

# Marketing perspectives in sustainable tourism Montenegro

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## 1. Literature review

Modern understanding of tourism marketing is based on a comprehensive marketing management in terms of sustainable tourism, which involves the use of the principles of holistic marketing.

Sustainable and responsible tourism can be defined as "a form of tourism based on nature which tends to be ecologically, socio-culturally and economically sustainable, while providing opportunities for learning and assessment of the natural environment or its specific elements"(Weaver, 2001).

Defining the relationship between marketing and sustainable tourism, O.Bakić insists that "tourism marketing can no longer be facing away from the environment (natural, cultural, historical, etc.) and society, but on the contrary it is facing towards the environment and towards socially responsible development "(Bakić, 2009).

The idea of green marketing emerge in the late '80s(Peattie & Crane, 2005). The term "green marketing" describes the organizational effort in designing, promoting, valuing the price and distribution of products that do not endanger the environment(Pride & Ferrell, 1993).

Sustainable or environmental (green) marketing orientation of companies is a strategic orientation which is implementing balanced and streamlined inter-generational management of environmental, social and economic resources(Mitchell, et al., 2010).

When the tourists are satisfied with eco tourist experience, as established Y.H.Chiu, W.Lee and T.H.Chen, they might better understand the importance of preserving the environment which improves their responsible behavior. In addition, participation in ecotourism activities and satisfaction their needs develop a stronger connection to ecotourism, which again leads to environmentally responsible behavior. These attitudes point to the importance of management and resource planning for ecotourism, such as enhanced services of guides and accommodation facilities, maintenance of a high level of quality of the natural, cultural and other environments, and to ensure an authentic ecological experience for the purpose of strengthening the ecological knowledge of tourists(Chiu, et al., 2014).

The difference between the level of environmental awareness and actual ecological behavior of tourists during travel and accommodation is an important issue for the creators of tourism in the area. The research results concerning the alleged dilemma refer to paragraph(Doran & Larsen, 2014):

- (1) that the tourists of themselves have a positive opinion regarding the environment and sustainable development
- (2) that their environmental stance reflects the perceived desired standards

A significant issue in destination marketing of sustainable tourism is the establishment of a positive chain of influence(Kokkranikal, et al., 2011) as the concept of harmonization goals of marketing and tourism policy which leads to the development of tourism which providing social and economic benefits to the local community. The formation of negative chain of

influence, in contrast, involves differences between the created image and objectives of tourism destination development which implies the question what are the real benefits and who is the real beneficiary of tourism development: a travel agency or local community? Perfect positive chain of influence may not be realistic in the modern and consumer-oriented market, but stronger link between the objectives of tourism policy (DMO) and the destination image (DMO and tour operators) is as essential as a key variable in socio-economic development of local communities in tourist destination.

## **2. Research results in marketing sustainable tourism destination Montenegro**

Researching opportunities for the application of marketing sustainable tourism in Montenegro is based on the presentation and statistical analysis of the attitudes of tourists regarding the particular elements of sustainable tourism product.

### **2.1. Methodology notes**

Testing attitudes of tourists is performed using SPSS base of primary data of the National Tourism Organization of Montenegro with the presentation of results that are the result of the original process and have not been published in its report. They're used statistical methods of descriptive statistics, cross-tabulations, single-factor analysis (ANOVA) and t-test for independent samples. Examined are the attitudes regarding selected elements of the tourist product and positioning destinations in terms of sustainable tourism. Selected elements of the tourist product as the dependent variable, are: the beauty of nature and landscape; the picturesque and arrangement of destination; environmental preservation; quality of marking tourist attractions; diversity of cultural events; excursions; and overall stay satisfaction. The independent variables (factors) include: age, gender, education, country of origin, method of travel arrangements and overall cost of travel per person. Required are significant differences in the level of satisfaction measured by Likert scale (1-excellent, 2 = very good, 3 = good, 4 = poor; 5-very bad; 9 do not know) between groups within independent variables (three or more group-factor ANOVA analysis; two groups, t-test for independent samples). The bond strength between the dependent and independent variable, in a group with significant difference was measured by Cohen's eta squared (Cohen, 1988) (little impact, medium impact, high-impact). Positioning destinations Montenegro was done by cross-tabulating the comparison element of the tourist product (environmental preservation) among destinations: Serbia; Croatia; Italy; Turkey; Greece; Spain; other European countries; other, non-European, countries; based on the country of origin of respondents: Russia, Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia, Germany and Great Britain. The level is measured by comparing the Likert scale (1-Better in Montenegro; 2 Similarly, 3-worse in Montenegro).

