

Occupancy of the Slovak Accommodation Establishments by Foreign Tourists

Petra Vašaničová¹ / Eva Litavcová¹ / Sylvia Jenčová²

e-mail: petra.vasanicova@gmail.com, eva.litavcova@unipo.sk, sylvia.jencova@unipo.sk

¹ Department of Mathematical Methods and Managerial Informatics, Faculty of Management, University of Presov in Presov, Slovak Republic

² Department of Finance, Faculty of Management, University of Presov in Presov, Slovak Republic

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Abstract

Accommodation has an important role in the development of tourism in every country we perceive as the tourism destination. Due to the increasing competition in the tourism industry, it is necessary to analyze the occupancy of the accommodation establishments, and thus to find specific segments of the market, which the tourism development strategy should focus on. The aim of this study is to describe, which types of the selected accommodation establishments are preferred in the Slovak Republic by foreign tourists with a special focus on seven specific nationalities (Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Ukrainian, German, Austrian, and Russian nationalities). Formally, the hypothesis being tested is whether there is a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of these nationalities over time. In addition, we aim to discuss the development of the selected types of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic in 2014–2017, and at the same time to emphasize the development of the hotels according to hotel classes. The results showed that in the Slovak Republic, the most numerous groups of the accommodation establishments by their type, were hotels, motels, botels, and guesthouses, and these establishments are also the most used by foreign tourists. Furthermore, the set hypothesis has been confirmed, on the basis of the results of Friedman ANOVA and the Kendall coefficient of concordance.

Keywords

Tourism, accommodation establishments, foreign tourists, Slovak Republic, nationalities

JEL classification: L8, Z32

Introduction

Accommodation is the key element of tourism and plays a major role in the development of this ever-evolving industry. At the same time, it provides service for both domestic and foreign tourists and therefore represents an important part of the tourism system. Accommodation is an important feature of a complex destination image. When a destination provides adequate accommodation suitable for the needs of the tourism market, it meets the basic conditions of tourism development (Bhatia, 2002).

“Tourism is largely dependent on the size and type of accommodation establishments available in the destination” (Bhatia, 2002, p. 171). For the successful development of tourism, it is necessary to provide a sufficient amount of the accommodation establishments to meet the demand of tourists in the destination. In addition, these establishments should meet the tourists’ expectations and requests on equipment, services, and cleanliness of the accommodation establishments (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2014). Only then, tourism can be successful because if the quality of tourism services drops, there is also a decrease in demand in this area.

If the Slovak Republic wants to compete in the international tourism market and ensure an increase in the number of foreign tourists, it is necessary to analyze the occupancy of the Slovak tourist accommodation establishments from different perspectives. Then, it will be possible to find out specific segments of the tourism market, on which tourism development strategy should focus.

The aim of this paper is to find out whether there is a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment in the Slovak Republic by foreign tourists of seven nationalities, specifically, Czechs, Hungarians, Poles, Ukrainians, Germans, Austrians, and Russians, over time. The second aim of this study is to discuss the development of the selected types of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic in 2014–2017, and at the same time to emphasize the development of the hotels according to hotel classes.

Definition and classifications of the accommodation establishments

Orieška (2011a) states that accommodation services are a prerequisite for providing accommodation in the destination and allowing for overnight stays or temporary accommodation in the destination. It is a set of consecutive activities related to the provision of temporary accommodation, usually to a larger number of guests outside their place of residence (Gúčik, 2012; Kučerová & Šmardová, 2016). The mentioned authors also add here the services that are related to the stay at the accommodation establishments. For example, it is reservation of accommodation, registration of guests, giving information, storage of luggage and its transport within the accommodation establishment, safekeeping of valuables in the safe, waking up guests, sale of selected goods, or services related to the guest’s departure and payment.

According to the European Commission (1998), the collective tourist accommodation establishment is “an accommodation establishment that provides overnight lodging for the traveler in a room or some other unit, but the number of places it provides must be greater than a specified minimum for groups of persons exceeding a single family unit and all the places in the establishment must come under a common commercial-type management, even if it is non-profit-making”.

The accommodation establishments and their equipment constitute material conditions for providing accommodation services. It includes the accommodation establishments accessible to the public, working on a profit or non-profit basis, which provides accommodation for a larger number of tourists. They are usually built together with food establishments (hotel, motel), or as a separate accommodation establishment, such as a hostel or cottage. Private short-stay rental accommodation, such as rented rooms in detached houses, dwellings houses rented from private individuals, private cottages, weekend houses, rooms of holiday flats are also used (Orieška, 2011a). There exist also other collective establishments, such as tourist camp-sites that include tents, caravans, trailers, and mobile homes. During traveling, accommodation services are provided in trains, rotels (accommodation establishments in the bus trailers), motels, camping sites, cruise ships, decks of the aircraft. Accommodation units are the base of accommodation facilities. In this case, one can talk about rooms. Cabins, cottages, huts, chalets, bungalows, and villas can be treated like bedrooms and apartments, i.e., to be let as a unit (European Commission, 1998).

There are many views on the classification of the accommodation establishments. In Table 1, we present an overview of the selected classifications according to Gúčík (2010), Orieška (2011a), Novacká et al. (2014).

