

# Who spends more: sport-active versus active tourists

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## Abstract

This study empirically investigated the influences of gender, age and educational level on the main motive for travel, which then explored the relationship of these influences to travel spending. Furthermore, sports-active tourists were compared with other tourists who are interested in active travel. Active traveling, in this present study, includes tourists with other main motives of traveling, but not those whose main motive is “rest and relaxation”. Slovenian tourists traveling within Slovenia and those traveling abroad were compared. We found that men, younger tourists and better educated tourists mainly choose sports related travel. Further research explains the influences of the main motives for travel spending and revealed who tends to spend more between sports-active tourists and other active tourists. For a potential sports-tourism destination is it vital to know the presented data. The implications of the results are discussed in the context of sport tourism marketing.

Key words: sport tourism, active tourists, travel expenses, sports tourism marketing

## 1 The role of socio-demographic characteristics of tourists

Every tourism destination should be interested in the type of tourism offer and specialization of tourism products which, from the tourism destination, will derive as much as possible, especially when talking about income, employment opportunities, investments and other positive direct and indirect tourism effects. As income increases, the demand for tourism is also likely to increase (Ryan, 1991). Sometimes niche tourism offers will characterize destinations (e.g. ski resort, sea resort), thus creating its competitive advantage (Juvan & Ovsenik, 2008).

Slovenia is a tourism destination with no specifically defined priorities in tourism. The Slovenian Tourism Strategy has no clearly defined type of tourism which the country wants to develop and promote. Which type of tourism destination does Slovenia want to be mostly recognized as? Buhalis warned as early as 1999 that the destination is forced to develop tourism which then evolves into mass tourism as planners either failed to limit development or to implement plans against politicians, industry and developers. However, it is still the case that as of 2012, Slovenia has no clear tourism image.

Furthermore, a tourism destination needs to know the push and pull factors of tourists (Dann, 1981) when preparing a general or specific tourism strategy for a tourism product. On the other hand, factors affecting the decision to go on holiday are composed of different socio-demographic characteristics including different income levels, household size, education, size of the city of origin and opinion regarding going on holiday (Nicolau & Mas, 2005). Many authors have analyzed the socio-demographic characteristics of different types of tourists or rather, tourists with different motives for traveling. Ryan (2003) even affirmed that there is a link between income and motivation for traveling; when material needs are satisfied, experiential needs become important. Nevertheless, successful tourism management and planning will increasingly need to identify the factors changing demand trends (Buhalis,

2001). In other words, the question is whether the age, level of education and gender of a tourist has any effect on choosing the travel activity, which could be sport or any other tourism activity (shopping, culture events, etc.). Collin and Tisdell (2002) found that gender has a major influence on travel demand. They discovered that men tend to travel more often than women for business and work-related travel, but women travel more often for leisure purposes, including traveling to visit friends and relatives. Pizam and Fleischer (2005) added that individuals from masculine cultures preferred more dynamic and sport-active tourist activities than those coming from feminine cultures. Sport-active tourism undoubtedly is one of the types of tourism where experience comes to the front. Gibson (1998) established that a typical sports active tourist is highly educated, male, aged between 25 and 34 with an above-average income. On the other hand in the perception of a typical 'culture' tourist, Slak Valek, Kolar, Jurak and Bednarik (2005) found that a Slovenian 'culture' tourist (which is an individual whose main motive for traveling is to visit museums, churches and other cultural amenities) is older, more educated and spends more than the average Slovenian tourist.

Many socio-demographic characteristics undoubtedly affect the decision to travel, but none as much as household income (Agarwal & Yochum, 1999; Fleischer & Pizam, 2002; Cannon & Ford, 2002; Ryan, 2003; Hennessey, Macdonald & Maceachern, 2008). Household income is undoubtedly important when choosing a tourism destination. As assumed, the level of household income is not the only factor which shows what people are prepared to spend. Many individuals have a wish that one day they will travel to some specific place for a specific activity. People with low income have travel wishes, too. For example a fan of the Ajax football team living in China would save money for as long as it takes to one day travel to the Netherlands to visit the Ajax stadium. This is a tourism activity that has a strong motivation even to the individual who does not have a high household income.

From this point of view, the question is how much are people prepared to spend while travelling for a specific reason and an activity to satisfy the push fac-

tor. Cannon and Ford (2002) affirmed that the only significant variable related to the increased spending per day among sport event visitors is high income levels and the fact that the visitor was from out-of-state. Education level, marital status, and ethnicity were not significant factors in explaining visitor expenditures. Of course, many authors analyzed the role of household income as the main socio-demographic characteristic and found that greater levels of income are associated with the greater probability of going on a holiday (Nicolau and Mas, 2005). Davies and Mangan (1992) and Cai (1999) added that household income, among other socio-demographic characteristics, has a great effect on the type of travel activity.

It is generally understood that the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics influence the demand of tourists and that many tourism destinations target those with higher household incomes. On the other hand the aim of a tourism economy is not only to attract those tourists with a high household income, but to also convince tourists to spend more on the activity of interest.

Our study question was to see if the demographic characteristics affect the motive for traveling and if the motive for travel affects the amount of money spent while traveling. Past research did reveal some findings. Thrane (2002) studied tourists with the main motive for travel was to assist a jazz festival where the length of stay, respondents' geographical location, household income and household size were found to affect the personal expenditures during the festival. Cai (1998) investigated the relationship between household socio-demographic characteristics and vacation food expenditures. Mills, Couturier & Snepenger (1986) were interested in how money spent by Texas skiers was differentiated by socio-demographic characteristics where the results segmented skiers into two groups, heavy and light spenders, showing differences in spending through the same motivation for travel. People with a low household income are skiers as well, and need to satisfy their motivation for travel. This finding is very important for sports tourism destinations which need to attract skiers with higher and lower incomes.

