
ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Trends and factors in the development of world tourism in the post-pandemic period

Natalia Zatsepina

Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic National University, Zaporizhzhia 69063, Ukraine; Nat020375@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the study of modern factors and trends in the development of world tourism. Researching the impact of the pandemic on the state of modern tourism is extremely relevant, as COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the tourism industry worldwide. Various factors and trends in the development of this process, which are affected by the pandemic, were considered. That is why the study determined that the COVID-19 pandemic primarily led to the restriction of movements and the closing of borders between countries, which significantly reduced the volume of international travel. The analysis was carried out taking into account such factors as travel restrictions. The introduction of restrictions on international and domestic travel has become one of the main measures to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This led to a sharp reduction in tourist trips and a significant deterioration of the global tourism sector. Also, the loss of revenue when the travel-related tourism sector faced severe financial difficulties due to the pandemic. Cancellations, border closures, and restrictions on international flights were found to have resulted in a significant loss of revenue for companies and hotels and affected employment in the sector. Differences in recovery have been identified when the recovery of international tourism after the pandemic is uneven in different regions of the world. Some countries and regions that quickly implemented effective measures to control the spread of the virus began to recover earlier than others. This led to the emergence of new “tourist hotspots” and the redistribution of tourist flows. New trends in tourism have been identified. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a change in the preferences and behavior of tourists. Safety, health, and hygiene have become the main priorities when choosing a direction and types of recreation. As a result, the popularity of ecological tourism is growing, and new formats of tourist services are emerging, such as virtual tours and remote travel. In general, the COVID-19 pandemic has a serious and long-term impact on the current development of world tourism, leading to changes in the preferences and behavior of tourists, as well as causing a redistribution of tourist flows and difficulties of a financial nature in this area.

Keywords: pandemic; COVID-19; world tourism; international tourism; travel; tourist services; development trends; tourist flows

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the travel industry and has led to many changes that will be relevant and influential in the future, especially in terms of safety and traveller satisfaction. One of the main aspects that underlines the relevance of this impact is the restrictions on the spread of the virus,

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 16 August 2023 | Accepted: 12 September 2023 | Available online: 18 October 2023

CITATION

Zatsepina N. Trends and factors in the development of world tourism in the post-pandemic period. *Smart Tourism* 2023; 4(1): 2338. doi: 10.54517/st.v4i1.2338

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2023 by author(s). *Smart Tourism* is published by Asia Pacific Academy of Science Pte. Ltd. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

with many countries closing their borders or imposing entry restrictions on foreign nationals. This led to a huge reduction in international travel and significant losses for the tourism industry. Due to the restrictions and uncertainty associated with the pandemic, many people have cancelled travel or postponed their future plans. This has led to a significant decline in demand for international tours and services. The pandemic has led to a significant reduction in air travel and the closure of many airlines. Restrictions on international flights and the fear of infection led to a decline in passenger numbers and significant economic losses for airlines.

International travel in the post-pandemic era has been accompanied by increased security measures, such as COVID-19 testing, quarantine measures, and mask requirements. This creates additional restrictions and costs for travellers, which may discourage some people from travelling internationally. The pandemic has changed traveller preferences and behaviour. Many people have started to prefer local or regional travel, avoiding long-distance international travel, which in turn may lead to a shift in tourism demand and the need for new types of tourism services. Thus, the impact of the pandemic on the development of international tourism is that it has created serious challenges and changes in the industry, which will continue to have an impact in the near future. Adapting to these changes and developing new strategies are essential for the recovery of international tourism and its future development.

2. Objective of the study

That is why the main purpose of this study is to identify trends and factors in the development of world tourism in the post-pandemic period, which can become the basis for further development.

3. Hypotheses development

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a change in the preferences and behavior of tourists, which has led to the formation of new trends in tourism. Safety, health and hygiene have become the main priorities when choosing a direction and types of recreation. As a result, the popularity of ecological tourism is growing, new formats of tourist services are emerging, such as virtual tours and remote travel. In general, the COVID-19 pandemic has a serious and long-term impact on the current development of world tourism, leading to changes in the preferences and behavior of tourists, as well as causing a redistribution of tourist flows and difficulties of a financial nature in this area, which must be taken into account in the further planning of the development of the industry at various levels management, from state bodies to individual enterprises.

