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Examining Travel Habits During the Fourth and Fifth Waves Of The COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Due to changes in the structure and system of the consumer society, the previously used consumer, geographical, and demographic characteristics did not prove sufficient for the exploration and analysis of the reasons behind consumer habits and tourism behaviour. The characterisation of traditional consumer behaviour was complemented by psychological and psychographic factors. These factors also include lifestyle and motivation. As part of a quantitative study based on an online survey, regular travelers were surveyed, alongside Hungarian people interested in traveling. This paper focuses on arranging the measured sample of travelers into homogeneous groups based on their tourism motivation, lifestyle, and travel behaviour as it relates to COVID-19 pandemic. It was also important to describe and characterize the resulting groups of travelers based on their well-identifiable characteristics. The study was conducted as a continuation of foundational research. Previous research analysed the impact of the first three waves of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel behaviour. The results of the present research refer to the

effects of the fourth and fifth waves

Keywords: Lifestyle, Tourist motivation, Travel habits, COVID-19

Introduction

Tourism demand is an activity generated by tourists through their participation in tourism. Since tourism demand is extremely complex and continuously changing, it can be interpreted in many ways (Buhalis, 2004). The demand for tourism can be distinguished into three types: actual, repressed, and latent. Actual demand is created by tourists who participate in tourism activities. The so-called repressed demand comes from the activities of two groups of tourists. The first group includes those who cannot participate in tourism for some reason. The second group consists of those who are forced to postpone their trips due to a difficult situation involving the supply environment. The category of latent demand covers certain types of demand which are directed at a specific long-desired destination or specific accommodation that is out of reach for some reason (Kalmárné, 2018).

Tourism is one of the most dynamically developing branches of economy in the world, as well as in Hungary. The tourism sector has been severely impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Reflecting on the coronavirus pandemic in April 2023, it could be stated that life fundamentally changed in early 2020 when the World Health Organisation classified the COVID-19 coronavirus infection that originated in China as a global pandemic (WHO, 2020). The situation caused a shock effect in business and private life, as well as in consumer behaviour (Soós, 2020).

The travel and tourism sectors suffered severe impacts during the health crisis, as countries all over the world imposed restrictions on non-essential travel to curb the spread of the virus. Revenues in the global travel and tourism market declined drastically. The COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges to the global travel and tourism market in 2020 and 2021, as governments imposed lockdowns and travel restrictions to contain the number of infections.

However, the tourism sector has shown its commitment to putting people first. The UNWTO reacted quickly to the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic and set up the Global Tourism Crisis Committee, which continuously prepared evaluations and issued recommendations. The committee published its guidelines under the title ‘Measures to Relaunch Tourism’ in order to advance the recovery of the sector. The sector also played a leading role in facilitating the recovery of the economy (Ilyés, 2020). Certainly, the social and economic benefits provided by tourism could pave the way for sustainable development for individuals and countries. All global destinations had travel restrictions implemented (UNWTO, 2020).

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In 2022, restrictions were lifted, which prompted the recovery of tourism and hospitality. Compared to the previous year, the number of international tourist arrivals roughly doubled worldwide, especially after the sharp decline it had with the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In addition, Europe reported the largest number of inbound travellers, with nearly 585 million arrivals. Although this number represented a significant annual increase, the number of international travellers' arrival to the region remained below the pre-pandemic levels.

While examining the regional breakdown of the growth of incoming tourist numbers worldwide in 2022, the Asia-Pacific region showed the most significant annual increase in the number of incoming tourists.

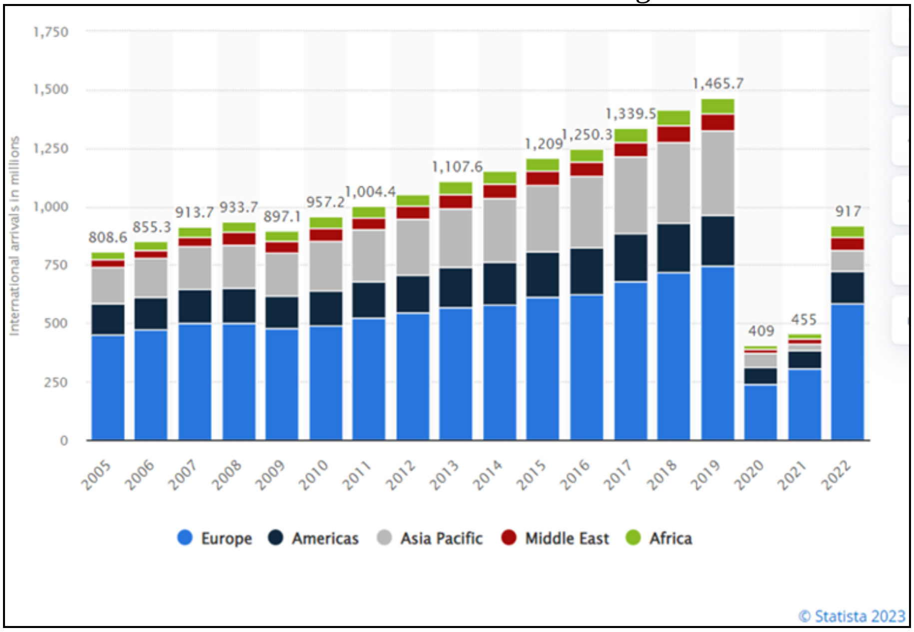

Figure 1. Number of International Tourist Arrivals Worldwide Between 2005 and 2022, According to Region (million)

Since 2005, Europe had been the global region attracting the highest number of international tourists. Compared to the previous year, the number of tourists arriving in Europe significantly increased in 2022. Nonetheless, it has still not reached the pre-pandemic level yet (Figure 1).

