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Source / Izvornik: **23rd International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development Proceedings, 2017, 146 - 154**

Conference paper / Rad u zborniku

Publication status / Verzija rada: **Published version / Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)**

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:122:176178>

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-05-26**



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# SECURITY AS THE KEY FACTOR IN CONTEMPORARY TOURISM: SPECIFICITIES IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE ANALYSIS OF RESPONDERS' ATTITUDES

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The paper represents a product of mentor-graduate student cooperation, developed at the graduate study of Business Economics, major Tourism. Following the latest threatening events and having in mind those yet to come, we can conclude that no country can benefit from the tourism industry if at the same time does not develop its security system as an integral part of the standard tourist offer. Analyzing the trends in contemporary tourism, the safety and security issues became the decisive factors for the choice of a certain destination. Consequently, countries must not perceive security systems and measures as an unnecessary expense but as an essential element in organizing their tourist services. All hotels and respectable tourist agencies should have a crisis management, with detailed, thoroughly elaborated procedures for emergency situations. Tourists should be timely informed about the potential dangers and risks and the measures taken to prevent them, as well as on procedures for emergency situations. Additionally, it would be good to have mobile applications that would enable tourists to make direct emergency calls with instructions on behavior in crisis situations. It is also essential to implement and put into effect sophisticated security measures such as using surveillance cameras, controlling access to buildings, information exchange with colleagues and neighbors, reporting the suspicious occurrences to the security services, and training staff for crisis management. Having in mind everything stated above, the security issue is definitely one of the crucial factors in the development of tourism in a certain country.*

**Key words:** *tourism, tourist destinations, security as the key factor of tourism development and sustainability, security measures in tourism.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines a tourist destination as a place which tourists visit during their trip. It represents a place different from the one they live at on a

daily basis. The main feature is that the journey must be shorter than 12 months and longer than 24 hours and the tourists must not perform any lucrative activities in the place they visit.

Modern tourism and security are closely related. Nowadays, security is one of the most important elements when a tourist is choosing his probable tourist destination. Security level can never be at 100%, because some situations are unpredictable and it is almost impossible to defend against them.

In recent times, terrorism is the main cause of Europe and its citizens, the Europeans. From the assault on the attack, the question arises as to when? How many human victims do we have to face to make a change? Not only is human dignity jeopardized by all these attacks, but in a great and disturbing manner it destroys a healthy economic and social order, the basics of free movement crumble. Islamic extremists pose the greatest threat to security since they have changed their organization but their means of action are always terroristic. In South America, where the most dangerous countries are Mexico and Costa Rica, the other type of terrorism prevails, and that is abduction and blackmail of tourists and businessmen. Terrorist threats become an integral part of modern life and are likely to be a danger for a long time. Some countries, like Jordan, become collateral victims of perceived insecurity in the region. Although no violent incidents occurred in Jordan over the past eleven years, the number of tourist arrivals from Europe fell by 70% after bad events that hit North Africa (<http://hrturizam.hr/itb-turizam-i-sigurnost/>).

## 2 INFLUENCES ON MAKING TOURISTS DECISIONS

Media, such as television, newspapers, radio and the Internet, give information on a daily basis about current events in our country and in the world. Great power has a media that influences on society or on an individual. Influences can be positive and negative as well, depending on the people themselves and about how they accept and respond to influences. In the media, information about a negative event in a tourist destination will immediately affect a certain number of tourists who will most likely give up travelling to that destination. In the first 24 hours, the media does not have so much information, so the public speculates on the possible causes and consequences. The images in the head come mainly from what we hear and see in mass media, where the actual existence of the world differs from pseudo reality and subjective perception of the world (journalistic observation). One of the five most important events that make up the “good journalistic story” is the crisis caused by the catastrophe. The media are usually interested in:

- What happened?
- Why did this happen?
- What will be done? (Perinić, 2014).

The media, with their reporting, shape public opinion, i.e. the opinion of various social groups about the system which then has a fatal effect on its reputation. Mass media are highly influential during the crisis situations by filtering and shaping images of possible solutions, with the tendency to intensify existing partialities (stereotypes, prejudices and similar) that exist in the public domain. The average rating of the media's influence on the standpoint of the destination is 3.29.

