

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences  
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality, Imatra  
Degree Programme in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management

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## **Motives of a Film Tourist - Case: Game of Thrones**

Thesis 2018

## **Abstract**

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The purpose of this thesis was to find out why film tourists travel, by using the popular HBO series Game of Thrones as a case study. The research questions this thesis sought to answer were why film tourists travel; if the location or activity is their primary reason for travelling; and what the film tourists get out of the experience.

The theoretical part describes the concept of film tourism, its history and types of film tourism and film tourists as well as introduces the case study subject Game of Thrones and film tourism related to it. In addition, motivation theories used in tourism are discussed and the continuum of film-induced motivation, which was used in this thesis, is introduced. A quantitative method was used for the data collection in the empirical part. An online survey was distributed through several social media channels to reach the target group, Game of Thrones film tourists.

The response rate to the survey was very low and thus the results achieved in this thesis cannot be generalised in any way. Caution should be exercised when interpreting them. The findings do, however, offer some direction into what may motivate film tourists. The participants identified different motivations for different film tourism activities. The motivations also varied between fans of the series and those who were not fans. The main push motivations for film tourism among those who are fans of the film were found to be curiosity, relaxation, fantasy, and novelty. For non-fans, the research suggests curiosity and education as the primary push motivations. The primary pull motivations for fans, on the other hand, were theme, scenery, plot, landscapes, genre, and venue. For non-fans, they were genre, scenery, and landscapes. The findings also suggested that film tourism happens both as the primary purpose and as a part of a holiday or other trip. In addition, the research suggests that what film tourists get out of film tourism depends on the individual and what they expected from it and what motivated them to participate in it.

Keywords: Film tourism, Tourism, Motivation, Quantitative research

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#### Appendix

The motives of a Game of Thrones film tourist survey

# 1 Introduction

Imaginative literature has long since attracted people to visit places described in their favourite stories and the coming of film allowed them to gain even more visual access to them, creating even further desire to see those sites in nature. Thus it is no wonder that film tourism has existed from the time the first films were made in the late 19th century.

Film tourism is a niche form of tourism in which films, TV, video or DVD induce people to visit filming locations or participate in other film tourism activities such as visiting film studios and theme parks or attending fan-events associated with the film. Why do people visit those places, though?

Films offer us relief from our daily lives and the stress and problems that come with it. They offer an escape into someone else's problems which will in the end always be solved one way or another. People watch films to rest and relax and to see new places and gain new experiences through someone else's stories, which may inspire them and make them wish to see them themselves, just to experience a little bit of the magic of it all.

The link between film and tourism has been known for quite some time. However, only in the past few decades the true power and the penetrating effect of the film has been understood and entrepreneurs have realised the potential film has in attracting consumers. Now, more than ever, films are utilised in tourism before, during and after the production by many different means varying from locations to one-time events.

The world-famous HBO series Game of Thrones is a good example of a popular target for film tourism. The filming locations of the series are visited by tourist masses from all over the world to the point when access to some of them have had to be restricted (Rigby 2016). The question this thesis wishes to find an answer for is "why?" Why do thousands of people wish to see ruins that they once saw used in a film? Why do people travel thousands of kilometres just to see a landscape that once served as a backdrop for a film? What are the motives behind it all?

The purpose of this thesis is to identify those motivations by using Game of Thrones as a case study. The aim is to find out why film tourists travel; if film tourism is their primary reason for travelling; and what film tourists get out of it that makes them satisfied. The research method used in this thesis was quantitative. An online survey was distributed through several social media channels – Facebook, forums and Twitter - to reach the target group – Game of Thrones film tourists. The survey was created and analysed with the help of Webropol. The main motivation theories used in this thesis are the Push and Pull Factor theory by Dann (1977) and the Continuum of Film-induced Motivation, which bases on it, by Mac-ionis (2004).

The topic was chosen due to film tourism being a current phenomenon and the author's personal interest in it. Understanding why people travel to filming locations or take part in other film tourism activities is imperative for the longevity of the phenomenon that is film tourism. Companies which do business in film tourism have a chance to gain valuable knowledge from this type of research, in order to understand what motivates people to show up and what they want to get out of the experience. Game of Thrones was chosen as a case study because of its popularity among film tourists and due to it being the initiator of the author's interest in the topic.

The thesis is split into five main parts: Introduction, theoretical part, empirical part, conclusions, and evaluation. The theoretical part will begin from the second chapter, which gives an overview on film tourism, what it is, a brief history, the types of film tourism, film tourists and film tourism activities, as well as the importance of authenticity in regards to film tourism. The third chapter briefly introduces the case study subject Game of Thrones and film tourism related to it. The fourth chapter concludes the theory part and discusses known motivation theories used in tourism and briefly what research has been done in film tourism before introducing a film tourism motivation theory, which was used in this thesis to create the survey and to help to analyse the results. The fifth chapter begins the empirical part by describing the research methods, the process, and the survey. The sixth chapter outlines the results achieved through the survey and the seventh discusses said results. The

eighth chapter covers the conclusions and evaluates the results and the whole thesis process.

## **2 Film tourism**

### **2.1 Film tourism defined**

Film tourism is a form of special interest tourism where a person travels due to some particular interest, in this case, films. Douglas, Douglas & Derrett (2001, p. 3) define special interest tourism as *leisure and recreational experiences driven by the specific expressed interests of individuals and groups.*

Film tourism is also said to fall under the umbrella term of cultural tourism which refers to tourism activities related to the artistic and intellectual heritage of an area. Cultural tourism is closely connected with special interest tourism but is a much broader concept. (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, p. 35.)

Heitmann (2010) suggests that film tourism overlaps with various other tourism segments. She justifies this argument by outlining that often people watch films of a certain genre because they are interested in it. She gives an example of the research done by Frost (2006), who investigated the impact of historic films with a case study on the film Ned Kelly (2003). Heitmann argues that those who watch historic films become heritage tourists because they already have a previous interest in history: *Having identified that films as part of the media are an extension of our individual (and tourists') worldview but does not create a new one, maybe film tourism should not be considered in its own right.* (Heitmann 2010.)

Heitmann (2010) suggests that films could act as triggers for the genre and thus the type of tourism they represent, pondering whether Braveheart (1995) and The Lord of the Rings (2001, 2002, 2003) induced nature tourists to visit the natural sceneries of Scotland and New Zealand respectively.

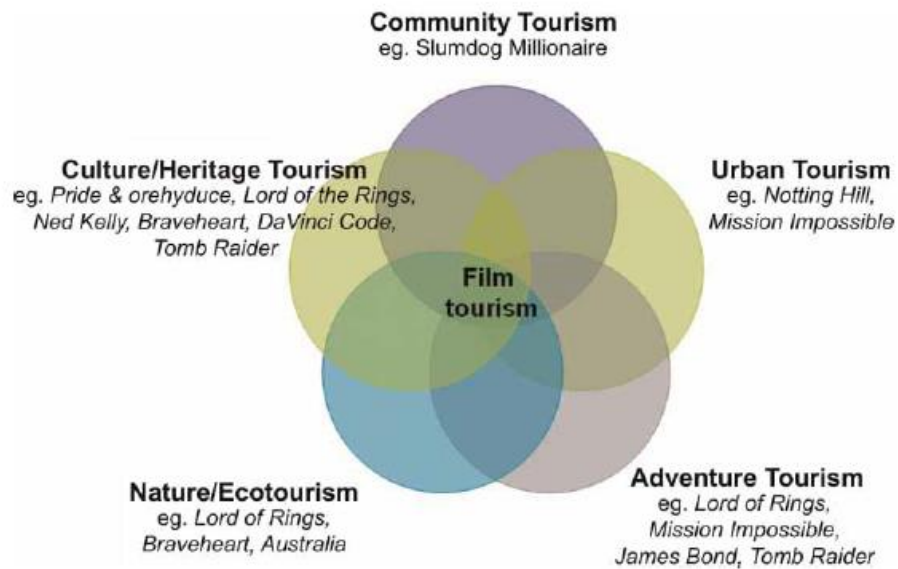


Figure 1. Film tourism and other types of tourism (Heitmann 2010)

Film tourism has many different names and definitions. The terminology varies from film tourism, (Hudson & Ritchie 2006), film-induced tourism (Beeton 2005), movie-induced tourism (Riley 1994), screen tourism (Connell & Meyer 2009) and television tourism (Evans 1997) to cinematic tourism (Tzanelli 2007), popular media-induced tourism (Yen & Teng 2013) as well as set-jetting tourism (Grihault 2007).

Beeton (2005, p. 9) uses the term “film-induced tourism” and describes it as tourism that happens due to a successful film, television series, DVD or video inducing people. She makes a distinction between off-location tourism and on-location tourism and refers with “film-induced tourism” to the latter.

Roesch (2009, p. 7) distinguishes between “film tourism” and “film-location tourism” saying that “film tourists” are people that are induced by the film to visit a certain place due to an exposure in a film while “film-location tourists” are those who visit the exact filming locations of the film. For instance, a “film tourist” would be a person who was induced by the hit series BBC *Sherlock* (2010) to visit London due to being exposed to the city in the series, and “film-location tourist” would be a person who seeks out the exact filming locations such as Baker Street.

Connell and Meyer (2009) use the term “screen tourism” arguing that the use of dual terms gets confusing, lessens the importance of television and disturbs the understanding of the whole concept of the phenomenon. Screen tourism consists of television programmes, video, DVD as well as films made both for big and small screens (Connell & Meyer 2009).

Connell (2012) speaks of film tourism as a generic term: *tourist activity induced by the viewing of a moving image, and is accepted as encompassing film, television, pre-recorded products (e.g. video/DVD/ Blu-Ray) and now extends to digital media.*

The variation in the terminology can partly be explained by geographical or cultural differences, especially when it comes to the use of the terms “film” and “movie” as one country prefers the former and another the latter. The terms are used interchangeably in academia, but it could be argued that “movie” refers to the American “moving image” as films were referred to in the early days of cinema.

In this thesis “film tourism” is used as a generic term which refers to the whole concept of film tourism, including both on-location and off-location film tourism. The term “film” refers to both films and TV-series as well as pre-recorded products and digital media. The term “film-induced tourism” on the other hand refers to on-location film tourism.

“Set” stands for the place where the story of the film is set while “location” refers to the place where the filming was actually made.

## **2.2 A brief history of film tourism**

Film tourism is a relatively new field of study, which can be seen for instance in the published works on the subject as they are all using the same literature as a basis. Film tourism is preceded by literature tourism, heavily influenced by the Romantic movement of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, which aroused the interest in nature, scenery, and landscapes. Writers of the time, such as Shelly, Byron, and Wordsworth wrote of sunsets, moonlight, tree lanes and other picturesque views that became the main interest in tourism thus creating the basis for modern tourism and further film tourism. (Beeton 2005, p. 5.)



The Industrial era allowed the advancement of technology which led to the first public screening of Cinematography method by the Lumière Brothers in Paris 1895. The first presentations only showed one black and white shot of people or places with no sound. Only in the 1900s emerged motion pictures which are now known as films, with basic editing and narrative. The first full-length feature film, “The Story of the Kelly Gang”, was made in Australia in 1906 and the first film with sound, “The Jazz Singer”, came a decade later in 1926. The first important film studio was established in 1911 in Hollywood. (Connell 2012.)

A feature film “The Mutiny on the Bounty” in 1935 was one of the first films to cause significant movement in the tourism industry, as upon its release it turned Tahiti into a popular tourist destination. However, it was not until films such as “The Third Man” (1949), “Niagara” (1953) and “The Sound of Music” (1965) came out more than a decade later, that film tourism truly emerged. These films draw visitors from all over the world even today, more than half a century later. (Roesch 2009, p. 8.)

Film tourism was strengthened by the development of mass media in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as blockbuster film productions. Further, advances in television, telephone, and most importantly internet allowed global marketing and promotion and thus a wider consumer market. (Roesch 2009, pp. 8-9.) Emblematic films such as Titanic (1997), Star Wars (1977, 1980, 1983, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2015, 2017), The Sound of Music (1965), and The Lord of the Rings-trilogy (2001, 2002, 2003) adhered the interest in film tourism, simultaneously countering the debate on whether film tourism has any long-lasting effects. With a deeper understanding of the value of film in destination promotion, the field continues to grow even today.

The research on film tourism has grown in the past decades, but research gaps in the literature still remain. The recent researches done on the phenomenon tend to be based on the most popular film tourism destinations such as New Zealand, which serves as a backdrop to popular films such “The Piano” (1993), “The Last Samurai” (2003) and perhaps most notably “The Lord of the Rings” (2001, 2002, 2003). Lord of the Rings has instigated more studies than any other production.

### 2.3 Types of film tourism

Film tourism is generally understood to mean on-location tourism, where people visit the filming locations of a film. Beeton (2005) however, deems this too simplistic explanation for such a complex and varying issue as film tourism. She separates film tourism into six different types: on-location, off-location, commercial, mistaken identities, one-off events and armchair travels (Beeton 2005, pp. 10-11).

On-location tourism refers to visiting filming locations as the primary motivator for travelling or including it, for instance, as a part of a holiday. Travelling to a filming location due to nostalgia reasons to see a different era or visiting locations which have taken a celebrity status is also part of on-location tourism. In addition, travelling to a location to “pay their respects” to a film, also known as film tourism pilgrimage, also falls into the category of on-location tourism. (Beeton 2005, pp. 10-11.)

Off-location tourism refers to the places which are not filming locations but associated with the film. For instance, film studio tours in which one can see how the actual filming process is done would be off-location film tourism. While actual filming is done in the studios they are not considered on-location tourism due to the artificiality involved. (Beeton 2016, pp. 10-11.) This kind of tours around film studios are done nowadays by almost all film studios.

Commercial film tourism exploits the fame and success of the film to create tourism mainly after the filming has been completed. It can also be split between on-location and off-location tourism. Tours around several filming locations such as On Location Tours, and guided tours around specific sets such as Hobbiton, as well as attractions made post-production simply for tourism purposes, fall under commercial on-location tourism. Theme parks, such as Universal Studios, museums as well as constructed studios, simply made for fans to enjoy, on the other hand, fall under commercial off-location tourism. (Beeton 2016, pp. 10-11.)

Mistaken identities stand for film tourism to places where a film is set but not filmed, as well as the so-called “runaway productions” which refer to film tourism to

places where the filming is believed to have taken place (Beeton 2005, pp. 10). Such cases are numerous as often problems such as financial issues prevent film-makers from filming in the locations the films are actually set. Runaway productions are one of the problems in film tourism as they create issues with authenticity. For instance, *Braveheart* (1995), which tells the story of a Scottish warrior William Wallace, inspired film tourists to visit Scotland to see sites connected with Wallace, when in reality almost the whole movie was filmed in Ireland. (Frost 2006.) Also, the iconic series *Baywatch*, which is set in Malibu was in reality mostly filmed in Hawaii.

