

Multidestination travel of the Slovenian population

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Abstract. This paper focuses on the multidestination travel of the Slovenian population. It presents the results of a questionnaire survey that aimed to gain insight into some relevant characteristics of the travel behaviour of the Slovenian population and its links to factors that were found in previous research to be related to the incidence of multidestination travel. A destination was defined within this research as any location where an overnight stop is made. Single-destination trips prevailed. Still, a considerable percentage of respondents' most recent trips had been multidestination trips. The greater part of them was directed to just one country within which they visited several overnight destinations. The results indicate that duration of trip, distance of destination from tourists' residential location, familiarity of destination, travel-group size and tourists' activities are associated with the likelihood of multidestination travel.

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1. Introduction

Tourism is an important industry, but it is also a complex spatial phenomenon. Considered as a system, it includes destination region, region of origin, and the space in between them (see, e.g., model of the geographical elements of tourism by Leiper, 1979). Likewise, its formal definitions indicate the crucial importance of travel (i.e. movement through space) as an inherent component of the tourism phenomenon. For example, tourism as “any activity concerned with the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, and their activities during the stay at these destinations” (Vanhove, 2005: 2; the author quoted a definition adopted by the British Tourism Society based upon earlier works). The characteristics of travel differ a lot in regard to its duration, means of transportation used, travel group, characteristics of destinations visited, and also in regard to trips’ spatial characteristics (distances travelled, spatial distribution of locations visited and ways of linking them within a single journey, etc.). Knowledge of these characteristics is useful when dealing with tourism impacts or destination marketing (Hwang and Fesenmaier, 2003; Lue et al., 1993; Oppermann, 1995; Popp and McCole, 2016; Tussyadiah et al., 2006).

Tourist travel requires an input of time, money and effort. This input increases with distance. Consequently, demand generally diminishes as distance increases. Travel to land neighbours dominates outbound travel, accounting for 53% of all departures (McKercher and Mak, 2019). Eighty percent of all international travel is directed towards countries within a 1,000-km radius of tourists’ home country (McKercher et al., 2008). The share of departures for travel of more than 5,000 km is typically 3% or lower (McKercher and Mak, 2019). In general, the number of visitors to a specific destination is positively related to the population size of the visitor’s areas of origin and inversely related to their distance from destination (e.g. Mings and McHugh, 1992). Of course, in addition to distance or accessibility, visits to a destination are related to numerous other factors. A destination’s attributes that affected its attractiveness were frequently discussed as pull factors (Klenosky, 2002; Prayag and Ryan, 2011).

They influence tourist satisfaction, which is related to tourists’ loyalty to a destination and repeat visits (e.g. Castro et al., 2017; Chi and Qu, 2008; Ryan, 1995; Sun et al., 2013).

Many tourists do not travel from home to just one location. Instead, they link within a single journey visits to various locations, and stay at these locations for various amounts of time. Therefore, their journeys are in fact multidestination journeys. Multidestination travel has been studied by various authors (earlier works include Flognfeldt, 1999; Lue et al., 1993; Mings and McHugh, 1992; Oppermann, 1995). According to Tideswell and Faulkner (1999), tourists undertake multidestination trips to maximise the benefits of travel. Some forms of tourism are especially closely related to multidestination travel. Probably the best such example is backpacker tourism. Its definitions usually include as a crucial element “a prolonged multiple-destination journey with a flexible itinerary” (Sørensen, 2003: 851).

When studying multidestination travel, the question arises of what a destination is. Because of differences between definitions of destination, understandings – as well as conceptualisations – of what multidestination travel is also differ considerably. Already Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003) pointed out the lack of clarity in what is meant by “multidestination travel”. Higham (2005: 8) states that tourist destinations are “places that attract and provide for the needs of visitors”. Cho (2000: 144) defines destination as:

the place where tourists intend to spend their time away from home. This geographical unit visited by tourists may be a self-contained centre, a village or a town or a city, a region or an island or a country [...], a single location, a set of multidestination as part of a tour, or even a moving destination such as a cruise.

Similarly, Flores and Scott (2016) stress the fact that the term “destination” is used to describe locations at a range of scales, from an individual resort to even a continent. Framke (2002: 103) points out that destination exists “at various geographical levels, but it is never a place with clear boundaries”, while Saarinen (2004) sees in destination a problematic concept and concludes that destination can be conceptualised as “a historically produced structure which is experienced and represented through

different administrative, economic and cultural practices” (Saarinen, 2004: 165).

Authors researching multidestination travel have usually, for practical reasons, disregarded the complexities involved in defining destination. Definitions (explicit or implicit) of destination in empirical studies have differed considerably. Consequently, so too have the notions of multidestination travel differed among various studies. Wu and Carson (2008) defined destinations as “overnight stops”. The same decision was adopted by Parroco et al. (2012). Unlike them, Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003: 167) defined multidestination travel as “a trip that has at least one additional ‘significant’ stop (or side trip) whose purpose is other than spending the night, transportation transfer, or dropping off/picking up a passenger”, while Hwang et al. (2006) studied multidestination travel only in relation to urban destinations (multicity trips).

