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IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC ON TOURISM FACILITIES IN THE REGIONS OF SLOVAKIA IN 2020

Vplyv pandémie koronavírusu COVID-19 na zariadenia cestovného ruchu v regiónoch Slovenska v roku 2020

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Annotation

Tourism is an inter-ministerial sector, significantly affecting the employment and development of regions. The paper aims to determine the impact of the epidemiological situation caused by the COVID-19 on the development of tourism in the regions of Slovakia based on the use of quantitative methods. Extensive travel restrictions caused a record drop in accommodation visit rate in 2020. The number of foreign visitors decreased by two-thirds year-on-year to the level of 1998. The visit rate in the Slovak Republic was mainly by domestic visitors. Despite the pandemic, in the third quarter of 2020, they exceeded last year's record numbers from the summer season. After considering the visit rate of domestic and foreign visitors, the number of visitors decreased the least year-on-year in the Žilina Region. The most significant year-on-year decrease in visitors was recorded in the Bratislava Region, where business clients were significantly absent. Gross sales decreased by almost half compared to the previous year. The highest gross sales were achieved by accommodation establishments in the Žilina Region. The number of overnight stays decreased year-on-year in all regions. However, the length of stays was significantly extended in the fourth quarter of 2020, thanks to the visit rate in spa towns.

Key words

tourism, COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, gross sales, regions of Slovakia

Anotácia

Cestovný ruch je medzirezortným odvetvím, výrazne ovplyvňuje zamestnanosť a rozvoj regiónov. Cieľom článku je na základe využitia kvantitatívnych metód zistiť vplyv epidemiologickej situácie spôsobenej COVID-19 na vývoj cestovného ruchu v regiónoch Slovenska. Rozsiahle obmedzenia cestovania zapríčinili v roku 2020 rekordný pokles návštevnosti ubytovacích zariadení. Počet zahraničných návštevníkov klesol medziročne o dve tretiny na úroveň z roku 1998. Návštevnosť v SR tvorili najmä domáci návštevníci. Tí aj napriek pandémie, v treťom kvartáli 2020 prevýšili minulo-ročné rekordné čísla z letnej sezóny. Po zohľadnení návštevnosti domácich aj zahraničných hostí, sa počet návštevníkov medziročne najmenej znížil v Žilinskom kraji. Najvýraznejší medziročný pokles hostí evidoval Bratislavský kraj, kde výrazne chýbali biznis klienti. Tržby sa v porovnaní s predchádzajúcim rokom znížili takmer o polovicu. Najvyššie tržby dosiahli ubytovacie zariadenia v Žilinskom kraji. Medziročne sa vo všetkých krajoch znížil počet prenocovaní. Výraznejšie sa však v štvrtom kvartáli 2020 predĺžila dĺžka pobytov, vďaka návštevnosti v kúpeľných mestách.

Kľúčové slová

cestovný ruch, pandémie koronavírusu COVID-19, tržby, regióny Slovenska

JEL classification: Z31, J10

1. Introduction

Tourism is a significant part of the economy in many countries. It directly affects several sectors of the economy, and as part of the national economy, it belongs to the tertiary sector (services sector). It has a significant impact on employment, job creation, and GDP growth. Until the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the tourism sector was considered the largest service sector, leading to many social and economic changes. It was considered to be the fastest-growing sector of national economies, whose performance contributes significantly to building long-term competitiveness. The 267 million Europeans (62% of the population) go on at least one tourist stay a year, and 78% of Europeans spend their vacations in their home country or another EU country (European Commission, 2020). In 2019 the average share of tourism was 9.5% of GDP and employed on average 11.2% of the total number of employed persons in the European Union. An above-average share of tourism within the EU-28 was recorded in Spain (14.3%) and Italy (13%). The share of tourism in the V4 countries is lower compared to the average values of the EU-28 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020a).

The outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism sector. It was one of the first industries to be directly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic has a direct impact on the business activity of entities operating in tourism, generating unprecedented losses since its outbreak. According to revised OECD estimates, the decline in international tourism will range from 60% to 80%, depending on the length of the recovery (OECD, 2020). In recent years, the immediate and significant decline in tourism was due to the financial and economic crisis of 2009, but it is estimated that the current situation caused by the COVID-19 coronavirus will have a much more severe impact on the sector. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (2020b), over 121 million jobs in the global travel and tourism sector will be impacted by the pandemic. International tourism is also significantly affected by the number of cases and deaths of COVID-19 in individual countries. Farzanegan et al. (2020) found a positive correlation between international tourism and the cumulated level of COVID-19 confirmed cases and deaths by April 30, 2020. Regression analyzes showed that countries exposed to high flows of international tourism are more prone to cases and deaths caused by the COVID-19 outbreak. Based on their estimations, a 1% higher level of inbound and outbound tourism is associated with 1.2% and 1.4% higher levels of confirmed COVID-19 cases and death, respectively.

Countries for which tourism is one of the key sectors of the economy are significantly affected by the pandemic. Moreno-Luna et al. (2021) analyzed the impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector in Spain. The country has seen a significant decline in foreign tourists, which, according to the authors, is due to its negative image caused by the high infection rates. This decrease is partly replaced by domestic tourists, whose number increased in the analyzed period. Another country, whose dominant part of the economy is tourism, is Croatia. According to Payne et al. (2021), Croatia will experience a significant decline in GDP by up to 10%, which will be one of the largest declines among European countries. They concluded that the negative shock of the global pandemic on tourism may have established a new trend though at a much lower level. Škare et al. (2021) measured the potential effects of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic on tourism sector. The results showed that the past pandemic crises caused large adverse shocks mainly to domestic tourism sectors, and once they perished (zero infection cases), inbound arrivals revived immediately. The recovery of the tourism industry worldwide from the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic will take more time than the average expected recovery period of ten months. The authors emphasized the need to coordinate the public and private policy support to assure sustainability of the tourism sector. The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has already significantly affected revenues in this sector. Governments in several countries are trying to mitigate the slowdown in the sector caused by restrictions through economic stimulus packages. Khalid et al. (2021) analyzed the relationship between the size of the tourism sector and the economic policy response to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. The results based on data from 136 countries showed that countries with larger tourism sectors adopted more aggressive economic stimulus packages, and the size of the tourism sector is positively associated with both fiscal and monetary policy responses to the pandemic.

In the tourism sector, there will undoubtedly be one of the first and probably most serious shocks caused by the international expansion of COVID-19. Kuqi et al. (2021) investigated the impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic in the tourism sector in Kosovo. They analyzed data from the Q1, Q2 and Q3 period of 2020. The travel restrictions and therefore empty accommodation facilities had the greatest impact on Kosovo tourism during the Q2 and Q3 period of 2020. The results showed a decrease in the number of visitors and the number of their overnight stays. Peluso and Pichierri (2021) conducted a study of the influence of age on the individuals' negative effect felt during the lockdown period of the first contagion wave and their level of uncertainty subsequently perceived. The results showed an inverse relationship between age and negative effect. The negative affect was associated with greater perceived uncertainty, which in turn decreases individuals' preference for exciting vacations while increasing their interest in relaxing vacations, which suggests a potential change in vacation preferences. Lopez et al. (2021) analyzed the demands of hotel guests in protection against COVID-19 coronavirus.

The research concluded that women demand more than men concerning the security measures, including ensuring good hygiene conditions, the use of disinfectants, the existence of health and information checks, adapting the establishment to WHO recommendations, obtaining quality certification, measuring temperature, the need to provide information on protocols and measures, and the elimination of physical contact between people.

2. Impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic on Slovak tourism sector

The importance of tourism for the economic growth of a country depends on the level of development of this sector. Even though the Slovak Republic was included among the countries with low performance in the tourism sector by the authors Brida et al. (2020), almost two and a half million foreign visitors and almost four million domestic visitors visited the Slovak Republic in 2019 (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2021). However, it is not the number of tourists and their time spent in the country that contributes to GDP but the amount of money they spend during their stay on services such as accommodation, transport, and catering (Haller et al., 2020). In 2019, the gross sales from accommodation services to foreign and domestic visitors was more than EUR 516 million (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2021).