Table 1 Classifications of the accommodation establishments

| Classification | | Description |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Based on seasonality | Year-round | Operated all year. |
| | Seasonal | Operated no more than 9 months of the year. |
| Based on size and capacity | Small hotels | Up to 100 beds. |
| | Medium sized hotels | From 101 to 250 beds. |
| | Large hotels | More than 250 beds. |
| Based on construction method | Fixed | Hotels, motels. |
| | Partially fixed | Assembled cottages. |
| | Portable | Tents. |
| | Mobile | Berths in trains. |

| Classification | | Description |
|------------------|-------------|---|
| Based on type a) | Hotels | They have a capacity of more than 10 rooms and provide a comprehensive product, which is accommodation, food and additional services (hotels, motels, apartment houses, guesthouses). |
| | Non-hotels | They do not meet the criterion of 10 rooms and do not provide a complex hotel-type services (cabins, cottages, huts, chalets, bungalows, camping sites, private accommodation). |
| Based on type b) | Traditional | In particular, hotel type establishments, e.g., hotels, motels, guest-houses, botels. |
| | Additional | Cottages, huts, chalets, bungalows, camping sites and other seasonal accommodation establishments. |
| | Others | Accommodation provided in dormitories, colleges (not for their original purpose). |

Source: own processing according to Vašaničová (2018)

Goeldner & Ritchie (2014) divided the accommodation establishments into commercial and non-commercial. We can include in the non-commercial group private (private homes), non-profit (hostels, shelters), and institutional (colleges, universities, public spas, and healthcare facilities) accommodation establishments. The commercial group is composed of hotels, motels, B&B (bed & breakfast), and time-share facilities (or vacation ownership).

Based on the location of the accommodation establishment, Křížek & Neufus (2014) classified seaside, mountain, city, spa, and recreational accommodation establishments. In addition, based on major additional services and business focus, they classified congress (conference, seminar), wellness, spa, sports, relaxation, and family accommodation establishments.

The Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 277/2008 Coll. (Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic, 2008), which establishes classification symbols for categorizing and ranking the accommodation establishments, defined the accommodation establishment as a building, space or an area, where the temporary accommodation and its additional services are provided for the public for payment all year-round. It is also the seasonal accommodation establishment and its additional services, which operates no more than 9 months. The appendix of this Decree contains the classification symbols and conditions that determine the categories and ranking of the accommodation establishments. The individual accommodation establishments are divided into the classes that are defined as determining the minimum requirements for the equipment of the accommodation establishment according to each category and the requirements for the level and scope of the provided services connected with the accommodation according to the criteria set out in the appendix to this Decree. The classes are marked with stars from the lowest class (*) to the highest class (*****). The number of stars means the following: (*) – tourist class, (**) – economy class, (***) – standard

class, (****) – first class, (*****) – luxury class. If the accommodation establishment meets a few optional criteria, it may still be marked with (+) – higher (Křížek & Neufus, 2014). The categorizing and ranking of the accommodation establishments based on the mentioned Decree are described in Table 2.

Table 2 Classification of the accommodation establishments into the categories and classes based on Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 277/2008 Coll.

| Category | | Class | | | | |
|----------|----------------------------|-------|----|-----|------|-------|
| 1. | Hotel | * | ** | *** | **** | ***** |
| | Garni hotel | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| | Mountain hotel | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| | Congress hotel | — | — | *** | **** | ***** |
| | Wellness hotel | — | — | *** | **** | ***** |
| | Spa hotel | — | — | *** | **** | ***** |
| | Boutique hotel | — | — | — | **** | ***** |
| | Apartment hotel | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| | Motel | * | ** | *** | **** | — |
| 2. | Botel | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| 3. | Guest-house | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| 4. | Apartment house | — | ** | *** | — | — |
| 5. | Turist hostel | * | ** | — | — | — |
| 6. | Cottage settlement | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| 7. | Camp | * | ** | *** | **** | — |
| | Mini-camp | — | ** | *** | **** | — |
| 8. | Recreational vehicle parks | — | — | — | — | — |
| 9. | Private accommodation | | | | | |
| | Room | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| | Building | * | ** | *** | — | — |
| | Holiday flat | * | ** | *** | — | — |

Source: own processing according to the Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 277/2008 Coll.

With the growing classification of the accommodation establishments, the quality of the services provided should also increase (Křížek & Neufus, 2014). The owner ranks the accommodation establishment in the appropriate class on the basis of the character, scope and level of provided services, which correspond to the relevant category and class.

In the Slovak Republic, rural accommodation is also an important part of the accommodation. The accommodation is provided to tourists by owners of suitable establishments, such as detached houses, cottages, cabins, farmhouses, ranches, and farms with accommodation capacity that is usually up to 10 beds. The main prerequisite for providing the accommodation services in this area is sufficient awareness of potential tourists, which can be achieved by precise marketing management and promotion (Orieška, 2011b).

For statistical purposes, enterprises in the Slovak Republic are divided by economic activities NACE Rev. 2. These economic activities are classified by sections (marked by letters) that are divided into the divisions, which have groups, classes, and subclasses (marked by a specific code number). According to NACE Rev. 2, the accommodation services are in one section with food services (code I), but in the separate division with code 55 – accommodation. Group 55.1 is composed of hotels and similar accommodation, group 55.2 of holiday and other short-stay accommodation, and group 55.3 of camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks, and trailer parks. Last group 55.9 is composed of other accommodation. The enterprises providing accommodation to tourists in the accommodation establishments are listed in the register of accommodation establishments of the statistical office. Based on their information, for example, the number of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic is identified, as well as the capacity, or the occupancy of the accommodation establishments. These indicators are used in international statistics.

Requirements for the Accommodation Establishments

An important multiple factor in the providing of tourism services is their quality because customers compare individual offers and chooses those that best fit the relationship between the quality and price. Tourists accentuate not only specific services and equipment but also the environment. As the conditions in the accommodation sector are still changing and competition is increasing, the quality of the accommodation establishment represents an important competitive advantage. The quality measure is customer satisfaction, repeated visits, loyalty, and positive references. Theobald (2005) noted that only those establishments should be successful that will consider the top quality of the services offered as the basis of their activity.