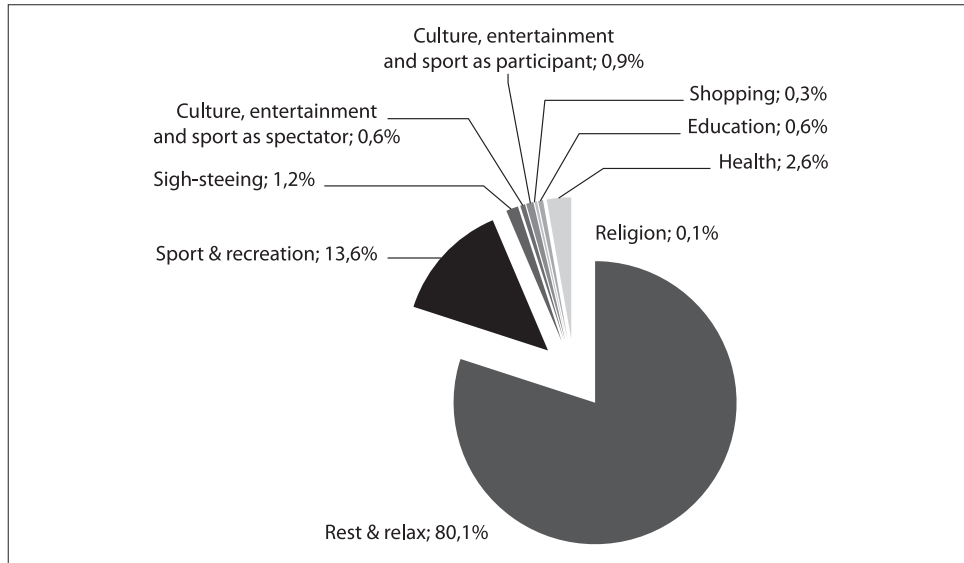
We were interested in active Slovenian tourists and their socio-demographic characteristics and travel spending habits. Several studies support socio-demographic determinants to have an effect on activity, participation and travel behavior (Saayman & Saayman, 2009) and the socio-demographic characteristics (Nicolau & Mas, 2005; Lehto, Cai, O'Leary & Huan, 2004; Thrane, 2002) undoubtedly affect spending during travel. Our research was focused on active travel only and excluded those tourists who are completely non-active on vacation.

## 2 Passive and active tourists

Even passive travel does not exist by definition (all tourists are active due to travelling), in the present study tourists traveling mostly with the main motive for "rest and relaxation" were defined as passive tourists. Those tourists are called "sea, sun and sand" tourists in most literature, and their main activity is taking sun on the beach or relaxing in spas and health resorts. Data presented by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS), is collected to ensure the distribution of Slovenian tourists by their main motivations for travel which are as follows: rest & relaxation; sport & recreation; sight-seeing; culture, entertainment & sport as spectator; culture, entertainment & sport as participant (non-professional), shopping, educational reasons, health reasons, going on a pilgrimage, other. As can be seen, all mentioned motives of travel demand an activity to satisfy the motivation, except the motive for "rest and relax". Tourists with the main motivation to travel being rest and relaxation mainly travel due to a habit behavior, but without a specific desired activity. This is why they were defined as passive tourists.

In Figures 1 and 2, the market share by motives of travel of Slovenian tourists traveling in Slovenia and abroad is shown. We find the biggest market share belongs to passive tourists. Since our study is focused on active tourists only, the passive tourists were excluded (see methodology chapter).

**Picture 1:** Market shares of main motive for traveling of Slovenian tourists traveling in Slovenia

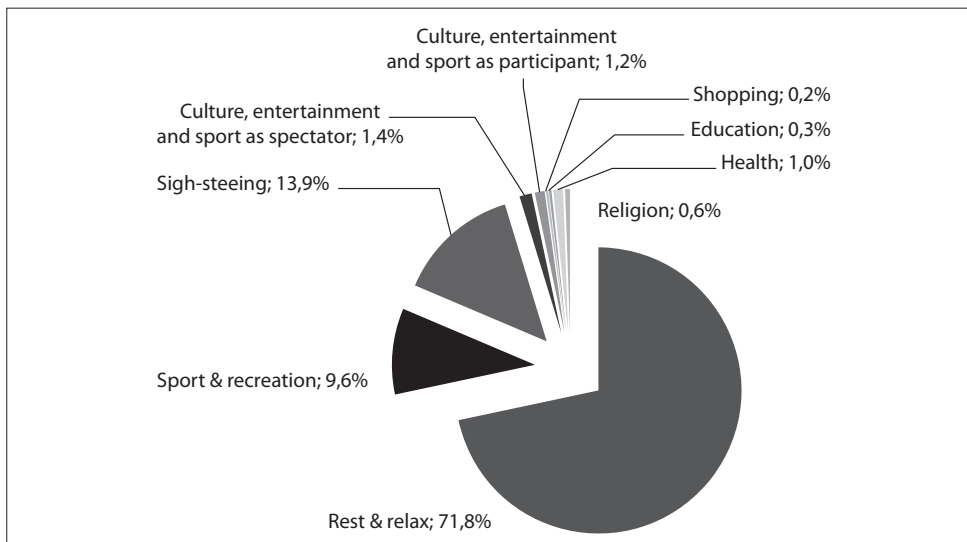


Source: SORS, 2008

According to Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert & Wanhill (1999), typology is a method of sociological research which investigates and classifies tourists by different characteristics, in particular, motivation or behaviors.

