made to attract "the right type of tourist", responsible, with discernment and, if necessary, controlling the number of tourists by reducing the capacity of support, charging for entry, pre-booking

with fixed numbers, subsidizing and reducing flights , restricting the number of cruise ships and promoting less well-known areas.

The most frequently encountered type of right tourist will be the responsible tourist, creating maximum benefits for local economies with the lowest possible environmental and social impact.

2. Technology continues to rule

Significant progress was made in smart technology and artificial intelligence in 2019, in particular in integrating this progress into our daily lives. The websites we visit, smartphones and other smart devices are growing in their capabilities, just like our trust in all of them. In 2020, we will see even more growth of people using technology to make a decision on the key aspects of their travel decision.

Specialized studies show that more and more people are interested in seeking for information about potential destinations to visit to a virtual assistant (Siri, Alexa, Google Home, etc.), which are largely represented by the Z and millennium generation, with the X generation and Boomers being much less interested.
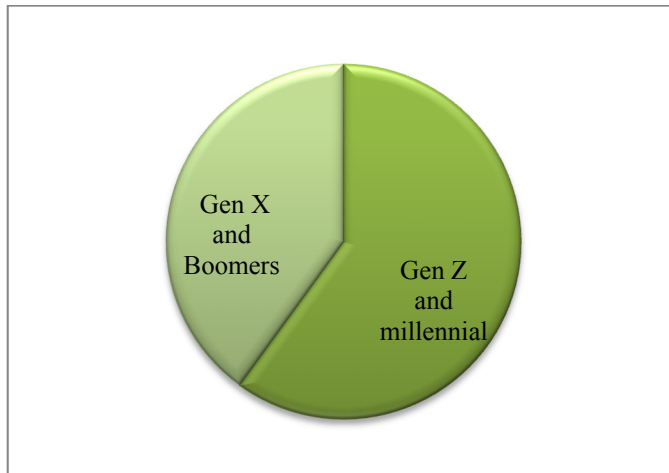
Fig. 2 People who ask for information about potential destinations to visit to a virtual assistant
Source: processed data from Booking.com

In a similar perspective, Booking.com has revealed that 44% of global travel will use an app that allows them to plan their activities in advance, 46% say they will use an app that makes it easy to scan and book real-time activities while traveling and 59% say they want technology to

offer them comfortable / surprise options, which would introduce them to something completely new.

The challenge between tourism and technological innovation is to ensure that industry remains up-to-date and trained to facilitate this type of growth. The failure to understand data or how to manage technical programs, software, etc. is an obstacle that must be considered. Of course, the managers of many destinations are aware of this and engage in discussions regarding the involvement and progress of such technological advances in the industry..

In 2020, we should expect greater technology dependence to influence travel decisions and improve the ability of technology to offer suggestions on where to visit, what can be practiced and where to stay based on your previous travel history, personal preferences and interests.

3. Ecological travel: less a trend, more an imperative

Tourism trends are strongly influenced by customer base concerns and morals. As a new generation becomes more and more relevant on the market, the ideals that drive their purchasing decisions create new tourism trends. Ecological travel is just an example of these tourism trends, reflecting a growing concern of today's travelers for ethical and sustainable tourism options. Eco travel includes simple changes, such as availability of carbon credits when booking a flight or the option of renting an electric vehicle instead of a conventional one.

A global crisis of our time is represented by the strategies for adapting to climate change that are slowly being considered in the tourism industry. Not only does climate change affect those who are most vulnerable in today's social systems (people living in poverty and marginalized), but it changes the way people, communities, governments have to think about experimenting, extracting and using of natural resources.

Tourism can play a key role in reducing the risks and impacts of climate change by changing the way destinations are strategized. This could include initiatives that encourage regenerative systems and approaches.

A study conducted by Booking.com on global travelers finds that almost three quarters (74%) of travelers believe that people need to take action now and make sustainable travel choices to save the planet for future generations.

Travelers have and will continue to choose for more environmentally friendly accommodation, transportation and destinations. They are increasingly interested in picking for eco-friendly transportation to their chosen destination. Beyond the transport options, travelers make

sustainable choices also in terms of accommodation, many of them being willing to offset the carbon footprint on the accommodation unit.

Another way travelers are seen making sustainable choices is by picking on lesser-known destinations to reduce tourism, pollution and environmental damage in certain places.

Climate change is complex and there are no immediate solutions. But it is encouraging to see that sustainable tourism professionals are contributing to (at least) discussions around significant ways to include climate change adaptation strategies in policies and management.

