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THE TOURISM IMAGE OF ESTONIA IN SPAIN: A FORMULATIVE APPROACH

La imagen turística de Estonia en España: un enfoque formulativo

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Abstract

We are living in an environment, where information flow is freer than ever. Nowadays everyone has access to global news and can make their own conclusions based on the perceived image. Therefore, the role of perception and image is becoming more important for different countries to attract visitors and investors. Tourism is a way of selling the image of a country and the reputation and word of mouth generated from tourism activities are priceless to the image of a destination. This paper analyzes the case of Estonia, which is an emerging tourism market and quite new and unknown for Spain. The authors try to accent the importance of direct promotion, through a survey carried out to 341 Spanish people in Madrid. The result from this quantitative and formulative research method is that Estonia has to promote its tourism image better if the country wants to attract the Spanish tourist.

Keywords: *Tourism Image, Estonia, Quantitative Method.*

Resumen

Vivimos en un ambiente donde el flujo de información es más libre que nunca. Hoy en día todo el mundo tiene acceso a noticias globales y pueden sacar sus propias conclusiones basadas en la imagen percibida. Por tanto, el papel de la percepción y de la imagen se está haciendo más importante para diferentes países para atraer visitantes e inversores. El turismo es una manera de vender la imagen de un país y la reputación y el boca a boca generado por las actividades turísticas son inestimables para la imagen de un destino. Este proyecto analiza el caso de Estonia, que es un mercado turístico emergente y bastante nuevo y desconocido para España. Los autores intentan acentuar la importancia de la promoción directa, a través de una encuesta llevada a cabo con 341 Españoles residente en Madrid. El resultado de este método de investigación cuantitativo y formulativo es que Estonia debe promover su imagen turística mejor si el país quiere atraer al turista español.

Palabras clave: *Imagen Turística, Estonia, Método Cuantitativo.*

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Introduction

1. Estonia nowadays

Since Estonia regained its independence in 1991, the situation and the reputation of the country has been constantly improving. The strategic location in North-Eastern Europe has brought problems in the past, but nowadays this is considered as an advantage due to its proximity to rich Scandinavian countries and being one of the connecting countries to Russia.

When Estonia joined to the Europe Union in 2004, it started out like all the new countries accepted to this alliance, but in 5 years time, Estonia had already exceeded all the expectations. This country took the resources and knowledge within and started creating a positive image on the global scale by joining many more international organizations. This has helped improve the economy and most of all, has helped put Estonia on the map.

Everyone knows that image is important, but what is within matters most. Estonia has developed quite rapidly and can deal with any type of business it sets out to. The population puts a lot of effort into high level education in order to create professionals who can help this country develop even more. So as from within, there is progress and constant activity towards improvement, what about the external image? As mentioned before, image is important. A country cannot separate itself from the rest of the world and be successful in the global economy. And in order to find the best alliances, the image has to be attractive and polished. This has helped Estonia enter most of the international organizations and take part in decision making.

Apart from the political and economic point of view, we also have to consider the image Estonia has in the eyes of the general public. The general public is the one who decides the image by visiting the country, reading about it, etc. Therefore tourism plays an important role when creating an image among visitors and generating 'noise'4. This is the main factor when creating positive perception and Estonia is trying to do so. However, this country is still not so well known, mostly regarding tourism. Why is Estonia's tourism not well known? It is part of theWW European Union, United Nations and receiving positive reviews from all over the world. This project tries to find out what is the Estonian image not only in the world, but focusing the case study on Spain.

1.1 The purpose of this research project

The main reason for choosing this topic is because the authors have opened an academic research line about the Baltic countries in Spain. Furthermore, one of the authors is an Estonian living in Spain, and is quite interested in the tourism business. This is why the title 'The Tourism Image of Estonia in Spain' was chosen. The authors believe there is a potential tourism market for Estonia in Spain, and that Estonia is a destination that is exactly what the Spanish are looking for when travelling. This is due to climate,

4- Term 'noise' in marketing – refers to information an audience must filter through to receive the marketing message.

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culture and surroundings. However, the authors state that Estonia is not known in Spain due to low level or non-existent promotion.

1.2 The objectives of this research project

The main objective of this project is to determine what is Estonia's tourism image in Spain by using quantitative research technique.

To carry out face-to-face survey among the Spanish population in order to determine what is their perception of Estonia's tourism.

Through the objectives stated above, present the final results and analyze what could be done better.