When talking about the impact of the media on the public, we can conclude that the media are decisive for the formation of public opinion; the public easily falls under the influence of the media and mostly think what the media suggests. The media do not determine what people think, but they create a discussion platform and can boost public opinion if some topic triggers the imagination<sup>1</sup>.

### 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Survey research was conducted via the Internet, through Google group. A total of 154 responders participated in the period from May 15, 2017 to June 11, 2017. Of the 154 responders, 64.9% were women and 35.1% of men. The younger population prevailed. Precisely, 52.6% of responders were between the ages of 19 and 29, and 27.9% of the responders were between the ages of 30 and 39. 11.7% of the responders were aged 40 to 49, 6.5% were over 50, and 1.3% were under 18 years of age.

Most responders have completed undergraduate or graduate studies (57.8%). 37.7% of responders have completed high school, while 1.3% of responders have completed elementary school, and 3.2% of responders have completed postgraduate studies.

Household incomes were mostly average → 70.1%. 14.9% of responders stated that they had low incomes, as did the percentage of high-income responders (Table 1).

Table 1: Description of the responders(s)

		% of responders
Gender of responders	Female	64.9 %
	Male	35.1 %
Age of responders	Do 18	1.3 %
	19 – 29	52.6 %
	30 - 39	27.9 %
	40 - 49	11.7 %
	>50	6.5 %
Education level	Elementary school	1.3 %

<sup>1</sup> The reason for the drop in the number of visitors to a destination may be the media that convey information about a negative event in the destination. Thus, Taiwan's demand for hotel capacities fell by 50%, as various journalists reported various unfounded data after the appearance of SARS. Also, after the tsunami in Southeast Asia, in response to Western media writing, tourist demand declined, greatly affecting Thailand's tourism. (Perinić J., 2014).

	High school	37.7 %
	Undergraduate or graduate studies	57.8 %
	Postgraduate studies	3.2 %
Household income	Low incomes	14.9 %
	Average incomes	70.1 %
	High-incomes	14.9 %

All of the results were obtained through the own research conducted by the graduate student under lecturer's supervision. The results are shown in Figures 1-11.

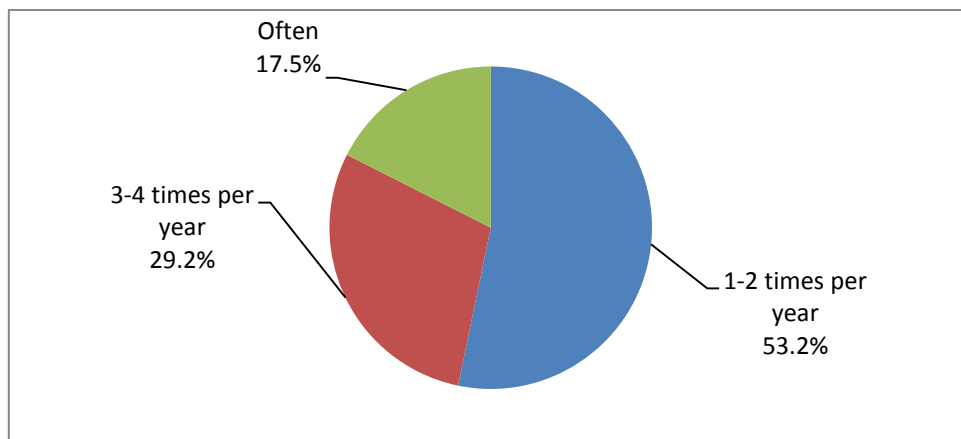


Figure 1: The frequency of traveling

Most responders travel twice a year, 53.2%. Up to four times a year 29.2% of them travel and 17.5% travel often.

