

## EXPLORING THE PORTUGUESE TOURIST PROFILE DURING WAR

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**Citation:** Cunha, M., Figueiredo, J., Oliveira, I., Cardoso, A., & Pereira, M. (2023). EXPLORING THE PORTUGUESE TOURIST PROFILE DURING WAR. *GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites*, 51(4spl), 1796–1802  
<https://doi.org/10.30892/gtg.514spl20-1175>

**Abstract:** In this research, we intend to study the profile of the consumer in the face of the reality we live in: the War in Ukraine. The goal is to understand how individuals, as individual tourists, in groups or with family, consider that tourism is or will undergo changes, in terms of conditions of choice, opinions, categorization, and societal involvement. The Investigation was quantitative and adopted the survey method. Data was collected at Continental Portugal and Islands, where 1200 responses were obtained for analysis. Key findings revealed that people like to travel the world. People travel more for holiday reasons than for work. It is also concluded that people travel at least once a year on vacation. Due to the last event and according to the sample answers the will to travel has changed. Through the study, we could easily see that the impact of recent events interfered with the lives of tourists significantly changing intentions and habits and countries near the war are not a choice.

**Key words:** Consumer Profile, Tourist, Post-Pandemic, War, Ukraine

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### INTRODUCTION

This research aims to understand the problem of the War in Ukraine, the changes in the profile of the tourists, and their behavior in current times of uncertainty. The problem of research has become central at the moment. Thus, it is worth mentioning that the general objective was to determine and analyze the profile of the consumer/ tourist in times of war.

In the tourist landscape, many concepts must be taken into account, but the most important is undoubtedly the definition of tourist. In this sense, it can be said that a tourist is a person who moves to other regions or countries to spend moments of leisure, know other cultures, and visit specific places that are absent in the region of the usual residence. From this perspective, it is understood that the role of the tourist is the consumer of services related to transportation and staying in other regions (Mielniczuk, 2016; Cunha, 2019; Hasan et al., 2020, Dharen and Rahul, 2023). In the past, participation in tourism was restricted to the elite who had the time and money to travel. The tourist routes started through the Grand Tour, and a long trip could last 3 or 4 years. As time went by, lives transformed and the world transformed lives and began to travel globally. Currently, due to the events that have been lived, human beings are forced to respect social distancing, reanalyze their travels, and take new measures of coexistence. This new world order leads humans to rethink tourism to empower the economy. This is precisely why the motivations that lead human beings to travel are a critical point when deciding the type of tourism to be presented by destinations and enjoyed by tourists, almost always in a leisure format (Cunha, 2019; Phuthong et al., 2023).

The truth is that it is unknown what the profile of tourists will be in the post-pandemic and during the war in Ukraine (Hudoshnyk and Krupskyi (2023). In this sense, the researchers decided to look for answers. The final aim is to understand what changes in tourist behavior caused by the last great moments lived globally.

The general objective was to determine and analyze the profile of the consumer/ tourist in times of war.

Investigation question nr. ° 1 - What factors contributed to individuals' inclination and motivation to explore the world during the Ukrainian War?

Investigation question nr. ° 2 – Where do tourists like to travel and where during This War?

Investigation question nr. ° 3 – When and Where do the tourists wish to go?

Investigation question nr. ° 4 – Where do they get information about possible Destiny?

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Portugal as a tourist spot

The Portuguese tourism industry has been a vital component of the country's economy. Portugal is known for its rich history, stunning landscapes, and vibrant culture, making it a popular destination for both leisure and business travelers (Cunha, 2019; Cunha et al., 2021). The tourism industry holds significant importance in both local economies and the global tourism sector (Watjatrakul, 2018). In Portugal, tourism is a key economic activity for the generation of wealth and employment, and the tourism data for 2022 are encouraging.

