

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION WEB SERVICES: USAGE IN SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Ana-Maria Marić¹ and Jovana Zoroja^{2, *}

Received: 11 March 2019.

Accepted: 21 June 2019.

¹INA, d.d. Zagreb Zagreb, Croatia

²University of Zagreb – Faculty of Economics and Business Zagreb, Croatia

DOI: 10.7906/indecs.17.2.14

Preliminary report

ABSTRACT

Travel and accommodation Web services are used to promote tourism services and to attract customers offering them the opportunity to book accommodation services online, to communicate and for many other tourism activities. The goals of the article are: (i) to investigate the current trends in usage of Web services for online accommodation reservation in selected European countries, and (ii) to investigate the habits and readiness of individual Croatian travellers regarding the usage of Web services for the accommodation reservation. Respondents were asked to evaluate indicators that effect on the selection of different Web services and functionalities for three Web services regarding accommodation reservation (Airbnb, booking.com, TripAdvisor). Data was collected using an online questionnaire which was distributed by Facebook, WhatsApp, and sent by email. Research results indicate that the percentage of individuals who are using the Internet for tourism services is growing through years in European Union countries, but the differences among the countries are also strongly evident. However, research results regarding individual Croatian travellers indicate that almost half of the respondents have never used the option of booking accommodation through Web services.

KEY WORDS

travel and accommodation Web services, accommodation services, internet, social media, Croatia

CLASSIFICATION

JEL: L83, L86

INTRODUCTION

Tourism as an economic, social, and cultural activity is one of the most significant activities of modern society and world-wide economic development and is particularly significant in most European countries [1, 2]. Furthermore, Croatia is a traditional tourism- oriented country [1]. Tourism is a very important segment of the economy and has the potential to stimulate the entire socio and economic development [3].

Development of information and communication technology (ICT) and its usage in all aspects of every day life has an influence on tourism. New applications, the popularity of social media, and social networks lead to higher usage of Internet and adaption to new technologies in tourism. According to Dunne et all. [4] "The Internet has become an inevitable decision-making tool of a modern, wealthy, traveller with no time". Buhalis and Law [5] point out that ICT plays a key role in the competitiveness of tourism organizations. Using ICT can improve the quality of the service, which will contribute to greater customer satisfaction, especially through loyalty programs [6]. In general, technological advances, in particular, the development of the Internet, have had a huge impact on the growth of tourist expectations [5]. Usage of ICT also helps in attracting new tourism consumers, especially various social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The quality of travel and accomodation Web services in providing customer support refers to the quality of the service itself and the quality of the information provided by these general features of the system. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Web service is manifested in the satisfaction of its users [7]. The use of the Internet has drastically changed the behavior of tourists. Potential Internet travelers have direct access to vast information provided online by tourism organizations, private companies from the tourism sector, etc. Due to the popularity of Internet applications, most of the companies in the tourism industry have adopted the use of Internet technology as part of their marketing and communication strategy [5, 8].

The goal of the article is twofold. Firstly, we try to discuss the impact of Web services for online accommodation reservation. Using data from Eurostat, we analyse Internet usage for travel and accommodation services in European Union countries from 2009 to 2017 and analyse Website or app usage to arrange accommodation in the year 2017. Secondly, we aim to investigate the habits and readiness of individual Croatian travellers regarding the usage of Web services for the accommodation reservation. We also investigate respondents' attitudes towards different determinants regarding accommodation selection and which functionalities of Web services respondents prefer the most. Data were collected from August 2016 until March 2017 through an online questionnaire which was distributed by Facebook, WhatsApp, and send by email. Descriptive statistical methods were used to analyse collected data from Eurostat and data regarding habits and readiness of Croatian individual travellers regarding Web services usage for booking accommodation.

The article consists of six sections. After the introduction, there are two sections which describe the role of travel and accommodation Web services and social media in tourism. The fourth section is about data on tourism trends in selected European countries and is based on data from Eurostat regarding the percentage of individuals who use the Internet or any Website for travel and accommodation services in European countries. The fifth section is a case study of individual Croatian travellers regarding accommodation reservation, which consists of two subsections: methodology and data. The last section concludes the article.

