UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

MASTER'S THESIS

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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANIC DESTINATION IMAGE
OF LJUBLJANA
BASED ON USER-GENERATED CONTENT**

Ljubljana, March 2022   ANASTASIIA SKIBINA

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

The undersigned Anastasiia Skibina, a student at the University of Ljubljana, School of Economics and Business, (hereafter: SEB LU), author of this written final work of studies with the title An analysis of the organic destination image of Ljubljana based on user-generated content, prepared under supervision of Ljubica Knežević Cvelbar,

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DMO – Destination management organisation

eWOM – electronic word-of-mouth

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

UGC – User-generated content

WOM – word-of-mouth

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is characterised as a set of tangible and intangible products (UNWTO, n.d.) that forms unique experience for each visitor of the destination, what makes its image formation rather different from other industries. Tourist destination image is one of the most investigated topics in the tourism field: first studies have appeared in 1970s (Gunn, 1972), when authors have discovered the importance of tourist behaviour and satisfaction for tourism development. Since those years, the topic is broadly investigated for the interests of public or private management and marketing tourism organisations and scholars, whose academic interest is based in the tourism, marketing or psychological field.

Successful development and promotion of the destination helps to improve its image and become more competitive on the market of tourist destinations; thus, image is an important indicator of destination's performance and an important factor for competitiveness. To develop and maintain strong destination image, stakeholders have to understand the uniqueness, strengths and weaknesses and target audience of the destination. Analysing different aspects of destination image from different angles helps to infer and make a strategy for future effective and sustainable development of the destination.

The current research is devoted to investigating the image of Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia – a small young country and yet an undiscovered destination seeking for identity of tourism branding, which is one of the most important industries for its economy (Slovenian Tourist Board, n.d., a). Together with Slovenia, Ljubljana as its main destination endures rapid tourism growth and development over the recent decade (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016; Ljubljana Tourism, 2021), however this growth disclosures new challenges – so as the opportunities for the city. Despite the few research works on the topic for destination Ljubljana, there is a lack of relevant academic knowledge about the image of Ljubljana.

Since there are numerous angles for analysing destination image, the current research particularly focuses on it in terms of image formation and tourism markets. One of the perspectives – image formation – has been suggested by Gartner (1993), who has identified three components of formation: cognitive, affective, conative. Konečnik and Gartner (2007) give a comprehensive explanation to each component: "The cognitive component constitutes awareness... The affective component is based on how one feels about this knowledge. The conative component is the action step" (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007, p. 403). This concept has been supported by numerous researchers (Beerli & Martin, 2004a; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Kladou & Mavragani, 2016).

Another important concept of destination image raised in the current research is the concept of geographical distance. The concept states the difference in destination perception of tourists from distant and closer markets. Geographical distance is also a subject for several

key studies of tourism destination image (Hunt, 1975; Konečnik, 2005; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008)

This study is based on analysing organic image (Gartner, 1993) of destination Ljubljana in order to find how the city is perceived by tourists after the visitation and what feedback they give based on it. One of the easily available and effective sources of organic image is word-of-mouth, which, in the time when the Internet permeates every sphere of life, can be found in quantities on online platforms. Thereby, the Internet plays significant role in forming tourist image about the destination also being a convenient instrument for evaluating organic image.

The main research purpose of the current work is to analyse the organic destination image of Ljubljana by using user-generated content.

In order to achieve the main purpose, several research objectives have to be met:
1) to assess the literature background and empirical studies about destination image.
2) to define research hypotheses.
3) to retrieve tourist data and prepare it for the analysis.
4) to provide descriptive statistics and test the hypotheses with the help of defined statistical methods.
5) to make a conclusion, implications for stakeholders and recommendations for future studies.

To enable better understanding of Ljubljana organic image and meeting the research main purpose, four main and four subsidiary hypotheses have been formulated:
H1: Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references.
H2: Conative references about Ljubljana are less frequent than affective references.
H3: There are more positive than negative references about Ljubljana.
• H3a: There are more positive than negative references for affective component.
• H3b: There are more positive than negative references for conative component.
H4: The references about Ljubljana are more positive among tourists representing closer markets than among tourists representing distant markets.
• H4a: Affective references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.
• H4b: Conative references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.

The data for this research is collected by retrieving reviews from TripAdvisor, one of the largest and most influential online social platforms for tourism (TripAdvisor, n.d., a). The sample is random TripAdvisor users, who have made publications on webpage "Ljubljana Old Town" (TripAdvisor, n.d., b). 3148 reviews in English language excluding reviews of

Slovenian users have been collected for the analysis. The data includes reviews for the period 08.2011-09.2020.

The method of data analysis is the sequence of qualitative and quantitative analyses. The qualitative part includes text-mining; the reviews containing qualitative data are transmitted into the quantitative form using a coding approach. The obtained data is analysed in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, n.d.) with the help of descriptive statistics, Chi-square goodness-of-fit test for testing hypotheses H1-H3 and Chi-square test of independence for testing hypothesis H4. After statistical analysis of the quantitative data, the results are decoded into the text form and described in the current research.

The current work includes two large parts consisting of theoretical and empirical analysis. The theoretical part includes understanding of the role of destination image, image formation components, the concept of geographical distance and the impact of social media content on destination image. Additionally to this part, the destination of Ljubljana is presented, describing tourism supply and demand and the studied image of Ljubljana. The empirical part analyses the organic image of Ljubljana represented on TripAdvisor and includes research approach, methodology, descriptive statistics, hypotheses testing and discussion of the obtained results. Based on the results, the conclusion including the overall knowledge, recommendations for stakeholders, limitations and recommendations for future studies are suggested.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW OF TOURIST DESTINATION IMAGE

1.1   Role of destination image

Tourist destination image is an important research area in tourism enabling to analyse the destination performance from tourists' perspective, assess changes in tourism demand and, as a sequence, create a strategic plan for building a stronger destination brand. One or another image motivates or demotivates tourists to visit the destination as well as defines tourism offer that can be suggested to the visitors. Thus, destination management organisations (DMOs) are interested in evaluating their tourism product from different perspectives in time dynamic to effectively respond to possible changes.

Before speaking about image, the concept of tourist destination has to be explained. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2007) provides a thorough definition, referring to destination as a "physical space in which a tourist spends at least one overnight, includes tourism products such as support services and attractions and tourist resources, has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, and images and perceptions" (UNWTO, 2007, p. 1). Buhalis (2000), in the article devoted to destination marketing, states, that destination is an "amalgam of tourism products, offering an integrated experience to

consumers" (Buhalis, 2000, p. 97), what emphasise not only its geographical but also perceptual nature. Konečnik Ruzzier (2010) supports previous definitions, highlighting, that destination is a geographical area that, as well, has to be an end goal of travelling (Konečnik Ruzzier, 2010, p. 155). Thus, tourist destination is often seen as a bounded area for visitation with own tourist attractions, management, and holistic perception.

Crompton (1979a) determines that tourists' destination choice is based on their perception formed by previous experience, word-of-mouth, beliefs, and advertisement. Tourists, in their turn, have limited personal experience before visitation and are forced to act in accordance with this perception rather than the objective reality (Crompton, 1979a). The limited experience is the result of the fact, that before making a choice of a certain destination visitors are not able to test it until the actual visitation (Gartner, 1993), so, making a purchase, they "buy into an image" (Cai, Gartner & Munar, 2009, p. 23). It makes the majority of tourism products (packages) intangible, unlike products of many other industries.

Although tourist perception is not based on the objective reality, it creates a new reality; Thomas' theorem states: "What is defined or perceived by people is real in its consequences" (Pike, 2011, p. 109). Thus, it is not the objectivity of tourist perception that brings tourists to the destination, but their preliminary perception. To provide tourists with comprehensive information during decision-making and win the competition against other destinations, DMOs have to build a strong image.

Gunn and Hunt are one of the first researchers, who have defined and studied destination image: Gunn (1972) is also among the first ones, who have seen it as the combined result of all perceptions about the destination, received from different spheres of life; Hunt (1975), above all, has identified it as a key factor of tourism development, according to which the main goal is permanent increase of visitor numbers. One of the most common definitions of tourist destination image is created by Crompton (1979a), who refers to it as "the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions, that a person has of a destination" (Crompton, 1979a, p. 18). Echtner and Ritchie (1991) accentuate the importance of distinction between the general impression of the tourist destination and the impression of specific attributes. In his turn, Gartner (1993) focuses on tourist destination image formation and various informational sources it is based on. Subsequently, Baloglu and McCleary (1999a) have referred to the destination image as the outcome of individual's mental representation of knowledge and feelings; Jenkins (1999) has defined its image from the perspectives of individual perception, group stereotypes and destination promotion; San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque (2008) has identified it with synonyms "impression", "perception" and "mental representation". Hereby, numerous key studies confirm that tourist destination image is predominantly a set of subjective perceptions about the objective reality, that can be investigated through either individual/collective, or general/attributable points of view.

Presenting the analyses of destination image from different perspectives, researchers generally make a comparison of the images among different groups of tourists. Gunn (1972) sees the difference in the destination image of potential visitors, non-visitors and returned visitors; his theory has been supported by numerous other researchers (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Fakeye & Crompton, 1991), who state, that, in general, returned visitors have more realistic and sophisticated destination image than non-visitors, and, consequently, visitors have better awareness about destination's features such as opportunities for socialisation and tourist attractions (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991, p. 15). Hunt (1975), on the contrary, claims, that non-visitors and non-residents do not perceive destination significantly different from visitors or residents. In their turn, Beerli and Martin (2004a) have discovered, that repeat visitors have stronger loyalty to the destination due to increased awareness of its features and the destination itself than first-time visitors. The above research works reveal the controversy existing regarding attempts of comparing the perception between different groups of tourists referring to the destination.

Analysing the factors affecting tourists' perception of destination, Gunn (1972) has become a pioneer in discovering that information sources can be divided into two levels regarding the image formation: organic and induced. As displayed on Figure 1, both organic and induced images merge at the later stages and form modified-induced image – the result of it represents Gunn's stage theory mode. Organic image is based on received and assimilated knowledge during the entire life from tourism-unrelated information sources, including general and school knowledge, books, tourism-unrelated media, or personal visitation (Gunn, 1972, p. 24). This type of image cannot be easily and directly changed by the actions of DMOs due to its long-term fixity in tourist perception. On the other hand, induced image is the image created and promoted by DMOs and diverse touristic sources (Gunn, 1972, p. 24): travel magazines, TV programmes, advertising, and other touristic promotional materials. Unlike organic, induced image can be changed relatively easily by reorganization and investment in destination marketing. The stages of image formation are illustrated in Figure 1, which shows the process of image accumulation in regard to information sources or obtained experience.

Figure 1. Stage theory model of Gunn.

1. Accumulation of mental images of a place through life.	ORGANIC IMAGE
↓	
2. Modification of images through researching prior to the decision to travel.	INDUCED IMAGE
↓	
3. The decision to travel based on image efficiency, anticipated experience but kept within time, money and other constrains.	
↓	
4. Travel to attraction may condition the image (e.g., road signs, landscapes, guides).	
↓	
5. Participation or experience at the destination, the activities, accommodation, and other services all influence the image.	MODIFIED-INDUCED IMAGE
↓	
6. Return travel allows reflection and evaluation, including discussing experiences with fellow travellers.	
↓	
7. New accumulation occurs after the visit because the process is circular, the end image may be the same or different to the original one.	

Source: Gunn (1972, p. 120).

Gunn's categorisation has since become commonly used among authors, and, moreover, several researchers have been contributing to his knowledge. Phelps (1986, as cited in Jenkins, 1999, p. 3), analysing visitors over time, makes a similar conclusion defining, that different sources of information form either primary (created by a visitor through the visitation), or secondary image (created by a non-visitor through external sources of information). Stabler (1988, as cited in Jenkins, 1999, p. 4) divides factors influencing destination image into demand and supply factors that correspond with organic and induced images of Gunn, respectively. In this case, demand factors come from individual's characteristics, such as socio-demographics, culture, experience, and motivation (Jenkins, 1999; Lutkenhaus, 2011), whereas supply factors originate from DMOs' facilities and activities including tourist attractions and promotion (Jenkins, 1999; Lutkenhaus, 2011).

Fakeye and Crompton (1991) consider three levels of destination image relatively information sources: besides organic and induced, described by Gunn, they additionally suggest complex image, which is the accumulation of organic and induced and represents the last stage of obtaining the information by a tourist. Additionally, they have found out,

that informative promotion (aimed to enlighten tourists about the destination) is more effective in the stage of organic image formation, persuasive promotion (invoking to visit the destination) – in the induced stage and reminding promotion (aimed to recall visitors' memories and feelings about the destination) – in the complex stage. Similarly, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) distinguish three stages of image formation. In the first stage, organic image is formed by receiving tourism-unrelated information, education, and reactions of other people; in the second stage, when a tourist intentionally gathers information about the destination in the process of decision-making, induced image is formed; in the last stage, after the visitation of destination, a tourist forms re-evaluative image.

Gartner (1993) gives a detailed presentation of eight agents of destination image formation: Overt Induced I (traditional forms of advertising), Overt Induced II (information from tourism organisations not connected with a particular destination), Covert Induced I (information involving a recognisable public figure to improve credibility), Covert Induced II (hidden promotion in reports about the destination), Autonomous (news and popular culture), Unsolicited Organic (unrequested information received from destination visitors), Solicited Organic (word-of-mouth), Organic (actual visitation). According to Gartner, the main difference between agents is the extent of control the destination has over the information received by tourists. The Gartner's model has significant contribution for further studies of destination images and allows to consider the specifics of diverse information sources and choose the correct methodology when analysing destination image formation among different tourist groups.

The main conclusion of the first part of the research is that destination image and its formation have been thoroughly investigated over the last half-century and numerous research works have contributed to its identification and classification. The above studies introduce the image formation process from the point of view of information sources – specifically, how visitors or potential visitors become familiar with the destination and its different aspects, and by this, enable the current work to pursue further theoretical and empirical analysis of this topic.

1.2 Components of destination image formation

About half-century ago, Fishbein (1967) has created the Theory of reasoned action (TRA), first devoted to and implemented in frames of psychological studies, with the purpose of predicting individual's behaviour based on one's beliefs and attitudes, or, in other words, the A-B relationship. Later, Gartner (1993), based on this theory, has identified three components of image formation: cognitive, affective and conative, and in following work of Konečnik and Gartner (2007) a comprehensive explanation has been given to each component: "The cognitive component constitutes awareness: what someone knows or thinks they know about a destination. The affective component is based on how one feels about this knowledge. The conative component is the action step: how one acts on the

information" (Konecnik & Gartner, 2007, p. 403). This concept has been widely supported by numerous researchers (e.g., Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Beerli & Martin, 2004a; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Kladou & Mavragani, 2016), whereas some of the researchers deepen the knowledge investigating these components separately from each other (Russell, 1980).

1.2.1 Cognitive component

Cognitive component has been defined by Boulding (1956, as cited in Gartner, 1993, p. 195) long before the works studying destination image formation: the author has suggested that images are derived from facts, beliefs, or stored information about something. A more common in the recent literature definition, however, has been made by Gartner (1993, p. 196), where cognitive component is interpreted as "the sum of beliefs and attitudes of an object leading to some internally accepted picture of its attributes". Over time, Konečnik and Gartner (2007) have formulated the most broadly used explanation, where the component is represented as "awareness", which constitutes for individual's' knowledge, obtained information and belief about the destination.

Considering the diversity of what cognitive component can stand for, researchers have made attempts to categorise the attributes it may consist of. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) classify cognitive component in accordance with three different pairs as illustrated on Figure 2: attribute – holistic, tangible (functional) – intangible (psychological), common – unique. The attribute-holistic pair refers to attributes being analysed separately or together in a bundle; pair functional-psychological is presented by functional (physical) attributes, which are easily measurable and psychological (abstract) ones; finally, some attributes can be held in the perception of only one individual (unique) and some – in the perception of the whole group (common) or even create a stereotype.

Figure 2. The model of cognitive component by Echtner & Ritchie.
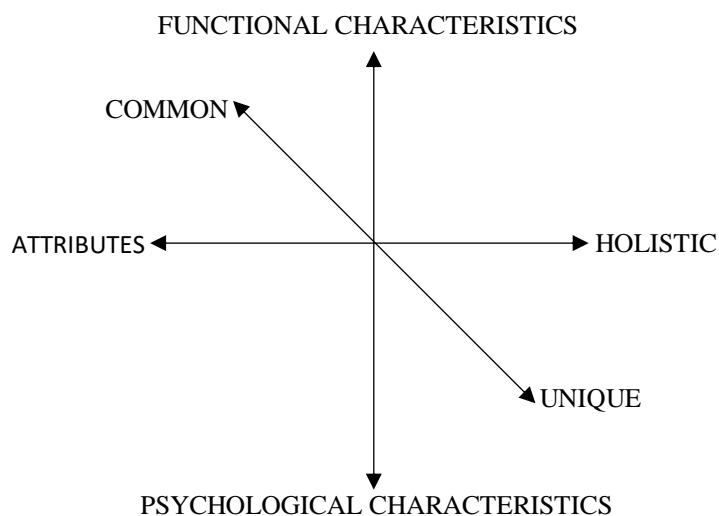
Source: Echtner & Ritchie (1991, p. 6).