Empirical studies have focused on various populations. To mention just a few, Mings and McHugh (1992) researched Yellowstone visitors and their travel movements to and from Yellowstone, Oppermann (1995) focused on international tourists (only air travellers!) to Malaysia, Tideswell and Faulkner (1999) on international visitors in Queensland (Australia), and Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003) on domestic travellers in the USA using ground transportation. Stewart and Vogt (1997) researched the spatial behaviour of visitors to Branson (Missouri, USA) using ground transportation (thus excluding air travel), while Hwang et al. (2006) studied the behaviour of international tourists using air transportation, besides which, they considered only a special case of multidestination travel, i.e. multicity trips. Parroco et al. (2012) have taken into consideration all tourists in Sicily excluding residents of the island, and Kang (2016) considered US domestic tourists in selected South Carolina coastal areas.

Such diversity precludes detailed comparison between findings. Nonetheless, some general conclusions are very evident. One is that multidestination travel is very common (Hwang et al., 2006; Önder, 2017; Parocco et al., 2012; Stewart and Vogt, 1997; Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999) and not an anomaly. Multidestination travel varies spatially as well as temporally. In regard to the latter, it has been shown that frequency of specific travel itineraries varies seasonally (Stewart and Vogt, 1997). Furthermore,

spatial behaviour and mobility of tourists change in regard to the phase of a trip (Zillinger, 2007). Various spatial movement patterns can also be observed within destination areas (e.g. Lew and McKercher, 2006; McKercher and Lau, 2008).

A series of intervening factors can affect tourist movements: distance decay and market access, time and financial budgets, trip and personal characteristics (McKercher and Zoltan, 2014). In regard to multidestination travel, Tideswell and Faulkner (1999) summarised factors affecting the incidence of multidestination travel patterns. First, they identified five basic “predisposing factors”: multiple-benefit seeking (the individuals’ need to seek variety), heterogeneity of preferences (different members of a travel group differing in the benefits they seek from destinations on a vacation), risk and uncertainty reduction (i.e. by relying on several destinations rather than on a single one to provide the benefits sought, travellers may perceive that they reduce level of risk), economic rationalism, and visiting friends and relatives. This last could be seen as being an extension of multiple-benefit seeking. In addition, the same authors (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999) mentioned several other factors that in their opinion can be classified as constraints and/or opportunities associated with multidestination travel patterns. Empirical research dealing with multidestination travel has shed some light on the role of these and some other factors.

Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003) found that the share of multidestination travel among domestic tourists in the United States increased with an increase in distance from place of residence. Likewise, distance between visitors’ home country and destination was the most significant variable in determining the extent of multidestination travel of international visitors to Queensland, Australia (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). Similar findings were made by Parroco et al. (2012) and Wu and Carson (2008).

In the case of international tourists in USA travelling by air (Hwang et al., 2006), differences in the number of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) visited and the choice of MSAs were observed with respect to familiarity with destination (as a consequence of a previous visit). In Sicily, first-time visitors more frequently engaged in multidestination travel (Parroco et al., 2012). Differences between

first-time and repeat visitors were observed also within the context of intradestination spatial behaviour in Hong Kong: first-time visitors were inclined to wander throughout the destination, while repeat visitors concentrated their activities in fewer places (McKercher et al., 2012; see also Wang, 2004).

The use of private or rented vehicles translated, in the case of tourists in Queensland (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999), into an increased number of overnight stops being made. The authors ascribed this to visitors' increased mobility levels (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). In accordance with this, Wu and Carson (2008) assumed that domestic visitors may have greater potential for dispersal, arising primarily from greater use of private motor vehicles. On the whole, however, their trips in South Australia tended to be limited to one or two nights and to be centred on Adelaide.

Kang (2016) noted that the purpose of travel of US domestic tourists visiting selected South Carolina coastal areas was significantly associated with the incidence of multidestination travel. Parroco et al. (2012) also found an association between travel purpose and multidestination travel; sea-and-sand holiday tourists were less likely to engage in multidestination travel than other tourists (e.g. those interested in culture, ecotourism, etc.). Visiting friends and relatives was suggested by Lue et al. (1993) as a factor increasing the tendency to visit more destinations, but empirical research did not confirm this. In fact, Oppermann (1995) found that respondents who stated pleasure as their sole purpose were less likely to visit just one destination, in contrast to respondents visiting friends and/or relatives and those on business visits.

