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# **Ecotourists' motivation and its relation to the ecotourism's principles**

## **Abstract**

The definition of ecotourism and ecotourists became a matter of debate among researchers. Moreover, such aspects as ecotourists' motivation and behaviour are frequently criticized by scholars, who claim that they contradict to principles of sustainability and are not environmentally friendly. Nevertheless, in terms of lacking definition, the concept of ecotourism is reflected by its principles, which are considered by researches as a sustainable basis for this tourism form. In this occasion, the consumers of ecotourism industry are recognized as the tourists, who reflect the ecotourism's principles at all stages of the travel. Thus, ecotourists' behavior, preferences and decision regarding the trip should correspond to the ecotourism's principles. All these characteristics are determined by tourists' motivation as it is a base which stimulates people to make certain decision (Pearce et al., 1998). Thereby, to consider travelers as ecotourists, their motivation to travel and to behave in a certain way during the trip should be based on ecotourism's principles.

The present thesis examines the ecotourist's motivation to be involved in ecotours and to behave in a certain way during the trip with the purpose to define whether their motivation corresponds to the theoretical principles of ecotourism or not. The study is focused on those tourists who identify themselves as ecotourist. The research was conducted using quantitative methodology. The tourists' motivation was defined using online questionnaire. This study is not limited in space. Thus, it investigates general ecotourists' motivation without focusing on regional features.

As a result of this research it was revealed that the vast majority of self-identified ecotourists are driven by personal motives, especially when it comes to motivation to behave in a certain way during the tour. Nevertheless, in some cases the personal tourists' motives coincide with the ecotourism's principles and one quarter of tourists are strongly motivated by ecotourism's principles when participating in ecotrip.

The findings of this research can be included to the broader studies of ecotourists' motivation, as well as it can be used for further researches aimed to determine the criteria for identifying the consumers of ecotourism and to verify the applicability of respondents-based approach to define the ecotourists.

**Key words:** ecotourism, ecotourists, ecotourism's principles, motivation, behavior

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## **1. Introduction**

While the ecological situation in the world is getting worse, the international community has begun to care more about the environment. Most human activities tend to be organized in such a way to reduce negative influence on the environment. Thus, within the tourism industry niche of ecotourism has been formed, which aims to decrease unwanted impacts on the environment and the local community and raise respect for host cultures (Wearing & Neil, 1999).

The idea of ecotourism appeared in the late 1980s and implied that this form of tourism could be beneficial for the social, cultural and natural environment. Then, during the 1990s the popularity of ecotourism increased very rapidly all over the world and aroused interest among tourism consumers, developers and researchers (Fennell, 2008; Page & Dowling, 2002).

This study is aimed to investigate ecotourists' motivation to participate in ecotours and to behave in certain way during the trip in order to define whether it corresponds to the ecotourism principles or not. This research is based on respondent-based approach to define the target group of the study. Thereby, the primary data regarding ecotourists' motivation are collected from those travelers, who identify themselves as ecotourists. Despite this approach had been used for some researches in the field of ecotourism, the studies aimed to verify whether those tourists who identified themselves as ecotourists meet key criteria of ecotourism industry or not were not found in the literature.

To reach the goal of this study followed research questions should be answered:

1. What are the ecotourists' motives to participate in ecotours?
2. What are the ecotourists' motives to behave in a certain way during the ecotours?
3. Does ecotourists' motivation correspond to the ecotourism's principles or it is based on personal motives?

Nowadays, ecotourism is very controversial field of study (Fennell, 2005). There are a lot of debates regarding its definition, place in a wider context of tourism studies, sustainability, etc. among researchers. The most important issue, which has to be urgently solved within the ecotourism industry, is definition. If there would be a universally accepted definition of ecotourism, it would allow defining which activities can be considered as ecotourism and would help to identify the consumers of this type of tourism. Consequently, it would enable to evaluate the real influence of the industry on natural, cultural and social environment and help to estimate its sustainability.

In terms of lacking definition, the key criteria of ecotourism industry are reflected by its principles. Thus, the concept of ecotourism can be explained through its principles. As for ecotourists identification, it is more complicated to define who they are. There are a number of approaches to define the consumers of ecotourism. These approaches are based on such criteria as tourists' values, preferable sites or activities, behavior during the tour etc. The ecotourists can even be defines according to their self-

identification. In this case travelers are considered as ecotourists if they confirm their belonging to the group of ecotourists (Jinyang & Jian, 2015). Despite all these approaches are applied to identify the consumers of the ecotourism industry, the researchers argue about ecotourists' environmental friendly behavior and impact on environment, highlighting that for being considered as ecotourists, travelers should meet the key characteristics of the industry, which are reflected in the ecotourism's principles. The problem is that in terms of popularized "eco" lifestyle some tourism activities call themselves as ecotourism to attract the higher number of visitors. Consequently, visitors involved in these trips consider themselves as ecotourists without meeting the key criteria of the ecotourism industry. As a result, it is difficult to estimate the ecotourists' influence on environment and conclude whether this form of tourism is sustainable or not (Fennell, 2005). To solve this problem it is important to consider the effects caused by "real" ecotourists, who meet the key criteria of the industry. The initial step is to define who ecotourists are. Thus, it is important to investigate whether it is possible or not to consider self-identified ecotourists as real ecotourists.

According to researchers, the travelers who reflect the ecotourism's principles through their preferences, behavior and decisions while choosing and participating in the trip can be defined as ecotourists. All these characteristics are determined by tourists' motivation as it is a base which stimulates people to make certain decision (Pearce et al., 1998). Thus, ecotourists can be identified as tourists whose travel motivation is based on the ecotourism's principles.

The field of ecotourists' motivation is deeply studied and well described in the literature. Various researchers have been investigated it from different perspectives and concluded that it is one of the most important criteria to define whether a tourist is an ecotourist or not. Nevertheless, there are still a lot of limitations and gaps in studies of the tourists' motivation. For example, the research of the motivations of tourists concerning consumption of ecotourism is still very poor and especially rare when it comes to the collection of the primary data for ecotourists' segmentation. In spite of collecting new data, studies often tend to extrapolate data gathered 20 or 30 years ago (Zografos & Allcroft, 2007).

As a result of this research it is expected to collect primary data regarding ecotourists' motivation, conduct ecotourists' segmentation based on their motivation to participate in ecotours and behave in a certain way during the trip and estimate to what extent the motivation of self-identified ecotourists corresponds to the theoretical ecotourism's principles.

To get more reliable results, the tourists were not aware of the theoretical ecotourism's principles. Thus, as a result of this research is expected to define real motivation ecotourists previously had.

The findings of this study enable to verify the applicability of respondents-based approach to define the ecotourists and can be taking into account during the further researches aimed to determine the criteria for identifying the consumers of ecotourism. This research examines one aspect of tourists' motivation and can be included in a broader research in this field.

### **1.1. Outline of the thesis**

This paper consists of 6 chapters including introduction. Each section is devoted to specific issue, which is a significant component of this research.

The first chapter provide introduction and outline to the whole thesis with the purpose to acquaint the reader with the idea, aim and the structure of this study.

Chapter 2 presents a theoretical background to the issues investigated in this research. It is based on recent studies related to the aim of this research. Thus, it explains the idea of ecotourism and raises the issue regarding ecotourists identification. It describes the phenomenon of human motivation and explains the importance to study it within the field of tourism.

The following section provides the description of method used to conduct this research. It contain information regarding data collection and data analysis processes, explains sampling strategy and questionnaire design and presents ethical considerations and limitation occurred during this research.

The results of this study are presented in the chapter 4 and discussed in the chapter 5. The summarizing conclusion is provided in the last chapter.



## **2. Theoretical background**

### **2.1 Ecotourism as a field of tourism industry**

#### ***2.1.1 The definitions and principles of ecotourism***

The idea of ecotourism appeared in the late 1980s and implied that this form of tourism could be beneficial for social, cultural and natural environment. During the 1990s the popularity of ecotourism increased very rapidly all over the world and arouse interest among tourism consumers, developers and researchers (Fennell, 2008; Page & Dowling, 2002).

Nowadays, despite the rising popularity of ecotourism among consumers, this type of tourism is the matter of debate among numerous researchers, who argue about its definition, place in a wider context of tourism studies, impact on the natural and cultural environment, sustainability etc. (Fennell, 2008; Wearing & Neil, 1999; Page & Dowling, 2002).

Nowadays, in terms of increasing demand for ecotrips, many types of nature-based tourisms represent themselves as ecotourism, even if they do not meet the key criteria of the industry (Fennell, 2005). Thus, one of the main problems within this field is a lack of universally accepted definition.

If the only definition of ecotourism will be accepted, it will allow to define which certain criteria should meet the activities to be considered as ecotourism. Also it will enable to define the place of ecotourism in a wider context of tourism studies and will help to solve one of the most significant issues within the field of ecotourism: define the consumers of this type of tourism, determine their number and determine the market limit. Consequently, it will enable to evaluate the real influence of the industry on natural, cultural and social environment, help to estimate its sustainability and contribute to further researches in the field of ecotourism (Fennell, 2005).

Nevertheless, according to Fennel (2002) nowadays there are more than 85 definitions of ecotourism. It considerably complicates to define the issues listed above. But despite all controversies, the majority of researchers agreed that ecotourism is a type of tourism which is definitely relate to “natural areas (62.4% of the 85 definition), conservation (61,2%), reference to culture (50,6%), benefits to locals (48,2%), education (41,2%), sustainability (25,9%) and impact (25%)”(Fennell, 2002).

These key words can be considered as key parameters, which define the idea of ecotourism and determine its fundamental features in terms of lacking definition.

When discussing the fundamentals of ecotourism it is essential to unveil the underlying principles of ecotourism as they define the idea and the direction of ecotourism development. In other words, in the ecotourism’s principles describes and explains the concept of ecotourism in terms of lacking definition.

There is a wide variety of ecotourism’ principles provided by different researchers in the literate. Most authors bring their own list, but some don’t and do just work on the statements that can be referred to as principles, as in here, “Ecotourism has to be both ecologically and socially conscious” (Raju, 2009). As seen from authors’ works these

principles revolve around two main ideas, namely nature (ecological) protection and local communities support. Although all authors agree on these two, they differ in outlining some other and complement each other rather than contradict.

Thus, summarizing the various ecotourism' principles proposed by different authors in the literature, it can be concluded that the generalized list of ecotourism' principles includes such principles as:

1. Ecotourism should maintain such a use of resources that would minimize unwanted impacts to both the environment and the local people and maximize respect for host cultures.
2. Should develop awareness and understanding among the tourists of natural and cultural system in the area they visit.
3. It should bring economic and other benefits to the local communities in a way, which would not disrupt traditional ways of running households and businesses, but rather support and develop them.
4. It should establish proper moral and ethical behaviors toward both the natural and cultural environments.
5. Ecotourism encourages independent travelers as well as organized tours for small size groups.
6. It should create recreational facilities for local communities use as well as for domestic and international visitors.
7. It should include local people in decision-making process in estimation how and in what scale should tourism occur in their area.
8. It should maintain respectful attitude to the natural resource and make sure it is properly protected, thus following rules of supply-oriented management rather than demand-oriented.
9. It should monitor, asses and manage tourism impacts, as well as develop reliable methods of environmental accountability that would mitigate negative effects should they happen. (Wearing & Neil, 1999).
10. It should provide benefits for the local people and those employed in the tourist industry, such as free access to the sites and ability to learn more about them (Fennell, 2008; McLaren, 2003);
11. It should provide relevant education for all parties involved – local communities, government, nongovernmental organizations, industry and tourists.
12. It should sustain conservation and support management of the natural and protected areas.
13. It should sustain long-term varied benefits (conservation, scientific, social, cultural or economic) to the natural resource, to the local people and to the business. (McCool & Moisey, 2008).