One-off and recurring events include film premieres and film festivals as well as fan-based events such as Comic-Con where fans dress up as their favourite characters and get to meet the film-makers and actors in and out of character (Beeton 2016, p. 11). Film premiere-events are nowadays more common than not and most films and series have premieres some weeks before the broadcasting and numerous fans from all over the world gather to see the cast on the red carpet.

Beeton (2016, p. 11) adds also armchair travels as a category for film tourism, meaning travelling on the safety of one's own couch by watching TV travel, gastronomy as well as documentary programmes such as *An Idiot Abroad* or *Madventures*.

## **2.4 Types of film tourists**

It is difficult to put film tourists in any boxes as they can be basically anyone from everywhere. There is no data that says only one age group, gender, nationality, social class and so on, represents film tourists. It always depends on the film and how an individual person likes it and is affected by it.

In literature, definitions for film tourist are few, but they are often referred to as film-induced tourists (Singh & Best 2004; Roesch 2009) - people who seek filming locations. Based on Urry's (1990) theory regarding tourist gaze, Riley, Baker and Van Doren (1998) define film tourists as people who seek the sight or a site, which they

saw on the silver screen (Singh & Best 2004). This definition, however, excludes the other forms of film tourism.

Also, the level of how affected the tourist is should be taken into consideration when defining the term film tourist. Based on literature (Roesch 2009), it is clear that film-induced tourists - those who seek specific filming locations - are often quite knowledgeable of the film and have been thoroughly inspired by it, but what of those who just simply visit a country or a city, perhaps having seen it in a film or several and been attracted by it?

This is why making a distinction between different types of film tourists is important. Macionis (2004) separates film tourists into three different types based on how they ended up visiting the filming location and how interested in the filming locations they are. According to Macionis (2004), the first type is “serendipitous tourists”, who can accidentally, without necessarily even realising it, visit a filming location, or then be accompanying a friend or a family member who wants to visit said location. The second is a “general film tourists” who might include the visit to a filming location among their other tourism activities. Finally, the third type is “specific film tourists”, who make it their mission to visit filming locations and actively seek them out. (Macionis 2004; Gunesch 2017.)

Bolan, Boyd & Bell (2012) on the other hand separate film tourists into types based on authenticity and displacement (mistaken identities). According to them there exist three markets in film tourism, one for so-called “scenic/visual tourists” who tend to be affected by what they see and thus are induced to visit filming locations to see the actual landscape shown in the film. Another market is for “emotional/nostalgic tourists” who are induced by the film’s characters and narrative that they identify with, to seek out the setting of the film. The final market is for those who wish to see both the setting of the film and the filming location. The “pure film tourists” are induced by nearly everything in the film and thus wish to see and visit all they can, associated with it. (Bolan et al. 2012, pp. 219-234.)

In terms of the research conducted in this paper, a film tourist is a person who was induced by the TV series Game of Thrones to participate in film tourism related to

the series (outlined in Chapter 3). It is important to note that this person may or may not have read the books the series is based on. A person who has simply read the books does not qualify as a film tourist nor can they be classified as literary tourists - people who are induced to sites that an author wrote about or was associated with - due to the fact that George R. R. Martin writes of a fictional world of Westeros, which has nothing to do with any of the filming locations of the series. It is, however, acknowledged that the descriptions of the author may add to the novelty of visiting the locations which are now associated with the setting of the story due to the series.

## **2.5 Film tourist activities**

Tourists rarely want to be just passive observers when visiting locations which are previously unknown as well as hold some amount of interest to them. The simplest forms of film tourist activities are taking pictures of one's surroundings and taking selfies.

Roesch (2009) focuses on on-site film tourist activities, which according to him, are shot re-creations, filmic re-enactments, interaction with site markers, handling of film-related items, miniature positioning and collecting souvenirs.

Shot re-creations refer to the action of a person placing oneself in the same position and setting as the character in the film. The scene is then photographed and should look the same when compared to the scene in the film. Thus the recognition value of the location is extremely important when re-creating shots. Film stills are often used to help to find the correct position. (Roesch 2009, pp. 159-162.)

Filmic re-enactments encompass roleplay as one of the characters. A person uses mental simulations to get into the character and acts as that person, repeating their lines and actions from the film. The re-enactment is not necessarily tied to a particular scene but may be just doing the actions of the character from a film in a similar manner. (Roesch 2009, pp. 162-164.) An example of this could be acting like Legolas from *The Lord of the Rings*, climbing hills and shooting imaginary arrows at imaginary enemies in order to feel like Legolas.

Interaction of site-markers refers to the signposts announcing and describing specific locations, helping the tourists in identifying them, as well as transportable markers such as guidebooks and film stills. Signposts are said to be very important especially when tourists visit the filming location by themselves without a guide to tell them what is where. Some site markers also add to the authenticity of the location, especially if a known name or a reference is written on it. People like to photograph these signs or be photographed with them. (Roesch 2009, pp. 165-169.) For instance, it is an everyday occurrence to see people lining up to take a picture with the sign that says Platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$  from Harry Potter at King Cross station in London.

Guidebooks help especially those who travel by themselves to get around, identify the specific locations and get the knowledge of the locations and technical aspects. Film stills on the other hand, also help with the authenticity of the location and add to the recognition value. (Roesch 2009, pp. 169-170.)

Handling of film-related items is very common on film location tours. Tour guides often provide real items or exact replicas from the films such as scripts, weapons or parts of costumes, which the tourists are then allowed to touch, look at and pose with. This also adds to the authenticity of the experience. (Roesch 2009, pp. 170-173.)

Miniature positioning involves a tourist having miniatures of the characters or items of a film with them at the location and photographing them. Roesch (2009, p. 173) states as an example a person at a Star Wars tour, who took pictures of a miniature R2-D2 and C-3PO with the Dome in the background.

Souvenir collection encompasses buying, receiving or taking an item which reminds the tourists of their visit to the location. It could be, for instance, a guidebook, a certificate, an item related to the film, on a rare occasion a piece of the actual set, or some natural part of the location such as sand or a rock. The important thing is that it has some meaning to the person acquiring it. (Roesch 2009, pp. 174-180.)

Other film tourist activities could be, for example, meeting the cast and creators, getting autographs and taking pictures with them. For film soundtrack concerts these could attribute to meeting the musicians and the composer. In addition, meeting and interacting with other fans of a film could be counted as a film tourist activity.

These activities were used in the survey to find out how engaged the film tourists were in the series and their chosen location or activity.

## **2.6 Authenticity in film tourism**

Authenticity is one of the major problems in film tourism. Problems occur, for instance, when a tourist arrives at a filming location and the location does not look at all like in the film. Roesch (2009) found in his study of the experiences of The Lord of the Rings film tourists that a high recognition value is very important to tourists. According to Roesch (2009, p. 161), it adds to the value of the location and the experience by allowing mental images and simulations.

The previously mentioned mistaken identities also create problems. As stated, films may be set in one country, but actually filmed in another, which causes tourism in the location where the film was set instead of where it was filmed, thus creating an issue with authenticity.

According to Frost (2006) though, in the case of runaway productions, a tourist may be interested in seeing the location where the film was set or where it was filmed, or even both. This depends on the tourist's knowledge and interest in the history and process of filmmaking.

In addition, many researchers (Macionis 2004; Beeton 2005; Roesch 2009) are of the mind that most tourists are aware of the inauthenticity of the locations and the fact that they will not be as they appear on the silver screen. It is argued that authenticity is negotiable and depends on the level of interest of the tourist. If the level of interest and concern of the tourists is high, it is more likely that they are aware of the issues with authenticity, expect it and do not care about it. (Macionis 2004; Frost 2006.)

As Game of Thrones - the subject of the case study in this research - is a fictional series set in a fictional world, there is no issue with authenticity in a similar manner as in many other films due to, for instance, a mistaken identity. However, the recognition value may be low in some places as many parts of the series have been created by computers. It is possible that this may cause disappointment in some tourists.

### **3 Game of Thrones**

Game of Thrones is a political fantasy drama TV series created by David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. It is based on the book series A Song of Ice and Fire by George R. R. Martin, who was also involved in making the television series. The series premiered in 2011 on HBO in the USA and is set for its eighth and final season to premiere sometime in 2019.

The show tells a story of nine noble families fighting for the throne while a thought-to-be-extinct race threatens to destroy them all. The story is set in Westeros, a fictional world in which, dragons and magic exist and a years-long summer has just ended giving way to a long winter. (Mckinney 2015.) Game of Thrones is an adult series, criticized by some due to the violence and sex displayed in the episodes. Regardless, it is the most popular show of HBO and has millions of fans from all over the world. The books and the show are infamous for killing off the main characters without remorse and keeping the fans on their toes, praying that their favourite will not be next.

The HBO series has an average of 23 million viewers per episode and it is the most pirated show in the world, thus making it impossible to account for the actual numbers (Cannata-Bowman 2017). The show has been argued to be “the best TV-show ever” and has been on the first place of most popular TV-series for two years in a row, in 2016 and in 2017 (Lubin 2016; Cannata-Bowman 2017; Nededog 2017).

The series has also been noted among the critics and has received multiple nominations and awards such as Golden Globe Awards, Peabody Awards, Critic’s



Choice Television Awards and Emmy Awards to mention a few. The show has received altogether 110 Emmy nominations and has won 38 of them. These include for instance six nominations for Outstanding Drama Series. Game of Thrones has won the award twice in 2015 and 2016. (IMBD N/D.)

Game of Thrones has been filmed in Northern Ireland, Croatia, Iceland, Spain, Malta, Morocco, Scotland, Canada as well as the United States and each of these countries have become a destination to Game of Thrones film tourists, although Scotland, Canada, and the USA to a lesser effect.

According to Frost (2006) there are five different reasons why a film tourist would be interested in visiting filming locations rather than film sets: first, if the place is fictional or vague; second, if the location has been used in many different films; third, if some famous scene has been shot there; fourth, if the location has some distinctive feature such as an interesting history or some iconic film has been shot there; and finally fifth, if the location has some attracting factor such as a tour or a visitor attraction and it is being marketed.

Game of Thrones fulfils two of these reasons. The first one for being set in a fictional world of Westeros and the fifth one for having different services in several of the filming locations. Many services have appeared in these places as the entrepreneurs realised the popularity of the show and people's interest in seeing the locations. For example, in Northern Ireland, there are over a dozen different tours organized to visit the filming locations (Visit Belfast 2018). The same goes for Malta, Iceland, Croatia, Spain, and Morocco.

Game of Thrones has been filmed in the Titanic Studios in Belfast, which is a popular destination on its own due to being situated in the Titanic Quarter, the location with the biggest Titanic attraction and where the RMS Titanic was actually built. Visiting the Titanic Studios is usually part of the Game of Thrones tours in Belfast. (Game of Thrones Tours 2018.)

Other forms of Game of Thrones film tourism are for instance soundtrack concerts, season premieres and fan events such as Comic Cons. The Game of Thrones Live

Concert Experience is an all-arena concert tour by the composer Ramin Djawadi, first held in autumn 2016 consisting of 24 dates in both the United States and Canada. The first World Tour will launch in May 2018 and concerts will be held in several European countries such as Britain, Sweden, and Germany, as well as Canada and the USA. The concert consists of Djawadi as a conductor with the orchestra and choir playing the soundtrack of Game of Thrones from all seasons while showing footage of the series. (Renfro 2017.)

The Game of Thrones season premieres gather up hundreds, even thousands of fans to catch a glimpse of their favourite actors on the red carpet. Some lucky ones may even get to meet the cast and watch the first episode of the new season with them in an exclusive premiere. For instance, for the Final Season, set to be released in 2019, there is a possibility to win this chance with flights and hotels included, by donating to support NEXT for AUTISM, which designs supportive programmes for autistic people. By donating, one gets a certain amount of entries to the lottery based on how much money one donated. The winner is drawn and they and one of their friends will get to enjoy the premiere with the cast. (Omaze 2018.)

Fan events, such as Comic-Con, allows fans to see and interact with the cast and the makers of the series. Comic-Con is a multi-genre – mainly science fiction and fantasy - entertainment and comic convention, which is held each year in San Diego, USA. It features comic books, games, arts, movies, and various pop culture. The San Diego Comic-Con is a huge convention with over 100,000 participants each year. It includes hundreds of events featuring not only comics but all aspects of the popular arts, including hands-on workshops and educational and academic programming and anime and film screenings. Cosplay is a huge part of Comic-Con and a Masquerade costume competition with prizes and trophies is arranged each year. As mentioned, the Comic-Con allows fans to meet with the cast and makers of movies and series. A panel is held where fans may ask questions of the cast and the makers. (Comic-Con International 2018.) Game of Thrones has been involved in Comic-Con since its premiere in 2011.

The Game of Thrones film tourism reaches also to other countries, which do not necessarily have anything to do with the production of the series. For instance, in the Finnish Lapland, Lapland Hotels created a Game of Thrones-themed Snow Village in cooperation with HBO Nordic for the winter season 2017-2018. The hotel was built with snow and ice and decorated with ice-carvings of Game of Thrones characters and symbols. (Lynch 2018.)

Game of Thrones will be referred in this thesis as “Game of Thrones” or “GoT”.

## **4 Motivation in tourism**

### **4.1 Motivation factors in tourism**

Motivation in consumer behaviour refers to those reasons that induce consumers to make a certain purchasing decision. In tourism, those would be the reasons why the tourist decides to purchase a trip. (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, p. 53.)

According to John Swarbrooke and Susan Horner (2007, p. 53), motivation factors in tourism can be separated into two groups: factors which motivate people to take a holiday and factors which motivate people to take a particular holiday in a specific destination at a certain time. They outline that no tourist is the same and that different factors motivate them.

It is proposed that a tourist's personality, lifestyle, past experiences as a tourist and in life in general as well as their self-image and concern for other people's opinions, influence their motives. Motivations are fluid and often change over time in response to the changes in people's lives. (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, p. 55.) For instance, the motives for travelling for a woman in her twenties, free to do whatever she wants, are completely different in comparison to her when she is middle-aged with a husband and three kids.

Swarbrooke and Horner (2007) also outline that there is never just one motive which induces people. Often people have several motivations to plan a trip, but not all of them are necessarily fulfilled. One motivation usually takes the front seat or diversely the trip is planned so that most of the motivations will be fulfilled. (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, pp. 55-56.)