Tideswell and Faulkner (1999) observed that larger travel-group sizes resulted in fewer overnight stop destinations, which contrasted with suggestions by Lue et al. (1993) that larger travel-group size should be associated with heterogeneity of preferences of different members of a group and should therefore positively influence frequency of multidestination travel. Similarly, Oppermann (1992) noted that number of overnight destinations is negatively related to group size.

In regard to duration of trip, a close relationship between number of places visited by foreign tourists in New Zealand and their length of stay was found by Oppermann (1994). Another relevant charac-

teristic is difference between package tourists and independent travellers. According to Oppermann (1992), non-package international tourists in Malaysia visited more places than package tourists. On the other hand, Debbage (1991) observed no significant difference in spatial behaviour between the two groups of tourists visiting a spatially confined resort destination (i.e. Paradise Island, Bahamas). However, the spatial level of analysis differed between the two cases.

Spatial configuration of destinations (spatial structure of the supply of tourism resources/recreation opportunities) has been suggested by Lue et al. (1993) and by Tideswell and Faulkner (1999) as an important factor influencing multidestination travel. In accordance with this, Hwang and Fesenmaier (2003) concluded that variation in multidestination travel between and within US states suggests the influence of geographical characteristics.

The research on multidestination travel discussed above was (with only one partial exception) based on surveys among tourists visiting a particular destination. In contrast, this paper focuses on tourists from a specific area of origin, i.e. Slovenia. It intends to provide an insight into the travel behaviour of the Slovenian population and factors affecting multidestination travel in general.

In the first part of the paper (Section 2), based on the data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, some characteristics of the travel behaviour of the Slovenian population are presented briefly. These data should provide a general picture of the tourism travel of the Slovenian population and thus offer a context for the central part of the paper (Chapters 3 and 4), which presents the results of a questionnaire survey whose specific aim was to gain insight into some relevant characteristics of the multidestination travel of the Slovenian population and its links to factors that were found to be related to incidence of multidestination travel in previous research.

2. Some characteristics of the travel behaviour of the Slovenian population

The Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia regularly collects various data about the tourism

travel of the Slovenian population. This travel includes business trips, which are less relevant for this paper. Therefore, only data on “private” trips (i.e. leisure, including *visiting friends and relations*) will be presented.

The share of the Slovenian population taking overnight private trips in a particular year amounts to more than 60% (see Table 1). The share of those who went on at least one longer private trip (at least four overnight stays) is between 50% and 60% (51.8% in 2014, 59.5% in 2018).

When going on longer private trips, Slovenian tourists usually use private motor vehicles (78.9% in 2014 and 2018, 82.2% in 2017). Their share is even bigger in the case of shorter private trips (fewer than four overnights) and surpasses 90%. The majority of Slovenian tourists direct their longer private trips to destinations outside the home country. Slovenia is close to several leading European destinations (Italy, Austria, Croatia, etc.). The most popular destination for Slovenian tourists is neighbouring Croatia, with its long and attractive Adriatic coast; its share among destinations of longer private trips is around 50%. In recent years, this share has ranged between 47.4% (in 2014) and 51.0% (in 2015). Despite important changes in tourism demand in the last decade, the popularity of Croatia as a tourist destination is a persistent, long-term characteristic of Slovenian tourists’ behaviour. For example, in 2005 the percentage of Croatia among the destina-

tions of longer private trips stayed more or less the same (48.3%) (Gostiša and Belak, 2006). When taking into account all private travel, Croatia’s share is smaller (e.g., 38.2% of trips in 2017).

The majority of private trips is of a rather short duration. More than 50% of them involve three overnight stays at most (see Table 2). The share of longer trips is, accordingly, around 40% or less (36.2% in 2014, 42.7% in 2016). The percentage of trips with 15 overnight stays or more is between 2 and 3% (2.4% in 2017, 3.3% in 2016).

Therefore, these data show that the typical private trips of the Slovenian population are of relatively short duration, usually involve the use of personal cars, and are directed towards nearby destinations (and especially the Croatian coastal resorts in the case of longer private trips).

3. Data and method

For the purpose of this research, data on travel behaviour were collected by questionnaire survey, which took place in 2015 as a web survey among the Slovenian population of at least fifteen years old. Respondents were invited to participate through social media and web forums. The sample only included those persons who had already taken at least one longer private trip, i.e. a trip involving at

Table 1. Percentage of Slovenian population who went on private trips (business trips not included) in the five year period 2014–18

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Went on a private trip	62.9	62.6	66.6	65.6	69.3
Went on a longer private trip (at least four overnights)	51.8	52.3	53.5	55.6	59.5

Source: SORS, 2020a

Table 2. Duration of overnight private trips (business trips not included) of the Slovenian population in the five year period 2014–18 (percentage of trips)

Number of days	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
1–3	63.8	57.4	57.3	62.8	60.2
4–7	23.9	27.2	27.3	23.7	26.2
8–14	9.8	12.4	12.1	11.1	10.9
15+	2.5	2.9	3.3	2.4	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: SORS, 2020b

least four overnight stays. The latter condition was deemed necessary because it is hardly possible (or at least very unlikely) to perform multidestination travel in the case of very short trips (e.g. two overnights). The sample included 606 respondents.

