

Lab University of Applied Sciences
Business Administration, Lappeenranta
Degree Programme in International Business
Specialisation in Marketing

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How sustainability perceptions influence buying decisions in travelling industry? – Teko Travel case

Thesis 2020

Abstract

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The purpose of the thesis is to study the attitudes of people regarding sustainability and to determine to what extent they are influencing buying decisions in the travelling industry. Based on this study recommendations on marketing actions to Teko Travel, a Finnish start-up operating in the tourism industry, are given. In order to fulfil this objective, the concepts of ecotourism and sustainability as well as buying behaviour are considered. The role of sustainable lifestyle in the modern world is reviewed and the key dimensions of tourism such as accommodation, food and shopping are studied in detail.

The theoretical part of the thesis provides a framework to understanding the key concepts and to executing empirical research in the way that allows to get the most valuable insights. Firstly, it defines the concepts of sustainability and ecotourism in order to create fundament for the whole research. After that, such dimension of tourism as immersion travelling, accommodation, food and shopping are studied and the main sustainable practices within each dimension are identified. It is followed by analysis of buying behaviour that aims to find the role of sustainability among motivators of tourists. In the end of theoretical chapter potential marketing actions to be applied by tourism companies are considered.

The methodology and empirical parts describe precisely the data collection process and review the key results of statistical analysis. Empirical study allows to connect the studied theory to practice and to determine the actual attitudes of travellers towards sustainability. The empirical chapter proved the importance of sustainable lifestyle in various aspects of life and defined the areas where travel companies can make contribution in terms of education and minimization of environmental footprint of tourists.

The final chapter of the thesis includes a comprehensive summary of theoretical and empirical findings, answering the research questions and giving recommendations to Teko Travel on sustainability actions that can be implemented into the marketing strategy. Additionally, suggestions for future research are given.

Key words: sustainability, ecotourism, buying behaviour, sustainable travelling, motivation factors, marketing actions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Survey questions

1 Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to determine the extent to which sustainability perceptions influence buying decisions of consumers in travelling industry. The study helps to see if sustainable values play an important role in buying behavior and move travelers towards ecotourism.

First of all, it is important to understand that today the role of sustainable lifestyle is growing. According to the article of Townsend (2018) that reviewed the survey conducted by Futtera, *96% of people feel their own actions, such as donating, recycling or buying ethically, can make a difference*. That is why, to win customer appreciation companies should comply to principles of Corporate Social Responsibility. It is also worth mentioning that dominating majority of consumers would prefer brands to help them be eco-friendlier. This idea is proven by the Figure 1 below:

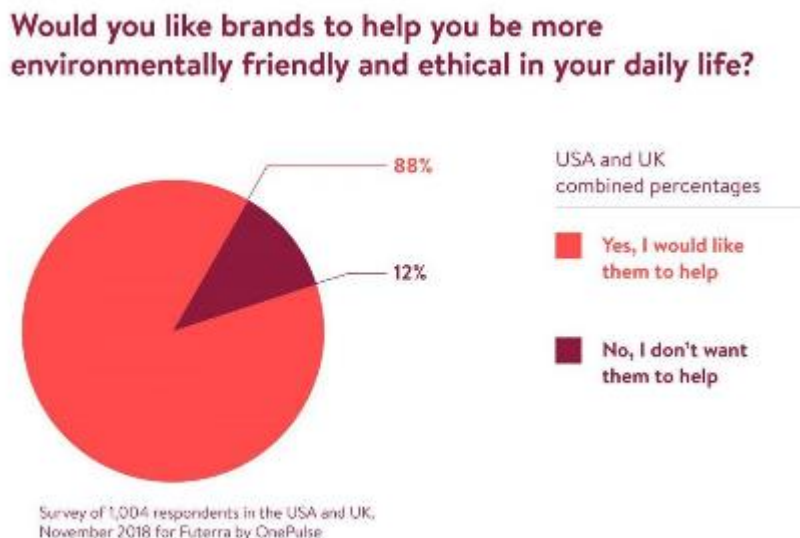


Figure 1. 88% of consumers want brands to help them live sustainably according to FUTTERA 2019 (Townsend 2018)

In order for companies to meet sustainability expectations of customers, it is crucial to analyze buying behavior regularly. It is especially important in tourism industry since this sector is rapidly growing. According to World Travel & Tourism Council (2019), during recent year travelling industry grew by 3.9%, and, as a result, became second-fastest growing sector in the world.

Moreover, the study is going to investigate not only customer expectations from companies but also their level of knowledge about sustainable travelling. *In fact, three quarters of travelers believe that making sustainable travel choices is important for saving the planet for future generations.* However, *only 50% of travelers understand what they can do to travel more sustainably, meaning it's up to tour operators, travel agents and DMCs to enable their customers to make sustainable choices.* (Booking.com 2019.) That is why it is important to discover such aspects of eco-travelling for which additional educating from the companies would be helpful.

1.1 Case company

To get most value of the results, the study is focused upon Teko Travel case. Teko Travel was founded in March 2019 and has been operating in Helsinki area since August 2019. The company creates travel experiences by connecting travelers with locals. Events and workshops organized by Teko Travel are designed to create unique experiences.

Examples of available services include forest immersion tour, urban distillery tour and guided tasting, wild herb foraging workshop, paints and wine workshop, and Helsinki tour with a city planner. The tourists must choose the activity they like, book it and meet the local host. To become a host, one should send a proposal of the activity he or she would like to organize and after that this offer will be considered. Further in this report, when it is stated “customers of Teko Travel”, travelers who book experiences are meant. However, when it is stated “hosts”, those who organize experiences are considered.

Currently, Teko Travel is integrating recommendation section to its website. It allows travelers to share recommendations as well as follow people in whose recommendations they are interested. As a result, people can get advice regarding places to visit from those whom they trust.

Teko Travel is a startup and from the start the company strives to find sustainable solutions for business. This research will help Teko Travel to gain insights on

sustainable development from customer buying behavior perspective and give advice on which actions to take.

1.2 Objective and delimitations

Based the above, the problem of the study can be stated as the need for companies in tourism sector to study buying behavior in terms of sustainability and to adapt business to customer preferences. Since Teko Travel is a company operating in the tourism industry, it has this need as well. Therefore, according to the described problem, the objective of the study can be defined as follows: giving recommendations to Teko Travel about marketing actions related to sustainability.

However, sustainability is a wide concept, which is why a range of delimitations is set. First of all, sustainability is considered from traveling perspective which leads to the concept of ecotourism. Ecotourism can be defined as *a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive, and locally oriented (control, benefits, and scale). It typically occurs in natural areas, and should contribute to the conservation or preservation of such areas.* (Fennell 2003, p.24.)

Secondly, the concept of ecotourism is considered from experiential perspective to bring most value to the case company. The services provided by Teko Travel are closely related to immersion traveling, which was defined by Fuggle (2016) as *a form of tourism in which people focus on experiencing a country, city or particular place* by connecting to its history, people and culture. In other words, it is the type of travelling that allows to see the destination from the eyes of a local rather than from comfort zone.

Thirdly, the study focuses on those dimensions of tourism that are the fields of interest for the case company. Tourism as well as ecotourism can be considered from various aspects such as transport, accommodation and food. In this research attention is paid to food, accommodation and shopping.

Additionally, the concept of buying behavior is studied from consumer behavior perspective because services of Teko Travel are purchased by final users. The study aims to understand motivational factors behind sustainability preferences, that is why within individual consumer behavior concept focus is done on motivational influences.

1.3 Research questions

Based on the problem and the aim of the study, the following research question is answered:

What marketing actions can be taken by Teko Travel to attract customers based on their preferences related to sustainability?

In order to get a precise and accurate answer, this question is followed by two sub-questions:

1. How willing are people to travel in a more sustainable way?
2. What preferences in buying behavior are dominating regarding sustainable traveling?

Answers are given through theoretical analysis as well as analysis of empirical findings.

1.4 Structure of the study

The research combines theoretical analysis that describes in detail the key concepts and empirical analysis that investigates practical side of studied theory. The main sections of the study include introduction, theoretical part that consists of several topics, methodological part, empirical research and conclusions. Below is a brief description of what information can be found in each chapter.

The first part of the study is presented in introduction and describes the background of the study and the case company to justify the value of research. Moreover, objective and delimitations as well as research questions are included to determine the direction of the research process. Finally, some details on structure of the whole thesis are provided.

The second part includes theoretical analysis, where the following key concepts are reviewed: sustainability, ecotourism and buying behavior. The concepts of sustainability and ecotourism are combined since in this case they are closely related to each other. Moreover, the following dimensions of tourism mentioned in delimitations are described: experiential travelling, accommodation, food and shopping. The goal is to define important aspects of these concepts that would help travelers to be eco-friendlier and determine if tourists are aware of these aspects and are willing to implement them into practice. This section is followed by theory related to buying behavior, where focus is laid on individual buying behavior as well as buying behavior motivators. Finally, theoretical part includes some research on marketing actions that companies can apply to meet sustainability needs of their customers. At this point the focus is done on the ones that are most relevant to Teko Travel.

The third chapter describes methodological issues considered in the study. It includes justification of chosen research method, description of data collection process as well as population and sampling. Moreover, data analysis process is described.

Mentioned above is followed by the empirical research. To be more precise, this chapter describes and analyzes the key survey findings. Empirical evidence helps to link theory and practice and get fresh insights on sustainability preferences in buying behavior.

The final chapter represents conclusions and discussion based on both theoretical and empirical findings. It answers research questions by providing recommendations to Teko Travel on marketing actions to implement in order to attract more customers and satisfy their sustainability preferences. Finally, ideas for further development and research are given.

2 Sustainability and ecotourism

The concepts of sustainability and ecotourism are considered together since in this case they are closely related to each other. This chapter defines the concepts

and provides important insights on them that are further studied in the empirical part. In order to build a theoretical framework, it is firstly essential to understand the definition of sustainability and substantiable development as well as the meaning of Sustainable Development Goals (later SDG).

2.1 Sustainability

Despite the fact that sustainability is a rather modern concept, it used to be considered from the 19th century and represented interstate cooperation to manage natural resources. According to Bert Vries (2012, p.122), the earliest examples of sustainability concerns included river commissions in Europe and agreements on seal hunting and fisheries. *In the course of the 1990s, the ambiguity and plurality of the concept became clear in divergent emphases on nature versus culture and on efficiency versus equity. A common denominator is to have a balance between the three P's: people, planet, profit.* (Vries 2012, pp.122 and 142.)

The concept of sustainability is commonly considered as a continuous process and, as a result, is defined through the concept of sustainable development. The latter can be defined as *a search for the preservation of quality of life in a continuous play between change and stability* (Vries 2013, p.142). Sarah Lumley (2010 p.6) claims that sustainable development is fundamentally a moral concept that has been developing through history and has led to recognition of importance of environmental conservation to long-term human welfare that allows to enhance wellbeing of humanity.

The term sustainability is broad and combines a variety of spheres, which is why the concept of sustainable development is to be interpreted in various ways. It was first applied in the *World Conservation Strategy* that emphasized the link between the conservation of biological systems and human wellbeing. However, the most popular and accepted definition today was stated in the Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*. *In that report, the World Commission on Environment and Development stated that sustainable development is: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".* (Lumley 2010, p.7.)

In order to understand the purpose of sustainable development, SDGs must be considered. SDGs address economic, environmental and social issues as described by Jeffrey Sachs (2012) in his article “From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals”. According to the United Nations (later UN), there are 17 SDGs that *are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental*, as mentioned above (United Nations n.d.). This report provides a brief description of the SDGs that are mostly related to travelling in a direct or indirect way. These goals are presented below:

- Good health and wellbeing comprise ensuring and promoting healthy lifestyles and wellbeing at all ages. In tourism this goal can be achieved through immersion activities such as hiking and cycling tours, for instance;
- Industry, innovation and infrastructure comprise creating resilient infrastructures and promoting sustainable industrialization and innovation. Infrastructure and innovation often affect travelling opportunities in the country and amount of resources needed to fulfill certain activity.
- Sustainable cities and communities refer to the idea of *making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable* (United Nations n.d.).
- Responsible consumption and production comprise ensuring and promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns. In tourism it is related to food and shopping practices.
- Life below water refers to conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources. Marine resources and life below water are influenced by means of travelling and immersion tourist activities.
- Life on land refers to protecting and using sustainably terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managed forests and other aspects relating to preservation of natural environment. (United Nations n.d.)

Moreover, the objectives of sustainable development have been defined by UK government, and these objectives pay a proper attention to social dimension of sustainable development. According to HM Government (2005), sustainable development objectives include:

- *ensuring a strong, healthy and just society,*
- *meeting the diverse needs of all people,*
- *promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion,*
- *creating equal opportunity for all, and*
- *mentions the importance of social justice and tackling inequality and social exclusion (Leigh et. al. 2012, p.69).*

As it can be seen from the above, sustainable development affects various dimensions of tourism to a certain extent, which proves that sustainable traveling can contribute to fulfillment of a range of SDGs. That is why, in this research, it is important to define the concept of sustainable tourism. According to the UN World Tourism Organization (1998), sustainable tourism means *leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and esthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems* (Leigh et. al. 2012, p.68). The most common form of sustainable travelling is ecotourism and this concept is analyzed in the following chapter.

2.2 Ecotourism

The concept of ecotourism has also been developing through years. The early definitions were mainly nature-oriented and did not consider cultural aspects of ecotourism. For example, in 1987 Laarman and Durts defined ecotourism as nature tourism in which traveler wants to learn more about destination because of his or her interest in certain features of a destination's natural history. Such tourism includes educational, recreational and adventure aspects. (Fennell 2003, p.19.)

Further definitions of the concept considered not only natural resources and nature aspects of travelling but also communities with which travelers interact. Thus, Goodwin in 1996 defined ecotourism as *low impact nature tourism which contributes to the maintenance of species and habitats either directly through a contribution to conservation and/or indirectly by providing revenue to the local community sufficient for local people to value, and therefore protect, their wildlife heritage area as a source of income* (Fennell 2003, p.20).

Nevertheless, this research examines ecotourism not only from the nature perspective but from the perspective of experiences and immersion travelling. That is why the following definition is the key one in the study:

Ecotourism is a sustainable form of natural resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, nonconsumptive, and locally oriented (control, benefits, and scale). It typically occurs in natural areas, and should contribute to the conservation or preservation of such areas. (Fennel 2003, p.24.)

Apart from the definition of the concept, it is important to mention the four fundamental pillars of responsible tourism that were provided by Hetzer. Hetzer (1965) claimed that the key aspects of sustainable travelling must include the following:

1. minimum environmental impact
2. minimum impact on- and maximum respect for- host cultures
3. maximum economic benefits to the host country's grassroots
4. maximum 'recreational' satisfaction to participating tourists (Fennell 2003, p.17.)

