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Driving Factors of Czech Consumers in the Context of Slow Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The intensifying discussion of a slower pace of life has increased interest in the concept of slow tourism. This value-driven approach contrasts with faster, mass travel and is consistent with sustainable economic, social and environmental development. This study empirically identifies the factors shaping Czech consumers' attitudes toward slow tourism and evaluates the potential of slow tourism in the domestic market. In the period January–February 2025, a Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) survey was run via social networks and online travel communities. The sample included 204 adults who regularly spend holidays in the Czech Republic; gender and age were adequately diversified. The analysis mapped travel motivations, recreational habits, and understanding of slow tourism. Respondents had limited awareness of the term but favoured its main principles: a preference for the natural environment, authentic local experiences, cultural involvement, and less-visited destinations. The identified limits were the predominance of short holidays (1–6 days) as a consequence of current labor situation of respondents and the lesser importance given to environmental criteria relative to price and destination appeal. The results highlight latent, behaviour-based potential for slow tourism in the Czech context. Findings broaden the evidence base for sustainable tourism's consumer dimension and provide data to support destination management and planning for environmentally and socially responsible domestic tourism.

Keywords: Slow Tourism; Mass Tourism; Sustainable Development; Tourism Industry; Consumer Attitude

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1. Introduction

The negative impacts of mass tourism have become increasingly evident. These impacts encompass socio-cultural pressures on host communities, as well as environmental and economic challenges, including air pollution, water scarcity, and inadequate waste management. As these issues intensify, many destinations are acknowledging their long-term implications and enacting various policy responses. Some have implemented measures such as entrance fees, accommodation limits, and stricter visitor regulations. A smaller number of destinations are adopting slow tourism, a model that contrasts with mass tourism by emphasising respect for local communities, environmental conservation, and sustainable local economic development.

The transition to slow tourism requires more than destination policy; it also depends on travellers' readiness to change consumption habits. Success relies on tourists adopting mindful travel that values authenticity, deep destination engagement, and environmentally responsible behaviour, instead of the fast, convenience-driven mindset of mass tourism.

This study investigates the factors influencing consumer attitudes toward slow tourism in the Czech Republic. It assesses how these attitudes affect the potential for slow-tourism development at the national level. The primary objective is to identify prevailing consumer perceptions of slow tourism and to analyse the key determinants of travellers' motivations, awareness, and behavioural intentions. The results indicate that environmental concerns and a desire for authentic experiences primarily shape Czech consumers' strong awareness and positive perceptions of slow tourism. These factors significantly enhance the prospects for slow tourism development in the Czech context.

2. Materials and Methods

Slow tourism began to be recognised as a separate class within the broad category of tourism in the early 21st century. Post-pandemic recovery efforts have set the global economy on a more sustainable trajectory. There is an urgent need to further improve the sustainable development of tourism[1].

2.1. Slow Tourism and Sustainable Development

Out of concern for the environment and their own travelling physical and mental health, people are increasingly focused on discovering strategies to reduce stress. Slow tourism is part of sustainable tourism and includes several activities that differ from mainstream tourism in that they involve a higher degree of personal awareness among travellers and a completely different approach to time management, activity intensity, and relationships with the environment and other participants. Slow tourism combines travel for pleasure with benefits for local stakeholders[2].

When it comes to sustainable tourism, two terms have different meanings and are often confused. There is inevitable overlap between the two concepts in their emphasis on sustainability, authentic experience, and personal attachment to a destination through "slow," measured approaches to travel. Slow tourism and slow travel have therefore been used interchangeably. In general, there is no need to separate them from the beginning; instead, highlight the subtle differences for better understanding and future use as follows. Slow tourism is ultimately about an enriched tourism experience that is also achievable through high-carbon travel. In contrast, slow travel is based on low-carbon travel processes that aim to minimise environmental impacts during travel while achieving reflective absorption of places[3].

