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Sensing the Destination in Slow or in a Fast Style? – The Lessons of a Hungarian Survey

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ENTRENOVA, Split, Croatia, 2020

Slow movements as cultural revolutions?

- People live their lives in an extraordinary speed
- Virtual reality interweaves every minute, instant life
- BUT: there is a revolution in society against the speedy lifestyle – which is incorporated in the slow movements
- The slow philosophy of life started with the slow food movement
 - Quality, clean food, fair prices for the producer, gastronomic traditions, joy and culture of food, food education
- Later the movement has spread to other areas as well

Appearance of slow concepts in different areas of life

slow food

slow city

slow tourism

slow medicine

slow fashion

slow
education and
learning

slow aging

slow blogging

slow money

slow
architecture

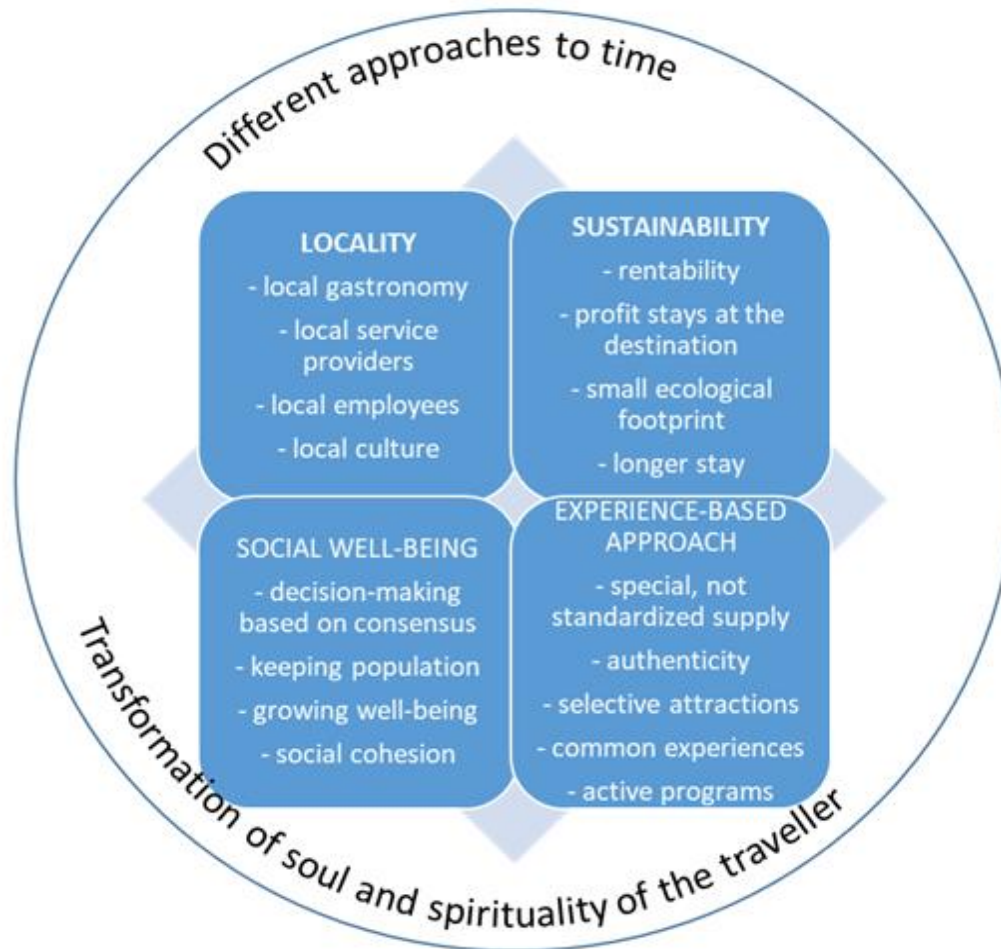
slow flower

slow
marketing

Tourism in 'slow' style – a generally accepted definition does not exist...