The above considerations prove that the business of Teko Travel has a great potential in order to contribute towards sustainable development in the tourism sector since the company is striving to create customer value by connecting host cultures with tourists.

Since the objective of the study is to give recommendations to Teko Travel on marketing actions, marketing perspective of ecotourism must be explored. It is important to understand the fundamental differences between ecotourism marketing activities and the ones of regular products. These differences have been identified by Mahoney (1988) and are presented below:

1. Tourism is primarily a service industry, where services are intangible, and quality control and evaluation of experiences are more difficult to envision.
2. Instead of moving the product to the customer, the customer must travel to the product or resource.

3. People usually participate in and visit more than one activity and facility while travelling. (Fennel 2003, p.87.)

Mentioned above proves that an educational approach and a good communication with target customers play an important role in marketing one's business from sustainability perspective. Moreover, Fennell (2003) claims that to promote business successfully, only certain customer groups must be targeted according to the offered product. Fennell (2003, p.89) refers to Ryel and Grasse (1991) who believe that the key two cornerstones of effective marketing in ecotourism include *attraction for tourists (which includes biodiversity, unique geography, and cultural history)*, and *tourism infrastructure to support the industry*. Therefore, companies are free to undertake various marketing activities according to mentioned idea. It means that cultural history and natural environment integrated in travel services can be marketed more intensively from ecotourism perspective to satisfy the growing need of customers in sustainable travelling.

Weaver (2001) claims that when company wants to focus more on sustainable travelling, it should not only spend time and monetary resources on marketing activities but also manage its offer (in this case services) in the right way. Managers should focus rather on benefits customers want to get than on experiences themselves; otherwise, customer satisfaction may decrease. Therefore, there is a common dilemma faced by managers regarding the ways to do both minimize environmental impact and provide visitors with memorable tourist experience, while at the same time affording benefits for local communities. (Weaver 2001, p.458.)

Written above proves that companies in tourism sector should find means to create customer satisfaction and at the same time encourage travelers to contribute towards sustainable development of destination. Weaver (2001, p.460) summarizes that *better experience development can be achieved by focusing on the needs and wants of the ecotourist and balancing this with the resources and capabilities of the agency*. Since the case company is a startup, it has limited re-

sources to invest in Research & Development. That is why to enhance sustainable corporate image, Teko Travel has to utilize available digital marketing tools and enhance clear communication with customers.

2.2.1 Immersion travelling

As it was previously mentioned, Teko Travel creates customer value by providing travel experiences, that is why additional attention should be paid to the concept of immersion travelling and experiential dimension of ecotourism.

Immersion traveling can be defined as a form of travelling that allows *to experience a locale like a local by embedding yourself in the culture of a destination, rather than simply viewing it from a comfortable distance* (Coakley 2018). Coakley (2018) claims in her article “Get a full cultural experience with immersion travel” that immersion travelling consists of learning more about local communities and meeting locals. The author provides some examples of immersion activities that include participating in activities organized by locals, sharing meals, homestay and learning language.

Immersion travelling can be also called experiential travelling. Another definition of the concept was provided by Fuggle (2016) who define experiential travelling as *a form of tourism in which people focus on experiencing a country, city or particular place by connecting to its history, people and culture*. Fuggle (2016) believes that tourism companies should not emphasize what their destination is like but focus on providing such activities that will allow travelers to see and experience the location on their own.

Fennell (2003, p.144) states that integration of tourism and recreation has played important role in the development of experiences. *Service is a key aspect which is common to both areas, but there does not appear to be the same level of importance given to service in tourism, as there is in the field of recreation, where the delivery service system is designed to ensure that the participant is satisfied* (Fennell 2003, p.144). This idea means that when it comes to experiential travelling, companies should not underestimate the role of recreational aspects in ecotourism and focus firstly on customer satisfaction while designing their services.

In order to understand the role of immersion travelling in modern tourism, it should be mentioned that the need for experiences has been rapidly growing and today continues to increase. It is proved by Flint who reviewed the top trends of sustainable travelling in her article “Travel will change for the better this year—here’s how” published by National Geographic. Flint believes that by 2019 immersion travelling has become one of the top priorities for tourists. Epic Private Journeys’ Brad Horn claims that now customers *want to be immersed in the destination and doing that by trekking, cycling, horse-riding, and experiencing authentic culture.* (Flint, n.d.)

In order to create a better understanding of what immersion travelling is, a list of key immersion activities with short description is presented below. The list is created based on recommendations of Bilal published by Greenheart, a community focused upon promoting sustainable travelling and encouraging travelers to become eco-friendlier.

1. Learning how to make a local dish refers to the practice of not just trying new dishes but learning more on how to make them by immersing in the culture.
2. Staying with a host family comprises the desire to feel like a local by getting *intimate glimpse of another culture.*
3. Being intentional about meeting locals comprises meeting up with locals and creating new relationships.
4. Learning the language refer to becoming more familiar with the culture by improving language skills.
5. Get off the beaten path and get lost comprises desire of trying activities that are not commonly practiced by majority of the tourists.
6. Going to local market refers to exploring the ways locals live and trying traditional cuisine.
7. Taking public transit comprises changing perspective of a city by navigating around new location the way locals do. (Bilal 2017.)

The goal of this study is to create understanding of what immersion travelling is and what is the relation to the services offered by Teko Travel. As it can be concluded from mentioned above, experiences provided by Teko Travel have common points with the immersion practices described and allow customers to integrate into local culture. According to Leigh (2012, p.154), *implementation of sustainable tourism products in small niches is possible by avoiding the involvement of the mass market-dominating tour operators*, which means that small companies such as Teko Travel can make valuable contribution to development of sustainable travelling practices. Empirical part of the study it will investigate which of Teko Travel's immersion activities customers find most attractive and for which extra communication as well as education is needed. It will allow more advanced planning of marketing actions in the way that would communicate sustainability perspective of experiences and encourage customers to be eco-friendlier.

2.2.2 Sustainable accommodation

Sustainable accommodation is the area of interest for the case company and the study aims to investigate what are the types of sustainable accommodation and what its key features are. Theoretical findings are used in empirical part to determine if respondents understand what sustainable accommodation is and if they prefer eco-friendly housing instead of traditional one. As a result, degree of needed communication and education to promote sustainable accommodation can be determined.

Sustainable accommodation is, to certain extent, related to the immersion travelling. As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, examples include staying with locals as well as house-sharing. Nevertheless, the most common form of eco-friendly accommodation is sustainable hotels and it will be considered first in this chapter.

Girling (2015, p.70) claims that *today, hotels view being perceived as eco-friendly as necessary in order to remain competitive*. Moreover, the author believes that *decisions taken in the construction and the operations of hotels directly impact the environment and the local community. During the last two decades, environ-*

mental considerations have become critical determinants of customer satisfaction, repeat visits, and competitive advantage for hotels. (Girling et. al. 2015, pp. 70-71).

Various hotels and hotel chains take steps to communicate sustainable housing practices to their customers. According to Ferrer Hotels (n.d.), a strong hotel chain in Mallorca and Menorca, sustainable or eco-friendly hotels can be defined as *establishments that try to reduce to the minimum the consumption of natural resources, the expense of energy or the emissions and they take special care of the waste treatment so their environmental impact is as low as possible.* Another example of hotels that communicate sustainable issues to visitors is Westin Ka'anapali Ocean Resort in Maui Hawaii that encourage customers to support sustainability in the following way:

- *Recycling— Divert recyclable cans, bottles and plastics from our landfills by utilizing the recycling receptacle...*
- *Food Donation— Your unopened non-perishable food items are generously donated to the Maui Food Bank....*
- *Conserve Energy— Turn off the lights in your villa when not in use.* (Girling et. al. 2015, p. 70.)

In order to investigate what kind of accommodation people prefer, it is important to understand the features of eco-hotels. Hotel can be considered as eco-friendly one if it implements some of the following practices:

1. measurement and monitoring of environmental impact which allows to decrease continuously environmental footprint
2. having sustainability as a separate department in team
3. providing healthy accommodation which includes concerns on customers health issues
4. implementation of innovations and new technology
5. taking care of community concerns (Green City Trips 2014).

According to Ferrer Hotels, accommodation is sustainable if *environmental, social and cultural principles* were taken into account at the time of its design, if

natural surroundings are respected, contribution to local communities is done and renewable energies are used. Moreover, consumption of local and ecologic alimentary products must be promoted, low-consumption illuminations as well as organic materials are used and, finally, bioclimatic construction rules must be respected. If one or more of these criteria are met, then accommodation is sustainable. (Ferrer Hotels n.d.)

As it was previously mentioned, another form of sustainable housing is house sharing. It allows to do both experience local culture by staying with locals and avoid living in hotels and, as a result, save resources. According to Yulia Palgan (2017), house sharing is a more sustainable way of living because it extends lifecycle of certain goods and products and decreases the need for production of new ones. In order to prove this idea, Palgan states *that in the accommodation sector, the expectation is that flats and houses owned by private people will be shared and their idling capacity will thereby be reduced. This will enable a more efficient use of physical capital, such as real estate and, consequently, fewer resources will be needed to build new properties.* (Palgan et. al. 2017.)

Rosenstein (2019) in his article “Economic benefits of home sharing: new industries, jobs” states that due to lower pricing of house sharing, travelers have the possibility to stay longer and, as a result, to spend more in the place of destination. It allows the host country to raise more money on tourism and contribute to development of the local community. However, Palgan (2017) claims that the fact that lower prices of house sharing motivate tourists to spend more on other activities may lead to the consequence that in total more resources are consumed that could have been if non-sustainable accommodation would be chosen.

Mentioned above means that when travelers book sustainable accommodation, especially house sharing, they must understand that they do it to contribute towards development of sustainable tourism rather than to save money. This idea may need additional communication from tourism companies to facilitate thinking of their customers in a sustainable way.

2.2.3 Sustainable food experience

As well as the previous chapter, this one is the area of interest for the case company and it is focused upon investigating sustainable practices regarding food experience. Nowadays food is becoming an important aspect of immersion traveling and popularity of food tours and other experiences related to food is growing. Theoretical findings of this chapter are used in empirical research to determine if travellers are interested in becoming more sustainable with their eating habits.

First of all, it is important to understand what food sustainability is. Baldwin (2015, p. 2) claims that *the goal of sustainability in the food industry is to produce and consume food in a way that supports the well-being of generations*. The authors describe 10 principles of food industry sustainability that address nutrition issues, agricultural production and environmental practices, sustainable food supply chain, packaging, food waste and consumption issues. This study focuses on immersion travelling which means that travellers try to understand the local culture through trying its food and learning more about local cuisine. That is why this chapter reviews mainly the consumption perspective of food sustainability.

It is believed that each stage in the supply chain plays a role in improving sustainability, which means that from farmer to consumer sustainable practices have to be applied and advanced. Consumer education helps to facilitate consumption and has to cover areas from choosing what food to eat to preparing this food in the right way. Additionally, it is important to connect consumer to the farm so they can better understand the value of sustainable choices. (Baldwin 2015, p.189.)

Baldwin (2015, pp.193-194) believes that brands play important role in educating consumers in terms of sustainability, including food sustainability. The authors refer to example of Innocent, the UK food and beverage manufacturer that promoted eco-friendly food practices to customers. According to Innocent, consumers can take the following five steps to contribute to planet's as well as their own health:

- *Eat less meat*

- *Eat more plants*
- *Throw less away*
- *Eat less processed food*
- *Eat better food* (Baldwin 2015, p. 194.)

When we talk about food sustainability in travelling industry, there are also certain practices that tourists can apply to be eco-friendlier. Some of them are described by Impact Travel Alliance, a global nonprofit community helping to improve world through sustainable traveling. According to Impact Travel Alliance (2015), choices regarding how and where to eat have impact on local community as well as the environment.

First of all, it is suggested to *seek out restaurants that utilize locally sourced and sustainable ingredients. Choosing foods that are regionally grown ensures the highest quality and lowest carbon footprint.* Secondly, switching between home cooking and eating out can help to be eco-friendlier. Choosing local dish to cook is also a way of immersing into the local culture. Another option is participating in workshops and cooking classes organized by locals. Thirdly, decreasing food waste is another practice that can be implemented while travelling. It can be done by choosing restaurants that strive to become zero-waste or improving shopping habits by analyzing one's diet and doing more frequent purchases but buying less items. (Impact Travel Alliance 2015.)

Finally, environmental impact of the food one buys must be considered. No matter while travelling or not, it is suggested to *avoid foods that come with excessive packaging if and when possible* (Impact Travel Alliance 2015). According to Morawicki (2012, p. 290), sustainable packaging helps to increase shelf life of foods, to avoid waste due to breakage and contamination as well as to maintain food fresh for a reasonable time. Moreover, considerations regarding *how natural resources (i.e. water) are used to produce the foods we purchase* also contribute towards sustainable food experience. Mentioned ideas means that the role of daily eco-friendly habits regarding food should not be underestimated while travelling, especially regarding food experience.

2.2.4 Sustainable shopping

It is a common knowledge that shopping is important aspect of travelling which means that certain shopping practices can contribute to development of sustainable tourism. This chapter discusses the concept of shopping experience as well as eco-friendly practices that can be applied while travelling. The theoretical findings are used in empirical research to determine degree of willingness of travelers to be more sustainable regarding their shopping habits.

Timothy and Hall (2005) believe that *shopping is among the most common and enjoyable activities undertaken by people on holiday and, in many cases, it provides a major attraction and basic motivation for travel. Butler (1991) noted that the relationships between shopping and tourism could be divided into two categories. The first is where the primary purpose of the tourist trip is to shop. The second is where shopping is done as a secondary activity during a trip which might be motivated primarily by something other than shopping (e.g. sunbathing, ecotourism, etc.).* (Timothy & Hall 2005, p. 42.)

This research considers shopping as a dimension of ecotourism which means that among two approaches mentioned above, the second one that describes shopping as a secondary activity while travelling is reviewed. In other words, this approach can be defined as tourist shopping. *Heung and Qu (1998) and the Tourism Shopping Implementation Committee (1990) define tourist shopping as the expenditure of tangible goods by tourists either for consumption in the destination (excluding food and drink items) or for export to their home countries/regions* (Timothy & Hall 2005, p. 70).

Timothy and Hall (2005, pp. 75-76) refer to the study by Travel Industry Association of America (2001) that identified 10 reasons people do shopping while traveling. The most popular ones are presented below:

- something to do,
- wish to buy something for other people,
- having event or holiday for which something must be bought, and
- souvenirs of the trip.