TRAVEL AND ACCOMODATION WEB SERVICES

Travel and accomodation Web services are nowadays the most often used services for various purposes, such as the selection of the destinations, reservation of specific accommodation, use of various contents during the journey, and sharing experiences after the journey [9]. Travel and accomodation Web services allow users quick and easy access to all relevant information [10]. Andrlić and Ružić [11] consider that travel and accomodation Web services provide access to relevant information about global destinations, enable direct communication with tourism services providers, enable a quick and easy booking and allow users to develop and buy their own itineraries anytime and anywhere [12]. However, in order to support these activities, travel and accomodation Web services should be simple, transparent, and informative, and enable quick access to the required information. In addition, they should enable communication with touristic providers and sharing experiences with different users.

Lončarić, Bašan, and Gligora Marković [13] believe that travel and accomodation Web services must be designed to respond to user needs. Information about the offer, destination descriptions, and booking options, are of great importance for tourists. The well-known travel and accomodation Web services are TripAdvisor, booking.com, Trivago, HolidayCheck, and Expedia. Millions of tourists share their experiences on these services that help in rating and scoring system of accommodation services [14, 15]. Therefore, Web services such as booking.com, Airbnb, and TripAdvisor will be analyzed in the next sections.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN TOURISM

Social media has become inevitable in all aspects of everyday life, and they have a significant impact on communication and decision-making. Most people use the Internet as the main source of information, and by the emergence and development of social networks, people primarily use the benefits of social media when searching for information.

For many travelers, social media have become a key tool for finding travelling ideas; they use them to choose the ideal destination and choose accommodation in that destination. Since it has become a widespread practice to share photos and impressions of travels on social networks, future travelers can search, view photos, and read comments and reviews, find inspiration and advice, which can help them decide and maybe even be crucial when choosing a destination.

Thus, via social media, there is two-way communication between consumers and owners, where consumers leave positive and negative feedback on experience that owners should use to improve and adjust their offer to the wishes and needs of potential customers [16].

Social networks are an excellent mechanism for fostering sales. Through social networks, it is possible to increase sales, and especially through various offers intended solely to their customers [17]. They can be Last Minute offers or prize games that are common on social networks. This can encourage users to comment on why they should win the prize (travel, discount, etc.) and thus encourage users to think and interact, and the most creative will be winners.

Consumers rely on their smartphones during travel planning, but also during travel, and it is very important for tourist providers to customize their Websites for mobile use. Speed, transparency, and simplicity are key search elements. Such apps are available for various travel and accomodation Web services, such as booking.com, Airbnb, and TripAdvisor [18, 19]. Also, important apps that help with orientation are Citymapper and Google Maps. Citymapper is an application through which various forms of public transport, routes and distances can be found. The most popular application of this kind is certainly Google Maps, which allows users to search for various locations (places, states, exact addresses, routes and distances, length of travel, various types of public transport, etc.), and one of the best features

is Google Earth. Yelp is an example of an app that offers a wide variety of restaurants, bars, including user reviews, which is one of the best features of this app. An excellent example of a travel application is Foursquare, which offers the ability to find the best places to go out easily and the best places for nightlife, shopping, food and drink and entertainment. Consumers can also be active providers of content on social media.

Another way of advertising is through blogs. The blog is a diary that is posted on the Internet and is published by one person, while others can read and comment on it. They can be personal, thematic, but also in the form of a travelogue. A blog can be an essential element in the advertising of tourist content [20]. Many bloggers are paid to travel to various destinations and stay in hotels and other types of accommodation and write their impressions about the activities, amenities, and location itself [21].

USAGE OF TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION SERVICES IN EUROPAN COUNTRIES

In the following section, data from European statistical database Eurostat will be used to present dynamic trends for individuals who use Web services for travel and accommodation services in European countries.

In the last nine years, there is an increasing trend for the EU-28 countries in usage of travel and accommodation Web services. Table 4 in the Appendix presents the detailed information about the number of individuals who use the Internet for travel and accommodation services for the period of nine years, from 2009 to 2017. In 2009 there was 35 % of individuals who use the Internet for travel and accommodation services, which increased to 42 % of individuals in 2017. However, there are differences among countries.