Cooper et al. (1999) claimed that a definition of type of tourists represents the foundation for the adjustment of products, which exerts a significant influence on the ways in which tourist needs are satisfied. Although a

**Picture 2:** Market shares of main motive for traveling of Slovenian tourists traveling abroad



Source: SORS, 2008

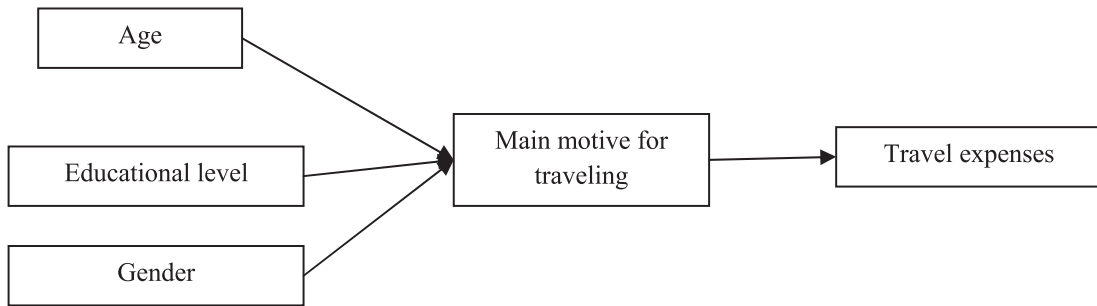
large proportion of vacations are spent on international trips especially during the summer season, several other types of tourism demands emerged (Buhalis, 2001). For this reason it is important to know the preference of active tourists, tourist trips focused on an activity.

Passive and active tourists have been researched in the past by many authors. Dardis, Soberon-Ferrer & Patro (1994) described three categories of leisure activities: active leisure, passive leisure, and social entertainment. Before Gibson (1998), sport tourism was divided into active and passive. Gibson (1998) however, suggests there are three main types of sport tourism which include; sport-active tourists, nostalgia sport tourists and event sport tourists. From our point of view the need to divide tourists into passive and active generally exists in tourism. Active tourism is mainly used in articles on sport tourism (Gibson, 2003, 2004; Gibson, Attle & Yiannakis, 1998; Kurtzman & Zauhar, 1993; and many other), but there is a need to distinguish between active versus passive tourism activities (De Knop, 1987; Pizam & Fleischer, 2005). Passive tourists prefer vacationing in places near the sea with a lot of sun (De Knop, 1987), 3S or 4S tourists (sea, sun, sand, sex), or relaxing in wellness centers. On the other hand, an active tourist is not an individual who likes sport activities only, but may also be interested in other activities such as a cultural or religious activity, visiting nature attractions and other types of active participation. In the end, creative tourism depends far more on the active involvement of tourists (Richards & Wilson, 2006). Buhalis (in Wahab & Cooper, 2001) even explained that 4S tourists spent more on international trips, especially when people from cooler climates visit warmer destinations to enjoy resorts, but tourists who tend to concentrate on sport and educational activities, hobbies and visiting cultural attractions spend their short-term breaks traveling in their country of origin. Our study analyzes both active tourists traveling in their own country of origin and tourists traveling abroad with active motivation for traveling. Active tourists are more interesting in terms of spending, if comparing them with passive tourists. Theobald (2005) recommended that tourism consumption expenditures be identified

by a system of three main categories: travel purpose, travel destination and travel conclusions. From the data of Slak Valek (2008), 70% of Slovenian tourists travel with the main motive for traveling being "relaxation and rest", which as a matter of fact means they do not spend more money than planned. This kind of tourist prefers relaxing on the beach without any involvement in an activity. However, the important number is 70-80% of tourists are non-active tourists, which is a big loss for the Slovenian tourism economy. Based on the assumption that active tourism participation has a higher economic impact on tourism than passive leisure tourism, the tourism industry should focus on attracting active tourists. This activity could be sport, culture, wellness, and/or religion. Due to a deep interest in sport activity, we were interested in finding a type of tourist who spends more – sport active tourists or tourists with other main motives for traveling that led to an additional activity.

Most authors (Gibson, 1998; Higham & Hinch, 2002; Hudson, 2003) dealt with sports tourism from the aspect of the consumer or tourists. Amongst Germans, the average active sports tourist spent 7.5 nights and 580 Euros on his or her holidays. The Dutch spent 11.6 nights and 592 Euros. The average sport active tourist spent 9.4 nights and the most money (UN WTO and IOC 2001). This type of data is very important for preparing plans and strategies to develop sport tourism in any country. Results from Slak Valek (2008) showed that Slovenian sport tourists spent 35 EUR per day in 2003, which is more than the average spending per day of Slovenian tourists. Actually, 70% of Slovenian tourists could be active. While sports play an important role in Slovenia as shown by various studies, both domestically (Petrovič, Ambrožič, Sila & Doupona Topič, 1999; Kovač et al., 2004) and internationally (European commission, 2004, 2009), we are convinced that sports activities are becoming an even more interesting tourism product for attracting Slovenian tourists. The aim of sport tourism marketing should be to persuade a part of the 70-80% of passive tourists to become sport-active tourists. On the other hand, other tourism products are fighting for the same market share.