The role of the last point should not be underestimated. *For many travelers, purchasing a memento is an extremely important action and a trip would hardly be considered complete without having bought something to take home.* The authors, Timothy and Hall refer to MacCannell (1976) and Swanson (1994) who believe that souvenirs and other collectibles can have a function of prolonging the travel experience. However, according to Anderson & Littrell (1995), *in tandem with buying items for themselves because they are useful and of personal interest and buying souvenirs as reminders of their trips, purchasing souvenirs or other items as gifts for people at home is one of the top three reasons tourists shop.* (Timothy & Hall 2005, pp. 77-84.)

Mentioned ideas prove importance of shopping as a dimension of ecotourism and the need to integrate it towards sustainable travelling. Therefore, this chapter must determine the practices for travelers that can be considered eco-friendly in terms of shopping.

Victoria Gomelsky (2019) in her article “Shopping with sustainability in mind” refers to Alden Wicker (n.d.), the founder of the sustainable fashion and travel blog Ecocult, who claims that sustainable shopping considers of two main factors: choosing the right brand and the right item to buy. Wicker states that nowadays *there are a large number of brands attacking sustainability on every front. Brands trying to detoxify their supply chains. Brands who’ve signed on to the Bangladesh fire and safety accords to make factories safer.* It means that brands integrate sustainable practices more and more in their business; therefore, choice of the right brand contributes to development of sustainable shopping. Moreover, about souvenirs Wicker claims that it is unsustainable to buy something for another person that he or she does not want or going to use. This facilitates production to replace such goods on shelf and results in waste of resources. (Gomelsky 2019.)

Ideas mentioned above can be proven by Dunston who describes 6 principles of sustainable shopping that can be applied around the world. Dunston believes that *one of the easiest ways to travel more responsibly is to shop more responsibly* (Dunston n.d.). The eco-friendly shopping practices provided by the author are listed and briefly described below:

1. Buying ethically comprises reading information on labels and tags to ensure that products are ethically made.
2. Supporting fair trade refer to paying attention to stickers and certificates in the shop that confirm fair trade status. It means that the products are produced and sold according to World Fair Trade Organization principles that require commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.
3. Buying organic and eco-friendly products comprises purchasing organic products from farmers markets and looking for brands with eco-friendly image.
4. Buying local and direct comprises purchasing from shops where products are sourced locally.
5. Keeping traditions alive refers to supporting traditional crafts or contemporary applications of traditional techniques in one's shopping practices, especially when it comes to souvenirs.
6. Choosing vintage over new refers to buying from charity shops and vintage stores which allows to contribute to the local community and experience culture by focusing on shops where locals buy. (Dunston n.d.)

As it can be seen from mentioned above, there are simple shopping practices that can be applied by tourists and that can contribute to development of sustainable travelling. In the empirical research it is important to understand if travelers are already implementing eco-friendly shopping practices and if additional education regarding this topic is required.

3 Buying behaviour

Buying behaviour is the factor that guides our intentions to choose certain brands or products. Therefore, in travelling industry it determines what kinds of activities tourists prefer, which brands they choose and which travel trends they are willing to follow. In Teko Travel case the services are purchased by final user which means that focus on consumer behaviour should be done. This chapter is designed to define the buying behaviour and consumer behaviour concepts as well as motivational factors of tourists and the position of sustainability amongst them.

3.1 The concept of buying behaviour

In order to understand the concept of buying behaviour and consider it from consumer level, it is important firstly to define the term itself. Dudovskiy (2013) refers to Enis (1974) who claims that buying behaviour can be defined as *a process, which through inputs and their use through process and actions leads to satisfaction of needs and wants.*

As it was mentioned above, in the case of Teko Travel services are purchased by final users, and this fact leads to the concept of consumer behavior. In 2010 Kumar (2010) said that consumer buying behavior *“refers to the buying behaviour of final consumers, both individuals and households, who buy goods and services for personal consumption”*. From marketing perspective, consumer behavior must be studied from various perspectives such as *reasons behind consumers making purchases, specific factors influencing the patterns of consumer purchases, analysis of changing factors within the society and others.* (Dudovskiy 2013.)

The last factor mentioned above that needs to be studied is changing factors within society which means that changes in the market and way of thinking of people affect their buying behaviour. This idea is proven by Carter (2019) who reviewed a survey conducted by ClickZ that discovered that *over half (50.7%) of US marketers believe that new tech leading to changes in behaviour is the marketing trend that people need to pay attention to over the next 12 to 18 months.* It means that due to technological advancements and other factors, market is regularly changing which affects the buying behaviour and the way consumers act. That is why there is a need for companies to do research regarding preferences in buying behaviour to satisfy customers better and increase customer value of services.

According to Foxall (2014, p. 35), consumer decision-making is influenced by social structure aspects such as reference groups, family, social class, and culture and individual influences such as personality, self-concepts, attitudes, perception and learning, and dissonance. Moreover, buying behaviour must be considered as a process which can be spitted into the following stages:

1. *the development and perception of a want or need*
2. *pre-purchase planning and decision making*
3. *the purchase act itself*
4. *and post-purchase behaviour which may lead to buying, repeat sales* (Foxall 2014, pp. 35, 39-40).

As it was mentioned above, Foxall (2014) claims that influences on buying behaviour and consumer behaviour itself can be distinguished as individual and group. In this study buying behaviour is considered from personal level and the goal is to understand motivating factors behind sustainability preferences in travelling industry. That is why the chapter below considers motivational issues in buying behaviour with focus on motivational factors of tourists.

3.2 Motivational factors in buying behaviour

Motivated behaviour is activity that is directed towards the attainment of a goal or objective. The author believes that the two key elements of motivated behaviour include goal or objective which acts as *an incentive and which is usually located outside the individual* and *state or condition within the motivated person which stimulates action*. The latter can be a social need such as popularity or a psychological drive such as thirst, for instance. (Foxall 2014, pp. 73-74.)

Another definition of motivation and motivated is provided by Bown-Willson (2019). She claims that the concept of motivation can be defined as *an internal state that drives people to identify and buy products or services that fulfill conscious and unconscious needs or desires*. Motivational behaviour can be defined as the behavioral aspect of consumer motivation concerning the actions someone takes before purchasing and consuming goods or services. It means that various customers need different time for pre-purchase activity and consider different factors before selecting among alternatives. (Bown-Willson 2019.)

3.2.1 Types of motives based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Before motivational influences of tourists are considered, it is important to mention that people are motivated not only by physiological needs but also by the social ones such as desire of social acceptance and self-esteem. The levels of

needs and motives can be examined through Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs presented in the Figure 2:

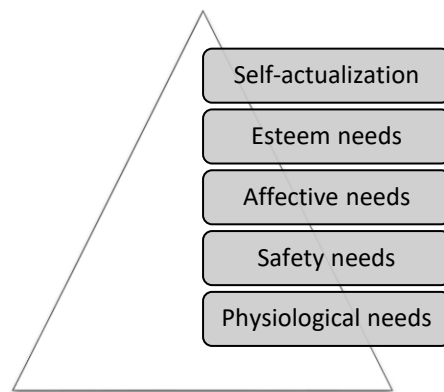


Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Foxall 2014, p. 75)

According to chart presented above, *the satisfaction of a lower-order need triggers the next level of needs into operation, demanding new patterns of behaviour on the part of the individual*. After all bio-genic needs are satisfied, the behaviour is driven by more advanced motives such as self-esteem, self-realization and opportunity to invest person's talents and abilities in meaningful activities which can be done through leisure activities and creative pastimes. (Foxall 2014, pp. 74-76.)

3.2.2 Motivational factors of tourists

This section aims to explore motivational factors of tourists and tries to understand what motives guide buying behaviour in the travelling industry. *Motivation is a state of need or a condition that causes the tourist to take action – in the case of tourism motivation, to take a holiday that is likely to bring satisfaction by addressing the aforementioned state of need or condition* (Robinson et. al. 2011, p. 39).

Iso-Ahola (1982) proposed that tourism motivation is composed of both escape and seeking which are two motives that act simultaneously. Moreover, along with this idea Iso-Ahola suggested that motives of tourists have both a psychological (personal) and a social (inter-personal) component. Therefore, driving force of

tourism behaviour can be classified into four dimensions such as personal seeking, personal escape, interpersonal seeking and interpersonal escape. (Robinson et. al. 2011, pp. 39-40.)

Mentioned above leads to the definition of push and pull factors that guide motivational behaviour of tourists. In 1997 Gnoth stated that *push factors are defined as internal motives or forces that cause tourists to seek activities to reduce their needs, while pull factors are destination generated forces and the knowledge that tourists hold about a destination*. According to Uysal and Jurowski (1994), push factors are *intrinsic motivators, such as the desire for escape, rest and relaxation, prestige, health and fitness, adventure and social interaction*. Pull factors *emerge due to the attractiveness of a destination, including beaches, recreation facilities and cultural attractions*. (UK Essays 2018.)

Motivation influences of tourists can be also classified according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs described in the previous chapter. First of all, tourist must satisfy lower order needs such as need for suitable hotel rooms and high-quality restaurants, for instance. After that, tourist focuses on higher-order needs such as learning new culture and emerging in the destination. (UK Essays 2018.)

According to UK Essays (2018), *the subject of tourist motivation involves questions about why people travel*. These questions influence relationships between an individual's motivations and selection of a destination. Krippendorf (1987) identified the following tourists' motivation:

- *recuperation and regeneration,*
- *compensation and social integration,*
- *escape,*
- *communication,*
- *broadening the mind,*
- *freedom and self-determination,*
- *self-realisation,*
- *happiness.* (UK Essays 2018.)

Most of the reasons mentioned above are related to immersion travelling and need for experiences. Therefore, they can be classified as higher order needs in Maslow's Pyramid. As it was mentioned in previous chapters, sustainable travelling indicates tourists' desire to be more sustainable in their travel activities which

means that higher order needs are satisfied by fulfilling this desire. Moreover, as it was proven previously in this study, both tourism industry and need for sustainable lifestyle are constantly growing. Therefore, it is important to understand the role of sustainability among tourists' motives to travel and to choose certain destinations and activities. This study aims to fill in this research gap through empirical evidence.

4 Potential marketing actions to be applied by tourism companies

This chapter is designed to review existing theory on ecotourism marketing, and marketing of experiences. Along with empirical research this chapter helps to determine which communication channels customers prefer most.

Ryel and Grasse (1991) suggest that the two cornerstones to effective marketing in ecotourism are the attraction for tourists (which includes biodiversity, unique geography, and cultural history), and tourism infrastructure to support the industry. These criteria must be utilized by tourism agencies in planning their marketing actions to attract customers. Companies can classify tourists into two categories: "born" ecotourists and "made" ecotourists. The latter includes the people who can be unfamiliar with this form of travelling but can be attracted through effective marketing. Ryel and Grasse suggest that a basic approach to marketing the ecotourism product is through (1) the identification of the characteristics of a desired group, (2) appropriate advertising, (3) careful crafting of the advertising message, and (4) the development of a mailing-list. Additionally, demographic, psychographic and geographical variables must be included in segmentation of customers. Mayo (1975) suggested that demographics alone are not effective which means that other factors must be also considered such as level of knowledge on sustainable travelling, for instance. (Fennell 2003, p.89.)

4.1 The concept of green marketing

This topic leads to the concept of green marketing, which was defined by Peattie (1995) as *the holistic management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirements of customers and society in a profitable and sustainable way. Green marketing differs from other conventional approaches to marketing in the following four ways:*

- 1. It has an open-ended rather than a long-term perspective.*
- 2. It places greater emphasis on the natural environment.*
- 3. It treats the environment as something that has an intrinsic value over and above its usefulness to society.*
- 4. It focuses on global concerns rather than those of individual communities.*

(Fennell 2003, pp. 92-93.)

Ward (2020) defined green marketing as *the process of promoting products or services based on their environmental benefits* and believes that companies who implement it into their marketing activities discover *that demonstrating a high level of social responsibility can increase brand loyalty among socially conscious consumers*. It happens due to the educational approach of green marketing which allows customers to learn from the brand and increase their environmental awareness. (Ward 2020.)

4.2 Marketing of experiences

Mahoney (1988) has suggested that tourism marketing fundamentally differs from the marketing of other types of products in three important ways: (1) tourism is primarily a service industry, where services are intangible, and quality control and evaluation of experiences are more difficult to envision; (2) instead of moving the product to the customer, the customer must travel to the product or resource; and (3) people usually participate in and visit more than one activity and facility while travelling. Moreover, travel companies cannot target the whole market which means that the role of segmentation in marketing is high. Target marketing can occur in four main ways: (1) geographically, on the basis of geographical space;

(2) demographically, based on age, gender, religion, race, etc.; (3) psychographically, based on individuals' lifestyles, attitudes, values, and personalities; and (4) benefits, which include an analysis of the benefits sought by tourists and the costs they avoid. (Fennell 2003, p. 87.)

Mentioned above leads to the concept of experiential marketing that emphasizes the consumption experience perspective. The characteristics of experiential marketing can be defined as follows:

- focus on customer experiences,
- considering consumption as a holistic experience,
- considering customers as irrational and emotional animals,
- eclectic methods and tools (Frochot & Batat 2013, pp. 21-22).

As it was mentioned above, in tourism industry the customer must travel to service or resource, which means that marketing of experiences strictly relies on promotion and communication with travelers. According to TravelNet, a powerful ecommerce platform providing online business building tools for travel companies, the most effective strategies to communicate with customer include the following:

1. Creating blogs about travel comprises sharing meaningful articles on one's own website and third parties helps to increase traffic to the website and increase value for customers by providing expertise in certain niche.
2. Effective Social Media Marketing refers to identifying several Social Media platforms target audience uses most, helps to establish personal relationships with customers and increase engagement with the brand.
3. Email Marketing refers to building customer database and contact list allows to distribute offerings effectively by reaching huge audience.
4. Providing incentives comprises incentives and benefits for customers help to trigger visitor engagement on website, Social Media and other channels.
5. Sharing reviews and testimonials refers to providing some exceptional a high-quality service helps to collect testimonials and reviews from customers which increases trust to the brand. (TravelNet Inc. n.d.)

Based on mentioned above, it can be seen that clear understanding of target audience, the right segmentation and effective communication with customers are vital elements of experiential marketing and marketing of ecotourism. Empirical part of this research helps to investigate importance of communication tools for customers.

5 Methodological issues

This research aims to discover dominating preferences in buying behavior regarding sustainable travelling, which means that relationships between variables should be analyzed. Therefore, quantitative research method is applied.

Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind. It means that quantitative research is focused upon discovering the underlying motives and desires, using in depth interviews for the purpose, and reasons behind human behavior while quantitative is focused upon collecting data and understanding relationships within it. (Kothari 2004, pp. 3-4.)

Since the goal of this study is understanding what the preferences of people regarding sustainable travelling are and not the reasons behind these preferences, quantitative design is most appropriate for empirical part. Additionally, it worth being mentioned that research is descriptive. *Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present.* This research is suitable for measuring preferences of people and can be executed through surveys of various kinds. (Kothari 2004, p.3.)