Many studies have confirmed that the active use of quality management has a positive impact on customer satisfaction, increasing sales and market share, enhancing guest loyalty, attracting new guests, increasing the satisfaction of tourists, and improving the image of local businesses and the overall image of the country. This also improves the competitive position of the destination (Țițu, Raulea, & Țițu, 2016; Molina-Azorín et al., 2015).

Depending on the target segment that the accommodation establishment focuses on, it differs from others by its location and availability, arrangement, standard of equipment, complexity of the provided food and other services, price level, number of employees, scope and focus of marketing activities.

The range of the provided services at the accommodation establishment is based on whether it is an establishment with complex services or with a limited amount of services. It also depends on the class, respectively, the category of the accommodation establishment (Mensah & Mensah, 2013). The accommodation establishments may or may not exist in organizational isolation from other sectors of the tourism economy. On the one hand, there are accommodation establishments that provide only accommodation

services for their customers. They have only minimal horizontal integration with other tourism activities. On the contrary, there are establishments, where accommodation services are only one of the many integrated services provided by a given tourism organization (Cooper, 2008). The accommodation establishments, according to their size, standards, and clientele, can provide a wide range of other paid or unpaid services to their guests. For example, it is a hairdresser, barber, parking and garage services, sports and recreation services, swimming pool, sauna, fitness, tennis courts, mini golf, reading room, children's room, or congress services.

Most tourists demand from accommodation services reliability, availability, flexibility, pleasant environment, professional competence of staff, appropriate behavior represented by the friendly treatment, and warmth (Beránek, 2004). It is well known that people play the key role in services. It is also true for the tourism industry and accommodation establishments where a positive reputation is the strongest advertising. Employees have to make a good first impression. It follows that the accommodation establishments should develop personal qualities of their employees. The main impetus should come from the top management that should introduce and continually improve the quality system of the accommodation establishment.

The accommodation establishments should apply some criteria of sustainability related to water, energy, waste, and pollution. Guests should be informed about window closures, lights off, water saving, changing towels and bed sheets, and waste separation (Závodná, 2015). Other requirements for the accommodation establishments are stated in Vašaničová (2018).

Quality perception by foreign tourists

At present, tourism organizations are increasingly exposed to multicultural consumers, who, on the one hand, force these organizations to operate in a multicultural environment, on the other hand, they create new opportunities for them.

In international tourism, the impact of several national cultures comes into contact. Managers and other employees in this area must therefore not only deal with classical tasks but must be experts in sociology, cultural traditions, religious traditions, and other specificities of different cultures (Evangeliu & Gasparics, 2013). Understanding the character of different nations is an essential element of the success of businesses in the market (Štefko & Turáková, 2016).

With the ongoing globalization of tourism economies, the number of publications, which consider national culture to be the key area of their research, is increasing. These studies are aimed at understanding how culture explains patterns of tourist preferences and behavior. The results provide advice to marketing specialists and tourism entrepreneurs who face a dilemma, whether it is appropriate to standardize a tourism product and tourism marketing campaign for all potential foreign visitors or it is better to adapt product and promotional mix to individual markets (Pizam & Sussmann, 1995; You et al., 2000; Crotts, 2004, p. 84).

According to Klímová (2017), from the perspective of providing services in tourism, there are not too many fundamental differences between the members of European culture. However, visitors from the original European Union prefer a higher standard of products, and on the contrary, those from the new member countries and Eastern European countries focus on price rather than quality (Michalová, 2001). Klímová (2017) described behavior of the selected foreign tourists. For example, while the Germans prefer hotel comfort, the Dutchmen enjoy caravanning. The Frenchmen are looking for day trips related to learning, the Englishmen prefer evening experiences and entertainment. The Scandinavian residents often choose alco-tourism, the Czech persons and Slovaks like peaceful family sessions.

As it is stated in Donthu & Yoo (1998), the level of service expectations is different when taking into account customers from different countries or cultures. Thus, customers from different countries of origin tend to differently evaluate the same service quality they receive (Pantouvakis & Renzi, 2016). Kozak (2001) examined the British and German tourists' attitudes toward the selected destination attributes during visiting the same destination. He found out that the British tourists were more likely to be satisfied with all individual attributes than the German tourists were. According to the attribute of the accommodation services, he provided a comparison within individual characteristics such as cleanliness, level of services, quality of food, the speed of check-in and check-out, security of rooms, and adequacy of water and electricity supply at the accommodation.

It seems that different national culture, as well as different perceptions of quality, may influence the choice of the category of the accommodation establishment. It is well known that the individual Slovak accommodation establishments differ in their assigned class (Table 2) based on the quality of the services provided. In our study, we focus on the selected foreign tourists in the Slovak Republic and try to find out if their preferences in the selection of accommodation facilities are different.

Data and Methodology

The research sample consists of secondary data obtained from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. The information on the main type of the accommodation establishment of foreign tourists in the Slovak Republic was obtained from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, on the basis of a random sample survey of inbound tourism, either at border crossings or in tourist centers. A specific statistical survey was aimed at tourists of Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Ukrainian, German, Austrian and Russian nationalities. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to choose the types of the accommodation establishments differentiated according to the Decree of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic No. 277/2008 Coll. described in Table 2. The survey was conducted at all seasons (spring, summer, autumn, and winter), while, for example, in 2014, the overall sample was composed by 4,720 respondents (1,180 respondents in each season), in 2015, the overall sample was composed by more than 5,600 respondents

(1,400 – spring, 2,800 – summer, 1,400 – autumn, not available – winter). The Statistical Office did not specify the size of the survey sample for 2016. We use annual data that are calculated as the average of individual seasonal periods. In our analysis, we cover the period from 2014 to 2016.