Using the model described in Figure 2, Echtner and Ritchie (1991) present 32 functional (e.g., natural attractions, price levels, tourist sites/activities, nightlife and entertainment, shopping facilities, etc.) and psychological (e.g., reputation, opportunity for adventure, atmosphere, accessibility, crowdedness, etc.) attributes as continuum that is displayed on Figure 3, which also includes attributes situated in the middle of it, that can be considered as both functional or psychological, e.g. cleanliness (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991, p. 10).

Figure 3. Cognitive attributes for measuring destination image.

FUNCTIONAL (physical, measurable)

    Scenery / Natural attractions
    Costs / Price levels
    Climate
    Tourist sites / Activities
    Nightlife / Entertainment
    Sports facilities / Activities
    National parks / Wilderness activities
    Local infrastructure / Transportation
    Architecture / Buildings
    Historical sites / Museums
    Beaches
    Shopping facilities
    Cities
    Fairs, exhibits, festivals
    Facilities for information and tours
    Crowdedness
    Cleanliness
    Personal safety
    Economic development / Affluence
    Accessibility
    Degree of urbanization
    Extent of commercialization
    Political stability
    Hospitality / Friendliness / Receptiveness
    Different customs / Culture
    Different cuisine / Food and drink
    Restful / Relaxing
    Atmosphere (familiar VS exotic)
    Opportunity for adventure
    Opportunity to increase knowledge
    Family- or adult-oriented
    Quality of service
    Fame / Reputation

PSYCHOLOGICAL (abstract)

Source: Echtner & Richie (1991, p. 10).

Baloglu and McCleary (1999b) have studied non-visitors of Turkey from the USA and identified 14 cognitive (perceptional) attributes of destination image: good value for money, beautiful scenery/natural attractions, good climate, interesting cultural attractions, suitable accommodation, appealing local food, great beaches/water sports, quality of infrastructure, personal safety, interesting historical attractions, unpolluted/unspoiled environment, good nightlife and entertainment, standard hygiene and cleanliness, interesting and friendly people (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999b, p. 148). Beerli and Martin (2004a), studying the image of Lanzarote in Spain, have suggested 21 cognitive attributes that are listed on Table 1, classified into the next groups: natural resources; general infrastructure; tourist infrastructure; leisure and recreation; culture, history & art; political and economic factors; natural environment; social environment; atmosphere. Krešić and Prebežac (2011) have identified the list of 19 attributes while researching Croatian resorts, among which there are the common image of the country, feeling of personal safety, quality of the country's promotion, climate, scenic beauty, accessibility, quality of information, urban and architectural harmony, environmental preservation, tidiness, friendliness, quality of accommodation, quality of restaurants, variety of restaurants, presentation of cultural heritage, entertainment opportunities, sport and recreation opportunities, shopping opportunities, "value for money" (Krešić & Prebežac, 2011, p. 505). As for psychological cognitive attributes only, Ekinci and Hosany (2006) have found out three dimensions: sincerity (reliability, sincerity, intelligence, success, wholesomeness), excitement (excitement, dare, originality, spirit), conviviality (friendliness, family orientation, charm) (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006, p. 132).

Figure 4 . Cognitive attributes determining the perceived destination image.

Natural resources	General infrastructure	Tourist infrastructure
Weather - Temperature - Rainfall - Humidity - Hours of sunshine Beaches - Quality of seawater - Sandy or rocky beaches - Length of the beaches - Overcrowding of the beaches Wealth of countryside - Protected nature reserves - Lakes, mountains, deserts, etc. Variety and uniqueness of flora and fauna	Development and quality of roads, airports and ports Public and private transport facilities Development of health services Development of telecommunication Development of commercial infrastructures Extent of building development	Hotel and self-catering accommodation - Number of beds - Categories - Quality Restaurants - Number - Categories - Quality Bars, discotheques and clubs Ease of access to destination Excursions of the destination Tourist centres Network of tourist information
Tourist leisure and recreation	**Culture, history and art**	**Political and economic factors**
Theme parks Entertainment and sport activities - Golf, fishing, hunting, skiing, scuba diving, etc. - Water parks - Zoos - Trekking - Adventure activities - Casinos - Night life - Shopping	Museums, historical buildings, monuments, etc. Festivals, concerts, etc. Handicraft Gastronomy Folklore Religion Customs and ways of life	Political stability Political tendencies Economic development Safety - Crime rate - Terrorist attacks Prices
Natural environment	**Social environment**	**Atmosphere of the place**
Beauty of the scenery Attractiveness of the cities and towns Cleanliness Overcrowding Air and noise pollution Traffic congestion	Hospitality and friendliness of the residents Underprivileged and poverty Quality of life Language barriers	Luxurious Fashionable Place with a good reputation Family-oriented destination Exotic Mystic Relaxing Stressful Fun, enjoyable Pleasant Boring Attractive or interesting

Source: Beerli & Martin (2004a, p. 659).

From the suggestions and analyses of above authors, it is possible to notice that there is no commonly accepted classification that could be used to measure attributes inside the cognitive component. Their grouping of attributes varies from authors' research perspective of studying the visitors of tourist destinations. The difficulty of such analysis is in a possible confusion of psychological (abstract) cognitive attributes and the attributes of affective component described further.

1.2.2 Affective component

The other component of image formation is affective. In one of the earliest definitions, Fishbein (1967) has defined it as attitude that has later been understood as affective component due to its representation of favourable or unfavourable evaluation of tourist destination. Moreover, Gartner (1993) states that affective component is directly connected to the motivation during decision-making process, determining expectations and valuation of the destination (Gartner, 1993, p. 196). Speaking in words of Baloglu and McCleary, affective component "refers to feelings about the object" (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a, p. 146).

For classification and measuring affective component, researchers use bipolar pairs of attributes (Russell, 1980; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999b; Konečnik, 2005). In "A circumplex model of affect", Russel (1980) proposes four-dimensional bipolar scales, such as unpleasant-pleasant, sleepy-arousing, distressing-relaxing, gloomy-exciting, where these attributes fall in a circle in the following order as presented on Figure 4: pleasure (0'), excitement (45'), arousal (90'), distress (135'), displeasure (180'), depression (225'), sleepiness (270'), relaxation (315') (Russel, 1980, p. 1164, p. 1166). However, simple pair "positive-negative" has also been used by researchers (Kladou & Mavragani, 2016).

Figure 5. A circumplex model of affect.
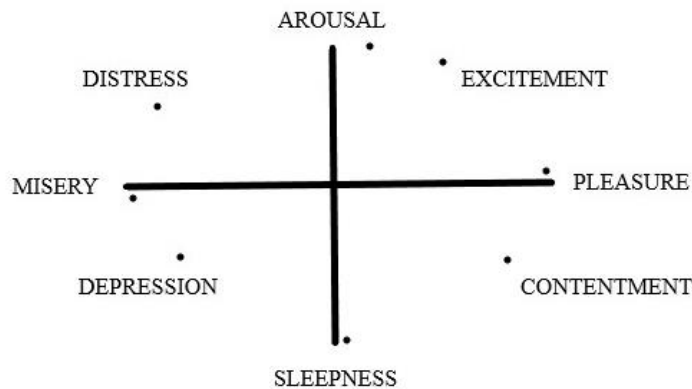
Source: Russel (1980, p. 1164).

Russel (1980) in his work concludes, that affective state is the result of cognitive process. Moreover, Baloglu and McCleary (1999a) find out, that image is rather based on affective component, than on cognitive. This conclusion has been also supported by other researchers (San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008; Basaran, 2016), however, the number of studies enlightening affective component is still smaller than ones devoted to cognitive component.

1.2.3 Conative component

Conative component is the final component of image formation and is associated by Gartner (1993) with the behaviour or action. According to his work, conative component depends on the perceptions obtained during cognitive stage and evaluations made during affective stage. Similarly, Baloglu and McCleary (1999a) state, that conative component includes both cognitive and affective components. According to Pike and Ryan (2004, p. 339), conative component refers to the Action, which is the last stage of the AIDA (Awareness-Interest-Desire-Action) marketing model.

Most of the authors see conative component of destination image formation as intention to revisit or spread word-of-mouth (WOM) including recommendations (Gartner, 1993; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; Agapito, Valle & Mendes, 2011) and some of them also connect it to loyalty (Beerli & Martin, 2004a). According to Ekinci and Hosany (2006), spreading positive WOM is the indicator of better tourists' experience and better destination image more than a motive to revisit. Agapito, Valle and Mendes (2011) insist on studying these two intentions separately as different parameters influence them on different levels. Researchers distinguish "actual conduct" and "behavioural intentions" (Agapito, Valle & Mendes, 2011, p. 36): the latter refers to willingness to revisit or recommend, whereas the former refers to an actual behavioural action as not all the intentions lead to the actual action.

On the assumption of the number of studies, conative component is possibly the least investigated of all three components; however, as well as in case of other components, a commonly used definition and classification of its attributes have not been specified. Conative component directly influences destination attractiveness and performance, which makes it the most finalised and significant component that DMOs have to consider with more attention.

1.2.4 Interconnection of components

Although Russell (1980) is one of those researchers, who suggests investigating the components separately, many others find important interconnections between them, accentuating the importance of revising them in complex (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Beerli & Martin, 2004a; Beerli & Martin, 2004b; Pike & Ryan, 2004; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008; Molinillo, Liebana-Cabanillas & Anaya-Sanchez, 2017; Slabbert & Martin, 2017). Baloglu and McCleary (1999a) state, that cognitive and affective components fulfill each other, where the cognitive one influences the affective one. Pike and Ryan (2004) and Konecnik and Gartner (2007) have also found out, that cognitive image influence affective image, as well as affective image influence conative, what subsequently proves, that the cognitive one has an impact on the intention to revisit. More specifically, Alcaniz, Garcia and Blas (2009, as cited in Basaran, 2016, p. 166)

demonstrate, that functional attributes of cognitive component influence the intention to revisit, whereas psychological attributes – the intention to recommend. Russell and Snodgrass (1987) have also concluded that affective image is a better behavioural predictor than the cognitive one. Supporting the topic, Chon (1992) has discovered, that positive pre-visit and post-visit images cause moderately positive evaluation, positive pre-visit and negative post-visit image cause the most negative evaluation and, finally, negative pre-visit and positive post-visit images cause the most positive evaluation. Finally, Slabbert and Martin (2017), in the article devoted to studying South-African festivals, claim, that affective and conative components have a more significant role in destination evaluation than the cognitive one.

The image formation components are investigated within diverse tourist destinations (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999b; Pike & Ryan, 2004; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008; Basaran, 2016; Kladou & Mavragani, 2016; Slabbert & Martin, 2017). Fakeye and Crompton (1991) have made one of the pioneering studies on the image formation components for Rio Grande Valley, Texas, USA. Baloglu and McCleary (1999a; 1999b) have conducted the analyses of image formation in the USA in their former work and has studied tourist destinations of Turkey, Egypt, Greece, and Italy in the latter one. Beerli and Martin (2004a) have studied Lanzarote, Spain; Pike and Ryan (2004) – the case of New Zealand. Konecnik and Gartner (2007) have investigated the concept of brand equity on the Slovenian market. San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque (2008) have presented the case of Cantabria, Spain, where they have found out, that tourists' perception is significantly affected by individual and cultural psychological factors. Basaran (2016), investigating Safranbolu in Turkey, has supported the theory, that affective component has a mediate role between cognitive and conative components and the assessment of cognitive and affective components help in predicting tourist behaviour about a destination. Kladou and Mavragani (2016) have demonstrated descriptive statistics of TripAdvisor based on image formation components and found gender differences in user-generated content (UGC) for Istanbul, Turkey. Moreover, the authors have discovered the difference between the frequency of components: there are 63,74% of cognitive, 22,52% of affective and 13,74% of conative references among 684 overall references (Kladou & Mavragani, 2016, p. 10). The research also demonstrates that visitors tend to share positive references than negative.

Destination image formation has been viewed from different angles of analysis, as well as it has wide geography that helps to adapt the analyses from different geographic and cultural perspectives. The variety of perspective and diversity of the studies allow to investigate the topic cumulatively or specifically for particular cases or destinations, since tourism consists of international diverse markets including numerous cultures and culture-based phenomena.
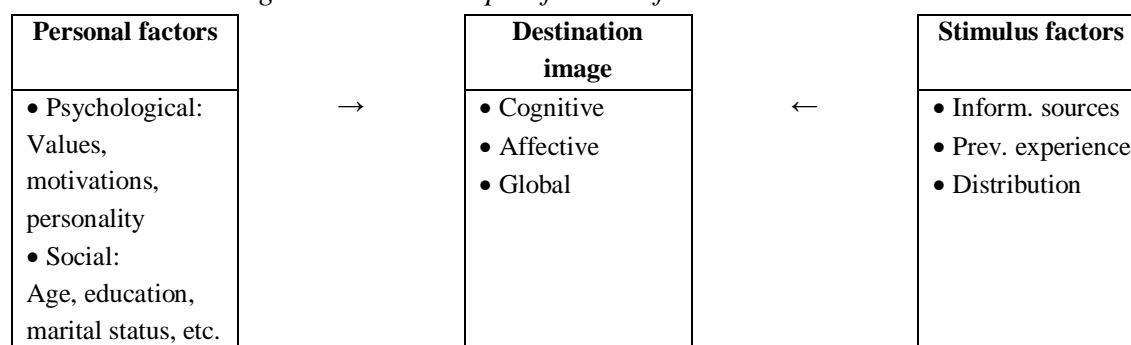
1.3 The concept of geographical distance

Attempting to forecast tourists' behaviour, authors study their motivation and personal factors influencing destination image formation and, as a sequence, decision-making about the destination. For example, the study of Baloglu and McClearly (1999b) shows the influence of age and education level on tourist choice. The authors have found the connection between personal or cultural characteristics and image formation, what has led to better understanding of tourist choices.

One of the most important characteristics is travel motivation. Pizam, Neumann and Reichel (1979, p. 196) define it as a set of needs that make an individual to involve in a tourist activity. Pearce, Morrison and Rutledge (1998, as cited in Božić, Kennel, Vijučić & Jovanović, 2017, p. 382) see it through biological and cultural forces explaining tourist's decisions and value to one's experience. Beerli and Martin (2004a) explain it as a need to act particularly to achieve "the desired level of satisfaction" (Beerli & Martin, 2004a, p. 626). Briefly concluding it, tourist motivation represents a set of triggers that induces particular travel behaviour.

Dann (1977) and then Crompton (1979b) are pioneers in distinguishing two main factors of tourism motivation: push and pull factors, that are illustrated in Figure 5. This idea has been supported and investigated by numerous researchers (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999a; Božić, Kennel, Vijučić & Jovanović, 2017). Push (personal) factors are internal socio-psychological motivations, such as "desire for escape, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, adventure, prestige and social interaction" (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996, p. 32), values and socio-demographic indexes (Crompton, 1979a, p. 410). Pull (destination) factors are external motivations coming from attractiveness of a tourism destination, including tangible attributes, such as "beaches, recreation facilities and historic resources", and intangible ones, such as "novelty, benefit expectation and marketed image" (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996, p. 32). Push factors are the ones that trigger the desire to travel, whereas pull factors explain destination choice (Crompton, 1979a, p. 410).

Figure 6. Push and pull factors of tourism motivation.

Personal factors		Destination image		Stimulus factors
• Psychological: Values, motivations, personality • Social: Age, education, marital status, etc.	→	• Cognitive • Affective • Global	←	• Inform. sources • Prev. experience • Distribution

Source: Baloglu & McCleary (1999a, p. 870).

Crompton (1979b) in his work, instead of terms "push" and "pull", operates with seven "socio-psychological" and two "cultural" factors. Among the former ones, there are escape, self-exploration, relaxation, prestige, facilitation of social interaction, whereas the latter ones include novelty and education. All these factors have been investigated by Yuan and McDonald (1990), who have made research in Japan, France, West Germany, and the UK. The authors have identified 29 push and 53 pull factors and, although internal motivations of individuals from different countries for vacations may be similar, their external motivations of which destination to choose differs between respondents from the above countries.