On March 6, 2020, the first case of COVID-19 coronavirus in Slovakia was confirmed. Subsequently, the Government of the Slovak Republic declared, in connection with the risk of the spread of COVID-19, an emergency situation in the territory of the Slovak Republic, and on March 15, 2020, the government approved a proposal to declare a state of emergency. As a result of the declared state of emergency, measures taken in Slovakia have been tightened since March 16. Shops and establishments were closed except for pharmacies, grocery stores, drugstores, newsagents, and other necessary services. The tourism sector was one of the first sectors to be directly limited by the restrictive measures. The travel restrictions of the movement of persons in Slovakia was reflected in a sudden decrease in the number of visitors, as well as in the number of canceled stays, corporate, cultural, and other events. A significant drop in tourism has also been recorded throughout Europe. The most significant decrease in the number of overnight stays in accommodation establishments was recorded in EU countries in March (-62%) and in April (-95%) compared with the same months of 2019 (Eurostat, 2020). To prevent the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus, European countries began to gradually close their borders, including Slovakia, which began restricting cross-border movement on March 14, 2020.

The favorable development of the epidemiological situation in Slovakia led over time to the relaxation of the measures, which consisted of several phases. The first phase of the relaxation of measures took place from April 22 to May 6, 2020. In the first phase, establishments were opened, which also included restaurants. Opening hours were limited to 06:00 - 20:00. Consumption of food and beverages in the establishments and on the terraces remained prohibited. Accommodation facilities were also partially opened, namely those that provided long-term accommodation services (at least for ten days), catering services remained prohibited. The continuing favorable development of the epidemiological situation in Slovakia caused the second and third phases of the relaxation of measures to take place simultaneously from May 6 to May 20. At this phase, public catering establishments and their outdoor terraces were opened. Subsequently, in the fourth release phase from May 20, other facilities, services, premises, and mass events were opened by the Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic. All shops, services, and shopping centers were opened, except for, for example, natural and artificial swimming pools, facilities providing wellness services, hydro massage and other wet procedures, salt caves and cryo chambers, zoological and botanical gardens, and entertainment facilities. Subsequently, the fifth phase was launched, in which facilities providing wellness services, spas, massages, swimming pools, and sports grounds, hotels, public catering without a limit on the number of people at one table, and others were opened with effect from June 3, 2020. Slovakia opened its borders, and from June 13, 2020, the state of emergency ended.

Due to the deteriorating development of the COVID-19 pandemic, a state of emergency was again declared in the country from October 1. With effect from October 1, 2020, until further notice, hygiene measures were taken. These include limiting the concentration of customers to one shopper per ten square meters of the sales area and keeping a distance between customers of at least two meters. At the same time, for hotels, restaurants, guest houses, and other facilities and their outdoor terraces, opening hours are limited to 10 pm, except for delivery services and take-outs through a window. With effect from October 13, mass events for more than six people were prohibited. From October 15, public catering establishments can only serve take-outs or serve food outdoors if they have this option. Saunas, wellness, swimming pools, and aqua parks were also closed. Following the adopted anti-pandemic measures, entrepreneurs from the tourism sector are again directly restricted in carrying out business activities in the sector. That is, again, reflected in a significant decline in sales and employment. Without more targeted support, this can result in bankruptcy for several tourism entities. Tourism needs support not only from the government but also from municipal governments, which will be returned, for example, in the form of a local accommodation tax (Papcunová et al., 2018).

In the first half of October 2020, targeted state aid for tourism in the amount of EUR 100 million was approved. This aid is intended not only for restaurants, cafes, hotels, and boarding houses but also for water parks, swimming pools, guides in the tourism sector, and other entities operating in tourism. Eligible tourism entities, whose sales have fallen by more than 40% compared to last year, can apply for aid. The amount of support itself will depend on the decrease in sales in specific months compared to sales for 2019. The financial contribution will range from 4% to 10% of the gross sales of the relevant month in 2019 (Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic, 2021).

