



Article Will the Consequences of Covid-19 Trigger a Redefining of the Role of Transport in the Development of Sustainable Tourism?

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Abstract: As there are very marked relationships between tourism and transport, integrated knowledge of these processes is essential if destinations and tourism enterprises are to be developed, an effective tourism policy pursued, and emerging local and global issues and conflicts surrounding tourism resolved. Beyond this, in an era of huge change reflecting the consequences of the COVID-19 viral pandemic, the importance of sustainable transport in tourism's sustainable development appears to be of critical importance. Adopting this kind of perspective, this paper seeks to achieve a critical overview of conceptual dimensions of sustainability that link up with tourism and transport. To this end, ideas based on the literature and previous discussions are extended to include certain new propositions arising out of a (hopefully) post-COVID-19 world. Proceeding first with a systematic literature review (SLR), this article discusses the importance of transport to the development of tourism, dealing critically with modes of transport and their changing roles in sustainable development under COVID and post-COVID circumstances. The author summarises likely new way(s) of thinking in the aftermath of the pandemic, with the need for this/these to be far more sustainable and responsible, and characterised by a reorientation of behaviour in a "green" direction. It is further concluded that three aspects of transport-tourism relations will prove crucial to more sustainable utilisation-i.e., proximity, slower and less energy-intensive travel, and green transport.

Keywords: sustainable tourism; sustainable transport; proximity; slow tourism; COVID-19; accessibility; walkability; tourism destination

1. Introduction

Tourism activity is now omnipresent, with the development of travel during the 20th century being facilitated by progress with systems of transport, be that cars, buses or coaches, ships or aeroplanes. It was such improvements in transport that allowed many people to travel quickly and more cheaply to places of tourist interest, with more people beginning to enjoy the benefits of leisure time, and a cycle being put in place that supported intensive development of tourism [1,2]. In turn, a great many tourist destinations were entirely dependent on good transport for their development, given the dependence on a high degree of attractiveness and effective promotion, but also good accessibility.

All of this denotes a need to discuss and critically evaluate transport infrastructure, accessibility and other related issues that link up with the growth of the tourism sector. On top of this, it is more and more necessary to consider where sustainability fits into this. This demand for sustainability in tourism is in fact seen to revolve around several interrelated processes. Since the 1960s and 1970s, the growth of global tourism has been intensive, with significant impacts on the tourism system. These impacts—and especially destination regions' at times negative perceptions of the outcomes of a growth in tourism—have highlighted the need in many places for tourism to be at least "guided" or even limited [3–7].

Integrated knowledge of the interactions between transport and tourism is essential for the development of destinations, tourism enterprises, and effective policy in this domain,



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Copyright: © 2021 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https:// creativecommons.org/licenses/by/ 4.0/). as well as for resolving emerging local and global issues and conflicts. At the same time, in an age with change undoubtedly ushered in by COVID-19, the importance of transport in the sustainable development of tourism looks critical. Paradoxically perhaps, a number of scholars are commenting on the unfolding COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity for tourism to be "re-imagined" in terms of its sustainability, as well as the social and ecological justice it may yet offer—e.g., [8,9].

In fact, every crisis in history has also represented an opportunity, or at least a chance for reflection [10]. However, instead of actively sinking the idea of sustainability, we might reflect further on its conceptual side where both tourism and transport are concerned, before going on to reflect on certain ideas arising out of 2020's pandemic-induced changes. It ought to be the case that ever-greater significance is attached to social justice [11], as well as spatial justice [12]. The world after the COVID-19 pandemic should be much more sustainable; certain new trends in tourism should entail a change of behaviour (in a "green" direction), and an increase in the level of disposable income among potential tourists. This will fit with "responsible" behaviour on their part.

This paper seeks to offer a critical overview of conceptual dimensions of sustainability that link tourism with transport. To this end, ideas based on the relevant literature and the debate hitherto are supplemented by certain new propositions apt in a (hopefully) post-COVID world.