In 2022, the tourism sector approached the record values of 2019 in the main indicators of overnight stays (-0.9%) and guests (-2.3%), having surpassed the values in tourism revenues (+15.4%) (Barry et al., 2022; Brito and Zarrilli, 2023). In Table 1 it is possible to see some key reasons why this industry is considered important. Overall, the Tourism industry plays a multifaceted role in supporting economic growth, fostering cultural exchange, and providing essential services for travelers. It has a significant impact on local economies, job creation, and the broader tourism sector, making it a vital component of many regions' development strategies (Watjatrakul, 2018; Barry et al., 2022; Brito and Zarrilli, 2023).

Table 1. Why is tourism so important? (Source: Watjatrakul, 2018; Barry et al., 2022; Brito and Zarrilli, 2023)

<p><b>Economic Impact</b>  <b>Job Creation:</b> Tourism generates employment opportunities, both directly (in hotels, restaurants, transportation, etc.) and indirectly (in related industries such as agriculture and manufacturing).  <b>Revenue Generation:</b> Tourism brings in foreign exchange through expenditures on accommodation, food, transportation, and other services, contributing to the economic growth of a region or country.</p>
<p><b>Cultural Exchange</b>  <b>Cultural Understanding:</b> Tourism promotes cross-cultural understanding as visitors engage with local traditions, customs, and ways of life, fostering mutual respect and appreciation for diversity.  <b>Preservation of Culture:</b> Tourism can contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage by creating economic incentives for communities to maintain and showcase their unique traditions.</p>
<p><b>Infrastructure Development</b>  <b>Investment:</b> The need to accommodate tourists often leads to infrastructure development, including the construction of hotels, transportation facilities, and recreational areas, benefiting both residents and visitors.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Conservation</b>  <b>Conservation Funding:</b> Revenue generated from tourism can be used for environmental conservation efforts, including the protection of natural habitats and wildlife.  <b>Awareness:</b> Tourism can raise awareness about the importance of preserving natural resources, fostering a sense of responsibility among visitors and local communities.</p>
<p><b>Global Peace and Understanding</b>  <b>Diplomacy:</b> Tourism can act as a form of soft diplomacy, promoting understanding and positive relations between different countries and cultures.  <b>People-to-People Connections:</b> Interactions between tourists and locals can lead to the exchange of ideas and perspectives, contributing to global peace and harmony.</p>
<p><b>Quality of Life Improvement</b>  <b>Infrastructure and Services:</b> Improved infrastructure and services designed to cater to tourists can also enhance the quality of life for local residents.  <b>Cultural and Recreational Opportunities:</b> Residents may benefit from increased cultural and recreational opportunities that arise due to tourism development.</p>
<p><b>Diversification of Economy</b>  <b>Reducing Dependency:</b> Tourism can help diversify the economy of a region or country, reducing dependence on a single industry and providing a buffer against economic downturns in other sectors.</p>
<p><b>Education and Learning</b>  <b>Educational Opportunities:</b> Tourism can provide educational opportunities for both tourists and locals, fostering a greater understanding of history, geography, and cultural diversity.</p>

### The tourist behavior

Talking about tourism until a few years ago was talking about concepts such as over tourism, creative and sustainable tourism, with concerns for nature and the environment, in the face of climate change. Today, after the pandemic and the entry of Ukraine into War, destinations have become risky, traveling is a risk and the tourist has become even more aware of the surrounding reality (Hudoshnyk and Krupskiy, 2023). Several factors contribute to the understanding of consumer behavior, such as the sources of information used, the influences on the destination and travel decision, and currently, the consequences and implications that the Post Covid-19 Pandemic and War entail (Bama and Abrahams, 2020; Hashemi et al., 2023).

The choice of a destination to travel can be conditioned by several factors. There is talk, for example, of socio-economic, political, legal, cultural, or even personal factors in the sense that a third-age consumer does not seek the same as a young consumer 30. Psychological factors are extremely important and embrace concepts such as motivation, perception, attitude, and experience (Govender et al., 2020; Purwoko et al., 2023). In the light of these ideas, it is possible to verify that marketing plays a key role here. After all, marketing often presents the ability to change and influence consumer choices. And consumer behavior becomes central to a good understanding of the market. Thus, with the correct application of traditional and digital marketing under platforms offering tourist activities, it is possible to reorganize the product and or services and better meet the expectations and requirements of the tourist/ consumer (Rahim et al., 2022; Brito and Zarrilli, 2023).