4. Fly less and make your vacation count

The growing trend of ecotourism, together with the general trends in experiential travel and slow travel, has led to the recent revival of train travel.

With studies showing that flights already have a negative impact on the environment, rail travel will take a step forward in 2020, especially if tour operators are contributing to this growing trend and will facilitate travel by offering train tickets instead of flights.

The data provided by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) clearly shows tourists' efforts to reduce flights, the number of annual international air passengers registering a downward trend from 2017 to 2019 (Fig. 3).
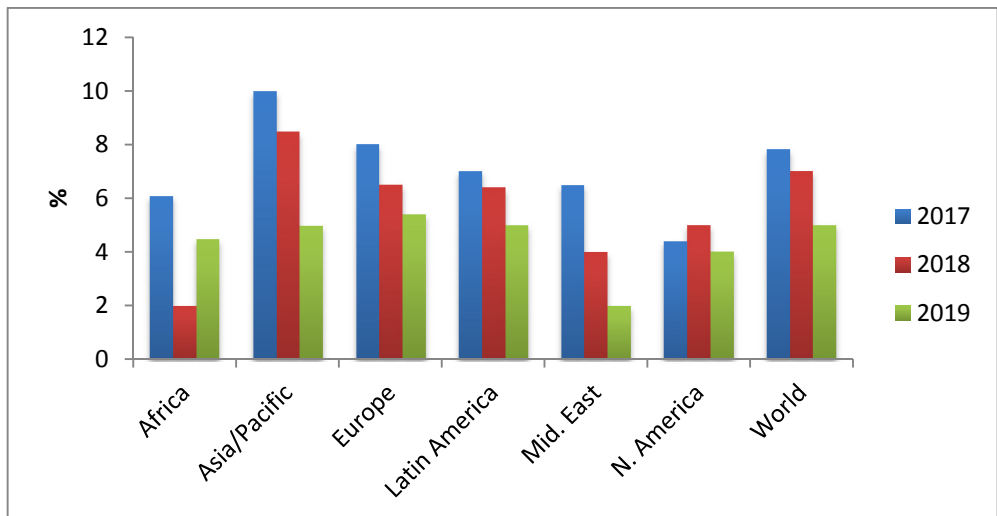
Fig.3 Number of annual international air passengers
Source: processed data from IATA

In today's fast-paced and dynamic world, many travelers want to slow down and bring another type of relaxation on their vacation. Trains offer a unique and slow way to explore, allowing travelers to sit and see the sights as they depart from the comfort of their picturesque and warm cabins, thus anticipating a return of the "good old days."

Greta Thunberg, 16-year-old whose speech drew attention to climate change and inspired millions of people internationally. In particular, her decision to sail across the Atlantic for two weeks on a non-emissions boat, rather than take a plane to the United Nations Climate Action Summit, has helped to draw attention to the carbon footprint of aircraft. Although the aviation industry has already begun to respond to these concerns, allowing travelers to purchase carbon offsets to reduce their personal carbon footprints, other modes of transport, such as trains or boats, are in the public spotlight.

5. Off-season travel and "second City" syndrome – the desire to see places in a different way

As excessive tourism continues to show its consequences, both destinations and tourists will seek ways to experience places without the prohibitive crowding associated with peak season. In the extraseason tourists benefit from more time and space to enjoy the tourist sites and more chances to interact with the locals and to know the destinations.

The act of traveling to a lesser known destination became so widespread that the term "second city" was coined to describe this phenomenon. It refers to exploring lesser-known destinations, in an effort to reduce overtourism and protect the environment. Among the growing trends in tourism, it often offers a more culturally immersive experience, is more economically friendly and is more environmentally and socially sustainable.