In February 2023, the Statista Research Department analysed the growth of the number of global visitors, both inbound and outbound, between 2020 and 2024. Accordingly, the number of inbound and outbound travellers will further increase in 2023 and 2024. Compared to the previous year, the number of global arrivals is expected to increase by 15.5 percent in 2023. Meanwhile, the number of outbound travellers worldwide is estimated to increase by nearly 16 percent during the same period (statista.com, 2023).

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Literature Review

Understanding and analysing consumer behaviour is significantly important in scientific research and practical applications. The key to successful marketing strategy requires thorough knowledge of the expected behaviour of potential buyers and consumers living in domestic and international cultures. The first consumer behaviour theories evolved from economic theories, which identified the impact of consumption on the economy (Kopányi, 2002; Zalai, 2000; Kopátsy, 1992).

The purpose of consumption is to satisfy needs, which is the fundamental driving force behind all final consumption. It is a feeling of lack that triggers action to eliminate itself (Farkasné & Molnár, 2006, p.73).

Consumers are people who buy products or services for their own personal consumption. (Jobbler, 2002, p.89). Most of the time, buyers make the purchasing decisions on their own, but there are some purchases where the whole family gets involved as well. Typically, since most of the demand or need appears as motivation, it is necessary to learn why the consumer chooses the given product or service. In order to get to know this decision-maker better, segmentation needs to be performed because communication will not reach its goal without the identification of roles (Jobbler, 2002).

The examination of consumer behaviour is an interdisciplinary research and analysis activity carried out in order to determine the direction and nature of marketing activity, which characterizes, describes, and explains the mass phenomena of consumer behaviour, as well as the trends in consumer behaviour (Veres- Szilágyi, 2007). When researching actual decisions, other factors should also be considered (Kotler, 2006). The author emphasized that consumer behaviour is an extremely complex phenomenon and is divided into endogenous, individual-specific internal (personal and psychological characteristics), and exogenous or external (environmental, social) factors.

Travel decisions are determined by many factors. Tourism demand consists of three basic conditions: motivation, discretionary income, and free time. If one of these three conditions is not met, tourism demand cannot be achieved.

Due to the closure of borders, restrictive measures such as suspension of air transport and cancellation of flights and trips are put in place.

The COVID-19 pandemic has become a factor, which has fundamentally affected travel decisions. Subsequently, these decisions have changed travel habits.

The contribution of tourism to GDP is a key macroeconomic factor in the economic life of Hungary. Based on the results of recent years, it can be declared that its share in the national economy has continuously increased and has become determinant.

As earlier mentioned, life changed at the beginning of 2020 when the World Health Organisation (WHO) classified the COVID-19 coronavirus – which started in China – as a global pandemic. The illnesses caused by COVID-19 infection started at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of Hupei Province. The epidemic spread very quickly, which led to the introduction of restrictions on inbound and outbound travel in several countries in March 2020. All these measures also limited the services requiring personal contact (education, hospitality, leisure activities) (Debreceni, Fekete-Frojimovics, 2021).

The pandemic crisis has led to fundamental changes in the economic and social spheres. Furthermore, the adverse effects of the pandemic also affected the most important sectors of the national economy, namely tourism. This resulted to changes in the sense of security of consumers. The pandemic also had an impact on the inbound tourism of Hungary and the number of foreigners arriving in the country dropped drastically. A major source of domestic tourism revenue is generated from expenditure by international visitors. The external macroeconomic factors largely determine the composition and volume of incoming guests. The worldwide decline and subsequent shutdown of international tourism was one of the most decisive consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Restrictive measures such as the suspension of air traffic, the closure of borders, and the control of passenger traffic curbed the spread of the virus. However, the restrictions brought significant changes in the operation of commercial accommodation and catering units. In the second half of 2020, most of the accommodation providers were closed. In a presentation by the CEO of the Hungarian Tourism Agency, it was pointed out that in the year 2019, 93 percent of the guest nights in Budapest, the capital city, were spent by foreign tourists. This is a very high ratio compared to other European cities. For this reason, a model change needed to be implemented in order to save tourism in Budapest (Guller, 2020). According to the report by World Travel and Tourism Council, the European travel and tourism sector suffered the second largest economic collapse in 2019. The sector's contribution to GDP declined by a total of 51.4 percent (€987 billion). This considerable drop could partly be due to the continuous mobility restrictions and border closures aimed at curbing the spread of the virus. The European domestic spendings fell by 48.4 percent, while the international spending plummeted to an even greater extent, specifically 63.8 percent. Despite this, Europe remained the number one region in the world in terms of international travel spendings. Regardless, the level of employment in the continent's travel and tourism sector shrank considerably by 9.3 percent, which meant the loss of 3.6 million jobs (WTTC, 2020).

The lifestyle and social composition of the world's population, as well as the level of economic development of individual countries are constantly changing. These changes, among other things, have an impact on tourism and its performance. Therefore, preparations for these processes should start long before the change happens. The tourism market and the service providers are also adapting to the constantly changing tourism demand (Kalmárné & Hering, 2019).

The impact of the pandemic is expected to result in more careful and cautious behaviour on behalf of travellers in the future. It is also possible that many people will prefer to stay safe at home or visit only relatives, friends, and acquaintances. “Cautious travellers will almost certainly demand new and more comprehensive insurance packages, and the responsible traveller will also scrutinize the general terms and conditions of the service providers in details. A travel insurance system adapted to COVID-19 is being developed and some insurance companies are already offering specific COVID-19 insurance” (Raffay, 2020, p.4).