We use the mentioned data to model: the development of the number of the selected categories of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic; the development of the number of foreign arrivals to the selected categories of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic; the development of the number of Slovak hotels (motels) according to class; and the development of the number of foreign arrivals to Slovak hotels (motels) according to class

The collected secondary data were processed through descriptive statistics. We also used graphical modeling. In order to verify the formulated hypothesis, we applied the methods of inductive statistics, specifically Friedman ANOVA and Kendall coefficient of concordance r_w . We used a data analysis and visualization program STATISTICA 13.

Results

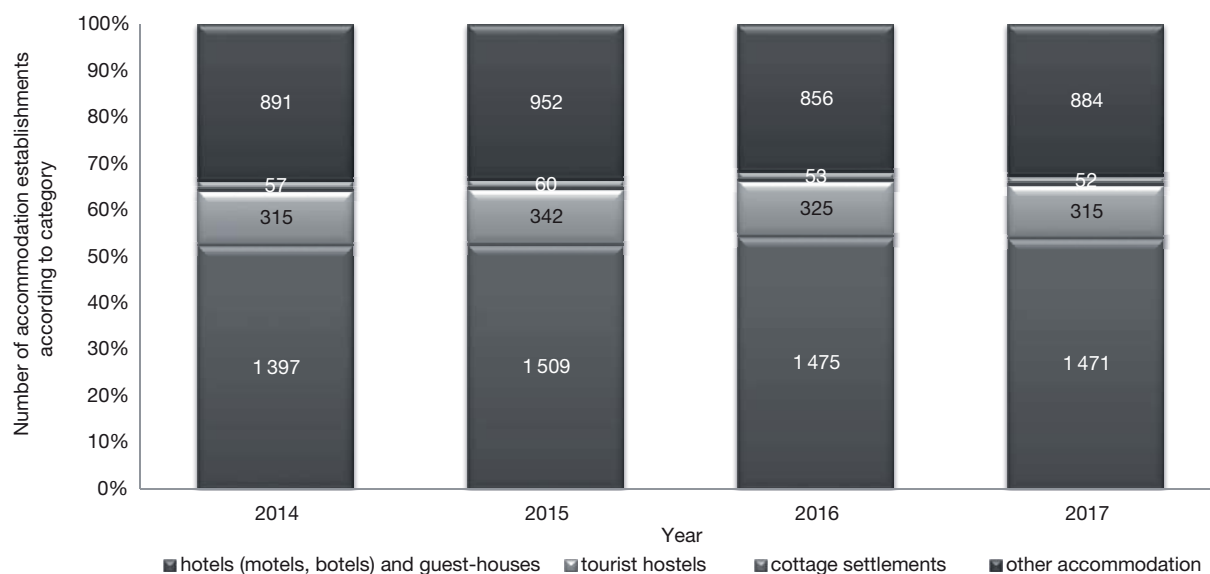
One of the aims of this study was to find out the development of the selected types of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic in 2014-2017. Specifically, we considered 4 categories, specifically 1) hotels (motels, botels) and guesthouses, 2) tourist hostels, 3) cottages, and 4) other types of accommodation. The highest number of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic was from the first category (hotels, motels, botels, and guesthouses) – see Fig. 1. Their total number declined slightly in 2017 (as compared to 2015). In the second place, in terms of their number, there was a category of other accommodation, followed by tourist hostels, the number of which was the same in 2017 and in 2014. The least numerous category was the cottages, whose number dropped in 2017, too. Compared to 2015, in 2017 the total number of collective accommodation establishments decreased by 136.

The percentage distribution of the selected categories of the accommodation establishments corresponds to the percentage distribution of foreign arrivals to the selected categories of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic (Fig. 2). Thus, most foreign tourists are accommodated in hotels, motels, botels, and guesthouses, the least in cottages.

The largest category of the accommodation establishments, i.e., hotels and motels (except for the guest-houses), is divided into the classes by the number of stars. From Fig. 3, it is clear that the Slovak Republic has the most hotels with 3*. From 2014 to 2017, there was the highest growth in the number of 4* and 5* hotels, while the number of hotels in the remaining categories has been declining since 2014.

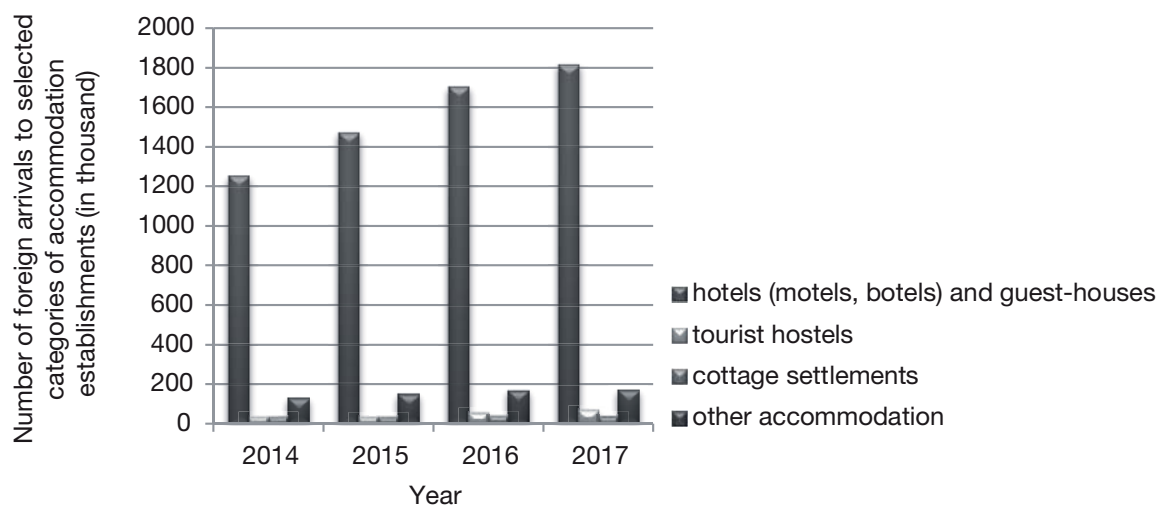
Interestingly, despite the fact that in the Slovak Republic there is the most 3* hotels, foreign tourists prefer 4* and 5* hotels (see Fig. 4). In addition, Figure 4 shows that since 2014 the number of foreign tourists arrivals to the Slovak Republic has increased.