The questionnaire contained mostly close-ended questions on respondents' general travel behaviour and, more in detail, on respondents' most recent longer private trip. In the majority of cases, the respondents were asked to choose the appropriate answer from those offered in the questionnaire. Possible answers are shown in Table 3. A destination was defined as the location of an overnight stop (similarly as in Parroco et al., 2012; and Wu and Carson, 2008).

Despite the considerable size of the sample it is, in fact, a convenience sample, which is one of the limitations of this research. It could be supposed that it includes, to an above-average extent, persons who were interested in the topic and thus willing to answer the questions. Nevertheless, the characteristics of the sample in regard to travel behaviour of the respondents are to a large extent congruent with the characteristics of the travel behaviour of the Slovenian population (the leading role of Croatia as a destination for longer private trips, the predominance of trips of a short to modest duration, the predominance of personal motor vehicle as transport mode used; see next section). Therefore, it could be assumed that findings to a considerable extent reflect the behaviour of the general Slovenian population.

The questionnaire survey was focused on the role of several factors that were found or assumed to be relevant in the literature on multidestination travel with regard to the incidence of multidestination travel, as presented below.

Duration of the most recent trip (of at least four overnights). The amount of time available for a trip quite obviously affects the number of destinations that can be included in the itinerary (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). Respondents in the survey were asked about the number of days spent on their last trip. Duration of trip is not necessarily equivalent to available time but it is certainly closely related to it.

Previous visit(s) to destination country and number of previous visits. Familiarity with a destination may reflect a tendency among repeat visitors

to focus on pursuing particular interests (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). Consequently, they should be less inclined to visit many destinations. The respondents were asked about the previous visits to the destination country of their most recent longer private trip and the number of their visits, but not about specific places visited (overnight stops).

Distance of a visited destination country (or countries) from Slovenia. Distance from the tourists' area of origin can be considered in relation to risk reduction. Visitors from more distant areas of origin invest more time and money into their trip. Consequently, they will be more sensitive to the risk involved (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). It can also be considered in regard to economic rationality: inclusion of additional destinations into a travel itinerary would require only a relatively small increase in time and money (Lue et al., 1993), which is especially relevant in the case of visits to distant destinations. Respondents were not asked about the exact distance of destinations visited from respondents' homes and it would be unrealistic to expect all respondents to provide such information. However, they were asked to name the countries visited during their last longer tourist trip. For the analysis, the countries visited have been classified into five groups with respect to their proximity/distance: Group 1: Slovenia; Group 2: neighbouring countries; Group 3: countries which are at least partly within a 500-km radius of central Slovenia (neighbouring countries excluded); Group 4: other (i.e. more distant) European countries as well as non-European Mediterranean countries (Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey, etc.); the latter are located in relative proximity to Slovenia and, additionally, they are rather popular holiday destinations; Group 5: non-European countries (excluding non-European Mediterranean countries). In the case of a visit to several countries, the most distant one was taken into consideration.

Use of personal motor vehicle as the primary mode of transport. Use of personal motor vehicle results in increased travel mobility and consequently facilitates visits to several destinations (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). On longer trips, travellers probably use several modes of transportation, while in the case of single-destination travel the prevailing (or exclusive) use of just one mode of transportation could be expected. Therefore, respondents who visited more than one destination (i.e. multi-

destination visitors) were offered the possibility to choose up to three responses, i.e. the most frequently used transportation modes. We included into the further analysis only responses on the use or non-use of a personal motor vehicle (including a rented one), which was the most frequently used mode of transport by far. Other transport modes were far less common.

Involvement of travel agency in trip organisation (package tours versus self-organised travel). Independent travellers can act like “explorers” (see Cohen, 1972) while tourists on package tours are constrained by the travel programme and predetermined itinerary. However, distinctions between tourists using travel agency services and those who organise their trips independently are often quite blurred. Many tourists use travel agency services just in relation to some elements of their trip (e.g. booking of tourist accommodation).

Size of travel group (number of persons) can be related to heterogeneity of preferences of travel group members – i.e. different travel expectations and requirements of different members of the same travel group – which encourages the selection of multiple destinations (Lue et al., 1993). Consequently, multidestination travel becomes more common when one travels with more people. On the other hand, small travel groups could be inclined to explore a country or region, with many destinations being included in their itinerary as a consequence (Lue et al., 1993; Oppermann, 1992). The respondents were offered six possible responses. One included variable group size since, especially in the case of very long trips, number of persons in a group can change.