Richardson and Crompton (1988) state, that culture significantly influences such spheres of life as general lifestyle, work, leisure and consumption, whereas each of them in lower or higher extent directly affects tourism industry and destination choice and evaluation. Reisinger and Turner (1999) have found out, that, first of all, there are significant differences between different culture groups and, second, cultural motivations define push and pull motivations of an individual. Supporting study have been made by Kozak (2000), who has found the difference in satisfaction, intention to recommend or revisit and the nationality of tourists, and by Weiermair and Fuchs (2000) and by Plangmarn, Mujtaba and Pirani (2012), who have confirmed the presence of cultural differences and similarities between tourists from Germany, Spain and France.

The result of above research works lead to one of important concepts in multicultural studies in tourism, which is a distance between cultures and its influence on destination choice and evaluation. Tourists from different cultures demonstrate different values, behaviour and evaluation as well as differently formed destination image (Chen & Kerstetter, 1999) that directly and significantly affects destination competitiveness. Psychological, or speaking in larger scales – as individual values coexist with cultural values (Pikkemaat & Weiermair, 2001, p. 78) – cultural distance takes place, when individual's familiarity with a culture or destination specifics exists (Molinillo, Liebana-Cabanillas & Anaya-Sanchez, 2017). According to Pikkemaat and Weiermair (2001), personal values, as well as cultural, are directly related to individual's attitude or behaviour, thus, understanding culture becomes relevant for understanding, how it affects visitors' information, values, consumption patterns, purchase behaviour and affinity to new products. As San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque (2008) have found out, individuals different in cultural background perceive a particular tourism destination differently, which means that DMOs have to act differently when attracting different target tourist groups.

According to Geertz (1973, as cited in Ozdemir & Yolal, 2016, p. 2), culture is "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form, by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge and attitudes towards life". Svanberg and Runblom (1988, as cited in Plangmarn, Mujtaba & Pirani, 2012, p. 1295) define it as common knowledge, perceptions and values, which are

the base for social, economic and religious spheres. Hofstede (1997) sees the culture as a collective mind, which with the help of behavioural patterns help to distinguish the groups of people. Chau et al. (2002) give a laconic definition of culture as "the learnt patterns of thinking, feeling and acting learnt from a social environment usually defined by a country" (Chau et al, 2002, p. 139). Thus, cultural values consist of values, beliefs and norms shared by one group, which make it different from another group (Pizam, Jansen-Verbeke & Steel, 1997).

Several works aimed to study cross-cultural tourists' motivations (e.g., Plangmarn, Mujtaba & Pirani, 2012), decision-making (e.g., Pikkemaat & Weiermair, 2001; Frias, Rodriguez, Castaneda, Sabiote & Buhalis, 2012), behaviour (e.g., Ozdemir & Yolal, 2016), satisfaction (e.g., Pizam, Jansen-Verbeke & Steel, 1997) and evaluation (e.g., Konečnik, 2005) of towards tourism destinations. One of the earliest behavioural studies in tourism has been made by Mayo (1973), where the author has analysed the image of different regions in the USA and discovered significant difference between them, which has resulted in identifying three crucial influencing factors: climate, scenery, and the lack of congestion. Following the research, Hunt (1975), in his work devoted to the investigation of tourism image in the Rocky Mountains, the USA, has noticed, that tourists from farther regions do not differentiate destination's attributes as good as tourists from closer regions, based on what the author has proposed the idea of significance of the distance role towards the image of the destination, or, in other words, the phenomena of geographical distance. Crompton (1979a) in the research for Mexican states, has confirmed that the further US visitors of Mexico reside from this country the better the image of the destination is.

After more than a decade, researchers have done significant works on related topics. Pizam, Jansen-Verbeke and Steel (1997), who have investigated tourist behaviour in the UK, Israel, South Korea and the Netherlands, have concluded, that among tourists from the USA, the UK, Germany, France, Japan, South Korea and Italy, American tourists, being also one of the furthest tourists to every above destination, are named as the most distinctive in each group with socialising as their most distinctive trait; the research has been supported by analogous work of Ozdemir and Yolal (2016), who have confirmed the difference between the behaviour of tourists from the USA, France, Germany, the UK, Italy, Spain and Japan in Istanbul, Turkey. Reisinger and Turner (1997) have made another crucial research in cross-cultural tourism study: investigating Indonesian tourism market for Australia, they have found out differences in awareness, understanding and acceptance of another culture. According to the authors, the greater the difference in cultural background, the more unsuccessful may be cross-cultural communication and more likely the appearance of cross-cultural conflicts. Weiermair and Fuchs (2000) contribute to the topic by supporting the existence of more positive image among respondents culturally more distant from Austria and a higher tolerance level for distant markets. San Martin and Rodriguez del Bosque (2008) also confirm the impact of cultural distance on the process of destination image formation, stating, that the shorter the distance, the more favourable the destination image.

Konečnik (2005) has conducted an analogous research for Slovenia, however, have not found a statistically significant difference in the image between closer and distant markets, and, moreover, concluded, that neighbouring markets evaluated the destination higher than more distant ones. Tourists from close markets have an insignificantly higher evaluation of accommodation, infrastructure, cleanliness, safety, cuisine, natural beauty, and atmosphere (Konečnik, 2005, p. 274). According to author's recommendation, Slovenia has to emphasise its positive attributes, such as stunning surroundings and relaxed friendly atmosphere and that the marketing strategy has to be diverse for diverse markets, as the perception of both categories of markets still has differences.

Even though a culture plays a crucial role in forming destination image, it is not the only variable to explain the difference in perception of tourist destination. As has been noted earlier, tourist culture falls into push motivation factors, whereas pull factors have to be as well considered. The difference between cultures is important to consider for building portraits of target and potential visitors and strategic marketing plan for DMOs.

1.4 The impact of user-generated content on tourism destination image

Tourist destination is an intangible product, which is purchased without real advance experiencing or physical testing, as it refers to a bundle of experiences consisted of diverse tourism goods and services. McIntosh (1972, as cited in Pan, MacLaurin & Crotts, 2007, p. 10) refers to it as an experience good, thus, it can be received by a tourist mostly in a form of impressions only. Intangibility makes the experience of other visitors significant to unexperienced tourists, who are planning or interested in a particular tourist destination, and word-of-mouth – one of the most influential tools in spreading and receiving the information about it (Cai, Gartner & Munar, 2009).

Yet in 1966, Dichter (1966, as cited in Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008, p. 462) and, later, Westbrook (1987) have noticed, that consumers, whose affective perception are influenced with positive or negative impressions, are inclined to express it to others. Arndt (1967) has formulated one of the first commonly used definition of WOM (word-of-mouth), which refers to interpersonal and verbal communication between consumers about a product or a brand. Richins (1983, as cited in Gretzel & Yoo, 2008, p. 36) refers to it as interpersonal communication between consumers influencing each other's decisions about product consumption. Westbrook (1987) describes it as informal communication between consumers about a product or a brand. Bone (1992, as cited in Fili & Križaj, 2016, p. 108) identifies WOM as an exchange of experiences between consumers, who are not related to marketing campaigns of the brands. However, whereas the above authors consider WOM as a communication without commercial impact, some other authors (Pan, MacLaurin & Crotts, 2007) consider the presence of marketing.

The main advantage of WOM is its effectiveness of information sharing and the strength of influence within low cost (Crotts, 1999). The significance of this mean of communication at the stage of decision-making (Amdt, 1967) and during purchase of a product (Westbrook, 1987) has been investigated by scholars, and the advantages it gives have drawn attention of marketers, who induce positive WOM for building stronger destination brand and increase performance.

Several works are devoted to measuring the impact and significance of WOM. Kirby and Marsden (2006, as cited in Fili & Križaj, 2016, p. 108) have concluded, that 76% of customers admit the influence of WOM on their decision-making. Works provided by eMarketer (2007, as cited in Gretzel & Yoo, 2008, p. 38) suggest, that women tend to participate in spreading and receiving WOM more often than men, being affected more by personal recommendations rather than marketers' messages; moreover, 85% of millennials get a primary information about a product or a brand by WOM. Carson (2008), in his work for Australia, has concluded, that WOM is the main source of travel planning for such groups as nomads and backpackers. However, there are several studies devoted to studying WOM, they have received a larger contribution with the recent development of the Internet.

Cai, Gartner & Munar (2009) suggest, that the world has entered a new stage at the beginning of the 21st century – the stage of digitalisation, virtualisation and automatisation, which also comprise information exchange. According to Buhalis (1998), tourism sphere stands close to information and communication technologies. Wertner (2005, as cited in Mack, Blose & Pan, 2008, p. 136) calls tourism a leading industry relatively the number of online transactions with 78% of tourists searching for information and 75% making hotel reservations on the Internet. Based on that, the Internet has also become a crucial method of marketing communication with tourists (Mack, Blose & Pan, 2008). Wolcott (Wolcott, 2008) speaks about Web 2.0 that attracts all users into creating content, thus making destination promotion possible without DMOs' participation. Supporting the statement, Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2011) claim, that information culture on the Internet was replaced by conversation culture, making users participate in the content created by brands, and later, Shuqair and Cragg (2017) also note, that the role of users has shifted from passive to active, allowing them to involve in such content. The Ministry of Economic Development and Technology of Slovenia (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2017) states, that technological revolution greatly influences tourism, considering that 87% of visitors use their smartphones during travelling, that enables finding new ways of communication with potential visitors.

Tourism marketing organisations participate in formation of induced image of the destination (Gunn, 1972), however organic image nowadays is often based on the information from the Internet users, who, by means of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), affect the perception of potential visitors (Dellarocas, 2003; Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). Hennig-Thurau and Walsh (2003) describe eWOM as positive and negative statements made on the

Internet by potential, actual or former customers. Goldsmith (2006) suggests identifying eWOM as informal communication about particular products or brands over the Internet between consumers or between consumers and marketers. Eurobarometer (2016) concludes that eWOM is the second most popular source of information during decision-making among Europeans following WOM (51% and 34% of respondents).

WOM and eWOM are especially preferable ways of information exchange with consumers, according to Crotts (1999). Comparing both communication methods, Dellarocas (2003) suggests four main differences. First, the combination of low cost with the scale and speed of information exchange, what makes eWOM significantly more effective than WOM; second, easy control over the information by administrators of online platforms; third, easy access and a high number of anonymous users participating in eWOM, thus, low credibility of the given information; and, finally, fourth, wrong or controversial interpretations of the information due to corruption or misunderstanding of its initial context. Hennig-Thurau and Walsh (2003) have found the main advantage of this method of communication in its time-saving character, which allow users make a more informed decision. Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan (2008) see the advantage of eWOM in "many-to-many communication" that is provided by online platforms that can be "accessed, linked and searched" (Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008, p. 468). In addition to the above, Fili and Križaj (2016) conclude, that eWOM is less limited relatively "geographical, social and time factors" (Fili & Križaj, 2016, p. 108).

Bickart (2005) has found out three main motivations of why users search for eWOM about a product or a brand; these findings have been also confirmed by Gretzel and Yoo (2008). First, tourists search for any information in the process of idea-generating and decision-making about their vacation to create a general image about destinations and narrow down the options. Second, they seek support for the information they have found and decision they are inclined to make. Finally, the information search has an entertaining character for tourists. Additionally, Gretzel and Yoo (2008) have found out, that almost a third of the participants of their research search for eWOM to compare their experience with the experience of other users.

The impact of eWOM through social media and online tourist platforms has been thoroughly investigated from different perspectives. Gretzel and Yoo (2008) have discovered, that almost 98% of travellers that use the Internet for decision-making, read other travellers' reviews, and additionally noted, that such demographic characteristics as gender and age influence the perception of online reviews. Volo (2010), investigating the prospective tourists' perception of travel bloggers, have found a significant impact of commentaries and recommendations on the perception of potential visitors. The research for the US tourism market (Fili & Križaj, 2016, p. 108) shows, that 78% of respondents read online reviews during decision-making, mostly to estimate the quality of the tourist product.

Since it has become available for every person with an access to the Internet to generate information and post it online participating in Web 2.0 interactions, the exchange of travel experience has been partially transformed into publishing user-generated content (UGC) defined as "a mixture of fact and opinion, impression and sentiment, experiences and even rumour" by Blackshaw and Nazzaro (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006, p. 4), as a phenomenon of sharing information online enabled by Web 2.0 – by Cox, Burgess, Sellitto & Buutlejens (2009) and as content created by users on diverse online and social media platforms – by Cetinkaya (2010). UGC creates a base for consumers' expression and communication making it a convenient tool for exchanging their eWOM.

Although, in accordance with their research works, some authors are convinced in prevailing credibility of traditional WOM (Mack, Blose & Pan, 2008) or official sources (Cox, Burgess, Sellitto & Buutlejens, 2009; Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2012) over eWOM, some other researchers find credibility of eWOM as a communication method encouraging (Beerli & Martin, 2004a; Bickart, 2005; Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2011; Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2012). One of the reasons of it is that users' relationships over the Internet become comparable to relationships offline, where people get acquainted and get familiar with each other over time (Wright, 2000). Another reason is users' independence in self-expression (Crotts, 1999; Dellarocas, 2003; Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan, 2008). Gretzel and Yoo (2008) and Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy (2007), studying travel reviews, conclude that two thirds of respondents find UGC of other travellers up-to-date, enjoyable and reliable, rather than the information given by marketers and DMOs. They also define criteria that provide users with the credibility, which are: travel experience, similar interests and travel purpose, the manner of writing. Since tourist destination is intangible as a product, potential visitors especially appreciate other users' UGC, which enables them to experience it indirectly before the purchase.

Shifting towards Web 2.0 as well as the constantly increasing need of self-expression over exchanging UGC have forced the creation of multiple social media, where, apart from official sources, users can obtain enormous amount of other people's experiences. The use of social media enabled two-way communication between consumers and brands or, speaking about tourism, travellers and DMOs, thus making marketer-generated content and consumer-generated content coexist (Lim, Chung & Weaver, 2012).

One of popular definitions of social media, widely used by researchers is presented by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), stating, that it is "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). The authors distinguish six categories of social media: social networks (e.g., Facebook, Linkedin), blogs (e.g., YouTube, Flickr), collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia, Wikitravel), virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life) and virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft). Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides (2012) add to this list microblogs (e.g., Twitter), review and rating platforms

(e.g., TripAdvisor) and forums (e.g., Fodor's Travel Talk). Marine-Roig (2019) names the main sources of UGC containing information about tourism destinations, which are widely studied by researchers: travel-related forums, posts and photographs on social media, travel blogs and online travel review (OTR) websites.

As Pan, MacLaurin and Crotts (2007) state, that tourism-related media covers every step and every aspect of travelling: from planning to flying back, from tourism facilities to sentiments about a place. All these steps and aspects are very subjective, as according to the authors' example, such action as driving is perceived both positively and negatively by different travellers. According to Cai, Gartner & Munar (2009), blogging is an important tool for tourism that allows reading and writing reviews about travel facilities and activities. Morgan, Pritchard and Pride (2011) point onto the diversity of channels, where travel content that be posted: Wikitravel is considered as comprehensive and up-to-date guide, YouTube is often used for sharing travel reports in a video format, Flickr is comfortable in use due to tags helping to find information. Xiang and Gretzel (2010) consider TripAdvisor as the most well-known travel-related social media platform and are convinced in its impact on destination image.

The creators of platform TripAdvisor (n.d., a) define it as the largest website for unbiased travel reviews, which is updated by real travellers. Having more than 860 million reviews and presented on 49 markets, the website provides detailed textual and pictural information adding to the reliability of reviews. Considering increasing popularity, the ease of use and accessibility of TripAdvisor, Xiang and Gretzel (2010) have expressed a belief, that it can become a primary online information source.

Gretzel and the co-authors (Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy, 2007; Gretzel & Yoo, 2008) have conducted several studies analysing data presented on TripAdvisor. According to their thorough investigation (Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy, 2007, p. 4), more than 90% of respondents are affected by travellers' reviews during decision-making, 64% of Internet users specifically checks travel blogs and 57% do it regularly. Almost all respondents find travel reviews as a great way to inform themselves about a destination, evaluate particular options and alternatives, avoid unwanted places and receive new ideas. Gretzel and Yoo (2008) summarise, that most respondents read reviews to make a better decision of accommodation and a third – of dining and activities. The researchers (Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy, 2007) have also studied respondents from the perspective of UGC creation – writing reviews and evaluations on travel blogs and social media investigating the motives of posting UGC, as 83% admitted that they write reviews (Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy, 2007, p. 5). According to the authors, users leave their feedback mainly for three reasons: concern for others, help for businesses and personal extraversion.