Motives may also be shared as most people rarely travel alone (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, p. 56). A person's motivations are often different depending on who they travel with. For instance, a man's motivations to travel with his children would mainly be keeping them happy, while when travelling with his sports team his motivation would be to indulge in the sport he is passionate about.

Also if a person is travelling with a friend, two sets of motivations are involved and some of them may be shared (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, p. 56). They may both want to escape their routines back home but it may be so that the other one wishes to relax by sunbathing on a beach while the other relaxes by sightseeing and educating herself by visiting museums. In this case, either compromise is made to satisfy both sets of motivations or then the more dominant person makes the decisions. (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, p. 56.)

Roesch (2009, p. 103) suggests that tourists often cannot state any particular motivation for travelling. Macionis (2004) on the other hand, claims that though it is not necessarily easy to express them, tourists are usually aware of their motivations. They may both be right, as Swarbrooke and Horner (2007, p. 56) state that some of the tourist's motivations are unconscious, which the tourist is unable to recognize. Some motives are also not admitted to on purpose because of a conflict between the motivations, their contradicting nature or because they are of sensitive nature and thus difficult to admit to (Swarbrooke & Horner 2007, pp. 56-57). This kind of motivations could be for example a couple taking a holiday in a last attempt to save their marriage.

These are just a few factors mentioned, which affect the motivations of an individual and thus it is sufficient to say that motivations are complicated and multidimensional, and require some understanding of psychology and human behaviour.

## **4.2 Motivation theories in tourism**

Motivation theories are numerous and often overlap with one another with small distinctions and modifications which are based on previous studies, all trying to understand human behaviour. The common goal that all motivation theories have is to find an answer to the question "Why?". In consumer behaviour, the question is why people purchased or are going to purchase something. In turn, the question concerning tourist motivation is why people travel and why they purchased or are about to purchase a certain kind of trip.

While the goal of motivation theories is the same, the point of view varies. Based on a review of the literature on tourist motivation, Kay (2003) identifies four different approaches for tourism motivation theories: need-based, values-based, benefit sought or realised, and expectancy.

Need-based theories put the emphasis on human needs and satisfying them. They claim that satisfying their needs are the reason why tourists choose a certain type of holiday or a destination. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a typical example of these type of motivation theories. (Kay 2003.)

According to Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill (2008), Maslow (1970) created a hierarchy of needs, which is arguably the most known motivation theory of our time. Based on the theory, people seek to reach the level of self-actualization by satisfying first their primitive needs and then moving up the hierarchy onto more progressive needs. The hierarchy consists of five different levels starting from physiological needs and continuing to safety needs, social needs, and esteem needs before finally reaching self-actualization. The physiological needs are the basic needs of a person that are needed for survival, meaning food, sleep, shelter and so on. Safety needs refer to the need of protecting oneself and include, for instance, physical safety, health, and well-being. Social needs encompass love and belonging, meaning intimacy, friendships, family and so on. Esteem needs refer to a person's need for self-esteem, recognition, confidence, and attention as well as the respect of and for others. Finally, self-actualization encompasses the need for creativity, for developing as an individual and being the best version of oneself as well as for spontaneity. (Cooper et al. 2008.)

Kay (2003) found that while Maslow's theory is widely used in both work and leisure, it has been criticized for focusing only on satisfaction as a motivational driver, as well as for not taking into account the fact that people's motivations are never completely identical. The hierarchy of needs is also impossible to test empirically as there is no way of measuring how satisfied a certain need is and how satisfied it needs to be for the person to reach the next level (Kay 2003).

Despite these shortcomings, Maslow's theory has been deemed useful and utilised, for instance, in business and marketing, especially in marketing consumer goods as they are often created to satisfy people's needs (Kay 2003).

Values based motivation theories, on the other hand, deem personal values as motivating factors. According to Kay (2003), most used value based motivation theories are Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) (Rokeach 1968); as well as the Values and Lifestyles (VALS) (Mitchell 1983) and the List of Values (LOV) (Kahle & Kennedy 1989), which were designed to correct the weaknesses of RVS.

Rokeach Value Survey consists of 36 values which people should put in order of importance based on themselves and their lives. The first 18 values are called terminal values and they refer to the end-state of existence – the goals a person wishes to achieve during their lifetimes, such as wisdom or inner harmony. The other 18 values are called instrumental values, which are the preferred modes regarding behaviour, that act as means to achieve the terminal values. (Donald, Vinson, Munson & Nakanishi 1977.)

VALS differentiates people based on their values, attitude, and lifestyle into eight different types of consumers. The survey consists of first-person statements which should be answered in Likert scale (agree-disagree) based on how well they apply to the person doing the survey. (Wedel & Kamakura 2012.) The fact that VALS puts emphasis on social values rather than personal values, has said to be a great advantage of the typology (Kay 2003).

LOV bases on both Maslow's hierarchy and Rokeach Value Survey. It focuses only on terminal values, more specifically motivational domains which concern either individualistic or both individualistic and societal interests. The nine values include self-respect and accomplishment from Rokeach's values, as well as excitement, fun and enjoyment, self-fulfilment, being well respected, warm relationships with others, security, and a sense of belonging. (Wedel & Kamakura 2012.) According to Kay (2003), LOV is preferred over VALS due to its simplicity, reliability, and validity.

In tourism, RVS, VALS, and LOV are most commonly used in market segmentation.

Benefits sought or realised motivation theory – also known as benefit segmentation - is also used for segmentation purposes. The theory bases on the benefits of the product or service sought by the consumer. (Kay 2003.) For instance, in tourism, people could be segmented based on the benefits of the same trip into those who want to get a tan and those who want to get to know the culture of the place. Simply put, the theory thrives to find out the value consumers put on the benefits of a product or service.

Benefits sought or realised theory has been widely used in travel, tourism, leisure, and recreation fields, more particularly to study travel motivation (Kay 2003). According to Nduna & Van Zyl (2017), several studies have been made in different destinations. For example, Kim, Park, Gazzoli & Sheng (2011) used benefit segmentation to identify the benefits sought by international travellers to Macau in China, and Almeida, Correia & Pimpão (2014) did the same regarding rural tourism in Madeira. Kim et al. (2011) found that international tourists to Macau sought benefits such as cultural exploration, family togetherness, gambling and shopping experience from their visit, while relaxing in nature, socialisation, rural life, cost factor and learning factor were the benefits of rural tourism in Madeira in the study by Almeida et al. (2014). The segments identified were convention and business seekers, family and vacation seekers, gambling and shopping seekers and multi-purpose seekers for Kim et al. (2011) and the ruralist, relaxers, family-oriented and want it all for Almeida et al (2014), respectively. (Nduna & Van Zyl 2017.)

The benefit segmentation theory has received criticism regarding the timing of the research as some of them are based before the trip (benefits sought) and some based on a previous trip or after the trip (benefits realised) (Kay 2003).

According to Lunenburg (2011), the expectation theory was created by Victor Vroom (1964). He separates effort, performance and outcomes arguing that if a person believes that efforts and performance are positively linked, the end-result of a good performance will result in a desirable reward, which will satisfy a specific



need and/or justify the effort. Vroom uses the concepts of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy is the assumption that increased effort will result in the desired performance, instrumentality is the belief that the performance will result in a reward, and valence is the value that the person puts on the reward.

Witt and Wright (1992), according to Kay (2003), created an expectancy model of holiday preference and choice based on Vroom's theory. The model combines needs, attractiveness of vacation attributes, different vacation preferences and knowledge of the characters of the vacation destination that can influence the decision, as well as expectations and instrumentality. Different sources such as others' experiences, guidebooks, and the person's own previous experiences are further used as influencing factors. (Kay 2003.)

The complexity of the study of motivation is emphasised by Witt and Wright's model (Kay 2003). It is a complicated concept with a lot of variables and thus has been criticised for it. Especially investigating an individual's motivation and behaviour would be difficult with this model due to its many variables.

Other significant motivation theories in addition to the four, include the Push and Pull Factor theory of motivation by Dann (1977). According to him, push factors are those which influence people to travel. They are internal drivers such as escape or nostalgia. Pull factors, on the other hand, are what make people choose a specific destination. Such factors are for example sunshine and beaches. (Dann 1977.) Crompton (1979) continued the theory by specifying nine different motives: Escape from a perceived mundane environment; Exploration and evaluation of self; Relaxation; Prestige; Regression; Enhancement of kinship relations; Social interaction; Novelty; and Education. Crompton refers to novelty and education as pull factors and the rest are push factors.

According to Kay (2003) some researchers are of the mind that motivations can only be push factors (Witt and Wright 1992) and some view the push factors as human needs (Pearce 1982), and thus she suggests that: *Maybe pull factors could be reconsidered as preferences for satisfying motives, drives or needs.*

Push and pull factor theory has largely been favoured in tourist motivation research. To mention a few: Pearce and Lee (2005) set out to identify travel motives (push factors) for pleasure travel. They found that travellers considered escape, relaxation, self-development, relationships, and novelty as the most important push factors. Other push factors mentioned were self-actualization, stimulation, security, romance, nostalgia, and recognition. (Pearce & Lee 2005.) Park and Yoon (2009) on the other hand investigated the motives of tourists visiting rural villages in South-Korea. They used a factor analysis to cut 24 motivational into 6 push factors: Relaxation, excitement, novelty, learning, family togetherness, and socialization. (Park & Yoon 2009).

Other important factors that have been investigated in relation to motivations are emotions, authenticity, novelty, and hedonism as well as the role of preferences (Kay 2003).

### **4.3 Motivation in film tourism**

Motivation in film tourism is not too widely researched topic. Most research regarding film tourism motivation appears to revolve around The Lord of the Rings trilogy (2001, 2002, 2003). For instance, Roesch (2009) conducted a study on the experiences of film location tourists participating in a tour around the locations of the films in New Zealand, and Singh and Best (2004) investigated the motivations of the film tourists visiting the remaining film set Hobbiton. Buchmann, Moore & Fisher (2010) also investigated the experiences of The Lord of the Rings tourists, as did Carl, Kindon & Smith (2007).

Kim and Wang (2012) on the other hand, researched the film tourist experience in South Korea by conducting a case study in the Daejanggeum Theme Park, a popular film tourism destination with a basis on a popular Korean drama Jewel in the Palace (Daejanggeum).

Despite all the previously mentioned studies done on experiences of film tourists and their motivation, Connell and Meyer (2009) note a gap in the research literature regarding on-location experiences of film tourists, particularly on how the tour-

ists view and experience the destination. What also should be noted, is that basically all previous research concentrates on on-location tourism and film location tourists, completely excluding the other forms of the phenomenon.

#### **4.4 Continuum of film-induced motivation**

Macionis (2004) created a continuum of film-induced motivation to help to understand the underlying reasons for travelling to film locations. The continuum bases on the Push and Pull Factor theory of motivation by Dann (1977) and the nine motives (mentioned in Chapter 4.2) specified by Crompton (1979). According to Mowen (2000), these motives are similar as to what has been identified as motivations for going to see a film (Macionis 2004). In Macionis' (2004) continuum of film-induced motivation, these motives serve as the push factors regarding film tourism. They are the internal drivers of the tourist which induce him/her to make a trip to a filming location.

As mentioned before, Macionis separates film tourists into three different types: serendipitous, general and specific film tourists (see Chapter 2.4). As stated, serendipitous tourists are tourists that just happen to be at the filming site, not necessarily even aware of it, or then, accompanying someone. The continuum proposes that these types of tourists are not that interested in the film itself and thus the push factors have little importance to them. Their motivations would only include novelty and social interaction. General tourists, on the other hand, are said to be not necessarily that interested in the film, but to participate in film tourism activities anyway. The importance of the push factors, as well as self-actualisation motivations, are increased: Their motivations would include escape, novelty, education, and nostalgia. Finally, regarding the specific film tourists, who actively seek and visit filming locations, the continuum suggests that the push factors are very important and so is self-actualisation. Their motivations would include ego-enhancement, self-identity, self-actualisation, pilgrimage, vicarious experience, status/prestige, nostalgia, fantasy, and romance. (Macionis 2004.) The types and their push motivations are shown in Figure 2.

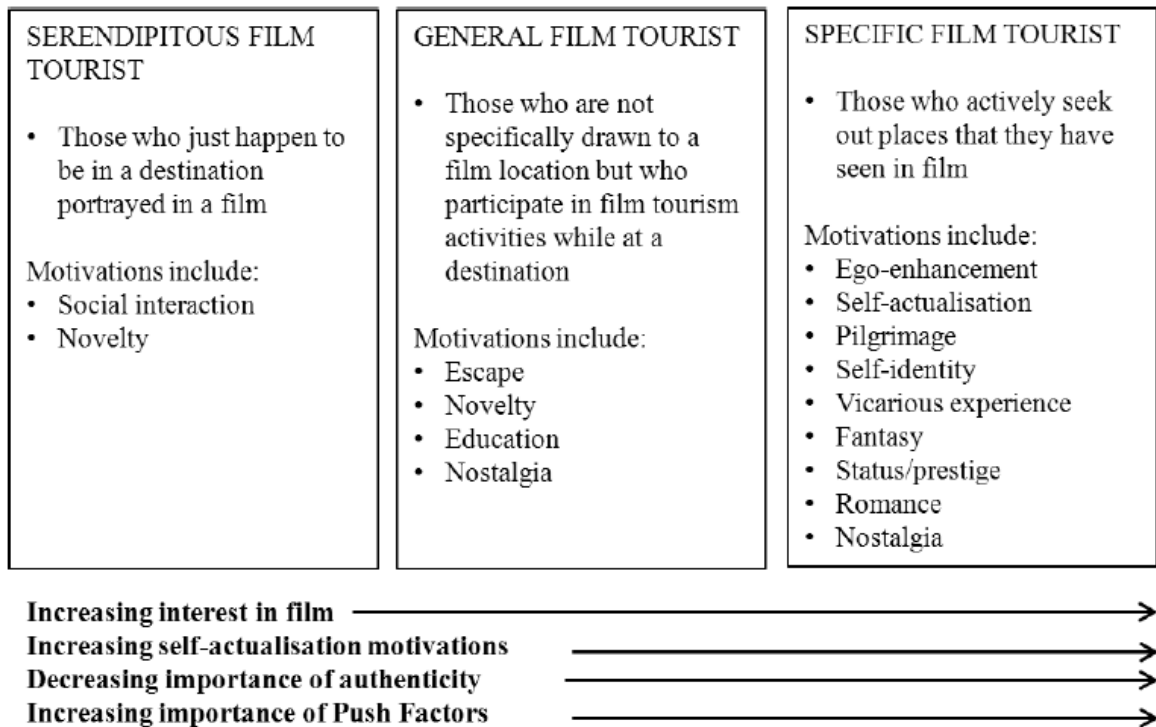


Figure 2. Types of tourists and their push factors (Macionis 2004)

Macionis (2004) suggests that the interest towards the film, the importance of push factors as well as self-actualisation motives increase from serendipitous tourists toward specific film tourists. She proposes that the visit to the location has more significance for specific film tourists and thus will be seen as a personal reward (Macionis 2004).

