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Perspectives for Tourism Development in the Post-Pandemic Period in the Opinions of University Students

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Abstract: The dynamic growth and evolution of tourism in recent times and its growing importance for the economies of many countries has been drastically hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has not only affected tourism through travel restrictions and the associated difficulties faced by the tourism industry, but it has also changed people's tourism preferences (mass tourism has been replaced by more sustainable tourism), as well as their motives for undertaking tourism. The aim of this study is to assess students' views on the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in shaping their tourism experiences and beliefs about the future of tourism in the perspective of the pandemic and its global implications. The issue is of interest given the young age of the study participants and the belief that they are key influencers in shaping the image of global tourism in the post-pandemic period. The participants of this study were 196 students from higher education institutions in Gdansk, representing both tourism- and non-tourism-related majors. The aim of this study was achieved using the diagnostic survey method, collecting information about the respondents' beliefs based on a research tool in the form of a survey questionnaire. The results suggest that tourism activities and students' motives for engaging in them may change after the pandemic expires compared to before COVID-19. In general, studying tourism is associated with moderate attitudes towards the aftermath of the coronavirus compared to the more radical responses of students who do not study tourism. A limitation of this pilot study was the geographical restriction of the respondents to the Polish population, which makes it difficult at this stage to draw more generalized conclusions.

Keywords: youth; students; tourist activity; COVID-19 pandemic; trends; perspectives; contemporary tourism



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1. Introduction

As the consensus view is that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global labour market [1–3], this can be considered in the perspective of tourism development both as a threat to the functioning of employers and as a barrier to participation in tourism trips. Young people and students approaching psychological, social and financial maturity will soon become an important segment of tourists, and their tourism activities should therefore be analysed and studied. Travelling and engaging in various tourism activities, and therefore accumulating various tourism experiences, plays significant roles in shaping the personalities of young people. It is therefore worth investigating how people (in this case, youth—students) choose the types of tourism activities they undertake and their level of involvement in these activities. This may help countries guide this group of consumers to appropriate tourism products and services in the future. At the same time, each type of tourism activity is dictated by certain motivations and is influenced by external factors, such as the finances of the tourist, the geopolitical and economic situation, the state of the pandemic in the intended destinations and their sense of security, which is at least partly related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The analysis of the signalled research problem, due to the links between human behaviour and the epidemiological situation, defined as an ecological threat, refers to several

theoretical models. These include the Diffusion of Innovation Theory [4], considered in light of the phenomenon of the spread of new tourism trends in society. The issue of human functioning in the perspective of COVID-19, considered as a natural disaster and at the same time a source of crisis in the personal, social, financial and environmental dimensions, refers instead to the Ecosystem Theory [5]. Finally, the urgency of human adaptation under conditions of global change such as the effects of a pandemic is presumptively close to Resilience Theory [6].

The issue of shaping the tourism space in a pandemic and post-pandemic reality has received much attention in the last few decades [7–10]. The circumstances shaping tourism are conceptualised in a number of ways, among which, albeit infrequently, the issue of youth tourism engagement also appears [11]. Within this issue, the issue of the influence of the academic system through its directionally different subject matter on students' beliefs and attitudes relating to the stimulators and barriers to tourism development resulting from the coronavirus pandemic should be considered a research gap. Learning about these determinants may be important from the point of view of the potential presence of representatives of the younger generation in the various sectors of the tourism economy in the post-COVID period.

In relation to the above, the aim of this article is to identify motivations, preferences and trends related to tourism activity and to learn about the opinions of young students (studying majors related and unrelated to tourism at universities in Gdansk) on the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in shaping their tourism activities.

The realisation of this objective will enable the formulation of answers to several key research questions: To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the tourism potential of the destination in the following years? To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect pro-tourism behaviour in future years? To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the uptake of tourism activities in the following years? To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the functioning of the Polish and international tourism industry in the years to come? To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the functioning and condition of tour operators in the years to come?

Regardless of the questions that arise, a natural one, as it follows from the division into two groups of respondents, is the research question with the following content: Do the opinions of tourism students and non-tourism students on the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in shaping tourism and its accompanying services differ?

The research hypothesis relating to this question contains an important caveat that does not allow it to be formulated categorically. This is because assuming the precise placement of students' answers on a scale is impossible to predict. This is due to the innovative nature of the research being presented. It is therefore difficult to make a reference in the discussion to the results of similar studies.

However, we can tentatively assume that tourism students are more aware of the realities governing current tourism supply and demand, and that they consider the motives for tourism activity in greater depth. This may be fostered by an in-depth knowledge resulting from a dedicated curriculum in a tourism-related degree program, easier access to bibliographic sources and to authorities in the field of tourism and, finally, their own tourism-oriented interests.

The suggestions made in this paper may be helpful in recognising whether studying tourism is part of the formation of an expanded consciousness compared to that of those showing a lack of basic tourism education. The possible lack of differences between the representatives of the two studied groups will indicate an inadequate level of content presented in tourism-related fields of study. In addition, the material presented is intended to fill the gaps related to this issue that can still be observed in the scientific literature.

This article is structured as follows: After the introductory section, the next section is dedicated to youth tourism, moving on to the circumstances surrounding tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic. The methodological section precedes the detailed analysis of the

research problem presented in the signalled five research areas. The final part of this paper is devoted to the discussion and conclusions.

2. Trends and Perspectives in Youth Tourism

Until recently, tourism undertaken by children and youths was treated as an unimportant element, especially in the context of international tourism. It used to be largely ignored by tourism services. Fortunately, in recent years, the situation has changed for the better—more and more tourist service providers understand the importance of this segment for the development of tourism (although, of course, the problem of the ‘social exclusion’ of the younger generation has not been entirely eliminated). According to the *Global Code Of Ethics For Tourism*, each one of us has the full right to tourism and to the freedom of movement for touristic purposes. Tourist activity should include respecting human rights, in particular protecting the rights of the most vulnerable groups—children, youths, the elderly and people with disabilities. This is why tourism for families, young people, students, elderly people and people with disabilities is supported by government bodies [12].

The right to engage in tourist activities today is encompassed in the term “accessible tourism” [13], not only in the context of disability, but also youth tourism. The concept of accessible tourism emphasises the need to create services and products and to promote them in a way that takes into account the specific needs of very different social groups (previously excluded from free access to touristic activities for various reasons). And thus it applies to elderly people, people with disabilities, families with children, children and youths, etc. Because youth tourism is a continuously developing segment of the tourism market (as well as access to work in tourist services), its value has been emphasised, for example, in the UNWTO 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular in the scope of SDG 4—Quality Education and SDG 8—Decent Work and Economic Growth [14].