The highest percentage of individuals who use the Internet for travel and accommodation services in 2017 was in Finland (61 %) and in Luxembourg (71 %), which was the leader also in the year 2009 (59 %). The lowest percentage of individuals who use the Internet for travel and accommodation services in 2009 (6 %) and in 2017 (11 %) was in Bulgaria and in North Macedonia (2009 and 2017: 10 %). There are also two countries whose percentage of individuals who use the Internet for travel and accommodation services, doubled in the last nine years (Cyprus: 2009 - 20 %; 2017 - 40 % and Estonia: 2009 - 20 %; 2017 - 39 %).

Several countries have approximately the same percentage of individuals who use the Internet for tourism services through nine years: Greece, Italy, Romania. In Latvia, there was less percentage of individuals who use the Internet for travel and accommodation services in the year 2017 (18 %) than in 2009 (23 %) as well as in Ireland (2009: 44 %; 2017: 42 %). The United Kingdom is the only country with a decreasing trend from 2009 (57 %) to 2017 (56 %). It can be concluded that developed countries with higher income and more effective ICT services use the Internet more for travel and accommodation services [22].

Table 5 in the Appendix presents the percentage of individuals who used the Website or app to arrange accommodation for the year 2017. In the year 2017, there were 18 % of individuals in the EU-28 countries who used any Website or app to arrange accommodation. There are several countries which are above EU-28 average: Ireland 21 %; Luxembourg 22 %; Malta 20 % and Netherlands 20 %. However, there are more countries below the EU-28 average: Czechia 5 %; Cyprus 4 %; Portugal 6 % and Romania: 6 %. United Kingdom is a country which has the highest percentage of individuals who used any Website or app to arrange accommodation (34 %), almost double the EU-28 average.

Regarding individuals who used dedicated Website or app to arrange an accommodation in the year 2017 in the EU-28 countries (14 %), the situation is quite similar regarding individuals who used any Website. There are several countries which are above EU-28 average:

Luxembourg 18 %; Malta 17 % and Netherlands 17 %. However, there are more countries below the EU-28 average: Czechia and Bulgaria 3 %; Cyprus 2 %; Portugal 4 % and Romania 5%. United Kingdom is a country which has the highest percentage of individuals who used dedicatedWebsite or app to arrange an accommodation (31 %), double than the EU-28 average.

There is a high percentage of individuals who have not used any Websites or apps to arrange accommodation in EU countries for the year 2017. There are many countries with 80 % and more of individuals who have not used any Website or app to arrange an accommodation Czechia (81 %), Denmark (88 %), Finland (85 %), Sweden (80 %) and Iceland (81 %). In Montenegro, there is only 15 % of individuals who have not used any Website or app to arrange an accommodation. The average for the EU-28 is 67 % of individuals who have not used any Website or app to arrange an accommodation in the year 2017.

Table 6 in the Appendix presents the percentage of individuals who make online purchases for holiday accommodation and travel and holiday accommodation for the year 2017. In every European country, there is a higher percentage of individuals who make online purchases for travel and holiday accommodation compared to online purchases for only holiday accommodation. Percentage of individuals who make online purchases for holiday accommodation is 25 % and for travel and holiday accommodation is 31 % for the year 2017 for the EU-28.

Leading countries in both categories with the highest percentage of individuals who make online purchases for holiday accommodation (Netherlands 49 % and Luxembourg 52 %) and for travel and holiday accommodation (Netherlands 54 % and Luxembourg 58 %) for the year 2017 are Netherland and Luxembourg, which is doubled than EU-28 average. Bulgaria and Romania remain at the end of the table in both categories, with the lowest percentage of individuals who make online purchases for holiday accommodation (Bulgaria 4 % and Romania 2 %) and travel and holiday accommodation (Bulgaria 5 % and Romania 3 %) for the year 2017.

CASE STUDY OF CROATIAN INDIVIDUAL TRAVELLERS: ACCOMODATION RESERVATION

BACKGROUND

In this work, we focus on individual Croatian travellers and their attitudes towards travelling. Figure 1 presents the percentage of individual Croatian travellers who used any Website or app to arrange accommodation and to make online purchases for holiday accommodation and travel and holiday accommodation for the year 2017.