The technological advances implemented and developed in recent times have, in a way, filled some tourist implications that the Pandemic and the War launched on Tourism, in the sense that they exert great influence on travel. There is talk not

only of common use but also of allowing tourist companies to develop new relationships with customers, to provide new experiences, and to organize products that offer otherwise and with added value. The availability of smart devices such as smartphones, their capabilities and functions, and the number of people they have access to grows rapidly worldwide (Lingadkar and Sankaranarayanan, 2020; Hossain et al., 2021). Digital has made the world more accessible by keeping information in the palm of the hands of ordinary mortals. The Pandemic has transformed digital platforms in general and the tourism market has not been left aside. Travel agencies began to be deprecated at the expense of the Internet and the consumer began to buy their trips (Barry et al., 2022; Hashemi et al., 2023).

The still latent risk of the Pandemic, the many mutations of the virus, and the War have become extremely important themes. According to Cunha (2019) by car, motorcycle, motorhome, or other means, the propensity to start discovering a new country with maximum autonomy and flexibility will tend to increase in the post-pandemic period. The trend is to travel at local, inter-municipal, and regional levels since international travel and the feeling of potential insecurity associated with flights and airports continue to generate a redirection to domestic tourism. Nature Tourism gains competitiveness among others (Brusadin, 2015; Govender et al., 2020; Ferraro, 2022; Daren and Rahul, 2023).

In recent news, there is also the implementation of Iberian partnerships and spiritual routes aimed at the recovery and restructuring of the territory, as an independent spatial factor and border areas, of greater value for the different tourist activities that may be experienced and enjoyed (Wattjatrakul, 2018; Barry et al., 2022; Brito and Zarrilli, 2023).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this investigation, defining the research question and reviewing existing literature was considered a generic process that involves data analysis as it's possible to see on the flowchart below Figure 1.

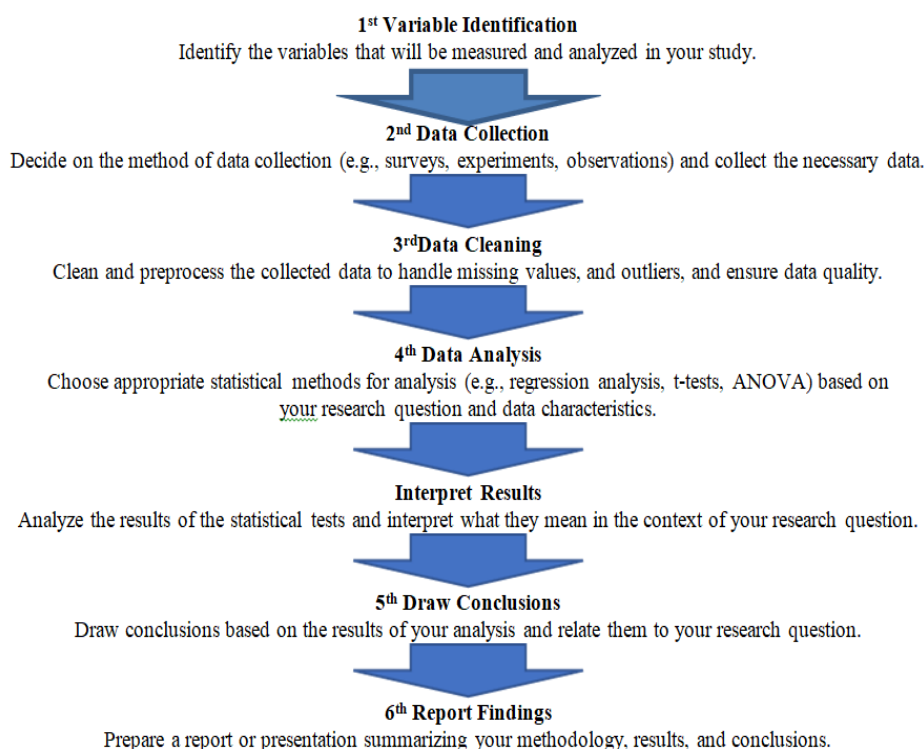


Figure 1. Investigation Process (Source: Own author)