2.1.1. Concept of Slow Tourism

Sources often mention the origin of the concept of slow tourism in the early 1990s as a result of the Cittaslow and Slow Food movements[4, 5]. Despite these facts, however, the notion of deceleration has already been discussed in previous literature. The basic principle of travel is that an individual needs to rest and relax as well as work and fulfil their duties. Mass tourism, on the other hand, effectively undermines this basic idea thanks to the constant rush, noise and stress. Slow tourism can therefore be understood as a return to the original purpose of travel[6].

The principles of slow tourism are rooted in ecological and cultural values that play a significant role in shaping the tourism sector. An inseparable component of tourism is mobility, and in the context of slow tourism, particular emphasis is placed on soft mobility, defined as active, non-motorised modes of transport such as walking, cycling, or skateboard-

ing. Soft mobility represents not only an opportunity for economic development, including in inner peripheral regions, but also a means of improving the accessibility of isolated or spatially dispersed destinations. By redirecting visitors away from dominant travel corridors and overcrowded natural and cultural sites, the development of soft mobility infrastructure can contribute to a more balanced distribution of tourism flows. This process may stimulate new investment and employment opportunities in related sectors, thereby supporting local economic development [7].

As a result of changes in the tourism industry, new forms of tourism have emerged recently. The alternative way of traveling is an antidote to mass tourism. Alternative tourism means a more autonomous, small-scale, and non-mass way of organizing trips or holidays. This includes more freedom and participation of tourists or customers; respect for the local communities and their particular social and cultural characteristics; real communication between tourists and locals; and substantial acquaintance with the local society, culture, and environment of the host destinations [8]. Travellers engage in a variety of tourism activities, including ecotourism, cultural tourism, historical tourism, green tourism, and medical tourism. These forms are driven by two forces: environmental sustainability and individual and societal well-being. These ecological and individual considerations also promote slow tourism as a distinctive travel style. However, slow tourism is still a relatively new idea that adheres to two basic principles: take your time and develop a relationship with a specific place [9].

Most authors characterise slow tourism versus fast tourism in terms of time value. The most popular type of tourism today is fast or mass tourism. Mass tourism, a product of modern, rapidly developing civilisation, is characterised by the concentration of large numbers of people in one place at a given time. Travelling to commercially popular destinations within a short period is a common aspect of mass tourism. In addition, signs of mass tourism include superficial meetings, hazy memories, stress and the need to see as many attractions as possible and take as many photos as possible. According to KRNAP, the most visited Czech mountain range, the Krkonoše National Park, welcomed 1,000,000 tourists from July to October. With this mass tourism, travellers are prevented from really getting to know and enjoying the atmosphere of the place. Slow tourism, on the other hand, emphasises slowness and a better understanding of the moments experienced [10, 11].

The concept of slow tourism can be understood as a travel with an emerging conceptual framework that offers an alternative to air and car travel, where people travel to destinations more slowly and by land, stay longer and travel less. Visitors are people who travel individually to destinations to gain new experiences and are tied to local transport options and slow drinking and eating, so there is plenty of time to learn about local history and culture and support the environment [6]. The basic principle of slow tourism is to satisfy consumers' desire to slow down, including minimising travel distance, maximising travel time, and relaxation that refreshes the mind and body. Slow tourism travellers prefer contact with local people, culture and heritage, eating at local restaurants, shopping at local markets, or directly from producers. In their travel experiences, they like to learn new skills, get to know the destination's authentic elements, minimise mechanisation and technology, and reduce the carbon footprint associated with travel [12].

Slow tourism can also be characterized in terms of place and community ties, because the main focus of slow tourism should be rural locations with a slower pace and longer vacations. The opportunity for visitors to actively participate in everyday life and integrate into the local community is a main component of this style of travel [13].

At the same time, the concept of transport is important for slow tourism. According to some authors, the essence here is the use of environmentally friendly forms of transport. In this context, great emphasis is placed on environmentally friendly modes of transportation, such as cycling, public transportation, and trains.