As is clear from the above, the first and main method used to compile this paper is a systematic literature review (SLR). On this basis, the article discusses the importance of transport to the development of tourism and deals critically with modes of transport and their changing roles vis-à-vis sustainable development under COVID and post-COVID circumstances. The paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 presents sustainable relationships between transport and tourism. The next section analyses changes in transport and their roles in tourism during the 2020 pandemic. Finally, critical points of departure are evaluated in relation to sustainability in transport to and within tourism destinations. The author summarises a new way of thinking in the light of the pandemic that would achieve a greater degree of sustainability.

2. Sustainable Relationships between Transport and Tourism

Sustainability has three main aspects—i.e., environmental, economic and social aspects. Although it is important for a balance between the three dimensions to be found, the scientific literature mostly dwells on relationships with the environment. Each of the elements changes temporally and spatially, and there would be a general principle that changes in tourism affect transport and vice versa.

In some places, specific turning points and radical contextual changes may have proved extremely influential, with elements of the development of tourism being profound enough in their effects to cause transformations in completely new directions [13–15]. Transport is an integral part of tourism and without its development there could have been no such development of tourism as has in fact taken place. Sustainable transport and sustainable tourism have a close relationship. The idea of sustainability is important for the tourism of today, and especially, of course, for its future. The latter is manifested by emissions of greenhouse gases or the enormous consumption of energy (including oil) by means of transport used in tourism [16,17]. However, criticism of the conceptualisation and operationalisation of sustainable tourism has increased recently [6]. Sustainability is often a "versus" set against actual challenges—e.g., sustainability versus political systems/power; sustainability versus economic growth and consumption; sustainability versus technological progress; sustainability versus resource (over)use; sustainability versus exclusion; sustainability versus exclusion; sustainability versus exclusion; sustainability versus ethics and morals, etc. [18].

2.1. Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is defined as an activity where persons travel to and stay in places outside of their usual environments for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited [19]. Tourism is also defined as travel away from one's home environment [20], and hence removal from the place of residence or "everyday life", in the direction of a place or places geographically and ontologically distant from work and home, and differing from those linked to the everyday routine [21]. The spatial relations describing the functioning of tourism concern three aspects: the tourist's place of residence, the destination, and the possibilities and ways of moving between them [22].

The aims of sustainable tourism are to minimise the negative and maximise the positive social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism in destination communities and environments, by promoting ethical consumption and production among tourists and all stakeholders [23,24]. However, the presence of increasing numbers of tourists at popular destinations throughout the world has provoked many problems and led to many conflicts. The excessive concentration of tourist traffic, known as "overtourism", [25,26] or "tourist saturation" [27], leads to overcrowding in attractive locations, describes the negative effects of tourism, and has been applied to the problem of excessive numbers of tourists in cities, along coasts and in naturally valuable areas.

Expressed simply, according to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Travel World Organization, sustainable tourism can be defined as: "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" [28]. Sustainability in tourism is firstly related to issues of the natural and cultural environments. Tourism can often cause environmental damage that ranges from the transformation of places with risks such as erosion, pollution, the loss of natural habitats, and forest fires, through to the impact on climate and the general troposphere (e.g., air pollution, CO₂ footprints left by travel) and consumption of resources. According to Saarinen (2014), the three overviewed traditions have their origins in discussions of tourism and the environment and also beyond sustainable development thinking: in resource-based, activity-based, and community-based traditions [6]. However, when the sustainability concept is applied to the resolving of global/regional challenges, it becomes obvious that sustainability is an emotionally ambivalent issue, depending on individual and collective value systems [18]. The tourism industry may continue to play a key role in sustaining not only itself, but also the capitalist system as a whole into the Anthropocene [29,30].

2.2. Sustainable Transport for Tourism

Transport plays a number of roles in contemporary tourism. As the most important, D. Hall (2008) has considered: (1) the link between the source market (region) and the host destination (region); (2) mobility and access within a destination region or country; (3) mobility and access at (within) a tourist attraction; (4) transport itself offering a tourist experience; (5) means of transport acting as centres of recreational or historical interest [31]. Transport exerts various external effects with respect to environmental functions, spatial organisation, public health, safety, and security. While transport and mobility are acknowledged widely as important elements to economic growth and accessibility, and integral to the achievement of sustainable development, there is also broad acknowledgment of the negative social and environmental impacts of increased motorised mobility—in particular, road and air travel (see [32–35]).