This investigation submits to the positivist paradigm since it intends to test several a priori hypotheses to determine relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The researchers selected a quantitative research approach since it increases accuracy through statistical analysis. The investigation was conducted in Portugal. Questionnaires were collected by email in all the countries and Islands. The researchers were able to collect 1431 questionnaires but only 1200 were complete. The investigation took a quantitative research approach that made use of the survey method. The sampling technique used was the convenience sampling approach due to the lack of a sampling frame. The gathered data were recorded on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet after screening returned questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha values and correlations, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 27.0). The Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS version 27.0) statistical software was utilized to test the psychometric properties of the measurement scales and hypotheses.

This research investigation acted following the ethical standards of academic research, for instance, all participation was voluntary and it was conducted anonymously. No personally identifying data was not collected. Participants were briefed on the research and provided consent before completion of the questionnaire. No incentives were provided to participants and they were allowed to withdraw from the investigation at any point. This research aims to understand the problem of the War in Ukraine, the changes in the profile of the tourists, and their behavior in current times of

uncertainty. The problem of research has become central at the moment. Thus, it is worth mentioning that the general objective was to determine and analyze the profile of the consumer/ tourist in times of war.

Investigation question nr. ° 1 - What factors contributed to individuals' inclination and motivation to explore the world during the Ukrainian War?

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Investigation question nr. ° 3 – When and Where do the tourists wish to go?

Investigation question nr. ° 4 – Where do they get information about possible Destiny?

### Data analysis

After examining the returned questionnaires, the collected data was recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, alpha values, and correlations of Cronbach and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 27.0). To test the psychometric properties of measurement scales and hypotheses, the statistical software Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS version 27.0) was used.

### Ethical contemplations

This research study acted by the ethical standards of academic research, for example, all participation was voluntary and conducted anonymously. No personal identification data were collected. Participants were informed about the research and gave their consent before completing the questionnaire. No incentives were provided to participants and they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Investigation was quantitative and adopted the survey method. Data was collected at Continental Portugal and Islands, where 1200 responses were obtained for analysis. The sample is Portugal representative. The demography of the sample has been analyzed concerning its different characteristics. Their findings showed that 56% (678) were male participants and 44% (522) were female participants as we can see in Figure 1. These results are in accordance with the INE (2023). As for age, the sample has 6 age groups: up to 19 years with 11% of the sample, from 20 to 29 years with 14%, from 30 to 39 years with 26% of the sample, from 40 to 49 years with 21%, from 50 to 59 years with 28% of the sample (Figure 2). According to Figure 3, the monthly income of participants, participants who receive between 500-1500 euros are 34.0%, while 52.0% and 14.0% earn between 1501-4000 euros and 4001 euros and more, respectively. Figure 4, presents the distribution of workers, 53.50% are part-time workers and 47.0% are full-time employees.

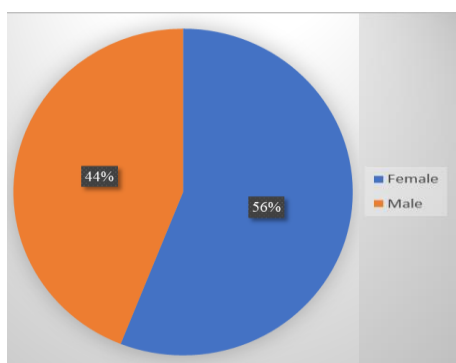


Figure 1. Gender (Source: Own author)

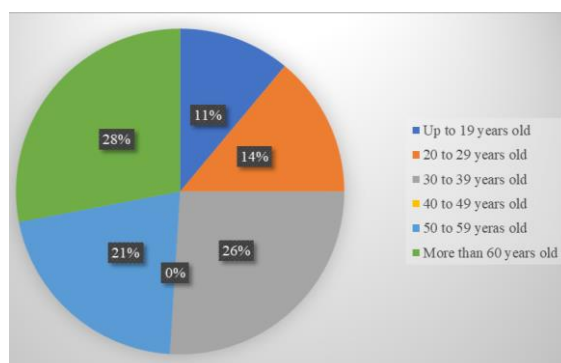


Figure 2. Age Groups (Source: Own author)