Workers in the tourism industry also suffered from the uncertainty caused by the pandemic. Many consumers decided to postpone their trip or ultimately cancelled their already booked trips altogether. This led to loss of income for businesses and companies (Raffay, 2020).

Around the end of the 3rd wave of the coronavirus pandemic, in the summer of 2021, consumers were expectant that they will be able to plan their trips for leisure purposes more freely due to the improvement of the pandemic situation. The travellers were motivated not only by the need to break away, but changing the monotony of the near past, and finding meaningful ways to spend their free time also contributed to the increasing desire to travel. However, most of the tourist groups still preferred the domestic destinations due to their perceived higher level of safety.

Lifestyle

Due to the changes in the structure and system of the consumer society, the previously used consumer, geographical, and demographic characteristics proved to be insufficient for the exploration and analysis of the reasons behind consumer habits and tourism behaviour. Subsequently, the characteristics of traditional consumer behaviour have been supplemented by psychological and psychographic factors. In addition to several other aspects, lifestyle and motivation can also be added to these factors.

The examination of tourist behaviour, which is one of the focal points of this paper, continues with the analysis of lifestyle. Many researchers have tried to define lifestyle by considering various aspects and factors. The first lifestyle research and related conceptual definition can be attributed to Max Weber. Nevertheless, it is also important to mention other researchers who described lifestyle from different aspects and included it in the consumer behaviour system. Bell (1958), Rainwater, Coleman and Handel (1959),

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Havighurst and Feigenbaum (1959) researched the area in the late 1950s. Bell focused on the examination of relations between consumption and consumer behaviour. Rainwater, Coleman, and Handel highlighted the importance of links between consumer behaviour and lifestyle. However, the work of the aforementioned researchers lacked the precise definition of the concept of lifestyle. In a paper by Lazer (1963, p.130), a detailed definition is found which has been widely accepted and adopted. In his opinion, lifestyle is a system. In other words, it is a distinctive and particular way of life which is typical for certain segments of society. The purchase and consumer behaviour truly reflect individual lifestyles.

Veblen (1975), Halbwachs (1971), Summer (1978), Hexter (1916), and Weber (1964) characterized the different lifestyles with differentiated ways of consumption per each group. These researchers defined lifestyle as the way of consumption and the way people pursue their lives, depending on the different life conditions.

In addition to the above, there have been many attempts to define, describe, and analyse the concept of lifestyle. Lifestyle cannot be described or characterized by a single word as it is a much more complex concept. Based on the multitude of definitions published by researchers and their contradictory wordings, it can be declared that neither the researchers of sociology nor marketing science represent a unified position regarding the definition of lifestyle and the methodology of analysing the research results. Nevertheless, the clarification and evaluation of the conceptual measurement and analysis procedures that have been created and scientifically implemented so far, as well as the recommendations of new approaches to the problem, contribute to the quality and creativity of lifestyle research (Wind & Green, 2011).

Lifestyle reflects public conduct, values, attitude, opinion, and personality, which determines consumer habits and behaviour. The VALS model is one of the most widespread methods in relation to lifestyle research. The initials of three English words gave the name of the method: Values, Attitudes, and Lifestyle. The research started in the United States, and, as the name also indicates, it was created for the analysis of correlations between values and lifestyle. Although there are two versions of the VALS method, both are widely called and used under the name VALS model. The first model, known as VALS 1, was developed in 1978 and is associated with Arnold Mitchell. The results of the method were published in a book by Mitchell in 1983. The survey was conducted by interviewing 1,600 people in the United States. However, the adequacy and theoretical accuracy of the research had been widely questioned.

Due to its difficulty and complexity, the method was revised by the Stanford Research Institute and VALS 2 was created. To this day, the

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questionnaire has been primarily used for commercial purposes, and it is also a popular and well-known market research method in marketing planning. It is a psychometric method that is based on personality traits and analyses the individualistic characteristics and the correlations between consumer behaviour and habits. It examines the characteristics along two dimensions: motivation and resources. The method is less theoretical, more practical, and more efficient than the previous version. Part of the set of questions of the current empirical research is made up by the referenced questionnaire adapted to Hungarian language.

Tourist Motivation

The study continues with the analytical evaluation of tourism motivation. Human needs are inexhaustible and may become motivated under optimal intensity. An individual may have several needs at the same time. This is regarded as psychological characteristics and usually comes from some kind of psychological tension. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the needs of belonging, esteem, and recognition also belong to this category. After some time, however, the needs turns into motivation due to external and internal factors. Motivation prompts the individual to act, which reduces or eliminates tension. Therefore, motivation can be interpreted as an internal state that drives people to achieve certain goals. Just as income and social status determine an individual's place in the hierarchy, motivation also determines the selection criteria (Veres, 2007).

The motivating factors influence the decision positively and result in a feeling of satisfaction. Lawler, Hackman, and Porter (1975) used motivation as a method, which was further developed. The resulting model was adequately used in tourism to increase the sales of products and services. Based on the model, it can be said that the motivational process starts with the size of the reward, which induces efforts. Subsequently, the launched process becomes performance by supplementing the abilities and character traits. The process ends in satisfaction after an external or internal reward. Certainly, recognition of effective performance is a reward in itself.

The present paper is part of a complex research, and it is the continuation of the analytical and evaluation research in relation to the first three waves of the pandemic. The aim of the questionnaire survey was to divide the samples of interviewed travellers into homogenous groups based on lifestyle, tourism motivation, and tourism behaviour related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, each homogenous group can be described with easily identifiable characteristics.