Sustainable transport is defined in relation to emissions and energy use [36]. This marked a first time for the (bold and much-needed) appearance of the concept of "sustainable mobility" as part of the international agenda [37]. In the literature on transport and sustainable development, the terms "sustainable transport" (also sustainable transportation and sustainable transport systems, etc.) and "sustainable mobility" are used synonymously [38]. Sustainable transport seems to be preferred in North America, and

sustainable mobility in Europe [39]. At present, the transport sector consumes approximately one-third of our final energy, and probably causes more environmental and social problems than any other sector [40]. During the last few decades, transport for tourism has become heavily dependent on the world's two most energy-intensive and polluting forms of transport—air transport and the motor vehicle [41]. However, Lumsdon (2000) discusses the extent to which a planned sustainable transport system offers an alternative model for the development of transport in tourism at the destination level. Is it possible

development at a destination level? [42]. In our differentiating world, many factors play important roles in tourism development, such as the commodity of transport, price, and mode, and the symbolic value of the tourism centre or region [43,44]. A sustainable transport system is one that is accessible, safe, environment-friendly, and affordable [43,45]. The main aim of sustainable mobility is to create a permanent change in transport behaviours among residents by increasing the share of trips completed via sustainable means of transport, such as public transport, cycling or movement on foot [46]. As the problem is devoted to private/public issues, then an increase in the attractiveness of the public transport offered is essential if the goals of sustainable mobility are to be attained [47–50]. The adjustment of service properties to meet the preferences and expectations of passengers whilst at the same time providing quality services is what determines the attractiveness of public transport [50]. For the future, we can state that "the next twenty years of transportation promise even more transformative changes to transport, and interactive effects on land use, mobility, regulation, and equity. The development of alternative fuels has been heavily influenced by governmental intervention; and there is nothing inevitable about the diffusion of autonomous technologies or shared mobility to a diverse and inequitable worldwide population of mobile citizens, living in a heterogeneous set of urban and rural environments, and who have inequitable access or experience with changing transportation technologies" [50].

to design nonmotorised tourist transport systems that adhere to principles of sustainable

In recent years, hope for sustainability has been attached to three particular innovations: electric vehicles, shared mobility, and automated vehicles. These have been collectively called the "Three Revolutions" [51] as well as "New Mobilities" [33], among other terms (e.g., automated, connected, electric and shared), [52]. Innovative shared mobility services are based on new technologies and new business models, such as the sharing economy, the on-demand economy, and the access economy, and include car-sharing, bike-sharing, ride sourcing or, more recently, scooter-sharing [53].

2.3. The Role of Transport in the Development of Sustainable Tourism

The role of transport in tourism is significant and emphasised by many authors; it is a component of tourism development, tourism theories and concepts, and the tourism product [31,54–56]. Transport is an integral part of many recreational behaviours, both as an aid to access to recreational opportunities and as a recreational activity itself [57] (p. 11). Transport is important for tourism, as it ensures the movement of tourists from origin to destination and acts as a means of that movement within the destination, allowing for a greater dispersion of visitors, and, as a result, bringing visitor flows as close as possible to areas where access would not otherwise be possible [58]. Classic relations of the role of transport in tourism, which can also be considered from the point of view of sustainability, focus on three spatial types of relationship—i.e., access to an area, movement around a tourist area, and transport involving multidestination journeys.

Access to an area: Thanks to transport, it is possible for tourists to reach attractions or tourist destinations from their place of residence. The tourist area may therefore fail to have a major impact on possibilities of external areas being reached, as they are served by external actors.

Transport at a tourist destination provides opportunities and ways to move around an area, with importance placed on the type of transport, the existing network, traffic organisation, and access to tourist attractions. Multidestination trips entail visits to many places that are distant from each other with changes of the place of stay (accommodation). Examples include trips around the world, ferry journeys [59–61], and round trips by coach. They are usually organised by carriers or travel agencies, and, in special cases, private transport (own car or even bicycle) is used directly by tourists. A journey may be taken along a recreational route where the type of transport and the nature of the route combine, or affect the tourist separately [31,62]. The means of transport itself can also be used in overnight accommodation (for example, where a motorhome, ship or special train are involved).