### **2.2. Research results**

In this section are presented some results such as characteristics of the sample profile, the age and gender in relation to selected elements of tourist product, positioning destination Montenegro on source markets of Russia and Germany. Basic characteristics of the sample profile are given by the following table.

#### **Table 1 Characteristics of the sample profile**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<= 25	489	19,7	<b>Country of origin</b>	Russia	603	24,3
	26 - 35	852	34,3		Serbia	609	24,5
	36 - 45	573	23,1		Montenegro	213	8,6
	46 - 55	341	13,8		Germany	102	4,1
	56+	225	9,1		Italy	49	2,0
	Total	2480	100,0		France	77	3,1
<b>Gender</b>	Male	1161	46,8		Other countries	143	5,8
	Female	1319	53,2		Kosovo, Macedonia, Albania i Romania	124	5,0
	Total	2480	100,0		Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia	153	6,2
<b>Education</b>	Primary school education or lower	31	1,2		Ukraine and Belarus	137	5,5
	High School	567	22,9		Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary	116	4,7
	Coledge	649	26,2	Skandinavia	69	2,8	
	Faculty and senior levels	1205	48,6	United Kingdom	87	3,5	
	No answer	29	1,2	Total	2480	100,0	
	Total	2480	100,0	<b>The method of travel arrangements</b>	Through a travel agency, tour operators	652	31,5
<b>The total cost of travel per person in €</b>	<= 500	1125	63,7		Directly with the accommodation facility in	1132	54,7
	501 - 1000	423	24,0		Through local tourism organizations (in Montenegro)	25	1,2
	1001 - 1500	126	7,1		Otherwise	230	11,1
	1501+	91	5,2		No answer	32	1,5
	Total	1765	100,0		Total	2070	100,0
<b>Lack of data</b>		715		<b>Lack of data</b>		410	
<b>Total</b>		2480		<b>Total</b>		2480	

Source: Guest Survey 2014 -Attitudes and expenditures of tourists in Montenegro, National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, Podgorica, 2014.

The average respondent in the sample is mainly (nearly or over 50%) women, younger age to 35 years, with college and faculty education level, comes from Russia and Serbia, reserve

accommodation directly with the accommodation facility and spent on travel per person up to 500 €.

**Table 2 The age in relation to the satisfaction with selected elements of the tourist product of Montenegro**

<b>ANOVA</b>						
<b><i>Selected elements of the tourist product (the dependent variable)</i></b>		<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b><i>The beauty of nature and landscape</i></b>	Between Groups	21,777	4	5,444	1,824	,121
	Within Groups	7385,583	2475	2,984		
	Total	7407,359	2479			
<b><i>The picturesque and arrangement of destination</i></b>	Between Groups	27,384	4	6,846	1,454	,214
	Within Groups	11651,118	2475	4,708		
	Total	11678,502	2479			
<b><i>Environmental preservation</i></b>	Between Groups	32,509	4	8,127	1,568	,180
	Within Groups	12827,093	2475	5,183		
	Total	12859,603	2479			
<b><i>Quality of marking tourist attractions</i></b>	Between Groups	123,917	4	30,979	4,095	,003
	Within Groups	18723,449	2475	7,565		
	Total	18847,366	2479			
<b><i>Diversity of cultural events</i></b>	Between Groups	144,622	4	36,156	4,349	,002
	Within Groups	20574,497	2475	8,313		
	Total	20719,120	2479			
<b><i>Excursions</i></b>	Between Groups	67,873	4	16,968	1,803	,126
	Within Groups	23295,754	2475	9,412		
	Total	23363,627	2479			
<b><i>Overall stay satisfaction</i></b>	Between Groups	43,591	4	10,898	1,920	,104
	Within Groups	14045,003	2475	5,675		
	Total	14088,594	2479			

Source: 1. Guest Survey 2014 -Attitudes and expenditures of tourists in Montenegro, National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, Podgorica, 2014.

2. Own processing

Age groups showed statistically significant differences for the elements of the tourist product such as quality of marking tourist attractions and a diversity of cultural events, with a value of eta square of 0,007 for both variables representing a small effect. No statistically significant differences were found for the other elements of tourist product. The level of satisfaction with a statistically significant elements of the tourist product was determined in the range of 2,46 to 3,24.

