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Drivers of Sustainable Tourism in Europe: How to Design Efficient Business Strategies

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This article studies the willingness of the citizens of the 27 EU countries to change their travel and tourism habits to assume a more sustainable behavior. The study wants to contribute to the recent literature on the topic of interconnections between tourism and sustainability. The data comes from the Flash Eurobarometer survey 499, involving more than 25,000 European citizens. The survey took place in October 2021 and wanted to analyze travel behavior and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on it, booking channels and information sources for travel preparations, reasons for selecting destinations, options and information on sustainable tourism. The hierarchical structure of the data - citizens within countries - is assumed applying a multilevel approach of analysis that considers heterogeneity between and within countries. The estimation of the multi-level latent class model allowed to identify seven groups of European citizens similar by their willingness to adopt tourism-related sustainability practices, and the association of these latent groups with the 27 European countries. Using sociodemographic variables, it was also possible to profile these groups as well as to describe the typical citizen belonging to each cluster. Moreover, drivers of sustainable tourism are identified, both at county and citizen level. The results of the analyses give many useful information for strategic management in the tourism sector.

Keywords

sustainability, tourism, multilevel latent class model, cluster analysis, circular economy, European Union.

Classification

Mainly application

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