5.1 Data collection

Data for empirical research was collected through a survey. As it was described in the previous chapter, survey is an effective tool to be used in descriptive and quantitative research which aims to discover customer preferences. Survey can

be defined as a tool for *the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions* (Check & Schutt, 2012, p. 160).

The survey designed included 16 questions that were spitted into 5 sections including:

- background questions,
- attitudes towards sustainable travelling,
- experiential travelling,
- accommodation, food and shopping,
- and attitudes towards marketing actions.

These sections helped to investigate the profile of respondents, their willingness to travel in a sustainable way, degree of their interest towards experiences provided by Teko Travel, degree of their knowledge about sustainability in various dimensions of travelling and attitudes towards communication tools brands can utilize.

The survey included non-comparative, multiple item and attitude measurement scales. The most frequently used scale was Likert attitude scales where respondents had to rate each statement based on the strength of their personal feeling towards it. Example of such question is presented I the Figure 3 below:

5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

5 - strongly agree, 4 - agree, 3 - neither agree nor disagree, 2 - disagree and 1 - strongly disagree.

	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to travel in a sustainable way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to be more sustainable while travelling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like travel companies to help me travel in a more sustainable way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to pay more for sustainable products/services while travelling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 3. Likert attitude scale question from the survey

Data was collected online, and the process was around 14 days. Survey was created in Webropol 3.0 and distributed with the help of the case company

through its Social Media channels. Sampling and profile of respondents are presented in the following chapter.

5.2 Sampling

The population of the study includes current and potential customers of Teko Travel as well as people who are aware of the company, follow its Social Media accounts or interacted with its website. The representatives of population are tourism-lovers and, therefore, consider traveling to be their hobby. Additionally, these people travel occasionally and many of them consider themselves as frequent travelers. The Figure 4 describes the profile of a population representative:

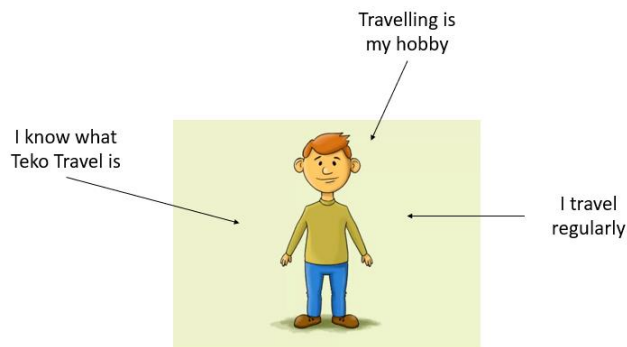


Figure 4. Profile of a population representative

According to Janna Larma, the Founder of Teko Travel, the population of the study includes 400 representatives. The sampling method was convenience sampling which is a type of non-probability sampling. This sampling type was chosen because participants could self-select into the study through the published link on Teko Travel's Social Media Channels.

Social Media channels were chosen for survey distribution because Teko Travel is a young startup which means that it does not have high traffic on the website or a rich customer database for email marketing. Therefore, easiest and fastest way to target respondents is on Instagram because users are most engaged there. It happens due to the possibility of doing regular interactions with followers.

In total, the survey was completed by 113 respondents. According to the statistics dominating majority of participants of 69% are female while only 31% accounts for men. Additionally, 79% of respondents are young people aged between 18

and 26 years old. Additional information on profile of respondents is presented under the “Background of respondents” section of empirical findings to determine if participants fit the population criteria.

5.3 Data analysis

Data from the survey was analyzed in SPSS 26. Before analysis was conducted, data was exported from Webropol and organized in SPSS 26. The variables have been renamed to display the content of the survey questions in a proper way, value descriptions have been edited and measurement scales have been defined.

Moreover, the missing values have been eliminated. Two of the missing values were found under “Age” variable and were replaced with the Mode value of 21. Mode was chosen because it describes the most frequent age among respondents and the outliers do not affect its value. Several more missing values were discovered in a couple of questions with Likert scale. They were replaced with the most frequent value identified with the help of Frequency tables. Frequency tables were chosen because they help to identify the most common attitude among sample units.

After data has been cleaned, statistical analysis was conducted with the help of bar and pie charts, descriptive statistics, crosstabulation, Chi-Square test and Frequency tables as well as analysis of changes done through Wilcoxon’s and Friedman’s tests. The findings discovered are presented in the following chapter.

6 Empirical findings

This chapter represents the insights discovered through the primary data collection. Empirical research helps to link studied theory with practice and analyze attitudes and preferences of people regarding sustainable travel practices. As it was mentioned in the methodology chapter, the survey is structured in 5 sections, and empirical findings are organized in a respective way.

6.1 Background of respondents

This section describes data related to the profile of respondents and helps to determine their attitudes towards travelling. First of all, it should be mentioned that majority of 68% of respondents are young people aged between 20 and 24 years old. Additionally, most of the sample units are female which accounts for 69% of total. These insights are proven by the Figure 5 and Figure 6 presented below:

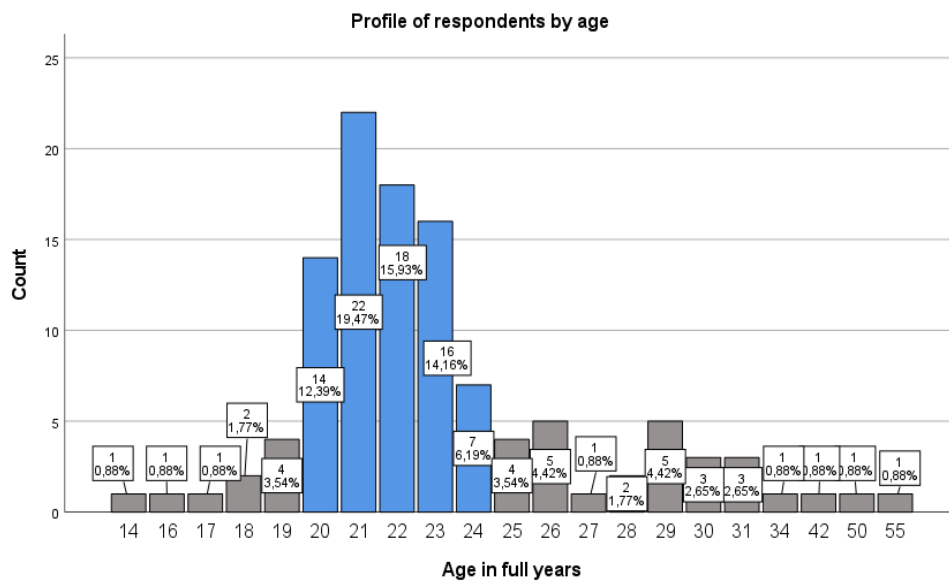


Figure 5. Profile of respondents based on age

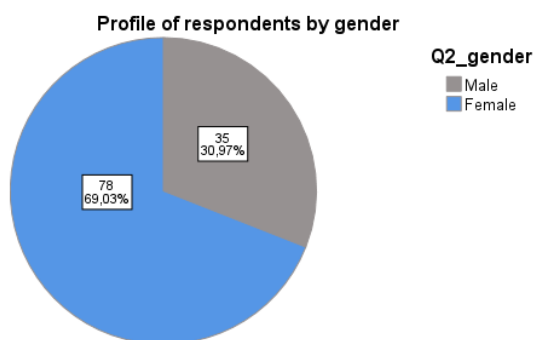


Figure 6. Profile of respondents based on gender.

Moreover, 77% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that travelling is their hobby while 71% consider themselves to be frequent travelers. However, only 17.70% of participants strongly agree that they are frequent travelers which

means that though travelling is a hobby of many people, they do not have opportunities to travel too frequently. These statements are displayed in the Figure 7 and Figure 8:

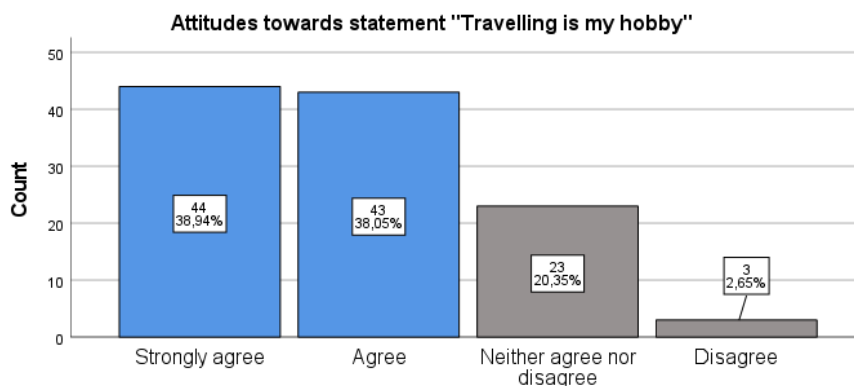


Figure 7. Attitudes towards statement "Travelling is my hobby"

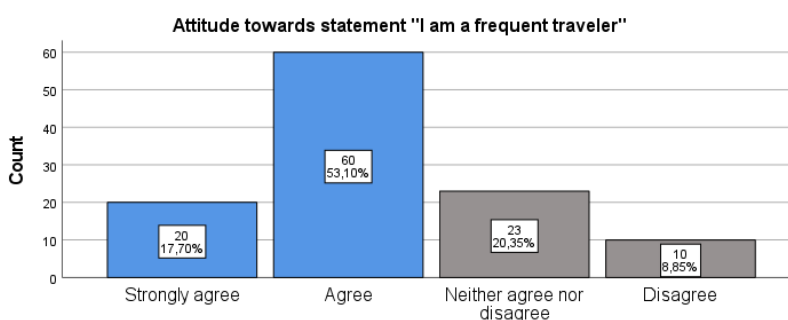


Figure 8. Attitudes towards statement "I am a frequent traveller"

The relationship between the variables above is proven by Chi-Square test that showed the significance value of 0.000002, proving that variables affect each other. The crosstabulation indicates that 86.4% of those who strongly agree and 76.8% of those who agree that travelling is their hobby either strongly agree or agree that they are frequent travelers. Therefore, we can conclude that those who consider travelling to be their hobby tend to travel on a regular basis. This idea is proven by the Table 1 below:

	"I am a frequent traveller"
--	-----------------------------

“Travelling is my hobby”		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
	Strongly agree	36.4%*	50.0%*	11.4%*	2.3%*
	Agree	7.0%*	69.8%*	16.3%*	7.0%*
	Neither agree nor disagree	4.3%*	34.8%*	43.5%*	17.4%*
	Disagree	0.0%*	0.0%*	33.3%*	66.7%*
	*percentage within attitudes towards statement “Travelling is my hobby”				

Table 1. Correlation between attitudes towards statements “Travelling is my hobby” and “I am a frequent traveller”

Summing the above, it can be stated that the sample includes 69% of women and 21% of men with the age range between 14 and 55. Majority of 68% of respondents are young people between 20 and 24 years old, which allows to gain valuable insights on sustainability preferences of the younger generation. Moreover, dominating majority of resp

ondents claim that travelling is their hobby and travel frequently. Therefore, it can be concluded that the profile of respondents matches the initially defined population criteria.

6.2 Attitudes towards sustainable travelling

This section determines the degree of knowledge about sustainable travelling of people and their willingness to learn more about this issue. Additionally, importance of brands to be involved in education on sustainable practices is reviewed as well as readiness of people to spend more money on sustainable products or services.

First of all, it should be mentioned that 34.5% of respondents agree and 33.6% of respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement “I know how to travel in a more sustainable way”. It means that majority believes that they have certain knowledge about sustainable travelling but not enough to say that they strongly agree with the statement. This idea is indicated in the Figure 9 below:

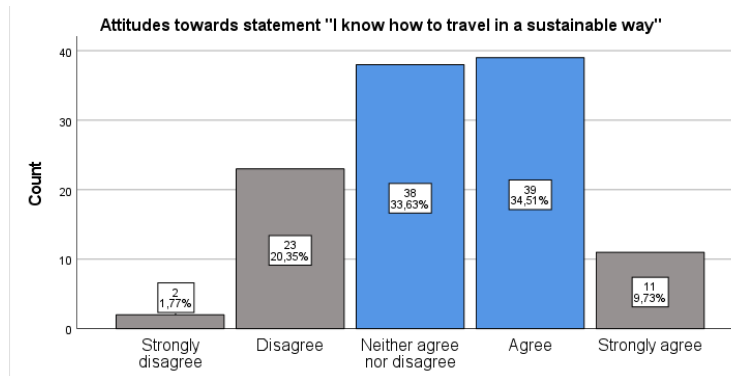


Figure 9. Attitudes towards statement “I know how to travel in a sustainable way”

Additionally, the Figure 9 shows that 22.12% of respondents believe that they do not have knowledge about sustainable travelling by giving answer “Disagree” or “Strongly disagree” to the statement. Therefore, we can state that from the Figure 9 it can be seen that dominating majority of respondents in total of 90.26% believe either that they don't have necessary knowledge or that their knowledge is not complete. It means that additional education on sustainable travelling is needed. That is why willingness to travel in a sustainable way is examined in the Figure 10:

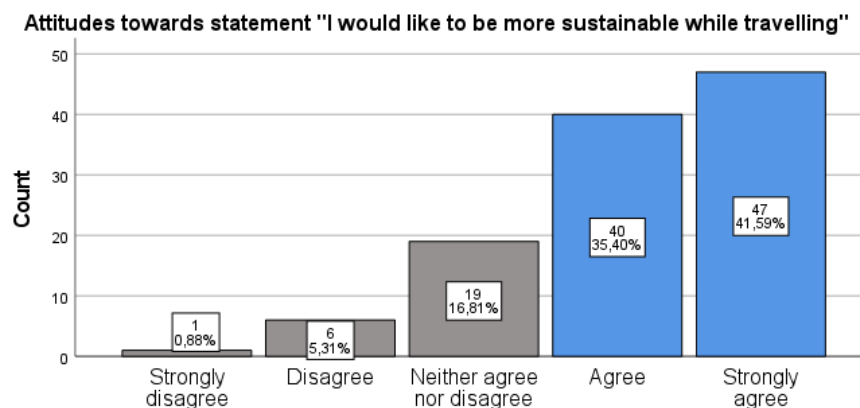


Figure 10. Attitudes towards statement "I would like to travel in a more sustainable way"

The Figure 10 shows that 77% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they would like to travel in a more sustainable way, which means that they want to learn more on this issue. The other part of 23% of respondents do not show willingness or does not find it to be important to integrate sustainable practices into their travelling habits. Therefore, education is still needed not only on actual sustainable travelling practices but also on its importance and benefits.