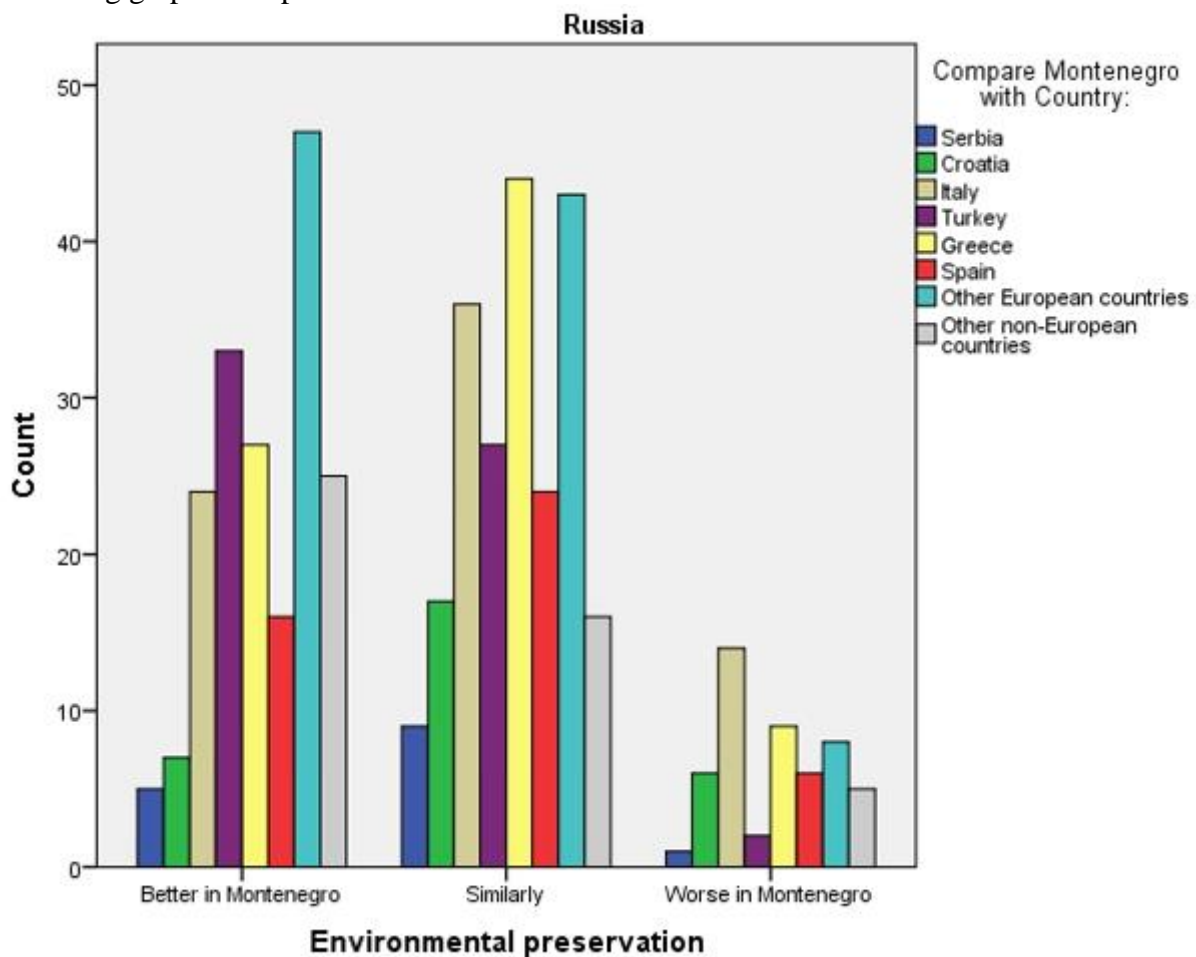
**Table 3 Gender in relation to the satisfaction with selected elements of the tourist product of Montenegro**

<b>Independent Samples Test</b>								
<b>Selected elements of the tourist product (the dependent variable)</b>		<b>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</b>		<b>t-test for Equality of Means</b>				
		<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>Std. Error Difference</b>
<b>The beauty of nature and landscape</b>	Equal variances assumed	10,507	,001	2,700	2478	,007	,188	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			2,665	2238,650	,008	,188	,000
<b>The picturesque and arrangement of destination</b>	Equal variances assumed	9,472	,002	1,726	2478	,085	,151	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			1,713	2340,588	,087	,151	,000
<b>Environmental preservation</b>	Equal variances assumed	,010	,919	1,342	2478	,180	,123	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			1,341	2424,786	,180	,123	,000
<b>Quality of marking tourist attractions</b>	Equal variances assumed	3,364	,067	1,625	2478	,104	,180	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			1,622	2420,266	,105	,180	,000
<b>Diversity of cultural events</b>	Equal variances assumed	6,802	,009	1,847	2478	,065	,215	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			1,843	2413,075	,065	,215	,000
<b>Excursions</b>	Equal variances assumed	16,120	,000	2,071	2478	,038	,256	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			2,065	2402,161	,039	,256	,000
<b>Overall stay satisfaction</b>	Equal variances assumed	6,430	,011	1,937	2478	,053	,186	,000
	Equal variances not assumed			1,929	2384,930	,054	,186	,000