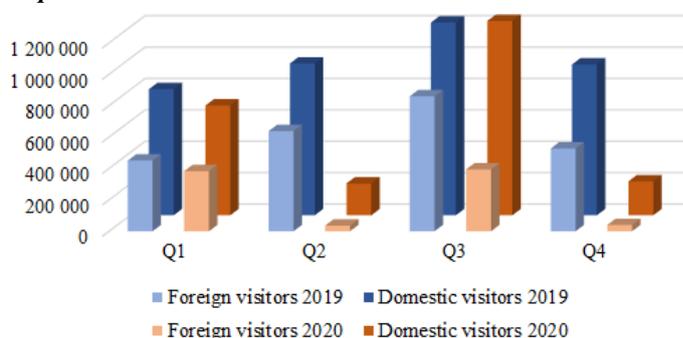
3. Aims and methods

As can be seen from the previous sections, tourism plays a significant role in the creation of the national economy in several EU countries. Until 2020, tourism was one of the most dynamically developing industries in Slovakia. Tourism is an inter-ministerial sector that directly affects several sectors of the economy, contributes to the GDP and total employment. The paper aims to determine the impact of the epidemiological situation caused by the COVID-19 on the development of tourism in the regions of Slovakia. The paper analyzes the impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic on tourism on a global scale, but especially in Slovakia. We emphasize the development of tourism in individual regions of Slovakia during the pandemic. The methodology of the paper consists of four phases. In the first phase of the solution, it is necessary to conduct literary research of domestic and foreign authors based on the analysis of secondary sources. In the second phase, we focus on the measures that have been introduced in the Slovak Republic to reduce the spread of the new COVID-19 coronavirus. In the third phase, we analyze secondary data on tourism in individual regions of Slovakia in the years 2019 and 2020 using quantitative methods. We evaluate the number of domestic and foreign visitors, the number of overnight stays, and gross sales of the tourism sector at the Slovak Republic and its regions for four quarters of 2020. We describe the measures of the Government of the Slovak Republic to mitigate the economic impacts of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic on tourism in Slovakia. We use data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic for the analysis. We evaluate the data descriptively, numerically, and graphically. In the third phase, we use mathematical-statistical methods, analyzes, and comparisons. In the final phase, we draw conclusions and recommendations using analogy, deduction, and summarization of knowledge.

4. Results and discussion

The measures against the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic significantly affected the March decreases in the number of visitors, overnight stays, and also the balance of the entire first quarter of 2020. In the first three months of 2020, 1 082 590 visitors stayed in Slovakia, which is a decrease of 13.7% compared to the same period last year. Graph 1 shows the number of visitors in Slovakia in 2019 and 2020. The number of overnight stays decreased by 10.6%. In the first quarter of 2020, 699 572 domestic visitors visited the accommodation establishments the number decreased by 12.9% year-on-year. They spent 2 046 991 nights in tourism facilities. The number of foreign visitors decreased by 14.9%, the number of their overnight stays was 1 043 944. Graph 2 shows the number of overnight stays in accommodation establishments in Slovakia in 2019 and 2020. Gross sales from accommodation establishments decreased by 8.1% compared to the first quarter of 2019. Graph 3 shows gross sales of accommodation establishments in Slovakia in 2019 and 2020.

Graph 1: Visitors in Slovakia in 2019 and 2020

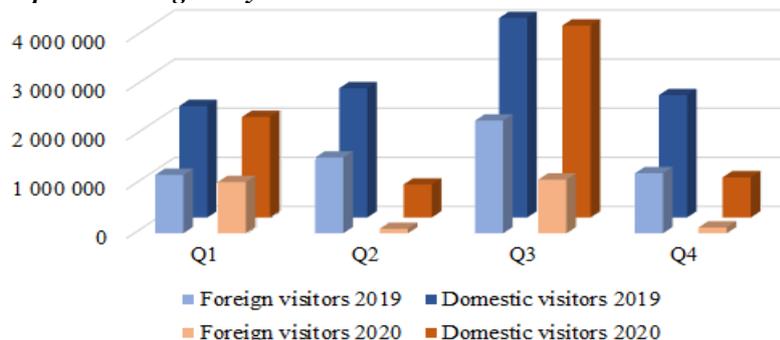


Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2021)

Extensive travel restrictions, especially at the international level, led to a large year-on-year decline in the number of visitors, overnight stays, and gross sales in the second quarter. In the second quarter of 2020, 239 116 visitors were accommodated in tourism facilities, which is 1 365 520 less than in the same period last year. The number of visitors in the Slovak Republic consisted mainly of domestic visitors, in the second quarter they represented

84.7% of the total number of accommodated visitors. The lower visit rate of foreign visitors persists in the second quarter; only 36 530 foreign visitors registered in hotels, boarding houses, and other accommodation establishments, which is 5.7% of last year's number. Gross sales fell by 85.3% in the second quarter.