The current generation of young people and students is classified as the so-called Generation Z (sometimes used alternatively as Generation C—the “C” comes from the word “connected”, and means connected to networks and the Internet) which, according to a United Nations report, in 2019 represented the largest demographic group in the world (2.4 billion people—i.e., 32% of humanity) [15].

Research shows that the level of tourist activity is closely related to age [16]. According to Keyser, one’s age determines the amount of free time devoted to rest and tourism, as well as the likelihood of deciding to travel [17]. Hartman and Cordel report that people aged below 35 are characterised by the highest tourist activity, after which it starts dropping with age [18]. This claim is supported by Murrmann who reported that, among adults, the most touristically active group are those aged 18–24 (comprising 63% of tourists) [19]. Our group of interest is formed by university students aged between 19 and 25 (age brackets as per recommendations of various authors regarding studying this population) [20,21]. Łaciak indicates that youth studying at universities is the group with the highest tourist activity [22].

The tourism segment represented by students is very dynamic. They constitute a very large group of tourists who, through their attitudes, behaviour and preferences, largely shape the tourism market. For them, tourism is a way of life, plays a very important role in their personal development and provides benefits on many levels. There are many factors that motivate them to undertake tourism activities.

In recent years, youth tourism has become one of the fastest developing segments of international tourism. This growth translates into huge social and economic opportunities for local communities, because travelling young people stimulate local tourism businesses, engage in closer social interactions with the host population and support environmental protection. Already in 2010, UNWTO reported that about 20% of 940 million international tourists travelling the world are from this increasingly significant group of consumers [23].

The number increased in the years that followed (in 2016, it was more than 23% of over a billion of tourists travelling internationally every year) [24].

According to the World Youth Student and Educational (WYSE) Travel Confederation, travels by people aged 15 to 29 are motivated either partially or entirely by the desire to get to know other cultures (this includes cultural exchange visits), gaining life experience and/or taking the opportunity to educate oneself either in a formal or informal way outside one's usual environment [25].

In Poland, students are a relatively large social group (in 2021 this was 1.8 million people) [26]. According to research by various authors [27,28], as much as 80–90% of students engage in tourism, and all types of such activities are placed very high in the hierarchy of interests of this social group [29]. The main functions of tourism for youths include hedonist, compensatory, cognitive, emotional, social, adaptive and health functions [30]. These functions allow one to realise the process of education through tourism and self-education of the young generation, and, as a consequence, this aids the development of the personality of a young tourist [31].

According to the Polish Tourism Organisation, the discussed segment of tourists can be characterised as in Table 1 (taking into account both their short and long-term travels).

Table 1. The characteristics of the youth tourist segment, according to the Polish Tourism Organisation.

Type of Travel	Characteristics
Short-term	These are people aged about 25, unmarried, often still studying at universities or other educational institutions. They assess their material situation relatively well. In many cases, these are people who still live with their parents, and the ability to combine their own means with the means of their parents may improve their assessment of their material situation. Their main motivations for travelling are visiting friends and relatives, but they also travel for tourism and recreation.
Long-term	These are very young individuals (mean age ranging between 18–22) with primary or secondary education, who still attend schools or universities. They assess their material situation as average or rather good. They usually travel for a longer time to rest or engage in tourism, less frequently to visit friends and relatives.

Source: own elaboration based on: Marketingowa Strategia Polski w sektorze turystyki na lata 2008–2015 (Polish Marketing Strategy in The Tourism Sector for Years 2008–2015), Polska Organizacja Turystyczna (Polish Tourism Organisation), Warszawa, 2008 [32].

As pointed out by Żukowska, tourism allows youths to fulfil their natural need for movement and interest in the world while also providing the conditions for formulating conscious and responsible attitudes towards how it is conducted [33]. According to Alejziak, when we think about youth tourism, we should pay attention to its educational values, which shape and improve the personality of the travelling youths. This happens mainly through getting to know the world and through direct, personal contact with the fauna and flora and with the social life and the people of the visited areas. Partaking in tourism develops certain attitudes towards different areas of life, such as altruism, kindness, empathy and often friendship. Travels encourage the processes of integration, bonding, cooperation and common experiences [34]. According to Dimanche and Richards, tourist activity is an important need in the daily lives of young people, and they treat tourism as part of their lifestyle and statistically travel more frequently than other tourist segments [35,36].

As Blomgren and Ljungström and Wood note [37,38], the main factors that have influenced such a dynamic increase in tourism participation by the younger generation include, in particular, the development of and access to low-cost airlines and new forms of accommodation services, the sharing economy trend, access to the internet, more leisure time, financial support from parents, opportunities to participate in student exchanges and internships abroad (e.g., Erasmus).

It should be assumed that other characteristics of young tourists are the collection of experiences and the creation of content, price sensitivity, spontaneity and the search for individualised offers. Today's young people are characterised by their freedom to use all sorts of technologies; they use telephones, computers and, above all, the Internet, which means they are able to function in the virtual world as well as the real world at the same time. Haddouche and Salomone [39] point out that, in addition to using the Internet to organise a tourist trip, the young generation also wants to share experiences with others (via the Internet) during the trip, for which they mainly use social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.).

Bizirgianni and Dionysopoulou [40] point out that many members of the younger generation, by visiting various tourist destinations and showcasing their trips on the internet or commenting online, become influencers, promote tourist attractions and encourage other potential tourists to visit tourist destinations.

At the same time, some researchers point out that motivation for tourism and travel by the young generation [41] is a multidimensional phenomenon because it involves seeking novelty, intellectual development and education, fun, recreation and enjoying the peace, experiencing the beauty of nature and the opportunity for socialising. The personalities of young people are not fully developed, which is why it is a research area that is difficult to interpret [36,42]. Thus, there is a need for further and deeper studies of this segment of tourists [43,44].

Table 2 shows the tourism industry (including Poland), too, sees young people as an important and increasingly significant customer segment for tourism products, changing and modifying its tourism offer.

Table 2. Tourism industry indications of selected new activities for the ‘youth’ segment.

Industry	Indicated Changes in Service Provision
Travel agencies	Changes in the organisation of events: in addition to typical leisure trips, entrepreneurs are increasingly offering thematic camps (e.g., “in the saddle”, sailing, sports, for youtubers, etc.), language camps (English, German, Italian, Spanish) and offers and proposals for active leisure (sports and leisure games, sightseeing tours, competitions, field games, city games, questing, geocaching, etc.). Particular attention is paid to ensuring the safety of participants in the above activities.
Leisure and recreation offer	Changes in the organisation and forms of entertainment and recreation offered: events are being organised, which are increasingly interdisciplinary in nature (increasing the sense of security during the events, level of the quality of the services, diversity of offers and event programmes, etc.). Programmes include many proposals for active leisure, e.g., sports and recreational games, competitions, workshops, field games, city games, questing, geocaching, conventions (rallies of fans of comics, fantasy, youtubers, bloggers), educational games or games using ICT technologies (e.g., computer games, etc.).