Source: 1. Guest Survey 2014 -Attitudes and expenditures of tourists in Montenegro, National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, Podgorica, 2014; 2. Own processing

By gender statistically significant differences were found in the beauty of nature and landscape and excursions, with the value of eta 0,003 square meters and 0,002 which means small influence. There is no evidence of a statistically significant difference between groups relating the other elements of tourist product. Women express higher levels of satisfaction regarding the beauty of nature and and landscape, and men a higher level of dissatisfaction regarding excursions.

Results of cross tabulation regarding positioning destination Montenegro were given in the following graphical representations.

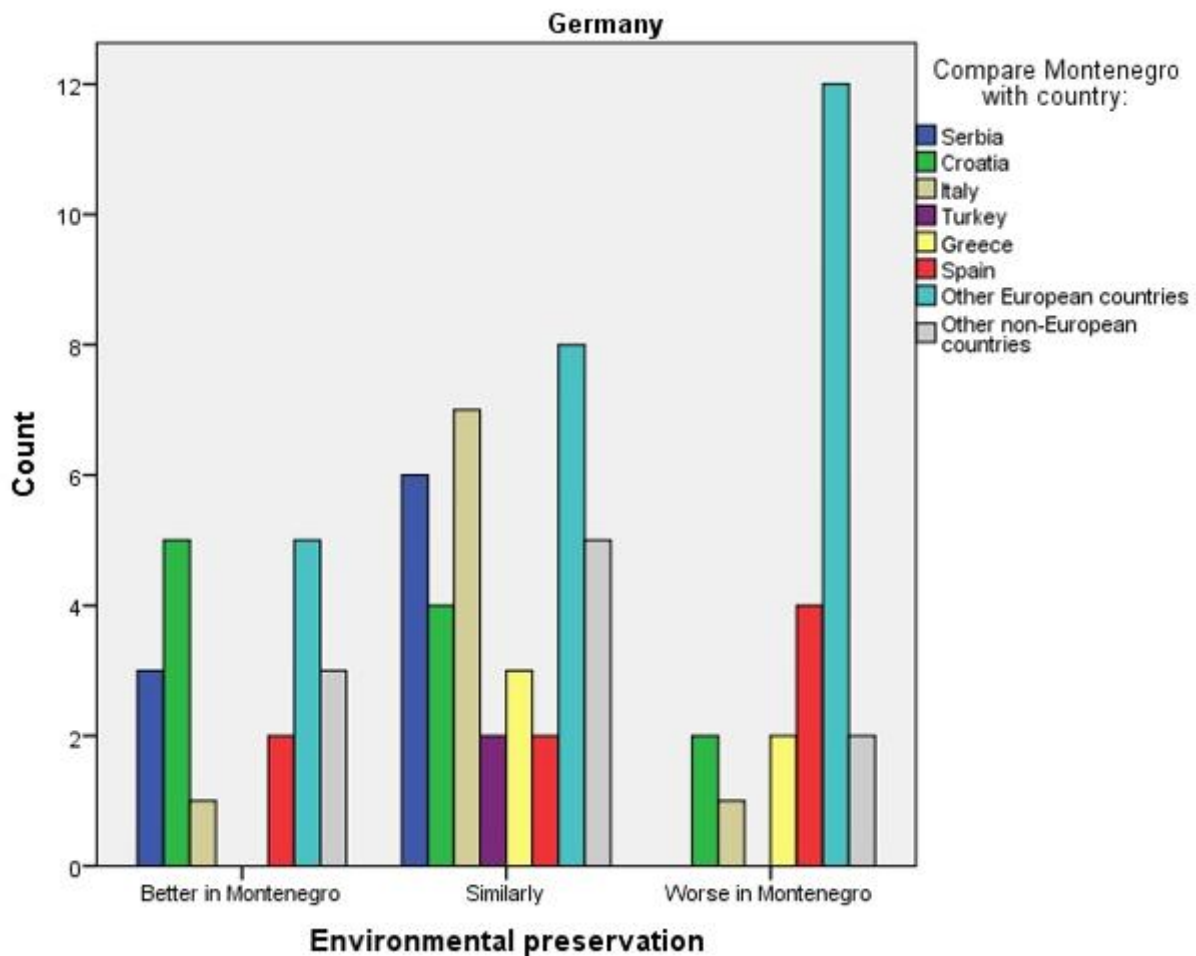


**Figure 1 The positioning of Montenegro on the Russian source market**

Source: 1. Guest Survey 2014 - Attitudes and expenditures of tourists in Montenegro, National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, Podgorica, 2014; 2. Own processing

Tourists from Russia best positioned Montenegro in comparison with other European countries, and most similar with a slightly lower intensity compared to Greece. Worse

positioning is in extremely small intensity.