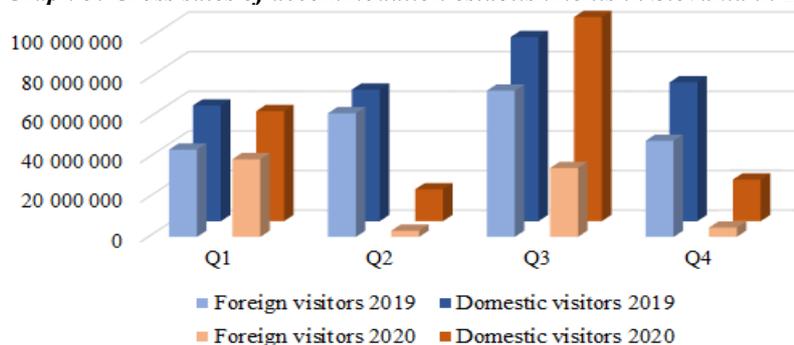
Graph 2: Overnight stays in accommodation establishments in Slovakia in 2019 and 2020



Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2021)

The relaxation of the measures was fully reflected in the number of residents in July and August. Compared to the previous quarter, accommodation establishments recorded an almost sevenfold increase in visit rate in the third quarter. In the third quarter of 2020, 1 632 313 visitors were accommodated in hotels, boarding houses, and accommodation facilities in the Slovak Republic, which is a decrease of 21.8% than in the third quarter of 2019. The year-on-year decrease was due to the persistently lower visit rate of foreign visitors. However, the number of domestic visitors increased, which was reflected especially in selected regions. An increase in the number of domestic tourists was also recorded in Spain in 2020 (Moreno-Luna et al., 2021). The number of domestic visitors in 2020 in the Slovak Republic exceeded last year's record numbers from the successful summer season of 2019. Year-on-year, their number increased by 0.8% to 1 237 918, which is 75.8% of the total number of visitors. Year-on-year growth of domestic visitors in the third quarter of 2020 was recorded in the Košice Region (by 5.7%), the Prešov Region (by 7.3%), the Trnava Region (by 13.0%), and the Žilina Region (by 17.3%). However, the number of overnight stays of domestic visitors in Slovakia decreased by 3.8% compared to the same period last year. They increased only in the Trnava Region, the Žilina Region, and the Prešov Region. The lower visit rate of foreigners continued, of which only 394 395 were accommodated in Slovakia. In the same period last year, there were approximately twice as many foreign visitors (859 379), this decrease was most pronounced in hotels in cities. After considering the visit rate of domestic and foreign visitors, the number of visitors decreased the least year-on-year in the third quarter in the Žilina Region (by 1.5%), mainly due to the Liptov, Orava, and Turiec regions. The most visited areas of Slovakia, the Žilina and Prešov regions, registered 762 894 visitors. In the Prešov Region, despite having many well-known tourist attractions in its territory, the total number of visitors decreased by 10.3%. The negative impact was higher in the Bratislava Region, whose visit rate decreased by as much as 59.7% year-on-year, and the number of foreign visitors decreased by more than two-thirds (by 71.2%). The city of Bratislava itself was even worse, as the results of the entire region were improved by the number of visitors in popular holiday districts such as Senec and Pezinok. Visitors spent a total of more than 5 million nights in accommodation establishments in the third quarter, a year-on-year decrease of 21.3%. Gross sales in the third quarter of 2020 decreased by 16.9% compared to the third quarter of 2019.

Graph 3: Gross sales of accommodation establishments in Slovakia in 2019 and 2020

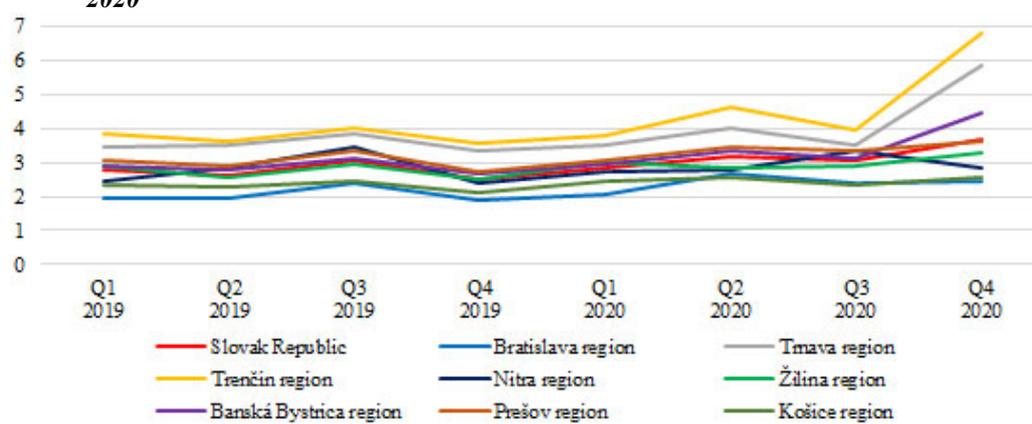


Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2021)