Fig. 1: Research model



Source: Author's own compilation

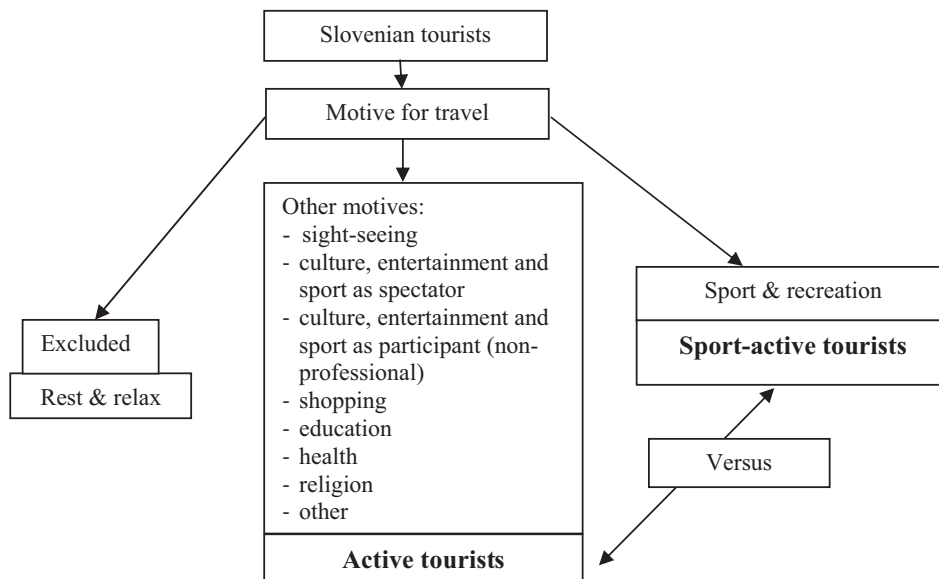
### 3 Method, data, hypothesis and model of work

Our research methodology was based on quantitative survey data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS). The target populations were Slovenian citizens (aged 15 and above). The data were collected throughout the year 2008.

The sampling frame was the directory of private telephone subscribers in Slovenia. The sample was stratified systematically. Strata were defined with statistical region (12 regions) and type of settlement within the region (6 types). Each stratum was independently sampled.

We received two databases of travelers - the first database of Slovenian traveling to Slovenia (domestic tourists) and the second database with the data of Slovenian travelers abroad.

Fig. 2: Sample frame



Source: Author's own compilation

SORS also prepared the necessary weights, according to the population data. In total we received data from 2,346 respondents traveling to Slovenia and 2,282 respondents traveling abroad. After weighing, the obtained data represents 1,795,535 trips made by Slovenians within Slovenia and 1,937,304 trips made by Slovenians abroad in the year 2008. In Figure 1 the research model to the theoretical background is presented accordingly.

Research hypothesis are as follows:

- H1: Socio-demographic determinants influence the main motive for traveling (sports activity versus non-sport activity).
- H2: Main motive for traveling influences travel expenses.

Data preparation and transformation is presented first followed by testing the research hypothesis. All the data was weighed according to weights and methodological implications<sup>1</sup> prepared by SORS. According to the methodological implications and limitations, we were able to conduct bivariate analysis only for testing the research hypothesis. This is why t-test and analysis of variance were used.

The sample is shown in Figure 2. Differences between sport-active tourists and active tourists were analyzed. All tourists with the main motivation for traveling for “rest and relaxation” were excluded. Non-active tourists represent 80.2% of all valid travel in Slovenia and 71.8% of all valid travel abroad. After the exclusion of passive tourists the weighed data represents 291,982 Slovenian domestic trips and 448,059 trips Slovenians made abroad in the year 2008.

In the present paper, “sport-active tourists” represent those with “sport & recreation” being their main motive for traveling, and “active tourists” are those who traveled with all other active motives and activities

(culture, health, events), but with a non-sport and recreation motive.

### 3. 1 Demographic data

The demographic data of the population is presented in Table 1, according to their gender, educational level and age.

The distribution of the highest education level of interviewees is found as follows. The possible answers were: no school education, 1-3 years of school completed; no school education, 4-7 years of school completed; elementary school; 2 years secondary education; 3 years secondary education; 4 years secondary education; 2 years college education; 3 years college education; university education; postgraduate education. The mentioned categories were transformed into 3 groups: completed elementary school or less and completed 2 year high school education; completed 3 or 4 year high school education; completed college, university or postgraduate education.

The age of respondents was obtained by subtracting the obtained variable (the year the interviewee was born) from the year 2008 (when the interviews were taken). The youngest interviewee was aged 15 and the oldest was 89 years. The data was grouped in 3 groups: aged between 15 and 34 years, aged between 35 and 54 years and aged above 55 years.

Of all those who did any kind of active traveling within Slovenia in 2008, 57.8% of voyages were made by males and 42.2% were made by females. Outside of Slovenia, 54.4% of voyages were made by males and 45.6% of voyages were made by females. All the data is representative for Slovenian travelers in 2008.