The term slow tourism is also associated with other terms, such as the aforementioned slow traveller, slow destination, slow food, and slow city. A slow destination favours quality over quantity, limiting marketing efforts and redistributing tourists. This is an example of a sustainable tourism concept that has gained popularity recently. Any location can become a slow destination, but some areas have significantly greater potential. For example, a naturally more mountainous environment where life moves more slowly [14].

2.1.2. Slow Tourism Driving Factors

Understanding the motivational factors of slow tourism represents a fundamental prerequisite for both a deeper theo-

retical conceptualisation of this phenomenon and its effective implementation within strategic destination and service management. The core motivational dimensions—relaxation, self-reflection, escape from everyday life, novelty seeking, engagement, and discovery—have been identified as key determinants of the choice of a slow-travelling style [15]. These motivations are interconnected and form a comprehensive value system that shapes attitudes toward sustainability, simplicity, environmental stewardship, and appreciation of authentic sociocultural contexts. Such core personal values ultimately influence tourists' decisions to slow down, engage with destinations, and immerse themselves in local communities [16, 17].

Comprehending these motivational structures is crucial for destination managers. Segmenting tourists by motivation, such as "escape seekers" and "novelty seekers," enables destinations to optimise marketing, tailor offerings, and develop targeted programs aligned with the needs of slow travellers. This segmentation underpins the development of sustainable and competitive strategies that address both economic priorities and the growing demand for sustainable travel [18].

It is also important to understand tourists' complex motivations, because this is crucial to effective destination governance. Their mixed-methods research reveals that recognising these motivational constellations enables destinations to strategically address contemporary challenges, such as overtourism and post-pandemic changes, by aligning services with what tourists find valuable and emotionally rewarding [19].

Identifying the motivations underlying slow tourism is fundamental for designing services and managing destinations. When tourism providers focus on these motivations, they can create experiences that drive authentic engagement and responsible mobility. Research indicates that slow tourism is a strategic approach that promotes deeper cultural immersion, community participation, and sustainable, locally beneficial management [20]. In slow tourism, travelers indicate their intention to have high-quality experiences while traveling by learning about the local people's culture, history, traditions, and gastronomy. Additionally, tourists who partake in slow tourism explore at their own speed without having to follow a set itinerary or time-based constraints. Staying in places with a rural, cultural, or sustainable ambiance is referred to as slow tourism. This means that slow tourism, by its characteristics, favors rural areas, areas rich in cultural values but not overpopulated, and areas rich in natural potential [21].

A comprehensive understanding of the motivations behind slow tourism is essential for developing sustainable tourism strategies. This knowledge enables managers to address tourist diversity, segment markets, offer authentic experiences, and enhance sociocultural and environmental outcomes. Providers are thereby better equipped to meet the needs of tourists seeking slower, deeper, and more responsible travel. Also, slow tourism prioritizes the appreciation of local culture, traditions, and gastronomy, with sustainability at its core-ensuring that community welfare and interests remain central. In this regard, slow tourism serves as a practical and conceptual extension of sustainable tourism, offering a pathway to address pressing sustainability concerns in the sector [22].

A return to the natural pace of everyday activities and the attempt to gain control over their management in terms of appropriateness adapted to current individual needs is an essential assumption for a slow and healthy society. Slow Movement is seen as a cultural trend encouraging healthy personal development of individuals, with the support of the use of time-saving technologies [23].

In summary, there is no universally adopted approach to the slow tourism concept and its interpretation is context-specific. The existing definitions include aspects from environmental, experiential, economic and ethical dimensions with 'slowness' being the overarching theme [24]. In terms of social well-being, slow tourism can improve the quality of life and well-being of local people while slowing down the pace of Cittaslows [25]. Understanding the motivations behind travellers' choices of slow tourism is crucial, as it informs sustainable service design, effective destination management, and adaptive tourism development.