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Methods

The empirical research was carried out using quantitative methodology, with a questionnaire consisting of the following five groups of questions:

- Travel habits during the examined period of the COVID-19 pandemic (July 2021 – December 2022)
- Lifestyle characteristics (adapted set of questions)
- Importance of tourism motivations before the COVID-19 pandemic and during the examined period (July 2021 – December 2022)
- Impact of COVID-19 on travel behaviour (July 2021 – December 2022)
- Demographic benchmarks

IBM SPSS and R statistical programme (R Core Team 2021) were used for the statistical processing. The calculations were made with the psych test package (Revelle, 2023). Descriptive and comparative statistics were prepared on the basis of the variables measured on the nominal scale and the demographic data.

Convenience sampling was employed to conduct comprehensive research during the timeframe of January to March 2023. 368 people filled out the questionnaire during the survey period, and 360 responses were used after data cleaning. Descriptive and comparative statistics were prepared based on the variables measured on the nominal scale and the demographic data. The respondents were grouped by hierarchical cluster analysis based on questions regarding travel motivations , using Ward's method (Ward, 1963) and squared Euclidean distance.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

40% of respondents were men and 60% were women. Approximately half of individuals held a secondary or higher education as their highest school qualification, demonstrating an even 50-50% distribution. The higher ratio of female respondents can be explained by the greater willingness of women to complete questionnaires and their increasing role in decision-making. According to Barletta (2002) and Popcorn Marigold (2001), women are the most likely to make travel decisions in the families. Nowadays, they make 80% of purchasing decisions directly or indirectly. Based on the impacts of tourism megatrends, it can be stated that more women travel in groups or individually. Examining the age distribution of respondents, 66% belong to Generation Z, 14% to Generation Y, 17% to Generation X, and 3% were Baby Boomers or veterans (Table 1).

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Table 1. Distribution By Gender and Age Group

		Number of Respondents	Ratio of Respondents
Gender	Male	142	40%
	Female	218	60%
Total		*360*	*100%*
Age group	Born before 31 Dec 1945 (veterans)	2	0%
	Born between 1 Jan 1946 and 31 Dec 1964 (baby boomer)	10	3%
	Born between 1 Jan 1965 and 31 Dec 1979 (Generation X)	6	2%
	Born between 1 Jan 1980 and 31 Dec 1995 (Generation Y)	8	2%
	Born after 1 Jan 1996 (Generation Z)	330	92%
Total		*360*	*100%*

Source: Authors' Field Survey

According to their place of residence, 26% live in Budapest and 74% live in the countryside. Regarding the financial situation of respondents, more than 63% have a monthly income of over HUF 150,000 per person, as shown in Figure 2 below.

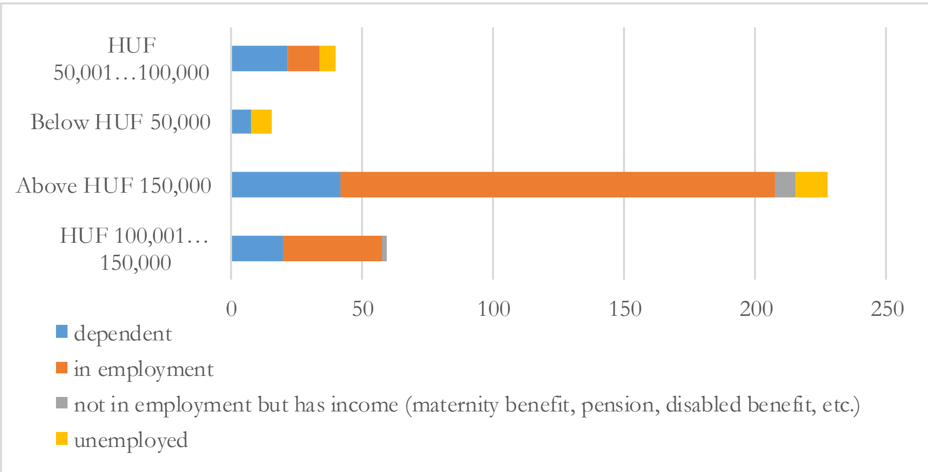

Figure 2. Financial Situation of Respondents According to Economic Activity
Source: Authors' Field Survey

Travel Habits in General

Apart from COVID-19 pandemic, 16% of respondents travel domestically once a year, 56% travel two to five times, and 9% travel six to ten times or more than ten times. On the other hand, 3% do not travel within the country at all, 17% declared that they never travel abroad, 29% travel once

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a year, 39% travel two to five times, and the remaining 2% travel abroad for leisure purposes at least six times. The study also examined the destinations chosen during the fourth and fifth waves of the pandemic. One-fifth of the respondents made only domestic trips, and a relatively small 3% mentioned that they did not travel within Hungary for tourism purposes.

Domestic Travels During the Pandemic

Figure 3 illustrates the number of domestic trips in the period between July 2021 and December 2022. Among the 360 survey participants, 353 affirmed that they had engaged in domestic leisure travel during the fourth and fifth waves of the pandemic. The results show that among the people who usually travel two to five times, nearly 55% marked the same option. In addition, 17% stated that they travelled only once and almost 8% did not travel at all.

Regarding the question about the trips in general, the proportion of those who travelled two to five times is 69%, 5% had one trip, and nearly 2% did not travel at all. Less than 7% marked the option of six to ten times. Only 2 people ticked the ‘More than ten times’ option.