Authenticity, on the other hand, is deemed decreasing in the continuum when moved from serendipitous film tourist to a specific one. So for a serendipitous tourist, the authenticity and the recognition value of the location would be more important than to a specific film tourist. According to Macionis (2004), it could be argued that specific film tourists either expect or just accept the hyper-reality of the location, in which model (film) and reality are confused. This correlates with Frost's (2006) opinion on authenticity being negotiable and reflecting on the tourist's interest in films and filmmaking.

Macionis (2004) highlights that push factors and pull factors work interchangeably and that an individual is likely to be induced by several different motives in both factors. Thus the pull factors are separated into three categories: Place, Personali-

ty, and Performance. Place includes scenery, landscapes, weather as well as cultural, social and activity origins. Personality consists of the cast, characters and celebrity and Performance contains plot, theme, and genre. (Macionis 2004.)

<b>Pull Factors (film)</b>			<b>Push Factors (Internal Drive)</b>
<b><u>PLACE</u></b>	<b><u>PERSONALITY</u></b>	<b><u>PERFORMANCE</u></b>	
Location attributes Scenery Landscapes Weather Cultural origin Social origin Activity origin	Cast Characters Celebrity (stars)	Plot Theme Genre	Ego enhancement Status/prestige Fantasy/Escape Vicarious Experience Search for self identity

Figure 3. Pull factors and push factors (Macionis 2004)

Macionis (2004) argues that by separating the 3 P's, the specific media attributes and representations important to the film tourists will be highlighted. Place encompasses beautiful scenery and gorgeous landscapes that have a high recognition value to the tourist. Many filming locations are transformed into tourist attractions. Macionis (2004) argues that the creation of movie maps and other promotional material are a testament to the power films have as pull factors for locations.

Performance is based on the idea that the plot, storyline or the theme of the film draws film tourists to visit the location to fulfil the push factors romance, fantasy or vicarious experience – the experiences of the people in the film. This is said to happen when the person viewing the film relates to the character or the story and thus wishes to act in the same manner. (Macionis 2004.) According to Macionis (2004), Beeton (2001) offers an example of a case such as this regarding a TV series called Seachange. In the film, an overworked lawyer decides to give up city life and move to a seaside. Macionis (2004) argues that the resulted increase in the visitors to the filming location was due to them being drawn to the destination by the idea of a “seachange” rather than the location itself. Also, Frost’s (2004) study on Ned Kelly (2003) would also refer to the power of stories as pull factors as

according to him people were attracted to visit the filming locations because they were interested in the story.

Personality encompasses the idea that characters of the film, actors or other personalities work as the drawing factors. Celebrities have long since been used to promote everything from products to services and places. Thus Macionis (2004) makes the assumption that personalities would work as a pull factor.

The push and pull factor theory (Dann 1977) and the continuum of film-induced tourism (Macionis 2004) which bases on it are the main motivation theories used in this thesis. The push and pull factors of the continuum are used as the motivation factors in the survey.

## 5 The research methods and the process

The research method used in this thesis was quantitative. A quantitative method focuses on numerical data, which is analysed through statistical means (Robson 2007, p. 21). Quantitative research methods are for example surveys.

Surveys are a good method to reach a lot of people and ask many questions at the same time. It is also a low-cost method and the results are easy to analyse. Surveys can be distributed by post, in person or online. However, there are some problems regarding survey research. For instance, the survey needs to be done so that the participants understand what is asked. If the questions are unclear or have a double meaning there is no telling how the participant has understood them and this may affect the results negatively. Also, it is impossible for the creator of the survey to know if the participant answered seriously to the questions or not. An additional problem appears if no-one or only a few people participate in the survey. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, p. 190.)

The method chosen for this thesis was an online survey. An online survey is a questionnaire, which is spread through the Internet, where people can answer it (Kananen 2010, p. 95). The population of this thesis is Game of Thrones film tourists and the sample those who follow and/or are active on the sites and groups of the chosen social media platforms: Facebook, Game of Thrones forums and Twitter.

In this thesis, the survey was created with Webropol, which is a tool that helps design questionnaires online. The survey consisted altogether of 28 questions of which 19 questions were the same to all participants while 9 questions appeared or stayed hidden depending on the answers of the participant. These questions were for additional information and most attempted to find out why the participants answered as they did.

After completing the survey, it was spread through the above-mentioned social media platforms. This was due to the fact that Game of Thrones is popular all over the world and thus film tourists may come from anywhere. While a qualitative

method would be preferable for this kind of research as motivations are often so closely connected with emotions and for instance interviewing subjects would gain a deeper understanding of them, a quantitative method was deemed necessary to conduct this research, as reaching the target group would have been difficult with a qualitative method.

The initial plan to carry out this thesis was to acquire a partner or several to help to spread the survey in addition to spreading it through social media. However, apart from one, none of the contacted companies replied to the author’s messages and the one that replied was not interested in the process. Hence the author of this thesis was only able to distribute the survey through the aforementioned channels. The author applied to be accepted in ten different Game of Thrones groups on Facebook and got accepted in seven of them. The three other groups declined to take any new members until the new season of Game of Thrones premiered. The posts on Facebook groups and pages were made by using the author’s own Facebook account.

In regards to forums, five out of seven activated the accounts made by the author. The groups, pages, and forums are outlined below in Figure 4.

<b>Facebook Groups</b>	<b>Facebook Pages</b>	<b>GoT Forums</b>
Game Of Thrones Fans Global	A Game of Thrones - A Song of Ice and Fire by George R R Martin	Previously – Game of Thrones
Game of Thrones Fans	Game of Thrones	Is winter coming?
GAME of THRONES	Game of Thrones Fans	Westeros.org
Game of Thrones-International	Game of Thrones Tours Ireland	Reddit
Game of thrones Xtreme	Game of Thrones Tours	Fanforum



Game Of Thrones - The Watchers on the wall	Game of Thrones a song of fire and ice	
Game of Thrones	Game of thrones Fanpage	
	Game of Thrones	
	The winds of winter	
	You know nothing John Snow	

Figure 4. List of Facebook groups, pages, and Game of Thrones forums used

In addition to the Facebook groups and pages, as well as the online forums listed in Figure 4, Twitter was used to spread the survey by using hashtags #GameOfThrones, #film, and #tourism. The Twitter posts were also made using the author's own account. These channels were chosen because they were deemed the best way to reach the sample.

A link to the survey was posted in each of these channels with an accompanying text that briefly described the purpose of the survey, the approximate time for participating in it as well as an assurance of anonymity. This was done four times during the three weeks the survey was online.

Several administrators of the Facebook pages/groups and forums were also contacted and inquiries were made to ask if they could be of help in spreading the survey. However, only two of them replied to the messages and only one agreed to help, even then just to pin the link to the survey on their forum.

The results were then analysed with the help of Webropol.

## 6 The survey results

### 6.1 The demographics and fandom

There were altogether 24 Game of Thrones film tourists who participated in the survey. Due to the low response rate, the results are presented by using the absolute amount of the participants in the survey, instead of using percentages. This was deemed necessary to achieve a better understanding of the results.

The first three questions focused on the demographics of the respondents. As can be interpreted from Figure 5, the majority of them were women. Most of the respondents were in the age groups 25-39 and 15-24 with only a one-person difference. The age distribution is illustrated in Figure 6.

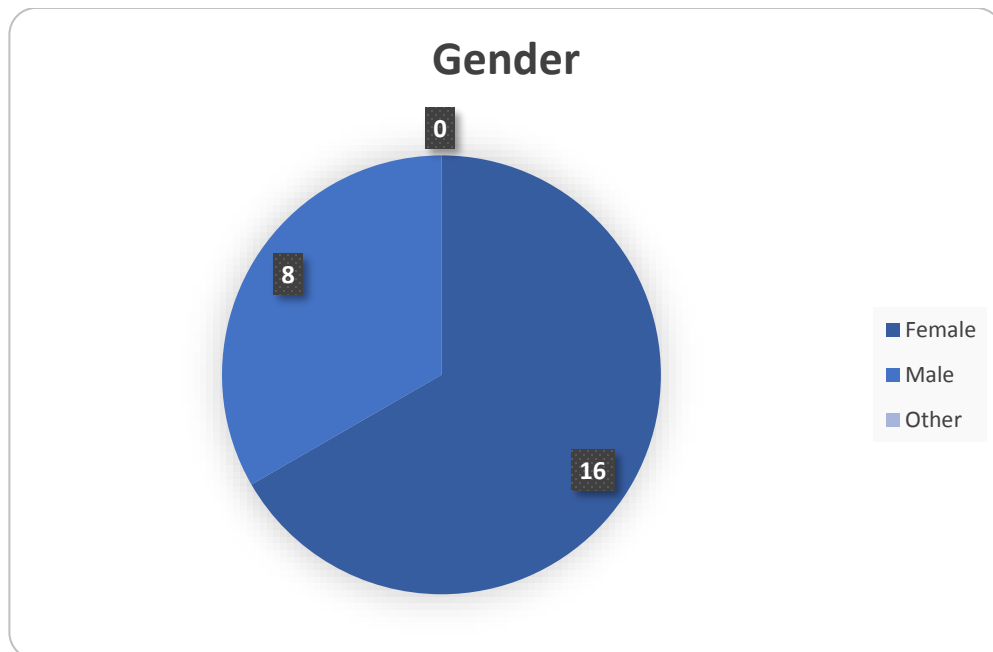


Figure 5. Gender distribution of the respondents

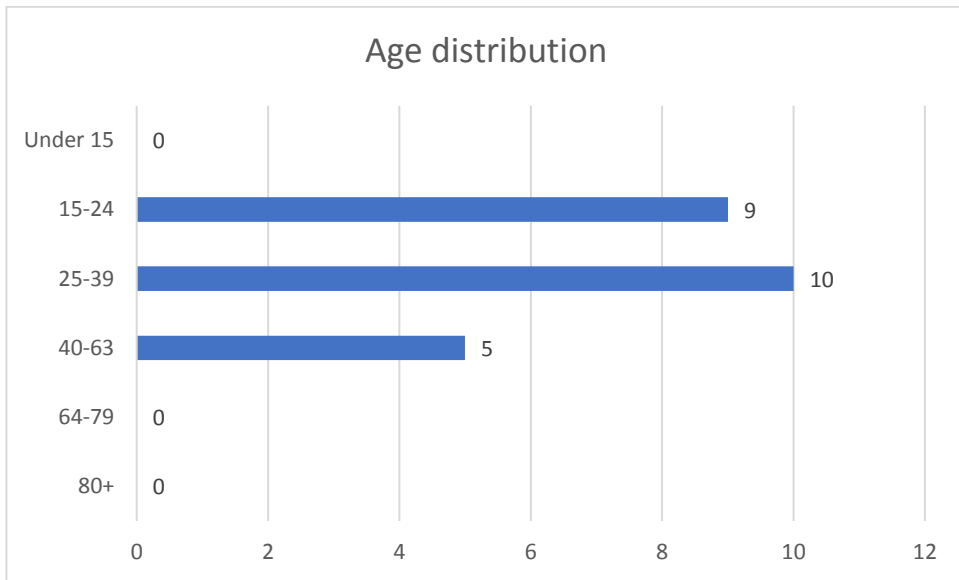


Figure 6. Age distribution of the respondents

The respondents were from 13 different countries. Most nationalities were European, but the United States had the most respondents of a single country.

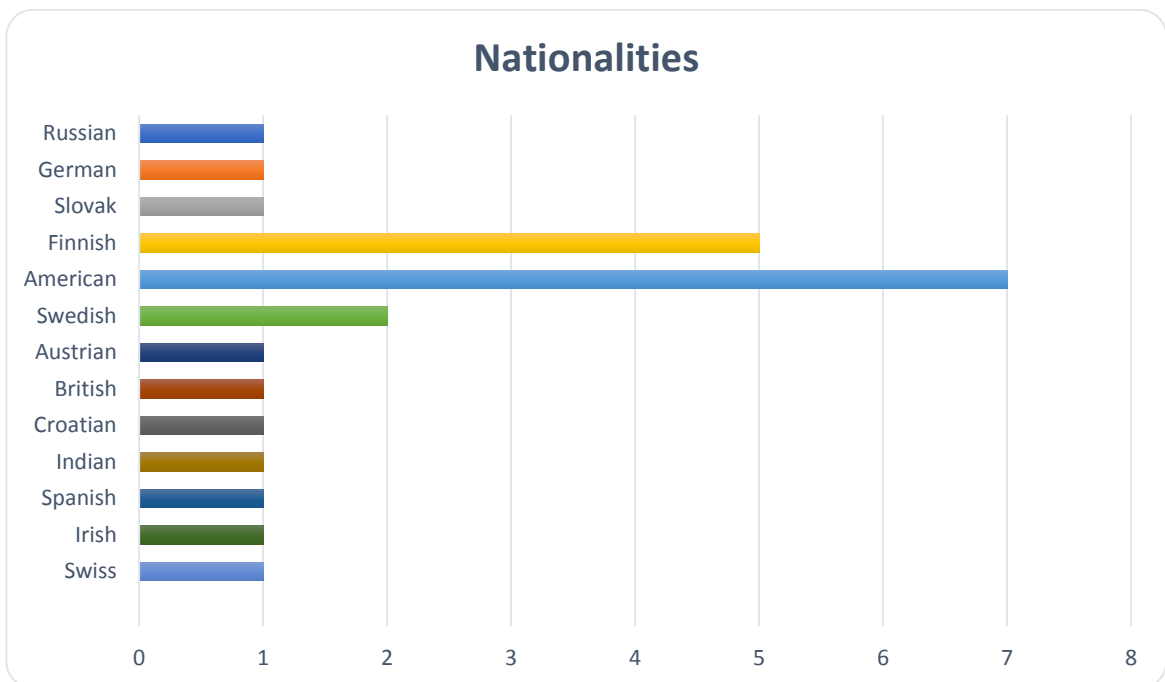


Figure 7. Nationalities of the respondents

The fourth question inquired whether the respondents were fans of Game of Thrones. Nineteen of the respondents considered themselves to be fans, while the rest 5 did not.