Respondents’ main activities during trip. Activities on a trip are closely related to trip purpose and they define the nature of a trip. Respondents were allowed to state up to three main activities undertaken during a trip. Included were the following (see Table 4): relaxation, rest; entertainment, meeting people; visiting natural and cultural attractions; attending cultural/entertainment/sports events; visiting friends and/or relatives; staying at a health resort, taking care of one’s own health; participation in sports activities; other.

Because of the mostly nominal nature of the data, the association of these variables with the incidence of multidestination travel was tested by chi-square

(χ^2) test. As a measure of association, standardised contingency coefficient was used, which has a maximum value of 1 (see e.g. Blaikie, 2003).

4. Results

4.1. General characteristics of respondents’ travel behaviour

The majority of respondents (79.0%) had been on a longer private trip (i.e. at least four overnight stays) in the last 12 months, 14.4% in the last 1–3 years, 2.5% in the last 4–5 years, and the remaining 4.1% had taken such a trip more than 5 years previously. Usually, their most recent trips had been of a rather short duration; 54.9% of trips had been 5–7 days long, 29.8% had been 8–14 days long, and only 15.4% of respondents’ most recent trips had been longer than two weeks (see Table 3).

Respondents tend to visit familiar destinations. Only 39.8% visited a country that they had not visited before during their last trip. The most frequently mentioned destination country was Croatia (visited by 38.1% of respondents) followed by Slovenia and Italy. Moreover, 44.0% of respondents had visited a particular destination country more than three times before their most recent trip. Among these respondents the largest group by far were those who had visited Croatia (71.2%).

Almost 60% (58.3%) of trips included just a visit to a single overnight destination. Therefore, 41.7% of respondents’ most recent trips were multidestination trips; the greater part of them (69%) was directed to just one country, within which they visited several overnight destinations. The prevailing mode of transportation was personal motor vehicle. It was used by 61.4% of respondents. Only a minority of respondents had used travel agencies to organise their last trip. Fifteen point five percent of trips were wholly organised by travel agencies, while 7.3% of trips were partly organised by them. This, again, is a consequence of the fact that the most common type of tourist trip consists of self-organised travel to seaside resorts in Croatia. The majority of travel groups included 3–5 persons (34.9%) or two persons (34.2%). On the other hand, the least

frequent travel group size was one person (6.2%). The most common activity during a trip was “relaxation, rest” (69.1% of respondents), followed by visiting natural and cultural attractions (54.6%), and entertainment / meeting people (46.6%). Other activities (sports activities, visiting friends and/or relatives, attending cultural/entertainment/sport events, etc.) were of lesser importance.

As already mentioned, the majority of trips were single-destination trips, i.e. trips with just one overnight stop. However, these trips largely included one-day trips to various attractions. Only 18.0% of single-destination visitors stayed at only the one destination for the whole duration of their trip. Twenty-three point one percent of them made one excursion into the surroundings of their destination, while the majority of them (58.9%) made several (at least two) day excursions. Therefore, a considerable leisure mobility of respondents is evident even in the cases when they are, from the perspective of accommodation statistics, staying in just one place.

4.2. Factors associated with multidestination travel

This research was specifically focused on the role of various factors in relation to multidestination travel (i.e. duration of trip, familiarity with destination, distance to destination, use of personal motor vehicle, role of travel agencies in trip organisation, size of travel group, purpose of trip). Knowledge of associations between these variables is helpful in understanding the phenomenon studied and tourist travel behaviour in general. The results are presented also in Tables 3 and 4.

Duration of trip. An association between multidestination travel and length of trip is very evident ($C_s = 0.521$). Of the respondents who visited only one destination (i.e. single-destination visitors), 69.7% spent 5–7 days on their last trip. This percentage is only 34.3% in the respondents who visited more than one destination (i.e. multidestination visitors). On the other hand, only 1.2% of single-destination visitors went on a trip for more than 21 days, while among multidestination visitors this percentage was 22.7%.

Familiarity with destination country. Visiting a previously unknown (i.e. not visited) destination country is moderately associated with the incidence of multidestination travel ($C_s = 0.482$). Of the respondents who undertook multidestination travel, 59.10% visited at least one destination country for the first time on their most recent longer tourism trip. Among single-destination visitors, this percentage is only 23.40%. It should be stressed that familiarity with destination was considered only as familiarity with destination country, not overnight stop, which was defined as a destination within this research.

In addition, multidestination travel is positively associated with the number of previous visits to a destination country ($C_s = 0.362$). This is related to the fact that the most frequently visited destinations are the ones in relative proximity to tourists' homes. These destinations can be visited even when just a small amount of time is available.