Figure 1 Development of the number of the selected categories of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic



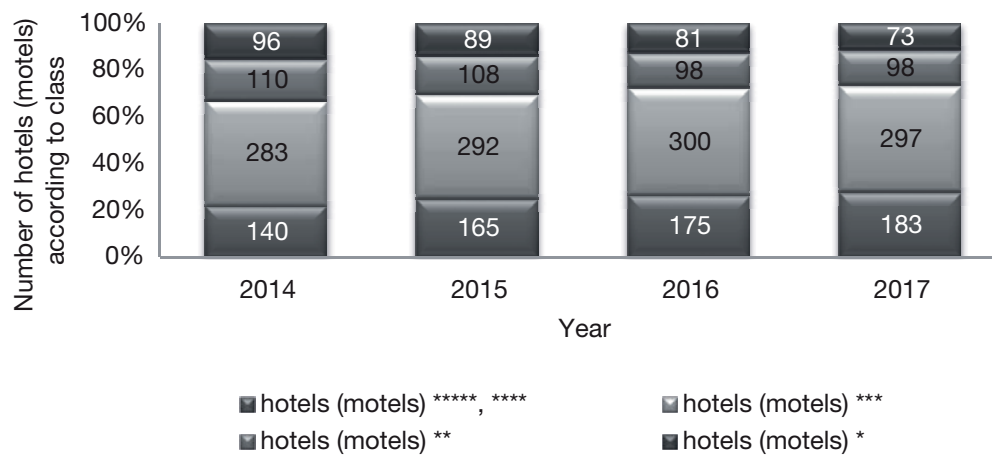
Source: own processing according to the data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Figure 2 Development of the number of foreign arrivals to the selected categories of the accommodation establishments in the Slovak Republic



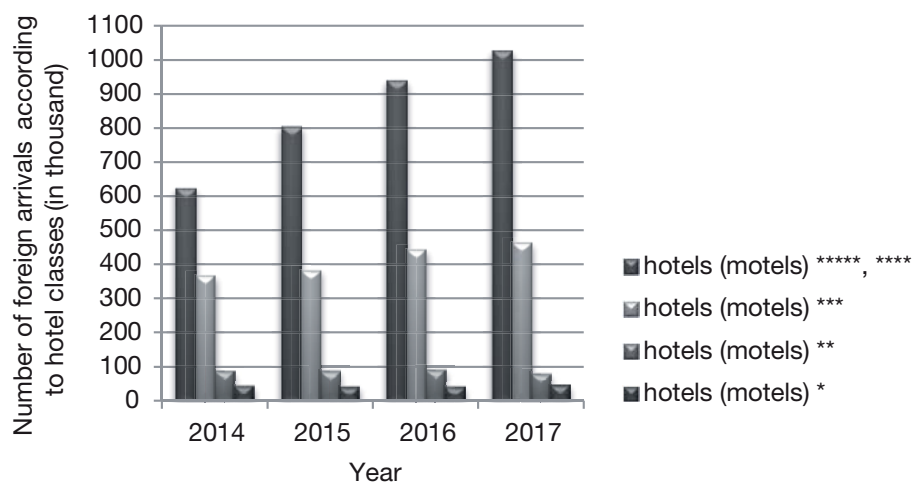
Source: own processing according to the data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Figure 3 Development of the number of the Slovak hotels (motels) according to the class



Source: own processing according to the data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Figure 4 Development of the number of foreign arrivals to the Slovak hotels (motels) according to the class



Source: own processing according to the data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

On the basis of the data obtained from the statistics of the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, Table 3 shows which types of the accommodation establishments are preferred by individual tourists from the Czech Republic (CZ), Hungary (HU), Poland (PL), Ukraine (UA), Germany (DE), Austria (AT), and Russian Federation (RU). Although the statistics provides preference separately for short-term and long-term stays, we present here comprehensive data.

Table 3 Selection of the Slovak accommodation establishments by foreign tourists in 2015 and 2016

| Country of origin | CZ | | HU | | PL | | UA | | DE | | AT | | RU | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Category | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 |
| Hotel, motel, hotel 5* a 4* | 9.2 | 9.8 | 9.7 | 9.0 | 8.1 | 9.1 | 8.2 | 10.9 | 31.4 | 26.9 | 24.0 | 24.4 | 28.4 | 28.5 |
| Hotel, motel, hotel 3* a 2* a 1* and guest-house | 35.4 | 31.1 | 30.2 | 29.5 | 39.4 | 35.6 | 32.2 | 31.3 | 36.6 | 41.9 | 40.7 | 37.2 | 45.5 | 42.0 |
| Tourist hostel | 7.9 | 6.4 | 7.2 | 9.2 | 13.0 | 14.9 | 12.1 | 12.2 | 1.7 | 2.5 | 3.6 | 1.8 | 4.3 | 4.9 |
| Cottage settlements | 4.4 | 3.7 | 5.1 | 3.7 | 5.2 | 3.4 | 5.1 | 3.8 | 1.1 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 1.6 | 2.1 |
| Camp | 3.2 | 3.3 | 4.4 | 2.3 | 3.6 | 6.6 | 6.1 | 3.3 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.9 | 3.6 |
| Private accommodation | 11.0 | 10.6 | 10.3 | 11.6 | 15.5 | 13.1 | 10.8 | 10.7 | 8.7 | 5.5 | 7.4 | 7.2 | 3.4 | 4.6 |
| Free of charge accommodation | 24.2 | 30.4 | 27.9 | 31.0 | 10.6 | 12.3 | 22.6 | 25.1 | 16.3 | 17.2 | 17.6 | 20.4 | 10.9 | 10.3 |
| Apartment house | 2.8 | 2.2 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 3.6 | 2.9 | 2.0 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Other accommodation | 1.9 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 1.9 |