Compared to EU-28 and EU-15, Croatia is low below the EU average for every category. Regarding online purchases, there is only 3 % of individual Croatian travellers who purchase online holiday accommodation and 4 % who purchases online travel and holiday accommodation.

The smallest difference between EU-28, EU-15, and Croatia is in category "Usage of other Websites or apps to arrange an accommodation" (EU28 6 %, EU-15 7 % and Croatia 4 %). There is an almost similar percentage for individuals who have not used any Website or app to arrange accommodation for the year 2017 in EU-28 (67 %), EU-15 (68 %) and in Croatia (62 %). However, Croatia is lagging behind EU-28 and EU-15 countries regarding the Internet, Websites, or app usage for tourism services.

METHODOLOGY

Research about individual Croatian travellers and their attitudes regarding Web service usage in toursim was conducted from September 2016 to April 2017. Online survey consisted of 25

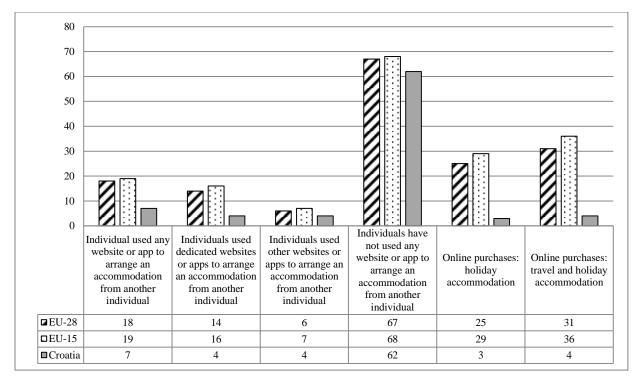


Figure 1. Percentage of individual Croatian travellers according to travel and accommodation Web services, 2017 [23].

questions and was distributed by Facebook, WhatsApp, and sent by email. There were 81 respondents who participated in the survey. Our intention was to investigate whether individual Croatian travellers are familiar with features of travel and accomodation Web services, whether they use travel and accomodation Web services and how often they use them. We also try to determine respondents' experience when using travel and accomodation Web services and what they perceived as advantages or disadvantages. For the purpose of this article, the following Web services are selected for analysis: booking.com, Airbnb, and TripAdvisor. These Web Services allow travelers to share their experiences and to get an impression of the quality of service they can expect before making their final decision on a specific trip [24].

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of Croatian respondents. There are more than double female respondents (70,4%) compared to male respondents (29,6%). Most of the respondents are from 25 to 34 years old. There is only 1,2% of respondents younger than 18 years and 6,2% older than 45 years. A third of the respondents are students (32,1%). Most of the respondents are employed (65,4%) and have a bachelor's degree (63%).

RESULTS

Overall usage of travel and accomodation Web services

A large number of respondents consider the Internet as the main information source (90,1 %) for their accommodation reservation. They mostly use smartphones (74,1 %), personal computers (18,5 %), and laptops (7,4 %) to acceess travel and accommodation Web services. Therfore, investigation about tourism services, most of the respondents start at the Internet (75,3 %), while 22,2 % discuss with their friends and only 2,5 % use journals, newsletters and flyers.

Respondents mostly make accommodation reservation through Web services (50,6 %). Around 16 % of them use travel agencies, 12,3 % use mobile applications, and 7,4 % use social networks to reserve accommodation.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondents. Source: authors' work, 2017.

Gender	Percentage, %
Male	29,6
Female	70,4
Age	
<18	1,2
18-24	18,5
25-34	67,9
35-44	6,2
>45	6,2
Employment	
Pupil/Student	32,1
Employed	65,4
Unemployed	2,5
Retired	0
Education	
Primary school	1,2
High school	23,5
Bacherlor degree	12,3
Faculty	63
Total	100

Most of the respondents (88,9 %) search Web services to select accommodation, while only 58 % of them finalize reservation over the Web servie. Only 11,1 % of respondents have never visited Web services for accommodation selection. Around half of the respondents (53,1 %) named travel and accommodation Web services as the main source of information and starting point regarding toursim services. Around half of respondents prefer paying accommodation services in cash, 38,3 % prefer using credit cards, and 11,1 % use PayPall services.