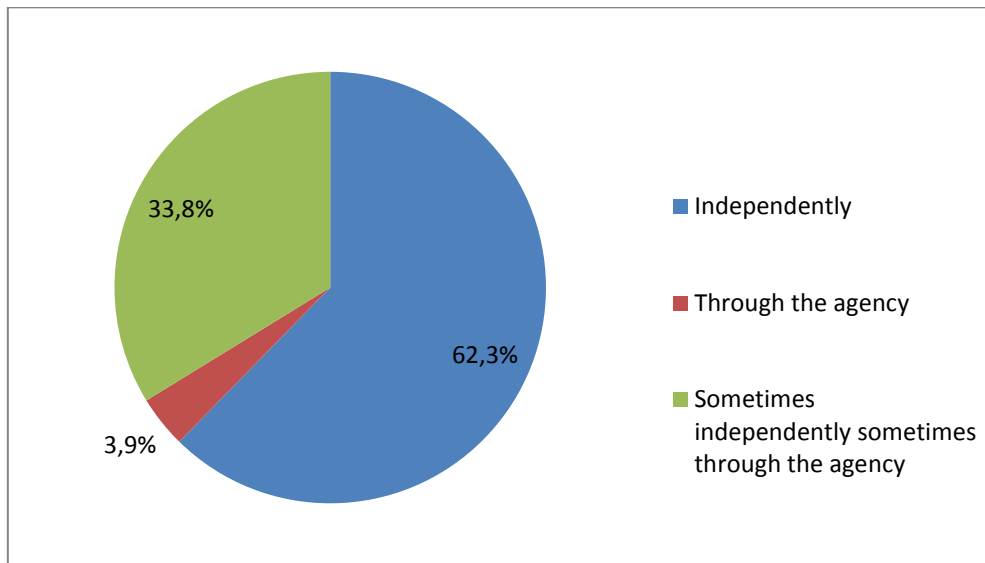


Figure 2: The means of organizing the trip

62.3% of the responders travel alone, while 3.9% travel organized, i.e. through a travel agency. 33.8% of responders sometimes organize their trips on their own and occasionally through a travel agency.

When choosing the most important holiday destination for vacation, the responders had the option of multiple answers to choose from. The first is the ratio of price and quality (56.6%). The second reason is an attractive or authentic destination (50%). The diversity of content and experiences is in the third place (35.1%), and after that it is finally the security of the destination (21.4%). The recommendation of friends or relatives and visiting them makes up 17.5%. The corresponding climate was recorded by 13.6% of responders. The option “Other” was also offered, where responders wrote their own answers. These responders travel depending on the budget, they combine work and vacation, they travel for no particular reasons, often grabbing good travel opportunities. In addition, one responder replied that he was travelling to experience changes and to spread the knowledge.

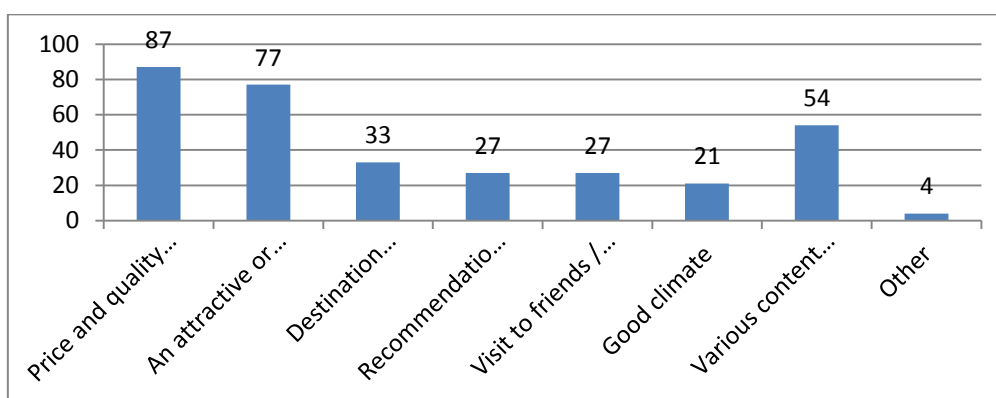


Figure 3: Reasons for choosing a tourist destination, number of responses for each possible answer

46.8% of responders sometimes or rarely seek safety information before travelling to the

certain destination. 31.8% of responders are always informed about safety, while 21.4% of responders are never informed of the safety in the destination.