2.2. Methods

2.2.1. Research Context and Setting

Opinions are increasingly coming to the fore that nowadays people are often under the pressure of harmful stress and an emphasis on performance. Competitiveness associated with stress is then transferred to everyday life and to the experience of a holiday. It is precisely because of these

aspects that the main purpose of the holiday is to rest, relax and gain new strength, both physical and psychological. For these reasons, the concept of slow tourism is gradually becoming known to the public. It is a phenomenon abroad; in the Czech Republic, this type of travel is slowly developing, but the general public is still not very familiar with this term. Research could verify public awareness and attitudes towards this concept. Based on the problem defined above—the non-familiarity of Czech travellers with the slow tourism concept—the main goal of this article is to identify consumer attitudes towards slow tourism in the Czech Republic. Consumers' attitudes and perceptions, to a certain extent, determine the success of slow tourism as a means of developing sustainable tourism.

Slow tourism in the Czech Republic is still at an early stage of development, yet it shows growing promise. Existing research indicates that domestic travellers often engage in practices aligned with slow tourism—such as longer stays, deeper interaction with local culture, and nature-based activities—even though many are unfamiliar with the concept itself. Czech academic studies provide a solid foundation for the further development of slow tourism, pointing to strong public support and significant potential in regions such as South Bohemia, South Moravia, and Hradec Králové. These regions are characterised by attractive landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and a slower pace of life. Findings from broader sustainability literature reinforce this perspective, noting that younger travellers increasingly favour responsible, less crowded, and more meaningful travel experiences. Nevertheless, an important research gap persists: existing evidence remains fragmented and lacks the comprehensive, long-term, or large-scale analyses needed to fully assess slow tourism's potential and its role in sustainable tourism transformation.

While scholarly interest in Czech slow tourism has increased, the field remains hampered by fragmented findings from small-scale surveys and diploma theses rather than by nationally representative or longitudinal studies. This methodological limitation means we lack crucial data about traveller motivations and evolving behaviours. As travel habits gradually shift, as shown in broader sustainability research, systematic and time-sensitive investigation is urgently required to capture these trends and guide development.

Furthermore, existing research insufficiently connects slow tourism with sustainable mobility, despite growing evidence that travellers increasingly consider environmentally friendly transport options and despite the fact that the Czech Republic has one of the densest railway networks in Europe. Although regional studies identify areas with strong potential for slow tourism, they rarely examine how regional planning, governance, or destination management strategies could support its practical implementation. In addition, Czech research has largely neglected the psychological and experiential dimensions of slow tourism—such as mindfulness, emotional engagement, and immersive travel experiences—which international literature consistently identifies as key drivers of slow tourism behaviour.

This study examines consumers' relationships with slow tourism, with particular attention to its characteristic components. Using primary data on how consumers spend their holidays in the Czech Republic, the research seeks to further clarify the concept of slow tourism and assess the relevance and feasibility of its development from the perspective of potential customers. Based on the study's objectives, three research questions were formulated. The first explores the level of awareness of slow tourism among consumers who holiday in the Czech Republic. The second examines consumer attitudes toward slow tourism, and the third investigates the potential for its further development within the Czech tourism context.

2.2.2. Research Method

Quantitative research was used to collect primary data, specifically a selected online questionnaire survey (CAWI). The questionnaire was administered via the Vyplňto website—cz service (www.vyplnto.cz). A draft of the questionnaire was imported to this website, which was subsequently processed into a publishable form, published and then disseminated via an internet link, especially through the social networks Instagram and Facebook.

The research was conducted from 15.01.2025 to 24.02.2025. A call to complete the questionnaire and a link to the published version were posted on Vyplňto.cz website via Facebook and Instagram. This call was sent to individual users and, after administrator approval, published on discussion groups focused on travel to the Czech Republic. These discussion groups, each with more than several tens of thousands of members, were Amazing Places in the Czech Republic, Travelling, and Wandering the Czech Republic.