1.3 The hypothesis

The hypothesis - a proposed explanation for a phenomenon (Cohen and Nagel, 1934: 375) – of this research project bases on the following prior observations:

- Estonia is not well known in Spain and has the image of a 'NEW' destination.
- Estonia is perceived as a culture tourism destination in Spain
- The promotion of Estonian Tourism Image in Spain is non-existent.
- Estonia is a 'cruise' tour stop point for the Spanish.
- Spain is a potential market for Spanish tourism

By using quantitative research technique to analyze Spain as a target market for Estonian tourism, and the tourism image of Estonia in Spain, the authors try to prove that the hypotheses presented for this research are correct and have a solid scientific base.

2. Methodology

2.1 Methodological process of 'The Tourism Image of Estonia in Spain' project

The object of this project is to determine the image Estonia's tourism has in Spain. In order to do this, 341 questionnaires have been carried out alongside with literature review. Malhotra's methodological process presented below gives an exact overview of how these different elements have been used to create this scientific research. Please see Figure 1 for the methodological process of the research project.

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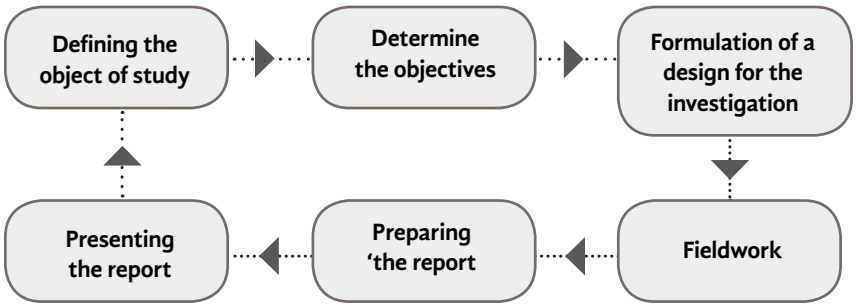
Figure 1: Methodological process of 'The Tourism Image of Estonia' project



Source: Malhotra, 2004:34

Defining the object of study – does the image perceived in Spain match, with what the Estonian Tourism Board tries to emit?

Determine the objectives – prove through quantitative analysis, if there is a potential market for Estonian tourism in Spain. Evaluate the current tourism management method and determine based on quantitative method if it has been effective.

Formulation of a design for the investigation – determine what is the best research method to use in order to reach the objectives.

Fieldwork – gathering of all types of material that matches the objectives of the research process.

Preparing the report – establishing the introduction and theory, set the body of the research, presenting findings, making conclusions, bringing out the most important points.

Presenting the report – presenting the findings to the general public.

2.2 Quantitative method

Quantitative research bases on using data collection in order to test a hypothesis which is based on numerical measurement and statistical analysis in order to establish patterns and test theories (Hernández Sampieri, et al, 2006: 5 - 42). This method bases on multiple opinions mostly gathered into statistical form by questionnaires. Questions about the subject under study are presented to a random or a selected group of people. Tourism image is researched on a regular basis by quantitative methods to to develop a destination image model that shows how the overall destination image is defined and how it affects the intention to revisit (Hallmann, Zeher and Müller, 2015: 94)

Based on the general opinion and ideas of this group, proof or controversy is found to either back up the theory or invalidate it. 'Experiment' questions are carried out in order to choose which questions are relevant and which irrelevant. The final sample is presented to the public (selected or random); the results are reviewed and carried into a statistics program to sum up the results. After the program has presented the findings, the data is studied carefully in order to find relevant details. Once this step has been completed, final conclusions can be made (Veal, 2006: 231 - 233).

Objectiveness is important and explaining the events under study, as they really occur. Quantitative research reflects the true nature of a theory which can be proved to be a fact, thanks to the proof given

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by the quantitative analysis. The opinion of the general public prevails as the researcher is impartial and assures the proper gathering of the data. The interpretation of the facts develops an explanation of how the results fit the existing reality (Creswell, 2005: 164).

On the other hand, quantitative research is altered if the opinions of some of the 'samples' within the general public distinguish from one another in a high level. One very different variable can change the course of the information. Another downside of this method is that it is costly: hiring interviewers, paper and print, statistics program, etc. (Hernández Sampieri, et al, 2006: 5 - 42).

2.3 Surveys

Survey is a hybrid field made up of statistics and social sciences. Survey methodology studies the sampling of individuals from a population and data collection techniques (Groves, et al, 2009: 15 – 17). Surveys involve the systematic collection of data and at the very heart of surveys lay the importance of standardization. Precise samples are selected for surveying, and attempts are made to standardize and eliminate errors from survey data gathering tools (Gray, 2009: 219). Professor Stokes (2011: 123) states that the purpose of using a survey is often to catch a range of facts or attitudes or information behaviours. The data collection technique used for this research is the questionnaire design.