45.3% of trips to Slovenia made by Slovenians who did or did not complete elementary school or 2 years of high school, 30.5% trips made by Slovenians who have completed 3 or 4 years of high school education and 24.2% of trips made by Slovenians who have completed college, university or postgraduate studies represented the sample. Travel outside of Slovenia by individuals with lower education (non-completion of elementary school or completed elementary school and completed

<sup>1</sup> The methodological implications of the obtained data are shown in the representative data. SORS developed the weighing and validation of obtained data. If there are between 0 and 12 units in each cell for non-weighted data is not possible to present representative data. In tables no.1 – no.6 this data is presented with the sign -. If there are between 12 and 75 units in each cell for non-weighted data, we have to report limited representativeness of the obtained data. In tables no.1 – no.6 this data is presented with the sign M. If there are more than 75 units in each cell for non-weighted data we assumed that the obtained results are representative for the Slovenian population.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the population according to the demographic data

| Variable   | Trips made within Slovenia | Trips made abroad |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>  |                            |                   |
| Male   | 57,8%                      | 54,4%             |
| Female   | 42,2%                      | 45,6%             |
| <b>Level of Education</b>                                |                            |                   |
| Elementary school or less, 2 years high school education | 45,3%                      | 33,6%             |
| 3 or 4 years of high school education                    | 30,5%                      | 33,3%             |
| College, university, postgraduate degree                 | 24,2%                      | 33,1%             |
| <b>Age</b>   |                            |                   |
| 15-34 years  | 39,1%                      | 43,9%             |
| 35-54 years  | 35,2%                      | 34,7%             |
| Above 55 years   | 25,8%                      | 21,4%             |

2 years high school) were at 33.6% , while 33.3% of trips taken by Slovenians who had completed 3 or 4 years of high school education and 33.1% of trips taken by Slovenians who had completed college, university or postgraduate education. All the data are representative for Slovenian travelers in 2008.

Among the trips Slovenians made within Slovenia in 2008 there were 39.1% of trips taken by Slovenians aged between 15 and 34 years of age, 35.2% of trips were taken by Slovenians aged between 35 and 54 years of age and 25.8% of trips were taken by Slovenians above 55 years of age. 43.9% of trips taken outside Slovenia were taken by Slovenians aged between 15 and 34 years of age, 34.7% were taken by Slovenians aged between 35 and 54 years and 21.4% of trips taken were done so by Slovenians aged above 55 years. All the data are representative for Slovenian travelers in 2008.

### 3. 2 Main motive for travel

The interviewees were asked to provide data about their primary motivation for travel. The variables have been recoded into a dummy variable where 1 means sport-active tourists and 2 means active tourists.

68.7% of trips taken by Slovenians within Slovenia were sport-active trips, while 31.3% were active trips within Slovenia. The reverse situation is found between trips taken outside Slovenia: 34.2% of trips were sport-active, while 65.8% of trips were active. All the data are representative for Slovenian travelers in 2008.

### 3. 3 Spending while traveling

Spending on travel is the dependent variable in our research model. The amount of money spent on travel

**Table 2:** Main motive for traveling by highest level of education for the trips made to Slovenia

|                                   |   |                               | Motive for traveling |         | Total  |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------|
|                                   |   |                               | Sport-active         | Active  |        |
| Highest level of education        | Elementary or less, 2 years high school | Count                         | 80716 M              | 51440 M | 132156 |
|                                   |   | % within motive for traveling | 40,2%                | 56,3%   | 45,3%  |
| 3 or 4 years high school          | Count                                   | 65990                         | 23058 M              | 89048   |        |
|                                   |   | % within motive for traveling | 32,9%                | 25,3%   | 30,5%  |
| College, university, postgraduate | Count                                   | 53960                         | 16818 M              | 70778   |        |
|                                   |   | % within motive for traveling | 26,9%                | 18,4%   | 24,2%  |
| Total                             |   | Count                         | 200666               | 91316   | 291982 |
|                                   |   | % within motive for traveling | 100,0%               | 100,0%  | 100,0% |

Source: SORS, 2008



**Table 3:** Main motive for traveling by highest level of education for the trips made outside Slovenia

| Highest level of education |   |                               | Motive for traveling |        |        |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------|--------|
|                            |   |                               | Sport-active         | Active | Total  |
|                            | Elementary or less, 2 years high school | Count                         | 53005 M              | 97528  | 150533 |
|                            |   | % within motive for traveling | 34,6% M              | 33,1%  | 33,6%  |
|                            | 3 or 4 years high school                | Count                         | 52896 M              | 96530  | 149426 |
|                            |   | % within motive for traveling | 34,5% M              | 32,7%  | 33,3%  |
|                            | College, university, postgraduate       | Count                         | 47217                | 100882 | 148099 |
|                            |   | % within motive for traveling | 30,8%                | 34,2%  | 33,1%  |
| Total                      | Count                                   | 153118                        | 294940               | 448058 |        |
|                            | % within motive for traveling           | 100,0%                        | 100,0%               | 100,0% |        |

Source: SORS, 2008

per person per day in Euros was calculated (€/person/day). On average, active Slovenian tourists (both: sport-active and active tourists) spent 44.72 €/person/day for their trip within Slovenia. The minimum amount spent was 4.17 €/person/day, while the maximum was 200 €/person/day. The average amount spent outside the country was 57.8 €/person/day. The minimum amount spent was 1.43 € and the maximum was 500 € per person per day.

## 4 Results

The two hypotheses were tested and the results are as follows.

### 4. 1 The influence of socio-demographic characteristics on the main motive for traveling

Hypothesis 1 was tested by using a t-test (in the case of gender) and analysis of variance (in the case of highest level of education and age). The results are shown in Table 2.