In addition, the questionnaire contained 20 closed-ended or semi-closed questions. The questionnaire was completed by 220 respondents, meeting the minimum of 100 required. After collecting the data from the evaluated query, Vyplnto exported it. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, which were copied to the server in Microsoft Excel in the correct format. This was done to consolidate the data matrix and prepare it for transfer to IBM SPSS Statistics. Subsequently, the selected questions were sorted into first- and second-level.

To evaluate the relative importance of factors influencing holiday choice, a coefficient of significance (CS) was calculated for each factor based on respondents' rankings. This coefficient was applied for several methodological and analytical reasons. First, it is appropriate for ranked (ordinal) data, as it respects the hierarchical nature of respondents' evaluations. Second, it offers greater interpretability than simple mean values by capturing both the position and consistency of importance assigned to each factor. The coefficient of significance enables a clear comparison of multiple decision-making factors within a single analytical framework, making it possible to identify attributes that dominate consumer choices as well as those that play a marginal role. This is particularly valuable for the strategic interpretation of findings in destination management and tourism planning. Finally, the coefficient of significance is widely regarded as a suitable method for examining tourist motivations, destination choice, and consumer priorities in tourism and consumer-behaviour research. The complete statistical analyses will be provided upon request.

Sample and Sample Profile

The basic sample consisted of residents of the Czech Republic aged 18 or older who were interested in travelling. The sample consisted of respondents who answered the initial filter question in the questionnaire and then completed and submitted it for evaluation. The structure consisted of men and women aged 18 and over, as legal maturity can be a prerequisite for free travel. There is no upper age limit, as there is no age limit for adult travel. The age structure of the respondents was divided by generation into Generation Z (18–24 years), Generation Y (25–41 years), Generation X (42–57 years) and Baby Boomers and over (58 and over). The respondents in the sample were selected using the appropriate judgment method to ensure more targeted recruitment and a greater return, and the snowball method to distribute the questionnaire directly to respondents.

The sample consisted of all respondents who spent their holidays in the Czech Republic. Of the 220 respondents, 204 were further processed. Four respondents provided inconsistent or illogical responses or did not complete the questionnaire, and twelve respondents failed to meet the entry filter, as they did not spend their holiday within the Czech Republic.

Of the total number of 204 respondents in the sample, 52% were women and 48% were men. Since the majority of women participated in the survey, to better represent the data, at the end of the survey, requests to fill out the questionnaire were sent specifically to men. The age structure of the respondents was divided by generation into the youngest Generation Z (18–24 years), Generation Y (25–41 years), Generation X (42–57 years) and Baby Boomers and older (58 and older). Generation Z (33%) and the smallest generation, Baby Boomers and above (20%), were represented here.

3. Results

The following subchapters will describe the results of the questionnaire survey. The presentation of the results will be divided into three areas: travellers' motivation, holiday length, and respondents' attitudes towards slow tourism.

3.1. Travelers' Motivation

Most respondents said they go on vacation in the Czech Republic mainly to explore new places (49.0%). The second most common answer was that respondents want to spend time with loved ones on vacation (20%). On the contrary, the fewest respondents answered that they want to meet new people (1.0%). In this question, the dependence on respondents' gender was established.

Men on vacation want to meet new people or relax, but do not seem interested in exploring new places. The majority of women (71.4%) chose another answer, but some like to discover new places and new experiences.

The mutual dependence between the question and the respondents' social status was also confirmed.

According to the answers, students on vacation in the Czech Republic mainly want new experiences or to explore new places. The employees most represented in the ques-

tionnaire chose the offered escape option and also wanted to explore new places. Retirees, on the other hand, are not very interested in discovering new places and prefer meeting new people or spending time with loved ones, which can be affected by age.

To determine the potential of the concept of slow tourism, it was also important to identify the factors influencing consumer decision-making when choosing a holiday in the Czech Republic. The respondents were ranked according to the factors considered when choosing a holiday in the Czech Republic, with values ranging from 1 to 8 (e.g., 1 = new experiences, 2 = destinations, 8 = price). Subsequently, the average and coefficient of significance were calculated (see **Table 1**).