Transport is an integral part of activity in the sector of tourism, which could not have developed to the extent it had if transport had not developed too. Indeed, most forms of tourism could not exist at all without transport [55]. Transport can act as a "gatekeeper" in cultural contacts, limiting or facilitating host-tourist interactions [63]. Second, local tourist mobility can prove critical when it comes to inequality and the social dimension to transport externalities [11,34]. Third, transport can give rise to overtourism [34,56,58]. Fourth, transport affects accessibility [31,44,64,65]. Fifth, transport has an impact on sustainable development, in terms of both accessing a tourist destination and movement around the destination area.

3. Sudden Change in the Transport–Tourism Relationship as a Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Sustainability (mitigated change and long-term transformation) and resilience (adaptation to change by short-term, incremental adaptations) can be seen as complementary, inter alia, given that they share certain principles and objectives [18,66]. Even as transport, mobility, and tourism intensified over many decades, there was still a temporary decline in transport volumes during the global financial crises between 2007 and 2011, as well as in the face of the spread of COVID in 2020. The huge and rapid development of tourism was stopped suddenly at the beginning of the year as a viral-induced pandemic gathered pace.

A new pneumonia was first detected in Wuhan, China, in 2019, and spread steadily around the world. Following the WHO's declaration of an event of pandemic status (on March 11th 2020), it emerged that most countries' governments were convinced that closures of their own state borders represented the most effective protection against the spread of COVID-19 [10].

Yet the pandemic continued, and a great many human activities were changed by it post-March 2020, with many and varied short- and long-term consequences. One of the first such—when lockdowns were introduced—saw transport being stopped, slowed down or otherwise limited. Each crisis that might have helped contain the COVID-19 outbreak immediately had a significant impact on the tourist industry—through mass cancellations of trips, the suspension of national and international flights, and the postponing of events [67–69].

The early phase of (re)action was characterised by chaos, isolationist tendencies, and an immediate desire to see the significance of the nation state restored. We all reacquainted ourselves with the reality that those states—and their borders—are still in place, and still able to meet—at least in part—their time-honoured defensive, filtering, checking, and controlling functions [10].

The pandemic has already affected tourism greatly. In many of the world's cities, planned travel declined by 80–90%, and hit the hotel industry [69]. Dramatic drops in foreign tourism made affected the majority of destinations. Transport and tourism relationships have also changed and will be discussed by type in the following.

Air transport, as the enormous propagator of global tourism via fast, safe, longdistance travel, has of course changed significantly in 2020. As early as in March this year, there was a near-instant grounding of aircraft and introduction of relevant restrictions, a lack of new flights, and a lack of any possibility to even make reservations. IATA estimates that the 2020 financial losses will be of the order of USD 84.3bn globally [10]. Similarly, after the summer period, in the Northern Hemisphere, the so-called "second wave" limited air transport once again. September restrictions and bans on flights to specific countries once again shook the market and the security associated with the planning of tourist trips. There is also evidence for the next months that aviation mobility can be decreased or fulfil purposes other than transport. There may be a significant reduction in long-distance travel, charter flights to typical holiday destinations and numbers of Low-Cost Carriers (LCCs). For instance, Nilsson (2009) suggests that as much as 60% of LCC demand may be stimulated, in the sense that there is no specific motivation for travel, other than the fact that a destination is offered at a very low price [70,71]. Price change and a reduction in connections can reduce numbers of tourist trips drastically, even when the airline market returns to a relative balance. Concerns about sudden flight cancellations may also persist for a while. People can also limit nonessential travel.