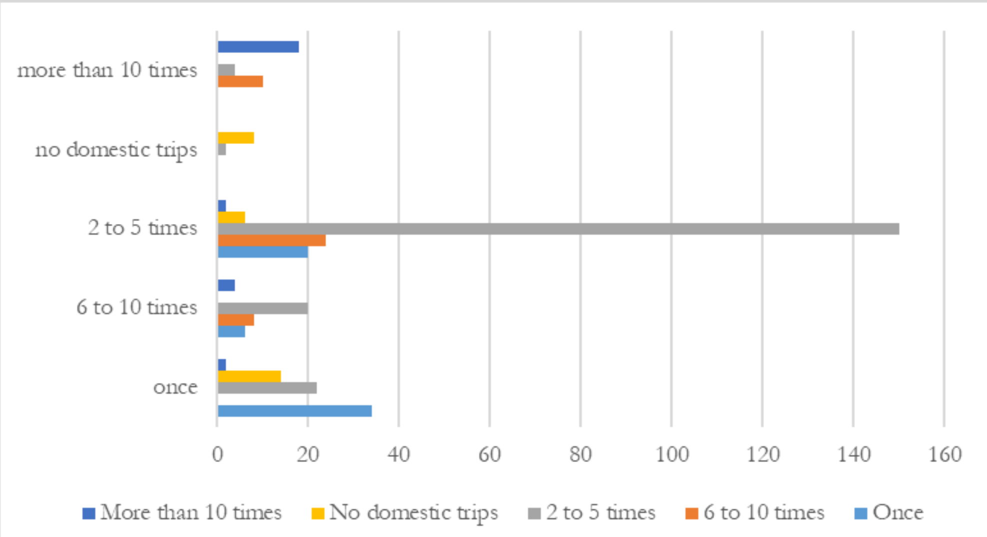

Figure 3. Number of Domestic Trips in General (Y axis) and During the Examined Period (X axis) (July 2021 – December 2022)
Source: Authors’ Field Survey

Travelling Abroad During the Pandemic

The number of trips abroad during the fourth and fifth waves of the pandemic was also analysed and the results are summarised on **Figure 4.** Among the 360 respondents, 266 individuals affirmed that they had traveled abroad during the surveyed period. 28% of the respondents mentioned that they had travelled once, 59% travelled two to five times, and 13% travelled

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six to ten times. None of the respondents indicated travelling abroad more than ten times.

According to the above interpretation, the following answers were obtained based on the question about trips in general. Apart from the COVID-19 period, 356 people indicated that they usually travel abroad. Analysing the answers, it can be concluded that 37% of the respondents usually travel abroad once a year, 40% travel two to five times, 2% travel six to ten times, and about 2% have international trips more than ten times.

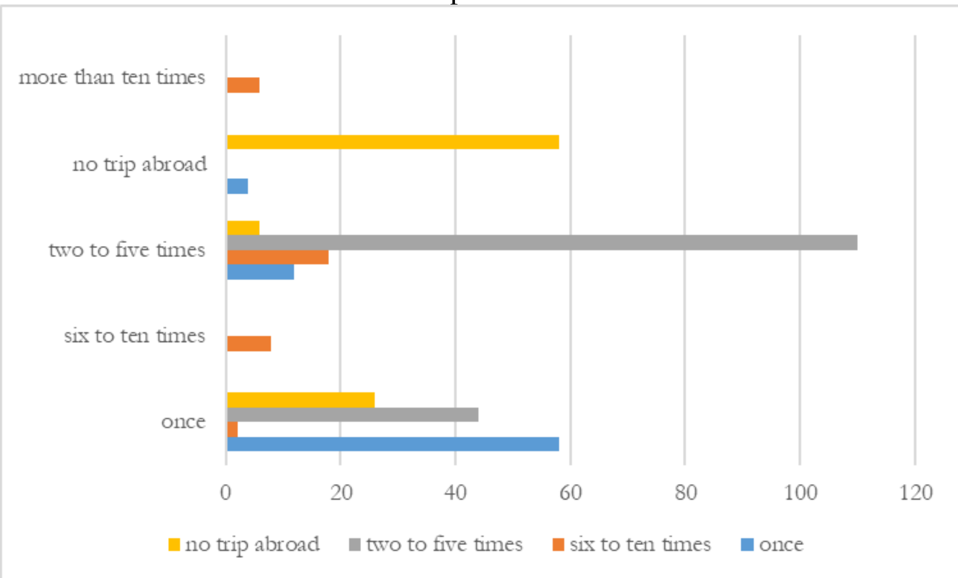

Figure 4. Number of Foreign Trips in General (Y axis) and During the Examined Period (X axis) (March 2020 – June 2021)
Source: Authors' Field Survey

Reasons For Not Travelling

The reason for not traveling, as stated by 54% of respondents who chose to 'stay at home,' was attributed to concerns about the ongoing pandemic. 22% stayed at home for financial reasons, while 12% did not plan to travel due to border closures, restrictions, and quarantine regulations. 6% mentioned work commitments as further reason for not travelling, 4% brought up health issues, and 2% referred to other reasons.