As seen from the above, these principles are set to prevent the traditional negative impacts of mass tourism on natural and cultural environments; therefore ecotourism can be seen as a more sustainable line of tourism development (McCool & Moisey, 2008).

The principles listed above show that ecotourism requires appropriate behavior from both suppliers and consumers. Thus, some of them represent the general fundamental ideas of the industry, when others can be considered as an instruction for suppliers (a set of rules and requirements, which have to be fulfilled to create ecotourism's product) or for consumers (requirements, which have to be fulfilled by tourists to be considered as ecotourists).

As this research is aimed to study to what extent ecotourists' motives correspond to principles of ecotourism, the focus of this study is principles 1-5 (see above) as they predominantly relate to consumers and can be reflected in ecotourists' motives. In contrast principles 6-13 mostly relate to supply sector or represent the general fundamentals of ecotourism.

### 2.1.2 Criticism of ecotourism

The supporters of ecotourism describe it as sustainable, nature-based and environmentally friendly type of tourism. Moreover, according to the ecotourism's principles, this form of tourism should be sensitive to the natural environment and cause the economic and social benefits for local community (Fennell, 2008; McLaren, 2003). Nevertheless, during last decades this idea became a matter of debates (Fennell, 2008; Wearing & Neil, 1999).

One of the most important issues to discuss is the ecotourism influence on environment. At first glance it seems that the impact caused by this industry is minimal as the tourists who participate in ecotourism are characterized by pro-environmental behavior. In fact, both ecotourists and ecotourism industry itself affect the natural environment dramatically. The most serious impact is caused by transportation. Even the most pro-environmental tourists use transport to reach remote travelling destination. As a result effects caused by transport strongly affect natural environment. It negatively influences the air and water resources, wildlife and vegetation. Motorized kinds of transport such as plane, train, ship or automobile pollute air and water by causing emissions. It leads to the negative impacts on vegetation and animals. Thus, as a result of pollution caused by transport such processes as vegetation removal, weed transmission, animal disturbance occur. Moreover, the most sensitive species are insects and small invertebrates, which are the important component of food chain (Kiper, 2013).

At the same time serious impact is caused by visiting the pristine territories or protected areas such as national parks, wildlife parks etc. Nowadays, the society supports the idea of sustainable development and environmental friendly life-style. As a result, the number of ecotourism consumers is constantly rising, transforming the industry into mass tourism. The high concentration of visitors destroys the ecosystems by causing overcrowding and increasing pollution (Honey, 2008).

As for benefits for local community, it is also a matter of debates. On the one hand, ecotourists benefit to local economy and support local entrepreneurs while visiting the travel destination. On the other hand, the positive effects of ecotourism are caused during the tourism season only. Thus, for example, local tourism-related entrepreneurs do not get profit and workers may be laid off during the off-season. In contrast, the main

portion of profit is made by airlines, tourism operators, and developers (Pleumarom, 1995).

In addition, the tourists' motivation to be involved in ecotours and behavior during the trip is the interesting and important subject to study. Nowadays there is a lack of empirical data regarding the motives to consume the ecotourism. Nevertheless, this gap should be filled in order to estimate ecotourists influence on the natural, cultural and social environment.

## **2.2 Who are ecotourists?**

### **2.2.1 Definition of ecotourists**

There is a need to define who ecotourists are both for the scientific and market purposes. The better subject is defined the more correct study can be performed over it. There have been a number of different ways in which the term has been defined; still usually ecotourist's definitions have been discussed within the domain of ecotourism definitions (Perera et al., 2012; Juric et al., 2002).

Obviously, because of a lacking definition of ecotourism, it is difficult to define who ecotourists are. Undoubtedly, ecotourists are defined as consumers of ecotourism. But a more comprehensive definition is the matter of debate among tourism' researchers.

Thus, some studies define ecotourists as those "who select a certain travel experience and destination, that of nature-oriented experiences in pristine natural environments" (Eagles, 1992, p. 3). While others state that ecotourists should also interact with and benefit to the local community, what contradicts to pristine natural environment.

According to some studies it is possible to define ecotourists as those consumers of tourism, who prefer ecotourism from all variety of tourism types, because of their natural inclination, preferences, convictions, in other words their pro-environmental psychological orientation (Perkins & Grace, 2009). Moreover, another definition points out the importance of one's interest in expanding knowledge about nature and being committed to sustainability and preservation of the environments they use as destination to be considered as ecotourists (Page & Dowling, 2002).

As it is seen from above, despite the lack of a universally accepted definition of ecotourists, existing definitions refer to main principles of ecotourism (e.g. they should expanding awareness of natural and cultural environment, benefit to local community, support preservation of preservation etc.). Thus ecotourists can be identified as tourists who are guided by principles of ecotourism while choosing or participating in tour.

All definitions listed above highlight some important characteristics of what makes an ecotourist, but none of them so far can pretend to be an all-inclusive or ultimate definition. And for this task, there should yet be studies conducted which should include collection of empirical data (Weaver, 2001).

When defining the ecotourists, researchers also argue about their environmental friendly behavior and impact on environment, calling into question the sustainability of ecotourism. In this occasion it becomes more important to identify who ecotourists are to estimate their impact on the environment.

As the aim of this research is to define to which extent ecotourists' motives correspond to the principles of ecotourism, this paper does not discuss the sustainability of ecotourism. It rather estimates how the motives of ecotourists reflect the principles of ecotourism. Thus, it is important for this research to define who ecotourists are. But as there is no generally accepted definition, it is important to look at ways how ecotourists can be identified.

### 2.2.2 How to define ecotourists?

Ecotourists can be defined using different methods such as site- and activity-based, motivation-based, value-based, multi-criteria-based, and respondent-based (Hvenegaard, 2002).

The site- and activity-based method considers tourists visiting a particular place or site as ecotourists. This method proposes to analyze tourist behavior during the visiting natural areas and highlights that not all tourists visiting nature-based attractions can be considered as ecotourists from a motivational perspective (Lawton, 2009; Mehmetoglu, 2007; Weaver & Lawton, 2002). Thus, motivation seems to be a more important and relevant criterion than places visited in order to judge whether a tourist is an ecotourist or not (Deng & Li, 2015).

The motivation-based method defines and categorizes ecotourists based on what stimulates them to travel. A few researchers proposed ecotourists typologies based on visitors' motivations and the level of their commitment to nature protection (Diamantis, 1999; Weaver, 2001). Also ecotourists can be classified according to the level of dedication. Is he/she interested only in ecotourism or other types of tourism as well? Is he/she occasional or full time ecotourist (Perkins & Grace, 2009)?

The value-based method identifies ecotourists based on their social or environmental values. The social values relate to "the ideals one has about how the world, one's country and one's community should be" (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997, p.32). Environmental values "are those values held by people with regard to the relationship between humans and their natural environment" (Zografos & Allcroft, 2007, p. 46).

Thus, according to this methods based on social values ecotourists can be divided into four types: ideological green, moral relativists, dualists and libertarians. *Ideological Greens* are characterized by a special attitude and respect for nature, attributing to it religious or spiritual significance. The group of *Moral relativists* represents by tourists who can not define any social value as a guiding principle for ecotourism. *Dualists* define such social values as development, control, equality and harmony as a very important component of ecotour. In contrast to Dualists, *Libertarians* do not concern about equality and harmony. Instead, for them it is important to have such social values as Rights and Freedom during the tour (Blamey & Braithwaite, 1997).

Based on environmental values ecotourists can be divided into concerners, approvers, disapprovers and skepticals. *Concerners* represent the group of tourist who are not critical of human attitudes and action toward the nature. They disagree that all species have equal rights. Nevertheless, they are concerned about the limits of the earth. *Disapprovers* group is characterized by tourists who criticize current human attitudes and action toward the nature. They are highly concerned about earth limit and support species equality. In contrast, the tourists who belong to *Approvers* segment strongly support current trend of human behaviour and attitudes toward the nature. *Skepticals* present the group of tourists who support species equality and critically asses human action, but at the same time they do not demonstrate concern regarding the limits of the earth and its resources (Zografos & Allcroft, 2007).

Multi-criteria based method defines ecotourists based on few variables simultaneously. There are wide variety approaches to this method, which taken into account different criteria. One of the most frequently used approaches identifies ecotourists based on three criteria. The first is type of destination. The second criterion used is the type of activity tourists are engaged in. And the third criterion is motivation to travel as a definitive tool for placing tourist into categories. Thus, if tourist's motives relate to ecotourism and he/she is involved into activity, which meets the ecotrip's criteria and the visiting destination is primarily natural environment, then this type of tourist are ecotourists. In this case tourists' motivation is a decisive criterion, since if tourist participates in ecotrip and visits natural environment but has inappropriate motives, he/she definitely can not be considered as ecotourist (Lee, 2007).

The respondent-based method allows respondents to self-classify themselves as ecotourists or non-ecotourists (Jinyang & Jian, 2015). This method has been applied for the number of researches aimed to define ecotourists' portion among all tourists in certain destination. Thus, for example, Priskin (2003) asked tourists to identify themselves as one of following tourist's types: causal tourist, nature tourist, adventure tourist, and ecotourist. As a result of this research she concluded that 27.7% (during the summer) and 38.6% (during the winter) of visitors to the Central Coast Region of Australia can be considered as ecotourists. Based on tourists' answers it was also concluded that those who have identified themselves as ecotourists were more environmentally concerned than non-self-identified ecotourists. Nevertheless, subsequent study aimed to verify whether those tourists who identified themselves as ecotourists meet key criteria of ecotourism or not was not conducted.

Moreover, according to Fennell (2003) ecotourist can be divided into two groups, "born ecotourists" and "made ecotourists". He defines "born ecotourists" as visitors who have internal predisposition toward nature travel. In contrast "made ecotourists" represent the group of visitors who are unfamiliar with this type of tourism, but can be involved in ecotours through effective marketing. This classification shows that even unfamiliar with ecotourism visitors can participate in ecotours and can be called as ecotourists (by definition as visitors who participate in ecotour). Also it can increase the probability of their self-identification as ecotourists. But it does not mean they can be considered as ecotourists according to their travel motives, values or behavior.

As it is seen from above there are a wide variety of methods and approaches to ecotourist's identification and classification. Some methods contradict each other, but still all of them are applied to conduct scientific researches.