4. Research methodology

The study found a systematic approach to the analysis of post-pandemic changes in processes and phenomena in the field of the international tourism industry. The research used theoretical search (comparative analysis, systematization), system analysis method and structural-functional method, predictive method, descriptive and graphic methods for clarity.

5. Results and discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on tourism and shaped new trends in the industry. Firstly, the pandemic has raised awareness of the importance of health and safety when travelling. Tourists have become more cautious and pay more attention to hygiene and precautions. Safety has become one of the most important factors when choosing a destination. Restrictions on international travel have also made tourists look more closely at local and regional destinations. Many people now prefer to explore their homeland and neighbouring countries, which is contributing to the growth of local tourism. The pandemic has also increased interest in sustainable tourism, which takes into account environmental and social aspects. Tourists

increasingly prefer tours that include environmentally friendly activities, visits to local communities and conservation of natural resources.

In addition, online booking platforms, virtual tours and various digital solutions have become an integral part of the travel industry. Interest in virtual travel has grown and companies are actively developing digital capabilities to meet the needs of tourists. Many travel companies have introduced more flexible booking conditions and cancellation policies to meet the needs of customers in times of uncertainty. Flexibility and the possibility of a refund have become important factors when choosing a tour operator or hotel. Also, with the rise of remote work, many people are choosing to spend long periods of time in other countries. This approach, called «working from anywhere in the world», allows people to combine work with exploring new places and cultures. In addition, the pandemic has increased interest in medical tourism as people seek opportunities to receive quality medical care abroad. Many countries are already actively developing this tourism industry and attracting international patients. These are just some of the trends that have emerged under the influence of the pandemic. Therefore, the situation may continue to change in the future, and the tourism industry will adapt to new realities.

Certain trends can be identified by studying various aspects of the state of tourism. For example, in Europe, according to statistics, international tourism revenues have varied depending on various global crises over the past 23 years: 2000, \$223 billion; 2003 (SARS epidemic), \$222 billion; 2009 (global financial crisis), \$251 billion; 2019, \$429 billion; 2020 (COVID-19), \$159 billion; 2022, \$240 billion. International tourist arrivals create a direct impact of tourism on GDP worldwide. **Table 1** shows the impact of tourism on global GDP from 2019 to 2022^[1].

Table 1. Impact of international tourist arrivals on GDP in the world.

Year	International tourist arrivals (million people)	Direct impact of tourism on GDP (in trillion USD)
2019	1500	3.3
2020	407	1.5
2021	456	1.7
2022	963	2.5

According to forecasts, international tourism is already returning to its pre-pandemic level, with +4% in 2022, 48% in 2023, and 64% in 2024^[2]. For example, **Table 2** shows the dynamics of international air traffic growth (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) on the example of Ryanair (the company's fiscal year ends on 31 March).

Table 2. Growth dynamics of international air traffic on the example of Ryanair^[3].

Year	Net profit/loss, USD billion	Customers, million people
2017	+1316	120
2018	+1450	130.3
2019	+1025	143.1
2020	+1002	148.6
2021	-815	27.5
2022	-355	97.1
2023	+1428	168.6

The tourism industry has begun to grow again as the pandemic has subsided. According to a survey of respondents from 18 global markets^[2], in 2022, 13% of tourists started spending more on holidays; 13% travelled with a larger group of family/friends; 9% took or booked more holidays than usual; 10% took longer holidays than usual; 8% worked remotely during their holidays; 5% took holidays as an extension of a business trip.

American Express Travel has released its 2023 Global Travel Trends Report, which highlights four global trends that are inspiring people to travel this year:

- The emergence of “Set-Jetting”: popular films, TV shows and social media are inspiring people to travel to the places they see on screen, such as Italy, Paris, Yellowstone or London;
- Tasty places: from top restaurants to local favourites and cooking courses, people choose their next destination based on what they will eat;
- The wave of wellness: restorative holidays are on the rise as travellers prioritise self-care and their mental and physical health;
- Travelling on the unknown paths: travellers want to discover hidden gems and support the local community when they visit^[4].

In today’s world, 66% of Generation Z and Millennials agree that they get inspiration about where to travel, where to eat and what to eat mainly from social media. The survey identified the main information sources that encourage tourists to choose a travel destination and book a trip (methodology: n = 1000 (Australia, Canada, India, Japan, Mexico, UK), 2000 (USA); respondents with a family income of at least \$70 thousand and travelling by plane at least once a year; 3–11 February 2023). **Table 3** considered factors that influence tourists’ choice of travel destination^[5].