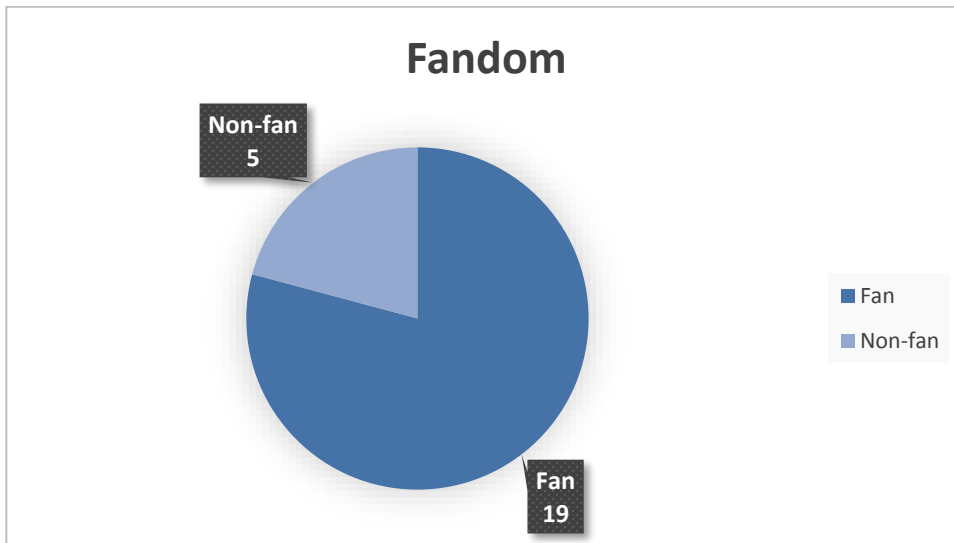


Figure 8. Fans of Game of Thrones

## 6.2 The travelling habits and participation in GoT film tourism

The next two questions focused on the travelling habits of the participants in regards to Game of Thrones film tourism. Question five inquired how many times the respondents had participated in GoT film tourism activities. More than half said to have done Game of Thrones film tourism only once, while only two people had participated in it thrice or more. All options included respondents who were not fans of Game of Thrones. The results are illustrated in Figure 9.

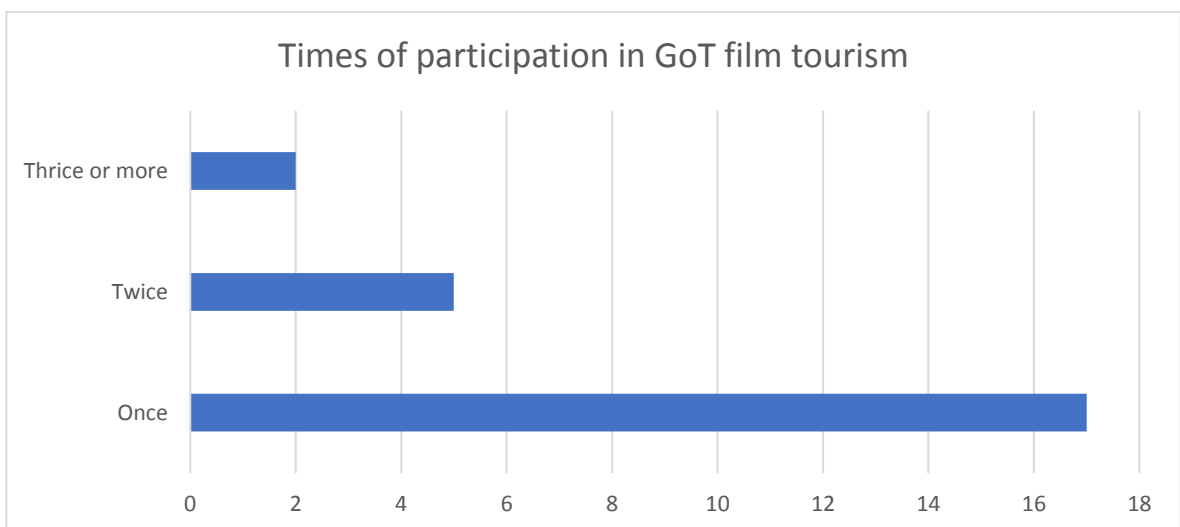


Figure 9. Respondents' participation in GoT film tourism activities

The results from this question onward contain multiple choices from those seven people who had participated in GoT film tourism more than once.

Question six inquired with whom had the respondents travelled when they participated in Game of Thrones film tourism. Most of them – eleven people - said to have done so with friends, while “with family” was the second most popular option with eight people having travelled with their families. The exact distribution can be seen from Figure 10.

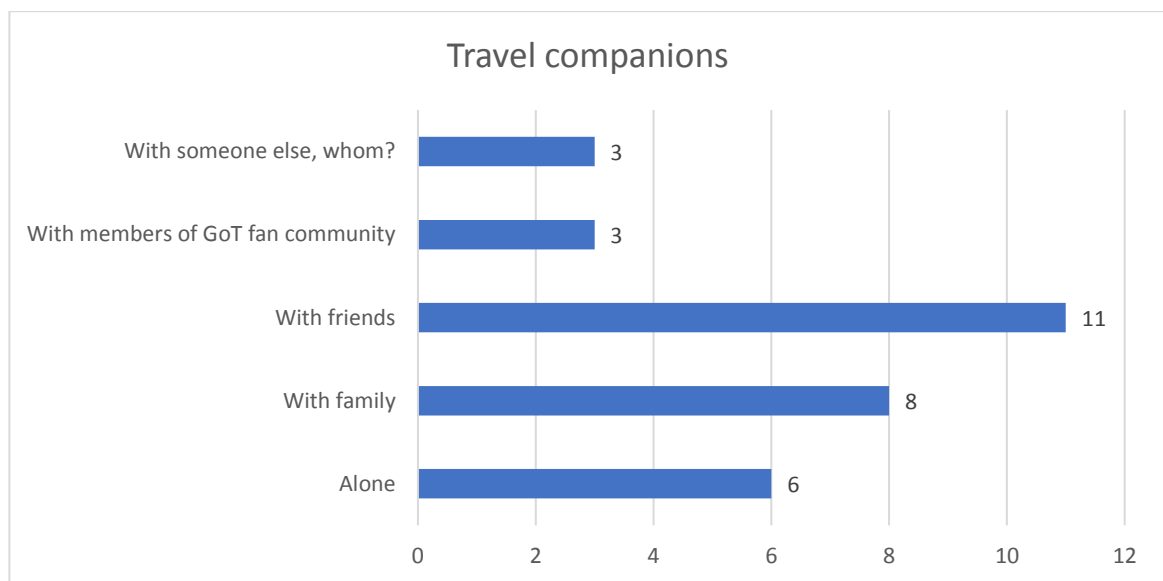


Figure 10. Respondents' travelling company

The respondents who said that they had travelled with someone else, stated that they had travelled with work colleagues, and one of them with a girlfriend. There was no distinctive separation between fans and not fans in regards to the travelling company.

The seventh question asked the participants to tick the Game of Thrones film tourism activities they had participated in. More than half of the participants said to have been inspired by Game of Thrones to visit a country or a city. This option was for the most part chosen as an addition to the main activity. Visiting the filming locations by taking an organised tour, and exploring them by oneself appeared to be the most popular activities. They were followed by fan events and the Game of Thrones Live experience concerts, both of which four of the respondents had visit-

ed. The three people who had visited the film studio, all took a tour in Belfast, which had it included. Thus there are no separate results for the film studio. The results are illustrated in Figure 11.

One other activity not listed, but mentioned by the respondents was a Game of Thrones Trivia night.

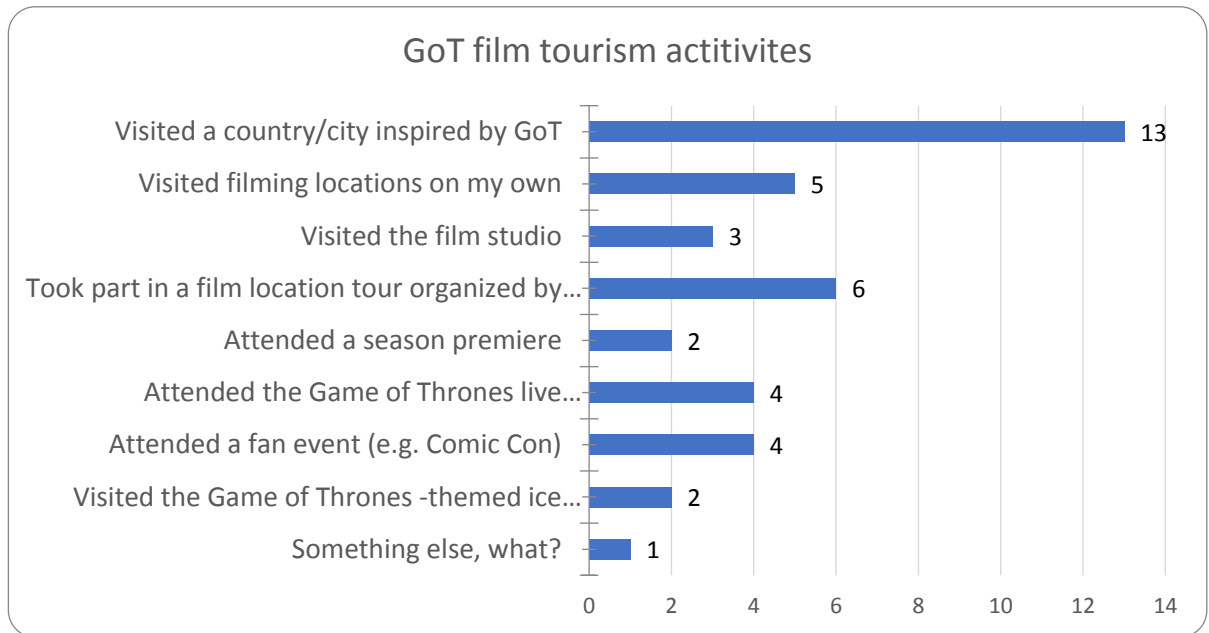


Figure 11. Participation in Game of Thrones film tourism activities

None of those who did not consider themselves as fans of Game of Thrones participated in tours or concerts.

Question eight was an open question and asked the respondents to specify the locations they had visited and the activities they had participated in. The locations mentioned were Azure Window in Gozo and Mdina gate in Malta; Dubrovnik and other locations in Croatia; Belfast, Magheramorne Quarry the Dark Hedges, Castle Ward, Ballintoy Harbor, the Caves of Cushendum, Downhill Strand, the Giant's Causeway, and other locations in Northern Ireland; and Osuna and Trujillo Castle in Caceres in Spain.

Live experience concerts attended were in London, Columbus Ohio and Washington D.C. Fan events mentioned were San Diego Comic-Con, Archipelacon, Game

of Thrones Exhibition as well as Titancon. One other fan event mentioned was Game of Thrones trivia night at Mo's Bar and Grill in San Diego, California.

One person had also attended the 5th season premiere gala at the Tower of London as well as Game of Thrones Exhibition premiere and after party in Stockholm. Another one had attended a Game of Thrones party in London:

*Went to a Game of Thrones party at Proud Camden (a night club in London) organised by the actor who plays Hodor (Kristian Nairn), which included DJing by the actor, a preview of the first episode of season 7, questions and answers with the actor, meeting and greeting the actor and some complimentary drinks. My friend and myself had VIP tickets which included some drinks and a private booth.*

Two persons had also visited the Game of Thrones-themed ice hotel in Kittilä, Finland.

Those who had visited the locations were inquired on scale 1-10, how important they considered the authenticity of the filming locations (see question 14 in the appendix). This question appeared only to those who had visited the filming locations either by taking a tour or exploring them by themselves. Four out of nine respondents deemed authenticity unimportant whilst the rest five considered it quite important. The exact ratings can be seen below in Figure 12.

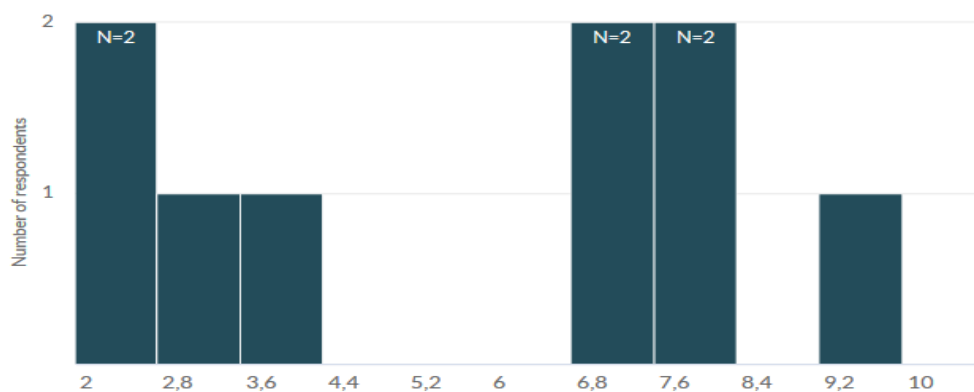


Figure 12. Importance of authenticity to respondents

Question nine inquired whether the visit to the Game of Thrones activity or location was the main reason for the trip. Fourteen of the participants answered that it was,

and ten said that it was a part of a holiday, whilst 3 had visited a location, not knowing that it was a filming location for Game of Thrones. Two thirds of those who did not know it was a GoT location were not fans of the series. Those who did not know the location they visited was a GoT filming location, stated that they had visited those places for their natural attraction, but that the value of the experience increased after knowing that fact. One of the respondents stated the following:

*It [The location] was a part of our cruise route, it looked beautiful and interesting and it was nice to notice it was a GoT-location and it seemed even more interesting after realising that.*

None of the respondents had spontaneously decided to visit a location or attend an event. The distribution can be seen below in Figure 13.