One survey template has been used for this research process: a face-to-face survey was conducted with respondents at the Atocha railway station (the main railway complex in Madrid) on the random basis. Prior to that, the questionnaire used for this survey was filtered by a pilot test.

2.4 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a form containing a set of questions, especially one addressed to a statistically significant number of subjects as a way of gathering information for a survey (The Free Dictionary, 2014: web page). The questionnaire for this research follows the 'flowerpot' approach which is a unique framework for interacting different sets of questions and scale measurements into scientific structure for collecting high-quality data. This approach consists of five decision factors: constructing development; the appropriate dimensions and attributes of objects; question/scale measurement formats; wording of actual questions and directives; and scale points and descriptors (Hair, et al, 2003: 454 – 460). The questionnaire layout for this research process is based on the flowerpot model from the beginning to the end. First of all it states why this survey has been created, who has created it and what the aim of this research is. Then it is supposed to create a sense of comfort by confirming the anonymity of the participants and guarantee the correct usage of the gathered data. After these statements, the questionnaire is divided into three parts. In the first part we distinguish the participants who have visited and who have not visited Estonia. Here we ask corresponding questions from each based on their experience or perception.

Second part of the questionnaire is to measure general knowledge about Estonia as a country regarding its socio-political scene and also to find out from where the participants have received their information regarding Estonia. The participants also have to state weather this information was negative, neutral or positive, and then based on their experience or perception mark Estonia as a tourism destination.

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The last, third part, is demographic data and is gathered once trust has been established between the participant and researcher. This data is to control the sampling process stated earlier as only the answers of Spanish or foreigners living in Spain are counted valid. Demographic data also helps to determine in many cases the target market and once gathered together, present interesting information about preferences among similar demographic groups.

2.5 Sampling

The sampling design used for this research is a simple random sampling technique. A simple random sampling is a probability sampling technique where subjects are selected on a draft basis. The main segmentation criterion for a random sampling was the condition of being Spanish; we have approached every seventh person exiting the underground of the Atocha railway station. The aim was to get the opinion of the general public regarding the tourism image of Estonia in Spain. In order to mark the general image, people from all over Spain have been questioned.

2.6 Analysis of the obtained data

To analyze the data gathered from the questionnaires, IBM SPSS 20 information system and Excel has been used. SPSS is a software package used for statistical analysis, which in most cases is used for social sciences. Excel graphs have been used in this research to present ratios regarding the experiences and perceptions.

3. Tourism image of a destination: the case of Estonia

The theoretical part of this project first of all gives a general overview of what is the image of a destination and how it affects consumer behaviour. We review the basic principles of a destination and move on to determining what the tourism environment of a destination is. Finally, we study the case of Estonia as a country and a tourism destination and how it has managed its tourism environment.

3.1 The tourism image of a destination

''The image of a destination is based on how individuals or groups of people feel about that destination in relation to their thoughts, opinions, knowledge, impressions and prejudices about it. Creating the right image is, therefore, important, but as image is based on many individual aspects it is not surprising to note that different types of tourists will feel differently about the same destination" (Jenkins, 1997: 1 - 15).

Many consumers will select a range of destinations when considering where to go on holiday. In that sense, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) states that destinations are "the fundamental unit of analysis in tourism" (WTO, 2002). Often people will look at options, re-evaluate them, and reconsider specific places based on their knowledge, the images portrayed in the media and

the opinions of individuals and group members - this is the tourist image of products and places which can be defined as[5]:

- The opinion or concept of something that is held by the public.
- The character projected to the public, as by a person or institution, especially as interpreted by the mass media.
- A vivid description or reputation.

Image can be powerful where destinations have memorable elements in the landscape that feature as icons to promote awareness and travel to the destination, leading to tourists associating positive reasons to travel with well-known icons that are safe and popular. A perfect example of this is the Coliseum in Rome, the Eiffel Tower in Paris or the Machu Picchu in Peru. In addition to this, destinations have to create images of their tourism offerings and locality that help to differentiate them from the competition. Yet much of the image itself is not just about the tangible elements, since tourism is a combination of tangible perceptions of place and emotional feelings about locations. For example, even when rational feelings question the logic of visiting somewhere, the desire to see something may override these concerns. This is related to risk behaviour in holiday purchases (Page, 2005: 64 – 66).