Source: own elaboration based on document: “Badanie opinii pracodawców na temat obecnych i przyszłych kompetencji pracowników w sektorze turystyki”, Rada ds. Kompetencji Sektora Turystyka Instytut Turystyki w Krakowie Sp. z o.o., Kraków 2018–2019 [45].

Being aware of the significant global disruption to tourism in recent years (in particular due to the COVID-19 pandemic), the UNWTO points to the important role of youth tourism, which will play a leading role in the future of tourism. During the first Global Youth Tourism Summit (GYTS), which took place on 27 June 2022–3 July 2022 in Sorrento, Italy, it was emphasised that young individuals have to play an active role in the “relaunch” of tourism and they should have a positive impact on making tourism more sustainable, inclusive and accessible [46]. The above is supported by global research conducted by Deloitte, which surveyed over 27,000 representatives of the younger generation. They found that despite individual challenges and personal fears, young people remain eager to promote positive change in their own communities, as well as in the world. This also pertains to the planning

and management of one's own tourist activity, especially where there is a risk of causing damage to local societies through the loss of authenticity [47]. This brings young people closer to the beliefs of representatives of previous generations of youth, especially hippies, who embraced the currently popular ideas of sustainable development and embodied authentic life and individuality, understood as living outside cities, close to and caring for nature [48].

3. Tourism during the COVID-19 Pandemic

As noted by Wendt and Olszewski-Strzyżowski [49], tourism is one of the fastest growing services in the modern world. The number of tourists between 1950 and 2018 increased almost 50 times and tourism revenues grew from USD 2 billion to USD 1.5 trillion; however, after a record-breaking 2019, the first quarter of 2020 began under the grip of a coronavirus outbreak, and tourism around the world faced a period of stagnation.

As per the WTTC report, COVID-19 and restrictions on the movement of international tourists caused the world economy to lose almost USD 4.5 billion, and, globally, the contribution of tourism to GNP decreased by 49.1% in comparison to 2019. The spending of intra-national visitors dropped by 45%, while the spending of international visitors dropped by 69.4%. In 2020, 62 million workplaces in tourist services were terminated or seriously affected [50]. The report also states that the segment of tourists who were most affected by the pandemic were women and youth.

As pointed out by Olszewski-Strzyżowski, up until very recently, we lived with the belief that tourism will continue developing forever and without limits (both in terms of tourist services as in terms of tourists' demand for services and products). Unfortunately, this unrestrained worldwide development of the tourism industry has been halted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This particular "tourism lock down" must have a significant influence on future attitudes and preferences in terms of types and forms of tourist activities, including an increase in interest in ecological, pro-social and sustainable approaches to tourism and a decline in mass tourism [51]. Other authors [52–54] also believe that before the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism was constantly developing, and the competition for a better share of the market of tourism destinations was a significant factor in this development. The disruption felt in 2020 due to the pandemic, which was unprecedented at the time, will continue to be felt for at least another few years by both tourists and tourism businesses all over the world.

According to Mirchandani, much evidence indicates that it will take many years for the tourism industry to recover the losses gained due to restrictions on international and intra-national movement [55]. This also shows that risks posed by events such as the global COVID-19 pandemic are relevant to almost every aspect of the global economy besides tourism [56]. Because of this global situation, tourist products have to be constantly developed, and destinations should offer a variety of tourist products that take into account the individual needs of tourists and the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes in tourist behaviour due to the pandemic phenomenon were identified in the UNWTO report, noting that travellers preferred to travel closer to home, which had a positive impact on domestic tourism; tourists were more likely to opt for nature holidays, rural tourism and road trips due to the many restrictions and the desire to spend time outdoors; young people travelled the most during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic; the main concerns of consumers were health and safety measures and cancellation policies; consumers were more likely to book last-minute trips due to the unstable global situation and changing travel restrictions; for tourists, supporting the local community in the region visited was an important aspect [57].

Examples of countries taking such initiatives include Austria, by promoting information about travelling within the country (in particular, about the safety restrictions associated with the pandemic, e.g., when using cable cars); Cyprus, by informing tourists about COVID-19-related safety measures in public and tourist transport, hotels, restaurants, beaches, swimming pools and other tourist attractions; Grenada, by promoting the

“Pure Safe Travel” project to ensure that tourists adhere to the safety procedures in hotels, restaurants, transport and tourist attractions; Guatemala, by certifying the tourist services (“Bioseguridad Touristica”) provided by tourist agents, tourist accommodation, archaeological parks, protected areas, yacht marinas, guides and tourist transport organisers, who declare that they will adhere to the epidemiological guidelines associated with COVID-19 prevention; and Indonesia, by promoting the “InDOnesia CARE” project—certificates for tourist services (hotels, gastronomy, transport, etc.) applying the highest standards of cleanliness, health, hygiene, safety and natural environment protection in the context of fighting the pandemic. At the same time, tourists are encouraged to plan their vacation to the country after the COVID-19 pandemic: “Looking for fresh tourist spots to visit after the pandemic? How about taking an eco-friendly trip? Enlighten yourself with these eco-tourism spots in Indonesia to enhance your post-pandemic travel plans and to make a positive impact on the community” [58].

According to UNWTO, in 2020, 100% of the world tourist destinations introduced some travel restrictions: 45% completely forbade tourist entry, 30% either completely or partially cancelled international flights, 18% forbade entry from certain outside areas and 7% introduced other measures (e.g., a 14 day quarantine) [59].

The pandemic not only caused significant changes in the global tourism economy on many levels (countries, regions, destinations, tourist attractions, tourism industries, etc.) but also in the behaviours and motivations expressed by tourists (e.g., the choice of destinations, the choice of tourist services, frequency of travel, health and life protection, sense of safety associated with travel, etc.). As pointed out by Bernas i Pujer [60], individual safety usually constitutes one of the main criteria for selecting a destination for recreational travel (alongside cost and attractiveness), and it is also one of the external determinants that has a huge impact on decisions associated with travel. It is reasonable to believe that, in the age of the pandemic, concern for one’s health, life and wellbeing are the main determinants that tourists take into account when deciding to travel or to abandon their travelling plans.

At the same time, as pointed out by Zorcec and Pop-Jordanova [61], the COVID-19 pandemic has had significant consequences for mental health all over the world, which also impacts tourist behaviour; their study concerned a group of youths and showed that the pandemic can cause greater or lesser distress depending on an individual’s subjective assessment, which is influenced by their stable personality traits. The results of the study revealed significant changes in quality of life, lack of sense of security, changes in mood and behaviour, as well as pessimistic outlooks on the future.