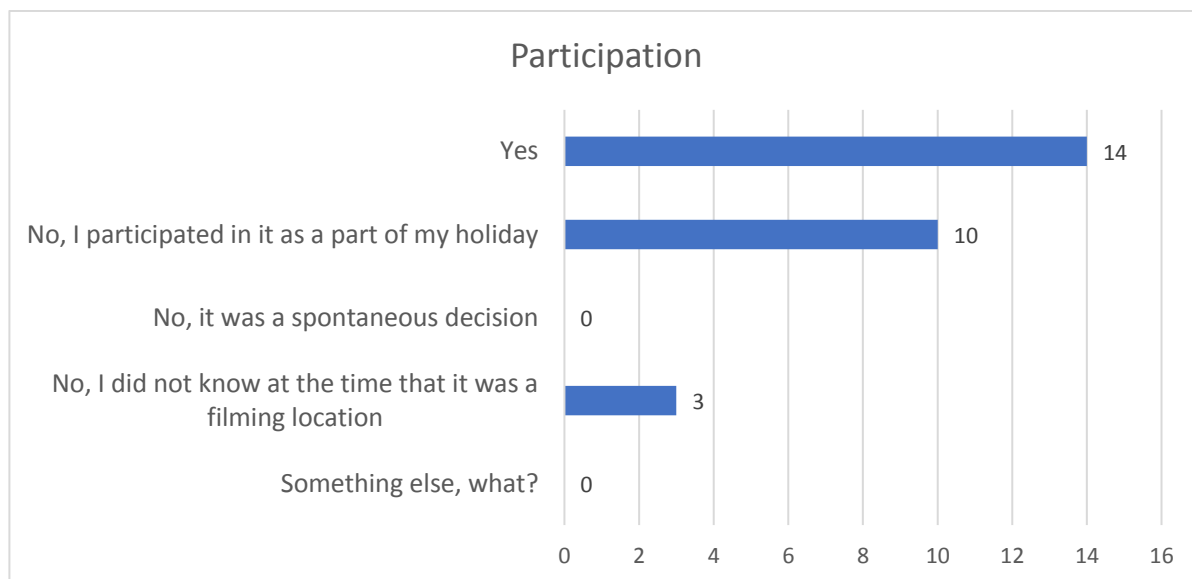


Figure 13. Was the visit the main purpose for travelling

Question eleven asked the respondents to choose the activities they had done during their visit. All five of those who visited filming locations on their own stated that they had taken a picture and a selfie. More than half of them also stated that they had taken a picture with a sign marker. Shot recreations were done by two of the respondents and roleplay and cosplay by one and two respondents respectively. Two of the respondents also used a guidebook or a film still during their visit, as



well as, bought a souvenir. One person also had interacted with other Game of Thrones fans.

All six Game of Thrones tour participants also took pictures with and without a sign marker, and five of them admitted to having taken a selfie. Four of them recreated shots, whilst one person did roleplay and half cosplay. Four of the participants also used a film still or a guide and all respondents stated they had bought a souvenir. Half of them also said they had interacted with members of GoT fan community during the tour. One person also mentioned having seen how a set was made.

All those who attended concerts also took pictures, three of them selfies and two a picture of or with a signpost. Three out of four also bought a souvenir and half met with other fans. One person also used a leaflet. None of the respondents met the composer.

Half of those four who attended fan events took selfies and pictures with signs, while three of them took other pictures and one met with the cast and got a picture with them. One person also got an autograph from George R. R. Martin. One person also did cosplay and three met with other fans as well as bought a souvenir.

One of the two who attended premieres also took selfies and pictures and both of them a picture with a signpost. Both also met with the cast and took pictures with them. They also met with fellow fans and the other bought a souvenir.

The two people who visited the ice hotel only took pictures of the surroundings and with a sign and the other one took selfies. None of the participants in the survey photographed miniatures, met the composer or got autographs from the cast.

The results of the activities done are illustrated below in Figure 14.

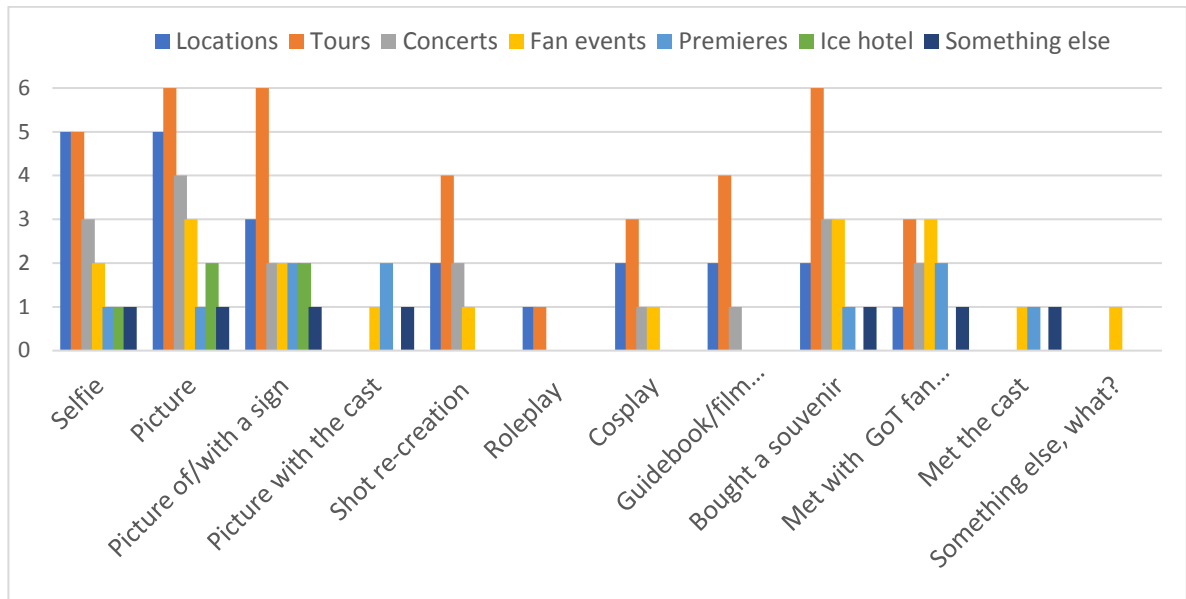


Figure 14. Tourism activities done by the respondents during the different visits

Those who were not fans of the series are included in the results. They took selfies, pictures, pictures with signs, and one of them met the cast and took a picture with them. They also bought souvenirs and interacted with the fan community.

### 6.3 The motivation factors

There were three different questions on motivation. One of them was an open question, which allowed the respondents to give the reasons they chose to participate in their chosen GoT film tourism activity without any incentives. The two others utilised the sets of push and pull motivations by Macionis (2004) and asked them to rate them based on their importance in regards to the chosen activity.

The open question was the tenth question in the survey and asked the respondents to give the three main reasons why they visited the locations or attended a fan event or a concert. Of those who visited Game of Thrones filming locations by themselves stated the love of the series, prestige, reliving the series and vicarious experience as reasons for the trip. Many of them also implied that the locations they visited, for instance, Azure Window in Gozo, Malta, were attractions in their own right and thus reason enough for the visit. One of them even admitted to not having known that the location was a Game of Thrones filming location until afterwards. The person then visited another GoT location on purpose and stated

the curiosity of seeing if the location was recognisable from the series as a reason for it.

Those who participated in a tour, also mentioned the love of Game of Thrones, prestige and reliving the series as well as following the characters' footsteps and standing where they stood. Additional reasons mentioned were curiosity, a wish to meet an actor, a wish to see how authentic the locations were as well as to view a tourism destination from a different point of view. Visits to the filming studio were part of the Belfast tours.

Love and obsession of Game of Thrones were also mentioned by the respondents who attended Live experience concerts. They also spoke of the chance to relive the series. The main reason, however, was the music itself. Another reason mentioned was the proximity of the concert.

Those who attended fan events stated reasons such as meeting fellow fans, cosplay, seeing other people's costumes as well as meeting George R. R. Martin or an actor, for attending.

Respondents who attended season premieres similarly mentioned meeting George R. R. Martin as well as the actors, and seeing the preview with other fans, as reasons for their attendance.

Reasons for visiting the Game of Thrones-themed ice hotel were a wish for a unique experience, curiosity, and fandom. One of the respondents stated that their family goes to the area every year.

All reasons stated by the respondents are shown below in Figure 15.

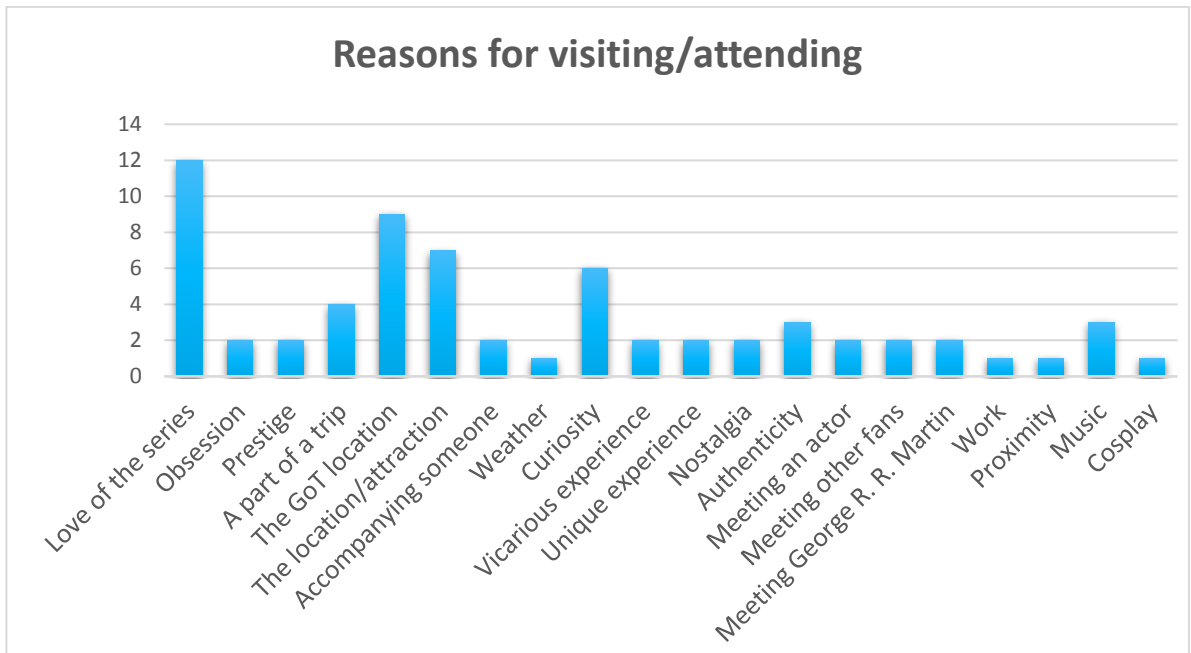


Figure 15. Reasons for visiting/attending locations, events, and concerts

Work, as part of a trip and the location/attraction itself were reasons for those participants who did not consider themselves as fans of the series. Accompanying someone was also a reason for a participant who was not a fan but not exclusively so.

The second motivation question, question twelve, asked the respondents to rate a list of push motivations based on their importance to them in regards to their visit or activity. The results are separated between fans and non-fans of the series. For fans of the series who visited the filming locations on their own, the most important push motivation was relaxation, with novelty and fantasy coming a close second. Other highly rated were curiosity and self-actualisation. For the non-fans of the series curiosity, novelty, social interaction, and romance were the most important push factors.

The tour participants deemed pilgrimage, curiosity, and novelty as the most important. Nostalgia, education, relaxation, fantasy as well as escape and vicarious experience were also considered highly important. All tour participants were fans of the series.

Fantasy was the most important push factor for all attendants in the Live experience concerts. Other important motivations were escape, relaxation as well as curiosity, nostalgia, and novelty. All participants were fans of Game of Thrones.

Fantasy was also considered to be the most important push motivation for fan-participants in fan events with escape and relaxation following close behind. Education, novelty, curiosity, and nostalgia were also deemed fairly important. Non-fans, on the other hand, deemed education and curiosity as the most important push motivations. Status/prestige, novelty, social interaction, escape, nostalgia, and ego-enhancement were also rated highly.

For fan-participants in season premieres curiosity, novelty, social interaction, relaxation and escape as well as fantasy were considered the most important. Non-fans, on the other hand, deemed education and curiosity as the most important push motivations. Status/prestige, novelty, social interaction, escape, nostalgia, and ego-enhancement were also considered important among non-fans.

Fantasy, curiosity, and novelty were the most important push motivations for those fans who stayed in the ice hotel. In addition, status/prestige, social interaction, escape, relaxation, self-identity, and self-actualisation were deemed important. For non-fans, fantasy and romance were most important.

For the Game of Thrones trivia night education, escape, relaxation, pilgrimage, and fantasy were the most important push motivation factors.

Overall, based on the average of all activities, the push motivations such as curiosity, relaxation, fantasy, and novelty were rated as the most important for fans of Game of Thrones, while non-fans deemed curiosity and education as the most important ones. All push factors and their ratings for fans and non-fans can be seen below in Figure 16.

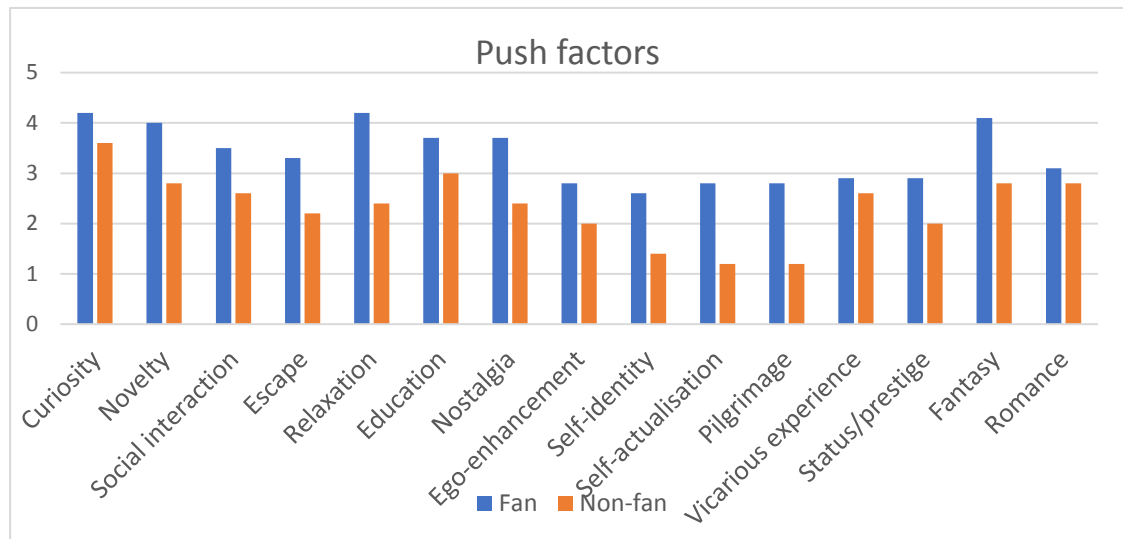


Figure 16. Push factors based on their importance to the GoT fans and non-fans

The third motivation question, question thirteen, asked the survey participants to rate a list of pull motivations based on how important they were in drawing them to their chosen location or activity. Again, the findings are separated between fans and non-fans of Game of Thrones. Genre, plot, and theme were deemed the most important pull factors among respondents who are fans and visited filming locations by themselves. Weather, scenery, and landscapes, on the other hand, were considered important in drawing the non-fans to the locations.