Around half of the respondents who make online accommodation reservation have only positive experince. However, there are also some reasons which prevent respondents from making online accommodation reservation: a negative review (44,4 %), low confindence (32,1 %), and previous bad experiences (9,9 %).

Usage of specific travel and accomodation Web services

The most of the respondents use following Web services: booking.com (58 %), TripAdvisor (33,3 %), Airbnb (27,2 %), and trivago (22,2 %). Less than 10 % of respondents use Hotels.com (8,6 %) and Expedia (6 %).

Table 2 presents the average grade regarding functionalities for Web services, which are the most popular and the most used by the Croatian respondents (Airbnb, Booking.com, Tripadvisor). In all categories, Booking.com has the highest average grades, especially for two categories: easy to use (3,91) and easy to find specific service (3,93). The lowest average grade, around 3,5, has Tripadvisor compared to the other two Web services. Airbnb has the highest grade for the category: viewable of the page (3,72). Booking.com has the highest average grade of all three Web services (3,85), followed by Airbnb (3,68) and Tripadvisor (3,57).

Previous research showed that users prefer following functionalities of Web services the most: easy of use, quality, quick search, as well as: ease of use, utility, information, security, and personalization [25].

Table 2. Average grade regarding functionalities of selected Web services. Source: authors' work, 2017.

Functionalities	Airbnb	Booking	Tripadvisor
Easy to use	3,70	3,91	3,59
Easy to find specific service	3,67	3,93	3,56
Visibility of pages	3,72	3,89	3,50
Sharing economics regarding	3,68	3,78	3,64
accommodation	3,00	3,70	3,04
Two-way reviews	3,65	3,72	3,57
Average grade of Web service	3,68	3,85	3,57

Advantages of travel and accomodation Web services

Table 3 presents determinants that could affect on the selection process of different travel and accommodation Web services. Likert scale from 1-not important at all to 5-very important was used to evaluate offered determinants.

Table 3. Importance of functionalities of travel and accommodation Web services. Source: authors' work, 2017.

Data and a second		Not important	Whatever	Important	Very	<u> </u>
Determinants	at all (1)	(2)	(3)	-	important (5)	Average
Transparency of prices and service description	3	0	5	21	52	4,47
Easy to search and make reservation	3	0	4	26	48	4,43
Cancellation policy and money return	3	0	5	25	48	4,42
Sercurity (personal and credit card data) for users	2	2	10	24	43	4,28
Reservation confirmation via email	3	0	8	38	32	4,19
Possibility of direct communication with the owner of the accommodation	4	1	10	33	33	4,11
Photos of accommodation	10	0	5	30	36	4,01
Free cancellation policy	8	3	9	21	40	4,01
Discounts and promo codes	1	4	14	37	25	4,00
Reviews	9	4	7	23	38	3,95
Mobile access	2	6	24	31	18	3,70
Social networks	3	14	22	27	15	3,46
Newsletters	14	15	26	16	10	2,91

Most of the respondents evaluate following determinants with grade 5 – very important, e.g., viewable, easy to search and make a reservation, the possibility of cancellation and money return, transparency of prices and service description and personal data security. All named determinants have an average grade higher than four. The highest average grade has determinant transparency of prices and service description (4,47). There are also two other determinants which are important for respondents when deciding which Web service to use when making accommodation reservation and which have a high average grade: discounts and promo codes (4,00) and reservation confirmation through email (4,19). The lowest average grade has determinant Newsletter (2,91) which mean that respondents do not consider it important for the selection of Web services. Following two determinants respondents evaluate as important: discounts and promo codes and reservation confirmation through email. Photos of accommodation and Free cancellation policy, with the highest average grade (4,01). Furthermore, all average grades are quite high, around four, which mean that respondents agree with offered statements and their influence on accommodation selection and reservation.