Table 1. Consumers' driving factors.

Decision-Making Factor	On the Whole	
	Average	Coefficient of Significance
Destinations	6.34	12.94
New experiences	6.22	12.68
Price	5.41	11.04
Transport accessibility	4.12	8.41
Type of accommodation	4.10	8.36
recommendation	3.75	7.66
Services in the destination	3.51	7.16
Ecological footprint	2.54	5.19

Source: Own processing.

Respondents attached the greatest importance to the appropriate selection of an experience destination, given a reasonable price. New experience was the most important factor, with an average maximum of 6.22. Respondents were not so tied to the type and services of accommodation. They took into account the ecological footprint at least when choosing, which is assigned the lowest average significance value of 2.54.

3.2. The Holiday Length

The length of holidays emerged as a critical structural factor influencing the feasibility of slow tourism among Czech travellers. Although slow tourism typically presupposes longer stays that allow for deceleration, deeper place attachment, and meaningful engagement with local environments, the findings suggest that many consumers face time-related constraints that limit the full adoption of this travel style. Nearly half of the respondents (49.0%) reported that they are able to spend only 1–6 days on holiday within the Czech Republic, while just 15.2% indicated the ability to take holidays lasting 14 days or more. This distribution highlights a prevailing pattern of short domestic trips that may restrict opportunities for extended immersion, a core characteristic of slow tourism.

Importantly, the results do not clarify whether these reported durations reflect travellers' actual preferences or, rather, the maximum time available to them. This distinction is crucial from an interpretative perspective, as it suggests that limited holiday length may be driven more by external, structural constraints—such as employment conditions, workload expectations, or institutional frameworks governing leave—than by a lack of interest in slower forms of travel. Consequently, the partial incompatibility between slow tourism ideals and observed travel behaviour appears to stem from contextual limitations rather than from negative consumer attitudes toward slow tourism.

The statistically significant relationship between holiday length and respondents' age further supports this interpretation. Different life stages are associated with varying degrees of time availability, employment stability, and personal obligations, all of which influence travel possibilities. Younger adults and working-age respondents, in particular, may face greater constraints on extended leave, despite expressing values and preferences aligned with slow tourism principles. This finding suggests that slow tourism in the Czech context may need to be reinterpreted and adapted to shorter time frames, focusing on "slow experiences" rather than long stays. From a destination management perspective, this reinforces the need to design slow-tourism products that

are compatible with short but high-quality visits, enabling travellers to experience the benefits of slow tourism within existing structural limits.

3.3. Slow Tourism Awareness

As part of the awareness survey on the concept of slow tourism, a research question directly on this concept was also included. The question to assess knowledge of the given concepts included several options to choose from, with typical names or slogans of the concepts, such as "slow tourism", "slow travel", "slow food", "slow destination", and "Cittaslow", given.

According to the results, the majority of respondents did not know any of the terms typical of this concept of travel (54.9%). However, a share of respondents knew at least the name of the term directly (22.3%). Furthermore, 14.6% of respondents knew the term "slow food", and 7.3% knew the term "slow destination". An almost unknown term among respondents was "Cittaslow", known by only 0.9% of respondents.

This was followed by a list of stimulating statements about the concept of slow tourism, in which respondents had to subjectively rate each statement on a scale from 1 to 5 according to how strongly they agreed (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree). These claims were constructed based on the typical elements of slow tourism. The list of claims is divided into two parts for clarity (see **Table 2**).

Table 2. Thought-provoking statements 1/2.

Assertion	Average
I prefer to spend time in a quiet area full of greenery where I can enjoy the surrounding environment.	2.26
Before I go on vacation, I read up on the destination, including its culture, attractions, and other details.	2.28
Consuming local food and drinks is an important part of my vacations.	2.38
I am mainly interested in the most important sights in the destination.	2.57
I prefer to travel from one place to another on vacation rather than staying in one place.	2.75
I choose less touristy destinations and like to discover new places and routes.	2.91
I like to be in contact with local people.	3.19
I use various modes of transport and am interested in their environmental impact.	3.52
I book my holiday through a travel agency.	4.05

Source: Own processing.