4. Materials and Methods

A total of 196 university students from Gdansk (Poland) took part in this study, including 117 representing the field of tourism and recreation and 79 students from non-tourism-related majors. The timing of the study, which occurred in spring 2022, covers the declining period of the COVID-19 pandemic, to which the aim of the study refers. The research was conducted using a diagnostic survey.

The diagnostic survey method is a way of gathering knowledge about the structural and functional parameters and dynamics of social phenomena. The knowledge gathered with its help also concerns the opinions and views of selected communities, as well as the intensity and directions of development of specific phenomena. It is concerned with all phenomena that do not have an institutional location, but are, on the contrary, as if dispersed in a global population. It is a proven effective way of assessing complex social phenomena. In this survey research, a survey technique was applied using a research tool in the form of a survey questionnaire of my own authorship prepared for this publication.

The questionnaire consisted of 37 questions about the degree of impact of the coronavirus pandemic on numerous tourism sectors, including tourist services. Respondents were given the opportunity to choose a response from options forming an 11-point scale, where a value of ‘0’ on the scale corresponded to the statement “to an extremely low degree”. The middle value of the scale, “5”, corresponded to the statement “to a medium

extent". The maximum value on the scale, "10", corresponds to the statement "to an extremely high degree". The planning of an odd number of scale points was aimed at a symmetric distribution of opinions with a neutral value placed in the middle of the scale.

The number of questions in the survey questionnaire analysed, in accordance with the adopted standards, was optimised with regard to the objectives of the study guiding the authors. At the same time, the number of questions was not too high in order to avoid respondent fatigue, which would exacerbate the tendency for subjective responses. An attempt was also made to avoid too few questions posing a threat to the full exploration of views.

The authors constructed the questions with the conviction that the general rules of question formulation were met. These rules refer to such features of the questions as their relevance, their adaptation to the intellectual level of the respondent or the elimination of references to events too distant in time. In addition, the questionnaire questions presented to the respondents were comprehensible and free of ambiguity. Any questions suggesting an answer were dispensed with and organised into several modules differentiated by content. Thematically, these modules referred to different spheres of perception of tourism reality.

The research tool prepared to meet the objective of this scientific project was constructed under the conditions of the dynamically changing reality accompanying the pandemic. This necessitated treating the current situation of the end of the pandemic very provisionally with the suspicion of non-repetition; hence, in light of time constraints, pilot studies aimed at verifying the reliability of this research tool were abandoned.

The selection of the research sample resulted from a bilateral agreement between the Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport and one of the secondary schools located in close proximity. The close educational contact consisted, among other things, of lectures for schoolchildren and the promotion of study at this university among students. On the other hand, this cooperation was in accordance with an agreement made between the Pomeranian school superintendent and the ethics committee of the Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport, represented by the rector. This agreement concerned the evaluation and stimulation of the quality of physical activity of school students in the Pomeranian Voivodeship (agreement number 17/03/05).

5. Tourist Trends in the Post-Pandemic Era According to University Students—Our Study

The conducted study allows us to draw the following conclusions: due to significant changes in recent years in global tourist activities, which were influenced by the COVID 19 pandemic, the motivations for tourism exhibited by young people (university students) may have also significantly changed. The description of the results of the study includes the content of each question and a short summary of the answers provided by participants in the two groups. The details are shown in the table below.

The author's assumption is that the changes resulting from the pandemic may concern issues and phenomena including, *inter alia*, the pro-tourist behaviour of tourism participants (travel motivations, choice of holiday destinations, etc.), progress or regression in the development of specific forms of tourism activity, the development or expansion of tourism destinations, the development of the tourism industry and the choice of means of tourism transport. These elements may evolve significantly under the influence of pandemics [62–65].

Taking this into account, the tables presented here contain the opinions expressed by the surveyed groups of tourism students and non-tourism students together with a detailed analysis of them.

Table 3 presents an analysis of respondents' answers to the questions in terms of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the destination's tourism potential in the following years.

Table 3. Characteristics of respondents' answers to questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the tourism potential of the destination in the following years.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the reduction in tourism in big city spaces?	The dominant response among tourism students (23.9%) was to indicate a neutral option (value on the scale: "5"). In general, more responses fell into values higher than '5', including extremely high ratings (value on scale: '10'), which were indicated by 15.4% of respondents.	For non-tourism students, the dominant response option was "7" (34.2%) and "8" (26.6%), with the percentage of extremely high averages (scale value: "10") at 3.8%.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect promotional activities of unpopular tourist destinations?	The response option was indicated by the largest number of tourism students (24.8%). The answer was generally positive (value from "6" to "10") and was marked significantly more often than the answer option with values from "0" to "4".	A similar distribution on the response scale was observed among non-tourism students.
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect changes in the budgets of regions/municipalities/cities implementing tourism-related tasks and projects?	For 28.4% of tourism students, they remained neutral to the question, but as many as 50.8% of respondents answered in the affirmative.	Among non-tourism students, these results were at the level of 22.8% and 46.8%, respectively.
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the conduct of tourism promotional activities at government/regional and local levels?	Response options from "6" to "10" were indicated in this case by 45.8% of tourism students, with 31% indicating a value of "5".	For non-tourism students, the values were 46.8% and 44.3%, respectively.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the functioning of tourism information?	In the opinion of tourism students, the flow of tourist information will not change significantly under the impact of the pandemic. In total, 31% of respondents answered "5", while "3", "4", "6" and "7" were indicated by a further 38.8%.	In the group of non-tourism students, "5" was chosen by 32.9%, while "3", "4", "6" and "7" were indicated by as many as 57%.

Source: authors survey 2022.

The results of the answers to the questions included in the module relating to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism potential of the destination are relatively similar in the groups of tourism students and non-tourism students. With regard to some responses, some differences are noted, such as when extremely high ratings were indicated by 15.4% of tourism students vs. 3.8% of non-tourism students when answering the question on the degree of impact of the pandemic on the reduction in tourism in big cities.

Table 4 analyses respondents' answers to questions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on pro-tourism behaviour undertaken in subsequent years.