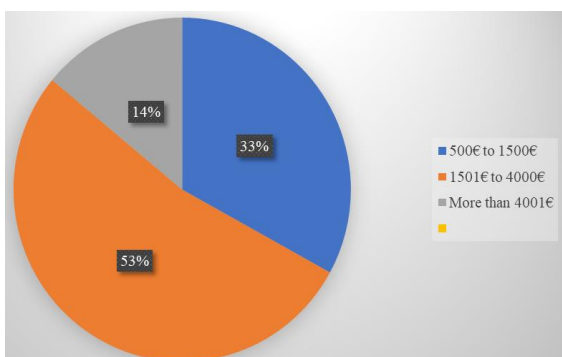


Figure 3. Monthly Income (Source: Own author)

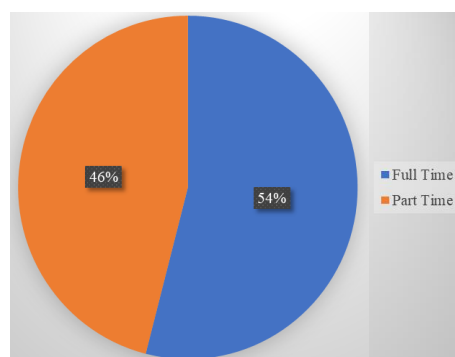


Figure 4. Part-Time vs full-time Time

In the context of schooling, it is possible to notice that 77%, are graduates, masters or doctorates, with secondary education the sample has 22%, and high school or basic education only 1%.

Regarding professional life, 81% of the sample is active, and only 19% is a student, unemployed, or retired. Regarding the region of residence, the North leads with 76%, followed by the Center with 11%, then the Metropolitan Area of Lisbon with 11%, the Autonomous Region of Madeira and Alentejo with 2%, and finally the Algarve with only one.

### Trying to figure out if the sample likes to travel and where to

According to the answers obtained, it can be concluded that 93% of the sample are individuals who like to travel the world. However, they do so more often for holiday reasons than for work. It is also concluded that 69% of respondents travel at least once a year on vacation 13% traveled between 3 to 5 times a year, also on vacation, and 18% say they still travel also for work. This situation is in line with studies carried out by Cunha (2019). It's very important that the individual leaves the usual place to replenish their energy. It was also possible to conclude that around 6% of the sample admits to being afraid to travel outside Portugal since the Pandemic. And this is the turning point. It's important to mention that with the pandemic came a time of not traveling, travel with restrictions, and then the Ukraine War (Cunha, 2023). Due to the last event and according to the sample's answer the will to travel has changed.

Also, according to the answers given by the sample in question, it is possible to verify that the impact of recent events interfered with the lives of tourists significantly changing intentions and habits (74%).

As far as destination is concerned, 65% of respondents assumed that they would travel in the future. When detailing these trips 25% of individuals prefer the comfort of traveling within Portugal, and 30% mention that Europe would be a great option, but would avoid countries bordering Ukraine or Russia. Other travelers would opt for countries outside Europe. About specific destinations, most countries such as Spain, France, England, Dubai, or Morocco are mentioned. Maybe in time, things change again but we're really living in difficult times at the moment.

Where do they get information about possible Destiny As for the use of information sources, 79% of respondents assume that Digital Platforms are the most important source, and 21% say that their trips are based on the Opinions of Family and Friends. Only The Newspapers/Magazines play an irrelevant role in the choice of 1200 respondents. Fact that is in line with the investigation conclusion of Magano and Cunha (2020).