The analysis of variance showed that the influence of the highest level of education on the main motive for travel to Slovenia is statistically significant at the null level ( $p=0.000$ ;  $F=3,405,505$ ). In Table 2 it can be seen that there are more active trips by domestic tourists with a lower level of education (having not completed or completed elementary school and completed 2 years of high school education) and sport-active tourists

**Table 4:** Main motive for traveling by age for the trips made to Slovenia

| Age in groups |                               |                               | motive for traveling |         |        |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------|
|               |                               |                               | Sport-active         | Active  | Total  |
| Age in groups | 15-34                         | Count                         | 79139 M              | 34911 M | 114050 |
|               |                               | % within motive for traveling | 39,4% M              | 38,2% M | 39,1%  |
|               | 35-54                         | Count                         | 78067                | 24589 M | 102656 |
|               |                               | % within motive for traveling | 38,9%                | 26,9% M | 35,2%  |
|               | 55 and above                  | Count                         | 43460                | 31816 M | 75276  |
|               |                               | % within motive for traveling | 21,7%                | 34,8% M | 25,8%  |
| Total         | Count                         | 200666                        | 91316                | 291982  |        |
|               | % within motive for traveling | 100,0%                        | 100,0%               | 100,0%  |        |

Source: SORS, 2008

**Table 5:** Main motive for traveling by age for the trips made outside Slovenia

|               |                               | Motive for traveling          |              |        |        |
|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------|--------|
|               |                               |                               | Sport-active | Active | Total  |
| Age in groups | 15-34                         | Count                         | 78471 M      | 118369 | 196840 |
|               |                               | % within motive for traveling | 51,2% M      | 40,1%  | 43,9%  |
|               | 35-54                         | Count                         | 52520 M      | 102955 | 155475 |
|               |                               | % within motive for traveling | 34,3% M      | 34,9%  | 34,7%  |
|               | 55 and above                  | Count                         | 22127 M      | 73617  | 95744  |
|               |                               | % within motive for traveling | 14,5% M      | 25,0%  | 21,4%  |
| Total         | Count                         | 153118                        | 294941       | 448059 |        |
|               | % within motive for traveling | 100,0%                        | 100,0%       | 100,0% |        |

Source: SORS, 2008

traveling in Slovenia with higher education (completed college, university or postgraduate studies) took more sport-active trips to Slovenia. The results are less representative.

The analysis of variance showed a statistically significant ( $p=0.000$ ;  $F=259.154$ ) influence of the highest educational level on the main motive for travel for trips made abroad. Table 3 shows more sport-active foreign trips made by tourists with a higher level of education than by tourists with a lower level of education. The results are less representative.

Using analysis of variance we found out a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.000$ ;  $F=3,489.020$ ) of age to the main motive for traveling. More sport active trips were made by younger individuals (aged between 15 and 34) and older individuals (aged above 55 years) Slovenians within Slovenia than by those aged between 35 and 54 years. The results are less representative.

Age has a statistically significant ( $p=0.000$ ;  $F=4,105.005$ ) influence on the main motive for traveling

for Slovenians who traveled abroad. More sport-active trips were made by younger individuals (aged between 15 and 34) and older (aged above 55 years) Slovenians outside Slovenia than by those aged between 35 and 54 years. The results are less representative.

The influence of gender on the main motive for travel was tested with a t-test. The difference was found as a statistically significant ( $p=0.000$ ;  $t=-70.99$ ). More sport-active trips to Slovenia were taken by males than females. The results are less representative.

A t-test analysis showed a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.000$ ;  $t=-89.149$ ) of gender on the main motive for trips made abroad. More sport-active trips outside Slovenia were taken by males than females. The results are representative for the Slovenian population.

**Table 6:** Main motive for traveling by age for the trips made to Slovenia

|        |                               | Motive for traveling          |              |         |        |
|--------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------|--------|
|        |                               |                               | Sport-active | Active  | Total  |
| Gender | Male                          | Count                         | 124919       | 43974 M | 168893 |
|        |                               | % within motive for traveling | 62,3%        | 48,2% M | 57,8%  |
|        | Female                        | Count                         | 75747        | 47341 M | 123088 |
|        |                               | % within motive for traveling | 37,7%        | 51,8% M | 42,2%  |
| Total  | Count                         | 200666                        | 91315        | 291981  |        |
|        | % within motive for traveling | 100,0%                        | 100,0%       | 100,0%  |        |

Source: SORS, 2008

**Table 7:** Main motive for traveling by age for the trips made outside Slovenia

|        |        | Motive for traveling          |        |        |        |
|--------|--------|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|        |        | Sport-active                  | Active | Total  |        |
| Gender | Male   | Count                         | 97157  | 146586 | 243743 |
|        |        | % within motive for traveling | 63,5%  | 49,7%  | 54,4%  |
|        | Female | Count                         | 55961  | 148354 | 204315 |
|        |        | % within motive for traveling | 36,5%  | 50,3%  | 45,6%  |
| Total  |        | Count                         | 153118 | 294940 | 448058 |
|        |        | % within motive for traveling | 100,0% | 100,0% | 100,0% |

Source: SORS, 2008

## 4.2 The influence of the main motive for traveling on travel spending

The second hypothesis was tested as well. Our second hypothesis is that the main motive for travel subsequently influences travel spending.