Table 4. Characteristics of respondents' answers to questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on pro-tourism behaviour in the following years.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the frequency of tourist trips to family and friends?	This is another example of a question to which tourism students responded most often in a neutral manner (value on a scale of '5')—23.1%.	In this case, non-tourism students appeared to be oriented towards higher values on the response scale, with dominant values of "7" (36.7%) and "8" (17.7%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the possible loss of funds previously invested in a tour operator's cancelled tour?	The distribution of responses among tourism students again showed a predominance of choosing a value of '5' or higher. In this case, however, it shows a sceptical attitude towards the possibility of recovering the money invested in a tour operator's cancelled tour. The predominant responses were '8' (20.5%) and '7' and '10' (13.7% each).	Compared to tourism students, in the group of non-tourism students, the responses were mainly values of "8" (27.8% of respondents) and "7" (15.2% of respondents), while a value of "10" was indicated by 11.4% of respondents.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect decisions to cancel trips abroad?	In the case of tourism students, significantly more people (20.5%) indicated a value of "0" compared to the opposite option (value of "10")—3.4%. As with the majority of responses from tourism students, "5" was the dominant choice (24.8%).	Non-tourism students indicated the response option of "0" more often (12.7%) than the opposite option, a value of "10" (1.3%). In this group, the neutral option ("5") had the highest score (29.1%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect interest in travel outside the high tourist season?	According to tourism students, the pandemic will significantly increase interest in off-high season travel in the next few years. The dominant responses in this respect were "5" (23.9%), "7" (20.5%) and "6" (13.7%).	Slightly higher scores were achieved by non-tourism students than tourism students, as they mostly indicated a value of "7" (27.8%), "6" (22.8%) and "8" (20.3%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect travel behaviour, motivations and changes in travel habits?	The pandemic will significantly affect tourist behaviour, motivation and change in habits. Among tourism students, 57% of respondents stated this with 23.3% remaining neutral to the question (value of "5").	Among non-tourism students, an affirmative attitude was represented by 50.6% of respondents and a neutral attitude by 31.6%.
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect interest in tourist travel due to the need to comply with specific hygiene procedures to ensure pandemic-related safety?	Tourism students were overwhelmingly (35%) convinced that hygiene and sanitation procedures will moderately reduce interest in tourism trips. The next most dominant answers to this question were "7" (15.4%) and "10" (6%).	The most popular answer among non-tourism students was "7" (29.1%). With no one answering "10", this group was notable for the high percentage of "6" (19%) and "8" (17.7%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect tourists' sense of security (e.g., security in purchasing an offer, security in means of transport, security in the tourist destination)?	Safety issues will not be satisfactorily addressed in relation to the coronavirus pandemic. Doubts on this issue were reported by 51% of tourism students (who answered with a value from '6' to '10') with 24.1% indicating a value of '5'.	Safety issues will not be satisfactorily addressed in connection with the coronavirus pandemic. Doubts on this issue were reported by 82.3% of non-tourism students (who answered with values from '6' to '10') with 10.1% indicating a value of '5'.

Table 4. Cont.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect older people's interest in tourism?	According to tourism students, the pandemic will reduce the interest of older people in tourism trips. A value of "5" was indicated by 23.9% of those surveyed, while values between "6" and "10" were indicated by 57.3% of those surveyed.	In the group of non-tourism students, a value of '5' was indicated by 22.8% of respondents, with 67.1% indicating a value from '6' to '10'. The distribution of responses in both groups was quite similar.
To what extent will the phenomenon of pandemic COVID-19 affect the interest of people with disabilities in tourism trips?	According to tourism students, interest in tourism among disabled people will not change under the impact of the pandemic. The predominant response was a value of '5' (34.2%) while the other scale options were indicated with relatively similar frequency.	For the first time in the case of this question, the response option '5' proved to be the most popular among non-tourism students (45.6%).
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the interest of socially excluded groups in domestic tourism, provided they are offered government support programmes (e.g., in Poland—the so-called "tourism voucher")?	Responses to this question among tourism students were generally favourable. The most frequently indicated values were '5' (21.4%), '7' (18.8%), '8' (16.2%) and '6' (14.5%).	The opinions of tourism students were similar to the dominant opinions of the non-tourism students, who answered '7' (25.3%), '6' (20.3%) and '8' (19%).

Source: authors survey 2022.

Among the responses to the question about the impact of the pandemic on pro-tourism behaviour, again there was a relatively small discrepancy in the opinions of tourism students and non-tourism students. Notably, non-tourism students were more convinced of the stimulating role of the pandemic phenomenon on such behavioural spheres as increasing the frequency of tourist trips to visit family and friends, as well as its limiting effect on interest in tourist trips due to the need to comply with specific hygiene and health safety procedures to counteract the negative effects of the pandemic.

Table 5 shows the characteristics of respondents' answers to the questions in the module on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on tourism activities (types and forms of tourism) in the following years.

Table 5. Characteristics of respondents' answers to questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the uptake of tourism activities (types and forms of tourism) in the following years.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect children and young people's access to organised tourism trips (camps, school trips, sports camps)?	In this case, slightly more people indicated values from "6" to "10". However, among the tourism students, the neutral option with a value of "5" (26.5%) remained by far the dominant one.	The preferred options for non-tourism students were '6' (35.4%) and '7' (22.8%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect interest in weekend tourism?	Among the tourism students, there was a neutral attitude towards this statement. The most common response was a value of "5" (30.8%) and symmetrically and indirectly adjacent values of "3" and "7" (15.4% each).	Non-tourism students were much more radical in their responses to this question, with indications of a value of '8' by 34.2% and a value of '7' by 26.6% of respondents.

Table 5. Cont.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the development of domestic tourism?	Tourism students considered that the pandemic would affect the development of domestic tourism in the coming years. A value of “5” was indicated in this case by 29.9% of the respondents, and values from “6” to “10” by a further 52.2%.	Similarly, non-tourism students opted for a value ‘5’ (12.7%) and for values from ‘6’ to ‘10’ by as many as 83.5%.
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the development of domestic roundtrips?	In the opinion of tourism students, the pandemic will not have a major impact on the domestic touring offer. In this case, values from “3” to “7” were selected (indicated by as many as 84.7% of respondents).	The distribution of responses was quite similar in the group of non-tourism students; however, 83.5% of the responses were values from “4” to “8”.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the development of foreign roundtrip offerings?	Rather, the pandemic will reduce the offer of foreign round trips. There were few extremes of opinion in this respect among tourism students and, apart from the most frequently indicated value of “5”, respondents most frequently opted for values of “6” and “7” (13.8% each).	No significant differences were perceived in the responses of non-tourism students compared to those of tourism students.
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the development of health tourism (i.e., health, spa, medical, spa and wellness)?	According to tourism students, the pandemic will increase the importance of health tourism. This is probably related to the increased public awareness of environmental health risks. A value of ‘5’ was indicated by 29.1% in this case, and values between ‘6’ and ‘10’ by 55.5% of respondents.	The neutral response was once again not popular among non-tourism students (11.4%), in contrast to the significant number of values from ‘6’ to ‘10’ (82.3%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the development of sustainable tourism, including agri-tourism and eco-tourism?	In the group of tourism students, the response indications referred predominantly to an intermediate value (“5”). This was decided by 29.9% of respondents. This was confirmed by the second result (12%) of the indications for the values “3” and “7”, thus symmetrically adjacent to the intermediate note.	Non-tourism students were in favour of indicating a value of ‘5’ (20.3%), while the value ‘8’ was their most frequently chosen value (34.2%).
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the development of cycling tourism?	The pandemic appeared to be a stimulator of the development of cycling tourism. This opinion was expressed by 73.4% of tourism students, who indicated a value of “5” and values from “6” to “10”.	In an even stronger positive light, non-tourism students indicated a value of “5” and values from “6” to “10” (89.9% of respondents).