Based on the purpose of research, this study is focus on two methods to identify ecotourists. First, the respondent-based method will be used. As this method defines ecotourists according to their self-identification and does not require any additional criteria to consider travelers as ecotourists, it will enable to focus on collecting primary data regarding ecotourists' motivation. That is an important step to fill the lack of empirical data regarding tourists' motivation to consume the ecotourism and to conclude whether ecotourists reflect the ecotourism's principles or not. Also the respondent-based method will help to avoid the controversies regarding the sampling's representativeness. Later, those respondents who define themselves as ecotourists will be categorized, using motivation-based method.

## **2.3 Tourist's motivation**

### ***2.3.1 Motivation and motives***

Human's motivation is an interesting and important issue to study. Various researchers have defined motivation in different ways and explored it from different perspectives. In general, the term "motivation" points to the reasons why people make certain decisions and how their behaviour is activated (Phan, 2010). Thus, Snepenger et al. (2006) determine motivations as a key criterion to understand human's behavior as it plays a crucial role in the decision making process.

Solomon (2014) defines motivation as an internal force that stimulates people into the action which will enable to fulfill their needs or desires. According to him human behavior is based on motivation and can be controlled by motivation. Thereby, motivation is defined as a "push factor", which activates human's behaviour and defines its direction. According to Fodness (1994), cited by Phan (2010, p. 4), motivation describes "a dynamic process of internal psychological factors namely needs, wants, and goals, which generate an uncomfortable level of tension inside of human's minds and bodies". As a result these internal psychological factors stimulate humans into the actions to satisfy the inner tension. In this case motivation can be considered as the inspiration to satisfy needs (Phan, 2010).

As motivation is formed by human's needs, it is not constant. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, human's needs are divided into 5 levels: biological needs, safety and security needs, relationship development and extension needs, special interest and self-development needs and fulfilment or self-actualization needs. Thus, while needs from basic levels are not fulfilled, people do not concern about needs from upper level. But as soon as basic needs are satisfied, the new needs from upper level appear. The same logic is applied for human's motivation (Hall & Page, 2014).

When it comes to motivational studies, the term “motive” is also frequently used. Sometimes it is considered as a synonym of “motivation” as both these terms mean incentive or drive. Thereby, in some cases these two terms are used interchangeably. Nevertheless, Gnoth (1997) concludes that motives differ from motivation. He highlights that “each motive has its distinct type of contents in the form of goals of behavior but motivations contain results of situation-person interactions”. Thus, motivation should be considered as a wider and deeper phenomenon than motive (Phan, 2010).

### 2.3.2. Tourist's motivation

As it is seen from above motivation determines human's behavior, preferences and decision to do or not do something. In the tourism field motivation became an important factor to study. What is a tourist's motivation? Pearce et al. (1998) define it as the integrating network of biological and cultural forces which influence the travel choices, behavior and experience. Hall and Page (2014) argue that an understanding of tourist's motivation can offer a range of insights into why people are involved in recreational activities. But they also highlight that it is important to understand not only why people are involved in tourism activities, but also which factors can inhibit them from participating. Prebensen (2007) emphasizes that tourists are driven by motivation while deciding which type of holiday to choose and which destination to visit. According to another study it can be defined as a set of needs that drives a person to participate in a tourist activity (McIntosh & Goeldner, 1986). Thus, tourist's motivation describes the reasons which stimulate people to travel and explains their decisions and behavior while organizing and participating in the trip.

As the number of researches place “need” as an internal force or motivation, the following research outlined four categories of motivators: physical, cultural, personal, and status and prestige (McIntosh & Goeldner, 1986). Then Eagles (1992) singled out such category of tourist's motivation as “social motivation”. Later, John and Susan (1999) complemented this list by “emotional” and “personal development” motivators.

Bringing all this categories together, the list of tourists' motives consists of the following motives (Eagles, 1992; Phan, 2010, McIntosh & Goeldner, 1986):

- physical motive is the need to certain actions or relaxation;
- personal motivation is the needs to fulfill personal dreams, desires or wishes, including visiting relatives and friends;
- personal development motive might be the need to increase knowledge;
- emotion motive is based on emotional connection with certain place or people, which drive people to travel. (e.g. nostalgia for a certain place);
- social motive includes personal goals to interactions with other people, including the need to find new friends;
- status and prestige motive includes the desire to obtain something exclusive or fashionable;
- cultural motivation is a interest to discover new cultures.

In some studies even more gradations have been used. They propose 10 trends to describe tourism motivation (Pearce et al., 1998).



As a rule tourists are motivated by one of these motives or by several motives together. But according to McClelland (1965), there is a group of tourists, who have a great need for power and uniqueness. They are motivated to get unique experience, which is inaccessible for all visitors. While separating themselves from other tourists, they satisfy their needs.

Despite tourist's motivation is considered as internal force, which drives people to certain actions, the study of motivation traditionally falls within push (internal) and pull (external) motivating dimensions, with the former being the prevailing focus of the tourism motivation research. The internal factors refer to such drivers as desire to rest, experience and enjoy natural environment, pursue one's interests or stay healthy, while external relate to destination properties, its features, e.g. visual or cultural attractiveness of the place. Thus, push factors are those that push a person to a decision to travel, and pull factors are those that define which destination to choose. Although push and pull motivators can be studied separately, it is not uncommon to perceive tourist motivation as a function of these two. Such approach creates beneficial and easy-to-use tool in uncovering motivations of tourist behavior (Luo & Deng, 2008; Perera et al., 2012).

There is another approach to consider tourist's motivation using Leisure Motivation Scale. This Scale is based on Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, which was explained above. It has been created by Beard & Ragheb (1983) with the purpose to describe the motives that determine whether satisfaction is gained from leisure pursuits. According to the Leisure Motivation Scale there are four motives that determine tourist's satisfaction: intellectual, social, mastery/competence, and stimulus avoidance motives. These four motives should be taken into account by tourism operators and agencies while choosing the tour for consumers with the purpose to sell the product, which will satisfy the tourist's needs in highest extent. The satisfied need will raise the probability of a repeat purchase from the consumer. Also it is important to consider this motives when the tourists are evaluating the trip after holiday in order to separate objective and subjective critique (Leisure motivation scale).

*Intellectual* motive "assesses the extent to which individuals are motivated to engage in leisure activities which involve mental activities such as learning, exploring, discovering, thought or imagining" (Beard & Ragheb, 1983, p. 223). In another words, this motive defines to what extent tourist is motivated by need to learn something.

*Social* motive assesses the extent to which individuals are motivated to travel because of a need for communication with other people. This motive consists of two basic needs: the need for friendship and interpersonal relationships. Also it refers to need of belonging to social group and "ego satisfaction" through getting respect from others (Phan, 2010).

*Competence/mastery* – the extent to which individuals are motivated because of a need to master, challenge or compete

*Avoidance* motive "assesses the drive to escape and get away from over-stimulating life situations. It is the need for some individuals to avoid social contacts, to seek solitude and calm conditions; and for others it is to seek to rest and to unwind themselves" (Phan, 2010, p. 8).

Tourists motivation has been studied during the long period, the but still it has not been investigated enough. Both, scientists and marketers argue it is important aspect, which influence human behavior. Thus, further studies in this field are needed. Researches in this field will enable to predict tourist's preferences and expectations. It leads to increasing amount of satisfied tourists and expand the tourism market in future. Given this, tourist's motivation can be considered as an important factor for marketing and management. As for date, there are still a lot of limitations and gaps in studies of the tourists' motivation. For example, the researches in the field of tourist's motivations concerning consumption of ecotourism is still very poor and especially rare when it comes to the collection of the primary data for tourist segmentation. In spite of collecting new data, studies often tend to extrapolate data gathered 20 or 30 years ago (Zografos & Allcroft, 2007, Juric et al., 2002).

### 2.3.3. Ecotourists' motivation

The drivers that create demand for experiencing ecotourism are important to study because understanding them may help adjust activities of the relevant stakeholders, be it local governments or businesses or other interest groups. On an epistemological level, some researches even place motivational factors as the basis of the behavioral studies in tourism (Perera et al., 2012). The beginning of ecotourist motivation research naturally takes its beginning from general tourist motivation.

Thus, the studies specifically focused on ecotourist motivations started to be conducted in 1990s. While dwelling within same push and pull motivational dimensions, the accent was shifted to ecotourists' bio-centric attitudes, and new specific terms were used, such as "appreciating pristine natural areas", "deep commitment to conservation and environmental issues", and "a desire to have deep interaction with nature" (Perera et al., 2012). Although such psychological notions, as pro-environmental beliefs or attitudes, are thought to be main driver for consumer preferences and resulting behavior (Fairweather et al., 2005; Zografos & Allcroft, 2007), little has been done in determining whether ecotourism market can be outlined as a distinct segment based on its specific motivational system. There have been virtually no studies that aimed at comparison of the structure of motivations of tourism in general and ecotourism. In recent studies this issue is addressed by examining tourists' preferences, which are perceived as stable motivational systems, for different types' experiences, as opposed to studying samples of tourists behavior at specific time. This approach is perceived to be more accurate because of the high level of consistency between consumer preferences which are based on "inbuilt" psychological motivations and the according behavior. Otherwise, there is risk of error in sampling which may be attributed to context-specific behavior (Perkins & Grace, 2009).

Until recently, the motivations of ecotourists have been measured through the general observation of the behaviors of some travelers, as opposed to systematic study (Juric et al., 2002).

So how practically the study of motivation can benefit tourist market? With the increasing demand, the ecotourism market is becoming more diverse, and the

businesses in ecotourism need to know how to meet various ecotourist groups based on their preferences (Higham & Carr, 2002). The tourist attitudes and preferences are a pivotal component in understanding and predicting his or her behavior. They can be uncovered with answers to such questions as: “What does the visitor want to experience? What social context is appropriate? What level of experience is desirable?” It is obvious, that proper fulfillment of these demands will correspond with the level of enjoyment the ecotourist will get. And as “visit management is the central factor that helps match the desires of the ecotourist” there is a need to manage both visitor and the experience (Eagles, 1992).

One of the useful tools for marketing an ecotourist attraction would be the establishment of the scale of interest and then estimation of the baseline rating of the target market’s ecotourism interest. It would allow to better adjust proposition accordingly to the level of interest in ecotourism. The scale could also be used to categorize ecotourists into interest levels from low to high, and based on the acquired information develop suitable propositions for each of the category (Eagles, 1992; Juric et al., 2002 ).

As for date, there are still a lot of limitations and gaps in studies of the tourists’ motivation. For example, the research of the motivations of tourists concerning consumption of ecotourism is still very poor and especially rare when it comes to the collection of the primary data for ecotourist segmentation. In spite of collecting new data, studies often tend to extrapolate data gathered 20 or 30 years ago (Zografos & Allcroft, 2007).