Water transport (ferry, cruises): Up until 2020, cruise tourism was the fastest-growing sector within the tourism industry [59]. However, as the pandemic took hold, maritime transport was the first form to run into difficulties, even though the reduction in flow was never so rapid or complete and has therefore been a huge casualty of the downturn, with the share prices of the major lines down 70–80%. Starting with the Diamond Princess as early as on 1 February 2020, at least 25 cruise ships already had confirmed COVID-19 infections by 26 March 2020 [72]. The vessels returned after the summer holidays, but it quickly emerged that even the medical examination of all passengers was not sufficient to prevent outbreaks of coronavirus from arising onboard the ships. Moreover, the COVID-19 cruise-tourism crisis, despite being characterised by discourse between cruise-ship companies and local authorities, was eventually hit by a breakdown in communications that only served to intensify the crisis. The fragile ecosystems of many small islands were threatened during the COVID-19 pandemic, but local governments only showed an interest in protecting their people and sovereignty. Finally, cruise lines' crisis-management strategies were deployed too late, with the ultimate effect of paralysing all the lines financially, to the point where their future existence has been put into question [73,74].

Land transport was also much reduced and limited. European land links (e.g., into and out of Italy) were simply severed, irrespective of Schengen, while domestic connections were reduced and then also eliminated. The reasons behind this were major restrictions on people's movements even within their own countries, as the need to "stay at home" became more and more pressing and obvious. Something had to substitute for this, and online connections and other new technologies boomed.

Individual road transport turned out to be very important in tourist trips, mainly in summer 2020. It primarily ensured greater safety and a certainty of being able to return home. A private car offers the tourist better protection against the virus (in terms of social distancing and self-isolation). The door-to-door capability present in car transport looks to be more important than ever. Positive features of such road transport had an impact in terms of generating local weekend overcrowding, as experienced by many countries' domestic tourist destinations in summer 2020. In turn, road public (collective) transport was hit by a huge crisis, as coach travel was cut to a minimum.

Rail transport is treated as sustainable transport, given its positive significance for both long-distance travel and movement around the destination area. Trains are also tourist attractions and evoke emotions. The railway has its limitations for tourist use: restricting traffic and restricting safety. During the pandemic, rail transport was felt to be (and proved to be) more dangerous than individual car travel, due to possibilities of the virus being transmitted. However, the future of sustainability still has great potential for improvement provided this mode of transport is better suited to the needs of tourists. It should be an important element of planning and marketing strategies aimed at increasing the importance of sustainability.

4. A New Way of Thinking after COVID to Be Much More Sustainable

While a global pandemic may not eliminate tourism, it can change it hugely. The global tourism industry has ground to a halt, and concern about overtourism has consequently been replaced by a newfound worry that "undertourism" (previously a marginal issue)

will instead threaten the future of economies and societies worldwide. However, this phenomenon is probably temporary. There are strong business and political voices speaking for the economy (tourism included) to be opened back up again as soon as possible, so that it can return to "normal"—with affected businesses likely receiving substantial government/taxpayer (financial) support without even necessarily having to do more to meet requirements on sustainability or climate-change mitigation [73,75].

However, because every crisis also represents an opportunity, we think and hope that post-COVID change presents an opportunity to modify the behaviours of tourists, with there now being an evolution in the direction of destinations being adapted to sustainability needs and the possibility of discovering them. The development of new sustainable modes of transport, reduction in negative impacts, and planning will all play crucial roles in this process.

The need for further decarbonisation and for reduced energy consumption, as well as the choices made by tourists themselves, will be of particular importance. Prices are also important—the choice of cheaper means of transport and fewer trips in general may both be dictated by societies' impoverishment. A reduction in numbers of places of accommodation [69] and the collapse of companies (services) as a result of the crisis may in turn produce a temporary increase in prices of tourist services. It would seem that, in tourism, and especially in transport–tourism relations, three elements will be important for a more sustainable use: proximity, slower, reduced-energy travel, and green transport.

Proximity: the distance between tourists' residential and stay markets should be reduced. For tourist trips, the shorter the stay, the shorter the travel route should be. It is also important to shape the markets of tourist destinations and the behavioural decisions made by tourists, who should try to choose tourist destinations closer to their places of residence.

Low-speed and reduced-energy travel: the essence of this is access (its length and choice of means of transport), frequency of tourist trips, and length of stay (and the choice of specific means of transport during the stay). Increased importance should be attached to tourists' use of the least harmful means of travel (including transport that consumes less energy and emits less CO₂).