In order to get more detailed insights on attitudes towards sustainable travelling, relationships between the following three variables were studied:

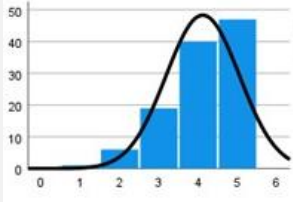
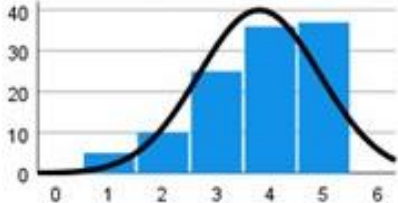
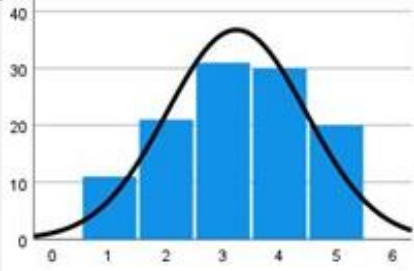
Variable Name	Histogram	Skewness
Attitudes towards statement “I would like to travel in a sustainable way”		Left-skewed; $g = -0.904$; $g < 0$
Attitudes towards statement “I would like travel companies to help me travel in a more sustainable way”		Left-skewed; $g = -0.731$; $g < 0$
Attitudes towards statement “I am willing to pay more for sustainable products/services while travelling”		Left-skewed; $g = -0.204$; $g < 0$ (closest to normal distribution)

Table 2. Variables related to attitudes towards sustainable travelling

The Table 2 above shows that all three variables are left-skewed, which means that respondents tend to choose options 4 and 5 that indicate “Agree” or “Strongly agree” to the statement. Responses to the statement “I am willing to pay more for

sustainable products/services while travelling” are closest to normal distribution, which shows that many people are not ready to increase budget for sustainable products and services. Since all the three variables are not normally distributed, correlation was examined through Crosstabulation and Pearson Chi-Square test.

The sig-value between attitudes towards statements “I would like to travel in a sustainable way” and “I would like travel companies to help me travel in a more sustainable way” is 0.000057, which is less than 0.5 and which means that there is correlation between variables. This idea is proven by Crosstabulation that is summarized in the Table 3 and indicates that those who are willing to travel in a sustainable way are also willing to receive help from travel companies regarding sustainable travelling:

“I would like to travel in a sustainable way”	“I would like travel companies to help me travel in a more sustainable way”					
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	Strongly disagree	0.0%*	100.0%*	0.0%*	0.0%*	0.0%*
	Disagree	16.7%*	33.3%*	16.7%*	33.3%*	0.0%*
	Neither agree nor disagree	5.3%*	15.8%*	47.4%*	21.1%*	10.5%*
	Agree	0.0%*	7.5%*	25.0%*	45.0%*	22.5%*
	Strongly agree	6.4%*	2.1%*	10.6%*	22.5%*	55.3%*
*percentage within attitudes towards statement “I would like to travel in a sustainable way”						

Table 3. Correlation between willingness to travel in a sustainable way and to receive help from travel companies

A similar picture is seen between attitudes towards statements “I would like to travel in a sustainable way” and “I am willing to pay more for sustainable products/services while travelling”. The analysis results discovered through Crosstabulation are presented in the Table 4:

“I would like to travel in a sustainable way”	“I am willing to pay more for sustainable products/services while travelling”					
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	Strongly disagree	0.0%*	100.0%*	0.0%*	0.0%*	0.0%*
	Disagree	33.3%*	50.0%*	16.7%*	0.0%*	0.0%*
	Neither agree nor disagree	26.3%*	31.6%*	21.1%*	21.1%*	0.0%*
	Agree	2.5%*	15.0%*	40.0%*	25.0%*	17.5%*
	Strongly agree	6.4%*	10.6%*	21.3%*	34.0%*	27.7%*
*percentage within attitudes towards statement “I would like to travel in a sustainable way”						

Table 4. Correlation between willingness to travel in a sustainable way and to increase budget for sustainable products or services

The significance value between variables described in the Table 4 equals to 0.003, which indicates that correlation exists. Therefore, willingness to travel in a sustainable way affects willingness to increase budget for sustainable products and services. The key insights from the Table 4 are listed below:

- 34.0% of those who “strongly agree” that they want to travel in a sustainable way “agree” that they are ready to pay more for sustainable products or services,
- 40.0% of those who “agree” that they want to travel in a sustainable way “neither agree nor disagree” that they are ready to pay more for sustainable products or services,
- 31.6% of those who “neither agree nor disagree” that they want to travel in a sustainable way “disagree” that they are ready to pay more for sustainable products or services.

The above shows that majority of people are not ready yet to increase their budget for sustainable services or products. However, those who strongly agree or agree that they want to travel in a sustainable way tend to be more willing to increase their budget.

It can be concluded that majority of people believe that they do not have a proper knowledge on sustainable travelling but at the same time they are willing to travel in a more sustainable way. It proves the actuality of the topic of the study and the increasing role of eco-friendly lifestyle as well as the need to educate customers on sustainable lifestyle practices. The willingness to travel in a sustainable way influences willingness to receive help from travel companies in terms of education and information. That is why today travel companies can bring valuable contribution to reduction of environmental footprint of tourists. Moreover, willingness to travel in a sustainable way affects readiness to pay more for sustainable products or services. Currently majority of customers are not willing to pay more but helping them understand importance of sustainable travelling can motivate them to increase the budget.

6.3 Attitudes towards experiential travelling

This section is designed to determine attitudes towards importance of experiences and environmental considerations. Additionally, it aims to understand which categories of experiences of Teko Travel are most interesting and whether sustainable or unsustainable travel activities are currently more preferred by travellers.

First of all, it should be mentioned that dominating majority of 84.1% find experiences to be either important or very important while travelling. It proves that currently role of immersion travelling is increasing, and travelers are willing to explore the destination from the inside. This idea is proven by the Figure 11:

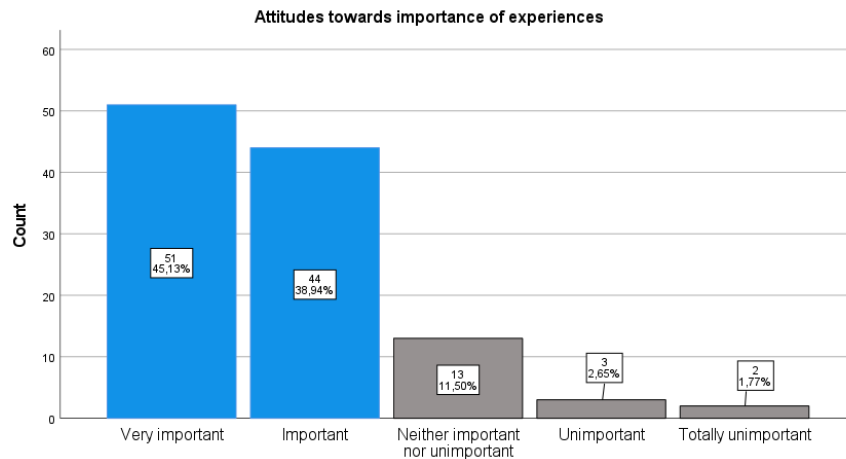


Figure 11. Attitudes towards importance of experiences

However, the percentage of those who find it important to consider environmental impact of experiences is lower and equals to 73.45%. As identified in the previous chapter, many people believe that they lack knowledge on sustainable travelling and would like travel brands to help them become more educated on this issue. It means that tourism companies can provide additional information regarding eco-friendliness of travel activities and help understand what kinds of activities are sustainable. The attitudes towards importance of environmental consideration are displayed in the Figure 12:

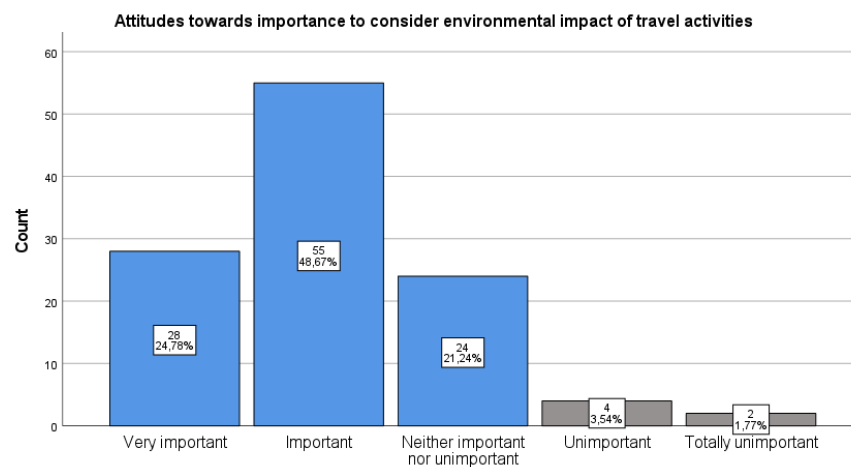


Figure 12. Attitudes towards importance to consider environmental impact of travel activities

It should be mentioned that according to Chi-Square test there is no correlation between variables described above. The sig-value equals to 0.289 which is more than 0.5 meaning that attitudes towards importance of experience do not affect attitudes towards environmental considerations of travel activities. Nevertheless, 76.4% of those who find experiences to be very important and 72.7% of those who find them to be just important believe that environmental considerations are important as well. It shows that people who want to immerse into the culture through experiences are willing to consider environmental impact of activities they accomplish. Moreover, majority of 76.9% of those who have given a neutral answer regarding importance of experiences still believe that environmental impact must be considered. It means that people for whom experiences are not an essential part of travelling would still like to decrease their environmental impact.

Though attitudes described above do not correlate, a relationship has been identified between willingness to travel in a sustainable way and importance to consider environmental impact of activities. The significance value between these two variables is 0.002 identifying that correlation exists. Therefore, people who are willing to implement sustainable practices towards their travelling habits believe that environmental impact of travel activities must be considered.

The question 8 of the survey asked respondents to evaluate their interest towards several experiences offered by Teko Travel. All available experiences have been split into four categories such as walking tours, food-related tours, craftsmanship workshops, and tours in the nature and one example from each category was included in the question. The responses were summarized by the Mean function and are presented in the Figure 13:

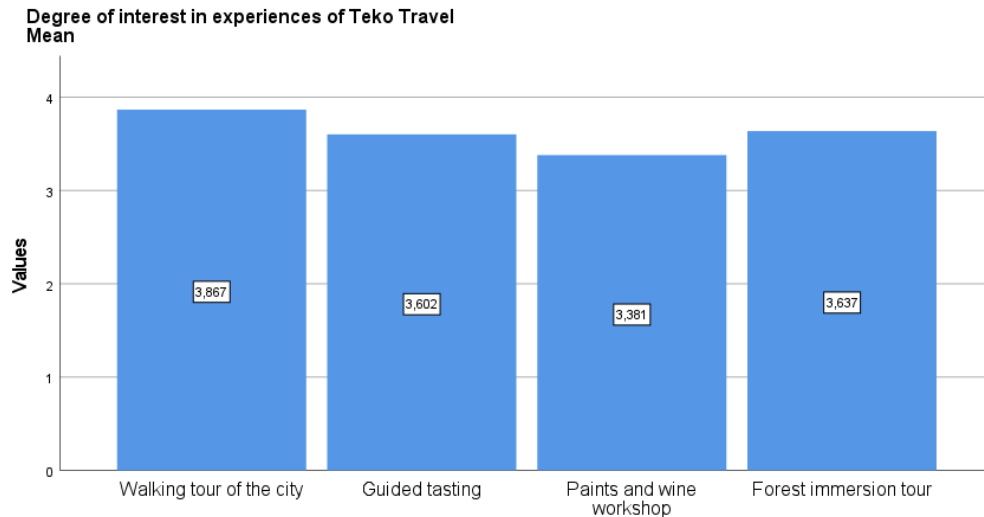


Figure 13. Degree of interest in experiences offered by Teko Travel

The mean scores for walking tour of the city, guided tasting, paints and wine workshop, and forest immersion tour are 3.87, 3.60, 3.38 and 3.64 respectively. In order to understand if there is statistical difference between the means Friedman's test was conducted. The significance value based on the Friedman's test is 0,004504 which is less than 0.05. It proves that based on the analysis results from the sample judgements about whole population can be done.

Therefore, from the Figure 13 it can be seen that the overall mean between all four variables equals to 3.62 meaning that only walking tour of the city is significantly above the mean. Guided tasting and forest immersion tour are closely to the mean while paints and wine workshop has farthest score from the mean. Therefore, it can be stated that currently customers are most interested in the walking tours of the city. Since these tours are organized by locals, they can be promoted from a perspective of immersing into the culture without large requirement of resources. The other activities, and especially craftsmanship tours, require extra communication on opportunity to explore local culture from the inside that can be followed by promoting sustainability aspects of these activities.

In a similar way intension of respondents to choose either more or less sustainable travel activities were analyzed. In the question 9 respondents were addressed to evaluate their likeliness to do a range of travel activities that included 6 sustainable and 6 unsustainable options. The means of responses were compares and results are presented in the Figure 14:

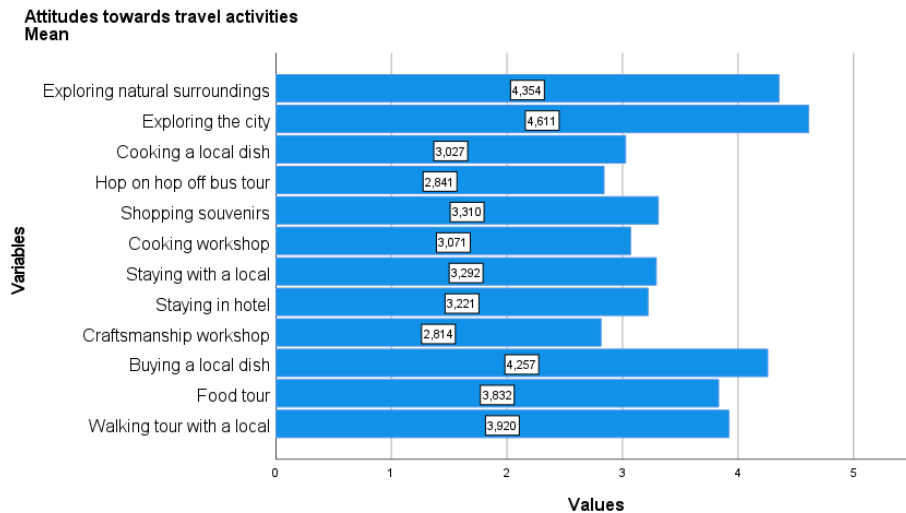


Figure 14. Attitudes towards sustainable and unsustainable travel activities

The average score between all 12 variables is 3.55 and based on Friedman's test the sig-value is less than 0.05, which allows making conclusions about the whole population. The following activities have gained the score above average: exploring natural surroundings, exploring the city, buying a local dish, going on a food tour and walking tour with a local. If the total average scores for more sustainable and less sustainable activities are compared, the results indicate 3.41 and 3.68 respectively. Though the difference between score is not huge, it indicates that on average travelers tend to choose less sustainable activities than more sustainable ones. One of potential reasons can be the lack of knowledge on what kind of immersion activities are eco-friendly.