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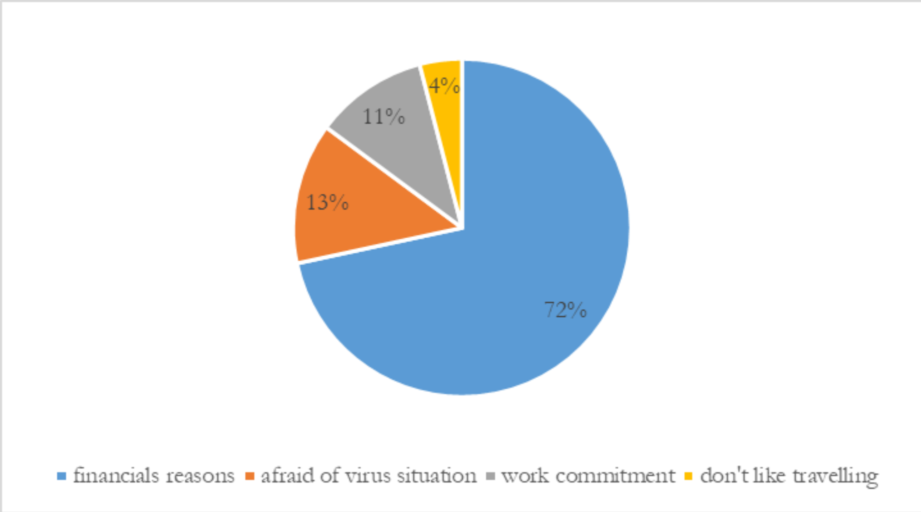

Figure 5. Reasons For Not Travelling
Source: Authors' Field Survey

Lifestyle

The lifestyle-related attitudes of the sample are summarized below: Respondents had to evaluate 34 lifestyle-related statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree, 5 – strongly agree). The most typical statements regarding lifestyle are summarized on **Figure 8**. The two highest values were given to the following statements: 'I like to try new things' and 'I like to do things that are also useful'.

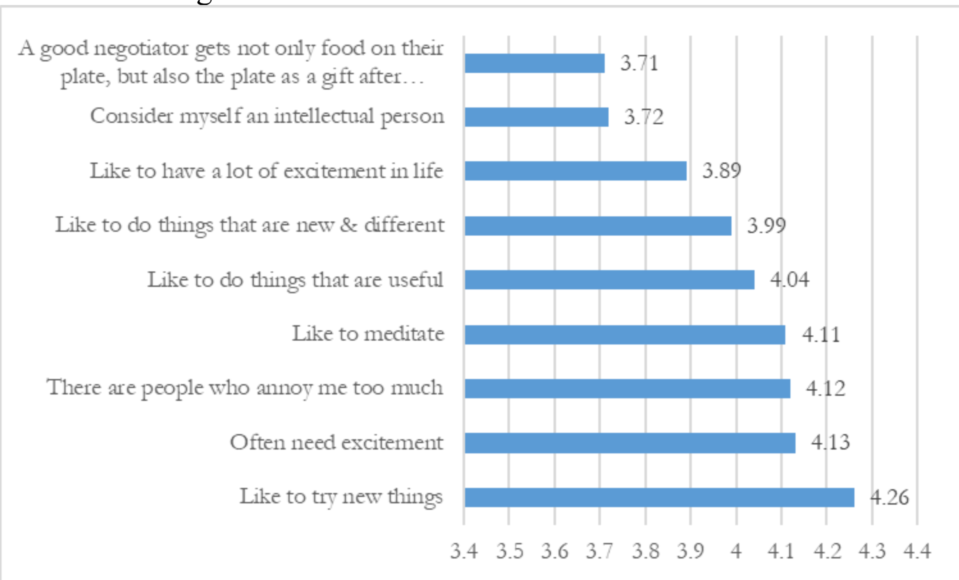

Figure 6. Statements Regarding the Most Typical Lifestyle
Source: Authors' Field Survey

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The analysis also identified the word the respondents associated with travel. Most of them outlined that words such as 'freedom', 'experience', 'relaxation', and 'rest' popped into their minds (**Figure 7**).

Figure 7. What Comes To Your Mind About Travel – Word Cloud
Source: Own Edition

Tourism Motivation

Apart from the COVID-19 situation, the respondents considered the search of experiences as the main motivation among the factors they had in mind when choosing a trip. This was followed by the aspect that determined the main purpose of travel by the interviewee. The costs of the trip, the respondent's income, and the attractions of the destination were among the main tourism motivations (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Main Tourism Motivations of Trips

Motivations	**Average**
Search of experiences	4.59
Main purpose of travel, e.g., relaxation, beach, hiking, etc.	4.53
Costs of travel	4.42
Income and the part of income that can be spent on tourism	4.27
Attractions of the destination	4.20
Accessibility of the selected destination	4.11
Duration of holiday	4.04
Time of the year when the trip is planned	4.02
Former experiences of a trip	4.03
Desires and wishes of fellow travellers	3.99
Means of transport	3.92
Type of accommodation	3.88

Source: Authors' Field Survey

Impact of COVID-19 On Travel Behaviour

The study also investigated the significance assigned by respondents to taking into account COVID-19 precautions and other factors when planning their travel destinations and making purchases after July 2021, with

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a rating scale ranging from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important). The average values of responses given to each aspect are shown on Table 3. The most important aspects were the value for money, the flexible cancellation, and payment terms.

Table 3. Importance of Aspects Related to the Planning of the Trip

Aspect	**Average**
Value for money	4,68
Flexible cancellation and payment conditions	4,34
Insurance conditions offering protection in case of emergency	4,08
More frequent cleaning in the selected destinations	3,56
Provision of individual, disposable protective equipment for guests	2,68
Individually packaged products (e.g., food products)	2,82
Possibility of contactless shopping	2,60

Source: Authors' Field Survey

Factor and Cluster Analysis

The basic condition of factor analysis is the correlation between the individual variables, which cannot be combined into factors without this correlation. The variables are suitable for factor analysis only when there is a strong correlation. The most important metrics of this are the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and the Bartlett test (Kassai, 2009).