**Figure 2 The positioning of Montenegro on the source market Germany**

Source: 1. Guest Survey 2014 - Attitudes and expenditures of tourists in Montenegro, National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro, Podgorica, 2014; 2. Own processing

Tourists from Germany positioned Montenegro as worse in comparison with other countries, and similarly with significantly lower intensity in comparison to other European countries, too. Better positioning is extremely in small intensity.

### 3. Discussion and conclusion

Considering the results in researching the opportunities in the implementation of the marketing concept of sustainable tourism in Montenegro we can see greater inconsistency than consistency with similar previous findings and that fact could be explained in the literature (Boley & Nickerson, 2013) on sustainable tourism that is not unusual to determine contradictory information regarding socio-demographic variables. Or there are in research regarding sustainable tourism common facts that some variables are and some are not significant. Comparing the influence of the independent variables on the level of satisfaction of selected elements of the tourist product of Montenegro, it is possible to argue the following.

Significant differences in relation to the almost all (85,71%) or a larger number (57,14 to 71,43%) of selected elements of the tourist product were reported in the independent variables such as educational status, country of origin and method of travel organization which is the only consistent within terms of country of origin with research regarding segmentation of geotourists (Boley & Nickerson, 2013). Significant differences were not reported in relation to the large number (57,14 to 71,43%) of selected elements of the tourism product in the independent variables such as age, gender and overall travel costs per person which is the only consistent when it comes to gender, the research regarding segmentation of wine tourists (Nella & Christou, 2014) when it comes to age with research regarding segmentation of geotourists (Boley & Nickerson, 2013).

According to all the other independent variables was not found consistency, but on the contrary, results were contradictory to findings in previous studies that found significant differences in the variables of age, income (total cost of travel per person) and have not found differences in the variables of the country of origin and education (Nella & Christou, 2014), and were found differences in the variables of gender and income (total cost of travel per person) and that are not found differences in the variables of education (Boley & Nickerson, 2013).

Assessing the positioning of destinations Montenegro in comparison with other destinations by country of origin of the respondents, it is possible to formulate the following observations. About environmental preservation in Montenegro, tourists from Russia and Serbia have a positive position compared to other European countries and Greece, and tourists from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Germany had a negative position in comparison with the Croatian and other European countries. Tourists from United Kingdom neutrally positioned environmental preservation compared with other European countries and Italy.

Montenegro is clearly positively positioned on two most important source markets (Russia and Serbia) as an eco destination which can be considered as a good result of the strategy of profiling image and positioning tourist destination. Negative and neutral positioning suggests or higher level of environmental awareness concerning the survey respondents and realistic lower level of environmental preservation in relation to the competition or to lower environmental performance of destinations which can be a question for future research.

Based on these implications it could be concluded that Montenegro is not clearly perceived as a destination that has a differentiated sustainable tourism product in the required forms and in the expected locations suggesting the extra effort in the design and place of integrated environmental messages through the chosen promotional mix. There is a need for a more precise segmentation of the group of tourists who have specific preferences for sustainable tourism products such as eco, rural and geo tourism, and in particular special interest groups such as birdwatchers, segment hiking and biking, tourists looking for different adrenaline adventures (rafting, paragliding, climbing, diving, etc..) and original experiences of cultural and historical heritage (the revival of historical events and sites, dark tourism, etc.) (Lacmanović, 2014). Using the strategy of differentiation of the tourism product it is necessary, in certain locations, noticeable by the sustainable tourism product, make adjustments, or significant innovation components of tourist product that tourists express a higher level of sensitivity. Sustainable tourism destination can be a long-term hold on the market provided that the establishment of adequate marketing concept that successfully meet the wishes and needs of tourism customers, achieved profitability of the tourism sector and benefits for the local community in a way that is more efficient and effective than the competition. The concept of societal marketing or socially responsible marketing (Kotler, et al., 2010) provides a high level of compliance in the work of tourism operators in the area of



sustainable tourism and is an appropriate framework for marketing management. In the future, tourism marketing will be considered from several aspects: the tourists as co-creators of value, competitors as potential partners, and marketers as moderators of learning about ourselves (Li & Petrick, 2008).

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