The way in which the tourist perceives the range of activities and opportunities available at a destination will influence their decision in the selection process. According to Brunt (1997: 141 - 153)., the holiday cannot be pre-tested, positive destination image and tourist perceptions are crucial In the selection of a tourist destination the importance of accurate perceptions of the range of facilities available at the destination together with a favourable image are vital to the success of the tourist destination. Several dimensions of importance: (the marketing planning process for destinations, destination image, segmentation destinations, destination promotion). If we take a destination as any other business, then similar components of the marketing plan are applicable, and aims and targets for the destination's future need to be established. It is clear that today marketing is crucial for tourism destinations analysis. Pike and Page (2014) presents an article with the first narrative analysis of the areas of research that have developed within the destination marketing field since its commencement in 1973. Both authors consider that not only has the destination and destination marketing emerged as a central element of tourism research (Fyall, Garrod, & Wang, 2012; Wang & Pizam, 2011), even it is associated with the operational activities undertaken in the highly competitive business of attracting visitors to localities (Pike and Page, 2014: 202).

What makes an individual select a particular holiday destination required the examination of various 'push' and 'pull' factors. This explanation shows how motivation pushes people into making a decision to travel to satisfy a need and then how they are pulled or attracted to a destination. The experience of a destination while crucial to the individual may also influence the actions of others. Goodall (1991: 58 - 77) suggests that if tourists are dissatisfied with their holiday they will not return and are unlikely to recommend that destination to their friends. Understanding the individual is a time-consuming process, however once we establish the point of interest, the best marketing model can be applied in order to attract these potential tourists.

5- Definitions based on the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary 2014.

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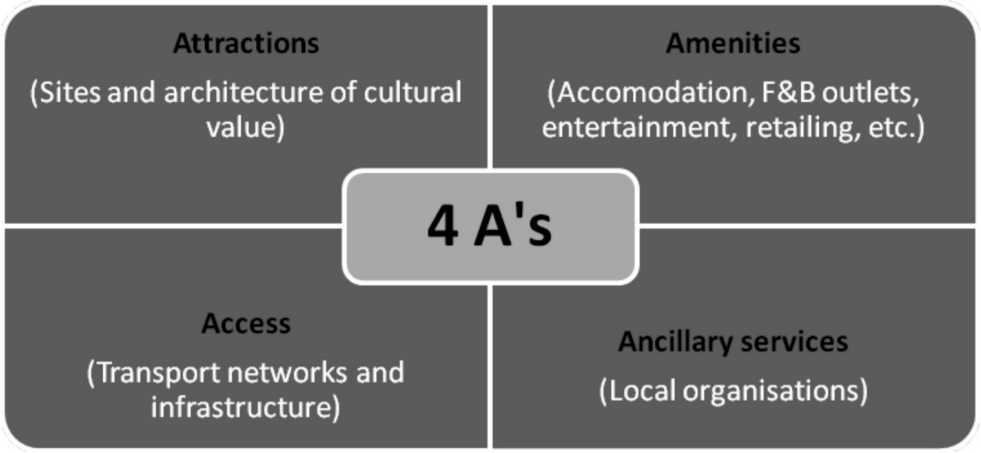
3.2 Tourism destination

Destination is a target area that tourists will visit. According to the Dictionary of Leisure, Travel and Tourism (2007: 90) a destination is place to which something is sent, or to which someone is going. In essence, a destination is a place in which visitors spend time as part of their tourist trip and is usually the place they stay in although it can be just one part of a broader itinerary where a wide range of destinations are visited as part of a coach or cruise ship holiday. A destination comprises a number of core components and some authors refer to them as the 4A's which are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The 4 A's of a destination



Source: Cooper, et al, 1998: 103.

In order to transmit the correct image of a destination to a potential group of tourists, some points of management have to be considered. These are in most cases management of a destination, segmenting, promoting, creating destination policies and controlling customer satisfaction.

The careful management of tourist destinations is crucial if tourism is to be maintained at acceptable levels. One dimension of this are changes in consumer tastes. As tourists become increasingly more experienced and sophisticated in their tastes, their expectations for tourist destinations have increased. Another dimension is that if development at a destination is not managed in a controlled way it may be possible that aspects of the destination are lost (Page, et al , 2004: 245 - 254). All destinations have a certain image surrounding them, created by a variety of factors over time.