Source: authors survey 2022.

Apart from a number of similarities in the statements of tourism students and non-tourism students, differences in the views of representatives of both study groups existed, as a stronger conviction of non-tourism students about the key impact of the pandemic on weekend tourism and cycling tourism came to the fore.

Table 6 shows the characteristics of respondents’ answers to the questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the functioning of the tourism industry (both nationally and internationally) in the following years.

Table 6. Characteristics of respondents' answers to questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the functioning of the tourism industry (both nationally and internationally) in the following years.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the development of the national tourism economy?	Tourism students were not likely to be optimistic about such a question. An overwhelming group of respondents (27.4%) indicated that the pandemic phenomenon would affect the development of the national tourism economy to a medium degree (value of '5'). A slightly lower option (value of '4') was indicated by 13.7% and an even lower option (value of '3') by 15.4%.	Non-tourism students took a more optimistic view of the issue compared to tourism students. Their answers were dominated by values of "8" (21.5%) and "7" (16.5%).
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the reduction in prices for tourism services?	Symptomatic among tourism students is the predominance (24.8%) of those indicating a value of "5". On the other hand, indications of a value of "10" were few (2.6%) compared to indications of a value of "0" (extremely low)—22.2%.	Non-tourism students were less critical of this question, indicating a zero in 11.1% of cases. In contrast, the largest proportion of this group (20.3%) indicated the value "8".
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the operation of travel agencies, hotels and other tourism operators and tourism participants themselves?	According to tourism students, the impact of the pandemic on the operation of travel agencies, hotels and other tourism operators as well as on tourists themselves is high and very high. Only 12% had opinions to the contrary, i.e., indications of values from "0" to "4".	A similar proportion of responses was observed in the group of non-tourism students, with a shift towards extremely high scores compared to tourism students being confirmed here once again.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the risk of travel agency bankruptcies?	According to respondents, travel agency bankruptcies seem to be the inevitable result of the pandemic. In the group of tourism students, a value of "5" was indicated in this case by 22.2% of respondents, and values from "6" to "10" were indicated by a further 63.2%.	Indications of values of "5" were chosen less frequently by non-tourism students (10.1%), while indications of values from "6" to "10" were chosen significantly more often (88.6%) compared to tourism students
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect the position of catering companies in the tourism market?	Again among tourism students, a value of "5" was the most frequently indicated value (23.1%). Options higher than this average were indicated by more people compared to the number of respondents indicating a value below "5".	The disproportion found among tourism students was more noticeable in the group of non-tourism students, who concentrated their indications on the value "7" (30.4%) and "8" (22.8%).
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the condition of business tourism and the exhibition industry?	Business tourism, including the exhibition industry, could be affected by the pandemic, according to those surveyed. Scale values between "6" and "10" were indicated (34.5%), with 44% of tourism students remaining neutral to this question (indicating a value of "5").	Among non-tourism students, they indicated a scale value of "6" to "10" (40.5%), while indications of "5" were 44.3%.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the tourism industry's interest in the use of modern technologies (e.g., travel blogs, virtual guides, apps, etc.)?	This question was perceived favourably by tourism students. This time, indications of values of "5" were not dominant in the statements of this group of respondents (22.2%). More people (23.9%) indicated values of "8".	Non-tourism students had similar views to tourism students, with the most frequently indicated value being "7" (34.2%).
To what extent will the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic affect possible retraining decisions and the departure of tourism industry employees to other professions?	The pandemic will affect the retraining decisions of tourism workers. An extremely high degree of agreement with this statement was identified by 11.1% of the tourism students surveyed, while an extremely low degree of agreement was identified by only 0.9%.	Here again, it is important to emphasise the greater disproportion between the extreme responses in the group of non-tourism students. The lowest indicated option was "2" (1.3%), while the indications of values from "6" to "8" (70.9%) definitely dominated.

Source: authors survey 2022.

Responses to questions referring to the impact of COVID-19 on the operation of the tourism industry showed more similarities than differences between the two groups of respondents. Non-tourism students were more likely to believe that the pandemic induced a more dynamic development of the domestic tourism business and catering companies.

Table 7 shows the characteristics of respondents' answers to the questions Table 6 shows the characteristics of respondents' answers to the questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the functioning of the tourism industry (both nationally and internationally) in the following years.

Table 7. Characteristics of respondents' answers to questions within the module impact of the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon on the operation and condition of tour operators in the following years.

Questions	Answers	
	Tourism Students	Non-Tourism Students
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the health of maritime carriers (passenger ferries and cruise ships—cruises)?	A pandemic will increase the risk of bankruptcy for maritime transport companies. Some tourism students (32.5%) were neutral on this question (indicating a value of "5"), but a further 41% were highly convinced (indicating values from "6" to "10").	In comparison, only 13.9% of non-tourism students indicated a value of "5", but in this group, the percentage of indications of values from "6" to "10" was significantly higher (74.7%) than among tourism students.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the risk of bankruptcies of coach transport companies?	The pandemic will increase the risk of bankruptcy for coach transport companies. Some tourism students (33.3%) were neutral on this question (indicated value "5"), but a further 45.2% were convinced to a considerable degree (indicating values from "6" to "10").	In comparison, only 13.9% of non-tourism students indicated a value of "5", but in this group, the percentage of indications of values from "6" to "10" was significantly higher (77.2%) than among tourism students.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect the condition of domestic air carriers operating in Poland?	Tourism students remained neutral to this question. The vast majority of responses oscillated around the value "5", with 66.6% of all responses in the value range "3" to "7".	Similarly, among non-tourism students, the indication of the value "5" was the most common, with 83.5% indicating values from "3" to "7".
To what extent will the COVID-19 phenomenon affect the condition of foreign air carriers operating in Poland?	Tourism students remained neutral to this question. The vast majority of responses oscillated around a value of '5', with 70.6% of respondents favouring indications in the value range of '3' to '7'.	Similarly, among non-tourism students, indicating a value of '5' was the most common, with 74.7% of respondents favouring indications between '3' and '7'.
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic affect global air carriers?	Global air transport will not be clearly influenced by the pandemic in the next few years. The extreme response options (values of '0', '1', '9' or '10') were only chosen by 12.9% of tourism students.	Extreme answers were even less common among non-tourism students, with only 5% indicating extreme answers to this question (values of '0', '1', '9' or '10').
To what extent will the COVID-19 pandemic phenomenon affect interest in private car transport for tourism purposes?	Private car transport will be heavily used for tourism in the post-pandemic period. Values of "5" to "10" were chosen by 86.2% of the tourism students surveyed.	Options on a scale of '5' to '10' were indicated by 93.7% of non-tourism students in this case, giving them a lead of 7.5 percentage points over the tourism students group.