Some studies have been made to see the connection of eWOM and its effect on destination image formation. Comparing media, Shuqair and Cragg (2017) have concluded, that some

of them (e.g., Instagram) may influence the overall perception of image, whereas others (e.g., TripAdvisor) refer to diverse attributes of destination image. Molinillo, Liebana-Cabanillas & Anaya-Sanchez (2017) have found out, that cognitive and affective images obtained in social media majorly influence the overall image. Stepaniuk (2015), in the recent study devoted to the relation between destination image and social media content, has discovered its strong influence on all three components of image (cognitive, affective, conative). Thereby, Shuqair & Cragg (2017) recommend stimulating users to generate online content, considering that most of eWOM is positive, and positive eWOM leads to positive image and better awareness about destination image.

Overall, not only users (travellers) receive valuable information about the destination and benefit from receiving eWOM, but also DMOs, who may monitor and reflect in order to plan marketing strategy creating correct induced image in addition to organic image that is formed by the WOM and eWOM of visitors. Molinillo, Liebana-Cabanillas and Anaya-Sanchez (2017) emphasise the importance for DMOs operating social media as well as official websites, as it provides travellers with the exchange of up-to-date information, whereas DMOs' responsiveness contributes to reliability of the information. In its turn, DMOs receive a quick and diverse feedback that enables controlling and improving quality of the product in short time. Pan, MacLaurin and Crotts (2007) note, that monitoring visitors' feedback allows to gain more detailed and honest reviews, than conducting a survey; moreover, the data from UGC provides with customer analysis and profile, making it possible to evaluate audience that is harder to reach. Thus, it is beneficial for both parties – visitors and DMOs – to exchange the information online, that makes two-way communication more honest, accessible and fast, which leads to better decisions for tourism consumers as well as tourism suppliers.

2 TOURIST DESTINATION LJUBLJANA

2.1 Tourism supply in Ljubljana

Slovenia is a Central-European country, located to the south of the Alps and to the north-east of Adriatic Sea and surrounded by Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Croatia (Wikipedia, n.d., b). Its population is 2,1 million inhabitants with Slovenians as a majority speaking Slovenian language. The climate of the country is mostly continental with sub-Mediterranean on the coast and Alpine in the mountains. Culturally, Slovenia represents a mix of Slavic, Germanic and Romance interactions, which provides the country with the diversity of offer (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2017). Economically and politically, Slovenia has claimed independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 and become a part of the European Union in 2004 with later introduction of euro as a currency.

The tourism of Slovenia is generally considered mature with a lack of service culture, whereas the awareness about the country is rather low (Dwyer, Knežević Cvelbar, Edwards

& Mihalič, 2011). Considering the cultural and natural diversity, Slovenia offers numerous activities and attractions within a small area that can be seen within a short period (Konecnik Ruzzier, 2006). Visiting and crossing the country is easy due to developed transport and tourism infrastructure, however, international aerial connection can still be improved (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2017).

The biggest challenges in tourism have appeared after the disintegration of Yugoslavia, when Slovenia faced decreased tourist demand and consumption due to the low quality of tourism supply (Mihalič, 1998). However, since 1992, when Slovenia has started the process of tourism revitalisation (Jeruc, 2014) and begun promoting itself as a westward-looking country (Božić, Kennel, Vijučić & Jovanović, 2017, p. 383), it is considered as one of the most economically successful ex-socialist countries demonstrating constant growth in the number of tourists and overnight stays (Konecnik Ruzzier, 2006). Up until now Slovenia has been enhancing its image as a democratic, stable, and successful European country with preservation of its national identity (Konecnik Ruzzier, 2006, p. 81). According to the travel and tourism (T&T) competitiveness report of the World Economic Forum (2019), Slovenia takes the 36th place in the world, demonstrating high indicators in safety, environmental sustainability, tourism service infrastructure and natural resources. Nowadays, the main strategy is that Slovenia is a green, active and healthy destination for 5-star experience (Slovenian Tourist Board, 2016; Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2017).

Ljubljana is the capital and the largest city of Slovenia (Wikipedia, n.d., a), which has a central location and connects the main routes passing Slovenia. Relatively tourism, Ljubljana is a leading Slovenian destination by the number of visitors and overnight stays as well as the amount of tourism offer (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016). The city gathered numerous awards, mostly in terms of sustainability (Bilynets, Knezevic Cvelbar & Dolnicar, 2020, p. 5): Green Capital of Europe, Global Top 100 Sustainable Destinations, World Travel Market Responsible Tourism, European Capital of Smart Tourism for sustainability and digitalisation. It is also among 50 most successful European congress cities (Ljubljana Tourism, 2011).

The DMO of Ljubljana, Ljubljana tourist board, or Ljubljana Tourism (*sl.* Turizem Ljubljana), in their Strategy of Marketing and Development of the Destination of Ljubljana (Ljubljana Tourism, 2014; Ljubljana Tourism, 2021) has been developing the strategy for better tourism managements of the city in years 2014-2020 and 2021-2027. In 2014, the vision of Ljubljana as a tourist destination has been set by the board as such: "By the year 2020, Ljubljana will be internationally recognised as full of experiences, European urban destination, a city for active and romantic experience as well as business meetings throughout the year; Ljubljana will remain a city with a high standard of living and pleasant atmosphere for residents and visitors" (Ljubljana Tourism, 2014, p. 33), – whereas in 2021, the vision has been changed to: "Ljubljana is the leading and most creative city destination

in the world for sustainable lifestyle" (Ljubljana Tourism, 2021, p. 57). There is an interesting shift in the strategy formulation: the vision has changed as a response to the global circumstances due to SARS-CoV-2, also known as COVID-19 (World Health Organization, n.d.), where the focus on activity has been replaced with the focus on sustainability and safety. Moreover, Ljubljana Tourism (Ljubljana Tourism, 2021, p. 50) identifies the following strategic directions: improving the life standard of locals with by facilitating local tourism, expanding the familiar tourist area beyond the Old Town, developing tourism offer and continuing promoting Ljubljana as a boutique destination.

Several years ago, Ljubljana tourist board (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016) has identified most visitors as the cultural segment that has a higher degree of education and purchasing power and defined culture as the main reason of visiting the capital. They have built up the strategy for years 2016-2019 based the promotion of cultural tourism that includes history, architecture, events, culinary, etc. As Ljubljana is recognised as a city of high cultural standard and diversity comparable to other European cities, the DMO has also set up a vision from a cultural perspective: "Ljubljana is the cultural, artistic, full of experience and festive Slovenian capital with an appealing offer for foreign and domestic tourists" (Ljubljana Tourism. 2016, p. 23). Based on the strategy, the main strategic directions are developing a differentiated tourism offer, informatively, logistically, and financially accessible offer (value for money) and personalised boutique offer, which leads to two main goals – to increase the share of domestic and foreign visitors Ljubljana interested in cultural offer and to increase the share of foreign visitors of Ljubljana interested in cultural events and organisations (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 25-26).

Moreover, according to the policies of developing Ljubljana as a congress destination in 2012-2020 (Ljubljana Tourism, 2011), the tourist board has aimed to position the city also as a leading congress destination in south-east Europe using the slogan: "Cool capital for great meetings" (Ljubljana Tourism, 2011, p. 9). The main values of this strategy are orientation on partnership, protection of environment, stimulating social responsibility, mutual respect and trust among stakeholders, uniqueness, and quality. Thus, to become a congress capital within the real circumstances and defined values, the DMO set the main practical goals, which are: aerial accessibility of Ljubljana and increasing the number of flights, increasing the amount of financial support from destination side and the awareness of Ljubljana in the world (Ljubljana Tourism, 2011).

Among the key tourism products for period 2021-2027 (Ljubljana Tourism, 2021, pp. 69-70), the management of Ljubljana Tourism sees congress and business meetings, which also enables the improvement of aerial connection, city vacation with all-season offer and gastronomy. The DMO is planning to continue strongly supporting culture and sports and additionally develop the event sphere that has high potential for tourism.

The strategic plans of Ljubljana's DMO give clear understanding, that tourism is a key industry for city development. Having challenging years in the past of local tourism and recent SARS-CoV-2, the management of both the country and the capital are promptly changing and renovating the approach for self-representation on tourism market. Constant analysis and innovations in tourism demonstrated by Ljubljana Tourism ought to increase the destination performance and attract more and more visitors from around the world to visit Ljubljana.

2.2 Tourism demand in Ljubljana

Recently, before the ongoing SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, Slovenian tourism was presenting a significant growth. In 2018 (Slovenian Tourist Board, 2018), tourist arrivals increased by 8% (total number = 5 933 266 arrivals), whereas overnight stays increased by 10% (total number = 15 694 705 overnight stays) than in 2017; a year later, in 2019 (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., b; Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., c), these indicators rose to 6 229 579 arrivals and 15 775 331 overnight stays, that are higher than in 2018 by 5% and 0,5%, respectively (Table 2). According to the analysis of the Slovenian tourism board (STB) conducted during 2018 (Slovenian Tourist Board, 2018), Slovenian tourism has been lately above average in Europe regarding the number of the arrivals of foreign tourists. Speaking about foreign tourists, the tourists from China, Australia, Canada, Japan and the USA have the biggest number of overnight stays.

With the ongoing SARS-CoV-2 pandemic the situation has changed drastically (Slovenian Tourist Board, n.d., b). Tourist arrivals fell by 51% to 3 065 085, whereas overnights stay decreased by 42% to 9 204 374. As presented in the same source, 2021 brought 31% more tourist arrivals and 22% more overnight stays that equal to 4 003 464 and 11 251 378 respectively. In this period of time, most tourists have come from Germany, Austria, Italy, Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Hungary. As it is possible to see, Slovenian tourism managed to recover only partially, and the picture of tourists has changed: overseas visitors making the biggest share have been totally replaced by visitors from neighbouring or closer European countries.

Table 1. Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Slovenia for 2018-2021.

	TOURIST ARRIVALS	OVERNIGHT STAYS
YOY change	+8%	+10%
2018	5 933 266	15 694 705
YOY change	+5%	+0,5%
2019	6 229 579	15 775 331
YOY change	-51%	-42%
2020	3 065 085	9 204 374
YOY change	+31%	+22%
2021	4 003 464	11 251 378

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (n.d., b, c).

Regarding the regions, the reports (Slovenian Tourist Board, 2018; Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., a) showed, that municipality Ljubljana had the highest number of overnight stays as well as growth of overnight stays in comparison with the previous year. According to the data of the Statistical Office (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., b; Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., c) for Ljubljana (Table 3), tourist arrivals in 2018 and 2019 equal 1 022 862 and 1 127 904, respectively, whereas overnight stays equal 2 179 914 and 2 227 669, respectively. The statistics shows constant growth in the indicators for tourism in the city. Sadly, due to SARS-CoV-2 in 2020, the overall numbers for tourist arrivals and overnights stays reduced at 77,4% and 75,7%, respectively (Ljubljana Tourism, 2021, p. 21-22), with a bigger harm for international tourism. The following year, 2021, the numbers started rising again, where the increase of domestic visitors is especially notable with its outpacing the numbers before the pandemic. Presumably, considering ongoing circumstances locals choose to explore own country rather than going abroad meanwhile supported by tourism benefits provided by the state.

Table 2. Tourist arrivals and overnight stays for foreign and domestic visitors in Ljubljana for 2018-2021.

	TOURIST ARRIVALS		OVERNIGHT STAYS	
	FOREIGN	DOMESTIC	FOREIGN	DOMESTIC
2018	1 022 862		2 179 916	
	965 111	57 753	2 067 395	112 521
2019	1 127 904		2 227 669	
	1 068 887	59 017	2 129 414	98 255
2020	254 964		540 195	
	214 579	40 385	461 566	78 629
2021 (prelim. data)	415 239		865 866	
	350 733	64 506	746 935	118 931

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (n.d., b, c).

Earlier, Ljubljana Tourism has conducted a thorough analysis of city tourism, which has included the analysis of the city visitors, their demographic description, motivations, and preferences. One of the reports before the pandemic shows, that the main markets for Ljubljana in 2019 were: Italy (11%), Germany (9%), the USA (6%), the UK (6%), Asian market (6%) and France (5%). In the first year of pandemic, the main visitors in 2020 came from: domestic market (15%), Germany (14%), Italy (9%), France (5%) and Croatia (5%). The results of 2021 (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., a) demonstrate, that the current key markets are: domestic market (16%), Italy (9%), France (7%), Austria (6%), the Netherlands (5%) and the growing comparative share of distant tourists from the USA (4%). As seen from the results, visitors from Italy and France have been representing the most stable interest in Ljubljana among European markets. Among distant markets, the Asian market, the USA and the UK were the most notable and significant in 2019, however, due to SARS-CoV-2, the amount of visitors from other continents has been significantly reduced giving a space for neighbouring and close European markets following a very large share of tourists representing domestic market.

According to some of recent data of Ljubljana Tourism (2018, p. 3), visitors tended to spend in Ljubljana more than 2 nights, and this number had been increasing before 2020. About a third used to come to Ljubljana by public ground transport, whereas a bit less visitors used to come by plane or a car – and this number had been growing (Ljubljana Tourism, 2018, p. 19). More than a third of visitors reserved an accommodation over website Booking.com. According to the report for 2018 (Ljubljana Tourism, 2018, p. 3), the number of travellers with partners and friends was also constantly increasing, whereas the number of solo travellers is decreasing. Relatively the information source, with help of which travellers get acknowledged with Ljubljana, 41% name friends and acquaintances, 25% - social networks, 17% - from before, 16% - tourist blogs and 15% - media (Ljubljana Tourism, 2018, p. 4), which makes the Internet one of the most influential information sources for potential visitors of Ljubljana.

The reports also include the analysis of visitors' consumption (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 29): the average expenditure used to equal 51 euro per visitor, where the highest amount – 30 euro – was consumed for dining, 10 euro by sightseeing and cultural events. In addition, the later report of Ljubljana Tourism (2018, p. 2) showed, that the above-average expenditures used to be made by tourists from France, South Korea, Austria, Canada, and Belgium. Regarding tourists' motivation, the results show, that the main trigger for visiting Ljubljana is enjoying its tourist attractions and architecture, whereas one third is interested in local cuisine and one quarter – in shopping; around 3,4% come to the capital for cultural events, which adds to results, proving, that the main motivation for travelling to Ljubljana is connected to a cultural aspect (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 20).

Another significant part of the report is devoted to the places of Ljubljana, that tourists visit and like (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 20). The visitors prefer to explore the city by foot, and the main touristic route lays within the Old Town between Dragon bridge and Carl's bridge and between the castle and Kino Šiška. The most inspiring places that people often share – with their close ones or on the Internet, are Preseren's square and the Triple bridge as well as numerous other cultural facilities: statues, Ljubljana castle, Butcher's bridge, architecture, cathedrals, cuisine (as well as the Carniolan sausage) and Metelkova. Among disappointing places are named weak presentation of Plečnik's heritage and short working hour for restaurants. The visitors estimate Ljubljana overall positively, especially noting hospitality, dining and architecture. The above results are also confirmed by the report of 2018 (Ljubljana Tourism, 2018, p. 4), where 88% said that they come to visit main tourist attractions, 63% - to experience local cuisine and 58% - to see architecture, which highlights the importance of cultural aspect for Ljubljana. The research outcomes of Božić, Kennel, Vijučić and Jovanović (2017) confirm, that cultural pull-factors are among the most significant for visiting Ljubljana alongside with its night life.

Considering the results, where the cultural aspect plays major role in the tourism of destination Ljubljana, the DMO has created the Strategy of marketing and development for

2014-2020 (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 21-22), where they analyse visitors dividing them in two markets. The first one represents closer countries within 500-km distance available with any direct transportation: Italy, Germany, Austria, the UK, Croatia, Serbia, and France. The target visitor of the first group is represented by a 30–49-year-old employed and educated couples. The second one includes further European countries, like Scandinavian countries, Spain, Belgium, and the Netherlands. This group mainly consists of 18-30-year-old young people and families with children. Overall, among visitors interested in culture there are more women than men, they are 20-39- and above-60-year-old; they visit Ljubljana for the first time – more likely alone, with friends or in an organized tour, staying in 2-star hotels on average (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 21).

Moreover, Ljubljana Tourism (2016) classifies visitors into three groups considering the motivation for visiting the city with the purpose of culture. First, it is tourists having cultural attractions or events as the main motivation; second, tourists having both cultural visit and other intention as the main motivation; third, tourists having the motivation different from cultural tourism, however, getting involved in cultural facilities and events. According to Ljubljana Tourism, it is hard to measure cultural tourism as a pull factor due to the large number of visitors randomly involved in culture and small amount of those, for whom cultural tourism is a primary intention.