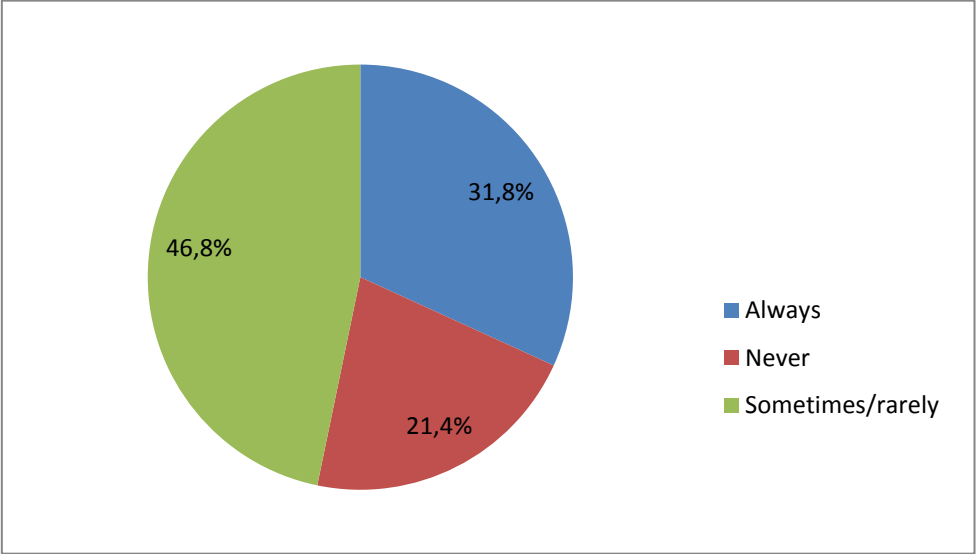


Figure 4: How often do responders seek information about security

When asked where to find the destination safety information, the responders themselves wrote the answers. Usually they search for the information on the Internet, on Google. They read the comments and recommendations of others on Trip Advisor and various forums. Also, a lot of responders find information on security in the media and in the news, as well as on the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of the Foreign Affairs website. Some seek general information about the destination itself and along with that often come safety information as well. When asked what they considered the greatest danger in the destination, or during the trip, responders could choose more answers. Crime is considered to be the greatest danger (theft, kidnapping, rape, etc.), and then terrorism. Third, there is a disease (food poisoning, viruses, infectious diseases, etc.), while in the fourth place there is a natural disaster (earthquake, tsunamis etc.) and at the very end is a traffic accident (crash, plane crash, sinking ship) with the lowest danger risk. One responder never thinks about the potential risks and dangers, while one responded that the risks depend on where the destination is located.

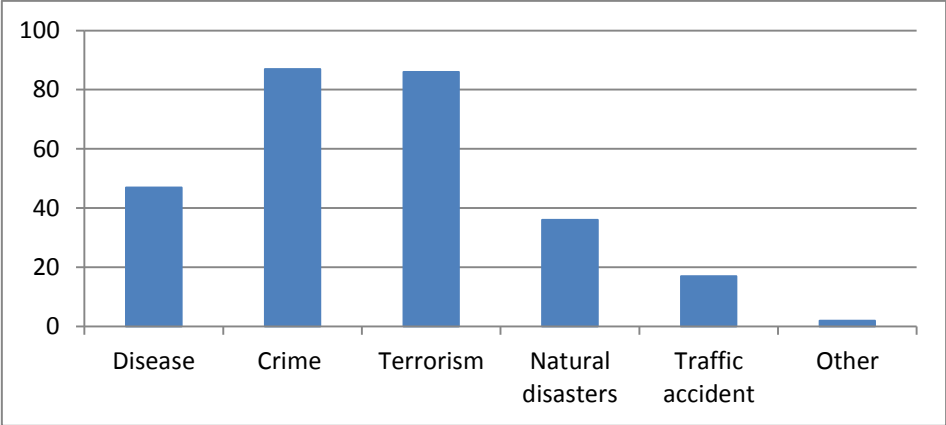


Figure 5: The greatest perceived danger in the destination, number of responses for each possible answer

The means of transport used by responders mainly depend on price, choosing the most favorable option. The second most common factor is time spent on the trip, and the third place is comfort, while safety is most irrelevant to responders when it comes to choosing the type of transport. Of the other responses, the responders mainly mention a combination of cost, time and comfort. Sometimes it depends on the destination and the situation, but they are least thinking about safety when choosing the means of transport.