Green transport (and "walkability" in TD): increasing the use of nonmotorised movement around tourist areas, which can (depending on the natural environment and the possibilities) entail walking, cycling or kayaking. A strategy and proposal are of course needed for this, with real possibilities needing to exist for transport and the necessary organisation in the tourist area.

Any change in thinking will thus need to entail an increase in the importance of noninvasive means of transport (minimising energy and CO₂ emissions) [50]. Attention can be paid to this by promoting the aforesaid "walkability" concept, as one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable cities [76–78]. The benefits of a walkable environment are further seen to arise out of environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development [79]. Walking (akin to cycling) has obviously been viewed as a "green" mode of transport [76,77,79]. In tourism we have to add kayaking and certain other means of movement on water. More generally, there are various means of transport utilisable in individual tourism (e.g., bicycles, motorboats, and canoes) that match neatly with the so-called "slow tourism" [80,81] and are likewise crucial to achievement of the sustainable development concept.

It is clear that these ideas mainly concern destinations, though some might also assume importance when it comes to access (proximity, bicycle) and multidestination journeys, and even when we leave home, e.g., by bike, or on foot, for example, in the context of a pilgrimage. In addition to the classic walking and cycling, special activities that might start to assume greater importance include ballooning and rafting. Furthermore, walking and cycling are not only modes of transport used frequently, but also represent a popular component of people's daily physical activity. As two alternatives to modes of motorised travel, such as private driving, walking and cycling can reduce transport costs effectively, and at the same time mitigate traffic congestion induced by the prevalence of motorised transport [82,83]. Meanwhile, as environment-friendly travel modes, they are conducive to reducing energy consumption and the abatement of transportation-related emissions of air pollutants [84] and greenhouse gases [85].

The walking environment should not only facilitate passage through a particular area, but should also put in place opportunities for a longer stay during which various types of activity may be engaged in [79]. The essence of this is nevertheless a conscious resignation from other means of transport and their limitations at and around tourist destinations, with places to stay in the vicinity of attractions (without the need to travel) therefore being selected. This in turn confirms the need indicated by T. Goldman (2006) for a permanent change in transport behaviour to be achieved [46]. Increasing the share of trips completed via sustainable means of transport, such as by public transport or bicycle, or on foot, joins together the three elements of "proximity, slow tourism and green transport".

Conventional conceptualisations of tourism–transport are often limited to the tourist's travel to, and occasionally around, destinations, but in this way we neglect the various ways in which actors, objects, and policies are all (made) mobile [86]. A transport system basically comprises four physical elements: route, vehicle, power, and terminal [87,88]. In the post-COVID world, the main elements that should be analysed in sustainable transport for sustainable tourism are: The infrastructural network, which should be considered to allow movement, and includes roads, railways, waterways, airports, sea and river ports, etc., is often independent of the tourist destination, but can be shaped for tourist needs as a result of overriding politics (e.g., of the state). The shaping of new roads, railways, and even airports, which is a reflection of the needs of tourists and a desire to develop certain places for tourism (e.g., Zakopane in Poland). This is in fact the system's most stable element, which also suggests inertia in the face of change. Finally, plans to create new infrastructure, the implementation of which can stretch over many years and often lag behind need. In a post-COVID world, this will be hard to change over a short period of time.

Organisation: connections and means of transport are elements that can be adapted to existing needs, but may be based on existing infrastructure and possibilities where means of transport are concerned. Changes in modes of transport and regulations affect both accessibility and quality and can be shaped by tourist-destination stakeholders; they are more likely to achieve rapid changes where the need arises, seasonally, in relation to time of day, etc., and are thus mobile (*sensu* Hopkins 2020) [86]. This is true of both travel to and from a tourist destination, as well as movement around it. The development of sustainable tourism requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership ensuring broad participation and consensus-building. The achievement of tourism of this profile is a continuous process requiring constant monitoring of impacts, with necessary preventive and/or corrective measures introduced whenever necessary.