#### 2.3.4. Segmentation based on tourist’s motivation

Market segmentation is frequently used in the tourism field with the purpose to conduct scientific research or apply certain marketing strategy. According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2004, p. 44), “market segmentation can be defined as the process of dividing a market into distinct subsets of consumers with common needs or characteristics”. To apply a segmentation approach, it is important to determine the main criteria for segmentation. In general, there are nine main characteristics, which can be used as basis for segmentation: geographic factors, demographic factors, psychological factors, psychographic (lifestyle) characteristics, socio-cultural variables, use-related characteristics, use-situation factors, benefits sought, as well as forms of hybrid segmentation, such as demographic – psychographic profiles, geodemographic factors, and values and lifestyles. In tourism field this list is added by such criterion as motivation.

It was mentioned above that tourist’s motivation can be studied from different perspectives, but also it can be used as a basis for other researches within tourist field. Thus, some studies focus on tourist’s classification based on traveling motivation. In this occasion segmentation approach based on motivation is widely used. This approach allows categorizing tourists into different groups based on their motivation. In this case tourist motivation can be considered from any perspectives (e.g. motivation to visit certain destination, to behave in certain way, etc). The only requirement to apply

segmentation approach based on motivation is to consider tourist's motivation as a basis for segmentation. Nevertheless, some other characteristics can be taken into account to highlight the differences between the groups (Phan, 2010).

It is important to mention that this approach is applied just to categorize tourists according to their motivation, but it does not focus on motivation's determination. So, a research based on this approach requires using additional method, aimed to determine tourist's motivation.

This research includes tourist's segmentation based on their motivation to participate in ecotrips and behave in a certain way during the tour. So, first tourist's motivation will be defined, using motivation-based method, which has been described in the section 2.2.1. After that segmentation approach based on motivation will be applied. In addition, this study will consider some other tourist's characteristics (e.g. age, gender etc.) to profile tourists who belong to same segment.

### **3 Method**

#### **3.1 Research design**

This research was conducted using quantitative approach, which enable to examine the subject of research in a comprehensive way by collecting the data through case studies, social survey, etc.(Clifton & Handy, 2001).

Quantitative approach is applied in cases if the purpose of study requires a high number of respondents. This research is aimed to study ecotourist's motivation. Thus, to make the study comprehensive and to get representational results, the large sampling is needed. Quantitative approach is aimed to collect data through questionnaires or surveys and enable their statistical, mathematical or numerical analysis. As quantitative approach focuses on data quantification and its analysis using computer software, it enables to operate large amount of information during the short time (Harwell, 2011).

When quantitative approach is used to study human's personal features, attitude, opinions or behaviour, only people's responses are considered to get the results. It ensures objective data analysis, excluding subjective conclusions made by researchers.

Based on collected data, quantitative approach can be used for further data classification or to construct statistical models and figures in order to present the finding of study. Also the results of researches based on quantitative approach are used for comparisons or to measure changes (The advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires). As this research is based on large sample with the purpose to investigate tourist's motivation to participate in ecotours and provides tourist's segmentation according to their motivation and its relation to ecotourism' a principle, the quantitative approach has been chosen. The data have been collected using on-line survey, as it is an effective method for studying the behaviour, attitudes, motives, preferences and opinions (Questionnaires). In addition, this metgod enables to reach the great number of people all over the world. So, it is frequently used for researches, which are not limited in space. (Methods of survey data collection). On-line survey enables to get a large amount of information from a large group of respondents in a relatively quick and efficient way. This method does not require any agreements or contacts between researcher and participants in order to conduct the interview. Thus, respondents can fill in the questionnaire whenever it is convenient for them. Also on-line survey can be filling in by few respondents simultaneously (On-line survey). Moreover, it has been investigated that respondents to online surveys answer questions more honestly than those engaged in other modes (Methods of survey data collection).

Despite on-line survey has a lot strong sides, it is still characterized by some disadvantages, which are provided in the following list.

The main advantages of on-line questionnaires (On-line survey; The advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires):

1. *Ease of Data Gathering.* The Internet connects all kinds of people from all over the world. Thus, one of the easiest ways to find the respondents who belong to the target group of study is to use online survey. As a result, a study that requires a large number of participants can be conducted faster via the Internet.
2. *Convenience for respondents.* Online survey provides the highest level of convenience for the respondents as they can fill in the questionnaire whenever and wherever it is suitable for them.
3. *Minimal costs.* Traditional survey methods often require to spend a high amount of money to get enough respondents. On the other hand, conducting an Internet survey ensures low-cost (or free) data collection from the target population.
4. *Automation in data input and handling.* The respondents are able to participate in study by filling in the on-line questionnaire while connected to the Internet. Their responses are automatically saved in a survey database. It decreases the possibility of data errors and ensures quick and easy data quantification by researcher or through the use of a software package.

The main disadvantages of on-line questionnaires (On-line survey; The advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires):

1. *Inability to reach challenging population.* People, who do not have an access to the Internet, can not participate in the research, even if they are representatives of the target group. The examples of these respondents include the elderly population or people who live in remote areas.
2. *Survey fraud.* Some respondents may participate in the study because of personal interest or motives, without any desire to contribute to the research. As these people do not belong to the target group, their participation affects the accuracy of the research. Survey fraud is probably the heaviest disadvantage of an online survey.
3. Some respondents want to present a positive image of themselves. In this case, they can provide untruthful responses. Using on-line survey, it is very difficult (sometimes impossible) to check whether responses are truthful or not.
4. The vast majority of questions in on-line survey propose a limited list of responses to choose. When developing the questionnaire, the researcher estimates and decides what is important and what is not. If the author has missed something important, respondents have to choose the answer from proposed alternatives, even if they have another attitude or opinion. To solve this problem, it is important to conduct a pilot study, before starting real research.
5. If a questionnaire contains open-ended questions, it increases the probability of subjective researcher's influence during data analysis.
6. *Interpretation of the questions.* Respondents can understand the same questions in different ways. Thus, their answers are based on their own interpretation. So, to get

accurate results it is important to formulate questions in a clear way, avoiding double meaning words.

### **3.2 Data collection process**

#### ***3.2.1 Sampling strategy***

Few decades ago the main disadvantages of survey method were cost and time for data collection. Nowadays these problems are solved through the use of the internet. Nevertheless, unless used carefully, the use of online questionnaire can lead to the problems related to the representativeness of the sample. Obviously, if respondents do not belong to the target group, the results of research will be unrepresentative (Baggio & Klobas, 2011). Consequently, it is important to choose appropriate sampling strategy in order to get reliable results.

It has been already mentioned that the aim of this research is to define ecotourist's motivation in order to determine whether it is based on principles of ecotourism or on private tourist's motives. Thus, the target group of this research is ecotourists. The respondents had been found through ecotourism online communities on such web-sites as Facebook and Vk.com. These web-sites have been chosen as a most appropriate for questionnaire distribution as they are one of the best known among the population. Thus, Facebook is the most popular social network, which is well-known all over the world. Vk.com is less-known social network, but still it is frequently used by residents of post-Soviet Union countries and unites huge amount of people. To get representative sampling, the questionnaire was distributed through on-line communities, which are represented by tourists interested in ecotourism. As online community unites people with similar goals and interests (Preece, 2000), it enables to reach a high number of people who relate to ecotourism. On the other hand, the use of social networks increases the risk of bias as some individuals are more prone towards using social networks than others (e.g. young population).

As there is no universally accepted definition of ecotourism and ecotourists and variety of approaches to define ecotourists is wide, the respondent-based method has been chosen as a most appropriate to identify the representatives of target group. This method allows respondents to self-classify themselves as ecotourists or non-ecotourists (Jinyang & Jian, 2015). Thereby, members of online groups related to ecotourisms, have been asked to fill the questionnaire in case if they define themselves as ecotourists. Such approach enable to find the respondents in a quick way and helps to avoid controversies regarding their representativeness.

Additionally, to get comprehensive and representative results when studying tourist's motivation, it is important to have a large number of respondents. According to Asghar et al. (2014) online survey usually provide lower rate of respondents than researcher expected. Given this, the number of participant was not limited for this research. All respondents, who consider themselves as ecotourist and agreed to participate in this study, were allowed to fill in the questionnaire. Thus, during 1 month 60 ecotourists participated in this research. The respondents filled in the questionnaire

voluntarily without any pressure on them. All participants could refuse to fill in the survey at any moment.

### 3.2.2. On-line survey

As this research is aimed to study ecotourist's motivation, the primary data collection was needed. According to Baggio and Klobas (2011), primary data are "those collected directly from the original or 'primary' source by researchers through methods such as direct observation, questionnaire surveys (online, printed or administered by telephone or computer), interviews and case studies". As it was mentioned above, this study was conducted using online survey.

The survey was created in English using the online service ESurvey creator. The system generated a web-link automatically as soon as questionnaire had been completed. The link was posted on Facebook and Vk.com in communities which relate to ecotourism. Such groups were defined by titles, posted publication and members' discussions. In general, the survey was posted in 12 groups with the average number of members 400. According to the posted publications and discussions in these communities, their members had been involved in ecotrips previously and currently they are looking for new opportunities to participate in ecotour.

The questionnaire is aimed to collect the data in order to answer the research questions. It was designed based on information founded during the literature review. The vast majority of questions in the questionnaire are multiple choice questions, as it fasters filling of the questionnaire. This type of questions allows to choose answers from proposed alternatives that have been decided in advanced by the researcher (Questionnaire). In case respondents are not satisfied with proposed responses for multiple choice questions, they are allowed to provide their own alternative in the field "other". It enables to get more accurate results in case author has missed something important. Replying on multiple choice questions, respondents provide information which can be easily converted into quantitative data by counting the number of certain answers. As this procedure is carried out automatically by online service used for survey creation (ESurvey creator), it simplifies and speeds up data analysis (Rajasekar et al., 2013). Also questionnaire contains few semi-open and open answers questions. Open answers questions can increase the reliability of results as they do not propose any answers to choose and allow participants to provide their opinion or attitude in their own words. In this study respondents were asked to state why they are interested in ecotourism and provide any additional comments for this survey or study in general. As this type of questions requires more time and effort to answer, they were not obligatory to response in this survey. Otherwise, the respondent rate could be decreased.

This survey consists of four sections, which are aimed to investigate: tourist's motivation to participate in ecotours, previous trips' characteristics, visitors' behaviour during the ecotrips and their motives to behave in a certain way and tourist's background information.

To define tourist's motivation for participation in ecotours, the list of 10 motives was provided in the questionnaire. 5 out of 10 motives relate to principles of ecotourism and another 5 are considered as personal motives. The list of motives based on



principles of ecotourism includes such motives as *“I want to learn more about the natural environment”, “I travel to new places to learn about the local customs and culture”, “This type of tourism is less harmful for environment”, “I have a passion for learning something new when I travel”* and *“I want to experience new culture with the minimum influence on environment and local community”*. The group of private motives includes such , motives as *“I like to spend time in the open air”, “I like to be physically active during the tour”, “I like adventure”, “I want to meet people with similar”, “I can easily organize an ecotrip by myself and travel alone or just with my relatives/friends”*.