On this scale, the answers were closest to "agree" for the statement "I prefer to spend time in a quiet location full of greenery, where I can enjoy the surrounding environment." On the contrary, the respondents' answers on the scale came closest to the one I do not agree with: "I arrange my vacation through a travel agency."

Respondents like to spend time in a quiet, green environment, where they can learn interesting information in advance. They usually arrange their vacation here themselves.

They like to visit significant local and more distant sights in a destination, even if it may have an environmental impact. However, the respondents show little interest in interacting with locals and prefer less touristic places.

In the next part of the evaluation of the statements, the respondents, on average, came closest to the answer "I agree with the statement" that "I want to visit places outside the main tourist centres" (see **Table 3**). The most common response from respondents, on average, "close to disagree" was the statement "I am not interested in local traditions and culture". Respondents tend to avoid large tourist centres, seeking to escape the stress of everyday life while maintaining a balance between relaxation and active time. They don't mind travelling long distances to see the destination's main attraction because it is important to know the destination. At the destination, they are interested in the local culture, although they usually keep their spending under control.

Table 3. Thought-provoking statements 2/2.

Assertion	Average
I also want to visit places outside the main tourist centres.	2.05
I need to maintain a balance between time spent actively and time for relaxation.	2.27
I think it's important to get to know the destination.	2.34

Table 3. *Cont.*

Assertion	Average
I go on vacation to escape the stress of my life.	2.44
I don't mind travelling far from the main attractions in the destination cities.	2.69
It is important to me that there are many additional facilities in the destination (e.g., swimming pool, sports facilities, entertainment facilities).	3.00
I'm interested in a quiet life in the countryside, and I want to try this lifestyle.	3.22
On vacation, I don't watch my expenses; I prefer luxury.	3.30
I don't care about local traditions and culture.	3.64

Source: Own processing.

4. Discussion

The study provides important insights into Czech consumer attitudes toward slow tourism and contributes to the existing literature on the benefits of slower, mindful travel. Although respondents demonstrate limited familiarity with the term "slow tourism," their preferences are consistent with its core principles. This discrepancy between low awareness and strong attitudinal alignment reflects findings from international research. These results indicate that many individuals engage in slow-tourism behaviours before recognising the concept.

4.1. Interpretation of the Findings in Relation to Previous Studies

The survey's motivational patterns match established research. Respondents value new experiences, quiet nature, and escaping stress—core motivators focusing on relaxation, well-being, and meaningful engagement in slow travel. Respondents also strongly prefer authentic places beyond tourist centres [13, 14].

The results support international research showing that personal values—nature, well-being, and sustainability—shape slow tourism behaviour, even for those unfamiliar with the term, finding similar patterns, showing travellers balance activity with relaxation and seek deeper engagement with local environments [17].

This finding highlights a gap between stated values and actual pro-environmental behaviour, a trend seen in broader tourism research.

4.2. Holiday Duration as a Structural Barrier

Short domestic holidays (1–6 days) limit the full adoption of slow tourism, but travellers still show strong interest in authentic culture, nature, and less-visited places. This suggests that brief trips can adopt the principles of slow tourism.

Because slow tourism prioritises extended stays, deceleration, and deep immersion, such brief holiday periods constrain the feasibility of fully adopting this travel style.

This limitation appears to result from structural rather than attitudinal factors, including labour legislation, workload expectations, and cultural norms regarding vacation length in the Czech Republic. Therefore, although attitudes toward slow tourism are favourable, practical barriers may inhibit its widespread adoption in the original, long-stay format.

4.3. Implications for Tourism Development and Destination Management

The findings have important implications for tourism practitioners. Consumer preferences align closely with the core ideas of slow tourism, suggesting that Czech destinations can further develop and promote slow-tourism products. The Orlické hory & Podorlicko region has already used slow-tourism themes in its branding, showing how this strategy can help set destinations apart from competitors focused on mass tourism.