Tourism Motivation

The initial conditions of the factor analysis related to travel motivations are fulfilled (**Table 4**), since the value of the KMO test is 0.85. This implies that it almost reaches the 'excellent' value limit (the variables are correlated), and the Bartlett test is significant (the variables are uncorrelated).

Table 4. KMO and Bartlett Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test		0.85		*KMO ≥ 0,9*	*Excellent*
				KMO ≥ 0,8	*Very good*
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. ChiSquare	16416.83		*KMO ≥ 0,7*	*Adequate*
				KMO ≥ 0,6	*Moderate*
	Df	2016		*KMO ≥ 0,5*	*Weak*
	Sig	0		*KMO < 0,5*	*Not acceptable*

Source: Authors' Field Survey

The number of factors were determined by considering the Kaiser criterion and the scree plot. The use of eight factors proved to be ideal. These can be clearly interpreted as each of them has an eigen value higher than 1 (between the limits of 17.02 and 1.59). The total explained variance is 46.5%, which is satisfactory in terms of the nature of the research. This indicates that

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the factors capture the underlying pattern inherent in the data. The generated motivational factors, with the number of variables and the smallest factor weight, are listed in Table 5 in descending order of explanatory power.

Table 5. Factors Produced on the Basis of Tourism Motivation

Factor	Number of Variables	Smallest Factor Weight
Nature lovers	10	0,62
Adventure seeking explorers	12	0,40
Safety seekers	8	0,42
Active gamblers	5	0,49
Frugal people	4	0,45
Gastro experience seekers	4	0,38
Culture seekers	15	0,20
Modern beach lovers	4	0,55

Source: Authors' Field Survey

The motivational factors encompassed within the measured variables involve individuals who identify as nature enthusiasts and prefer proximity to nature, while cultivating harmonious connections with their surroundings and actively avoiding mass tourism.

The adventure-seeking explorers are eager to discover thrilling experiences, and this means fun for them. This group has a considerable attitude for being bold and ready for action. While exploring different cultures and lifestyles, they easily make friends and enjoy exotic destinations. It is important for them to get to know the religion, culture, and customs of the given destination. Interestingly, this helps them to explore themselves better. For safety seekers, cleanliness is essential and their personal safety is also an important aspect. They seek reliable locations, with health preservation and regeneration being common travel motivations. Family togetherness and dependable weather are also key considerations in their trip planning.

Culture seekers often choose old historical cities, and they adapt their programmes to historical attractions. They like to trace their roots and often visit art galleries in the given destination. Their primary motivation is to learn and investigate fascinating subjects.

Active gamblers like to go to casinos and try out different types of games. When choosing a destination, fans are motivated by visiting the stadium of their teams and having exciting gambles. They search for destinations that they can brag about to their friends afterward. Visiting the designated place ahead of their acquaintances holds significance. Staying physically active throughout their vacation is crucial for engaging in sports, exercising, and regularly going hiking.

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For the frugal group, money is the primary concern. As such, they aim for the lowest possible cost in terms of destination, accommodation, and gastronomy.

The group of individuals seeking a gastronomic adventure is primarily motivated by the desire to explore and savor unique culinary delights. They are also willing to travel for the sake of a fine dining restaurant. Modern beach enthusiasts primarily seek destinations with quality beaches and frequently make use of water sports facilities.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the conditions of the factor analysis related to travel motivations are met (Table 6). Significantly, the value of the KMO test is 0.75. This implies that it exceeds the 'very good' value limit (the variable set is correlated), and the Bartlett test is significant (the variables are uncorrelated).

Table 6. KMO and Bartlett Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test		0,75		*KMO ≥ 0,9*	*Excellent*
				KMO ≥ 0,8	*Very good*
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. ChiSquare	691.6953		*KMO ≥ 0,7*	*Adequate*
				KMO ≥ 0,6	*Moderate*
	df	21		*KMO ≥ 0,5*	*Weak*
	Sig	0		*KMO < 0,5*	*Not acceptable*

Source: Authors' Field Survey

In this case, the number of factors was determined by considering the Kaiser criterion and the scree plot. Based on both methods, the use of two factors is optimal and their eigen values are 2.81 and 1.44. The total explained variance is 46.8% and the findings made in the case of motivational factors are also valid here. Given the nature of the data and the research, the ratio is acceptable. The motivational factors for the period of COVID-19, together with the number of variables and the smallest factor weight, are included in **Table 7** in descending order according to the explanatory power.

Table 7. Factors Generated on the Basis of COVID-19 Related Travel Behaviour

Factor	**Number of Variables**	**Smallest Factor Weight**
Hygiene measures	4	0,35
Financial measures	3	0,39

Source: Authors' Field Survey

The measured variables which belong to the tourism behaviour factors in relation to COVID-19 include the group of individuals that focus on hygienic measures. Certainly, possessing personal and disposable protective gear is crucial, and regular cleaning is necessary at designated sites. They opt for individually packaged food and products instead of buffet meals, and they show a preference for contactless delivery.

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People who prioritize financial measures tend to seek products offering good value for money, with a focus on insurance conditions providing a safety net against financial risks during emergencies.

Cluster Formation

With the help of cluster analysis, it is possible to classify individual data blocks into groups that are relatively homogeneous and different from each other (the significance values of the ANOVA test are always below 0.05). However, the motivation and travel habits of the individuals are the same. The classification indicates groups where members are more similar to each other than members of other groups.