Distance of a destination. Standardised contingency coefficient was the highest ($C_s = 0.547$) in regard to the distance of a destination country, as represented by previously described groups of countries. The majority of single-destination visitors (54.2%) visited a neighbouring country. On the other hand, for multidestination visitors the most popular destinations were other European and Mediterranean countries (42.6%). Among the respondents who during their last trip visited either Slovenia, neighbouring countries or Group 3 countries (within a 500-km radius), single-destination visitors prevailed (Fig. 1). The results were very different in the case of the respondents who visited more distant countries. Among them, multidestination visitors overwhelmingly dominated. This was most evident in the case of non-European countries, where the share of multidestination visitors was even 91.4%.

Use of personal motor vehicle. In contrast with the results of some other studies (e.g. Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999), use of personal motor vehicle did not positively affect the incidence of multidestination travel. The value of the standardised contingency coefficient is 0.184, which indicates only a weak association (according to Blaikie, 2003: 100). Among single-destination visitors, the share of personal motor vehicle users was 66.8%, while among multidestination visitors it was only 53.8%. This is

Table 3. Some characteristics related to respondents' most recent trip

	Single- destination visitors (% of respondents)	Multiple destination visitors (% of respondents)	Total (% of respond- ents)	χ^2	C_s	p-value	df
Duration of the most recent trip (in days)							
5–7 days	69.70	34.30	54.90	124.358	0.521	0.000	4
8–14 days	27.70	32.70	29.80				
15–21 days	1.40	10.40	5.20				
22–30 days	0.90	13.10	6.00				
More than 30 days	0.30	9.60	4.20				
Total	100	100	100				
First visit of (at least one) destination country							
Yes	23.40	59.10	38.50	78.585	0.482	0.000	1
No	76.60	40.90	61.50				
Total	100	100	100				
Number of previous visits to destination coun- try							
One	10.20	20.40	13.00	30.129	0.362	0.000	2
2–3	9.40	27.20	14.40				
More than 3	80.40	52.40	72.60				
Total	100	100	100				
Type of destination, by distance/proximity							
Slovenia	9.80	3.60	7.20	139.243	0.547	0.000	4
Neighbouring countries	54.20	19.70	39.80				
Countries within 500-km radius	10.70	8.40	9.70				
Other European and Mediterranean countries	23.60	42.60	31.50				
Non-European countries	1.70	25.70	11.70				
Total	100	100	100				
Use of personal motor vehicle (including rental)							
Yes	66.80	53.80	61.40	10.313	0.184	0.001	1
No	33.20	46.20	38.60				
Total	100	100	100				
Organisation of trip by travel agency							
No	75.80	79.20	77.20	2.922	0.092	0.232	2
Yes	17.60	12.70	15.50				
Partly	6.60	8.20	7.30				
Total	100	100	100				
Size of travel group (number of persons)							
One person (i.e. the respondent)	4.60	8.60	6.20	32.822	0.285	0.000	5
Two persons	33.90	34.70	34.20				
3–5 persons	40.80	26.50	34.90				
6–10 persons	11.50	7.80	9.90				
More than 10 persons	8.00	17.10	11.80				
Variable group size (variable number of persons)	1.10	5.30	2.90				
Total	100	100	100				