The t-test showed a statistically significant influence of the main motive for traveling on travel spent on domestic trips ( $p=0.000$ ;  $t=-30.598$ ) and for trips made abroad ( $p=0.000$ ;  $t=-209.211$ ). Those who traveled within their own country for sport activities spent on average 43.55 €/person/day, while those who did other tourism activities spent on average 47.29 €/person/day. The tourists traveling abroad spent 71.37 €/person/day for sport-active trips and 107.27 €/person/day for active trips.

## 5 Discussion of the main findings

In the present study, it was found that the influence of age, gender and level of education to be statistically significant on the motive for traveling. The influence was confirmed in both cases; for domestic Slovenian tourists and for Slovenian tourists traveling abroad. Subsequently the main motive for travel was discovered to be an influence on spending while traveling. In fact, the exact motive for travel is very important information that tourism destinations should know about their tourists; tourists choose a certain destination influenced by the image of that destination in order to engage in a concrete activity. Bigné, Sanchez, & Sanchez (2001) confirmed that the image of a desti-

nation influences the tourist's choice processes. A *destination image* is commonly accepted as an important aspect in successful tourism development and destination marketing due to its impact on both the supply and demand aspects of marketing (Tasci & Gartner, 2007). People travel due to the push and pull factors. They are pushed by their internal motives and pulled by external forces of a destination (Dann, 1981; Lam & Hsu, 2005). This is why tourism destinations should be interested in tourist motives and prepare a specific offer for different target groups. Our study also reveals the main motive for traveling as an influence on the amount of money spent while traveling. With this finding it is confirmed that the tourism destination needs to know how much money the tourists is prepared to spend for the appropriate activity. And the emphasis is on "activity". This is why we excluded trips made with the main motive as being "rest & relaxation". People with a concrete motive for traveling (activity) are prepared to spend more for the concrete activity and spending is even higher if the tourism destination has a good image for a concrete activity.

Another interesting finding from the present research is that tourists are prepared to spend more for the same activity in a foreign country. Many authors (Huh & Vogt, 2008; Nicolau, 2008; Hennessey et al., 2008; Ryan, 2003) analyzed the influence of household income when choosing a tourism destination, type of vacations or the main motive for travel. In fact, income has been proven to be highly explicative to tourist behavior (Mergoupis & Steuer, 2003). However, a high income does not always mean a tendency toward higher spending. There are many tourists who do not have a

high income, but they are prepared to save money for a concrete activity or a life-wish as in “one day I will (go) ...”. From the point of view of such a tourist, the important question is how much he or she is prepared to spend for the desired activity.

Results of Letho et al. (2004) indicated that not just the reason for travel, but age and gender are significant factors in influencing the amount of money travelers spend on shopping and the items that they prefer to buy. Letho et al. (2004) and Fleischer and Pizam (2002) found that older people tend to spend more. Gender, age and level of education were found to be important characteristics which also affect the motive for active and sport-active travel in our research. Mieczkowski (1990) wrote that the age of a tourist is one of the most important demographic characteristics that influence the tourism demand. Our finding confirms this, even in a sport-active demand. Men were found to be more sport-active travelers, as a domestic as a foreign tourists. This finding is alarming for sport-tourism destinations, since many past studies have revealed that when it comes to travel, it usually the woman in a family who decides where the holiday will be spent. An IPC magazine survey undertaken as early as in 1984 found that nearly twice as many women as men had the biggest role in influencing the choice of holiday and later (Holloway & Robinson, 2000) studies show that women are mainly responsible for the planning and organizing of holidays. Besides that, when talking about sport related holidays, the evidence suggests that women play a much more important role than was formerly thought in the process of choosing a destination and sport activities for the family. In the research of Doupona (2002) the results showed that women, although deprived of their own sports activities, play a dominant role in forming the sports life pattern of their family. Thus marketing experts should target women in order to better sell sport tourism products. Slak Valek et al. (2008) added that women obviously are a decisive or at least a dominant factor in choosing a tourism destination for sport activity. The significance of this information is that the sport-tourism enterprises and sport-tourism destinations should target women with the aim of acquiring more sports related tourists.

Since trips taken with the idea of rest and relaxation were excluded the results are even more significant. As previous research shows women travelled more often for leisure purposes, including travel to visit friends and relatives (Waters, 1988; Collins & Tisdell, 2002), but men are more active while traveling (Mieczkowski, 1990; Slak Valek, Mihalič & Bednarik, 2008). If we want to develop and push sports-related trips, tourist destinations need to target women.

Not only gender, but the influence of age on the motive for traveling was found to be significant. We found that younger and older tourists tend to be more sport-active, irrespective of traveling abroad or traveling within their country of origin. Those aged between 35 and 54 choose mostly other activities. The explanation could be that nowadays for people around 35 with young children; taking a sport related holiday with young children demands a lot of organization. Over the last few years, there is a tendency among women from EU countries to have their children later in life, the average age for giving birth is moving to after 30 (Eurostat, 2008). Nowadays people between 30 and 50 have young children. An important fact also is that parents are even more protective of their children (Concetta Chiuri & Del Boca, 2008) and the period at which one's children are independent is even longer in Slovenia (Eurostat, 2009). Both facts explained why people between 30 and 50 years old do not have time for themselves and a potential sport activity. However, the problem and the solution could be found right in this point. People should practice sports together with their children and this is why a vacation or travel is needed. Parents and children should spend the vacation together doing sporting activities. This finding is another alarm for sport tourism destinations that need to attract families with young children and keep the demand strong with the education of young generations. In fact there is an interested finding of Nicolau and Mas (2005) who claimed that with younger people there is an increase in holiday spending until they arrive at a threshold age and begin to reduce their spending. This finding, joined with our finding, obviously indicates that tourism destinations need to pay more attention to families with children.