The trip to a lesser known destination can have a positive impact on the culture and economy of small cities, while also avoiding problems related to over-tourism in larger cities. This aspect has become very large among international tourists, Booking.com finding that 54% of them want to play an important role in reducing excess tourism. (Fig.4)
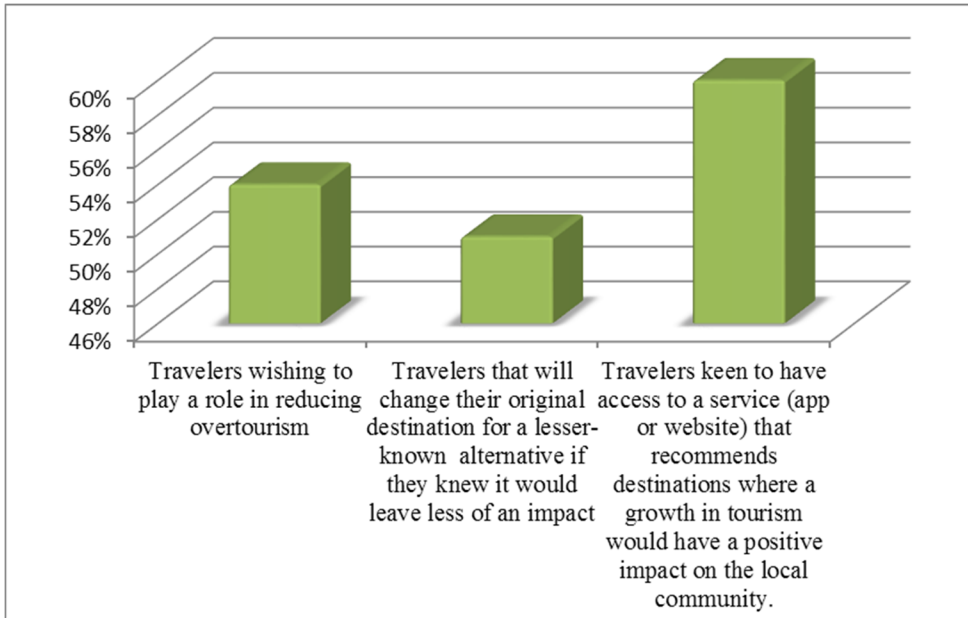
Fig. 4 The growth of "second city" tourists
Source: processed data from travelpredictions2020.com

In 2020, people will choose less known destinations such as Granada (Spain), Utrecht (Netherlands), Chengdu (China), Da Nang (Vietnam), Mpumalanga (South Africa), Riga (Latvia) or Ljubljana (Slovenia).

6. Solo Travel or "grand" escapades

The leisure trip was a family affair or something couples would do together. Although this is still the case for many, more and more people choose to travel alone. Enjoying a solo journey is no longer out of the ordinary, and tourist trends are increasingly reflecting this. The needs of solo travelers are showing a great deal of variety. Some simply want to travel without being distracted by a companion. Others are young, singles and in search of various social activities or to find a partner. Some widowed elders even use long-term hotel stays or cruises as a luxury alternative to conventional care for the elderly. Solo travel as a global trend has grown tremendously in recent years and continues to grow even more.

The solo trip will continue to be led by Generation Z, the generation that by 2025 is about to become the largest generation of consumers. Solo travel is increasing in all populations and this is particularly pronounced among female travelers. Numerous services and companies have appeared

on the travel market to meet these groups, and also play a role in fueling this and other trends in tourism and solo travel.

2020 will not only be the year of solo travel, but also the "grand" year, as more grandparents will take epic vacations only with their grandchildren. Grandparents who believe that parents need time alone without their children and agree that spending time with their grandchildren helps them keep young, saying that holidays are one of the best times for generations to spend time together.

All this is in sync with the fact that today's older generation is healthier, more adventurous and more eager to stay young and active than ever before, we will see "grand" travel that offer a wide range of active experiences for both generations to participate into an even greater popularity the following year.

7. Bleisure tourism: A millennial tourist trend

The concept of linking leisure and tourism with business travel is a new concept: "bizcations" has been popular for several decades. There have been many discussions about Bizcation - an increasing trend in business travel, with the idea of combining business and leisure or personal vacations into one.

What exactly is Bizcation or Bleisure? The word "Bizcation" is an amalgam of words - Business and vacation; and sometimes the word Bleisure (Business and Leisure) is used as an alternative.

As the tourism sector tries to create a wider customer base, however, the Bleisure travel concept has become increasingly relevant among tourism trends. Bleisure tourism can take a lot of forms. Sometimes, a client traveling for work decides to carry out tourist activities during the break; in other cases, a company can arrange travel activities for business trips as an advantage.

It seems that more people see business travel as a chance to explore new and exciting places. Lately, the traditional idea of business travel has evolved to include time for relaxation and pleasure during and after travel, without compromising the main priority, which is work.

Although not all business travelers engage in Bizcation or Bleisure; those who do so are part of the new phenomenon that follows the sacred formula "Only work without fun".