Source: authors survey 2022.

This module on the impact of the pandemic on the choice of tourist modes of transport highlighted the non-tourism students' stronger belief in the reductive impact of the coronavirus pandemic on maritime tourism (including the operation of passenger ferries and cruise ships. Representatives of this research group were also, compared to tourism students, more convinced of the threat of bankruptcies of coach transport companies.

6. Discussion

The answers to our questions given by youth/students (196 students of universities in Gdansk, Poland—either studying tourism or unrelated courses) revealed some discrepancies, likely the result of different levels of knowledge about the factors that influence tourism. The most common response across all questions selected by tourism students was five—to a moderate degree. This means that the representatives of this group avoided making any radical statements about the role of COVID-19 in shaping the realities of tourism. At the same time, this means that they do not overestimate the role of the pandemic, which can be seen in the large number of answers in the 6 to 10 range.

However, non-tourism students ascribe a higher impact to the pandemic, and usually assess its influence as positive. This can be seen in pronounced differences in answers to at least 8 of the 37 questions that made up the survey. These concerned, for example, the development of sustainable tourism (question 2), the development of Polish tourism entrepreneurship (question 3), decreases in the prices of tourist services in the next few years (question 4) and the promotion of less popular destinations driven by the pandemic (question 5). Non-tourism students were also more likely to believe that the pandemic will increase interest in travelling outside the summer season in the next few years (question 11), weekend getaways (question 16) and health tourism (question 18). They were more convinced about the post-pandemic development of intra-country tourism (question 17). The dominating belief that the pandemic has a strong influence on tourism held by non-tourism students was not, however, unanimously positive. In the case of answers to questions 25 and 26 regarding the risk of bankruptcy of bus and sea transport companies, the fact that this group selected higher answers indicates that they do not have optimistic predictions for these forms of business. In the context of the differences between the groups, a clear similarity in beliefs was seen in the answers to question 7, regarding the post-pandemic increase in interest in new technologies. Most respondents, independently of whether they studied courses related to tourism or not, agreed that the pandemic had a significant influence on the technologisation of tourism.

Unfortunately, the current literature has few studies that identify the motives, trends and opinions of students on the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in shaping their touristic reality. One study analysed trends in that realm among Interrail users in Turkey in order to identify the effect of the pandemic on the youth tourism market [66]. Data gathered via an online survey were analysed using factor analysis and showed that the influence of the pandemic on tourist behaviours can be explained in two dimensions: preferences regarding travel, and hygiene and safety. It was therefore concluded that the pandemic did not have a significant influence on the style of travel in this age group, but that it did, however, influence hygiene and safety. Moreover, it was concluded that the pandemic impacts women to a greater extent than men in terms of behaviours and preferences relating to travelling, as well as issues of hygiene and safety [67].

Another example of research was conducted by Szlachcik et al. [68] who investigated the impact of the pandemic on life, travel, choice of tourist destination, tourist activity, eco-tourism preferences and health and safety issues identified by international students from Europe and Asia studying at universities in Warsaw (a group of 719 respondents). The research showed that the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the travel behaviour of international students studying in Poland. Their travel motives, choice of destination (e.g., avoiding travel to crowded big cities after COVID-19—these are the responses of Asian students) and behaviour related to finding accommodation, hygiene, safety, etc. changed. Responses from European participants were more moderate.

In one of the few publications on topics linking youth, tourism and the pandemic, the impact of the first seven months of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth travel was analysed. A survey of youth tourism businesses between March and September 2020 found that youth tourism businesses were deprived of up to 70% of their business revenue. Youth tourism companies have taken a number of strategic steps in response to the crisis, including changing contract terms, expanding marketing activity, creating partnerships and moving

business online. As youth travel depends on social interaction, the industry faces serious challenges in the near future [11].

The pandemic has caused serious challenges for the youth travel industry, not only because of general travel restrictions but also because of the specific nature of youth travel. Above all, young travellers want to experience the local culture and build social contacts with hosts and other travellers, which has contributed to the growing popularity of youth hostels and hostels in Poland in recent years. However, this desire for social contact has now become a challenge for the tourism industry, as travel is associated with the spread of COVID-19 [69]. The need for social distance in accommodation and at attractions has reduced capacity and revenue for those businesses that continue to operate.

There is also the question of whether many destinations will want to return to the traditional pre-pandemic form of tourism. Indeed, many are now calling for a more creative travel model based on lower tourist numbers and more sustainable forms of tourism. Such forms are hard to come by now that people have become nervous not only about travelling but also about welcoming travellers. It is likely to be a long time before previous levels of mobility and socialisation are reached [70].

In the conclusion to his research, Asan [67] concludes that the pandemic will not necessarily have a fundamental impact on the attitudes and preferences of young tourists. On the other hand, however, following the prescribed behaviour of the rest of society, young people will attach greater importance to safety and hygiene than before.

There will also be increasing discussions about the tourism models that individual tourist regions plan to adopt in the future. In many places, this is likely to be a higher-spending option, reversing the decades-long trend of massification and pressure on prices. This could also reverse the democratisation of travel characteristic of the 20th century, making international travel a more exclusive product that only the more affluent will be able to afford. Another issue will emerge from this—the right to travel and possible support for those who cannot afford it, who often represent the younger part of the global population. Research carried out by the WYSE Travel Confederation [71] also pointed to growing concerns about epidemics, which in 2007 were seen as an issue accompanying travel by only 6% of young people while 10 years later this figure has risen to 12% and may steadily increase in the near future.

A study conducted by Szlachciuk and co-authors among 719 foreign students studying in Poland showed that the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on their travel behaviour and, in terms of changing their motives for choosing travel destinations, the choice of destination and standard of accommodation, hygiene conditions and their sense of security [68].

Vanicek and Jarolimkova [72] surveyed tourism students at the Prague University of Economics and Business regarding their opinions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (they conducted their research in 2020–2021). The research showed that the pandemic had a negative impact on the lives of the students surveyed; among other things, they cancelled their trips abroad in many cases. Despite the changes observed, they expect an increase in domestic tourism in the future (in the coming years) and a decrease in outbound and inbound tourism. Students also indicated the need to take measures to promote positive prospects for tourism development in the future, despite the stagnation and significant adverse changes in tourism markets caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A different conclusion in the perceptions of travel risks during the COVID-19 pandemic expressed by students was reached by Dragin and co-authors [73]. They surveyed tourism and hospitality students (206 people) at the University of Novi Sad (Serbia). The study showed that students could be a future segment of tourists to revive tourism after the COVID-19 pandemic, given that almost one in three respondents were ready to travel even in the COVID-19 crisis. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 69% of young tourists changed their choice of destination, but did not change the type of accommodation, travel companion or length of stay. The results also showed that younger generations of tourists were more concerned about the quality of the holiday, including health and non-health

risks. To some extent, young tourists were in denial about the risk of illness and expected to accumulate savings when travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors believe their research will help the tourism industry (including hotels) create holiday packages for these young consumers, as well as help stakeholders involved in providing services to young tourists during a pandemic.