When segmenting a destination, we have to bear in mind that people will consider the destination's image differently therefore it is important that the destination is marketed to the right market segment. The breaking down of the market into more manageable homogenous groups/segments is more likely to be a productive way for a destination to market itself effectively and efficiently.

The promotion of a tourism destination is not unlike the promotion of other tourism products. For instance the promotional message may be communicated by advertising the destination through a selected

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medium. Additionally, the promotional message might be communicated by sales staff, sales promotion, or generating publicity about the destination. As Holloway and Robinson (1995:158) state a business must experiment over time with different forms of promotion and learn to judge which seem to work most effectively.

Satisfying the consumer in tourism is important for three reasons: First of all, it leads to positive word-of-mouth recommendation of product to friends and relatives, which in turn brings in new customers. Secondly, creating a repeating customer by satisfying their expectations means there will be no need for extra marketing expenditure. And third, dealing with complaints is expensive, time-consuming and bad for the general reputation (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2004: 236-239). Quality here is used as fitness for purpose definitions, which are market-driven and customer oriented, and which focus upon customer utility and satisfaction. Service quality can be described as the intrinsic services nature of heterogeneity, inseparability of production and consumption and intangibility (Holloway and Robinson, 1995: 158).

3.3 Spain – a growing market for Estonia's tourism

According to the UNWTO 'International Tourist Highlights for 2012', Spain was the 4th in ranking for most international tourist arrivals and second in international tourism receipts. As we can see, Spain is one of the most popular destinations in the world and also the Estonian tourists choose this sunny Mediterranean country for their holidays year after year. On the other hand, Spanish tourists are also demonstrating increasing interest in Estonia as a tourism destination. What attracts the Spanish tourists to Estonia and what drives them away[6]:

- 'Nordic feel' with mild summers and green landscape when compared to Spain's hot summers.
- Estonia is a 'NEW' destination. Here the added value is the fact that Estonia freed from the Soviet occupation and re-established its independence. This appeals sentimentally to the Spanish as they also bring comparisons from their own history.
- Joining the EU has brought positive interest, as Estonia is seen as an allay by Spain just like the other EU member countries.

Marketing and selling Estonia as a tourism destination – Spanish tour operators are not very familiar with what Estonia tries to offer and which are the main attractions.

Internet is not the best means of information source as they prefer leaflets and brochures introducing the destination. Physical material of tourism information about Estonia in Spanish is limited[7].

4. Main findings

The results of the surveys are presented based on the general division of the main survey questionnaire model. As we have mentioned earlier, a total of 341 subjects participated in this survey at at the Atocha train station in Madrid. First of all we determine the percentage of people who have and who

6- Foreign Ministry of Estonia

7- Currently the visitestonia.ee website is also available in Spanish and therefore the Estonian Tourism Board based with Enterprise Estonia has reached their objective #1 for the Spanish market in 2013. We can consider this as a necessary investment to improve the presence of Estonia as a tempting tourism destination for the Spanish speaking population."

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have not been to Estonia. Based on this starting point we present the results for those who have visited Estonia in order to determine their travelling model. Further analysis of the authors will study and compare the patterns on to those who have not been to Estonia and try to determine whether they would like to visit Estonia in the future and why. This has been done in order to see whether the perception is in correspondence with the reality. Finally, the demographic data is analyzed and the most interesting points descriptive to certain groups are presented.

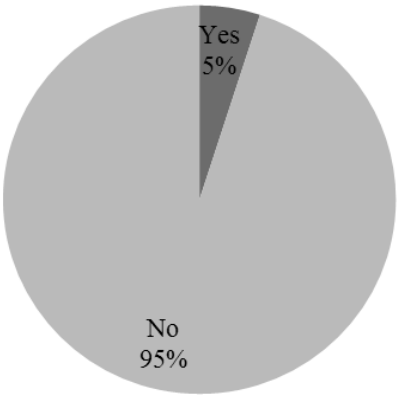
This part focuses on those people who have visited Estonia and tries to determine their travelling profile. We will see their travelling model (transport, etc.) and what they thought of this destination. From Table 1 and Figure 3 presented below we can clearly see that 95% of the public asked, had never been to Estonia. In general, Spanish seldom travel abroad and therefore this result was to be expected.

Table 1: Have you been to Estonia?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	17	5,0	5,0	5,0
	No	324	95,0	95,0	100,0
	Total	341	100,0	100,0	

Source: own elaboration.

Figure 3: Have you been to Estonia? (%)



Source: own elaboration.