Table 3. Factors that influence tourists’ choice of travel destination^[5].

Influencing factors (sources)	Generation Z and millennials, in %.	Generation X, in %.
TV shows or films	52	43
Instagram	46	22
Fasebook	34	22
Tik Tok	29	7

Furthermore, it should be noted that food has a huge impact on where people travel, from visiting world-class restaurants or local establishments to taking cooking courses. 81% of respondents agree that trying local food and cuisine is the part of travelling they look forward to the most. 66% of Generation Z and Millennials agree that they get their food inspiration while travelling mostly from social media. Almost half (47%) of Gen Z and Millennials agree that they have planned an entire trip around a particular restaurant^[5].

Giving priority to self-care is leading to an increase in the number of recreational holidays. 73% of respondents are planning a holiday this year to improve their mental, physical and emotional health. 60% of Generation Z and Millennials say they are doing their best to book hotels that offer spa and wellness services.

Travellers want to discover hidden gems and support the local communities they visit. 85% of respondents want to visit a place where they can truly experience the local culture. 78% of respondents are interested in taking a holiday that supports local communities in 2023. Also, Generation Z and millennials are travelling more to the Americas for leisure.

Thus, it should be noted that the tourism process involves different segments of the population, and each of them has its own characteristics and motivations for travelling. First of all, these are people who have

sufficient financial resources and free time to travel. These are usually highly paid professionals, entrepreneurs or wealthy retirees. They are often looking for luxury hotels, exclusive services and high-end leisure destinations. Secondly, there is the middle-income segment of the population that can afford certain types of travel. They can choose more affordable accommodation options, such as mid-priced hotels or apartments. Middle-class travellers may prefer more popular destinations and standard travel services. There are also budget travellers—people with limited financial resources who prefer more economical travel options. They can choose hostels, campsites or cheap hotels. Budget travellers often look for promotions and discounts to save on costs.

Young people and students are often active tourists. They are looking for adventure, new cultural experiences and opportunities to interact with local people. Young people may choose more affordable accommodation options, such as hostels and dormitories, and prefer active forms of recreation. Families with children are also actively involved in the tourism process. They are looking for places that offer entertainment for the whole family, such as amusement parks, water parks or kids’ clubs. Families can stay in a family-friendly hotel or rent apartments with a kitchen for easy cooking. Older people can also be active travellers. They can travel as part of their pension programmes or as cruise passengers. Older people may prefer more comfortable accommodation and services tailored to their needs. It is important to note that the identified segments of the population are not an exhaustive list, and each tourist may have their own unique motivations and preferences. Thus, it should be recognised that tourism is accessible to all segments of the population and it is important that the tourism industry is able to meet all their leisure needs^[5].

According to the frequency of travel, tourists are divided into those who travel frequently (3+ trips per year), occasionally (1–2 trips per year), do not travel or very rarely^[6]. For example, **Table 4** shows the frequency of travel among US adults by generation was determined (methodology: the survey was conducted from 14 December 2022 to 20 February 2023; unweighted error up to +/-4%)^[4].

Table 4. Frequency of US adult travel by generation^[4].

Generations	Those who travel frequently, in %.	Those who travel occasionally, in %.	Those who do not travel or very rarely, in %.
Adults of Generation Z	52	30	17
Millennials	52	32	17
Generation X	41	33	25
Baby boomers	35	37	28

It has been determined that the share of travellers who agree with the following statements about sustainable travel is growing in modern tourism. For example, 76% of travellers believe that the global energy crisis and rising costs of living are affecting their spending plans; 76% of travellers want to travel more environmentally friendly in 2023; 43% would be willing to pay more for greener travel options; 49% believe that greener travel options are too expensive (methodology: 33,228 respondents in 35 countries and territories who have travelled at least once in the last 12 months and are likely to travel in 2023)^[7].

Also, the most popular type of tourism is still educational. Research has been carried out in Europe and the best places for sightseeing have been identified (the top 10 reflects the number of endorsements for architecture, culture, history, monuments, old town, museums provided to Booking.com travellers from around the world as of June 2023):

- Paris, France;
- Prague, Czech Republic;

- Barcelona, Spain;
- Vienna, Austria;
- Madrid, Spain;
- Berlin, Germany;
- Lisbon, Portugal;
- Amsterdam, the Netherlands;
- Budapest, Hungary;
- Krakow, Poland.