Additionally, all travel activities from the question 10 were paired in order to identify whether respondents are more likely to do a sustainable or unsustainable activity in each pair. To see if there is statistical difference between pairs that allows to generalize results for the whole population the Wilcoxon's test was done. The Table 5 is designed to display visually what kind of experiences are more likely to be chosen in each pair as well as to show their statistical significance:

Line №	More sustainable activity	More sustainable activity (mean)	Less sustainable activity (mean)	Less sustainable activity

1	Exploring natural surroundings	4.35*	4.61*	Exploring the city
2	Cooking a local dish	3.03*	4.26*	Buying a local dish
3	Walking tour with a local	3.92*	2.84*	Hop on hop off bus tour
4	Craftsmanship workshop	2.81*	3.31*	Shopping souvenirs
5	Cooking workshop	3.07*	3.83*	Food tour
6	Staying with a local	3.29	3.22	Staying in hotel
Total mean		3.41	3.68	
*Based on the Wilcoxon's test the significance value between pairs is less than 0.05, indicating that there is a difference that is statistically significant and judgements about the whole population can be done.				

Table 5. Attitudes towards sustainable and unsustainable travel activities

Since in this research such dimensions of travelling as food, shopping and accommodation are considered as well as experiences provided by Teko Travel, the pairs of activities were designed based on these criteria. The Table 5 proves that walking tour is the most popular type of experiences while craftsmanship workshop is the least popular one. Regarding food, travelers prefer to choose unsustainable experiences such as buying local dishes or going on food tours instead of cooking on their own and participating in cooking workshops. Considering shopping, it is also preferred to buy souvenirs rather than participating in craftsmanship workshops and making them on one's own. However, when it comes to accommodation tourists are more likely to stay with locals. Nevertheless, sig-value of the last pair based on Wilcoxon's test is more **than 0.05**, which means that the results in the sample might not represent the whole population.

Summing up, dominating majority of tourists find experiences to be an important aspect of travelling. However, the amount of people who believe that it is important to consider environmental impact of activities they are doing is lower. On average people tend to choose the less sustainable travel activities, and one of the potential reasons for it can be the lack of knowledge regarding sustainable travel practices.

6.4 Attitudes towards accommodation, food and shopping

Since accommodation, food and shopping are travelling dimensions that are studied in detail in this research, a range of questions were designed to understand preferences regarding these issues. This section is designed explores attitudes towards sustainable accommodation, food experiences and shopping practices. The section is split into 3 sub-sections to consider each dimension separately.

6.4.1 Attitudes towards accommodation

This sub-section analysis the level of knowledge on sustainable accommodation, willingness to learn more on this issue and attitudes towards house sharing. First of all, it should be mentioned that most of respondent (46.90%) have given a neutral answer to the statement "I try to choose sustainable accommodation while travelling". Additionally, 23% disagree with the statement, which means that in total almost 70% of respondents neither agree or disagree or disagree that they try to choose sustainable accommodation. This idea is displayed in the Figure 15.

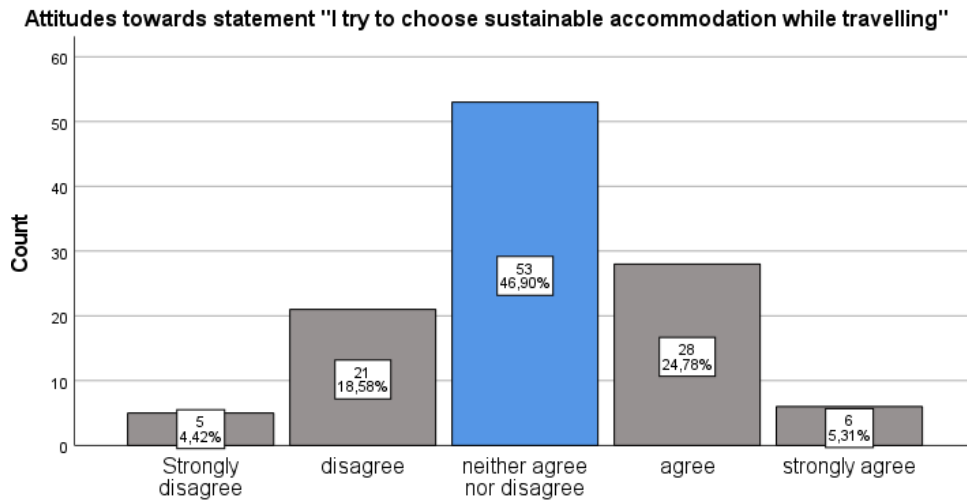


Figure 15. Attitudes towards statement "I try to choose sustainable accommodation while travelling"

The reason for neutral and negative answers can be a lack of knowledge on sustainable accommodation that leads to the fact that travelers are unable to choose sustainable housing. Therefore, it is important to determine if respondents believe that they know what sustainable accommodation is and if they are willing to learn more. Similar chart in the Figure 16 and Figure 17 indicate attitudes towards statements "I understand what sustainable accommodation is" and "I would like to learn more about sustainable accommodation":

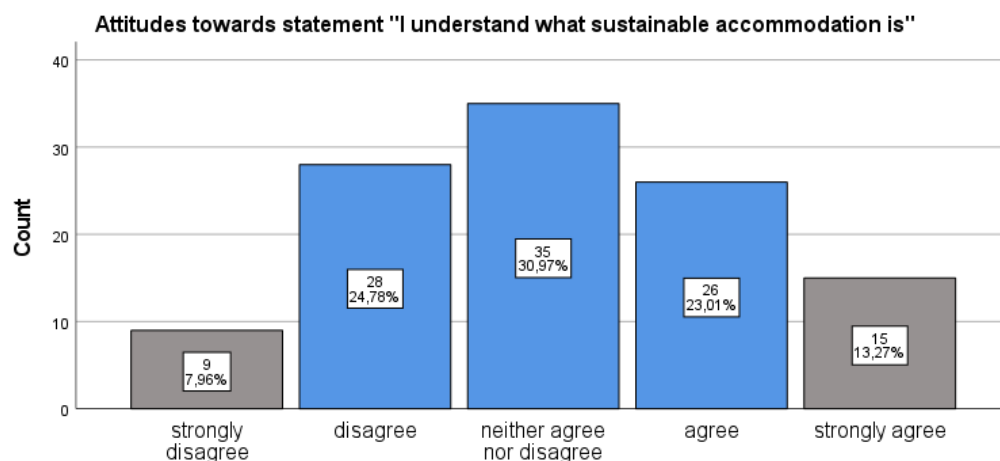


Figure 16. Attitudes towards statement "I understand what sustainable accommodation is"

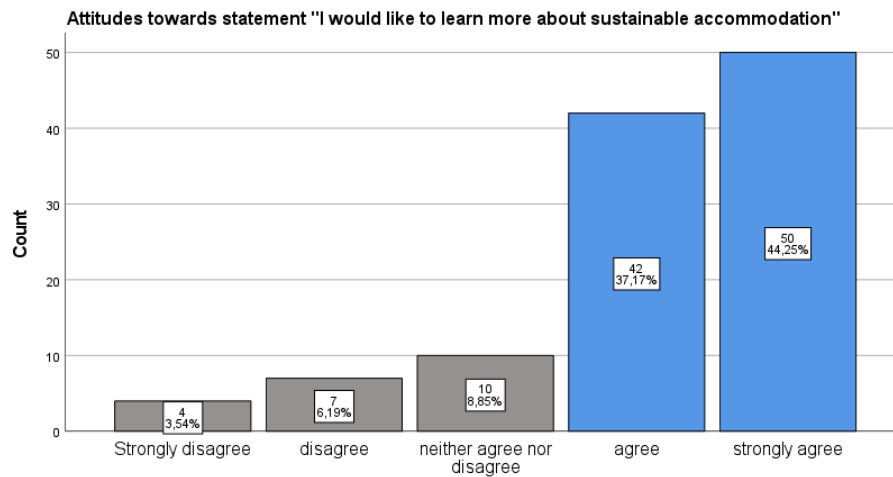


Figure 17. Attitudes towards statement "I would like to learn more about sustainable accommodation"

Figure 16 shows that most respondents of 30.97% neither agree nor disagree that they know what sustainable accommodation is, which means that they may have knowledge to certain extent but do not find it to be complete. Though 36.28% of survey participants agree that they have knowledge on this issue, majority of 63.71% believe that they do not have knowledge or are not sure about level of knowledge they have. At the same time Figure 17 indicates that 81.42% of sample units are willing to learn more about sustainable accommodation, which shows that travel companies can use this opportunity to educate their customers on sustainable housing practices.

Analysis of relationships between variables shows that there is correlation between attitudes towards statements "I try to choose sustainable accommodation while travelling" and "I understand what sustainable accommodation is" with a significance value less than 0.5. It means that those who try to choose sustainable accommodation tend to understand what is meant by this concept.

Analysis of relationships between statements "I understand what sustainable accommodation is" and "I would like to learn more about sustainable accommodation" indicates no correlation based on Chi-Square test. The significance value equals to 0.409, meaning that level of understand of what sustainable housing is does not affect willingness to learn more on this issue. Nevertheless, according to the Crosstabulation the following key insights can be seen:

- 66.6% of those who strongly disagree that they know what sustainable accommodation either agree or strongly agree that they are willing to learn more,
- 85.8% of those who disagree that they know what sustainable accommodation either agree or strongly agree that they are willing to learn more,
- 94.3% of those who neither agree nor disagree that they know what sustainable accommodation either agree or strongly agree that they are willing to learn more.

The above proves that majority of those who do not have a proper knowledge on sustainable housing practices are willing to learn more and become more educated. Therefore, there is a need to promote sustainable living practices to be applied while travelling.

Moreover, the survey considered attitudes towards house sharing and participants were asked whether they find house sharing to be a sustainable housing option. Analysis showed that 26.45% strongly agree, 41.59% of respondents agree and 23.01% neither agree nor disagree that house sharing is a sustainable housing option. It means that majority of the people prefer staying with locals not only for the purpose of saving money but also due to environmental considerations. However, almost 30% of the sample are not sure whether house sharing is a sustainable way of living.

Moreover, preferences of housing options were evaluated. Comparison of preferences was done through comparison of means which is presented in the Figure 18:

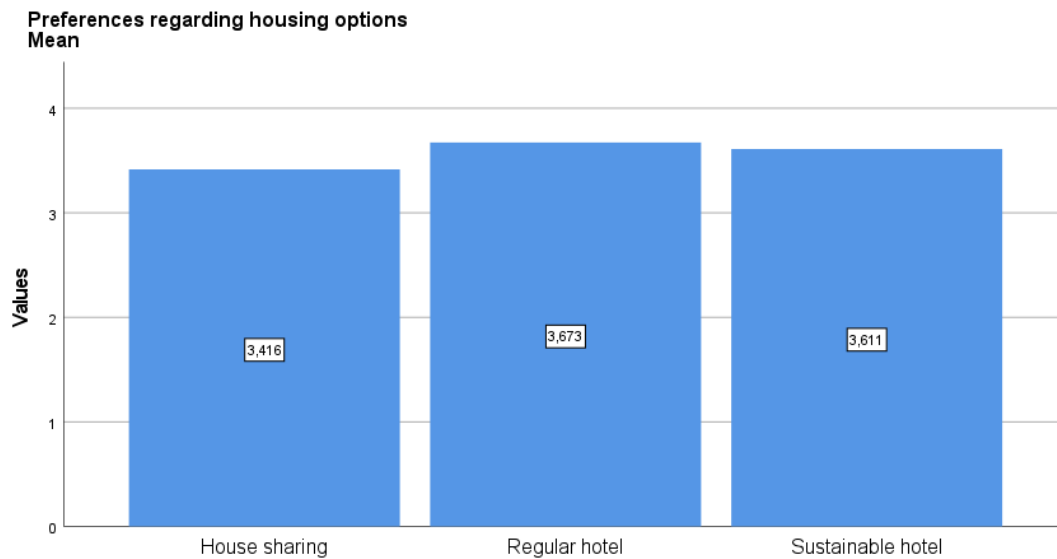


Figure 18. Preferences regarding housing options

The Friedman's test was conducted to investigate whether statistically significant difference between means exists. The sig-value of the test equals to 0,023957, allowing to make generalization about the whole population. The Figure 18 indicates that the grand mean of variables in the chart equals to 3.57, which shows that house sharing is the only housing option with the score below average. Therefore, sustainable perspective of house sharing can be communicated by brands. Additionally, regular hotel got the highest mean score of 3.67 which shows that many people do not take into account environmental considerations while choosing a place to stay. Though the mean score of sustainable hotels is also above average, it has been identified previously in the Figure 16 that majority lack knowledge on what sustainable accommodation is. Therefore, additional education on sustainable living practices by brands can increase the popularity of sustainable hotels.