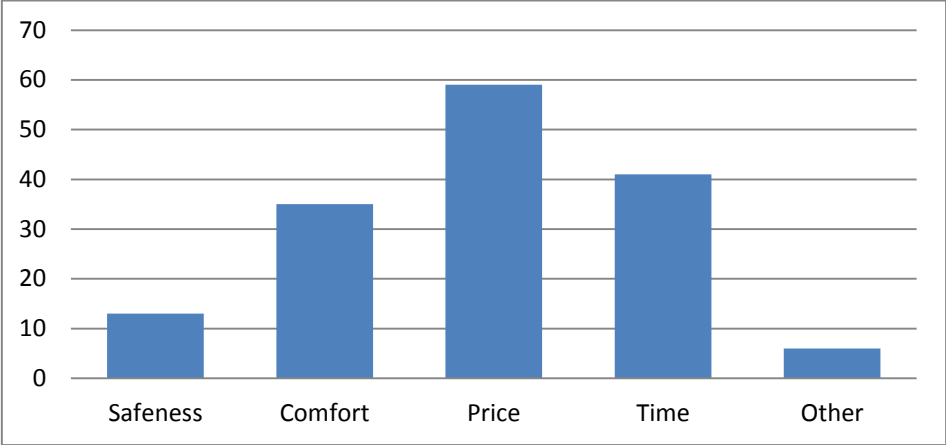


Figure 6: The most important factors when choosing a vehicle, number of responses for each possible answer

39.6% of responders sometimes or rarely take travel insurance when travelling, 31.8% of responders always take travel insurance and 28.6% of responders never take travel insurance.

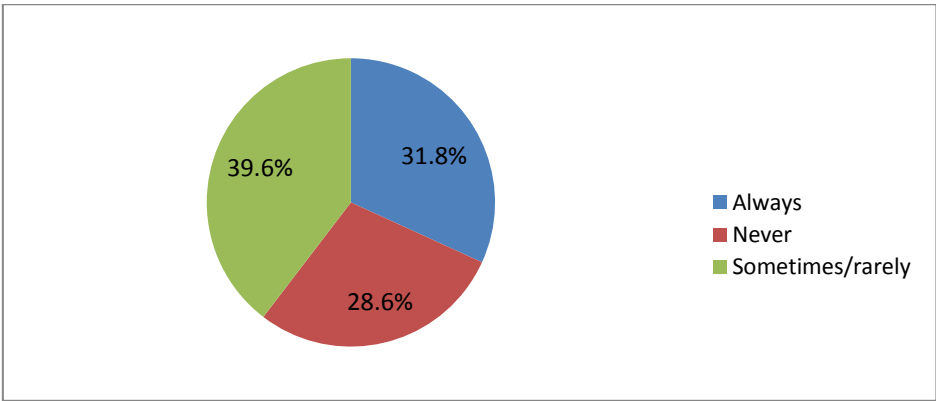


Figure 7: The use of travel insurance

Through answering which is the most common factor affecting the destination safety attitudes, responders could choose more options. The highest percentage show the news, 64.9%, second place is the experience of acquaintances and of friends, 51.9%. Third place are



state warnings and advice, 29.9%, and their own experience, which they previously acquired in a particular destination is immediately behind, 28.6%. In the last place is the cultural / religious arrangement of the state, 18.8%.

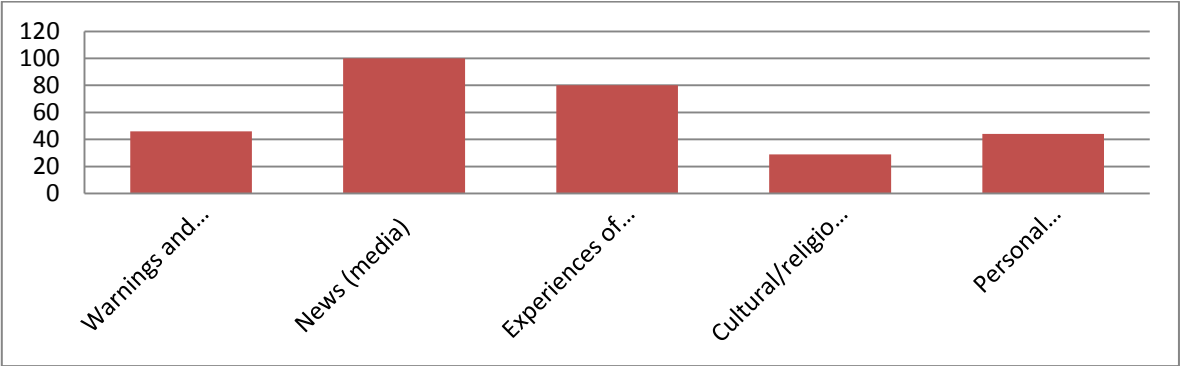


Figure 8: Which factors affect the standpoint on destinations, number of responses for each possible answer