Using a qualitative research project, Croatian authors had the opportunity to collect, analyse and discuss the views of tourism experts on the recovery and possible changes in post-COVID tourism. Long-term opportunities for transforming the tourism sector into a more sustainable and inclusive one are postulated, making proper use of regional competitive advantages [74].

Based on the feedback received and discussions with experts, Assaf and co-authors proposed an agenda for future research focusing on six key pillars: consumer behaviour, demand and performance modelling, forecasting, destination and facility management, informational technology and quality of life with a focus on sustainability. With all the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and the negative impact it has had on the tourism industry, now is the most opportune time for academic and industry experts to develop ideas to underpin recovery strategies [75].

The results of the Vietnam study confirm the significant negative impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry seen in other countries, characterised by a decline in visitor numbers, business, revenue and employment rates. Recovery in the post-pandemic period in the aforementioned sectors should be based on diversification and the provision of quality tourism products, relevant marketing, digital transformation and promotion of sustainable tourism [76].

In contrast, issues of personal security relating to safeguarding against potential sources of epidemic threats were addressed in a study by Armutlu and co-authors, who analysed the attitudes associated with the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak of Turkish tour operators towards Chinese tourists visiting the country. Despite the many other determinants of post-pandemic tourism development, the focus of attention is often shifted precisely towards health security [77].

Undoubtedly, all stakeholders in the tourism industry need to work together to make it sufficiently resilient to a pandemic crisis. With the help of a resilient approach from governments, market players, technology innovators and the industry's workforce, the tourism sector can eventually evolve in a much more sustainable way after a pandemic. Certainly, these efforts can be further supported by engaging local communities in tourism development [78].

In order to discover sustainable recovery paths for the tourism industry and the real impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on consumer perceptions and behaviour, Romanian quantitative research was developed using two different representative samples in May 2020 and December 2020. The results indicated that the pandemic has affected travel patterns and habits regarding economic factors. Psychological factors, primarily fear of contamination, affect the willingness to travel and preferences for holiday destinations. At least in the medium term, people will avoid travelling in large groups and staying in crowded places. Hygiene and health conditions at the destination can be important factors in travel decisions. Faced with a wary clientele, tourism businesses related to transport, accommodation and catering should improve their hygiene conditions to restore confidence [79].

While the impact of tourism and COVID-19 has received much attention, limited research has considered the perspective of local people working in tourism, especially those most affected by the pandemic. The views of tourism workers in Nha Trang, Vietnam, on the relationship between tourism and the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on quality of life and the local economy were analysed. The role of a sustainable strategy was highlighted, including diversifying sources of tourists, multiplying sources of income for local people and improving tourism management by local authorities [80].

It should be objectively noted that the research presented is subject to certain limitations. This cannot constitute a fully supported claim, because this is the first time our tool has been used and because of the relatively low representativeness of the sample. The results of this study therefore require confirmation through studies on bigger groups that are more cross-sectional in terms of variables such as age, place of residence and level of education. The need to conduct them should be considered urgent, because people are at present accustomed to the pandemic. As a result, in the near future there may be a transformation of subjective perspectives on many phenomena, which will make it impossible to compare the results of this study with the results of future studies. It seems justified to also transform the questions of the structured interview into a survey questionnaire; however, this would have to be preceded by an assessment of the validity and reliability of the items of the questionnaire. Therefore, the proposal to create a survey questionnaire to monitor public opinion on the impact of COVID-19 on the current and future image of tourism only encourages a broader discussion. Understanding opinions about the biggest epidemiological threat in decades will contribute to an accurate assessment of the extent to which these opinions correspond to actual threats to world tourism. In addition, future research will focus more on qualitative research in order to gain a deeper understanding of young people's post-pandemic perspectives on trends in contemporary tourism.

7. Conclusions

The observed tendency amongst tourism students toward a more critical approach to the virus and its consequences may be the result of the acquisition of a deeper awareness of the real and potential threats associated with COVID-19 through their education.

The results presented in this study showed a relatively frequent divergence of opinions between tourism students and non-tourism students regarding the impact of COVID-19 on global tourism. The non-tourism students were more categorical in their statements. Particularly, significant differences were observed in responses to questions about the negative impact of COVID-19 on the development of domestic tourism (52.2% of tourism students indicating values of 6 to 10 versus 83.5% of non-tourism students indicating the same values), the development of health tourism (55.5% of tourism students indicating values of 6 to 10 versus 82.3% of non-tourism students indicating the same values), the possibility of travel agency bankruptcies (63.2% of tourism students indicating values of 6 to 10 versus 88.6% of non-tourism students indicating the same values), the operation of maritime means of tourist transport (41.0% of tourism students indicating values of 6 to 10 versus 74.7% of non-tourism students indicating the same values) and the possibility of bankruptcy of coach transport companies (45.2% of tourism students indicating values of 6 to 10 versus 77.2% of non-tourism students indicating the same values).

Referring to the research hypothesis presented, it is worth noting a fundamental trend manifested in many responses, expressed in the often neutral views towards the role of the COVID-19 pandemic expressed by tourism students. Against their background, non-tourism students were much more often radical in their responses. In other words, we can speak here of a greater focus on the scale of responses in the case of tourism students. Representatives of this group seem to attach less importance to the phenomenon of pandemics as a determinant of global tourism.

Conversely, it is difficult to prejudge whether the study of tourism associated with the moderate importance attributed to COVID-19 as a determinant of global travel development simultaneously implies a more favourable attitude towards sustainable tourism. Higgins-Desbiolles believes that the pandemic presents an opportunity for a paradigm shift in tourism towards sustainability [81], but this may apply both to those with and without educational links to tourism. The strategic orientation towards sustainability not seen in specific groups of society, but rather in the whole cross-section of society, remains regionally, regardless of the pandemic, in the shadow of the many shortages created by the war in Ukraine. Consequently, resource saving is rather involuntary as a result of travel restrictions due to global inflation. Of course, it would be better if a shift in thinking towards

sustainable tourism resulted from a deeper awareness rather than being forced by periodic crises. However, we will probably have to remain in anticipation of this momentous transformation of people, both connected and not connected by the educational system to tourism in the broadest sense.

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