Theme was also the most important pull motivation for the tour participants. Closely behind followed plot, scenery, and landscapes for them as well. Other fairly important pull motivations were genre and venue. As stated, all participants were fans of the show.

Music was the most important drawing factor for concerts. The theme, plot, and composer were additionally important influencers. None of the non-fans attended any concerts.

Characters, theme, genre, and cosplay were the highest rated pull factors for fans attending fan events. Genre was also the most important pull factor for non-fans, followed by venue, cast, and theme.

Activity origin, cast, characters, plot, theme, and genre were the most important pull factors for fans who had attended season premieres. Non-fans rated genre equally important, while venue, cast, and theme were rated next important. Venue, on the other hand, was considered the most important pull factor for the ice hotel among the fans of Game of Thrones. It was followed by scenery, landscapes, weather, cultural origin, social origin, and activity origin. For non-fans, landscapes and weather were considered most important.

Venue, cast, characters and plot and theme were deemed most important for the GoT trivia night. Other fairly important pull motivation was cultural origin.

Based on the average of all activities, theme, scenery, plot, landscapes, genre, and venue were the most important pull motivations for fans. Non-fans, on the other hand, were motivated by genre, scenery, and landscapes as pull motivations. All pull factors and their ratings are shown below in Figure 17.

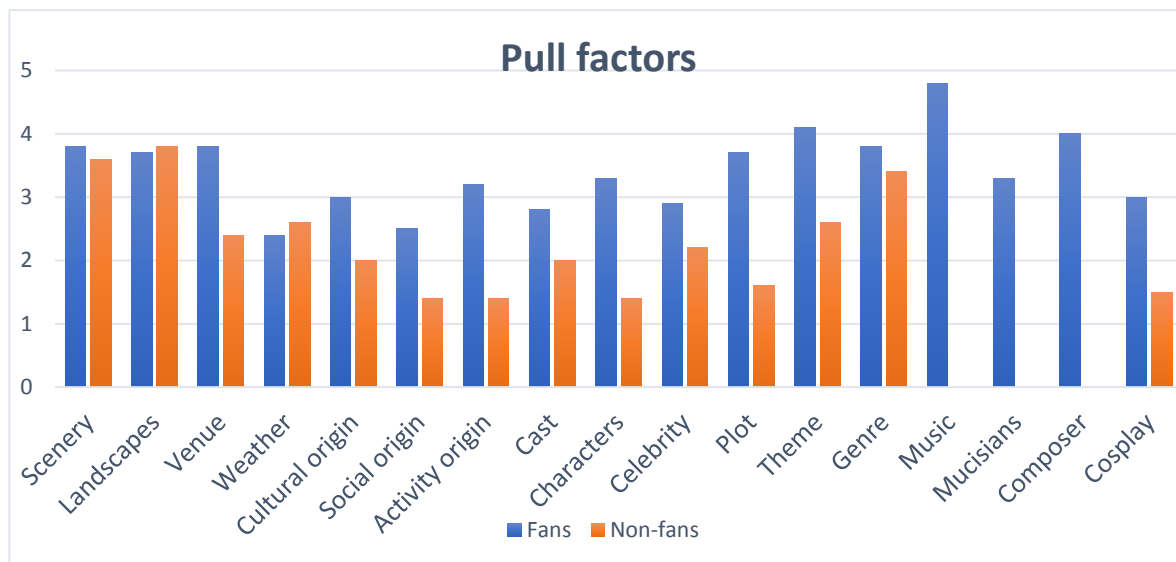


Figure 17. Importance of Pull motivations to the fans of Game of Thrones

#### 6.4 The satisfaction and highlights of the experience

This part focuses on the experiences of the respondents concerning their satisfaction and highlights of the activities.

In question fifteen the respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with their visit or activity or not, and to explain why or why not. All of the survey partici-

pants replied that they had been satisfied regardless of the activity they participated in. This included all the non-fans as well. Reasons given for the satisfaction for those who visited locations were the view, perfect shot recreations, seeing the locations and recognising them, getting to explore the locations and following a favourite character's footsteps.

Those who participated in a tour mentioned the tour itself, the programme, excellent guides, following a favourite character's footsteps, getting to re-enact a scene, beautiful landscapes and meeting a guide who had been an extra in the show.

The concert experience and the music itself was the source of satisfaction for those who attended the Live experience concerts. One of the respondents said the following:

*Very satisfied. They did a wonderful job showcasing the music of the series, and explaining its development. The visual effects were great, especially the pyrotechnics.*

Those who attended fan events mentioned meeting new interesting people and seeing the amazing costumes to explain their satisfaction. Those who attended season premieres, on the other hand, put their satisfaction down to good atmosphere and the actors being friendly and approachable.

The ice hotel itself and the whole experience was mentioned to be the source of satisfaction for those who had stayed there.

The sixteenth question asked the respondents to tell the highlight of their trip. Those who visited the locations by themselves or with a tour mentioned the view, the scenery, the filming locations themselves, for instance Magheramorne Quarry, Dark Hedges and Azure Window, having George R. R. Martin as a tour guide, the tour itself, weather and food, seeing a set, standing where the characters have stood, dressing up in Game of Thrones theme, recreating shots and getting to hold a piece of the set.



Those who visited the concerts identified the music itself as the highlight. Especially hearing the song The Rains of Castamere was mentioned by several respondents.

The respondents who had attended a premiere mentioned the novelty of seeing the first episode of the new season before others, meeting and talking with the cast and interacting with other fans, as the highlights.

Highlights of the fan events according to the respondents were cosplay, interacting with other fans and having a family member meet with George R. R. Martin. For the ice hotel visitors, the ice sculptures were mentioned as the highlights.

Question seventeen inquired how likely the respondents would recommend Game of Thrones film tourism. More than half definitely recommend it, while six people not necessarily. Five people stated that they would not recommend GoT film tourism. The exact distribution can be seen below in Figure 18.

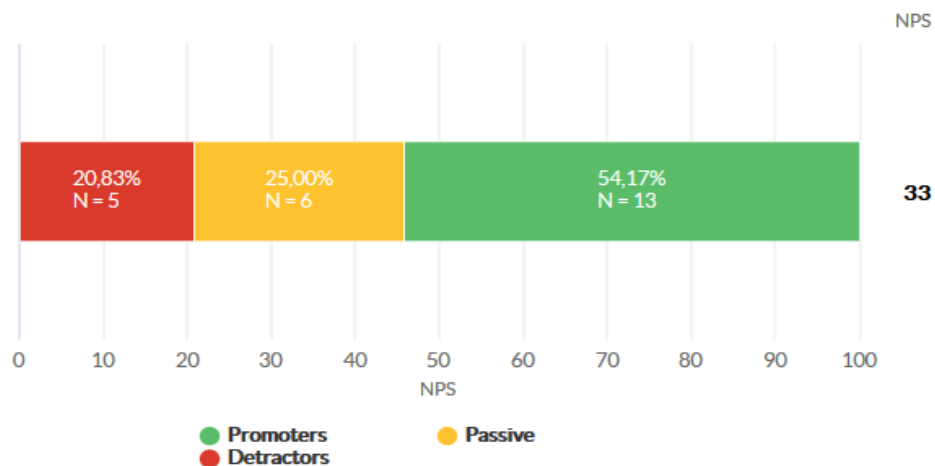


Figure 18. The likelihood the respondents would recommend GoT film tourism

Only half of those who would not recommend Game of Thrones film tourism or were passive did not consider themselves to be fans of the series.

## 6.5 The future plans in regards to film tourism

This part concentrates on the results concerning the respondents' future plans in regards to Game of Thrones film tourism and film tourism in general.

Question eighteen inquired if the respondents planned to do Game of Thrones tourism in the future and questions nineteen to twenty-one to give reasons for the answer. More than half stated that they planned with certainty to visit locations, participate in concerts and/or fan events. One person also planned to visit the ice hotel. Reasons for continuing to do Game of Thrones film tourism were the love/obsession of the series and getting immersed in the world, the wish to see more locations and good and fun previous experiences. Those who planned to see the concerts also mentioned the love of the soundtrack and hearing it live as reasons for wanting to attend. One person, planning on attending another concert stated the following:

*because this is a cultural phenomenon, right along the lines of harry potter levels of beauty and how it captivates you*

Six of the respondents said that they would possibly continue to do Game of Thrones film tourism. Some said that they might because it was fun and others if they happened to be in the proximity.

Only one person did not plan to do any Game of Thrones film tourism due to the fact that she is not a fan of the series. Other than that, all non-fans also planned or possibly planned to do Game of Thrones film tourism in the future.

The distribution can be seen in Figure 19.

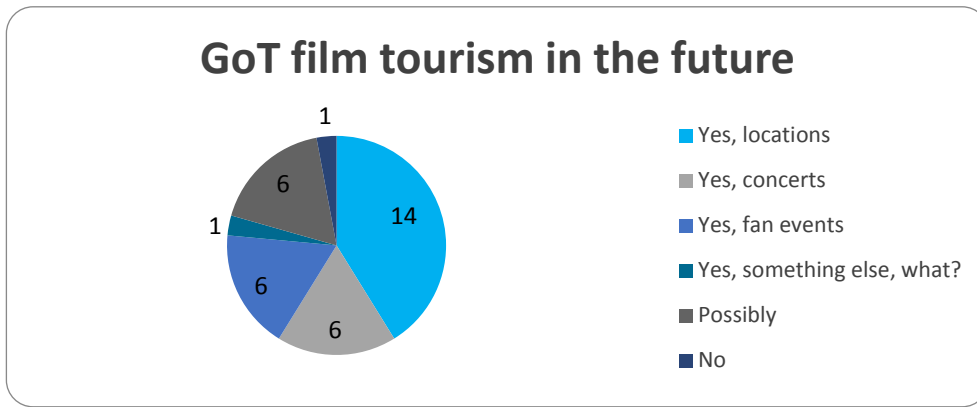


Figure 19. Participation in Game of Thrones film tourism in the future

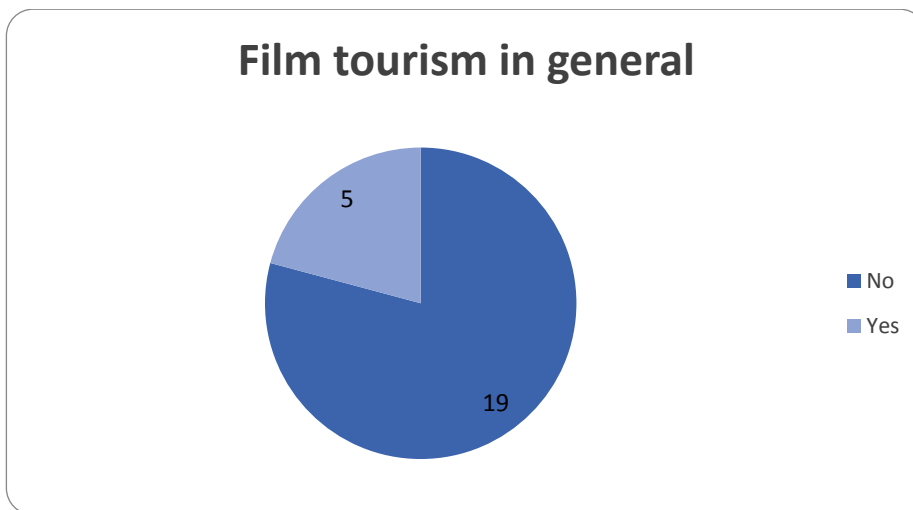


Figure 20. Participation in film tourism unrelated to Game of Thrones

Question twenty-two, on the other hand, inquired whether the respondents had participated in film tourism in regards to some other films. Only five of the respondents had done so (See Figure 20). Question twenty-three asked those who had, to specify which films had inspired them to do film tourism and which locations they had visited. Films and locations mentioned were Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter Park in Universal Studios Florida, Harry Potter and Sherlock locations in London, as well as Universal Studios Hollywood and a 20th Century Fox production centre in Baja California, Mexico.

Those who had never participated in any other film tourism than Game of Thrones referred to the following reasons: money, proximity and lack of interest in other

films. Some also said that they just had not had the chance yet, or had not previously thought of it.

Question twenty-five focused on the future plans of the respondents concerning film tourism unrelated to Game of Thrones. More than half stated that they might participate in it if they had money, if something was near them and if they found a film as interesting and inspiring as Game of Thrones.

Those who definitely would do film tourism mentioned Harry Potter studio and locations, Outlander in Scotland, and Lord of the Rings and Hobbiton as places of interest. Some also said they would visit anything if they got the chance.

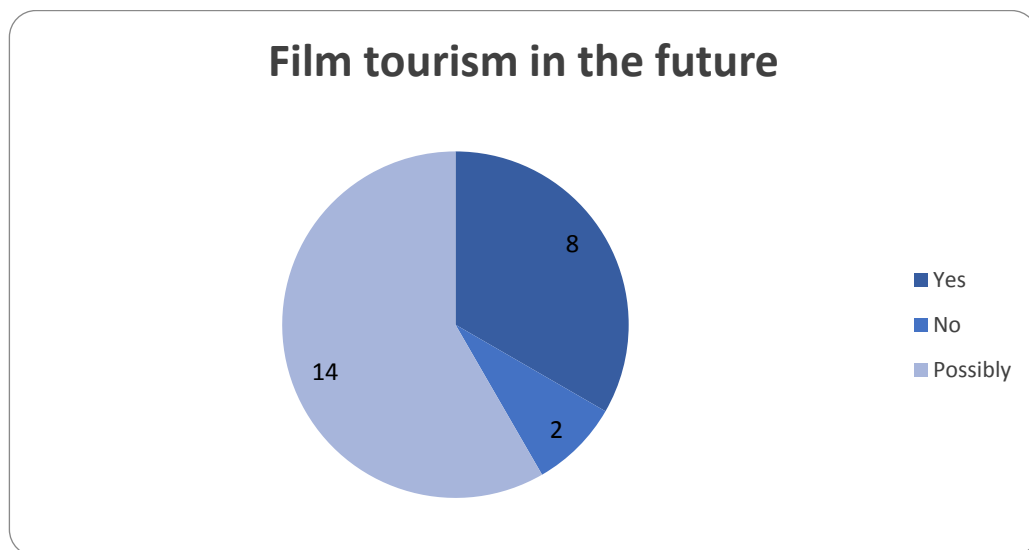


Figure 21. Participation in film tourism not related to Game of Thrones in the future

Those who did not plan to do film tourism in the future either could not state any reason or stated the lack of attachment to films as the reason, preferring to base their travels on interesting places, culturally or historically, rather than because of something from pop culture like films. The distribution of the future plans can be seen in Figure 21.