The respondents were asked to estimate their attitude to each motive using the measure scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= I do not think about it, 3= this is important for me, but is not a reason to participate in ecotours, 4= this is one of the reasons why I participate in ecotours, 5= this is a main reason to participate in ecotours).

Among all principles of ecotourism, which can be reflected in visitor's motivation to participate in ecotrip, there is such principle as *“Ecotourism should bring economic and other benefits to the local communities in a way, that would not disrupt traditional ways of running households and businesses, but rather support and develop them”*. It is difficult to consider this principle as a motivation to travel. Nevertheless it should be reflected in ecotourist's behavior. Moreover, their appropriate behavior should be based on “right” motives, which reflect the principle mentioned above. For example, while buying some local souvenirs, tourist is driven by desire to support local entrepreneurs. Such motive definitely reflects the principle of ecotourism. In contrast, if tourist buy local souvenirs because he/ she wants to have something memorable from the trip, than he/ she can not be considered as ecotourist whose motivation reflect the principle stated above. To verify whether ecotourist's behavior is based on appropriate motivation which corresponds to this principle, the section “visitors' behaviour during the ecotrips and their motives to behave in a certain way” has been included in the questionnaire.

The sections “Tourist's background information” and “Previous trip's characteristics” are used to provide brief profile of tourists, who identified themselves as ecotourists and to verify whether there is any relationship between personal tourist's details and his/ her motivation to participate in ecotours or not.

As for questionnaire design, it keeps the survey as short and clear as possible, avoiding specific terminology and double-meaning words or statements, which can be interpreted differently by different respondents. The survey started with easy questions which progressing to more difficult (for more details see Appendix).

Before the data collection process started, the pilot survey had been conducted. It enabled to test the questionnaire with a few participants in order to check that the terminology and questions are understandable, that emotive questions have not been used in the survey and that questionnaire can be completed in an appropriate time frame (5 minutes) (Questionnaire). Thus, 5 respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire to figure out whether all questions are clear and appropriate for respondents. Thus, participants in the pilot study were asked to identify any questions that they found difficult to understand or to answer. Also they were asked to provide

general comment for the questionnaire and point any inconveniences they had when answering the questions. Further, the questionnaire was corrected according to respondent's critique and link to the survey was posted in the Internet. The responses received during the pilot study were not considered for data analysis, because those participants do not belong to the target group as they have been chosen randomly.

### 3.2.3. Limitations

The number of limitations has been faced during the research process. Predominantly, they are related to chosen method. As online survey requires an access to the internet to complete the questionnaire, those tourists who have not either computer or internet connection (e. g. elderly population or people who live in remote areas) could not participate in the research. Moreover, to fill in the questionnaire people should be registered on Facebook or Vk.com and belong to certain online communities. Otherwise, they had not access to the link to the survey. Additionally, online link allows to fill in only 1 survey from 1 computer. Thus, few people who have access to only one computer (e.g. travelers who are family) can not participate in the study. The problem can be solved by using computers in public areas (e.g. libraries), but it requires very strong tourist's motivation to participate in the research. On the other hand, there is no opportunity to control if the same respondent completed the survey few times from different computers.

Another issue relates to literacy rate of population and knowledge of English. As this study was not limited in space, English language has been chosen for the survey as an international language. Despite the questionnaire had been written in understandable manner without using the specific terms, those tourists who do not know English or have just basic knowledge of this language could not participate in the research.

Next limitation relate to questions' type and their design. As the vast majority of questions in the survey are multiple choice questions, the respondents had to choose one of responses from the limited alternatives proposed by author. Thus, there is a high probability that participants will choose the most appropriate answer from proposed list instead of providing response they really want. Moreover, when reading the questions people can misunderstood their meaning and answer based on their own interpretation. As a result it leads to unreliable results.

The last limitation considered is inability to increase the rate of respondents. Using online survey, there is no opportunity to force people to participate in research. As the vast majority of potential respondents either not considers themselves as ecotourists (but belong to ecotourism online community) or refused to fill in the questionnaire, the number of participants in this research is relatively low.

### **3.3. Data analysis process**

When data had been collected, the data analysis process started. It consisted of several steps.

In the beginning the respondent's background information was analyzed. As a result the brief generalized profile of self-identified ecotourists who participated in this research was provided based on such characteristics as age, gender, country of residence and level of education. Then, the previous trips characteristics were analyzed. Thereby, on this stage were determined the number of ecotrips tourists have been previously involved, the average length of their tours, number of people within the group they travelled with, the distance to their travelled destination and transport they used to reach it.

Next step was aimed to analyze ecotourist's motivation to participate in ecotours and to behave in a certain way during the trip. To analyze traveller's motivation to participate in ecotours the measuring scale has been used. The respondent evaluated their attitude to each of 10 motives proposed, using 5-grades scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= I do not think about it, 3= this is important for me, but is not a reason to participate in ecotours, 4= this is one of the reasons why I participate in ecotours, 5= this is a main reason to participate in ecotours). It enabled to identify tourist's motivation to participate in ecotours. As a result of this step the generalized tourists attitude to each proposed motive was provided. Further, the motives based on principles of ecotourism and personal motives were considered separately and the average value of all motives from each group was found. It ensured to define whether the ecotourist's motives to participate in ecotours based on principles of ecotourism or on private motives. Further, tourist's motivation to behave in certain way during the ecotour was analyzed with the same purpose: to identify either it is based on principles of ecotourism or it is caused by private tourists interests.

During the next step the motivation of each respondent was considered separately in order to conduct ecotourist's segmentation. Thus, the average value of motives based on ecotourism's principles was calculated and compared with the average value of personal motives. In such way the motivation of each respondent was analyzed. As a result all participants were categorized in 3 groups: "Ecotourists, whose travel motivation is preferably based on principles of ecotourism", "Ecotourists, whose travel motivation is caused by private motives" and "Ecotourists, whose travel motivation is based on private motives and reflects the principles of ecotourism at the same time".

Finally, the personal tourist's characteristics were analyzed within each group to verify whether are any dependency between personal details and tourism motivation or not.

The analyses were conducted using the online service ESurvey creator and statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) 23.0 for Windows. First, the statistical analysis of primary data was conducted using ESurvey creator. Further, the analysed results were imported into SPSS to estimate individual values of motivation.

### **3.4. Ethical consideration**

Ethical issues should be considered while conducting any research to prevent negative influence on participants. In order to avoid any confusion, respondents have to be informed that the information provided by them is kept confidential. If questionnaire is anonymous, it is important to mention it before participant start to fill in the survey. In this case respondents will provide more honest responses (Questionnaires). In order to reduce the probability of any psychological harm, any forms of discrimination based on age, gender, ethnicity, etc. should not occur.

The aim of study and the design of the research themselves bring little possibilities for any unethical human or nature treatment. This is due to the domain of study, which is social study and humanities and methods applied. However, sensitive approach does show at least one area where ethical concerns can be elevated. It refers to the questions in the questionnaire that ask for personal information (e.g. gender, age). These questions are important as answers to them will be used for further data analysis. To solve this issue the questionnaire was anonymous and respondents were informed about it in the beginning of the survey. Other than these issues any other kind of harm to individuals is highly unlikely to happen as no personal information will be disclosed, no other psychological burden be put nor any unfair treatment be delivered.

The respondents filled in the questionnaire voluntarily without any pressure on them. All participants could refuse to fill in the survey at any moment and were allowed to withdraw their responses at any time during the study by sending a request to the author.

To familiarize respondents with research they are involved in, the information regarding the subject and field of study, its aim and significance was provide. In the beginning of the questionnaire, the participants were informed that all information provided by them would be used for the purpose of research only and will be deleted after the study is completed. The respondents were aware about opportunity to ask questions, provide comments and critique by sending an email to the researcher.

The pilot study shown that questionnaire had been written in understandable manner, without using the specific terms. Thus, any respondent with intermediate knowledge of English language can fill it in without any confusion.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Respondents' profile**

60 ecotourists participated in this research. While analyzing their personal information it can be concluded that the women participated in this study more actively than the men. Thereby, the ratio of male and female respondents is 38% and 62% respectively. As for participants' age, the majority of respondents (41 individuals) belong to the age group "18-30 years" and only 19 respondents are aged 31-50 years. Among all respondents there were not representatives of age groups "under 18", "51-65" and "over 65". Also respondents were asked about highest education they had received. Thus, the vast majority of participants (37 respondents) are well-educated as they had already graduated from university, 15 respondents are undergraduate student and 8 participants have specified secondary school as a highest educational institution they were graduated from. Moreover, when considering all respondents who graduated the university as 100%, it should be concluded that women portion is 70% and only 30% are represented by men. Thus, it shows that the female ecotourists, who participated in this study, are more educated than male respondent.

The tourists from different counties participated in this research. Analyzing their counties of origin it was found that 56% of tourists are representatives of Europe and 44% are from Asia. The highest number of European respondents is residents of Poland, France, Finland, Germany and Ukraine, while Asia was represented predominantly by ecotourists from Armenia and Vietnam. The ecotourists from any other continent did not participate in the study.

### **4.2. Previous trips' characteristics**

The respondents have been asked about how many times they participated in ecotrips. It was found that all respondents who identified themselves as ecotourists have been involved in ecotours previously. The most frequent answer on this question is 2-3 time. Despite some travelers stated that they participate in ecotours regularly and have been involved in ecotrips many times (e.g. 8 - 10 times), the average number of trips for all respondents is 3. Nevertheless, among all 60 respondents there was no tourist, who participated in ecotours less than 2 times.

As for length of the tours travelers were involved into, 11 respondents said that they prefer one day trips. The vast majority of ecotourists (32 participants) have traveled during 2 or 3 days. According to 17 respondents, the average trips they were involved continued 4-7 days. None of the tourists mentioned that the average length of his/her trips exceeded 1 week.

The respondents were also asked to specify the number of people within the group they have travelled with. It was found that the most preferable (26 respondents) group size for ecotourists is 5 people maximum. Nevertheless, 8 tourists have traveled alone. The same amount of participants prefers to travel in large groups, which contain more than 20 people. 14 and 4 respondents have experience to travel in groups of 6-10 and 11-

20 people respectively. This question has been asked because one of the ecotourism principles says that ecotourism encourages independent travelers as well as organized tours for small size groups as it decreases impact on environment. In relation to this, the behavior of 8 ecotourists (13%), who have traveled in large groups (more than 20 people), contradicts to this principle.

Also ecotourists were asked to provide the average distance to their travel destination and specify which transport they used to reach it. Thus, the shortest ecotrip mentioned was 10 km and the longest 1000 km. In general, equal number of respondents (17 individuals) participated in short-distant (up to 100 km) and medium-distant (101 – 500 km) ecotours. Another 14 tourists overcame more than 500 km to reach their travel destination. It was found that none ecotourist did not reach the tourism destination by bike. On the other hand, 11 participants did not use transport at all. Instead, they were walking during the tour. Predominantly, it is tourists who experiences short-distant trips. But also there is 1 tourist out of 60, who overcame 220 km by foot. In general, all kinds of transport have been used by ecotourists, but the most frequently used were cars, buses and trains. Only 1 tourist has specified the boat as the transport he used to reach travel destination. The vast majority of respondents (56%) have chosen public transport instead of private when participating in ecotours. Any dependencies between the transport tourists used and the distance they overcame to reach the travel destination were not found.