Adding a few days into your work schedule to explore destinations is one way to make work travel more tolerable and even fun.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This article has presented analytically a review of the specialty literature and articles published on interrelated topics of tourism trends in 2020. The increasing interest of tourists for this subject is demonstrated by the radical increase in the number of publications, every year being written more and more articles related to tourism trends, which themselves become a trend for travel enthusiasts. These directions suggest the development of the tourism phenomenon worldwide by increasing the number of people interested in putting into practice the latest trends in tourism, but also by developing new forms of tourism (Bleisure), and by expanding the value of Ecotourism.

The manner people choose where and in what way they will spend their vacations, especially between 1945 and the beginning of the '70s, is quite different from the one in the period between the' 80s and until now. During the post-World War II period, the society, especially in Europe and North America, appreciated the massive industrialization, rapid economic expansion and mass production and consumption of goods and services. (Cohen, 1979; Urry, 1990). Thus, the period after the World War II was characterized by an increased technological advance, in particular mass production and consumption of goods. In the case of tourism development, production and consumption were represented by tourist packages whose main features include large-scale production and the provision of standardized services, inflexible packing of tours, mass replication and marketing of products to undifferentiated customers and mass consumption of holidays with pay little attention to the place or culture (Poon, 1993 p. 32).

Therefore, due to the fact that we live in an era marked by the fast change of everything around us determined by the impact of technology on our lives and tourism consumers are changing their preferences at the same rate. Therefore, these trends change from year to year in order to be able to meet the requirements of customers, who literally have the power to plan and book their trips.

It is no longer possible to predict consumers' purchasing habits of almost any product or service by simply labeling it as a "luxury" group. A world of paradoxes appears in tourism and leisure behavior, in which the existing opposites work simultaneously. Greater similarity and diversity, plus a search for security and greater risk-taking appear side by side.

Several major directions have emerged from this research and it is actually quite interesting to note that all of these can be considered problems of our time (overturism, technology as an endless factor in the decision

making process of tourists in terms of establishing a trip, the ecological travel that have become an imperative in tourism, etc.). In order for tourism to fit the real global market, it is necessary to move from a limited tourism product, based on beach and wildlife tourism, to providing a diversified and differentiated tourism product that will appeal to the market more existing tourism, based largely on the sustainability of the products.

Sustainable development, which we want for tourism, can even be considered an ideal maintained to preserve and protect the political and economic power held. To find the solution of this problem, it is necessary to adjust the "socio-economic and ecological systems to this" given "of globalization: Sustainable development." (Mazilu, M., 2011, f, „Turism şi dezvoltare durabilă", Editura Universitaria, p. 110).

"Sustainability, for tourism as well as for other industries, has three independent aspects: economic, socio-cultural and environmental. Sustainable development implies stability, which means that sustainable tourism implies the optimal use of resources (including biological diversity), minimizing the negative economic, socio-cultural and ecological impact, maximizing the benefits on local communities, national economies and on conservation of nature. As a natural consequence, sustainability also refers to the managerial structures necessary to prove the fulfillment of these goals. " (Mazilu, M., 2011, g, „Turism și dezvoltare durabilă", Editura Universitaria, p. 110).

To meet high environmental standards in ecotourism, wildlife conservation tourism activities should be properly planned, monitored and managed to ensure that they do not conflict with the conservation and sustainable use of resources. Of particular importance is to determine the capacity of support of visitors from national and natural parks, and to regulate the number of tourists to avoid overcrowding and degradation of the natural beauty of the resources.

It is also important to note that the variables that influence consumption are centered on what is called "life motivations" that define the current post-modern existence, including the urge of people to participate in leisure activities. (Dietvorst, 1993). Modern tourists usually seek out distinct experiences that they cannot experience at home, so they are determined to visit tourist destinations based on various motivations. In addition, raising awareness about the effects of mass tourism has made tourists critical of the forms of tourism products and services offered. An increasing number of tourists want to participate in recreational activities that are environmentally friendly and have the least cultural impact on the

host communities. This is clearly evidenced by the tourism trends of the current year.

In conclusion, for the new trends in 2020 in global tourism, in order to become sustainable, **the goals of sustainable tourism** must be respected and pursued.:

- ✓ to improve the quality of life of the host community;
- ✓ to provide for intra and inter-generational equity;
- ✓ to protect the quality of the environment by maintaining biological diversity and ecological systems;
- ✓ to ensure the cultural integrity and social cohesion of the community."(International Tourism- A Global Perspective, OMT, Madrid, 1997, p.225)

The tourism industry is certainly changing and developing in a variety of ways. No one can predict the future, but the above trends are already starting to make an impact and you can expect them to continue to grow prominently in the years ahead. Moreover, there will undoubtedly be no trends that seem to be out of place, nor will they surprise us.

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