## 7 Discussion of the results

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the reasons why film tourists travel, if travelling to the film location or event was the main purpose of the trip, and what makes the film tourists satisfied with their experience.

The response rate to the survey was very low with only 24 participants and thus the results gained from this survey cannot be applied to the whole population. Hence the findings are not reliable or valid and can only be considered directional at best.

According to the findings of this survey, all the film tourists participating in Game of Thrones film tourism are aged between 15 and 64, most of them 25-39, which would correlate with the target group of the series. With 13 different nationalities within 24 respondents, it could also be said that Game of Thrones film tourism is a global phenomenon. The gender distribution according to the results implied that most Game of Thrones film tourists are women, but with such a small response rate it is impossible to generalize this. The fact that five out of nineteen respondents stated that they were not fans of the series needs to be taken into consideration when studying the results.

The first research question in this thesis aimed to find out was the motives of a film tourist; why they travel.

Macionis (2004) suggested a set of push motivations and pull motivations for film tourists, which were utilised in the survey. The research conducted found out that people identified these motivations in themselves at least to some degree and some of them were even mentioned in the open question regarding the travel reasons before the set lists.

The findings of this research support the idea that motivations are fluid and different for each individual and each activity, but that shared motivations exist as well. Based on this research the main push motivations for film tourism among those who are fans of the film are curiosity, relaxation, and fantasy as well as novelty. For non-fans, the research suggests curiosity and education as the primary push moti-

vations. These push factors would suggest that the respondents were general film tourists as Macionis' (2004) continuum indicates.

The primary pull motivations for fans, on the other hand, were theme, scenery, plot, landscapes, genre, and venue. For non-fans, they were genre, scenery, and landscapes. The findings would agree with Macionis' (2004) 3Ps with Place and Performance being the main pull factors and confirm that the place and the story of the film do have drawing power.

Based on this research it is also implied that not all film tourists are fans of the film as five of them stated that they did not consider themselves as fans of Game of Thrones despite having participated in GoT film tourism. Their motives were accompanying someone, visiting the place because of a tour not related to Game of Thrones, visiting the place due to its own attraction value whilst not knowing its connection to Game of Thrones, and work. These film tourists would fit Macionis' (2004) type of serendipitous tourists for not having much of an interest in the film itself. Macionis (2004) also stated that serendipitous tourists often do not participate in tourism activities. This is supported by the research findings as the tourist activities the film tourists who were not fans of GoT participated in were the basic ones such as taking selfies and pictures, and buying souvenirs.

The second research question was to find out whether film tourism is the primary reason for their trip. Fourteen of the respondents stated that they had done Game of Thrones film tourism as the main purpose and ten participated in it as a part of a holiday while three had not known it was a GoT location at the time of their visit. The results included both fans and non-fans of the series. Most of the respondents who had done film tourism as the main purpose had done activities, which require planning on at least some level. For instance, all concerts, premieres, fan events and most tours were done as the main purpose. These require purchasing tickets and being at a specific location at a certain time to attend, so it is not surprising that the respondents who had done any of these activities had done them as the main purpose of their trip. Visiting locations by oneself while on holiday as a spur of the moment is easier when there are no time limits. Based on the results, however,

no one had done film tourism as a spontaneous decision, so it could be concluded that the visits during a holiday were also somewhat planned.

It is difficult to know how the respondents have understood the options and if they have understood the main purpose in the manner it has been meant, as in travelling to a location or an activity precisely with the purpose of visiting it instead of participating in it because they happened to be there, as was the purpose of the option “No, I participated in it as a part of my holiday”.

Due to the few results achieved it is impossible to say either way if film tourism is planned or not. There was no major distinction between those who said they had participated in film tourism as the main purpose and those who had done so as a part of a holiday. Neither had fandom any effect on this. The future plans regarding Game of Thrones film tourism and film tourism in general also indicate that both types appear, as some of the respondents definitely planned on doing film tourism, while others would if they happened to be in the proximity.

All in all, the results suggest that film tourism is done both as the primary reason and as a secondary reason. They also indicate that certain activities which require more careful planning and preparation, such as concerts, would more likely be done as the main purpose, while location visits by oneself would fall onto holidays or other trips.

The third research question was to find out what the film tourists get out of their experience. All respondents of the survey stated that they had been satisfied with their visit or activity. However, there was no single reason mentioned that could be applied to all of film tourism. The reasons stated and the highlights mentioned varied from respondent to respondent and while some film tourism types had similar responses, they cannot be generalised in any way.

However, it would appear that satisfying their needs and motivations made the respondents satisfied with their experience. For instance, some respondents mentioned vicarious experience as a motivating factor when asked to state three reasons for participating in the activity. They also rated it highly important among the

push motivations and then mentioned it as a reason for satisfaction and/or as a highlight. Some also had novelty and status/prestige as the main motivations and these were satisfied by being at the location and getting to hold and/or take a picture with a piece of the actual set.

Thus it would appear that what the film tourists get out of their film tourism experience depends on what they seek from it, to begin with. And if their need is satisfied, they will deem the experience successful.

Interestingly enough, while all of the respondents stated that they were satisfied with their experience, only a little over half would very likely recommend film tourism. Those who did not consider themselves fans of the series responded that they likely would not recommend it or were passive, which partly explains this result, but even among those who said they are fans and definitely or possibly plan to continue doing Game of Thrones film tourism, replied that they would not recommend it. No explanation for this was found from the survey results.

The questions regarding the travelling habits and the future plans of the respondents were asked to get an idea on what kind of tourists were in question. Seventeen out of 24 respondents had done Game of Thrones film tourism only once, but all respondents apart from one, responded that they planned to or possibly planned to continue to do some type of Game of Thrones film tourism in the future. This included also those who stated that they do not consider themselves to be fans of the series.

In regards to other film tourism, not related to Game of Thrones, only five people had participated in it previously. However, eight of all respondents planned to do so in the future and 14 were open to the possibility. It could be hypothesised that the satisfaction and enjoyment of the previous experiences allow film tourism to continue its existence and growth.

Based on the lack of previous participation in Game of Thrones film tourism and film tourism in general, as well as the motivation factors suggested in the research, it can be assumed that most of the respondents are not what Macionis (2004) calls



specific film tourists. The motivations suggest that the fans are general film tourists and the non-fans are serendipitous film tourists. However, if the respondents' future plans and participation in the tourism activities are any indications, it is possible that at least some could become specific film tourists.

## **8 The conclusions and evaluation of the process**

The fact that motivation is a complex field of study with multiple dimensions became once again very clear during the process of this thesis. There is no single motivation that applies to all people and often there are several different motivations that induce people to act. It is possible that when asked, a person is unable to identify what exactly motivated them to do something, or that they are not even aware of it. Similarly, satisfaction is dependent on individuals and their needs, wishes, and expectations.

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the reasons why film tourists travel if travelling to the film location or event was the main purpose of the trip, and what makes the film tourists satisfied with their experience. To find answers to these questions, the popular HBO series Game of Thrones was chosen as a case study and a research was conducted with a quantitative method, by distributing an online survey through social media on several different Game of Thrones groups, pages, and forums. There is no previous research done on Game of Thrones as a film tourism candidate.

The theoretical part supports the empirical part and clarifies the concepts used in the research. It included information on film tourism and its types, Game of Thrones and film tourism related it, as well as motivation theories in tourism and film tourism to give the reader the knowledge to understand the empirical part.

The results gained in the empirical part are directive at best, due to a low response rate to the survey and thus caution needs to be exercised when interpreting them. They cannot be considered valid.

The findings suggest that film tourists who are fans of the film are mainly motivated by push motivations such as curiosity, relaxation, fantasy, and novelty and pull motivations such as theme, scenery, plot, landscapes, genre, and venue. Non-fans, on the other hand, are motivated by curiosity and education as the primary push motivations, and genre, scenery, and landscapes as pull motivations.

The research also suggests that activities which require more careful planning and being dependent on a schedule, such as attending concerts, are more likely to be done as the primary purpose for travelling. However, film tourism was done both as the main purpose and as a part of a holiday and was no clear distinction found between the two in the results.

According to the findings, film tourists gain some psychological notion of satisfaction out of participating in film tourism. The reasons for the satisfaction depend on what the individual expected and what their needs and motives were beforehand.

Overall the thesis process went well, especially in the theoretical part. However, there were quite a few problems with the research itself. The response rate for the research was a lot lower than expected and despite the author's efforts to promote and distribute it for an additional week, it remained low. Thus the results are directive at best and cannot be considered valid or generalised in any way.

A possible reason for the low response rate is, for instance, the fact that the survey was distributed in between seasons and thus the hype and discussion of Game of Thrones was not as eager as it usually is.

Social media was a good choice to distribute the survey in terms of reaching different nationalities and people who had done different GoT film tourism activities. However, finding groups and forums where these people were active was difficult as there were no existing sites the author could find. Social media is also a problematic tool in the manner that all posts disappear among others quite fast if the admins of the groups/forums do not pin them to the top of the pages. The author was unable to get any - apart from one - of the 10 admins contacted to cooperate in this manner. In addition, there were problems in promoting the post as many

sites considered these kind of surveys and asking people to answer them as spams and thus did not allow the posts to go through at all.

The gained answers were for the most part very informative and there was no indication that some of them would have been invalid. It is, however, possible that some terms, for instance in the list of pull factors, caused confusion or that the respondents did not fully understand what was meant by them. Such were, for instance, activity origin and social origin. Some questions in the survey could have also been phrased differently or asked more specifically. For instance, the question about satisfaction could have been also done in Likert scale to get an idea if the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience. Also, the reason why they answered as they did could have been put separately and made obligatory to guarantee answers to it. It was, however, positively surprising that all activities had respondents despite the fact that they were so few, and that the survey reached people from so many different nationalities.

Despite the problems with distributing the survey and acquiring answers to it, the thesis process went quite well. The theory was relatively easy to write and done with time to spare to keep the survey online for an additional week. Everything was done on time.

All in all, while the response rate was not as high as would have been desirable, the results do give some suggestions of motivations which likely cause film tourists to travel and what they get out of the experience. Thus the objectives of the thesis were, for the most part, met.

The author recommends that the survey is repeated during a more suitable time, such as when the final season of Game of Thrones comes out. Also repeating the survey with partners from each activity type would allow a better response rate. Also gaining a partner and focusing on a specific type of GoT film tourism, such as concerts, would be a good idea as there is no data of Game of Thrones as a film tourism destination apart from this research. There is also lack of data regarding film tourism in general when it comes to for instance events and soundtrack con-

certs, so further research concerning the more “rare” forms of film tourism is required.

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**Appendix. The motives of a Game of Thrones film tourist survey****Motives of a Game of Thrones Film****1. I am \***

- Woman       Man       Other

**2. I am \***

- Under 15       15-24       25-39       40-63       64-79       80+

**3. My nationality is \***

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**4. I consider myself a fan of Game of Thrones \***

- Yes  
 No

**5. I have participated in Game of Thrones film tourism \***

- Once  
 Twice  
 Thrice or more

**6. I travelled \***

- Alone
- With family
- With friends
- With members of GoT fan community
- With someone else, whom?
- 

**7. What type of Game of Thrones film tourism activities have you done? \***

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visited a country/city inspired by GoT | <input type="checkbox"/> Visited filming locations on my own  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visited the film studio                | <input type="checkbox"/> Took part in a film location tour organized by a tour operator (e.g. in Dubrovnik) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a season premiere             | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended the Game of Thrones live experience concert                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a fan event (e.g. Comic Con)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Visited the Game of Thrones -themed ice hotel in Finnish Lapland                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something else, what?                  |   |
- 

**8. Please specify which locations/events/concerts you have visited/took part in? \***

If you have visited several please list them individually.

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**9. Was visiting the filming location/fan event/concert the main purpose of your trip? \***

- Yes
- No, I participated in it as a part of my holiday
- No, it was a spontaneous decision
- No, I did not know at the time that it was a filming location
- Something else, what? \_\_\_\_\_

**10. I visited the Game of Thrones filming location/fan event/concert because... \***

Please state the 3 most important reasons.

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**11. During my visit, I did the following activities: \***

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Took a selfie  | <input type="checkbox"/> Took a picture                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Took a picture of/with a sign                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Took a picture with the cast                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreated a shot from the series                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Roleplay as one of the characters                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dressed up as one of the characters/in Game of Thrones theme | <input type="checkbox"/> Got an autograph from the cast                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photographed miniatures (of e.g. characters)                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Used a guidebook/film still/leaflet               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bought a souvenir  | <input type="checkbox"/> Met with members of Game of Thrones fan community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Met the composer   | <input type="checkbox"/> Met the cast                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None of these  | <input type="checkbox"/> Something else, what? _____                       |

**12. Please rate the following motives based on how important they were to you in regards to your visit/activity:**

1= Not important at all, 5= Very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Curiosity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Novelty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social interaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relaxation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nostalgia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ego-enhancement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-actualisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pilgrimage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vicarious experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Status/prestige	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fantasy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Romance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**13. Please rate how important the following factors were in drawing you to your chosen Game of Thrones film tourism destination/activity: \***

1= Not important at all, 5= Very important

	1	2	3	4	5
Scenery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Landscapes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Venue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weather	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activity origin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Characters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Celebrity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Theme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Genre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**14. How important was the authenticity of the locations to you?**

Not important at all |-----| Very important

15. Were you satisfied with your visit/activity? Why/Why not? \*

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16. What was the highlight of your visit/activity? \*

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17. How likely would you recommend Game of Thrones film tourism?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Not likely at all												Very likely

18. Do you plan to visit Game of Thrones filming locations/fan events/ concerts etc. in the future?

- Yes, locations
- Yes, concerts
- Yes, fan events
- Yes, something else, what? \_\_\_\_\_
- Possibly
- No

19. Why do you plan to do Game of Thrones film tourism in the future?

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**20. Why do you not plan to do Game of Thrones film tourism in the future?**

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**21. Why do you possibly plan to do Game of Thrones film tourism in the future?**

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**22. Have you ever visited other film/series' filming locations/events etc.?**

Yes

No

**23. Which film/series' filming locations/events have you visited and why?**

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**24. Why have you never visited any other film/series' filming locations/events etc.?**

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**25. Do you plan to visit any other film/series' filming locations/events etc. in the future**

Yes

No

Possibly



**26. Which film/series' filming locations/events etc. you plan to visit in the future and why? \***

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**27. Why do you not plan to visit any other film/series' filming locations/events etc. in the future? \***

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**28. Why do you possibly plan to visit some other film/series' filming locations/events etc. in the future?\***

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