Source: Author's survey

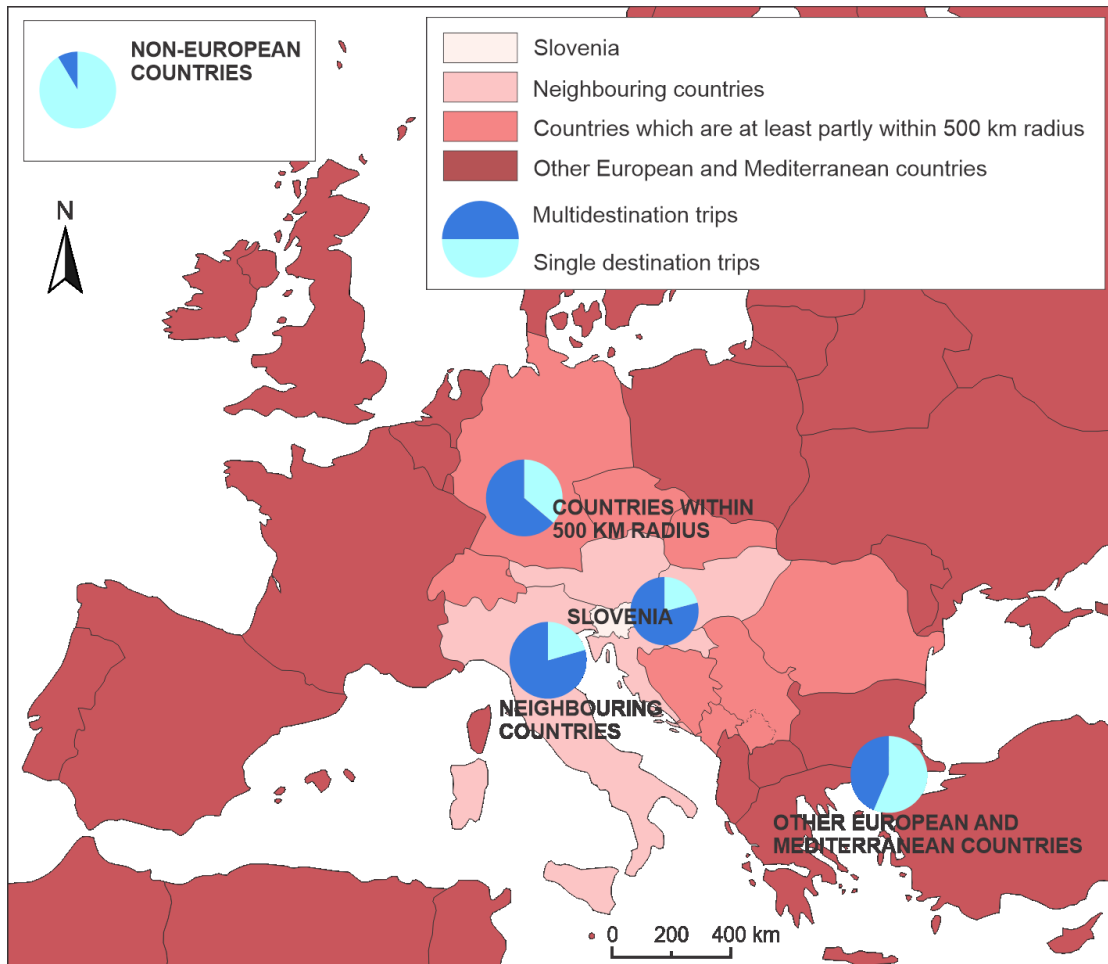


Fig. 1. Percentage of multidestination/single-destination trips of respondents visiting various groups of destination countries
Source: Author

largely a consequence of the prevalent type of holiday, which is based on a seaside stay on the Adriatic coast. The resorts on this coast are easily and quickly accessible by car, which is consequently the most frequently used mode of transportation. Therefore, despite increased level of mobility related to the use of personal motor vehicles, this does not necessarily translate into larger likelihood of multidestination travel. On the contrary; since personal motor vehicles are usually not used when visiting more distant destinations, use of various forms of public transportation (especially air transportation) is more common within multidestination travel. Nevertheless, it might be expected that when comparing travel of similar length and to similarly distant destinations, use of personal motor vehicles would prove to be related to a greater likelihood of multidestination travel. However, such analysis was outside of the scope of this research.

Organisation of a trip by travel agency. Proclivity for multidestination travel is not different between the respondents who were on a trip wholly or partly organised by travel agency and other respondents. Trips organised by travel agencies include seaside travel packages (stay at a single coastal destination) as well as touring groups, whose typical travel behaviour includes visits to numerous destinations. By contrast, independent travel includes seaside holidays (especially on the Adriatic coast) as well as backpacker travel (multidestination travel of long duration and flexible itinerary).

Size of travel group. Size of travel group is weakly to moderately associated with multidestination travel ($C_s = 0.285$). However, the supposed effect of heterogeneity of preferences, which is related to larger groups (see e.g. Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999), is not evident. In fact, multidestination travel is more common among larger groups (ten peo-

ple or more) but also among solo travellers, as well as among groups of varying size. This is probably a consequence of the fact that multidestination travel is, on the one hand, very common among solo travellers who travel as explorers (e.g. backpackers) and, on the other hand, among larger groups, which are in fact organised tour groups on a trip with a pre-determined itinerary. Multidestination travel is the least common among groups of 3–5 persons (usually families with children), who are largely sea-and-sand tourists on the Adriatic coast.

Activities undertaken during trip. Only a few activities are associated with the incidence of multidestination travel. Among the activities negatively associated with it are “relaxation and rest” ($C_s = 0.274$) and “staying at health resort, taking care of one’s own health” ($C_s = 0.120$). On the other hand, more frequent multidestination travel has been observed only in regard to visiting natural and cultural attractions ($C_s = 0.417$). Other activities (“visiting friends and relatives”, “entertainment and meeting people”, “visiting cultural, entertain-