The impact of the second wave of COVID-19 coronavirus again significantly reduced the revenues of accommodation facilities in the Slovak Republic. In the fourth quarter of 2020, hotels, boarding houses, and other

tourism facilities recorded a year-on-year decrease in visitors by 82.8%, with only 255 988 visitors. During the fourth quarter of 2020, domestic tourists, in particular, continued to generate a visit rate throughout the Slovak Republic. However, their number has also decreased significantly compared to the same period of the previous year (by 77.5%). In the same period last year, there were almost five times more domestic visitors (the number exceeded 960 000). However, the length of stays increased significantly in the fourth quarter of 2020, compared to the previous quarter, it increased on average from 2.5 nights to 3.7 nights, thanks to the visit rate in spa towns. Due to the spa visit rate, the average number of overnight stays increased most significantly in the Trenčín Region from 3.6 to 6.8 nights. The towns of Bojnice and Trenčianske Teplice are located in this region. Graph 4 shows the average length of stay in accommodation establishments in the Slovak regions in 2019 and 2020. From the regional point of view, the negative impact in the fourth quarter of 2020 was most visible in the Bratislava region, where the total number of visitors decreased by up to 87.0% year-on-year. The number of foreign visitors decreased even by 93.6%. Visitors spent 937 112 nights in accommodation establishments in Slovakia, their number was lower by 74.8% year-on-year. In the last quarter of 2020, gross sales of accommodation establishments decreased by 78.5% year-on-year.

Graph 4: The average length of stay in accommodation establishments in the Slovak regions in 2019 and 2020

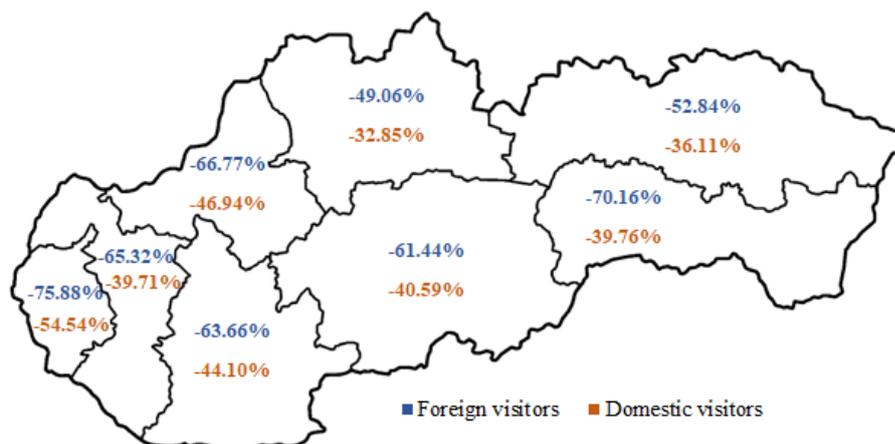


Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2021)