This ranking identifies the places with the highest number of historical and cultural endorsements on the Booking.com platform. The ranking consisted only of EU member states^[7].

There are also countries with the largest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. For example, Italy has 58, China 56, Germany 51, Spain 49, France 49, Indonesia 40, Mexico 35, Britain 33, Russia 30, and Iran 26. Thus, as of August 2023, Italy is the country with the largest number of world heritage sites^[7], which may, under certain circumstances, increase the attention to tourism in this country.

In addition, there is an uneven distribution of UNESCO monuments in the world. The share of cultural/mixed/natural world heritage sites per region (as of 27 September 2023) is as follows (see **Table 5**). Hyrcanian Forests, Uvs Nuur Basin, Dauria's landscapes and Le Corbusier's architectural works are not included because they cross several regions^[8].

Table 5. Distribution of UNESCO monuments in the world.

Country	Cultural	Mixed	Natural	In total
Europe	472	10	59	541
North America	12	1	10	23
Arab States	84	3	6	93
Asia and the Pacific Ocean	205	12	69	286
Latin America and the Caribbean	103	8	39	149
Africa	56	5	42	103

We note that the presence of natural and cultural monuments in different countries of the world also tends to influence the formation of tourist flows to these countries.

6. Implications and directions for future research

Thus, after the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism will continue to develop, but there will be changes in tourist preferences and behaviour. Some of the main factors and trends that may affect the development of tourism after the pandemic include:

- Health and safety: after the pandemic, tourists will be focused on strict compliance with safety and hygiene measures when travelling. Companies and institutions in the tourism industry will need to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of their customers;
- Local and localised tourism: tourists may prefer to travel within their own country or to nearby regions, avoiding long-distance and international travel. This may lead to an increase in demand for local tourism and the development of the domestic market;

- Sustainable tourism: the pandemic has shown how important it is to preserve nature and respect the cultural values of the places visited by tourists. Therefore, sustainable tourism, which takes into account environmental and social aspects, may become more popular;
- Digital tourism: the use of digital technologies and online platforms for travel planning and booking will become even more widespread after the pandemic. Tourists may prefer to have contact with a minimum number of people and choose online options for their travel needs;
- Increased demand for natural and open spaces: tourists may prefer holidays in natural parks, beaches and other open spaces where they can maintain a physical distance and enjoy the fresh air;
- Flexibility and cancellation: customers may become more demanding of flexible booking conditions as the pandemic has shown that plans can change suddenly. Flexible booking conditions and cancellation options can be key factors for travel companies.

These are just some of the factors and trends that may affect the development of tourism in the post-pandemic period. It is important to note that the situation may change and be influenced by other factors depending on the possible development of the pandemic itself and the measures taken by various governments, which also needs to be studied further.

7. Conclusion

Travel is finally back, and the industry is recovering quickly after being forced to close due to government restrictions. However, over the past few years, many aspects of the tourism situation have changed: new trends and ways of traveling have appeared. The main trends in the field of travel are being formed, which will change the way of traveling in the future. Changes in the preferences and behavior of tourists will be observed. Global trends shape tourists' expectations and preferences, and countries must adapt to them by developing their unique strengths and offering quality tourism products and services.

Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

1. United Nations World Tourism Organization. World tourism barometer. Available online: <https://www.e-unwto.org/toc/wtobarometereng/> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
2. YouGov. Travel & transport. Available online: <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/travel> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
3. The International Air Transport Association. Newsletters and blogs. Available online: <https://www.iata.org/en/publications/newsletters/> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
4. American Express Travel. 2023 global travel trends report. Available online: <https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/travel/discover/get-inspired/Global-Travel-Trends> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
5. American Express Travel. American Express reveals 2023 top travel trends. Available online: <https://about.americanexpress.com/newsroom/press-releases/news-details/2023> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
6. UncleRon. Travel stock alert—Airlines updating financial outlooks. Available online: <https://financenewslive.com/travel-stock-alert-airlines-updating-financial-outlooks/> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
7. Booking. Case studies. Available online: <https://business.booking.com/en-us/case-studies/> (accessed on 14 October 2023).
8. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Culture (Ukrainian). Available online: <https://www.unesco.org/ru/culture> (accessed on 14 October 2023).