### **4.3 Ecotourists' motivation**

This section provides the findings regarding ecotourists' motivation to participate in the ecotours and behave in a certain way during the trip. First, generalized tourists' attitude to various motives to participate in the ecotours is represented. Further, the main tourists' motives to behave in certain way during the ecotour are considered.

Ecotourists' motivation to participate in ecotours has been studied through the tourists' attitude to motives, which can drive person to travel. In relation to the aim of research, all proposed motives were divided into 2 groups: those, which relate to the principle of ecotourism and personal tourists' motives. The study revealed that the vast majority of those motives, which reflect the ecotourism principles, are important for tourists, but are not a reason to participate in ecotrips (Figure 1). Nevertheless, such motive as "Ecotourism is less harmful for the environment than other kinds of tourism" is considered by travelers as one of the reasons to be involved in ecotours. It should be mentioned, that the issue regarding ecotourism sustainability has become the matter of debates among researchers as they can not estimate the influence of ecotourism on environment (Fennell, 2008; Wearing & Neil, 1999). In this case it is difficult to conclude whether ecotourism is less harmful for the environment than other kinds of tourism or not. Despite this fact, travelers perceive ecotourism as a form of tourism which causes minimal impact on environment. Moreover, they are driven by this opinion when choosing the ecotours from all variety of tourism types.

As for personal tourists' motives to participate in ecotours, the majority of them (3 out of 5) are considered by ecotourists as one of the reasons to participate in ecotrips (Figure 2). It was found that travelers participate in ecotours because they like to spend time on the open air, like to be physically active and like adventure. At the same time such motives as "I want to meet people with similar interests" and "I can easily organize an ecotrip myself and travel alone or with relatives/friends" were not chosen by respondents as a one of the main reasons, which stimulate them to participate in ecotours. Nevertheless, despite tourists do not consider these 2 motives as a reason to travel, they estimated them as important factors.

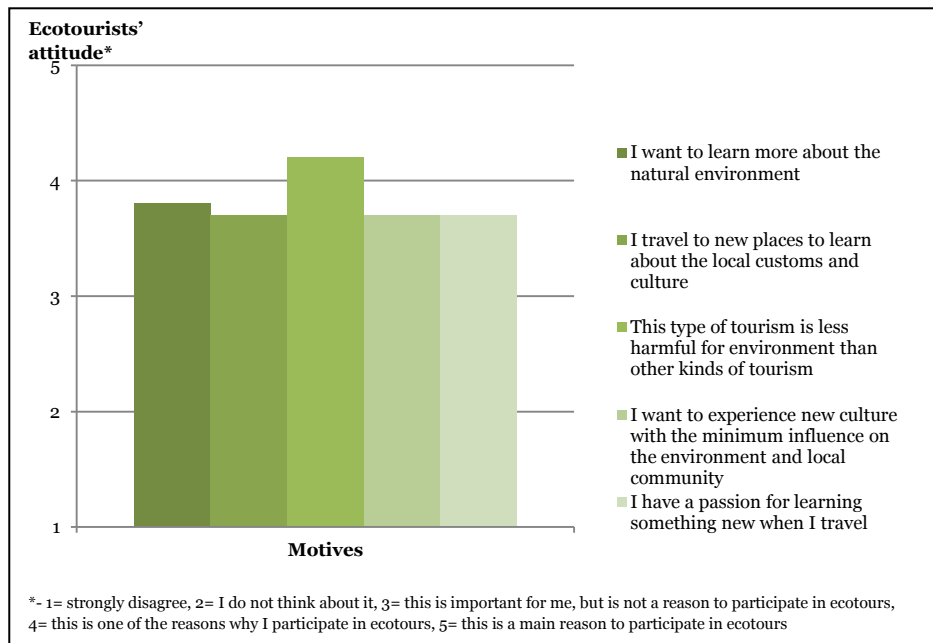


Figure 1: Ecotourists' attitude to the motives to participate in ecotours, based on ecotourism principles

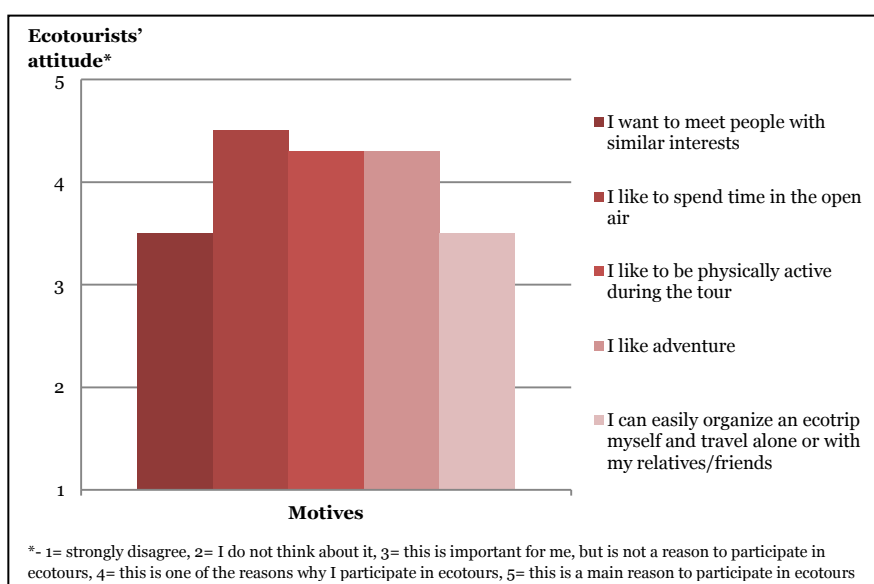


Figure 2: Ecotourists' attitude to the personal motives to participate in ecotours

Analyzing the average attitude of all respondents to the each group of motives (those, which relate to the principles of ecotourism and personal), it can be concluded that the ecotourists' attitude to the personal motives is clearly different from the attitude to the motives based on ecotourism's principles (Figure 3). Thus, the average travelers' attitude to the motives related to the ecotourism principles shows that this group of motives is important for tourists, but does not influence their decision to be involved in ecotrip. On the other hand, personal motives are considered by tourists as a reason to participate in ecotours.

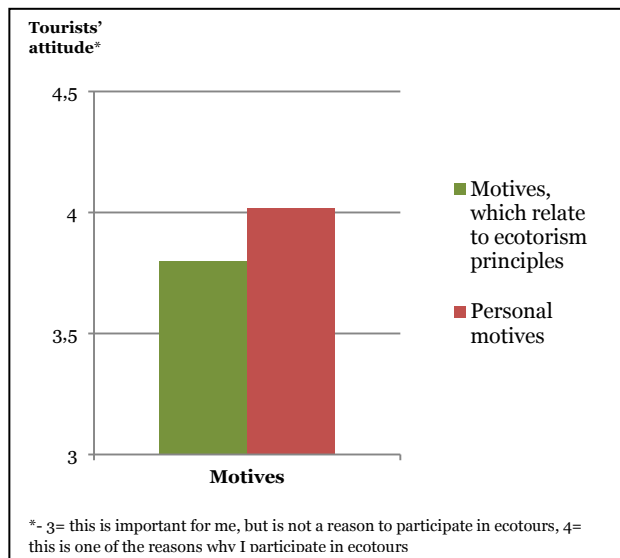


Figure 3: Ecotourists' attitude to the personal and principle-based motives to participate in ecotour

To investigate whether the ecotourists' motivation to behave in certain way during the tour correspond to ecotourism principles or not, such characteristics as motives to eat local food, book apartment, hotel or hostel if stay overnight, buy souvenirs sold by locals and motives to travel alone or in small groups were studied.

First, respondents were asked to specify the motive to eat the food provided by locals in case they eat. All respondents confirmed that they eat it at least 1 time per day during the ecotours, but the motives for doing this are different. Thus, according to the vast majority of respondents (87%), they are drive by personal motives, while eating the food provided by locals (Figure 4). For some ecotourists it is cheapest, easiest and most convenient way to eat, but majority of travelers (69%) want to try local cuisine. Only 13% of respondents eat local food in order to support local entrepreneurs, what relates to such principle of the ecotourism as "Ecotourism should bring economic and other benefits to the local communities".



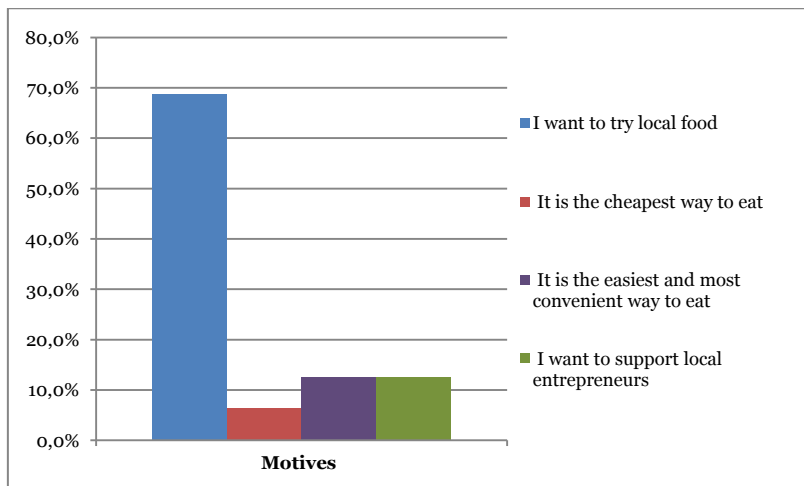


Figure 4: Ecotourists' motives to eat the food provided by locals during the ecotours.

As for motives to book an accommodation if tourists stay overnight in a visiting destination, first it should be mentioned that only 50% of respondents book an apartment, hotel or hostel if they stay overnight during the trip. 25% travelers did not specify where they stay overnight if they do not book a hotel. 12,5% of tourists do not book apartment or hostel as they have an opportunity to stay overnight for free (e.g. at relative's or friend's place). Another 12,5% respondents do not stay overnight at all. Nevertheless, the study shows that those ecotourists who book an accommodation while staying overnight are driven by different reasons to do it (Figure 5). Thus, the motive of one fourth of tourist reflects the ecotourism principle as they stay in hotels or hostels because of desire to contribute to local economy. Another 25% of respondent did not specify the reason to book an accommodation when they stay overnight. Thus, it is difficult to estimate whether their motive relate to ecotourism principles or not. According to the 50% of ecotourists, they book a hotel or hostel based on personal motives. Thereby, the vast majority of respondents (42%) said that it is the most suitable option for staying overnight and 8% of ecotourists book an accommodation in visiting destination just because they have no other alternative to stay overnight.