Overall, tourism indicators of demand in Ljubljana have been rising over the last decade. More visitors representing different groups are becoming interested in the destination due to informational awareness, mostly over the Internet, and exchange with other visitors, as well as they are open to have diverse experiences in Ljubljana, which requires the local DMO to constantly improve and expand tourism offer.

2.3 Ljubljana destination image

Whereas the image of Slovenia has been studied more thoroughly recently, with exquisite contribution of Konečnik, also known as Konecnik Ruzzier (2005; 2006), the image of its capital has been lacking up-to-date thorough studies done from different perspectives. Since tourism in Ljubljana has received a huge push from the demand side and started developing more rapidly, only few works show a real picture of tourism in recent years. However, nonetheless their amount, the positive point is that they raise the investigation of Ljubljana tourist image from different perspectives.

One of the earliest analyses devoted to the image of Ljubljana after deformation of Yugoslavia has been implemented by Pichler Milanović and Stefanović (1997), however, authors take a non-tourist perspective, conducting investigation with representatives of authorities or other public sectors. Most respondents consider Ljubljana a cultural (78%) and a business (74%) centre, whereas more than a half still considers it as research and development (59%) and congress (52%) centre (Pichler Milanović & Stefanović, 1997, p.

127). Almost a half name Budapest in Hungary and Zagreb in Croatia as the main capitals-competitors and almost a quarter also names cities Vienna (Austria), Prague (Czech Republic), Graz (Austria), Trieste (Italy) and Maribor (Slovenia) (Pichler Milanović & Stefanović, 1997, p. 128). The similarities with these cities are mostly due to business environment, central geolocation, and the presence of cultural mix.

Another earlier work that helps to shed the light on the image of Ljubljana, however already done from a tourism perspective, is the work of Lutkenhaus (2011), where the author investigates the image of city visitors and non-visitors. The study shows that the city has a moderately positive image mostly based on stereotypes among non-visitors, however visitors estimate it very high as their expectations are exceeded. Visitors, in their turn, give the highest evaluation to architecture, history, hospitality, atmosphere, uniqueness and safety, whereas lowest – to vibrance and size, although still within moderate rating frames. Such associations as chaos, danger, bad climate and dirtiness connected with the Balkan have not been confirmed after a visitation of Ljubljana. However, whereas the expectations about tourist attractions were met, the expectations about history were, apparently, too high. Finally, Lutkenhaus concludes with the results referring to the induced image of Ljubljana – specifically, that in traditional media it is more positive than in online information sources, however, all in all, only few respondents admit, that they have heard about Ljubljana in general.

Highly significant impact has been made by the analysis for the Ljubljana strategy in 2014-2020 implemented by Ljubljana Tourism (Ljubljana Tourism, 2014). The survey shows that the respondents associate the city with a pleasant touristic place, also for foreign tourists; economic, political, cultural, congress and university centre of Slovenia; comfortable base for travelling in surrounding regions; rich offer of cuisine, accommodation, activities and events; developed, safe and clean capital; relatively disabled-friendly place (Ljubljana Tourism, 2014, p. 29). According to Ljubljana Tourism, the main advantages of Ljubljana are the quality of living, pleasant atmosphere and the beauty of surroundings, which is positive ground for creating a successful tourist destination.

Shifting to more recent research works, one of thorough analyses of pull factors for visiting Ljubljana has been implemented in the article of Božić, Kennel, Vijučić and Jovanović (2017). According to their research, the main motive is cultural – visiting cultural facilities and seeing historical heritage; following this, entertainment and nightlife are second and one of the most significant pull-factors – most likely due to the status of the capital and many young visitors. Less significant motives (however, still important) are shopping and education mostly presented by the University of Ljubljana – the oldest and largest university in Slovenia accepting local and foreign students (University of Ljubljana, 2020). Ranked next, visiting cultural events (a motive, that can be referred to culture) is also a reason for visiting Ljubljana, that has to be taken into consideration, mostly due to the diversity of offer: Ljubljana hosts more than 14 000 events yearly, including 14 international festivals (Visit

Ljubljana, 2020). Gastronomy, which is often considered by researchers as a part of culture, follows cultural events, because of offer diversity, uniqueness of local cuisine, food culture and high-quality service. The other significant motive is natural environment – due to the general beauty of Slovenia, the diversity of green zones in Ljubljana and its award as European Green Capital 2016. Sport and visiting sportive events, occupying one of the last ranks in the survey, can still be considered important, because of specifics connected to the limited amount of people interested in sport, however, given average rankings shows, that even being a small place, Ljubljana attracts visitors involved in sport. Two last motives of visitations were named business and religion, respectively.

According to the authors' analysis of the data above (Božić, Kennel, Vijučić & Jovanović, 2017), there are several correlations in these results. Thus, visitors interested in culture are also interested in education choosing a group of statements connected under category "self-improvement"; those, who are interested in entertainment and night life are also interested in shopping – tend to choose ones from category "leisure activities"; those, who prefer to be involved in cultural events would rather be involved in gastronomy pursuing motives united under "hedonic consumption"; finally, visitors, whose motive is natural environment, also choose sport, which both refer to "active vacation" (Božić, Kennel, Vijučić & Jovanović,, 2017, p. 394). The results show that targeting a specific group of visitors has to also include the environment, that meets the visitors' main motive.

The later report of Ljubljana Tourism about visitors' consumption (Ljubljana Tourism, 2018) has, as well, a shorter assessment of the general image of Ljubljana. It reports, that 97% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the experience of stay in Ljubljana. Moreover, 44% of visitors recommends visiting the city to other people. In these terms, the goal of Ljubljana Tourism could be reducing the difference between these two indicators.

One of the most recent works on this topic is the publication of Bilynets, Knežević Cvelbar and Dolnicar (2020) regarding organic destination image of Ljubljana before and after the visit. According to the authors, in both categories the image stays positive: precisely, after the visitation such indicators as safety, friendliness, cleanness, environment-friendliness and sustainability rise, whereas the one referring to the post-communist vibe declines, making crowdedness the only negative characteristic that rises in the post-visit stage. Moreover, the biggest difference between before and after the visit is represented by indicators crowdedness, sustainability, and environmental friendliness, respectively. As the research is specifically aimed at finding out the perception of sustainable initiatives, it has been found out, that visitors positively acknowledge waste management and recycling, pedestrianalisation, car and bicycle sharing systems, rooftop beehives and solar panels, the variety of vegan/vegetarian food offer and, finally, fountains with drinking water.

Summing up the existing reading material about the image of Ljubljana, it can be concluded, that it is generally positive. The key advantages of the city are culture (mostly, architecture

and gastronomy), safety and cleanness, hospitality, and atmosphere. Congress and business environment are somewhat controversial in the image formation role: whereas some respondents admit its significance, others do not, - however, it may be explained in the way, that business tourism is generally not important for most of the visitors coming for leisure, and they only connect it to business and congresses due to its status of capital. The other indicators estimated rather positively or rather negatively in different works are liveliness of the place seen as vibrance or as crowdedness, which may get a different assessment due to psychological and cultural background of a visitor or a nation.

3 AN ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANIC DESTINATION IMAGE OF LJUBLJANA BASED ON USER-GENERATED CONTENT

3.1 Research approach

3.1.1 Problem statement

Slovenia is a small young country and yet an undiscovered destination seeking for identity of tourism branding, which is one of the most important industries for its economy (Slovenian Tourist Board, n.d., a). Slovenian Tourist Board as the official destination management organisation focuses on promoting country on local and, especially, international markets. Together with Slovenia as a whole, its capital and main tourist destination Ljubljana endures rapid tourism growth and development over the recent decade (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016; Ljubljana Tourism, 2021), however this growth disclosure new challenges as well as potentials for the city.

Most of the knowledge about the tourism of the capital is represented by Ljubljana Tourism, the city's tourist board, and includes statistics of primary tourism indicators without providing specific analyses as well as the analysis on the given research topic – destination image of Ljubljana. This, despite the presence of few research works on the topic, creates a lack of reliable knowledge and keeps the city image unstudied with the consideration of the constant dynamics of tourist perception over time.

Due to the growing number of social platforms, the Internet plays significant role in forming tourist image about the destination also being a convenient instrument for the image evaluation. The destination of Ljubljana has a lack of research works representing the image of tourists using social platforms, however it is an important source of organic image received from tourists by potential visitors of the destination (Gartner, 1993) due to its reliability and scale.

3.1.2 Research purpose and objectives

User-generated content is the source of organic image that enables effective and large-scale processing of tourist perceptions. In order to study the image of Ljubljana, it is possible to comprise the visitors of world-wide origins and different age, gender, interest and occupation groups. Thus, the main research purpose is to analyse the organic destination image of Ljubljana by using user-generated content.

In order to achieve the main purpose, several research objectives have to be met:
1) to assess the literature background and empirical studies about destination image.
2) to define research hypotheses.
3) to retrieve tourist data and prepare it for the analysis.
4) to provide descriptive statistics and test the hypotheses with the help of defined statistical methods.
5) to make a conclusion, implications for stakeholders and recommendations for future studies.

3.1.3 Research hypotheses

In the frames of the current research, several hypotheses are defined in order to enable understanding the image of Ljubljana and, thus, meeting the main goal.

The research results of Kladou and Mavragani (2016) for Istanbul demonstrate, that tourists posting user-generated content do not provide the same number of cognitive, affective and conative references. To be more precise, there are 63,74% of cognitive, 22,52% of affective and 13,74% of conative references among 684 overall references (Kladou & Mavragani, 2016, p. 10). In this regard, cognitive references are the most posted and conative ones are the least posted showing that tourists are more ready to share their knowledge rather than their attitude and share attitude – rather than make an action towards the destination.

H1: Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references.
H2: Conative references about Ljubljana are less frequent than affective references.

Kladou and Mavragani (2016) have found out, that positive references about Istanbul tourist attractions significantly exceed negative ones. According to the study (Kladou & Mavragani, 2016, p. 11), the share of positive references is 84,5% of overall references belonging to affective and conative component (cognitive component is excluded from the comparison due to its emotional neutrality). Moreover, positive references exceed negative in case of affective and conative component separately and overall.

H3: There are more positive than negative references about Ljubljana.

- H3a: There are more positive than negative references for affective component.
- H3b: There are more positive than negative references for conative component.

According to the studies of geographical distance (Hunt, 1975; Crompton, 1979; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008) and Konečnik's study of Slovenian image (Konečnik, 2005), tourists from different markets perceive tourist attractions differently. In the research, Konečnik (2005) compares the perception of closer (neighbouring countries) and distant (non-neighbouring countries) markets relative to Slovenia. The study (Konečnik, 2005) demonstrates, that the overall image is more positive among tourists from closer markets, which rejects the previous conclusions made by Crompton (1979a), who has confirmed that the further the visitors reside from the country the better the destination image is.

H4: The references about Ljubljana are more positive among tourists representing closer markets than among tourists representing distant markets.

- H4a: Affective references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.
- H4b: Conative references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Sampling and data collection

In this research work, I process user-generated content to investigate organic image of Ljubljana. The data collection is implemented by retrieving reviews from TripAdvisor, which is considered worldwide as one of the largest and most influential online social platforms for tourism reviews (TripAdvisor, n.d., a). The sample is random limited only by TripAdvisor users, who have ever made publications on web page "Ljubljana Old Town" (TripAdvisor, n.d., b). Since TripAdvisor creates independent webpages only for attractions and not for cities, "Ljubljana Old Town" has been chosen for the analysis as the most touristy attraction and city part, that has more than 7700 reviews on the platform. More than 4000 reviews are written in English language and considered for the study to avoid language limitations and "translation noise" (Godnov & Redek, 2015). Reviewers, who identify Slovenia as their domestic country, are not included in the analysis due to a high presence of domestic tourists (who are well-aware of Ljubljana and, most likely, have a not-tourist image of it), local businesses or Ljubljana citizens; reviewers not specifying the country are also not included. Thus, after being filtered by these requirements, 3148 reviews have been collected for the analysis. The data includes reviews for the period 08.2011-09.2020. The data updates on the website have also been revised within the following year during further working on the research, however only a few reviews have been updated within that time

that would not influence the results of the research regardless and have not been included into the current work.

The data is collected by the method of content analysis of primary data with web-scraping technique applied through browser application "Web Scraper" (Web Scraper, n.d.), which enables to extract data from websites. Considering the specifics of the application not allowing to extract the information from longer reviews, this information has been collected manually. The data that has been collected: reviewer's profile name, country of origin, gender (when it is possible to identify from a text or a profile picture), type of travellers, date of travel and the text of the review. Following the code of ethics, profile names will be used only to facilitate the analysis and will not be announced in the results.

3.2.2 Statistical analysis: descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing

The method of data analysis is the sequence of qualitative and quantitative analyses. The qualitative part includes text-mining and enables to classify review references as cognitive, affective, and conative components. Cognitive attributes are sorted in accordance with the classification by Beerli and Martin (2004a, p. 659): "natural resources", "tourist infrastructure", "natural environment", "general infrastructure", "leisure & recreation", "culture, history & arts", "social environment", "political & economic factors", "atmosphere" (Table 1). Affective attributes are estimated by pair "positive-negative" (Kladou & Mavragani, 2016) as any more detailed classification of pairs may create misinterpretation in this analysis; the references that do not contain positive or negative evaluation are related to the category of "neutral" and do not participate in hypotheses testing. Conative component has been primarily evaluated by questions (Pike & Ryan, 2004, Konečnik & Gartner, 2007): "Is there an intention to revisit Ljubljana (Old Town)?" or "Is there a recommendation of visiting Ljubljana (Old Town)?", i.e., the intention to revisit or not and the intention to recommend or not; however, while processing the data, the need of adding new categories has occurred, which are: the intention to spread positive or negative word-of-mouth, the intention to prolong the stay, recommendation to stay or not to stay longer.

The reviews containing qualitative data from TripAdvisor are processed into the quantitative form using a coding approach. Thus, each reference mentioned in a review is coded by a number representing a particular group of cognitive, affective, or conative component. Such parameters as gender, country, the market it represents, and the type of traveller also receive a coded number. This data is analysed using descriptive statistics in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, n.d.). Hypotheses H1-H3 are tested with the help of Chi-square goodness-of-fit test and H4 – with the help of Chi-square test of independence. After the statistical analysis of the quantitative data, the results are decoded into the text form and described in the current work.

3.3 Analysis of the results

3.3.1 Descriptive statistics of TripAdvisor users

The current research contains the analysis of 3148 reviews published on website TripAdvisor, page "Ljubljana Old Town", by its users excluding users identifying Slovenia as their country of origin. The analysis has been conducted with the help of descriptive statistics of frequencies in programme SPSS (n.d.). All the information has been coded for facilitating the analysis and decoded for demonstrating the results in the current research, thus, the data below is represented by the tables constructed in MS Word for visual convenience.

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for the users of TripAdvisor by gender and type of traveller. More than a third of reviewers do not demonstrate their gender in personal information (profile picture, personal description), thus, it is not possible to identify it. Among those, who show their gender by any mean, there are 36,7% of men and 27,6% of women: interestingly, that men tend to leave reviews about Ljubljana more than women approximately by a third.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of users by gender and type.

VARIABLE	INDICATOR	SAMPLE	
		FREQUENCY	%
Gender (100%)	Male	1155	36,7
	Female	869	27,6
	No data	1124	35,7
Type of traveller (100%)	Solo	337	10,7
	Couples	1333	42,3
	Family	440	14,0
	Friends	553	17,6
	Business	153	4,9
	No data	332	10,5

Source: TripAdvisor (n.d,, b).

The other variable is the type of traveller, which is represented on TripAdvisor by five indicators: solo travellers, couples, families, travellers with friends, business travellers. Most of Ljubljana visitors are represented by couples, who are 42,3% of all travellers. Whereas the share of other categories is distributed approximately equally, business travellers represent the rarest type of travellers, which is explained by the specifics of such travelling (business affairs as a motivation or a purpose of travel instead of vacation).

According to the table (Appendix 2) showing the distribution of tourists in accordance with a season, the most popular month is September with 453 total reviews, the least is February with 85 total reviews. Generally, May (350), June (362), July (382), August (395) and September (453) have a larger number of reviews, what allows to refer to these months as a higher season. April (213) has a lower number of reviews, but not the lowest, on the table it

is also marked as one of the most and least reviewed months in different years, thus, cannot be fully related to higher or lower seasons. January (111), February (85), March (144), November (140) and December (166) can be considered as a lower season with fewer total reviews. The obtained results depict Ljubljana more as a summer destination or destination for the warmer season.