### And how do they think to travel...

Respondents mentioned that they intend to enjoy trips in the form of visits to family/friends (76%), cultural visits 24%, weekend getaways (54%), and natural tourism as a holiday option (25%). Rural and cultural tourism were not rejected, but were not the first option of respondents, as happened before the Pandemic. The same does not happen with nautical tourism, spiritual routes, and enogastronomy which are not part of the options of the respondents of this sample.

### When?

It was also possible to verify the respondents continue to have a pre-pandemic view. Some respondents even reject the trend towards a new reality in terms of types of tourism. They consider that they still need some time to travel back to Europe or outside of it. To verify that 79% of individuals answered "I do not know if I will travel shortly". Those who show more willingness to travel are young adults between 20 and 29 years old, who choose the option between 6 to 12 months or 12 months from now and mentioned "outside Europe" as a destination. This group assumes that it will travel in the medium-long future while 6% of respondents answered "Do not leave when I will travel".

Therefore, one can present a conclusive analysis that meets the fear of traveling. The reality is that the "unknown" destabilizes the way people invest in travel. Which makes it possible to realize that fear or fear remains a constant.

### Scale reliability

Considering the proposed questionnaire, we found that the reliability test (Cronbach's test) showed excellent internal consistency, with  $\alpha = 0.911$ .

### Analysis of differences in means

When assessing the intentions and habits of the tourists under study, the researchers found statistically significant differences. In particular, it seems important to mention the groups with 19 and less years of age and those from 40 years to 49 years, since Significance (Sig.) assumes the value 0.05 in the Bonferroni test after ANOVA.

The Bonferroni test is a statistical test for testing the difference between two population means (only done after an ANOVA test shows not all means are equal). The formula for the Bonferroni (1936) test statistic is:

$$t = \bar{x}_i - \bar{x}_j \sqrt{(MSW(1/n_i + 1/n_j))}$$

Let's break down the components of the equation:

t: This represents the test statistic, typically used in various statistical tests to assess the difference between groups or conditions.

$\bar{x}_i$  and  $\bar{x}_j$ : These are sample means from two different groups or conditions.  $\bar{x}_i$  represents the mean of the first group, and  $\bar{x}_j$  represents the mean of the second group.

$\sqrt{(MSW)}$ : This part seems to involve the square root of a term denoted as MSW. MSW could stand for "mean square within," and it typically represents the mean of the squared differences within each group or condition in an analysis of variance (ANOVA) context. It's related to the variability within each group.

$(1/n_i + 1/n_j)$ : This part of the equation involves the inverses of the sample sizes ( $n_i$  and  $n_j$ ) for the two groups or conditions being compared. It's common to have different sample sizes when comparing groups in statistical tests.

In summary, the equation calculates a test statistic t to assess the difference between two sample means, taking into account the within-group variability (MSW) and the sample sizes of the two groups ( $n_i$  and  $n_j$ ). However, the specific test or analysis this equation is related to would require more context to interpret accurately. It might be part of an ANOVA or a t-test, but further information is needed to determine its exact purpose. Regarding gender and net monthly income, there is no difference of choice, given the impact of the act of traveling. To better understand this sample, it was also realized some other analyses.

### Cross-tabulation analysis

A cross-tabulation (or crosstab) report is used to analyze the relationship between two or more variables. The report has the x-axis as one variable (or question) and the y-axis as another variable.

Regarding the relationship between the demographic profile and the essential criteria for travel, the age group from 19 to 29 years has greater statistical relevance, followed by the group from 40 to 49 years who assume that Safety is a very important criterion. Other criteria also considered essential were Access to Health and Hygiene.

Ease of payment or access to online or contactless payment are also considered very important criteria when choosing the destination. As for the sources of information sought before and after travel, the ones that stand out are digital platforms, followed by websites, blogs, and the opinions of family and friends.