Source: own processing according to the data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

We can summarize that at most, each nationality prefers the following category of the accommodation establishment: hotel, motel, hotel (3*, 2*, 1*), and guesthouse. The Germans, Austrians, and Russians had the category of hotels, motels, hotels (5*, 4*) in the second place. On the other hand, the Czechs, Hungarians, and Ukrainians chose the category free of charge accommodation in the second place. For all these six groups of tourists, the private accommodation follows. In the case of the German, Austrian and Russian nationalities, there is a reduced proportion of private accommodation at the expense of a higher proportion of the 5* and 4* hotels. However, another ranking is for tourists of Polish origin, who usually stay in tourist hostels, private accommodation, and eventually, in the free of charge accommodation.

Validation of the statistical hypothesis

One of the aims of this paper was to find out whether there was a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of the mentioned seven nationalities over time. Therefore, we formulated the following hypothesis:

Null hypothesis: We assume that there is not a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of the mentioned seven nationalities over time.

Alternative hypothesis: We assume that there is a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of the mentioned seven nationalities over time.

In other words, we examined whether the tourists of the analyzed country preferred a certain category of accommodation establishment to another, regardless of the year, in which they came to the Slovak Republic. To verify the hypothesis, we used the data from Table 3, but we also had the data available for 2014. From this data, we created a ranking of accommodation preferences for each of the seven surveyed nationalities for each available year. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4. We did the analysis separately for both short-term and for long-term stays.

Table 4 Results of Friedman ANOVA and Kendall coefficient of concordance

| Country of origin | Kendall coefficient of concordance r_w | ANOVA χ^2 | p-value |
|-------------------------|--|----------------|---------|
| Short-term stays | | | |
| CZ | 0.9778 | 23.4667 | 0.0028 |
| HU | 0.9407 | 22.5778 | 0.0040 |
| PL | 0.9704 | 23.2889 | 0.0030 |
| UA | 0.9778 | 23.4667 | 0.0028 |
| DE | 0.9667 | 23.2000 | 0.0031 |
| AT | 0.8852 | 21.2444 | 0.0065 |
| RU | 0.9296 | 22.3111 | 0.0044 |
| Long-term stays | | | |
| CZ | 0.9926 | 23.8222 | 0.0025 |
| HU | 0.9482 | 22.7556 | 0.0037 |
| PL | 0.9482 | 22.7556 | 0.0037 |
| UA | 0.9704 | 23.2889 | 0.0030 |
| DE | 0.8778 | 21.0667 | 0.0070 |
| AT | 0.9407 | 22.5778 | 0.0040 |
| RU | 0.8741 | 20.9778 | 0.0072 |