From Tables 2 and 3 we can see that most travellers questioned have visited Estonia only once. Table 2 presents that the most common way of transport to Estonia was by boat and second by plane. Table 3 presents the duration of the stay in regards to how many times each visitor had been to Estonia. Most visits last less than 1 day or from 1 – 2 days. Based on these two graphs, we can assume that these are cruise travellers as this is their exact action pattern. Based on these graphs Estonia is mainly a cruise destination for the Spanish market.

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Table 2: How many times have you been to Estonia and what transport did you use? (Absolute numbers)

		What transport did you use to get to Estonia?		Total
		Plane	Boat	
How many times have you been to Estonia?	1	1	14	15
	More than 2	1	1	2
Total		2	15	17

Source: own elaboration.

Table 3: How many times have you been to Estonia and what was the duration of your stay? (Absolute numbers)

		What was the duration of your stay?			Total
		Less than 1 day	1 - 2 days	More than 7 days	
How many times have you been to Estonia?	1	9	6	0	15W
	More than 2	0	1	1	2
Total		9	7	1	17

Source: own elaboration.

As presented in Table 4, all tourists visited Estonia as a part of a general route that combined its neighbour countries. No one visited only Estonia. This is also the action pattern for the cruise tourists. Most trips were done to Estonia, other Baltic countries and Russia. Secondly, Finland was also added to the travel combination.

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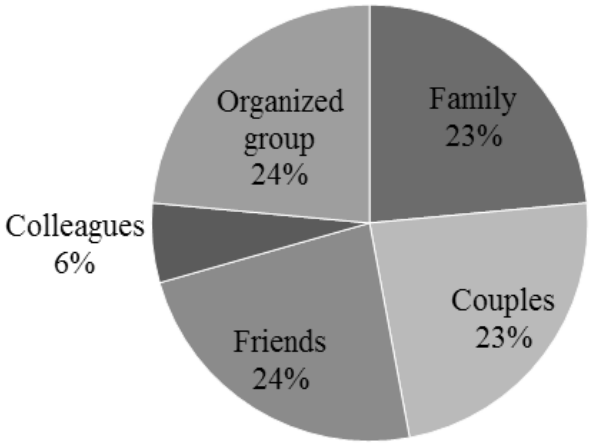
Table 4: During your trip to Estonia, you visited ….? (%)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Estonia & Other Baltic Countries	2	,6	11,8	11,8
	Estonia & Scandinavian Countries	1	,3	5,9	17,6
	Estonia & Russia	1	,3	5,9	23,5
	Estonia, Scandinavia, Finland & Other Baltic Countries	4	1,2	23,5	47,1
	Estonia, Other Baltic Countries & Russia	9	2,6	52,9	100,0
	Total	17	5,0	100,0	
Missing	System	324	95,0		
Total		341	100,0		

Source: own elaboration.

In the case of determining how these visitors travelled, it is seen that there are 4 equal groups (see Figure 4) who travelled either with family, with their couple, with their friends or in an organized group. A lower percentage of 6% travelled with their colleagues and no one questioned travelled to Estonia alone.

Figure 4: How did you travel? (%)



Source: own elaboration.

All the questioned tourists that have been to Estonia did Cultural tourism during their stay and visited the Old Town of Tallinn (see Figure 5). As we established earlier that these visitors were mostly cruise tourists, it is clear that they only had time to enjoy the Old Town of Tallinn and some gastronomy.