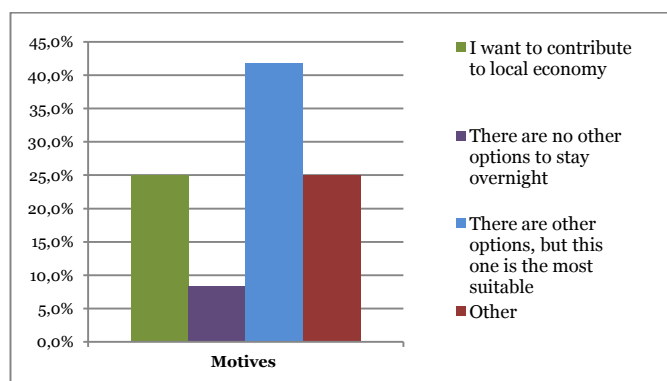


Figure 5: Ecotourists' motives to book apartment, hotel or hostel if stay overnight

Further, the ecotourists' motives to buy local souvenirs during the trip were investigated. It was found that 75% of all respondents buy some souvenirs or other memorable things sold by locals during the trip. Analyzing respondents' motives, it can be concluded that the large number of tourists (54%) buy local souvenirs because they

want to have something memorable from the trip. 7,5% of respondents buy them as a gift for relatives or friends and the same amount of tourists did not specify what motivate them to buy local souvenirs. At the same time, almost one third of all respondents (31%) who buy souvenirs sold by locals noted that they do it with the purpose to contribute to local entrepreneurs. Thereby, it can be concluded that the motive of 31% of ecotourists reflects the ecotourism principle when they buy souvenirs or other memorable things sold by locals (Figure 6).

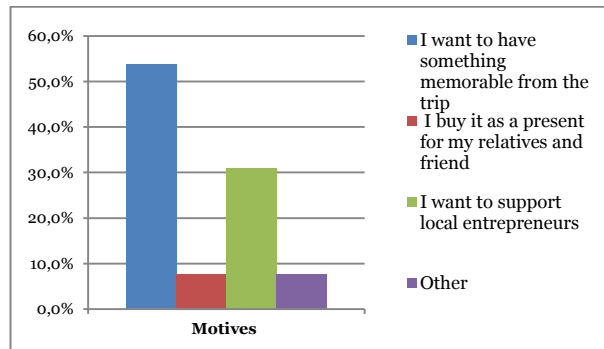


Figure 6: Ecotourists' motives to buy souvenirs sold by locals

The last question to define ecotourists' motivation to behave in a certain way during the trip relates to the tourists' motive to travel in small groups (up to 5 people). First the portion of tourists who prefer to travel alone or in small groups was defined and further their motives were investigated. In previous section ("Previous trips' characteristics") only 44% of ecotourists specified that they participated in ecotrips alone or have been involved in the group up to 5 people. Despite this fact, in this part 94% of respondents agreed they prefer to travel alone or on small groups. The majority of tourist (36% and 28% respectively) would like to travel alone or within the small groups based on such personal motives as "I feel myself more comfortable in a small group" and "I do not want to depend on other people during the trip". Additionally, 7% of travelers prefer to be involved in a small group during the ecotour because it is difficult to organize and control large group. 14% of respondents did not specify their motive to be a member of small group during the ecotour. Nevertheless, the motive of 14% of ecotourists corresponds to the principles of ecotourism as they prefer to travel in the groups up to 5 people because in their opinion it reduces the negative influence on the natural environment and local community.

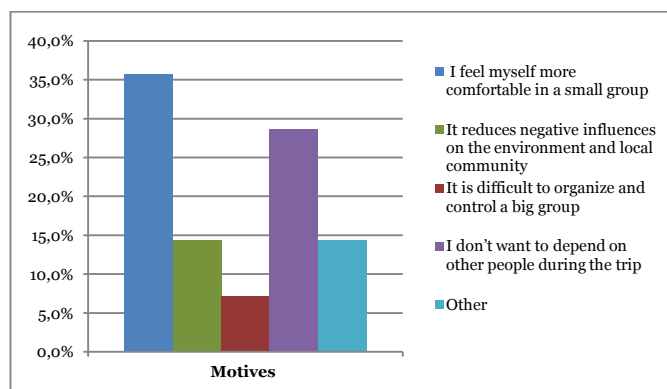


Figure 7: Ecotourists' motives to travel alone or in small group

#### **4.4. Ecotourists' segmentation**

This section provides ecotourists' segmentation based on their motivation to participate in ecotours and to behave in a certain way during the trip. To classify ecotourists, the motivation of each tourist was analyzed separately. Further, ecotourists were divided into the groups, according to their motivation. As a result 3 groups were created: "Tourists whose motivation is based on ecotourism principles", "Tourists whose motivation is caused by personal motives" and "Tourists whose motivation is based on personal motives and reflects the ecotourism principles".

When analyzing ecotourists' motivation to participate in ecotrips, it has been found that tourists are divided more or less equally into those who participate in ecotours because of personal motives, those whose motivation correspond to the principles of ecotourism and those are driven by personal motives and ecotourism principles at the same time (Figure 8). Nevertheless, there are some differences in the groups' ratio. The vast majority of respondents (57%) have clear motivation to participate in ecotrips (either personal or based on ecotourism principles). Thus, 25% of ecotourists choose the ecotourism among all variety of tourism forms as they have passion for learning something new about natural environment, local customs and culture, they want to experience new culture with the minimum influence on environment and local community, and think this type of tourism is less harmful for environment than the others. Given this, it can be concluded that the motivation of one quarter respondents corresponds to the ecotourism principles. Another group is represented by 32% of ecotourists, who do not consider ecotourism principles as a reason to participate in ecotour instead of any other trip. In contrast, they are driven by personal motives. Thereby, this group of tourists participates in ecotours because they like to spend time in the open air, they like adventure and want to be physically active during the tour, and they can easily organize an ecotrip themselves and meet people with the similar interests during the tour.

The ration between two groups considered above shows, that personal motives are more significant for ecotourists, when they decide to participate in ecotours. Nevertheless, the difference between these 2 groups is 7% only and the portion of tourists whose motives are based on ecotourism principles is quite large (1/4 of all respondents).

As for group of ecotourists whose travel motivation is based on personal motives and reflect the ecotourism principles, it comprises 43% of respondents.

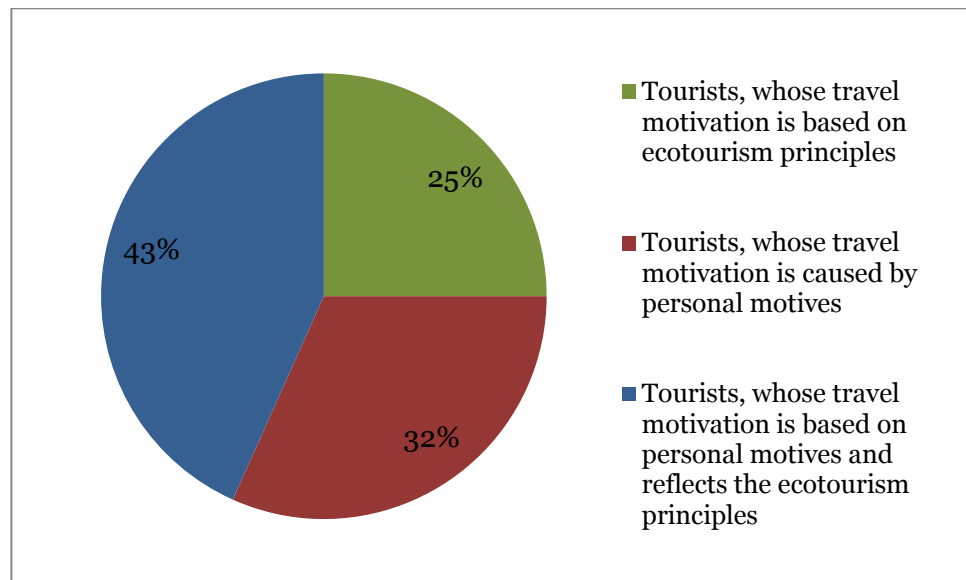


Figure 8: Ecotourists' segmentation based on motivation to participate in ecotours

When analyzing ecotourists' segmentation based on the motivation to behave in a certain way during the tour, it is seen that the behavior of majority of respondents (73%) is based on personal motives (Figure 9). These tourists eat local food with the purpose to try local cuisine, book hotel or hostel if stay overnight because it is the most suitable alternative or there is no other option at all, they buy local souvenirs in order to have something memorable from the trip or to bring a presents for relatives and friends. Additionally, this group of tourists prefers to travel alone or with group up to 5 people, because they do not want to depend from other people during the tour and they feel themselves more comfortable in the small group.

On the other hand, while eating local food, booking an accommodation, buying local souvenirs and traveling in the small groups, 20% of ecotourists wants to support local entrepreneurs and to contribute to local economy. So, it can be concluded that their motivation correspond to the ecotourism principles.

As for group of ecotourists whose motivation to behave in a way described above is based on personal motives and reflects the ecotourism principles, it includes 7% of all respondents only.

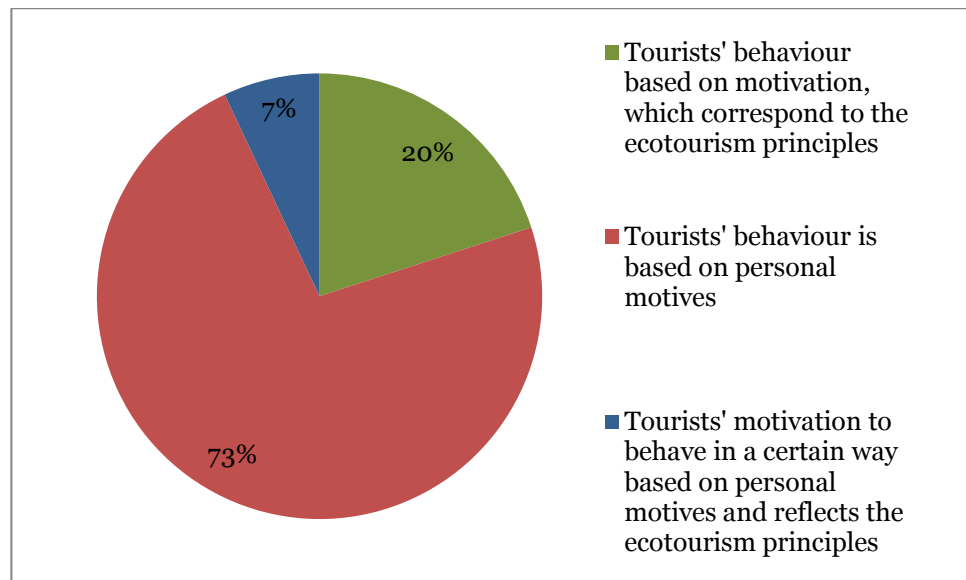


Figure 9: Ecotourists' segmentation based on motivation to behave in a certain way during the trip

When the ecotourist's segmentation was completed, the tourists' personal information was analyzed within each group. Further, comparative analysis of all groups was conducted based on personal tourists' characteristics, but no dependencies between ecotourists's motivation and personal details were found.