Table 4. Trip activities of single-destination and multiple destination visitors

Main activity on trip	Single-destination visitors (% of respondents)	Multiple destination visitors (% of respondents)	Total (% of respondents)	χ^2	C_s	p-value	df
Relaxation, rest							
Yes	76.70	58.20	69.10	23.054	0.274	0.000	1
No	23.30	41.80	30.90				
Total	100	100	100				
Entertainment, meeting people							
Yes	48.00	44.70	46.60	0.634	0.047	0.426	1
No	52.00	55.30	53.40				
Total	100	100	100				
Visiting natural and cultural attractions							
Yes	41.70	73.00	54.60	56.622	0.417	0.000	1
No	58.30	27.00	45.40				
Total	100	100	100				
Attending cultural/entertainment/sports events							
Yes	8.00	12.30	9.80	2.93	0.099	0.087	1
No	92.00	87.70	90.20				
Total	100	100	100				
Visiting friends or/and relatives							
Yes	10.10	11.10	10.50	0.155	0.023	0.693	1
No	89.90	88.90	89.50				
Total	100	100	100				
Staying at health resort, taking care of one’s own health							
Yes	3.40	0.80	2.40	4.292	0.120	0.038	1
No	96.60	99.20	97.60				
Total	100	100	100				
Sports activities (participation)							
Yes	17.50	18.90	18.10	0.17	0.024	0.680	1
No	82.50	81.10	81.90				
Total	100	100	100				

Source: Author’s survey

ment, sport events”, and “sport activities”) did not show association with the incidence of multidestination trips. The results indicate that single-destination visitors are somewhat less active during their trip than multidestination visitors. However, differences between the two groups are not very obvious since both single-destination and multidestination trips can be very heterogeneous in regard to tourists’ motivations.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The purpose of this study was to contribute to a better understanding of multidestination travel. Previous research usually studied tourists visiting particular destination areas, while this one was focused on tourists from a specific area of origin, i.e. Slovenia. It examined the role of various factors in affecting multidestination travel.

Single-destination trips prevailed. To a large extent, they were base-camp trips. Respondents were based in a single overnight destination but they went on many day-excursions to attractions in the surrounding areas. It appears that, in the case of the leisure travel of the Slovenian population, single-destination travel is relatively rare on trips to locations of more than 500 km away. Unfortunately, data on precise destinations visited are lacking. Only data on countries visited were collected. Consequently, detailed analysis of spatial range and travel patterns has not been possible, although it could shed additional light on the phenomenon being studied.

The results show the relevance of the majority of variables considered in this research. Multidestination travel is most common in the case of longer trips to distant destinations, and also to unfamiliar (i.e. previously not visited) destinations (destination countries). Among multidestination visitors, two groups prevail: solo travellers and large touring groups. In regard to tourist activities, multidestination travel is related to an above-average extent to visiting natural and cultural sights and to a below-average extent to rest and relaxation, and health-related tourist motivations.

In general, the results are congruent with the findings of previous research, despite the fact that

virtually all other studies were conducted on destination areas. Nevertheless, some differences can be noted. In contrast with the findings of Oppermann (1992) and Tideswell and Faulkner (1999), larger size of travel group is not necessarily negatively associated with multidestination travel. Rather, its role is much more ambivalent. Similarly, use of personal cars as the main transportation mode is not positively associated with multidestination travel (in contrast with the findings of Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999). Furthermore, in comparison with some previous research, results also conflicted in part on the role of travel agencies and visiting friends and relatives as a travel motivation. This indicates the importance of contextual/geographical factors in influencing multidestination travel. It could be assumed that these factors include, among others, accessibility and geographical distribution of tourism opportunities.

Further research is needed to clarify some issues. For example, is there a hierarchy of tourist destinations visited during a single trip (primary, secondary, etc. destinations), and how does this hierarchy affect the characteristics of travel itineraries and number of destinations visited? How should we understand relations between some of the variables included in the analysis? Is longer duration of trip a consequence of multidestination travel (tourists want to see many destinations and consequently need more time to visit them) or is it that, conversely, multidestination travel is a result of having a large amount of available time? Furthermore, some of the results are (as already pointed out) affected by the geographic characteristics of the area studied and its neighbourhood. In regard to this, additional research in other areas of tourists’ origin would be very welcome.

The rather technical (quantitative) approach to the research on multidestination travel allows only limited insight into the nature of multidestination travel. Definitions of the concept of destination indicated that destination is to a considerable extent the tourist’s construction. Accordingly, a tourist’s experience of multidestination travel could be much more complex than presented in the paper and in the majority of research on multidestination travel. The factors affecting multidestination travel and discussed in the research literature have, so far, been interpreted from the perspective of researchers

(based on the concepts of heterogeneity of preferences, economic rationalisation, etc.) and not from the perspective of tourists/travellers. Qualitative research on multideestination travel could give valuable insights into the researched phenomenon. For instance, it would be of interest to know how multideestination travel is perceived by tourists and how it contributes to the nature and quality of tourist experience.

Multideestination travel has many important implications. As pointed out by Lue et al. (1993), inclusion of a destination into a multideestination travel itinerary can enhance its appeal for visitors. Moreover, multideestination travel can contribute to spatial dispersion of tourist flows and, consequently, result in dispersal of the economic benefits related to tourism. It can also contribute to easing the problems of excessive concentration of tourist visits in the most popular tourist destinations. Therefore, better knowledge of multideestination travel is of considerable practical relevance and deserves additional attention.

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