CONCLUSION

Web services provide great flexibility and interoperability regarding online accommodation services. They offer a more effective and efficient way of publishing, promoting, finding, and making a reservation of accommodation. Therefore, the goal of the article was to describe and present the role of Web services for online accommodation services and to analyse Internet usage for travel and accommodation services in European Union countries. We also aimed to determine the habits and readiness of individual Croatian travellers regarding Web services usage for booking accommodation.

Research results showed that the percentage of individuals who are using the Internet for tourism services is growing from 2009 to 2017 in European Union countries, especially for developed countries which are leaders in ICT usage. Furthermore, leading countries regarding making online purchases for holiday accommodation and for travel and holiday accommodation are Netherland and Luxembourg for the year 2017. The situation is different in developing countries where ICT progress is low, which reflects negatively on Internet and Web services usage in tourism activities. The lowest percentage of individuals who are using the Internet for travel and accommodation services in 2017 was in Bulgaria and in North Macedonia. In Romania, there is the lowest percentage of individuals who make online purchases for holiday accommodation and for travel and holiday accommodation in 2017.

Based on Eurostat data, Croatia is low below EU average regarding Website or app usage to arrange accommodation and to make online purchases for holiday accommodation and travel and holiday accommodation for the year 2017 compared to EU-28 and EU-15. In addition, primary research results confirmed Eurostat data. Almost half of the Croatian respondents have never booked accommodation using Web services. Therefore, Croatia is still lagging behind and has to do more to foster individuals to use the Internet and its advantages and possibilities in tourism services.

This is an overview article, and there are several limitations which should be overcome in future research. We collect data from the Eurostat database for the year 2017, and the primary research was also conducted in 2017. Collected data were analysed using descriptive statistical methods. The online questionnaire also presents one of the limitations of the study, while individuals who do not use the Internet and Facebook could not respond to the survey. Also, all respondents regarding primary research are from one country, Croatia, which may cause some generalization problems. Therefore, future research should comprise a larger

sample from the year 2019, which will enable comparison of data from 2017 and 2019. The expanded analysis will also show if there is any progress in the area of Web services usage for online accommodation reservation during the last two years. In addition, inferential statistics methods should be used to describe and make inferences about the population.

APPENDIX

Table 4. Percentage of individuals who use Internet for travel and accommodation services, 2009-2017 [23].

Country	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
EU-28	35	37	39	36	38	39	39	40	42
EU-27	35	37	39	36	38	39	39	40	42
EU-15	40	41	43	41	44	44	44	45	47
Belgium	34	38	40	40	40	45	46	46	45
Bulgaria	6	12	15	9	13	12	17	13	11
Czechia	27	27	38	43	44	47	48	51	48
Denmark	56	61	60	55	54	50	66	65	58
Germany	47	46	54	51	55	56	58	55	58
Estonia	20	27	25	22	24	28	37	36	39
Ireland	44	47	47	47	45	43	42	42	42
Greece	25	25	27	21	23	19	21	28	28
Spain	36	41	39	40	38	40	41	42	46
France	38	40	41	38	44	:	43	42	43
Croatia	18	25	24	14	25	23	38	22	17
Italy	25	26	30	25	27	26	25	27	27
Cyprus	20	29	31	29	32	31	33	29	40
Latvia	23	26	25	11	19	19	21	19	18
Lithuania	14	18	15	14	13	14	9	16	18
Luxembourg	59	60	62	60	69	67	66	72	71
Hungary	18	26	21	17	20	26	26	23	23
Malta	27	35	38	32	37	35	46	40	40
Netherlands	48	50	50	51	50	51	49	51	56
Austria	31	35	40	41	44	37	44	40	43
Poland	14	17	19	12	12	14	17	21	23
Portugal	15	14	17	17	15	16	21	19	24
Romania	11	16	15	11	11	10	13	13	12
Slovenia	25	38	35	31	34	28	39	38	39
Slovakia	33	40	37	40	35	38	35	36	35
Finland	56	59	59	62	65	66	63	60	61
Sweden	48	52	49	54	54	58	51	55	57
United Kingdom	57	53	49	48	53	47	47	55	56
Iceland	52	58	54	52	53	46			57
Norway	47	63	60	56	61	57	62	61	57
North Macedonia	10	13		6	10	10	13	17	10

Table 5. Percentage of individuals who used the Website or app to arrange accommodation, 2017 [23].