## 5. Discussion

Until recently, the motivations of ecotourists have been measured through the general observation of the behaviors of some travelers (Juric et al., 2002). In contrast, this study was aimed to investigate ecotourists' motivation using qualitative approach, which ensures objective data analysis, excluding subjective conclusions made by researchers (Harwell, 2011). As a result of this research the main ecotourists' motives to participate in ecotours and to behave in a certain way during the trip were found and their correspondence to the ecotourism's principles was analyzed. Thus, the lack of primary data regarding tourists' motivation to consume the ecotourism product has been enriched and one of the gaps in this field of study has been filled (Zografos & Allcroft, 2007).

The study has revealed 4 motives out of 10 proposed, which considered by self-identified ecotourists as the reason to participate in ecotour. Thus, the main motives to participate in ecotrips are the desire to spend time in the open air and to be physically active during the tour, opportunity to be involved in adventure and desire to participate in the trip which is less harmful for environment than the other tours. Comparing these motives with theoretical ecotourism's principles (see chapter 2.1.1), it can be concluded that 3 ecotourists' motives are personal motives and only 1 motive ("This type of tourism is less harmful for the environment") corresponds to the principles of ecotourism. When choosing this motive as the one of the reason to participate in ecotrip, tourists demonstrate their subjective assessment of the ecotourism industry as the issues regarding its sustainability and low impact on environment are not a fact and are the matter of debate among the researchers (Fennell, 2008; Wearing & Neil, 1999; Page & Dowling, 2002). Thus, it can be concluded that when deciding to participate in ecotrip, self-identified ecotourists are driven by personal motives and self-interpreted idea regarding low ecotourism's influence.

Considering ecotourists' behavior during the trip it seems that it corresponds to the ecotourism's principles. Thus, all ecotourists contribute to the local economy by staying overnight in local hotels, eating local food and buying local souvenirs. At the same time researchers argue that tourists' motivation describes the reasons which determine human's behavior during the trip (McIntosh & Goeldner, 1986). Hall and Page (2014) argue that an understanding of tourists' motivation can offer a range of insights into why people behave in a certain way. It means that the same actions can be caused by different motives. Given this, to conclude whether the ecotourists are driven by ecotourism's principles during the trip or not, their motivation to act in certain was investigated. Thus, despite it seems that the tourists' behavior reflects the ecotourism's principle since all tourists support local community, the study of ecotourists' motivation to behave in a certain way during the tour revealed that the vast majority of ecotourists are driven by personal motives during the tour (e.g. they eat local food with the purpose to taste local cuisine, buy local souvenirs because they want to have something memorable from the trip etc.). But it should be mentioned that there are some tourists whose travel behavior is based on ecotourism's principles.

As seen from above, the motivation is an important issue to study, since it explains the fundamentals of human's decisions and behavior. Moreover, it is important to take into account that motivation is not constant (Snepenger et al., 2006). Thus, despite the motivation is a key criterion to understand human's behavior as it plays a crucial role in the decision making process, it should be investigated separately in relation to each case (Snepenger et al., 2006). It is proved by ecotourists' segmentation conducted in this research. The segmentation shows that it would be wrong to expect that the segmentation based on tourists' motivation to participate in ecotour will reflect the segmentation based on tourists' motivation to behave in certain way during the trip.

## **6. Conclusion**

In terms of lacking definition of ecotourisms and ecotourists, there is not any universally excepted approach to define these terms. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need to determine the consumers of this type of tourism as it will allow evaluating the real influence of the industry on natural, cultural and social environment and will help to estimate its sustainability (Fennell, 2005).

Nowadays, there is a wide variety of approaches to define the ecotourists. According to one of them, the consumers of the industry can be identified by their motivation to travel and to behave in a certain way during the tour (Eagle, 1992). Tourist's motivation describes the reasons which stimulate people to travel and explains their decisions and behaviour while organizing and participating in the trip (McIntosh & Goeldner, 1986). Given this, the tourists who have "right" motivation to be involved in ecotrips can be considered as ecotourist. Consequently, the question "Which motivation is "right"?" should be asked. As some researchers argue about ecotourists' environmental friendly behavior and impact on environment, to be identified as ecotourists travelers should meet the key characteristics of the industry, which are reflected in the principles of ecotourism. Thus, ecotourists can be considered as tourists whose motivation to participate in ecotour and behave in a certain way during the trip is based on the principles of ecotourism.

As a result of this research, it has been found whether the motivation of those travelers who identified themselves as ecotourists reflect the principles of ecotourism or not. Moreover, tourists' motivations to participate in ecotrips and to behave in a certain way during the tour were compared and following conclusions were drawn.

In general, ecotourists are driven by personal motives when deciding to participate in ecotours. Thereby, they consider personal motives as the reasons to travel. On the other hand, motives based on ecotourism principles travelers perceive as important components of ecotourism industry, but have mentioned that these motives did not stimulate them to be involved in ecotrips.

As for tourists' motivation to behave in a certain way during the trip, it is also based mainly on personal motives. But there is a part of ecotourists whose motives to behave during the trip reflect the principles of ecotourism. Moreover, the portion of ecotourists whose motivation corresponds to the ecotourism principles depends on

decision they have to make. Thus, the highest number of tourists is driven by motives based on ecotourism principles when they buy local souvenirs and book an accommodation to stay overnight (31% and 25% respectively). When doing this, they want to support local entrepreneurs, instead of fulfill personal needs. The motive of 14% travelers refers to ecotourism principles when they decide to travel alone or in small groups in order to decrease the negative influence on the environment and local community. As for local food, only 12% of respondents eat it with the purpose to contribute to local economy. The rest of ecotourists do it based on personal motives.

When comparing ecotourists' segmentation based on the motivation to participate in ecotours and to behave in a certain way during the trip, it is seen that groups' ratio differs considerably. Thus, the number of tourists whose motivation to be involved in ecotours reflects the ecotourism principles is almost equal to those travelers who are guided by personal motives to participate in ecotrips (25% and 32% respectively). Another 43% are represented by tourists, whose travel motivations are based on personal motives and reflect ecotourism principles at the same time. When it comes to the motivation to behave in a certain way during the trip, the vast majority of ecotourists (73%) are driven by personal motives and 20% of travelers correspond to the principles of ecotourism. Only 7% are represented by respondents, whose motivation to behave in certain way is based on personal motives and reflects ecotourism principles.

As it seen from above, the group of tourists whose motivation is based on the principles of ecotourism is more or less equal in both cases (20% and 25%). In this case, the ecotourists' motivation to travel is reflected in their behavior during the trip. In contrast, the number of ecotourists, who are driven by personal motives instead of ecotourism principles, is increasing dramatically when it comes to behavior during the tour. Thus, just 32% of respondents are stimulated by personal motives only when deciding to participate in ecotours. But when it comes to the tourists' motives to behave during the tour, their amount rises to 73%. Predominantly it happens because the travelers who belong to the group "Tourists, whose motivation is based on personal motives and reflects ecotourism principles" have not strongly marked motivation. As a results the majority of tourists, whose motivation to participate in ecotours reflected the ecotourism principles, are driven by personal motives during the tour.

To sum up all listed above, the ecotourists are mostly driven by personal motives when decide to participate in ecotours and determine how to behave during the trip. In some cases these motives coincide with ecotourism principles. As respondents were not aware of the theoretical ecotourism principles before they started participation in this research, it can be concluded that self-identified ecotourists have chosen sustainable lifestyle and have environmentally friendly requirements to the tour quality. Nevertheless, as the group of travelers whose motivation clearly corresponds to the ecotourism principles includes only 20-25% of all respondents who have identified themselves as ecotourists, the further applicability of the respondent-based method to define ecotourists should be calling into question.



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## Appendix: Questionnaire

*By filling in this questionnaire you contribute to research, which focuses on some aspects of tourists' demand for ecotours. So, if you consider yourself as ecotourist, you are welcome to participate in this study.*

*The questionnaire is anonymous. All information provided by you will be confidential and will be used for general statistical analysis only.*

*Each your answer will be very important and helpful for research.*

### **Part 1. Background information**

1. Gender a) male b) female
2. Age a) under 18 b) 18-30 c) 31-50 d) 51-65 e) over 65
3. Highest Education received: a) high school b) undergraduate c) graduate d) other  
if you are studying or graduated from university, please state field on study-  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Country of residence \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part 2. Previous trips' characteristics**

1. How many times did you participate in ecotours? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Length of your tour (if you participated in few tours, state average length) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Group size  
a) traveled alone b) up to 5 people c) 6-10 people d) 10-20 people e) more than 20
4. Distance to your travel destination (average ) \_\_\_\_\_ km
5. How did you reach the travel destination?  
a) by foot b) by bike c) by private transport  
d) by public transport (choose which): bus, train, plane, ferry, another

### **Part 3. Motives for ecotourism**

*I participate in ecotours because (choose the most suitable for you attitude in relation to each reason provided below):*

	1	2	3	4	5
Reason to participate in ecotourism	Strongly disagree	I do not think about it	This is important for me, but is not a reason to participate in ecotours	This is one of the reasons why I participate in ecotours	This is a main reason to participate in ecotours
I want to learn more about the natural environment					
I travel to new places to learn about local culture and customs					
This type of tourism is less harmful for environment than all the other kinds of tourism					
I can easily organize ecotrip by myself and travel alone or just with my relatives/friends					
I have a passion for learning something new when I travel					
I want to experience new culture with the minimum influence on environment and					

local community					
I like to spend time on open air					
I like to be physically active during the tour					
I like adventure					
I want to meet people with similar interests					

**Part 4. Do you agree or not with following statements (if YES, choose the reason):**

1. *During the ecotours I eat the food provided by locals at least 1 time per day (in local cafés, restaurants, buy in local shops, markets ets)*  
a) yes b) no

*Reason*

- a) I want to try local food  
b) I want to support local entrepreneurs  
c) It is the easiest and most convenient way to eat  
d) It is cheapest way to eat  
e) Other\_\_\_\_\_

2. *If I stay overnight in the visiting destination, in most cases I book an apartment hotel or hostel*  
a) yes b) no c) usually I don't stay overnight  
d) usually I have an opportunity to stay overnight for free (e.g. at relatives or friend place)

*Reason*

- a) There are no other options where I can stay overnight  
b) There are other options, but this one is the most suitable for me  
c) I want to contribute to local economy  
d) Other\_\_\_\_\_

3. *Usually I buy some local souvenirs or other memorable things sold by locals during ecotrip*  
a) yes b) no

*Reason*

- a) I want to have something memorable from the trip  
b) I buy it as a present for my relatives and friend  
c) I want to support local entrepreneurs  
d) Other\_\_\_\_\_

4. *I prefer to travel alone or in small groups (up to 5 people)*  
a) yes b) no

*Reason:*

- a) I feel myself more comfortable in small group  
b) I think it reduce negative influence for environment and local community  
c) It is difficult to organize and control big group  
d) I don't want to depend on other people during my trip.  
e) Other\_\_\_\_\_

*Why are you interested in ecotourism?*

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*If you have any additional comments you are welcome to write it below*

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***Thanks for your participation!***