Source: own calculations in STATISTICA 13

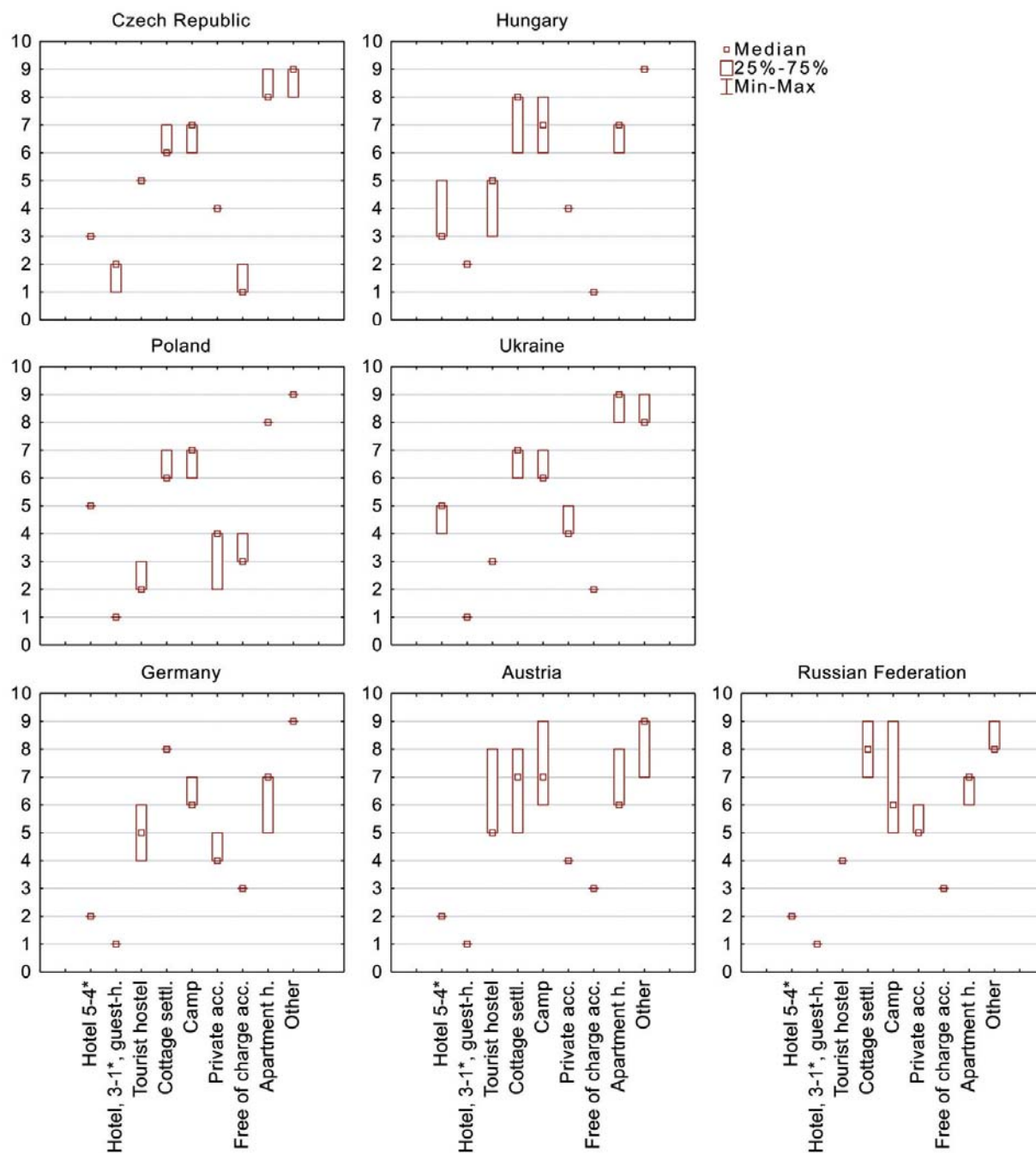
The results showed that the preferences for the Czech and Ukrainian tourists were the same, regardless of whether we considered the short-term or long-term stays. The highest relationship was reached within the Czechs and their long-term stays ($r_w = 0.9926$). When considering the lowest relationship, it was within the short-term stays for the Austrian tourists ($r_w = 0.8852$), within long-term stays for the Russian tourists ($r_w = 0.8741$). If we look at p-values, they all reached higher values than the assumed significance level $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, we can confirm the alternative hypothesis. Moreover, very high values of the Kendall coefficient of concordance also confirmed this hypothesis. Thus, there is a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of the mentioned seven nationalities over time. To better understand the results in Table 4, we show Box-Whisker plots for the short-term stays (Fig. 5) and long-term stays (Fig. 6) for each considered country.

Discussion

Looking at the percentage preferences of the individual categories of accommodation establishments (Table 3), we may notice some differences among the selected nationalities. We can clearly say that hotels, motels and botels 5* and 4* are occupied by the largest number of tourists from Germany and Austria (taking into account the selected nationalities). We can confirm the claim of Michalová (2001) that visitors from the original European Union prefer a higher standard of products than those from the new member countries. Unfortunately, she included in the second group also Eastern European countries and this is not confirmed because of the high percentage of the Russian visitors in Slovak hotels, even though it is true for the Ukrainians. We can also see that in general, foreign visitors are accommodated mainly in hotels, motels, botels 3*, 2*, 1* and guesthouses. We can see a high proportion of the Czechs, Hungarians, and Ukrainians in the free of charge accommodation, which can be explained, for example, by visits to family and friends as in the context of neighboring countries and historical development of population.

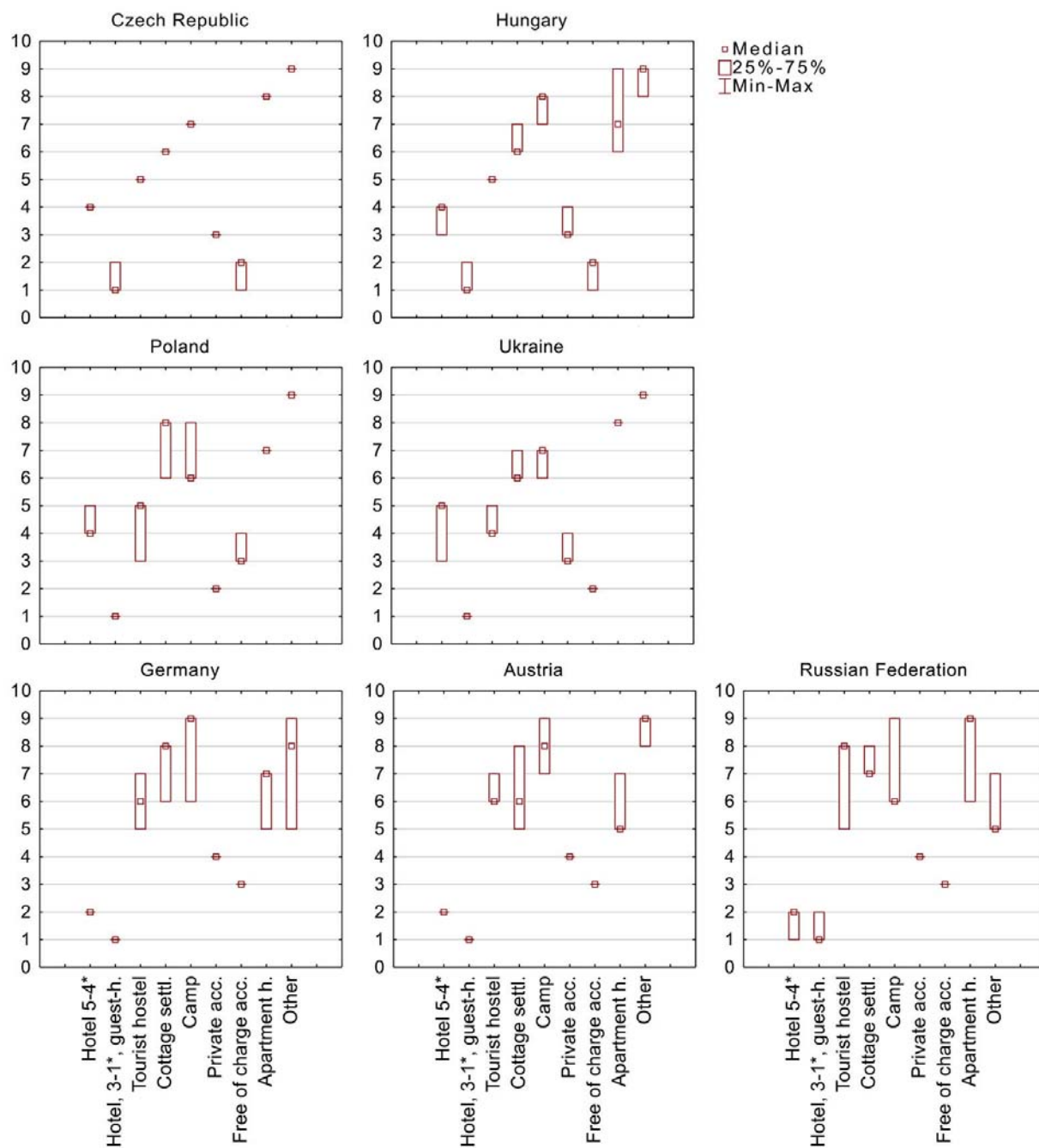
After the verification of our hypothesis, it is clear that there is a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of the mentioned seven nationalities over time. Thus, if one nationality preferred the given category of the accommodation establishment in one year, this preference would not change in another year. The changes in preferences are graphically presented in Figures 5 and 6. Foreign tourists from the Czech Republic have the most constant preferences.