Country	Individuals used	Individuals used	Individuals used	Individuals have
	any Website or		other Websites or	
	app to arrange	Websites or apps	apps to arrange	Website or app to
	accommodation	to arrange	accommodation	arrange
	from another	accommodation	from another	accommodation
	individual	from another	individual	from another
		individual		individual
EU-28	18	14	6	67
EU-27	18	14	6	67
EU-15	19	16	7	68
Belgium	19	13	7	69
Bulgaria	8	3	5	58
Czechia	5	3	3	81
Denmark	10	8	3	88
Germany	19	15	7	72
Estonia	15	13	3	74
Ireland	21	17	8	61
Spain	18	15	11	67
France	16	14	3	72
Croatia	7	4	4	62
Italy	17	13	10	56
Cyprus	4	2	2	77
Latvia	9	5	5	73
Lithuania	9	5	5	70
Luxembourg	22	18	7	76
Hungary	13	7	10	66
Malta	20	17	12	61
Netherlands	20	17	4	76
Austria	8	6	3	81
Poland	15	11	6	63
Portugal	6	4	3	69
Romania	6	5	2	63
Slovakia	16	8	10	68
Finland	9	6	3	85
Sweden	16	12	6	80
United Kingdom	34	31	6	61
Iceland	17	12	6	81
Montenegro	15	12	9	15
North Macedonia	8	4	4	68
Serbia	12	9	4	60

Table 6. Percentage of individuals who make online purchases for holiday accommodation

and travel and holiday accommodation, 2017 [23].

Country	Online purchases: holiday accommodation	Online purchases: travel and		
EU-28	25	holiday accommodation 31		
EU-27	25	31		
EU-27 EU-15		36		
	29			
Belgium	23	28		
Bulgaria	4	5		
Czechia	21	24		
Denmark	46	59		
Germany	32	38		
Estonia	22	36		
Ireland	31	36		
Greece	7	10		
Spain	27	31		
France	25	38		
Croatia	3	4		
Italy	9	12		
Cyprus	11	16		
Latvia	8	12		
Lithuania	9	11		
Luxembourg	52	58		
Hungary	15	16		
Malta	29	31		
Netherlands	49	54		
Austria	29	35		
Poland	7	10		
Portugal	14	18		
Romania	2	3		
Slovenia	11	13		
Slovakia	13	18		
Finland	36	45		
Sweden	40	57		
United Kingdom	47	55		
Iceland	38	51		
Norway	40	56		
Montenegro	3	3		
North Macedonia	2	2		
Serbia Serbia	3	4		
Turkey	3	6		

REFERENCES

[1] Vuković, I.: Suvremeni trendovi u razvoju turizma u Europskoj uniji i implikacije na Hrvatsku.

Tourism and Hospitality Management 12(1), 35-55, 2006,

- [2] Pejić Bach, M.; Zoroja, J. and Merkač-Skok, M.: *Social responsibility in tourism: system archetypes approach.*
 - Kybernetes **43**(3/4), 587-600, 2014, http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/K-09-2013-0195,
- [3] Pejić Bach, M.; Schatten, M. and Marušić, Z.: Data mining applications in tourism: A keyword analysis.
 - In: Hunjak, T.; Lovrenčić, S. and Tomičić, I., eds.: *Proceedings of the 24th Central European Conference on Information and Intelligent Systems*. Faculty of Organization and Informatics, Varaždin, pp.26-32, 2013,
- [4] Dunne, G.; Flanagan, S. and Buckley, J.: Towards a decision making model for city break travel.
 - International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research **5**(2), 158-172, 2011, http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17506181111139573,
- [5] Buhalis, D. and Law, R.: *Progress in information technology and tourism management:* 20 years on and 10 years after Internet The state of eTourism research. Tourism Management 29(4), 609-623, 2008, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.01.005,
- [6] Léo, P.Y.; Janawade, V. and Philippe, J.: Loyalty Programme and Meta-Services: Insights from the Case of Airline Alliances.