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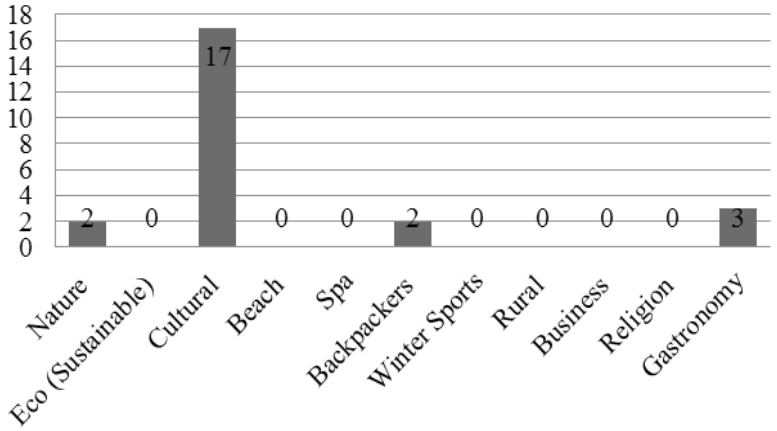
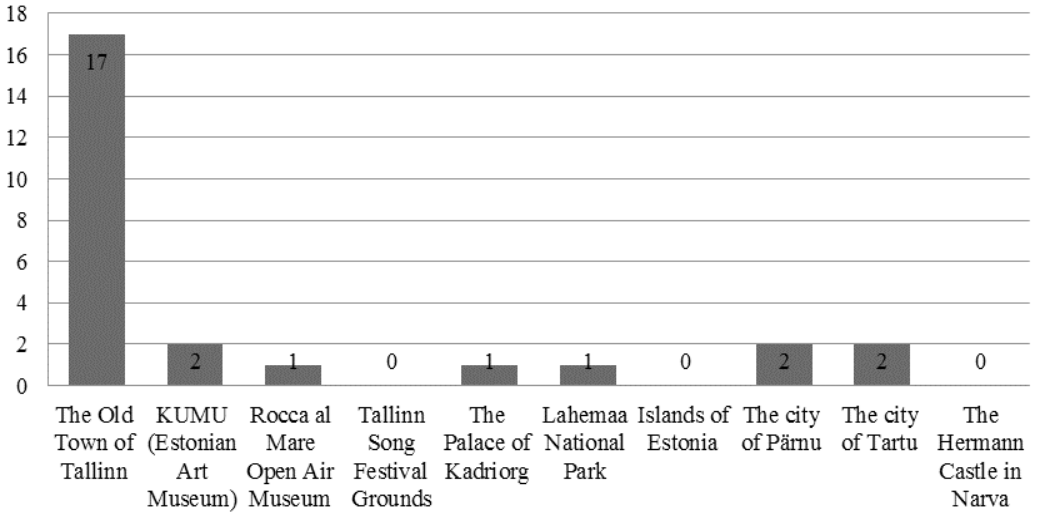
Figure 5: What type of tourism did you do during your stay in Estonia? (Absolute numbers/ multiple options)



Source: own elaboration.

All questioned tourist visited the Old Town of Tallinn (see Figure 6). Some also had time to enjoy the museums, other two big cities of Estonia and nature tourism.

Figure 6: What tourism attractions did you visit during your stay in Estonia? (Absolute numbers/ multiple options)



Source: own elaboration.

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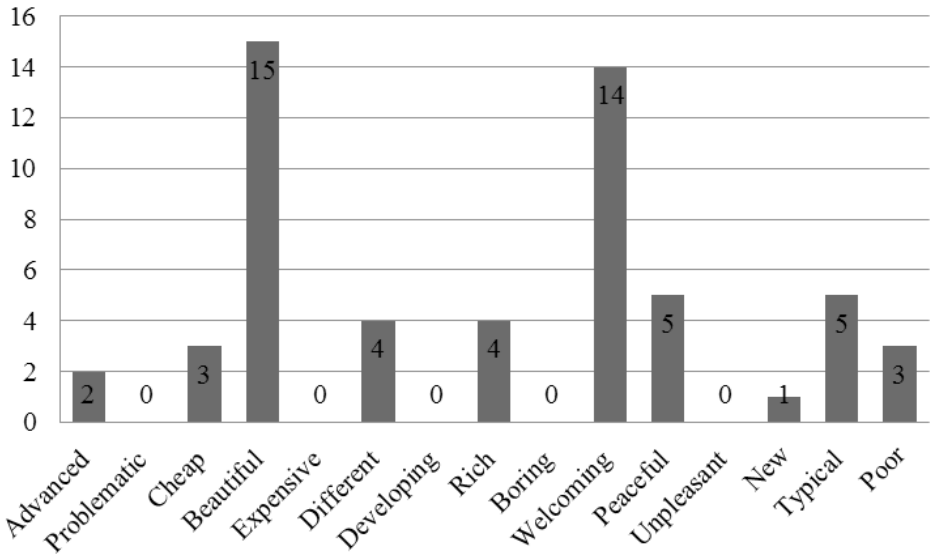
In the Figure 7 we can observe that the main adjective used by the visitors questioned was that Estonia is a beautiful tourism destination. Right after that it is welcoming, which is very important in order to create a positive image of the country so that the tourists upon return can create positive word of mouth from their side. Other most used adjectives were peaceful, typical, rich and different. No one thought Estonia was problematic, developing, boring, unpleasant or expensive. The feedback from the results is positive.