In future research, we could combine our results by exploring the quality perception of the accommodation establishments by foreign tourists because the quality perception is the key element influencing tourists' behavioral intention (Žabkar, Brenčič, & Dmitrović, 2010). Malhotra et al. (2005) and Taylan Dortyol, Varinli, & Katapci (2013) noted that it was important to define the quality perception correctly and thus use it for a competitive advantage. According to Othman and Hemdi (2014), we could say that tourists with higher perception of the accommodation involvement in improving

Figure 5 Box-Whisker plots for the short-term stays


Source: own processing in STATISTICA 13

Figure 6 Box-Whisker plots for the long-term stays



Source: own processing in STATISTICA 13

quality would express higher intentions to return. At present, the accommodation establishments should place the utmost emphasis on the opinions of their own guests on the service quality because their perception represents one of the ways of success in the tourism development. Furthermore, it would be interesting to explore the relationship between the quality and price.

Conclusion

The accommodation establishments are currently subject to rapidly changing conditions and as a result, many enterprises operating in this sector are victims of the competition arising from the creating and development of new products, services, and their standards. Therefore, these establishments should put more and more emphasis on their ability to respond positively to the demands of customers who are increasingly demanding as a result of globalization. Satisfaction of these demanding tourists, therefore, requires the provision of the quality services that take into account their changing needs and wishes. Satisfied and loyal customers affect the performance, success and prosperity of the accommodation establishment.

Tourism is not just about providing accommodation and food services. It is important to attract and keep the guests with attractive accompanying programs and various offers of leisure time. When organizing accompanying activities, the accommodation establishment can also cooperate with other business entities that offer recreational, sport and other activities in the destination. The offer of the accompanying program differentiates the given accommodation establishment from the competitive one and gives it an extraordinary value. Within a collaboration in the destination management and marketing, it is possible to create a strong regional brand and offer services more efficiently and inexpensively. In organizing events, organizers, and managers of the accommodation establishments should avoid in cooperation with other entities the following mistakes: weak organizational arrangements that cause an amateur event; wrong estimation of the capacity of the space, whether it is too small or too large; unattractive program and offer that discourage a visitor from further visit; unattractive, visually inconvenient environment; inadequate communication, poorly selected communication channels, and bad timing; low level of graphical processing of communication and promotional materials; missing good photo documentation from the event that is important, for example, for a customer who could not attend the event (Cesta z mesta, 2015). Proper communication with visitors is related to the requirement for visitor's information about the destination and the provided services (Štefko, Kiráľová, & Mudrík, 2015).

We can summarize that in the Slovak Republic, the most numerous category of the accommodation establishments is the category of hotels, motel, botels, and guesthouses, and these establishments are also the most popular among foreign tourists. More specifically, since 2014, 4* and 5* hotels have increased by 43, while the number of 3* hotels has increased by only 14. According to the survey by the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, the 3*, 2* and 1* hotels, motels, botels and

guesthouses are the most preferred types of the accommodation establishments for tourists from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Ukraine, Germany, Austria, and the Russian Federation. The Germans, Austrians, and Russians stay mainly in 5* and 4* hotels. In addition, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship in the choice of the accommodation establishment by tourists of any of the mentioned seven nationalities over time.

As it is stated in Štefko et al. (2018) and in Vašaničová (2018), the Slovak Republic is a relatively new independent state, which is not very well known in the international tourism market. Therefore, monitoring of the Slovak tourism destination development is important for its further efficient development and requires a broad perspective. Nationality and its associated national culture are not the only socio-psychological factors affecting the behavior of tourists, but we believe that their influence should not be underestimated. According to the specific characteristics of nationalities, it is possible to create effective marketing strategies for the tourism development.

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