Regarding disease control, or increased care for when traveling, the sample was very careful. 90% admitted to seeking information about the place where they want to travel, but also about typical diseases. As for the type of experiences, to have, the age group of 30 to 39 years of age appears to be extremely relevant. For these elements of the sample, Rural Tourism and travel with family and friends within Europe are the most common. About 40% say they want to travel by motorcycle and/ or motorhome. The experiences that meet the trends of the moment, such as Dubai, are the ones that have less projection about this sample. Regarding the type of tourism that tourists see themselves practicing in the coming holidays, Natural Tourism presents a statistical representation of 48% of the respondents. About the Spiritual Routes, almost 63% of respondents assume that it will be little or nothing likely for enjoyment in the next vacation. As for the level of income, those who give the most opinions regarding the destination of the holidays, are the respondents without income, thus assuming that most students assume the destinations of the holidays, whether with family or with friends.

### CONCLUSION

The problem of research has become central at the moment. Thus, it is worth reminding that the general objective was to determine and analyze the profile of the consumer/ tourist in times of war in Ukraine.

Outlining a profile of the tourist/consumer in this new world order becomes a delicate and even complicated topic to discern. However, our research had as its object of study the analysis and understanding of how tourists, as consumers of leisure and business, see today the Tourism of today. Through relevant methods, such as access to recent secondary data, and conducting a questionnaire, it was possible to delineate a type profile, however, we gathered the feeling that the trends that are released by the media, the responses we obtained, little or nothing goes together.

As for the conclusions, as mentioned above, it is delicate to develop a theme still under construction, with data as recent as those we have been working on, to understand how the war in Ukraine will change and condition travel, the act of traveling, and the arrival at destinations. However, it seems important to share some conclusions.

According to the answers obtained, it can be in general people like to travel the world. People travel more for holiday reasons than for work. It is also concluded that people travel at least once a year on vacation. It was also possible to conclude that people have admitted to being afraid to travel outside Portugal since the Pandemic. And this is the turning point. It's important to mention that with the pandemic came a time of not traveling, travel with restrictions, and then the Ukraine War (Cunha, 2021). Due to the last event and according to the sample answers the will to travel has changed.

Through the study, we could easily see that the impact of recent events interfered with the lives of tourists significantly changing intentions and habits. The truth is that they still have plans to travel but most of them prefer the comfort of traveling within Portugal, and some mention that Europe would be a great option, but would avoid countries bordering Ukraine or Russia. Other travelers would opt for countries outside Europe. About specific destinations, most countries such as Spain, France, England, Dubai, or Morocco are mentioned. When talking about getting information the most part still go to online platforms to read comments done by the last travelers of the Destination they want. But most of them would prefer places where they have family or friends, cultural visits, and weekend getaways, mostly in nature.

Rural and cultural tourism were not rejected but were not the first option. The same does not happen with nautical tourism, spiritual routes, and enogastronomy which are not part of the options of the respondents of this sample.

Talking about "when" most of the sample answered within 6 to 12 months or 12 months from now. But we also could see a part of the sample saying they will not travel again showing that the reality is that the "unknown" destabilizes the way people invest in travel. Which makes it possible to realize that fear or fear remains a constant.

When investigating war, there are several limitations that researchers may encounter. It's important to acknowledge these limitations to provide a clear understanding of the scope and applicability of the study. For example, human biases, cognitive limitations, and emotional responses can impact the objectivity of researchers when studying war. Maintaining impartiality and avoiding preconceived notions can be challenging. The ethical challenges of studying war involve issues such as the potential harm to participants, invasion of privacy, and the sensitive nature of the topic. Access to certain information or populations may be restricted due to ethical considerations. But also, War studies often involve subjective elements, including interpretations of events, motivations, and consequences. Different researchers may analyze the same set of data and reach different conclusions based on their perspectives.

**Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, M.N.C.; J.F. methodology, M.N.C.; I.O. software, M.N.C.; A.C. validation, M.N.C.; M.P. formal analysis, M.N.C.; M.P. investigation, M.N.C.; J.F. data curation, M.N.C.; I.O. writing - original draft preparation, M.N.C.; A.C. writing - review and editing, M.N.C.; J.F. visualization, M.N.C.; supervision, M.N.C.; project administration, M.N.C. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** Not applicable.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Not applicable.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data presented in this study may be obtained on request from the corresponding author.

**Acknowledgments:** The research undertaken was made possible by the equal scientific involvement of all the authors concerned.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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