6.4.2 Attitudes towards food experiences

This sub-section helps to determine importance of food experiences for travelers, their preferred food practices and interest in food-related experiences provided by Teko Travel. First of all, attitudes regarding importance of experiences are investigated in the Figure 19:

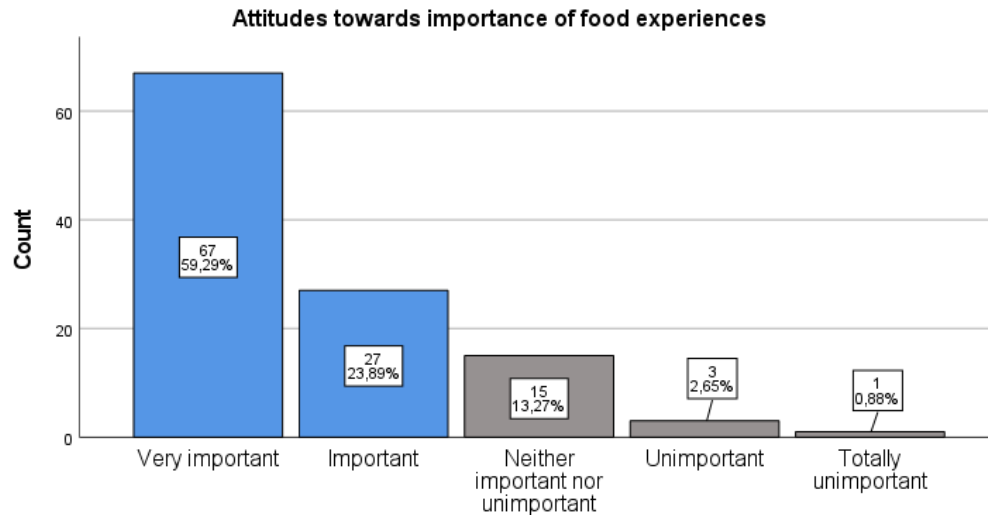


Figure 19. Attitudes towards importance of food experiences

The Figure 19 above shows that dominating majority of 83.18% of survey participants find food experiences to be either very important or important. It means that the role of food activities as a part of overall travel experiences should not be underestimated. Another question addressed interest in such food experiences as cooking workshops, guided tasting and other organized by locals that are related to the offers of Teko Travel. The analysis showed the following results displayed in Figure 20:

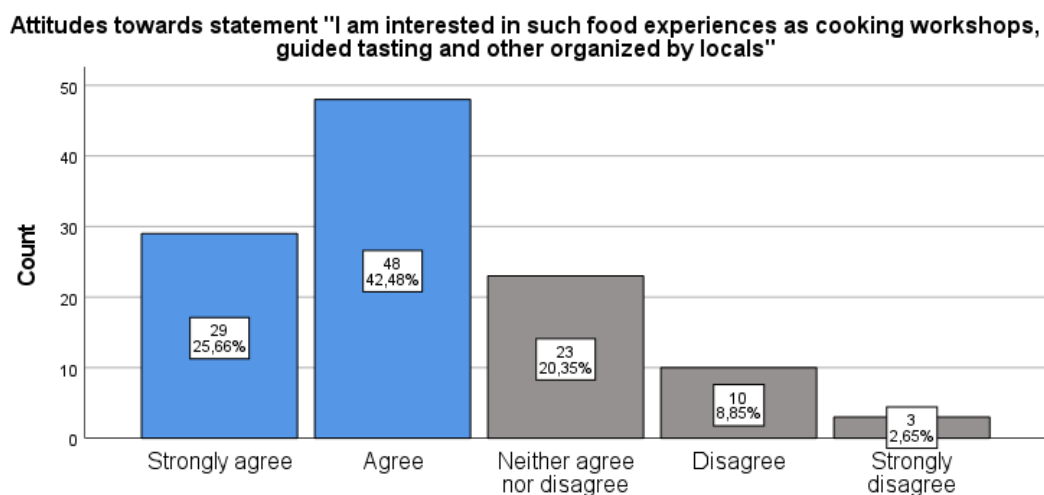


Figure 20. Attitudes towards statement "I am interested in such food experiences as cooking workshops, guided tasting and other organized by locals"

The above chart indicates that 68.14% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they are interested in food experiences organized by locals. Additionally, Chi-

Square test showed that attitudes towards importance of food experiences and interest in food experiences hosted by locals correlate with the significance value of 0.003. Therefore, interest in food experiences in general affects interest in experiences offered by Teko Travel.

In order to understand the need to educate on sustainable food practices, respondents were asked to choose whether they prefer eating out, eating in the accommodation or switching between eating in and out. The results showed that majority prefers the option of switching between eating in and out which can be done for the reason of saving money. Nevertheless, this practice is more sustainable than always eating in restaurants and its environmental impact can be communicated by travel companies. The results of responses are presented in the pie chart in the Figure 21:

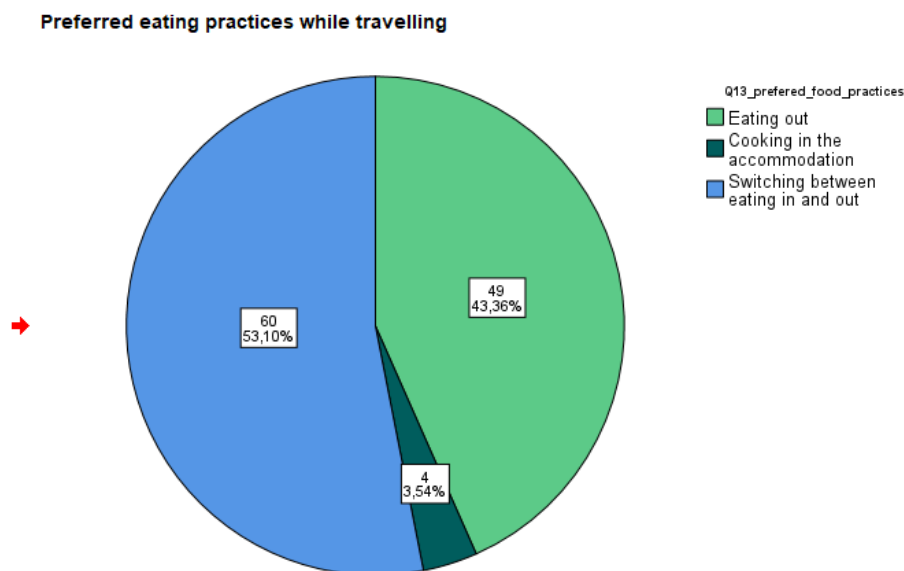


Figure 21. Preferred eating practices

Though majority prefers doing both eat in restaurants and cook in the accommodation, a big part of 43.36% claim that they usually eat out and less than 4% of travelers are cooking on their own. That is why food experiences organized by locals can be promoted in a way that communicates their environmental benefits and possibility to spend less resources by exploring local cuisine from the inside.

Summing up, it can be stated that the role of food activities must not be underestimated. Travelers who are interested in food experiences tend to be interested

in cooking workshops and tasting tours hosted by locals. Additionally, most of the tourists prefer either switching between eating in and out or eating out, which means that extra education on sustainable food practices can be beneficial to reduction of environmental impacts of travelers.

6.4.3 Attitudes towards shopping experiences

This sub-section considers importance of shopping as a part of travel experience, preferred shopping practices and role of local and sustainable brands for tourists. Firstly, attitudes towards statement “I always do shopping while travelling” are presented in the Figure 22 in order to understand frequency and importance of shopping activities:

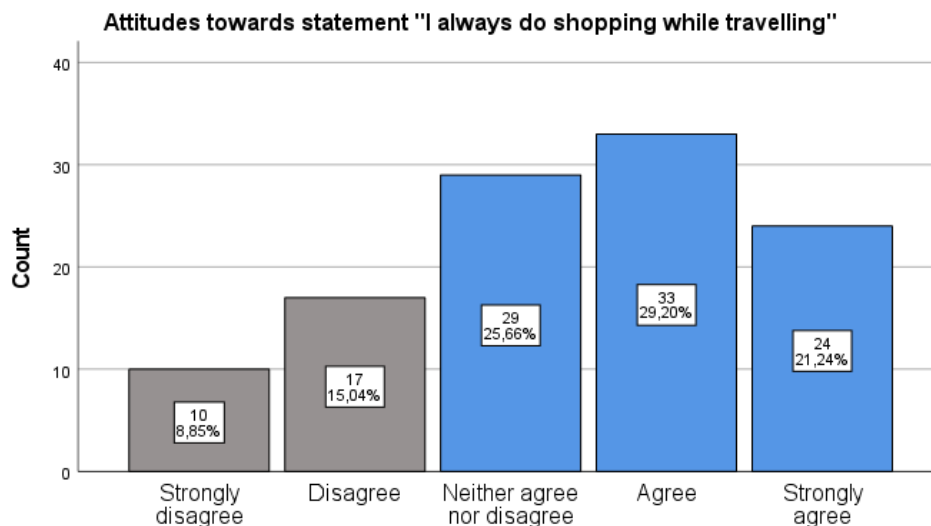


Figure 22. Attitudes towards statement "I always do shopping while travelling"

It can be seen from Figure 22 that 50.44% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that they always do shopping while travelling while 25.66% neither agree nor disagree, which means that these people do shopping occasionally. Therefore, it can be stated that shopping is an important part of travel experience for many people and communication on sustainable shopping practices will help to reduce overall environmental footprint of tourists.

Secondly, it should be mentioned that almost half of respondents agreed that they usually buy souvenirs for other people. Moreover, around 22% neither agree nor

disagree with the statement which might again indicate that this is an occasional practice. These statements are proven by the Figure 23:

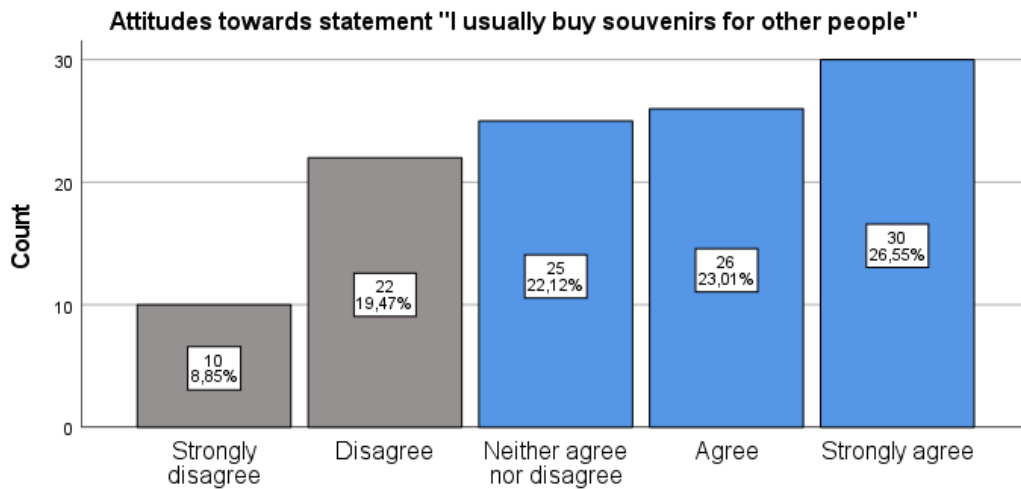


Figure 23. Attitudes towards statement "I usually buy souvenirs for other people"

Since buying useful souvenirs for oneself and others is a sustainable shopping practice, it is important to understand how many of those who buy souvenirs think whether these products are useful. The Chi-Square test showed that attitudes towards statements "I always do shopping while travelling" and "When I buy souvenirs, I always think if they will be useful for me or other people" correlated as well as well as attitudes towards statements "I usually buy souvenirs for other people" and "When I buy souvenirs, I always think if they will be useful for me or other people", both with the significance value less than 0.5. Below the key insights from analysis of mentioned variables through Crosstabulations are presented:

- 45.8% of those who strongly agree and 51.5% of those who agree that they always go shopping while travelling responded "strongly agree" and "agree" respectively that they think of usefulness of souvenirs,
- 34.5% of those who neither agree nor disagree and 40.0% of those who strongly disagree that they always go shopping while travelling responded "neither agree nor disagree" or "strongly disagree" respectively that they think of usefulness of souvenirs,
- 65.7% of those who disagree that they always go shopping either agree or strongly agree that they think of usefulness of souvenirs,

- 43.3% of those who strongly agree and 38.5% of those who agree that they buy souvenirs for others responded “strongly agree” and “agree” respectively that they think of usefulness of souvenirs,
- 68.2% of those who disagree that they buy souvenirs for others either agree or strongly agree that they think of usefulness of souvenirs.

The above shows that majority of those who go shopping frequently while travelling tend to think whether they are buying useful products. Similarly, those who usually purchase souvenirs for people at home tend to think about usefulness of products. At the same time majority of those who do not find shopping to be essential part of travel experiences still believe that they should choose useful products if they decide to purchase something.

Based on statistics above it can be stated that many tourists find shopping to be important part of travelling and tend to be more sustainable regarding shopping activities. That is why craftsmanship workshops can be promoted from sustainability perspective to encourage travelers to reduce environmental impact in terms of shopping. Another important aspect of sustainable shopping includes locally sourced brands since it gives a chance to contribute to economy of the local community. Figure 24 represents attitudes towards statement “When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products”:

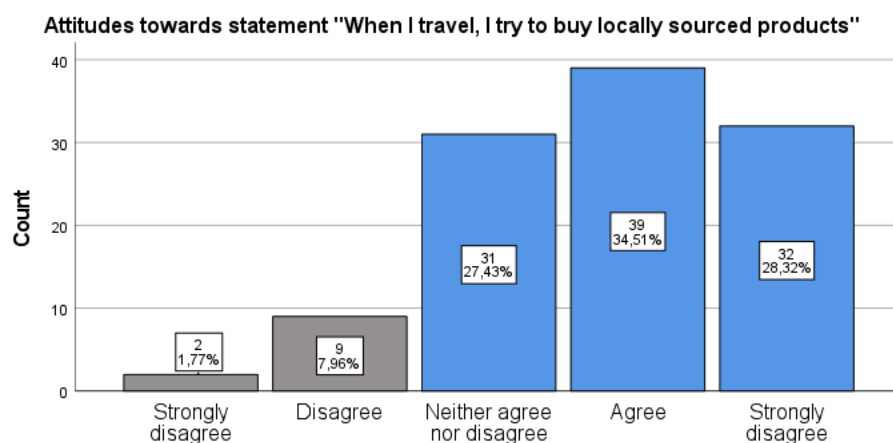


Figure 24. Attitudes towards statement "When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products"

From the Figure 24 it is seen that 62.83% of respondents try to buy locally sourced products while 34.51% neither agrees nor disagrees with the presented statement. The potential reason for the latter can be unawareness on whether products are locally produced or not. Moreover, the statement "When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products" has a relationship with the statement "I try to choose sustainable brands" which is proven by Chi-Square test that showed significance value of 0.002. These two variables were analyzed through Crosstabulation and results are presented in the Table 6 below:

"When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products"	"I try to choose sustainable brands"					
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	Strongly disagree	0.0%*	0.0%*	50.0%*	50.0%*	0.0%*
	Disagree	0.0%*	22.2%*	33.3%*	44.4%*	0.0%*
	Neither agree nor disagree	0.0%*	16.1%*	64.5%*	9.7%*	9.7%*
	Agree	7.7%*	17.9%*	46.2%*	28.2%*	0.0%*
	Strongly agree	0.0%*	12.5%*	34.4%*	15.6%*	37.5%*
*percentage within attitudes towards statement "When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products"						

Table 6. Correlation between attitudes towards statements "When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products" and "I try to choose sustainable brands"

The Table 6 shows that majority of those who strongly agree that they try to buy locally sourced products (53.1%) agree or strongly agree that they try to choose sustainable brands. Nevertheless, 46.2% of those who agree that they prefer

buying local products have given a neutral answer regarding choosing sustainable brands. These statistics could improve if travel companies would communicate about locally sourced and sustainable shops in the destination area.