Figure 7: Please describe the Estonian tourism image based on your experience. (Absolute numbers/ multiple options)



Source: own elaboration

General Conclusions

This paragraph presents the general conclusions of the research and confirms/denies the hypotheses stated at the introduction part. Based on the data analysis of the conducted survey, some suggestions of how to improve the problematic situations reflected from the results have also been given.

1. Estonia is not well known in Spain and has the image of a 'NEW' destination.

On the other hand, when looking at the results of the surveys carried out for this research, we can see that there is very little awareness among the Spanish population, regarding Estonia's tourism. The proof of this is that the medium mark for the tourism image of Estonia is 'normal'. The low level of knowledge, is no surprise here, as only 5% of 341 participants had been to Estonia.

Estonia is perceived as a culture tourism destination in Spain.

Culture is the main attraction point of Estonia for the Spanish traveller. Estonia is experienced or perceived as a cultural destination by all the questioned tourists that have been to Estonia. This image is in accordance with what the Estonian Tourism Board tries to emit. After that, Estonia is seen also as a nature and gastronomy destination.

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By Tallinn – capital of Estonia, being the European Capital of Culture in 2011, more awareness was created. The Old Town of Tallinn is considered the main attraction of the country by both the professionals of the study area and the tourists who have visited Estonia. It is important to mark that The Old Town of Tallinn was the attraction most known by those survey participants who had not visited Estonia. It was 5 times more known than the KUMU Art Museum or the Islands of Estonia. The Old Town is the main attraction because it is possible to get a general overview of the city within one day. Being declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO attracts even more visitors. The main attractions of Estonia in order of importance according to the survey participants were:

- The Old Town of Tallinn
- KUMU is the headquarters of the Art Museum of Estonia
- The islands of Estonia
- Tallinn Song Festival Grounds
- Lahemaa National Park
- Rocca al Mare open air museum
- The city of Tartu
- The city of Pärnu
- The Palace of Kadriorg
- Hermann Castle in Narva

The promotion of Estonian Tourism Image in Spain is non-existent.

The awareness of Estonian tourism is still very small in Spain and this is due to the low level of promotion carried out among the population. Promoting Estonia's tourism in Spain is not very extensive as Spain is not a priority target market for Estonia. Some initiatives have been implemented to increase the low level of awareness of Estonia among Spanish people through the 'visitestonia' web site. This website has been recently translated into Spanish and also comes in Estonian, English, Italian, Latvian, Swedish, Finnish, French, Norwegian, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Polish and German[8].

Each country should do their best to attract people to come and visit. This is important for economic, political and cultural reasons. The authors believe it would be more effective to launch a direct campaign dedicated to the general public in Spain, rather than focusing so much on tour operators. This would have a higher cost in the beginning but would create a direct line of information and generate interest among potential visitors. The tour operators try to sell their product in the best way and this does not guarantee that they give Estonia all the promotion it should receive.

Estonia is a 'Cruise' tour stop point for the Spanish tourist.

Out of 17 survey participants who had been to Estonia, 15 were cruise travellers. Everyone was on a combined tour of Estonia with the other Baltic's, Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Helsinki, etc. The hope here is for these cruise tourists to return for a longer period of time and create positive word of mouth in their everyday environment to attract even more Spaniards to Estonia.

This has been a good way of promoting Estonian tourism; however, these cruise tourists come to Estonia only for duration of less than 1 day. Then, according to the UNWTO definition, can we really

8- Data of August 2014

consider them tourists? Yes, this type of travelling is considered an excursion and the people practicing it, excursionists – a form of tourism. But these visitors do not generate an overnight stay as they are sleeping in their cabins on the cruise ship. In many cases, they don't eat at the restaurants of the city since they have all the meals included on the boat. Because these cruise tourists visit is so short and their expenditure minimal, it is economically not as beneficial to Estonia as a tourist who does a full stay. It does create a positive experience and creates encouraging word of mouth as revealed from the results.

In this case, Estonia has to find a way how to attract the Spanish tourist directly to Estonia without combining it with other countries. As mentioned earlier, a good way of doing this would be launching a big promotion campaign and leaving the tour operators to create awareness from their side. The best solution is taking charge of the Estonian tourism image in Spain and creating effective action points to get the message across to the clients directly. In order to do this, having a direct airline connection should be indispensable.

Spain is a potential market for Estonian tourism.

According to the data survey, those who marked Estonia's image as good had either experienced or perceived it to be mostly a beautiful, peaceful and welcoming destination. Another reason for this positive mark was the fact that they had received positive information from different resources and this had increased their positive opinion.

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