As for the year, the most reviewed year is 2016 with 640 total reviews, whereas the least is 2011 with 7 total reviews (the absence of reviews on the website before June 2011 has to be taken into consideration). In the period of 2011-2016 it is seen from the table, that the number of reviews is growing, which can be explained by the growth of tourist number, by the growth of TripAdvisor popularity or motivation to post among visitors globally or by the growth of TripAdvisor popularity or motivation to post among the visitors of Ljubljana. Thus, the fall of the review number in the period of 2017-2019 can be explained mostly from the perspective of TripAdvisor users, as the number of Ljubljana visitors had been constantly growing in this time frame (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, n.d., a). The only year marked as least visited in the table (Appendix 2) is 2020, which numbers of reviews per month are less than 10 or even equal to 0: the primary explanation of such decline is coronavirus pandemic SARS-CoV-2 (World Health Organization, n.d.), during which most tourists are restricted from travelling or choose not to travel.

Comparing the reviewers by their country of origin (Table 5, Appendix 3), it is notable, that the most active users on the Ljubljana Old Town webpage are from the USA (731 reviews, 23,3% of all the reviews) and the UK (704 reviews, 22,4% of all the reviews). It does not necessarily mean that visitors from these countries are the most frequent in Ljubljana, however it can be explained by the fact that only reviews in English language have been taken for the research, whereas English is a native language for these countries, and the fact that TripAdvisor is USA-based website and initially initiated for American users (TripAdvisor, n.d., a). This suggestion is also confirmed by the following ranking of countries with a larger number of reviewers among which are Australia (229 reviews, 7,3% of all the reviews) and Canada (148 reviews, 4,7% of all the reviews) where English is also a native language and informational fields among these countries may be easier shared.

Among the neighbouring countries illustrated in Table 5 the leading one is Italy (91 review, 2,9% of all the reviews), following Croatia (65 reviews, 2,1% of all the reviews), Austria (39 reviews, 1,2% of all the reviews) and, finally, Hungary (31 review, 1% of all the reviews). Thus, each neighbouring country belonging to the closer market of Slovenia is represented by at least 1% of reviewers.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of users by country of origin (full table – Appendix 3.).

RANK	COUNTRY	N OF REVIEWS	N OF REVIEWS, %
1	USA	731	23,2
2	UK	704	22,4
3	Australia	229	7,3
4	Canada	148	4,7
5	Italy	91	2,9
6	India	67	2,1
7	Croatia	65	2,1
8	Netherlands	65	2,1
9	Israel	54	1,7
10	Germany	46	1,5
11	Belgium	45	1,4
12	Singapore	44	1,4
13	Switzerland	43	1,4
14	Greece	42	1,3
15	Austria	39	1,2
16	Finland	39	1,2
17	Ireland	36	1,1
18	France	34	1,1
19	Hungary	31	1,0
20	Serbia	28	0,9

Source: TripAdvisor (n.d,, b).

As the countries belong to close or distant markets, they can be also presented in the table of frequencies on this basis as listed in Table 6. Close market consists of 226 reviews (7,2% of all reviewers), whereas distant market – of 2922 reviews (92,8% of all reviewers). Thus, the representatives of close market are more than ten times less frequent in the current research than the ones from distant market. Due to such circumstances in sample sizes, the results in some analyses are revised percentwise.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of users by market.

INDICATOR	SAMPLE	
	FREQUENCY	%
Close market	226	7,2
Distant market	2922	92,8
TOTAL	3148	100

Source: TripAdvisor n.d,, b.

In this analysis all the 3148 reviews have been taken into consideration. In total, users from 106 countries have left their publication on TripAdvisor's page of "Ljubljana Old Town" in English language.

3.3.2 Hypothesis testing

3.3.2.1 Hypotheses H1 and H2: Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references, whereas conative references are less frequent than affective references

In order to complete the research and analyse it from the perspectives designed in the methodological part, several hypotheses have to be tested.

The first two hypotheses are based on the research results of Kladou & Mavragani (2016, p. 10) for Istanbul stating that tourists generate a different number of cognitive, affective and conative references, where cognitive references are the most frequent and conative references are the least frequent. Thus, these hypotheses are formulated as:
H1: Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references.
H2: Conative references about Ljubljana are less frequent than affective references.

To process the primary data collected by the method of content analysis more effectively, the information has to be coded. Cognitive references are sorted in accordance with the classification of Beerli & Martin (Table 1) and decoded by the numbers referred to one of the groups: "natural resources", "tourist infrastructure", "natural environment", "general infrastructure", "leisure & recreation", "culture, history & arts", "social environment", "political & economic factors", "atmosphere". During the process of collecting data, it turned out that reviewers also speak about Ljubljana Old Town, Ljubljana, and Slovenia in general without the reference to any particular attribute, and due to this fact, "Ljubljana Old Town", "Ljubljana" and "Slovenia" have been additionally created as separate values. Thus, 11 values have been investigated in terms of cognitive component.

Affective references are evaluated by pair "positive-negative" as in the research of Kladou and Mavragani (2016). Some references that do not contain positive or negative evaluation, consist of words or phrases that may fall into any of two categories and are not clear from the context, have been put into the category of "unspecified".

Conative component has been primarily evaluated by "intention to revisit or not" and "intention to recommend or not" (Pike & Ryan, 2004, Konečnik & Gartner, 2007); however, while processing the data and discovering new reviewers' intentions, several new categories have been formed additionally, which are: "intention to spread positive or negative word-of-mouth", "intention to prolong the stay", " recommendation to stay or not to stay longer". Taking into the consideration the values from the previous research, the added values during the data analysis and their negative forms, 9 values have been created for the further investigation.

After coding, the data has been loaded into the SPSS for the analysis of frequencies (descriptive statistics of frequencies). Below, there are the results of analysis.

As seen from Table 7, 19392 references are devoted to cognitive component. Attribute "culture, history and art" (3266 references, 16,8% of all references) is the most mentioned among all, whereas "Slovenia" (91 reference, 0,5% of all references) is the least mentioned. Indeed, Ljubljana is a cultural centre, as has been concluded by Ljubljana Tourism (2016).

As for attribute "Slovenia", it can be explained that there may be other places that are associated with Slovenia more than Ljubljana.

According to Table 7, one of the most frequent references are also represented by attributes "tourist infrastructure" (2864 references, 14,8% of all references), "natural environment" (2360 references, 12,2% of all references), "tourist attractions" (2942 references, 15,2% of all references) and "Ljubljana Old Town" (2532 references, 13,1% of all references) in general. One of the least frequent are "social environment" (852 references, 4,4% of all references), "political and economic factors" (353 references, 1,9% of all references), "atmosphere" (973 references, 5% of all references) and "Ljubljana" (676 references, 3,5% of all references) in general.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for cognitive component.

VARIABLE	INDICATOR	FREQUENCY	%
Cognitive component	Slovenia	91	0,5
	Natural resources	1395	7,2
	Tourist infrastructure	2864	14,8
	Natural environment	2360	12,2
	General infrastructure	1078	5,6
	Tourist attractions	2942	15,2
	Culture, history & arts	3266	16,8
	Social environment	852	4,4
	Political & economic factors	363	1,9
	Atmosphere	973	5,0
	Ljubljana	676	3,5
	Ljubljana Old Town	2532	13,1
	TOTAL	19392	100

Source: Own work.

Regarding affective component (Table 8), it is represented by 12833 references given by the reviewers of webpage "Ljubljana Old Town". This is 6559 references less, than cognitive component is represented by. Revising the connection of cognitive and affective components more precisely gives better understanding, what reviewers like or dislike the most about each attribute of cognitive component. This analysis does not contribute to hypothesis testing, however, greatly contributes to research purpose – the analysis the organic destination image of Ljubljana. Crosstabulation analysis has been conducted in order to find the connection between both components.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for affective component.

VARIABLE	INDICATOR	FREQUENCY	%
Affective component	Positive references	12271	95,6
	Negative references	439	3,4
	Unspecified references	123	1,0
	TOTAL	12833	100

Source: Own work.

Table 9 demonstrates, which attributes TripAdvisor reviewers evaluated positively or negatively. The largest number of positive references relates to "Ljubljana Old Town" (2214 references) itself: users consider it as "charming", "beautiful" and "nice" place, many call it "a hidden gem" of Slovenia and Europe. The second most positively evaluated attribute is "tourist attractions" (1805 references) with mentioned tourist activities such as big central market, sightseeing walk in the Old Town, street entertainment and people-watching opportunities as a significant part of tourist activities; many simply say in short that there is "a lot to see and do". It is also remarkable, that attribute "tourist attractions" (72 references) has one of the most negative affective references: on the contrary to the said above, tourists often complain that there is "not much to do" and "too few attractions" or "no major attractions". The other most well-evaluated attributes are "culture, history and arts" (1616 references) and "natural environment" (1614 references). Regarding the former, reviewers admit their high appreciation of architecture, Plečnik's heritage, the castle, history, and local cuisine. Regarding the latter, users like cleanness, easy navigation, and attractiveness of the city. Attribute "culture, history and arts" (23 references) have the biggest number of unspecified affective references (that are difficult to connect to positive or negative, however still have an expression of affect), which is often evaluated by users as "OK" or "nothing special, but OK". "Natural environment" (74 references) also contains the largest number of negative references that mostly refer to smallness of the city and its old town, graffiti, too much quietness or, opposite, too much crowdedness/touristness (which may depend on the season). "Tourist infrastructure" (1433 references) also has one of the most positive reviews mostly due to the guided tours that are enjoyed by all mentioning reviewers, and the diversity of cafes, bars, restaurants and their offer. The most negative reviews and one of the smaller numbers of positive ones belong to attribute "general infrastructure" with almost the only negative reference, which is problematic and expensive parking in the city.

Table 8. Crosstabulation analysis of cognitive and affective components.

	No ref.	Positive	Negative	Unspecif.	TOTAL
Slovenia	21	68	2	0	91
Natural resources	993	362	37	3	1395
Tourist infrastructure	1384	1433	33	14	2864
Natural environment	655	1614	74	17	2360
General infrastructure	410	589	74	5	1078
Tourist attractions	1047	1805	72	18	2942
Culture, history & art	1587	1616	40	23	3266
Social environment	115	703	27	7	852
Political & economic factors	29	309	18	7	363
Atmosphere	78	881	7	7	973
Ljubljana	84	577	13	2	676
Ljubljana Old Town	261	2214	40	17	2532
TOTAL	6664	12171	437	120	19392

Source: Own work.

Conative component displayed in Table 10 is represented by 1525 references, which is 11308 references less than affective component has. The most mentioned attribute is "recommendation to revisit" (1236 references, 81% of all references), whereas the least –

"unwillingness to revisit" (4 references, 0,3% of all references) and "intention to share positive word-of-mouth" (3 references, 0,2% of all references). Some users also show the "intention to revisit" (197 references, 12,9% of all references).

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for conative component.

INDICATOR	FREQUENCY	%
Intention to revisit	197	12,9
Recommendation to visit	1236	81,0
Intention to share positive WOM	3	0,2
Unwillingness to revisit	4	0,3
Unwillingness to recommend	27	1,8
Intention to share negative WOM	0	0
Intention to stay longer	13	0,9
Recommendation to stay longer	32	2,1
Recommendation to stay shorter	13	0,9
TOTAL	1525	100

Source: Own work.

Again, crosstabulation analysis has been conducted to find the connection between cognitive and conative components and to see, which actions users take towards particular cognitive attributes. As depicted in Table 11, conative attribute "recommendation" is the most frequently used. Significantly more than any other cognitive attribute, reviewers recommend "Ljubljana Old Town" (425 references) in general. The other frequently recommended cognitive attributes are "culture, history and arts" (220 references), "Ljubljana" (178 references) in general, "tourist infrastructure" (177 references) and "tourist attractions" (170 references). "Natural resources" (9 references), "atmosphere" (6 references) and "social environment" (1 reference) are most likely not recommended due to specifics of the formulation of such recommendation. Cognitive attributes that motivate to revisit are the places themselves – "Ljubljana" (89 references) and "Ljubljana Old Town" (99 references). Unwillingness to recommend is caused by "Ljubljana" (7 references) and "Ljubljana Old Town" (7 references) in general. Regarding cognitive attributes, the least recommended is "tourist infrastructure" (5 references) due to disappointment with catering facilities and needlessness of taking excursion tours (even though, as found out earlier, there are only positive affective references, reviewers recommend replacing it with own exploration); another least recommended is "culture, history and art" (4 references), mostly because of the castle that seems to visitors too modern (regarding renovation) and lacking of interesting attractions. TripAdvisor users also admit that they have stayed longer because of Ljubljana (9 references) and the Old Town (4 references), others recommend staying longer in Ljubljana (17 references) and the Old Town (13 references); however, there are several visitors, who recommend shortening the stay in Ljubljana (4 references) and the Old Town (6 references).

Table 10. Crosstabulation analysis of cognitive and conative components.

	Revisit	Rec.	Positive WOM	No revisit	No rec.	Stay longer	Rec. to stay longer	Rec, to stay shorter	TOTAL
Slovenia	1	16	0	1	1	1	0	0	19
Natural resource	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Tourist infr-re	0	177	0	5	0	5	0	0	182
Natural env-t	1	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
General infr-re	0	20	0	0	2	2	1	0	23
Tourist attr-s	2	170	1	0	1	1	0	1	175
Culture, history & art	3	220	0	0	4	4	1	2	230
Social env-t	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Polit. & econ. factor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Atmosphere	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Ljubljana	89	178	1	1	7	9	17	4	306
Ljubljana Old Town	99	425	1	2	7	4	13	6	557
TOTAL	197	1236	3	4	27	13	32	13	1525

Source: Own work.

As all the required and additional descriptive statistics for three components are analysed, it is possible to test the hypotheses:

H1: Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references.
H2: Conative references about Ljubljana are less frequent than affective references.

As null hypotheses the following hypotheses have been suggested:
$H1_0$: There is no significant difference in the number of cognitive and affective references.
$H2_0$: There is no significant difference in the number of conative and affective references.

Thus, the alternative hypotheses are:
$H1_a$: There is a significant difference in the number of cognitive and affective references.
$H2_a$: There is a significant difference in the number of conative and affective references.

In order to test hypothesis H1 (Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references.) Chi-square goodness-of-fit test has been conducted for cognitive and affective references. This test is used to define statistical significance between observed and expected frequencies and, in case of the current work, compare the former ones through the latter ones.

The analysis of frequencies (Table 12) shows that the positive residual value belongs to cognitive references (3279,5), whereas the negative residual value belongs to affective references (-3279,5), what makes cognitive references more frequent than affective references and creates the gap between observed and expected values of these types of references. Test statistics for Chi-square value 1335,003 is quite large within the degree of freedom 1; p-value equals 0, so is less than 0,05, what means that test results are significant

and null hypothesis $H1_0$ (There is no significant difference in the number of cognitive and affective references) is rejected and alternative hypothesis $H1_a$ (There is a significant difference in the number of cognitive and affective references) is supported.

Table 11. Chi-square goodness-of-fit for cognitive and affective components.

	Frequencies			Test statistics	
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-square	1335,003*
Cognitive ref.	19392	16112,5	3279,5	df	1
Affective ref.	12833	16112,5	-3279,5	Asymp. Sig.	0,000
Total	32225			* 0 cells (0,0 %) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16112,5.	

Source: Own work.

To test hypothesis H2 (Conative references about Ljubljana are less frequent than affective references.) the same test has been implemented for affective and conative references. The frequencies test (Table 13) shows that the positive residual value belongs to affective references (5654,0) and the negative residual value belongs to conative references (-5654,0), thus affective references are more frequent than conative references. The Chi-square value equals to 8905,897 and is large for the degree of freedom 1; p-value equals 0 and is less than 0,05, what make the test results significant rejecting null hypotheses $H2_0$ (There is no significant difference in the number of conative and affective references) and supporting alternative hypothesis $H2_a$ (There is a significant difference in the number of conative and affective references).

Table 12. Chi-square goodness-of-fit for affective and conative components.

	Frequencies			Test statistics	
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-square	8905,897*
Affective ref.	12833	7179,0	5654,0	df	1
Conative ref.	1525	7179,0	-5654,0	Asymp. Sig.	0,000
Total	14358			* 0 cells (0,0 %) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7179,0.	

Source: Own work.

Thus, **H1** (Cognitive references about Ljubljana are more frequent than affective references) and **H2** (Conative references about Ljubljana are less frequent than affective references.) are confirmed. This generally means that the users of TripAdvisor are more ready to share the practical information about the destination objects and characteristics than about their feelings or emotions about them and more ready to share both – information and affect than to be intended to make an action towards the destination.