- The slow philosophy has appeared in the world of travel as well: the birth of slow tourism
- A “social, cultural phenomenon” (Di Clemente et al., 2014)
- “New generation” tourism products (Dall’Aglio, 2011)
- Its main elements are:
 - slowness in connection with taking time as a value;
 - special, slow type of transport;
 - activities and the importance of “the local”;
 - environmental consciousness (Lumsdon, McGrath, 2011, Di Clemente et al, 2014)

Summarizing: The four elements of slow tourism



Trends confirming and strengthening the validity and actuality of the „slow” concept

Aging society

The growing power of women in making travel decisions

The growing income of women

The possible consequences of the present coronavirus epidemics

The methodology of the online survey among Hungarians

- Omnibus research in Autumn 2019
- 386 respondents involved
- RQ: What is the attitude of Hungarian respondents towards different “slow” elements of a journey?
 - How important are the different aspects for respondents?
 - What is the legitimacy of this concept today, when Instagram tourism is boosting?

Demographic profile of the sample

	n	%		n	%		
Age group			Gender				
18-25 years	270	69,9	%	female	275	71,2	%
26-35 years	32	8,3	%	male	111	28,8	%
36-45 years	45	11,7	%	Education			
46-55 years	21	5,4	%	Primary school	11	2,8	%
55-65 years	13	3,4	%	Secondary school	302	78,2	%
> 65 years	5	1,3	%	College/ university	70	18,1	%
Occupation			Frequency of travel				
Student	240	62,2	%	not every year	8	2,1	%
Entrepreneur	9	2,3	%	1-2 times a year	238	61,7	%
Public sector employee	42	10,9	%	3-4 times a year	87	22,5	%
Private sector employee	88	22,8	%	> 4 times a year	53	13,7	%
Retired	1	0,3	%				
Other	5	1,3	%				

Source: Authors' own edition

Results

- Respondents were the most opened for **“taking time in a different dimension”**, since they are even willing to modify their original schedule to admire a nice landscape (avg. score = 4,04).
- The **“local” pillar** has avg score=3,65 based on the importance of the three related statements
- The **well-being of the local community** (avg. score = 3,3) was the next in the row.
- Finally, the **least important pillars are:**
 - **the personalized services** (avg. score = 2,74),
 - **spirituality** (avg. score = 2,67) and
 - **the matter of sustainability** (avg. score = 2,61).

The importance of different slow elements for respondents

TIME DIMENSION – DIFFERENT APPROACH TO TIME	Average score 4,04
I modify my original schedule to admire a nice landscape.	
LOCALITY I like discovering my destination as much as possible. I like meeting local people, their lives and their cultures. I like to try the local specialities.	3,65 3,77 3,41 3,79
SOCIAL WELL-BEING I go to the local market if I have opportunity. I prefer buying from local producers if I have opportunity.	3,3
EXPERIENCE-BASED APPROACH Getting personalized services is important for me.	2,74
SPIRITUALITY The target destination should provide spiritual experience.	2,67
SUSTAINABILITY I avoid crowded tourist places as much as possible Choosing environmentally-friendly transportation tool is important for me.	2,61