Extensive travel restrictions due to COVID-19 coronavirus led to a record drop in the visit rate of 50.1% throughout 2020. The number of foreign visitors decreased by two-thirds year-on-year, to 854 000, which was the lowest number of foreigners accommodated in the Slovak Republic since 1998. The decrease in the number of foreign visitors in Slovakia was so large, that its economic consequences were evident in every Slovak region. The number of domestic visitors, due to restrictions on travel abroad and an increase in domestic tourism in the summer months, decreased more moderately by 40.5%. The accommodation facilities registered 2.4 million domestic visitors. Domestic and foreign visitors spent 9.8 million nights in accommodation facilities in the Slovak Republic, which is a year-on-year decrease of 44.7%. The only indicator that recorded an increase in 2020 was the increase in the average number of overnight stays from 2.8 to 3.1 nights. However, restrictions on travel have brought significant changes in the number of visitors in Slovak regions. Even the most popular holiday locations in Slovakia will have to try to compensate for the loss of income by attracting mainly domestic tourists. Online marketing and new services will be important. The highest decrease in the visit rate in 2020 was recorded in the Bratislava Region by 68.5%. Compared to the previous year, it was visited by less than a quarter of foreign visitors (a decrease of 75.9%) and less than half of domestic visitors (a year-on-year decrease of 54.5%). Such a large drop was caused by the fact that hotels in Bratislava and also in other large cities are used during the year mainly by business clients, participants in congresses, conferences, and corporate events. The epidemiological situation and the speed of the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus not only in Slovakia caused companies to disrupt these events. In several companies, they had an absolute ban on travel until the end of the year, or they could travel on business trips only in exceptional situations. The lowest annual decrease in visitors was recorded by the most visited tourist regions, the Žilina Region by 38% and the Prešov Region by 40.9%. Graph 5 shows the decrease in the number of visitors in 2020 compared to 2019 in the Slovak regions. The structure of foreign visitors was dominated by visitors from the surrounding countries. Most foreign visitors came from the Czech Republic (378 thousand) and Poland (116 thousand), but their number was almost half lower than in 2019. The most significant drop, by more than 80%, was recorded by visitors from overseas destinations, from the USA and Asian countries. Accommodation establishments achieved gross sales of almost EUR 277 million in 2020, a decrease of almost half (by 46.4%) compared to the previous year. The overall result was improved by strong sales in the first months of the year, when the favorable development of the winter season persisted, followed by the spring break, as well as the recovery during the summer months after the temporary release of anti-pandemic measures. Recreational vouchers

also significantly helped the sales. Among the regions, the highest gross sales were achieved by accommodation establishments in the major tourist regions, in the Žilina Region (EUR 74 million) and the Prešov Region (EUR 63 million). Accommodation establishments in the Nitra Region had the lowest gross sales (EUR 14 million). Thanks to the summer season, domestic visitors generated gross sales of EUR 195.8 million, which accounted for 70.7% of total gross sales. Domestic gross sales decreased by 31.9% year-on-year, which is a slighter decrease than for foreign visitors. A pandemic situation, measures, restrictions, or thinking about potential government action against citizens, brings changes in people's behavior when choosing holidays and spending leisure time. Organized group tourism is in decline. Individual tourism comes to the fore. The further development in tourism will be influenced by the epidemiological situation and the speed at which the spread of COVID-19 coronavirus will be prevented not only in Slovakia but also in other holiday destinations of Slovak citizens.

Graph 5: The decrease in the number of visitors in 2020 compared to 2019 in the Slovak regions



Source: authors' own elaboration based on data from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2021)

5. Conclusion

The nature of tourism is influenced by development trends, which are reflected in social, demographic, and economic changes. In 2003, the European Commission defined ten basic trends that will affect tourism in the near future: demography, health, education, leisure, travel experience, lifestyle, information technology, transport, sustainable development, security, and safety (Kotíková, 2013). The outbreak of the COVID-coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on travel safety and, to a large extent, on the future of tourism. Governments around the world have responded to the threat by introducing strict quarantine measures to mitigate the rate of spread of COVID-19 coronavirus and protect the health of the population. On the other hand, the measures that took their toll resulted in an immediate and very significant slowdown in economic activity. A large part of companies, sole traders, and employees in tourism got into financial problems.

When evaluating the number of visitors, the number of overnight stays, and gross sales of the tourism sector at the Slovak Republic and its regions for four quarters of 2020, we see an evident decrease in almost all regions and all monitored parameters, which is the result of the corona crisis. We must agree with the statement made by Karaounalis (2018), who points out that, although the link between economic growth and tourism development is evident, tourism development is a product of economic growth and not the other way around. On the one hand, the tourism sector has a positive effect on economic growth, reduces unemployment, and increases the competitiveness of economies, but it is only valid during economic growth, without the travel risks and measures of the current corona crisis.

The takeoff of the tourism sector will depend on the speed of implementation of the adopted support measures of a short-term, but especially long-term nature. The indirect form of tourism support should also focus on individual consulting, legal and financial consulting, and, in particular, marketing support. At present, modern marketing methods such as advertising on social networks, webpages, via e-mail, etc. are coming to the fore. (Korenková et al., 2020). The current situation in the tourism sector can also be perceived as an opportunity for Slovakia and the EU to its modernization consistent with environmental and social responsibility.

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