3.3.2.2 Hypothesis H3: There are more positive than negative references about Ljubljana

The other hypothesis suggests, that, according to Kladou and Mavragani (2016), positive references significantly exceed negative ones: precisely, positive references exceed negative in case of affective and conative component separately and overall.

H3: There are more positive than negative references about Ljubljana.
H3a: There are more positive than negative references for affective component.
H3b: There are more positive than negative references for conative component.

The table of descriptive statistics for affective component (Table 8) shows, that there are 12271 positive references (95,6% of all affective references), 439 negative references (3,4% of all affective references) and 123 unspecified references (1% of all affective references).

Analogically to testing previous hypotheses, hypothesis H3a is also analysed with the help of Chi-square test. For this, null and alternative hypotheses have to be formulated:
$H3a_0$: There is no significant difference between positive and negative affective references.
$H3a_a$: There is a significant difference between positive and negative affective references.

The frequencies test (Table 14) demonstrates the highest positive residual value referring to positive references (7993,3) and the highest negative residual value referring to unspecified references (-3838,7), when negative references with negative value (-4154,7) in between them. Since unspecified references are not considered for the analysis results, it is important to consider the gap between observed and expected values of positive and negative references, which stays large. Chi-square value for affective references equals 22416,425 being large and having the degree of freedom 2. P-value equals 0 and is less than 0,05, so the test results are significant. Null hypothesis $H3a_0$ (There is no significant difference between positive than negative affective references) is rejected and alternative hypothesis $H3a_a$ (There is a significant difference between positive than negative affective references) is supported.

Table 13. Chi-square goodness-of-fit for affective references.

Frequencies				Test statistics	
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-square	22416,425*
Positive references	12271	4277,7	7993,3	df	2
Negative references	439	4277,7	-3838,7	Asymp. Sig.	0,000
Unspecified references	123	4277,7	-4154,7	* 0 cells (0,0 %) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 4277,7.	
Total	12833				

Source: Own work.

Considering the results of the descriptive statistic and Chi-square test results for affective component, it can be concluded hypothesis H3a (There are more positive than negative references for affective component) is confirmed, which means that emotional reaction of the TripAdvisor users on Ljubljana is much more positive than negative.

The table for conative component (Table 10) has negative and positive groups of intentions/actions that have to be explained. Positive references are "intention to revisit" (197 references, 12,9% of all conative references), "recommendation" (1236 references, 81% of all conative references), "intention to share positive WOM" (3 references, 0,2% of all conative references), "intention to stay/staying longer" (13 references, 0,9% of all conative references) and "recommendation to stay longer" (32 references, 2,1% of all conative references). Negative references refer to "unwillingness to revisit" (4 references, 0,3% of all conative references), "unwillingness to recommend" (27 references, 1,8% of all conative references), "recommendation to stay shorter" (13 references, 0,9% of all conative references). The sum of positive references equals to 1481 references with prevailing action "recommendation" (1236 references), whereas the sum of negative ones equals to 44 references.

Hypothesis H3b is analysed analogically to H3a and has following null and alternative hypotheses:
H3b$_0$: There is no significant difference between positive and negative conative references.
H3b$_a$: There is a significant difference between positive and negative conative references.

The test of frequencies (Table 15) shows two values that are located oppositely to one another relatively the expected value: positive references have a positive residual value (718,5), whereas negative references have negative residual value (-718,5). Chi-square value test equals 1354,078 with the degree of freedom 1 and p-value 0, which is less than 0,05, so the test results are significant. Null hypothesis H3b$_0$ (There is no significant difference between positive and negative conative references) is rejected and alternative hypothesis H3b$_a$ (There is a significant difference between positive and negative conative references) is supported.

Table 14. Chi-square goodness-of-fit for conative references.

Frequencies				Test statistics	
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Chi-square	1354,078
Positive references	1481	762,5	718,5	df	1
Negative references	44	762,5	-718,5	Asymp. Sig.	0,000
Total	1525			* 0 cells (0,0 %) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 762,5.	

Source: Own work.

Thus, hypothesis H3b (There are more positive than negative references for conative component) is confirmed, concluding that TripAdvisor users have much more positive actions and intentions towards Ljubljana than negative.

As hypotheses H3a (There are more positive than negative references for affective component) and H3b (There are more positive than negative references for conative component) are confirmed, the main hypothesis **H3** (There are more positive than negative references about Ljubljana) is confirmed.

3.3.2.3 Hypothesis H4: The references about Ljubljana are more positive among tourists from closer markets than among tourists from distant markets

The last hypothesis is based on the studies of geographical distance (Hunt, 1975; Crompton, 1979; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008) and Konečnik's study of Slovenian image (Konečnik, 2005), where they state, that tourists from different markets perceive tourist attractions differently. The studies (Konečnik, 2005; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008) demonstrate, that the overall image is more positive among tourists from closer markets.

H4: The references about Ljubljana are more positive among tourists representing closer markets than among tourists representing distant markets.
H4a: Affective references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.
H4b: Conative references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.

In this case, the first sub-hypothesis is presented by following null and alternative hypotheses:
$H4a_0$: Affective references are associated with tourist market being close or distant.
$H4a_a$: Affective references are not associated with tourist market being close or distant.

The column results of conducted crosstabulation analysis (Table 16) demonstrates, that tourists from closer market leave 6,8% of positive references belonging to affective component, whereas tourists from distant market leave 93,2% of positive references. Similarly, visitors from closer market post 5% of negative affective references, when visitors from distant market post 95% of negative references. The raw results show that proportion of affective references among closer market is 6,8% of positive to 5% of negative references, whereas the proportion of affective references among distant market is 93,2% of positive to 95% of negative ones.

Proceeding to Chi-square test results (Table 16), Pearson Chi-square value equals 7,289 with the degree of freedom 2 and p-value 0,026; all expected counts are higher than 5. Since p-

value equals 0,026 and less than 0,05, test results are statistically significant and H4a$_0$ (Affective references are associated with tourist market being close or distant) is rejected, which means, that H4a$_a$ (Affective references are not associated with tourist market being close or distant) is supported.

Table 15. Chi-square test of independence of affective references from closer or distant tourist market.

Crosstab					
		Affective references			Total
		Positive	Negative	Unspecif.	
Closer market	Count	835	22	2	859
	Exp.	821,4	29,4	8,2	859,0
	% (aff.r.)	6,8%	5,0%	1,6%	6,7%
Distant market	Count	11436	417	121	11974
	Exp.	11449,6	409,6	114,8	11974,0
	% (aff.r.)	93,2%	95,0%	98,4%	93,3%
Total	Count	12271	439	123	12833
	Exp.	12271,0	439,0	123,0	12833,0
	% (aff.r.)	100%	100%	100%	100%
Chi-square tests					
		Value	df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)	
Pearson Chi-square		7,289*	2	0,026	
Likelihood ratio		9,547	2	0,008	
Linear-by-linear ass.		7,054	1		
N of valid cases		12833			
*0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8,23.					

Source: Own work.

In this case, H4a (Affective references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets) is rejected.

To analyse the consistency of hypothesis H4b, null and alternative hypotheses are defined:
H4b$_0$: Conative references are associated with tourist market being close or distant.
H4b$_a$: Conative references are not associated with tourist market being close or distant.

In the crosstabulation analysis the column results (Table 17) show that visitors from closer market leave 7,6% of positive references referred to conative component and visitors from distant market leave 92,4% of positive references. Analogously, tourists from closer market publish 9,1% of negative conative references and tourists from distant market publish 90,9% of negative references. The raw results demonstrate the proportion of conative references as: closer market has 7,6% of positive against 9,1% of negative references, whereas distant market has 92,4% of positive to 90,9% of negative references.

Regarding the Chi-square test (Table 17), Pearson Chi-square value equals 0,129 with the degree of freedom 1 and p-value 0,72, which is higher than 0,05. As one of expected counts is lower than 5, Fisher's exact test has to be applied additionally to Chi-square test and Fisher's test p-value has to be analysed instead. Since new Fisher's 2-tailed p-value equals

0,77 and more than 0,05, test results are not statistically significant, thus, there is strong evidence for $H4b_0$. According to the results, we fail to reject null hypothesis $H4b_0$ (Conative references are associated with tourist market being close or distant), whereas alternative hypothesis $H4b_a$ (Conative references are not associated with tourist market being close or distant) is not supported.

Since $H4b_0$ (Conative references are associated with tourist market being close or distant) is not rejected, another analysis on testing how strong the possible association is between conative references and market distance is conducted. For this, the test of symmetric measures is used, which shows Cramer's V value in order to find this association. According to the results (Table 17), Cramer's V value equals 0,009, which is less than 0,1 and point at very weak or non-existent association between these variables. It means, that null hypothesis $H4b_0$ (Conative references are associated with tourist market being close or distant) fails to be rejected, however the results do not present any evidence for $H4b_a$ (Conative references are not associated with tourist market being close or distant) either.

Table 16. Chi-square test of independence of conative references from closer or distant tourist market.

Crosstab					
		Conative references			Total
		Positive		Negative	
Closer market	Count	113		4	117
	Exp.	113,6		3,4	117,0
	%(con.r.)	7,6%		9,1%	7,7%
Distant market	Count	1368		40	1408
	Exp.	1367,4		40,6	1408,0
	%(con.r.)	92,4%		90,9%	92,3%
Total	Count	1481		44	1525
	Exp.	1481,0		44,0	1525,0
	%(con.r.)	100,0%		100,0%	100,0

Chi-square tests					
	Value	df	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)	Exact.sig. (2-tailed)	Exact.sig. (1-tailed)
Pearson Chi-square	0,129	1	0,720		
Continuity corr.**	0,005	1	0,943		
Likelihood ratio	0,122	1	0,727		
Fisher's exact test				0,770	0,441
Linear-by-linear ass.	0,129	1	0,720		
N of valid cases	1525				
*1 cell (25%) has expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3,38. **Computed only for a 2x2 table.					

Symmetric measures				
		Value		Approx. sig.
Nom. by nom.	Phi	-0,009		0,720
	Cramer's V	0,009		0,720
N of valid cases		1525		

Source: Own work.

In this case, there is not enough statistical evidence to confirm or reject hypothesis H4b (Conative references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets).

Considering that sub-hypotheses H4a (Affective references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets) is rejected and H4b (Conative references are more positive among tourists from closer than from distant markets.) is neither rejected nor confirmed due to the lack of statistical evidence, the main hypothesis **H4** (The references about Ljubljana are more positive among tourists representing closer markets than among tourists representing distant markets) can only be rejected partially. In other words, that the positivity or negativity of affective references do not depend on the market distance, whereas the association of the market distance with the positivity or negativity of conative references cannot be found due to the lack of statistical evidence.

3.3.3 Discussion

The analysis of the empirical study consists of descriptive statistics and hypotheses testing of TripAdvisor webpage "Ljubljana Old Town". The findings of the descriptive part suggest, first, that couples prevail among other groups of travellers, which provides Ljubljana with the image of romantic destination. It can be taken in consideration by DMOs when organising tourist activities, creating, and promoting tourist facilities or attractions for couples' vacations. The tendencies of being higher season in Ljubljana are traced from April to October, which can be considered to avoid possible overtourism in the city centre, once the number of visitors reaches critical points. November and December are also perspective months, mostly for (pre-)Christmas vacations and allow Ljubljana to become winter holiday destination. The analysis also presents the drastic changes caused by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in the number of reviewers in such a way, that there have been no reviews for several months, that has never happened on the webpage since 2012.

Speaking about the representation of countries, English-speaking countries, such as the USA, the UK, Australia, and Canada occupy top charts by the frequency of reviews. Indeed, this finding confirms the reports of Ljubljana Tourism (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016; Ljubljana Tourism, 2021), where the visitors of these three countries are listed as one of the most frequent. Even though the USA and the UK demonstrate also the most frequent visitation of Ljubljana (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p. 19-22), most likely it relates to the fact, that the analysis has been conducted in English language (a mother tongue of these countries) and American origin of website TripAdvisor, that makes the users from the USA and English-speaking community more familiar with this platform. A larger sample may be required to estimate if there is cultural influence on the willingness to publish reviews by tourists from other countries. However, excluding English-speaking countries from the consideration, the most frequent reviewers come from Italy – the country representing neighbouring market, which coincides with the results of previous statistical reports (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016, p.

19-22). Croatia, Austria, and Hungary represent a smaller share of TripAdvisor reviews, which does not contradict the results of previous studies. The results prove, that the distant market of the USA and the UK and the closer market of Italy have a large weight in the visitation of Ljubljana, which implies the facilitation of stay and broader promotion for the tourists from these countries.

Regarding the markets that are assumed as close and distant ones, there are prevailing numbers of reviewers from distant markets. Beside the larger number of countries included into the distant market category, it can be also explained by the fact, that some of frequent visitors (e.g., from Italy) leave reviews on webpage "Ljubljana Old Town" in Italian language, that is not included into the current research to avoid language limitations and "translation noise".

Conducting crosstabulation analysis has helped to understand, what are advantages and disadvantages of visiting Ljubljana from the point of view of TripAdvisor users. Ljubljana Old Town can be considered as a highlight of visitation for the most of reviewers, often referred as a "hidden gem", - visitors are satisfied with historical city centre without pointing at something particular they have enjoyed, what makes the Old Town a whole completed experience for a visitor. Regarding the attributes, tourists are also well-satisfied with cultural and historical side of the city, which confirms some of the previous studies (Ljubljana Tourism, 2016; Božić, Kennel, Vijučić & Jovanović, 2017), tourist attractions and infrastructure, whereas feel down because of difficult and expensive parking, a lack of bigger-scale attractions or entertainment, graffiti, crowdedness, or emptiness during different seasons. The analysis has shown the high number of users recommending visiting Ljubljana and the Old Town and having an intention of revisiting them. Speaking about the attributes, visitors are active with recommendations more than with other actions, and majorly recommend cultural and tourist attractions as well as tourist facilities like excursions and cafés, bars, restaurants along the river embankment.

Hypothesis testing (hypotheses H1-H2) has demonstrated that users of TripAdvisor, who have ever posted on webpage "Ljubljana Old Town", tend to leave commentaries, that express their knowledge about Ljubljana (cognitive component) rather than their feelings (affective component); at the same time, they express feelings (affective component) more than expressing intentions or invoking others to make an action towards the destination (conative component). Thus, it makes it more difficult to analyse, what image visitors publishing online reviews have about the destination and how strong it affects their further decisions about it; however, it is still possible to evaluate visitors' awareness of the destination and its facilities or characteristics. It supports the results of Kladou and Mavragani (2016) stating, that visitors posting user-generated content do not provide the same number of cognitive, affective, and conative references, where the former are the most and the latter are the least frequent.

Testing hypothesis H3 has demonstrated the prevalence of positive references upon negative references in case of affective and conative components. In other words, the majority of tourists creating user-generated content either have positive reaction and feelings about Ljubljana or positive intention and action towards the city. The results, again, support the study of Kladou and Mavragani (2016), who, based on the example of Istanbul, have stated, that positive references significantly exceed negative ones.

Hypothesis H4 has been aimed to test the results of several previous studies of Crompton (1979), Konečnik (2005) and San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque (2008) suggesting, that close and distant markets of visitors have a difference in destination perception. Previously, Konečnik (2005) has concluded, that destination image is more positive among closer markets rejecting the results obtained by Crompton (1979a), who has concluded the opposite. The current hypothesis has not supported any of previous results and, moreover, has not found or has not been consistent enough to find any association between market distance and destination image. Considering the results of the current research, this does not require DMOs act differently in interaction with tourists from different markets to influence their image of the city, however, as noted above, it is important to understand main markets by country and interact with them.

The research contributes to academic studies in the way of analysing tourist destination image from the perspective of image formation and geographical distance that have been investigated using e-WOM. It has confirmed that visitors publishing on TripAdvisor are more ready to share their knowledge rather than feelings and, especially, to take an action towards the destination. It is also shown, what attributes tourists evaluate the most and the least, when they wish to express the feedback about the destination. At the same time, the analysis does not confirm or does not reject the impact of geographical distance on the perception of Ljubljana, as it has been found in the previous works (Crompton, 1979; Konečnik, 2005; San Martin & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2008).