Source: Authors' own edition

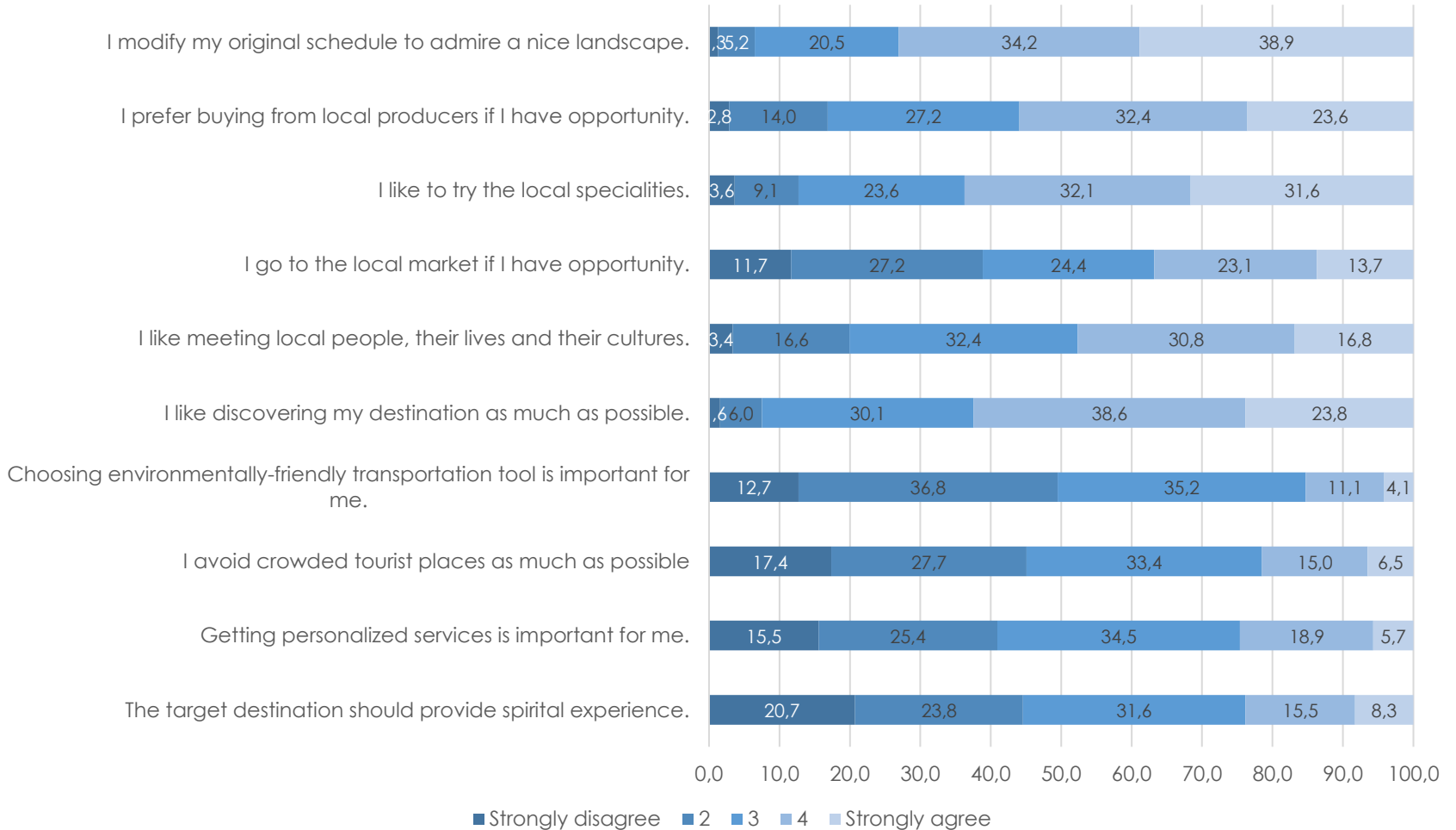
Results cont. – Examining each statement one by one...

- The most characteristic of the respondents is their willingness **to stop for the sake of a beautiful landscape to admire** (73,1%)
- The vast majority of the respondents like to **try the local specialities** (63,9%) and **like discovering the destination very thoroughly** (63,4 %)
- The respondents prefer **buying from local producers** if they have the opportunity (56%)
- It is important for around half of the respondents (47,6%) to **get to know local culture, local people** and to take part on their **programs**

Results cont. – What is not important at all for respondents...

- **Spirituality** of the destination does not really matter for the respondents (it is important only for the 23,8% of respondents)
- **Getting personalized services** is not so important, either, since nearly half of the respondents do not demand it on a holiday (45,9%)
- **Sustainability** is the least important, since only 15,2% of the respondents would choose environmental-friendly transportation
- Only 21,5% of the respondents would **avoid crowded, touristic places**

The attitude of respondents towards slow elements – detailed data



Source: Authors' own edition

Discussion and conclusion

- The respondents are opened for certain slow factors, but not for the whole concept in general
 - The “local” components are essential for them
 - Visiting hidden, calm destinations is only a perfect holiday scene only for a few
 - Spirituality is far from them
 - Personalized services do not really matter
- The research was accomplished before the COVID pandemic, which has the potential to change travel patterns and attitudes – it would be worth repeating the research