Responders - tourists are least likely to be safe in public transport in the destination (metro, bus ...) – 55.8%, while 37.7% of responders do not feel insecure anywhere in the destination, they probably do not even think about it. In the local shopping center, 5.2% feel insecure, while only 3.9% feel insecure at the hotel. One answer went for remote parts of the city, streets and nightclubs, squares, well-known locations, and nearby tourist attractions.

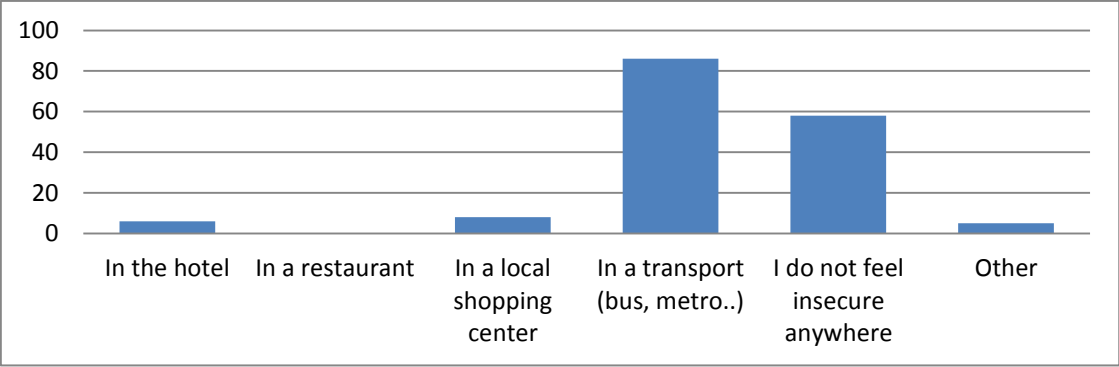


Figure 9: The most insecure places in the destination, number of responses for each possible answer

If there is a tourist attack in the destination they want to visit, an equal percentage of responders will replace the destination, just as they would travel to the planned destination, 35.7%, while 24% of the responders would give up travelling. The rest of the responders did not think about the situation and did not know what to do to find it.

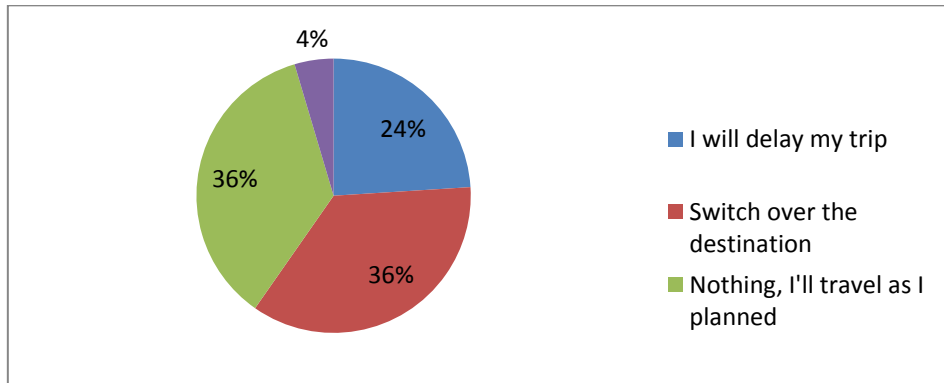


Figure 10: What needs to be done if terrorism occurs?

Travelling through the agency is safer for 13% of responders, while 48% of responders disagree with this statement. Concurrently, 39% do not know if they are more secure through the agency or not.