The research also contributes to the information of Ljubljana's DMO and tourism suppliers. First, it confirms the positive image of the city and disclosures, what aspects mentioned by visitors are rather positive or negative, as well as what are the most positive and the most negative experiences for the users of TripAdvisor visiting Ljubljana. The understanding of this is aimed to help the stakeholders accentuate what builds a stronger destination image and help them challenge the aspects that are not demonstrating good performance. Hereby, it is suggested to keep developing the cultural facilities and events, increasing the amount of experience they deliver to visitors and expanding them from the "local" level to a more appealing and understandable to international tourists. It is also suggested to promote Ljubljana Old Town as a bounded experience increasing the awareness of its contents – as the reviewers, due to the Old Town's size, the closeness of its attractions and their cultural orientation, perceive it as one large tourist attraction. It is important, that the drawbacks, such as difficult and expensive parking in the centre and graffiti, are taken into consideration

and rearranged in shorter time period. Second, the research demonstrates, who are the visitors of Ljubljana: the type of travellers, gender, nationality, revealing the points of expanding for destination marketing and management. The results reveal a larger number of couples, which requires more focused orientation at this group of visitors and considering the perspectives of increased visitation in the period of Christmas holidays, Ljubljana can also be presented as a romantic winter (holiday) destination. Third, the research work gives a comprehensive information about visitors that share eWOM on, so far, the largest online tourism platform, what enables to monitor the data and its dynamics after a required period to understand the tendencies that online platforms show about the visitors and their perception of the destination in terms of Ljubljana.

The current research has several limitations. First, the sample limitation, that TripAdvisor can provide: 1) users from the USA and English-speaking countries may be more aware of TripAdvisor (as it is an American website) than people from other countries, thus the website does not cover all the diversity of Ljubljana visitors from different countries, and, as a sequence, 2) the sample for distant market (which includes large countries with English as a native language, such as the USA, the UK, Canada and Australia) has significantly prevailing representation than close market; 3) due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, some reformations could have taken place in tourism of Ljubljana, that may affect the conclusions of the work. Second, TripAdvisor does not have unique webpages for cities, thus the image of the city is only possible to estimate from the perspective of its largest attraction or micro destination: in the case of the current research, Ljubljana has been evaluated through Ljubljana Old Town, even though Ljubljana Old Town contains many references particularly about Ljubljana. Third, Slovenian visitors of Ljubljana have been excluded from the analysis due to impossibility to define whether their image is tourist image and high presence of people interested in promoting Ljubljana. Fourth, the reviewers of TripAdvisor do not always specify all the profile data and the information about the trip, hereby it has led to analysing only those, who have presented this data. Although the above limitations have not impaired the results, potential minimising the limitations could contribute to more exact and broader knowledge of the topic.

Although the research has met its purpose and covered the data and analysis fitting its frameworks, there are still areas that can be investigated more precisely – mostly, by additional research instruments and methods to add up missing data and insights to the current work. First, due to global changes in tourism caused by SARS-CoV-2 and a drastically small number of reviews for years 2020-2021, the analogous tourist data can be collected otherwise to evaluate the image of Ljubljana for this period of time and the consequences of this event for Ljubljana. Second, the analogous research can be conducted for Ljubljana on TripAdvisor in different languages for visitors of diverse countries to fill up the current research with their perception shared in non-English language used in this work. Third, the research aimed at affective and conative components rather than cognitive one can be conducted to gather data reflecting visitors' emotions rather than the information

one obtains. Finally, the hypothesis covering the topic of geographical distance could be retested with a significantly larger sample for different markets to find statistical associations about the influence of market distance on visitors' perception found in previous works or to reject the presence of such.

CONCLUSION

Tourism destination is one of the most studied topics in the tourism sphere by tourism organisations and academic researchers. Well-being and success of tourism destination largely depends on its image, which can make a destination more or less attractive for visitors, and, thus, more or less competitive on the market. Providing the analysis of the image from different perspectives allows to acknowledge its potentials and make a strategical plan for future development.

The current research is aimed at investigating the image of Ljubljana. The main research purpose of the current work is to analyse the organic destination image of Ljubljana by using user-generated content. In the research process, theoretical sources on the topic of tourist destination image have been revised, TripAdvisor data for the analysis has been collected and the results have been analysed with the help of descriptive statistics and hypotheses testing in SPSS. Considering the obtained results, it can be stated, that the research purpose is met.

The city has a large number of visitors from the USA and the UK representing distant market and Italy representing closer market. The visitors from Canada, Australia and especially India (distant market) and all the neighbouring countries can be considered quite influential on the Internet for destination Ljubljana and potential target audience.

Ljubljana has an opportunity to become an all-season destination as tourist flow tend to not fall drastically during the colder season and, moreover, tourism season is expanding. Unfortunately, due to significant changes caused by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the number of the visitors as well as the number of reviews has fallen.

Testing hypotheses has presented, that sharing word-of-mouth over the Internet, reviewers express their knowledge about the destination rather than their feelings, and express both knowledge and feelings more often than intention to act in some way or action towards the destination. Thus, it is difficult to receive the understanding of tourists' perception about every aspect they talk about, however it gives the insight about visitors' awareness of the destination.

According to the research, Ljubljana Old Town is a highlight of Ljubljana with many positive reviews, which often improve the whole city image. Visitors have positive image about the cultural aspect of Ljubljana as well as tourism offer, and most of them are ready

to recommend them together with visiting Ljubljana and its Old Town. However, in some cases, visitors struggle with difficult and expensive parking, a lack of attractions and entertainment due to the small city size, graffiti, crowdedness, or emptiness during different seasons, which are challenges for strategical city and tourism planning.

The research results contribute for Ljubljana's DMO and tourism suppliers. Due to the high visitors' evaluation and requests, the city administration needs to maintain focus on its cultural facilities, and the same time set larger recognised events. It is suggested to promote Ljubljana Old Town as a bounded experience emphasising on its contents. Ljubljana can also be promoted as a winter destination for couples as the results have shown potential in this area. At the same time, some city infrastructure, such as difficult and expensive parking and graffiti, have to be improved within shorter time. The results of the current research can also be used to monitor the dynamics of Ljubljana image in the future, made to analyse SARS-CoV-2 post-effects.

The limitations of the work are mostly connected with the sample representation that are framed by the prevailence of English-speaking sample, starting SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and limitation of profile data that TripAdvisor provides. The limitations have not impaired the results; however, their reduction could have contributed more detailed and broader data. The research has met its purpose, and the future studies can fulfil the results, especially from the perspective of tourism changes in Ljubljana due to SARS-CoV-2 larger sample analysing user-generated content in different languages and, finally, further findings on the association of geographical distance and visitors' perception.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Summary in Slovenian language.
Povzetek.

Magistrska naloga je namenjena raziskovanju podobe Ljubljane, ki vzdržuje hitro rast in razvoj turizma v zadnjem desetletju. Raziskava se osredotoča na oblikovanje podobe s pomočjo treh komponent (Gartner, 1993): zaznavne, čustvene in namerne. Drug pomemben koncept podobe destinacije je koncept geografske razdalje, ki navaja razliko v zaznavanju destinacije turistov z oddaljenih in bližnjih trgov.

Naloga temelji na analizi organske podobe destinacije Ljubljana za ugotavljanje povratne informacije, ki jo dajejo obiskovalci na spletu, saj je internet lahko dostopen in učinkovit vir ustnih priporočilih, ki imajo pomembno vlogo pri oblikovanju turistične podobe. Glavni raziskovalni namen trenutne naloge je analiza organske podobe destinacije Ljubljana na podlagi vsebin generiranih s strani uporabnikov. Za dosego glavnega namena so bile oblikovane štiri glavne in štiri pomožne hipoteze:
H1: Zaznavne reference o Ljubljani so pogostejše od čustvenih.
H2: Namerne reference o Ljubljani so manj pogoste od čustvenih.
H3: O Ljubljani je več pozitivnih kot negativnih referenc.
• H3a: Za čustveno komponento je več pozitivnih kot negativnih referenc.
• H3b: Za namerno komponento je več pozitivnih kot negativnih referenc.
$H4_0$: Reference o Ljubljani so bolj pozitivne med turisti, ki predstavljajo bližnje trge, kot med temi, ki predstavljajo oddaljene trge.
• H4a: Čustvene reference so bolj pozitivne med turisti z bližnjih trgov kot z oddaljenih.
• H4b: Namerne reference so bolj pozitivne med turisti z bližnjih trgov kot z oddaljenih.

Podatki za to raziskavo se zbirajo s pridobivanjem mnenj iz TripAdvisorja. Vzorec so naključni uporabniki TripAdvisorja, ki so objavili mnenje na spletni strani »Staro mestno jedro Ljubljane« (*ang,* "Ljubljana Old Town"). Za analizo je bilo zbranih 3148 pregledov v angleškem jeziku brez pregledov slovenskih uporabnikov. Analizo dobljenih podatkov se izvaja z opisno statistiko in testom hi-kvadrat dveh posameznih vzorcev v SPSS.

Raziskava ima nekaj omejitev, kot je omejitev vzorca: razširjenost angleško-govorečih predstavnikov v vzorcu in večja seznanjenost s TripAdvisorjem med posameznimi državami; odsotnost določenih spletnih strani za mesta in ocenjevanje podobe mesta z vidika njegove največje turistične znamenitosti (spletna stran starega mestnega jedra Ljubljane namesto Ljubljane); izključitev slovenskih uporabnikov pri vrednotenju podobe Ljubljane ter pomanjkanje podatkov o profilih uporabnikov.

Testiranje hipotez je pokazalo, da obiskovalci, ki delijo ustna priporočila na internetu, raje pokažejo svoja znanja kot svoje občutke ter raje pokažejo svoje občutke kot svoje namere imeti interakcijo z destinacijo. Ljubljansko staro mestno jedro je vrhunec Ljubljane s številnimi pozitivnimi ocenami in pogosto izboljša celotno podobo mesta. Obiskovalci imajo

pozitivno podobo o kulturnem vidiku Ljubljane in turistični ponudbi, večina jih je pripravljena priporočiti Ljubljano in njeno staro mestno jedro. V nekaterih primerih pa se obiskovalci spopadajo s težkim in dragim parkiranjem, pomanjkanjem zanimivosti in zabave zaradi majhnosti mesta, grafitov, gneče ali praznine v različnih letnih časih, kar je izziv za strateško načrtovanje mest in turizma. Nobena od hipotez ne potrjuje, da je podoba o Ljubljani odvisna od oddaljenosti trga, in temveč ne kaže nobene asociacije med tema dvema spremenljivkami. Namesto tega je učinkovitejša ciljna interakcija s turisti iz najpogosteje obiskanih držav ne glede na oddaljenost trga.

Raziskava prispeva k akademskemu študiju razumevanja oblikovanja podobe destinacije Ljubljana in oblikovanja podobe, prikazane na spletnih turističnih platformah. Analiza študije ne potrjuje v celoti vpliva geografske oddaljenosti na dojemanje Ljubljane. Raziskava prispeva tudi k informiranju ljubljanske turistične organizacije in dobaviteljev turizma ter razkriva pozitivne in negativne izkušnje obiskovalcev Ljubljane. Predlaga se, da se kulturni objekti in dogodki še naprej razvijajo s povečevanjem števila izkušenj, ki jih ponujajo obiskovalcem, in s širjenjem »lokalne« ravni na privlačnejšo in razumljivejšo za mednarodne turiste. Predlaga se tudi promocija starega mestnega jedra Ljubljane kot celotne izkušnje s povečevanjem zavedanja o njenih znamenitostih, saj jo recenzenti že dojemajo kot eno veliko turistično atrakcijo. Pomembno je, da se upoštevajo pomanjkljivosti, kot so težko in drago parkiranje ter grafiti. Raziskava kaže tudi, kdo so obiskovalci Ljubljane: rezultati razkrivajo večje število parov, kar zahteva večjo osredotočenost na to skupino, in ob upoštevanju potencialno povečanega obiska na božične praznike, se lahko Ljubljana predstavlja kot romantična zimska (počitniška) destinacija. Raziskovalno delo ponuja izčrpne informacije o obiskovalcih, ki delijo ustna priporočila na največji spletni platformi za turizem, kar omogoča spremljanje podatkov in njihove dinamike po potrebnem časovnem obdobju za razumevanje teženj, ki jih spletne platforme kažejo pri obiskovalcih in njihovem dojemanju turistične destinacije Ljubljana.

Appendix 2. Descriptive statistics of users by season.

y/m	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	∑
2011	n/d	n/d	n/d	n/d	n/d	n/d	1	2	0	1	2	1	7
2012	1	0	2	4	6	8	15	10	16	13	14	3	92
2013	8	5	7	7	30	32	32	37	29	27	14	13	241
2014	9	5	10	22	24	21	44	40	56	42	12	15	300
2015	19	7	24	30	69	87	55	71	91	46	27	46	572
2016	23	23	30	54	68	80	81	90	81	55	26	29	640
2017	17	18	33	50	66	68	69	73	77	68	18	29	586
2018	16	15	17	31	53	39	53	45	54	41	16	17	397
2019	9	7	19	15	34	27	31	27	47	27	11	13	267
2020	9	5	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	19
∑	111	85	144	213	350	362	382	395	453	320	140	166	**3121**

* Table designations:

n – number of reviewers,

∑ – sum of reviewers

    – n ≤ 10

    – 10 < n ≤ 50

    – 50 < n ≤ 100

Source: TripAdvisor (n.d., b).

Appendix 3. Descriptive statistics of users by country of origin (full table).

RANK	COUNTRY	№ OF REVIEWS	№ OF REVIEWS, %	RANK	COUNTRY	№ OF REVIEWS	№ OF REVIEWS, %
1	USA	731	23,2	54	Luxembourg	4	0,1
2	UK	704	22,4	55	Jordan	4	0,1
3	Australia	229	7,3	56	Cyprus	4	0,1
4	Canada	148	4,7	57	S. Arabia	4	0,1
5	Italy	91	2,9	58	Vietnam	3	0,1
6	India	67	2,1	59	Japan	3	0,1
7	Croatia	65	2,1	60	Qatar	3	0,1
8	Netherlands	65	2,1	61	Bangladesh	2	0,1
9	Israel	54	1,7	62	Lebanon	2	0,1
10	Germany	46	1,5	63	Chile	2	0,1
11	Belgium	45	1,4	64	Maldives	2	0,1
12	Singapore	44	1,4	65	Albania	2	0,1
13	Switzerland	43	1,4	66	Hong Kong	2	0,1
14	Greece	42	1,3	67	Bahrain	2	0,1
15	Austria	39	1,2	68	Iran	2	0,1
16	Finland	39	1,2	69	Pakistan	2	0,1
17	Ireland	36	1,1	70	Costa Rica	2	0,1
18	France	34	1,1	71	Sri Lanka	2	0,1
19	Hungary	31	1,0	72	Taiwan	2	0,1
20	Serbia	28	0,9	73	Lebanon	2	0,1
21	Turkey	28	0,9	74	Oman	2	0,1
22	Poland	27	0,9	75	Jamaica	1	0,0
23	Sweden	25	0,8	76	Golan H.	1	0,0
24	South Africa	25	0,8	77	Paraguay	1	0,0
25	New Zealand	25	0,8	78	Kazakhstan	1	0,0
26	Brazil	24	0,8	79	Honduras	1	0,0
27	Portugal	23	0,7	80	Ukraine	1	0,0
28	Spain	23	0,7	81	Uruguay	1	0,0
29	Norway	22	0,7	82	Latvia	1	0,0
30	Czech Rep.	21	0,7	83	Nigeria	1	0,0
31	Slovakia	19	0,6	84	Bolivia	1	0,0
32	Romania	19	0,6	85	Azerbaijan	1	0,0
33	China	18	0,6	86	Sierra Leone	1	0,0
34	Denmark	16	0,5	87	Jordan V.	1	0,0
35	Bulgaria	16	0,5	88	Tunisia	1	0,0
36	Thailand	15	0,5	89	Cayman Isl.	1	0,0
37	Malta	14	0,4	90	Colombia	1	0,0
38	UAE	12	0,4	91	Zimbabwe	1	0,0
39	BiH	12	0,4	92	Bhutan	1	0,0
40	Egypt	11	0,3	93	Belarus	1	0,0
41	Philippines	9	0,3	94	Cuba	1	0,0
42	Russia	9	0,3	95	Mauritius	1	0,0
43	Mexico	8	0,3	96	Fiji	1	0,0
44	Indonesia	8	0,3	97	Puerto Rico	1	0,0

45	N.Macedonia	7	0,2	98	Montenegro	1	0,0
46	Iceland	6	0,2	99	Samoa	1	0,0
47	Lithuania	6	0,2	100	Tanzania	1	0,0
48	Malaysia	6	0,2	101	Moldova	1	0,0
49	Kuwait	6	0,2	102	Sudan	1	0,0
50	Argentina	6	0,2	103	Senegal	1	0,0
51	Estonia	6	0,2	104	Trinidad	1	0,0
52	Kosovo	5	0,2	105	Brit.Virg.Isl.	1	0,0
53	South Korea	5	0,2	106	Monaco	1	0,0
TOTAL:						3148	100

Source: TripAdvisor (n.d., b).