Second, the generally low public awareness of slow tourism terminology underscores an urgent need for targeted communication and educational initiatives. Destinations may benefit from employing clear, accessible messaging, supported by storytelling techniques and visually engaging content, disseminated through social media platforms, to help familiarise consumers with the concept and its benefits.

Third, the limited emphasis on environmental considerations among respondents suggests the need for improved environmental interpretation and behavioural interventions. Potential strategies include promoting low-carbon mobility

options, foregrounding ecological impacts in visitor information materials, and establishing partnerships with sustainable accommodation providers and local food producers.

Finally, given that consumers place high value on quiet natural settings, authenticity, and local culture, destination managers should prioritise the development of longer thematic trails, the promotion of rural and lesser-known regions, and support for local artisans and producers. Additionally, destinations could encourage longer stays by offering tailored packages and "stay-longer" itineraries that integrate slow-tourism principles into the visitor experience.

4.4. Future Research Directions

While this study offers valuable insights, several areas require further investigation, including the following:

- **Longitudinal Studies**
  Future research should examine the evolution of attitudes toward slow tourism over time, particularly as public sustainability awareness grows and Czech regions implement new branding strategies.
- **Large-Scale Representative Sampling**
  As current Czech research primarily relies on small or regional samples, nationwide studies are necessary to generalise findings and enhance policy.
- **Psychological and Experiential Dimensions**
  Further research should explore travellers' emotional states, mindfulness, and sense of place attachment within the context of slow tourism. These dimensions are recognised as key drivers in global research but remain underexplored in the Czech Republic.
- **Mobility and Transport Preferences**
  Given the Czech Republic's extensive railway network, future studies should assess the potential of slow mobility. Researchers should also examine how transportation influences destination choice.

5. Conclusions

Most Czech travellers do not recognise the term "slow tourism", yet their preferences and behaviours strongly reflect its core values. They seek a tranquil natural setting, meaningful and novel experiences, and a blend of activity and relaxation—all of which are central to slow tourism. This mismatch between their language and actions creates opportunities to shape slow tourism products and marketing in the Czech Republic.

The results show that travellers value experiential destinations and fair pricing above environmental factors, which are central to slow tourism in theory but less so in practice. This highlights a gap between pro-environment attitudes and actual choices, underscoring the need for better communication about sustainability in tourism.

Short domestic holidays (1–6 days) limit the full adoption of slow tourism, but travellers still show strong interest in authentic culture, nature, and less-visited places. This suggests that even brief trips can embrace the principles of slow tourism.

To summarise, this study recognises slow tourism as a key factor in the development of Czech tourism. It is consistent with global sustainable travel trends and identifies opportunities for destinations, providers, and decision-makers to enhance environmental management, visitor satisfaction, and local resilience. To advance slow tourism, stakeholders should increase awareness, communicate sustainability, design experiences for shorter holidays, and integrate authentic, experiential, and nature-based offerings into travel. By drawing attention to both consumer readiness and aspects needing improvement, this research presents a roadmap to strengthen sustainable tourism in the country.

Funding

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Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted using an anonymous online questionnaire (CAWI) targeting adult participants and did not involve any intervention, manipulation, or collection of sensitive or personally identifiable data. In accordance with the applicable national regulations and institutional guidelines of the Silesian University in Opava, surveys of this nature (non-invasive, fully anonymous, and based on voluntary participation) are exempt from formal ethical review and are not assigned a specific ethical approval code. Therefore, no Institutional Review Board approval or protocol code was required for this study.

Informed Consent Statement

Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to completing the questionnaire.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

AI Use Statement

The author utilized Microsoft Copilot during the preparation of this work to support stylistic refinement and grammatical verification. The author subsequently reviewed and edited the content as necessary and takes full responsibility for the final content of the published article.

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