 International Journal of E-Services and Mobile Applications (IJESMA) 9(1), 35-56, 2017, http://dx.doi.org/10.4018/IJESMA.2017010103,
- [7] Negash, S.; Ryan, T. and Igbaria, M.: Quality and effectiveness in Web-based customer support systems.
 Information & Management 40(8), 757-768, 2003, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0378-7206(02)00101-5,
- [8] Litvin, S.W.; Goldsmith, R.E. and Pan, B.: Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. Tourism Management 29(3), 458-468, 2008, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.05.011,
- [9] Díaz, M.R. and Rodríguez, T.F.E.: *Determining the reliability and validity of online reputation databases for lodging: Booking. com, TripAdvisor, and HolidayCheck.* Journal of Vacation Marketing **24**(3), 261-274, 2018, http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1356766717706103,
- [10] Guttentag, D.: Airbnb: disruptive innovation and the rise of an informal tourism accommodation sector.

 Current Issues in Tourism 18(12), 1192-1217, 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.827159,
- [11] Andrlić, B. and Ružić, I.: *Effect of e-marketing on consumer behavior in hospitality*. Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Opatija, pp.692-706, 2010,
- [12] Litvin, S.W.; Goldsmith, R.E. and Pan, B.: A retrospective view of electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management 30(1), 313-325, 2018, http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-08-2016-0461,
- [13] Lončarić, D.; Bašan, L. and Gligora Marković, M.: Importance of the DMO Websites in Tourist Destination Selection.
 In: Grbac, B.; Lončarić, D. and Dlačić, J., eds.: Marketing in a Dynamic Environment Academic and Practical Insights, 23rd CROMAR Congress. Fakultet za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu, Opatija, pp.373-385, 2013,
- [14] Mellinas, J.P.; María-Dolores, S.-M.M. and Bernal García, J.J.: Booking. com: The unexpected scoring system.
 - Tourism Management **49**, 72-74, 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.08.019,

[15] Mariani, M.M. and Borghi, M.: Effects of the Booking. com rating system: Bringing hotel class into the picture.

Tourism Management 66, 47-52, 2018,

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.11.006,

[16] Miguéns, J.; Baggio, R. and Costa, C.: Social media and tourism destinations: TripAdvisor case study.

Advances in Tourism Research 26(28), 1-6, 2008,

[17] Xiang, Z.; Du, Q.; Ma, Y. and Fan, W.: A comparative analysis of major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. Tourism Management **58**, 51-65, 2017, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.10.001,

[18] Valdivia, A.; Luzón, M.V. and Herrera, F.: *Sentiment analysis in tripadvisor*. IEEE Intelligent Systems **32**(4), 72-77, 2017, http://dx.doi.org/10.1109/MIS.2017.3121555,

[19] Oskam, J. and Boswijk, A.: *Airbnb: the future of networked hospitality businesses*. Journal of Tourism Futures **2**(1), 22-42, 2006,

[20] Schmallegger, D. and and Carson, D.: Blogs in tourism: Changing approaches to information exchange.

Journal of Vacation Marketing **14**(2), 99-110, 2008, http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1356766707087519,

[21] Jaković, B.; Pejić-Bach, M. and Šimičević, V.: Statistical analysis of the Websites of high category hotels in Croatia.

Acta Turistica 17(2), 130-156, 2005,

[22] Pejić Bach, M.; Zoroja, J. and Bosilj Vukšić, V.: *Review of corporate digital divide research: A decadal analysis* (2003-2012).

International Journal of Information Systems and Project Management 1(4), 41-55, 2013,

[23]—: *Eurostat*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database,

[24] Stors, N. and Kagermeier, A.: *Motives for Using Airbnb in Metropolitan Tourism—Why do People Sleep in the Bed of a Stranger*? Regions Magazine **299**(1), 17-19, 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13673882.2015.11500081,

[25] Kim, W.G. and Lee, H.Y.: Comparison of Web service quality between online travel agencies and online travel suppliers.

Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing 17(2-3), 105-116, 2004, http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J073v17n02 09.