6.5 Attitudes towards communication tools

The last section of the survey addressed respondents to share opinion regarding digital tools they prefer most to communicate with brands. The importance of such tools as Social Media, blog posts and newsletter has been evaluated. The comparison of the means is presented in the Figure 25:

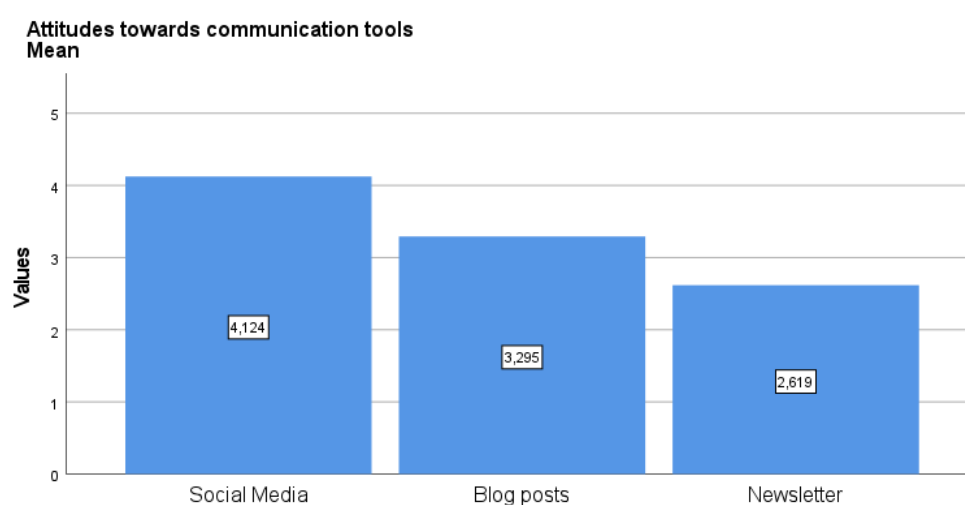


Figure 25. Attitudes towards digital communication tools

The Friedman's test indicated the sig-value between means less than 0.05 and, therefore, results from the Figure 25 can be used to make judgements about the whole population. The average score between all three variables is 3.34 while the scores for Social Media, blog posts and newsletter are 4.12, 3.29 and 2.62 respectively. The mean score of Social Media is the only one strongly above average, which means that currently customers find it to be most important. Blog posts are close to average indicating that many respondents find it neither important nor unimportant or less important than the Social Media posts. Newsletter got the lowest score indicating that spending a lot of resources on email marketing is not an effective way of communication with customers.

The above shows that currently the best way to educate customers and promote sustainable travel lifestyle are Social Media posts. This tool can be followed by

blog posts that allow to provide more detailed information and can help create a complete picture in travelers' mind. Blog posts can be linked to Social Media posts in order to bring most value.

7 Conclusions and discussion

The goal of the study was to answer the following research question: "What marketing actions can be taken by Teko Travel to attract customers based on their preferences related to sustainability?". In order to answer the main research question, the following two sub-questions have been defined: "How willing are people to travel in a more sustainable way?" and "What preferences in buying behavior are dominating regarding sustainable traveling?".

The theoretical study has created a solid background to conduct the empirical research and define the right insights to discover. Additionally, studied theory supports the findings of the whole study and some recommendations in conclusions are given based on it. The sub-sections of this chapter are designed to give answers to research questions based on the key theoretical and empirical findings.

The validity of the results can be affected by the convenience sampling since respondents have been self-selected into the study through the survey link. Since it was published on Instagram, the sample profile could be affected by the overall audience profile of Instagram users. Therefore, we can assume that sample size included mainly the younger representatives of the whole population who are active users of the Social Media. Nevertheless, analysis of respondents' background showed that the profile of sample suits the defined population criteria, which increases trustworthiness of the research.

7.1 Willingness of people to travel in a sustainable way

The study has proven the increasing role of sustainability in various aspects of lifestyle including travelling. The empirical research (chapter 6.2) showed that most of tourists believe that they do not have enough knowledge on sustainable travelling or lack it to a certain extend. At the same time dominating majority of

travelers of 77% agree that they are willing to learn more about sustainable travelling as well as to receive help from the travel companies. Apart from it, those who are willing to travel in a more sustainable way tend to find it important to consider environmental impact of travel activities they do. It means that additional education on sustainable travelling is needed and that travel companies can bring valuable contribution to reduction of environmental footprint of tourists.

Moreover, it worth being mentioned that willingness to travel in a sustainable way affects readiness to pay more for sustainable products or services, which is also proven in the chapter 6.2 of the empirical research. Since most people are willing to implement sustainable travel practices into their lifestyle, educational approach from travel companies can motivate customers to increase their budget for sustainable services and, as a result, support companies with implementation of sustainable strategies into their business.

From motivational perspective described in the chapter 3.2 it can be stated that sustainable preferences can be classified as higher-order needs and can be considered as a part of esteem and self-actualization needs. It happens because eco-friendly practices are part of tourist's desire to contribute to saving the planet and to development of local communities.

7.2 Preferences in buying behavior regarding sustainable travelling

The study has proven the idea that immersion travelling has become one of the top priorities for tourists. The motivational factors for travelling showed that most tourists are satisfied through experiences while empirical research (chapter 6.3) indicated that dominating majority of 84.1% of travelers find experiences to be an important part of their overall travel experience, which proves their willingness to explore destination from the inside.

Talking about experiences provided by Teko Travel, walking tours are currently most preferred by tourists, followed by food-related tours and tours in the nature, and then by craftsmanship tours. Additionally, on average people tend to choose less sustainable activities, especially in terms food and shopping.

Moreover, each travelling dimension defined under the delimitations section (chapter 1.2) was studied separately. The empirical research (6.4.1) shows that majority of 63.71% of people believe that they do not have a complete understanding on what sustainable accommodation is and 81.42% of them are willing to learn more. Regarding housing preferences, majority prefer staying in regular hotels which is followed by house sharing. The reason for the lowest popularity of sustainable hotels can be explained by the lack of knowledge on what it is. Moreover, many travelers believe that house sharing is a sustainable way of living and prefer staying with locals. Therefore, sustainable aspect of house sharing can be communicated as well as information on sustainable housing options in the destination area can be provided by travel brands.

Analysis of attitudes towards food practices in the chapter 6.4.2 showed that the role of food experiences must not be underestimated. Majority of 83.18% of respondents finds food-related activities to be an important aspect of their travel experience. Those who are interested in food experiences in general have showed interest to experiences organized by locals which shows a good potential of Teko Travel services. Additionally, nearly half of 43.36% of respondents have indicated a preference to eat out while they are travelling. It means that brands can communicate sustainable eating practices in terms of switching between eating in and out as well as provide information on sustainable and zero-waste restaurants in the area. Environmental benefits of cooking workshops organized by locals can be also communicated as a way to immerse into the local cuisine without spending a large amount of resources.

Analysis of shopping habits (chapter 6.4.3) showed that shopping is an important part of travel experience for many people and communication on sustainable shopping practices will help to reduce overall environmental footprint of tourists. Most of participants in the study, no matter whether they do shopping frequently or not, said that they think of usefulness of souvenirs and try to purchase locally-sourced products. Therefore, it can be stated that many people already follow certain sustainable practices and brands can contribute to promotion of sustainable shopping by providing information on local sustainable brands and best places to buy authentic souvenirs. Moreover, craftsmanship workshop can be

promoted as a way to produce souvenirs for oneself by immersing into culture with low environmental impact.

7.3 Marketing actions to be applied by Teko travel

Based on the answers to research sub-questions and on the analysis above, this section answers the main research question: “What marketing actions can be taken by Teko Travel to attract customers based on their preferences related to sustainability?”.

First of all, it should be mentioned that as a young tourism startup Teko Travel has a good potential to contribute towards sustainable development in the tourism sector in its operating area. Since services in tourism sector are intangible and customer must travel to the service or resource, an educational approach and a good communication with target audience play an important role in marketing of Teko Travel business from sustainability perspective. The ways to enhance a proper communication with customers are described further in this section.

Regarding promotion of experiences, Teko Travel should focus not just on describing content of services but rather on the benefits customers can get. Since immersion is becoming important aspect of customer experience, Teko Travel can emphasize the possibility to integrate into local culture through available experiences. Research showed that sustainability is another influencing factor in consumer motivation, and that is why environmental and social benefits of services can be communicated.

Proper segmentation is another aspect of effective ecotourism marketing that has been proven by Fennell (2003) in the chapter 4 of the study. Based on theoretical findings, it can be recommended to Teko Travel to focus on the benefit dimension of segmentation, which includes an analysis of the benefits sought by tourists. In marketing activities Teko Travel can focus on satisfying sustainable needs and wants and develop content for those who seek environmental benefits. It will help to improve brand authority by engaging with customers and providing them valuable knowledge. Additionally, the empirical research (chapter 6.2) showed that many people would like to travel in a more sustainable way but do not have

enough knowledge on this issue. Therefore, as suggested by Fennell (2003) in the chapter 4, Teko Travel can target 'made ecotourists' that indicates the people who can be unfamiliar with sustainable travelling but can be attracted through effective marketing due to their desire of contributing to the environment and local communities.

The most effective ways to communicate with customers have been described in the chapter 4 of the study based on the information provided by TravelNet and mainly include various digital marketing tools. According to the empirical findings (chapter 6.5), Social Media posts are the most preferred communication tool by travelers, which is followed by blog posts and then by newsletter. Therefore, Teko Travel could include sustainable travelling into its content strategy and provide information on sustainable experiential travelling, accommodation, food and shopping as a part of its Social Media content mix. Social Media strategy also allows to build relationship with customers and influence word of mouth effect due to the possibility to engage easily with the content. More detailed and practical information can be provided on website blog posts which allows to generate additional organic traffic to the website. Newsletter does not significantly enhance sustainable image of the brand, which means that there is no need for a frequent email campaigns. However, in a long run this tool can also bring a valuable contribution.

Based on the customer preferences described in these chapter, it can be suggested to Teko Travel to educate customers on sustainable travel practices in terms of experiences, accommodation, food and shopping as well as to provide information on sustainable local housing options, restaurants and shops to contribute to local economy. It can be done as a part of content strategy through various digital marketing tools with an emphasize on Social Media and website blogs. These ideas create various opportunities for partnership with sustainable local brands that can help Teko travel enhance its brand image and increase customer value.

8 Suggestions for further research

This research proves the increasing role of sustainability as a part of personal lifestyle, especially in terms of travelling habits. Additionally, it reviews sustainable travel practices related to immersion travelling, accommodation, food and shopping. The findings prove a solid background for integrating sustainability to Teko travel marketing strategy but also create opportunities for further research.

First of all, the study briefly mentions the concept of green marketing as a way to promote products and services based on their environmental benefits. The further research could deepen into the concept of green marketing and its core practices in order to provide Teko Travel with additional information on enhancing and developing further sustainable image through green marketing. Practical advice on actions, strategy and marketing materials could be given.

Moreover, it was mentioned previously that marketing actions related to sustainability create new partnership opportunities for Teko Travel. Therefore, additional research on sustainable brands, restaurants and hotels in the Helsinki area can be conducted in order to enhance Business development and suggest potential partners.

Finally, the study investigates sustainability perceptions through statistical analysis, which allows to understand relationships between variables and the dominating preferences. However, it does not consider the underlying reasons for these preferences. That is why further qualitative research can be done to understand the exact motivating factors related to sustainability in the buying behaviour.

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Appendix 1 – Survey questions

Sustainable travelling survey

Hi, this is a survey about sustainable travelling conducted for Teko Travel, a Finnish company that creates unique travel experiences by connecting travelers with locals and by providing travel recommendations. The survey is done as a part of thesis project of Aleksandra Seregina, a student of Lab University of Applied Sciences. The survey consists of 16 questions and takes **less than 5 minutes** to complete. Thank you for your time!

Section 1. Background questions

1. What is age?

2. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "Travelling is my hobby"?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "I am a frequent traveler"? (think about normal situation, not considering current quarantine)

- ☐ Strongly agree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Section 2. Attitudes towards sustainable travelling

Sustainable travelling or ecotourism is the form of travelling that brings minimum environmental impact, minimum impact on- and maximum respect for- host cultures, maximum economic benefits to the host country's grassroots as well as maximum 'recreational' satisfaction to participating tourists.

5. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

5 - strongly agree, 4 - agree, 3 - neither agree nor disagree, 2 - disagree and 1 - strongly disagree.

	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to travel in a sustainable way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to be more sustainable while travelling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like travel companies to help me travel in a more sustainable way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am willing to pay more for sustainable products/services while travelling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section 3. Experiential travelling

6. How would you rate importance of experiences while travelling? By experiences it is meant tours, excursions, workshops, hiking and other activities that help to learn more about destination.

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neither important nor unimportant

- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Totally unimportant

7. How important is it for you to consider environmental impact of activities you do while travelling? By environmental impact it is meant level of eco-friendliness of activity and its impact on environment and local communities.

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neither important nor unimportant
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Totally unimportant

8. How interesting you find each of these travel experiences?

5 - very interesting, 4 - interesting, 3 - neither interesting uninteresting, 2 - uninteresting and 1 - totally uninteresting.

	1	2	3	4	5
Walking tour of the city	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Urban Distillery Tour and Guided Tasting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Paints and Wine Workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forest immersion tour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. How likely are you to do these activities when you travel?

5 – very likely, 4 – likely, 3 – neither likely nor unlikely, 2 – unlikely, 1 – very unlikely.

	1	2	3	4	5
Hop on hop off bus tour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking tour with a local	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food tour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5
Buying a local dish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in craftsmanship workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staying in hotel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Staying with a local	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in a cooking workshop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping souvenirs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cooking a local dish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exploring the city	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exploring natural surroundings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section 4. Accommodation, food and shopping

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

5 - strongly agree, 4 - agree, 3 - neither agree nor disagree, 2 - disagree and 1 - strongly disagree.

	1	2	3	4	5
I try to choose sustainable accommodation while travelling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand what sustainable accommodation is.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to learn more about sustainable accommodation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
House sharing is a sustainable way of travelling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. How likely are you to stay in the following accommodation options?

5 – very likely, 4 – likely, 3 – neither likely nor unlikely, 2 – unlikely, 1 – very unlikely.

	1	2	3	4	5
House sharing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5
Regular hotel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainable hotel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. How would you rate importance of food experiences while travelling?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neither important nor unimportant
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Totally unimportant

13. Which of these food practices do you prefer most while travelling?

- ☐ Eating out
- ☐ Cooking in the accommodation
- ☐ Switching between eating in and out

14. Do you agree with the following statement: "I am interested in such food experiences as cooking workshops, guided tasting and other organized by locals"?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

15. To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding shopping?

5 - strongly agree, 4 - agree, 3 - neither agree nor disagree, 2 - disagree and 1 - strongly disagree.

	1	2	3	4	5
I always go shopping while travelling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I usually buy souvenirs for other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I buy souvenirs, I always think if they will be useful for me or other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I travel, I try to buy locally sourced products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I try to choose sustainable brands.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section 5. Attitudes towards marketing actions

16. Considering communication tools brands can utilize, how important are these information channels to you?

5 – very important, 4 – important, 3 – neither important nor unimportant, 2 – unimportant, 1 – totally unimportant

	1	2	3	4	5
Social Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blog posts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newsletter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>