The motivation factor-forming characteristics are variables measured on an ordinal scale. Thus, the 8 factors derived from these are also suitable for classifying individuals into groups. Clustering is most effective when 4 clusters are created, and the factor weights in each cluster are as follows:

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Table 8. Factor Coeffiients in the ANOVA Model

Factors		Clusters				*F*	*Sig.*
		Mass Tourists	**Adrenalin Tourists**	**Exotic Travellers**	**Explorers**		
Motivation	**Nature lovers**	0,47035	-1,07366	-0,41426	-0,10902	41,59	2.2e-16
	Adventure seeking explorers	0,27308	-0,22743	0,09261	-1,01562	23,56	6.199e-14
	Safety seekers	0,26854	-0,03042	-0,55557	-1,13032	36,38	2.2e-16
	Active gamblers	-0,22642	0,02537	2,59338	0,07861	130,8	2.2e-16
	Frugal travellers	-0,28912	0,60153	0,56977	0,05758	11,32	4.137e-07
	Gastro experience seekers	0,44629	-0,71836	-0,21011	-0,79725	22,73	1.738e-13
	Culture seekers	0,31815	-0,54528	-0,32679	-0,42713	9,339	5.871e-06
	Modern beach lovers	0,19333	-0,19436	-0,54875	-0,39739	4,93	0,002285
COVID19	**hygienic measures**	0,028	-0,276	0,052	-0,069	1,332	0,263
	financial measures	-0,112	0,110	0,070	-0,031	0,922	0,430

Source: Authors' Field Survey

Features of Clusters

Although mass tourists find pleasure in nature and adventures, they prioritize safety. In their case, the significance of hygiene measures heightened amid the COVID-19 pandemic due to their frequent visits to crowded areas, which put them at a higher risk of infection from the virus.

Adrenaline tourists prioritize gambling and seek reasonably priced lodging and dining choices. When traveling, culinary experiences and the exploration of cultural values do not serve as motivating factors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, in contrary to mass tourists, the financial measures were more prominent for gamblers since the programme of such trips can be

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very expensive. Conversely, hygiene measures were less underlined, as large crowds are not typical at these types of locations.

Exotic travellers delight in journeys that intertwine with gambling, placing a significant emphasis on the enhancement of their social status. Their primary focus is not on engaging in various activities or indulging in gastronomic experiences. Typically, they seek an escape from the routine of daily life. Opting for destinations that avoid large crowds, they gravitate towards exclusive and prestigious trips, driven by a desire to preserve the substantial financial investments made in their travels.

Explorers, on the other hand, enjoy nature and like to discover new things. However, they are not interested in prestige. In connection with COVID-19, less frequented locations are their preference, with no regard for hygiene and financial measures. Avoiding crowded places, they rely on a relatively low budget and remain unaffected by insurance.

Conclusion

COVID-19 pandemic has completely transformed the tourism industry. Travel habits, both domestically and internationally, have changed significantly. The quantifiable losses following the pandemic cannot be realised yet. It is uncertain how travel opportunities will change in the future due to the impact of the possible next wave(s). Experts forecast the performance improvement in the tourism sector in different ways.

The aim of the study was to create homogenous groups of travellers and provide their descriptive analysis based on various characteristics during the fourth and fifth waves of COVID-19. Subsequently, the aim of the research has been achieved. Based on lifestyle, tourism motivation, and travel behaviour related to COVID-19, the interviewed sample of Hungarian travellers was divided into homogenous groups.

The results of the research are interpreted as a snapshot for the period from July 2021 to December 2022, thus providing a descriptive analysis of travel habits affected by the two waves of the pandemic. A study had been previously prepared on the investigation and analysis of travel habits related to the first wave of the pandemic. The results of this research can be understood and interpreted as a continuation of the referenced foundational research. Further research requires comparative study and analysis of travel habits during the two investigated waves in order to make more in-depth findings.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the quantitative research:

- 60% of the interviewed sample of travellers were women. In terms of education, 50-50% of the sample have secondary and higher education qualifications. Regarding the age distribution, 92% are members of

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Generation Z. Most of them are self-employed and in stable financial situation.

- In the survey about lifestyle, the majority of the respondents agreed that they like to try new things and spend their time usefully.
- Among the respondents, the most frequent associations related to travel were ‘freedom’, ‘experience’, ‘relaxation’, and ‘rest’.
- Apart from the pandemic situation, the respondents considered the experience gained during the trips to be the most important of the factors related to the choice of the trip. Regarding the extra services following the COVID-19 outbreak, the flexible cancellation and payment conditions proved to be the most important for the members of the sample.
- Based on the motivational criteria, four clusters can be identified: mass tourists, adrenaline tourists, exotic travellers, and explorers. The travel habits of the defined homogenous clusters and their attitudes regarding the changes caused by COVID-19 are influenced by various factors, different tourist motivations, and demographic characteristics.

It is evident that the respondents did not travel significantly less in the examined period (July 2021 – December 2022) than in the previous years. This is true both in terms of domestic and foreign trips. Compared to the previous three waves, the enthusiasism to travel could be clearly perceived and recognised.

Fear of the virus situation and financial insecurity were identified as the two most common reasons among those who ‘stayed at home’.

The pandemic has considerably transformed not just the travel habits, but everyday life as well. However, this can be an advantage for the sector and a positive yield can also be discovered. On the one hand, the existence and establishment of safer travel conditions will be one of the basic tasks of tourism service providers in the future. Nonetheless, the changes expected now and in the future require fast, well-founded, and well-prepared crisis management from the service providers.

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