Higher educational levels are associated with greater propensity and more ability to go on holiday (Nicolau & Mas, 2005) and a higher educated tourist tends to be more active while traveling, but tourists with lower levels of education are more passive tourists (Slak Valek, 2008). In the present research passive tourists were excluded due to researching the active tourists only. Is the educational level so important if we exclude “passive” tourists? Our research found more sport-active tourists with higher education and more other-active tourists with lower education, traveling as a domestic or as foreign tourists. Nicolau & Mas (2005) add that people with higher levels of education take a greater number of foreign trips, which is also the reason for higher spending. Even if the passive tourists were excluded in our research, the comparison between different kinds of tourist activities revealed that more highly educated tourists choose sport more often than other tourist activities. More highly educated people are familiar with the positive effects of sports on their life and health and have a higher tendency to educate their children to live a healthy and full social life. On the other hand we found out that many people with a lower level of education did other activities while traveling. The positive point is ‘the activity’, irrespective of the kind of activity, which could be a sport-activity or any other tourism activity (event, culture etc.). But as it seems, people with a lower level of education still do not recognize the importance of sport activities. This is why sport tourism destinations need to target those individuals with lower levels of education, as well, but not with highly educated and complex advertising. They need to find simple, but effective way to promote a sport-active traveling experience for that particular target group.

Since education, age and gender have an influence on the main motive for travel and the motive has an influence on the amount spent while traveling, tourism destinations need to be very attentive to socio-demographic characteristics when targeting tourists. We may conclude that the tourism socio-demographics indirectly affect the amount of money spent on active and sport-active trips. Mok and Iverson (2000) and Kastenholz (2005) found a positive relationship be-

tween age and spending. Other research also confirmed (Cai, 1998, 1999; Kim & Qu, 2003; Dardis et al., 1994) a positive relationship between higher levels of education and greater tourist expenditure. Any kind of activity (culture, sport, spa and other) requires spending, while passive tourists do not spend much with lying on the beach or engaging in other kinds of relaxation. The motive for travel, according to Letho et al. (2004) has a definite impact on expenditure levels. Saayman and Saayman (2009) analyzed the spending in the national park and found that higher spending is associated with people who travel to the park with the main motivation for travel being escape, so as to relax and get away from the normal routine. When Slak Valek (2008) analyzed Slovenian tourists for their main motivation for travel, she found tourists with the intention of taking part in events, culture traveling and education traveling to be the biggest spenders (about 70 € per person per day), while sport active tourists were in the fourth place with an average spending of 30 € per day; but the tourists whose motivation was to »relax« were on the bottom of the scale with a spending of 25 € per person per day.

The interesting findings in our study also include that sport-active tourists spend less than tourists with other main activities. Slak Valek et al. (2005) found that sport-active tourists from Slovenia prefer to pay less for accommodations since they prefer to spend their money on activities. Among other active motives for traveling, we find “shopping”, which is, according to Oh, Cheng, Lehto & O’Leary (2004) a popular tourist activity and is often the most significant expenditure category on vacations and traveling. The results showed that sports tourism activities are not the most expansive activity while traveling and tourists choose even more expansive activities. This confirms that a tourism destination should find a way to attract the other 70% to 80% of passive tourists presented in Figure 1 and 2, before other activity offers attract them. Even we expected an opposite results, but we can confirm hypothesis 2, since the motive for traveling has an influence on the travel spending.

Our conclusion suggests that those tourism destinations which would like to enlarge their market share of sport-active tourists, should consider targeting their

offer to women, tourists aged between 34 and 54 and those with a lower level of education, as well. On the other hand, trips with the main motive for traveling being sport and recreation seem to be more conveni-

ent than other tourist activities. This finding should be treated as a suggestion to entice tourists to become more sport-active, while nowadays a sport related travel experience has still an expansive image.

## Kdo potroši več: športno aktivni ali drugače aktivni turisti?

### Povzetek

V pripravljnem prispevku smo avtorji raziskali vpliv spola, starosti in izobrazbe na glavni motiv potovanja, ki posledično vpliva na potrošnjo med potovanjem. Primerjali smo športno aktivne turiste in turiste, ki so na potovanju drugače aktivni. Aktivne turiste smo definirali kot turiste, ki so navedli, da je bil njihov glavni motiv potovanja vsak motiv z (aktivno) vsebino, izločeni pa so bili tisti, ki so kot glavni motiv potovanja navedli "počitek in sprostitvev". Med seboj smo primerjali slovenske turiste, ki so potovali po Sloveniji, in tiste, ki so potovali v tujino. Glavna ugotovitev predstavljene raziskave je, da športno aktivne počitnice bolj izbirajo moški, mlajši in bolje izobraženi turisti iz Slovenije. Z nadaljnjo analizo pa smo ugotavljali, ali obstaja povezava med motivi potovanja in potrošnjo športno aktivnih in drugače aktivnih turistov. V kolikor se Slovenija želi razviti v priljubljeno športno-turistično destinacijo, predlagamo, da si snovalci turističnega razvoja Slovenije preberejo pridobljene rezultate, saj so rezultati predstavljeni v smislu trženja športnega turizma.

Ključne besede: športni turizem, aktivni turisti, potrošnja, trženje športnega turizma

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