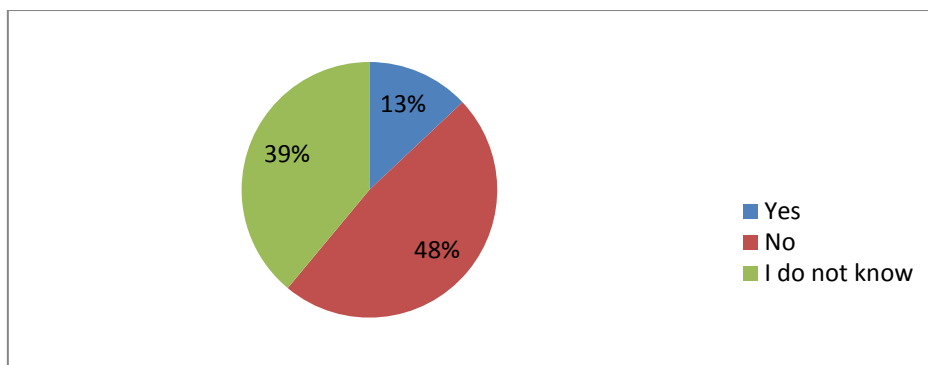


Figure 11: Organization of travel through agency

Those who responded positively to the previous question gave an answer why they think so. Some of the answers are having everything organized, travelling in groups, agencies have experience and offer advice and assistance to tourists. The overall impression of travelling in an organized arrangement with a group of people and the experience of the agency makes the organized trip safer.

Responders also gave their answers to the question: Which country is the most dangerous at the moment? Most of them consider Syria as the most insecure destination, followed by Turkey and the Middle East. France and the UK are also one of the most uncertain countries, due to terrorist attacks. Croatia is behind them, as well as Germany and the USA. Some believe that nowadays everything is unsafe, while the two responders think that the one who loves travelling does not even think about it. One or two responders marked Venezuela, Congo, China, Hawaii, Mexico, Greece, Sri Lanka, Morocco, and Sweden, respectively, as insecure destinations.

## CONCLUSION

Contemporary security has never been more important to one tourist destination and is therefore an essential part of the tourist product. In order to make the tourist in the destination feel the best, the most enjoyable, in order to experience a positive and clear experience, must first feel secure and protected. Today, unfortunately, the security threat does not know the geographic and temporal boundaries. When we talk about security challenges, we do not stop at crime, street raids, kidnappings, rapes, natural disasters. Most of the fear of bony is the growing danger of terrorist attacks that are happening more and more often in almost every corner of the globe. The future of the economy is ruined, and tourism particularly, as one of important economic activities, particularly for many small, vulnerable economies, such as the Caribbean island nations, and other island nations in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean especially. Because tourism is responsible for almost 20 percent of the GDP of Croatia, we have decided to give a special importance to the issue of security in tourism. Nevertheless, by questioning 154 responders, we have come to the conclusion that people continue to travel largely, despite the frequent negative phenomena occurring in the world. The survey was mostly conducted on young responders who wanted to discover new things and gain experience learning different cultures. They usually travel twice a year, most of them even up to five times a year, and only a small number of people travel often. The most important factor of travel planning is the price and on that basis it selects the means of transportation to the tourist destination. Even 31.8 % of responders always and definitely look for safety information before traveling, while others do so rarely or never. The responders see perceive crime as the greatest danger, followed by the danger of terrorism, then the danger of an illness. Natural disasters are considered least dangerous. The impact of the media on the responders is visible and most responded to taking into account media messages, announcements and promotional activities when choosing a tourist destination. Travel insurance is largely taken by travelers before travel to a destination. A smaller part of the responders believe that the organized trip is safer, mainly because they travel to groups and believe that the agency has experience that makes them safer. According to the poll results, Syria and the Middle East were considered as the most dangerous country and region, respectively, while in Europe, France, the UK, Germany, and even Croatia were considered to be insecure.

Security cannot be fully guaranteed in any corner of the Earth, as disasters can be anywhere and anytime. In the end, no matter how many people have received various information and (no) warnings, it is up to him to decide if he will go to the desired destination or stay in his already familiar environment. According to the latest analyzes and statistical data, people who are reluctant to travel to bypass tourist destinations where they have a high degree of precaution will replace them with a less dangerous destination.

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