Planning is an important element, at various levels, from the local, via the regional and national, through to the continental, and this may be the subject of changes, proposals, and activities aimed at improving accessibility and adapting transport possibilities to tourist needs (or vice versa). Planning is of particular importance for tourist destinations. The authorities of a region, locality or city can both shape transport policy and influence structural transformations in types of transport, energy consumption, emission of harmful substances, and directions of operation. This may serve to improve the functioning of transport, combine potentials (local and tourist), and shape multimodal and sustainable transport. Many authors emphasise the essential nature of good planning when it comes to the development of sustainable tourism [6,7,18,23]. When we assume that sustainable tourism development is a permanent process which is following the claim for sustainability step by step, we can argue that, if stakeholders and civil society are supportive, sustainable development can be implemented incrementally even in mass-tourism destinations [18,89]. The new study proposed a Prepare–Protect–Provide Avoid–Adjust Shift–Share Substitute–Stop (PASS) approach for policymaking that accounts for COVID-19 and future public

health threats. The PASS approach was illustrated conceptually, and then policy measures were recommended by referring to the past and ongoing best practices [90].

Promotion, as an element of broader marketing, can be used for the purposeful and conscious shaping of supply and demand, changes in means of transport, and greater emphasis on the necessity and possibility of sustainable transport being used in tourism. It can serve to inform us about the desired use of transport, means, travel times, prices, etc. However, transport is rarely the subject of advertising, and as such should become an element of well-thought-out marketing strategies at the destination. Investment, policy, and promotion in public transport are all in keeping with a policy of sustainable development. Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience for tourists, raising their awareness of sustainability issues and promoting sustainable practices amongst them.

5. Discussion

Research into resilience in tourism highlights the need for biodiversity conservation and climate-change imperatives to be considered in combination with destination models that seek to reduce leakage, enhance wellbeing, and better capture and distribute tourism value [91–93]. Higgins-Desbiolles (2020) believes that COVID-19 represents an opportunity to change the paradigm of tourism in the direction of sustainability and local interests [9]. Many stakeholders, regional planners, and even tourists hope that sustainable tourism and sustainable transport to and within tourist destinations could be considered as a new way of thinking about and engaging in tourism [94].

As sustainability consists of three dimensions, these should be emphasised here in the context of the benefits that each pillar can generate under post-COVID circumstances in tourism and transport relationships.

Environmental benefit: Reductions in long-distance travel (by plane and ship, and generally where international travel is concerned) may reduce pollution, including CO₂ emissions. Other benefits would accrue with changes of tourist destination due to changes of direction towards walkability. In the case of the environmental dimension, the positive effect lies in the cuts achieved in traffic congestion and the need for car parks, along with a reduction in noise and vibrations, levels of pollution, and land use [79,95,96]. Other benefits of walkability are preservation of natural resources, microclimate improvement, and gains in area where public space is concerned [79,97].

Social dimension benefits: These pertain to overall quality-of-life improvement relating to quality of travel [98,99]. In particular, such improvements pertain to the mental and physical health of inhabitants, an increased frequency and quality of social interactions, greater safety, a reduction in traffic accidents, and enhanced social justice, as seen in the availability of walking routes, cycling paths, and the use of public transport [76,77,79,95]. COVID-19 may offer the impetus for individuals to transform their travel behaviours, even though a transformation of the tourism system overall would be extremely difficult to achieve [10].

Reduction in distance, travel excess, etc. should make a difference and affect the growth of sustainability, with some benefits accruing in the economic dimension. Proximity, slow tourism, and green transport all contribute to enhanced attractiveness of public spaces, and to changes in individuals' spatio-temporal and consumption patterns [95]. This promotes tourism and investment in new means of transport, and may also increase employment rates [96,97].

If transport (including LCCs) experiences further increased prices (e.g., as a result of the need to introduce disinfection costs, reduce the number of beds), numbers of tourists will decrease and tourism will be more sustainable than in the pre-COVID 2000s and 2010s. For all the many problems it has brought, the COVID-19 pandemic has created an opportunity for a development of rural tourism focusing mainly on domestic tourists, albeit with the possibility of subsequent expansion to embrace foreign clients [100]. New empirical research is still needed on the accessibility of regions and tourist attractions [65],

as well as the importance of pedestrian traffic in city-centre areas, opportunities for physical activity, congestion in National Parks, and time-budget studies [31]. The dense network of small towns and frequency of operation of public transport create a favourable territorial base. Particular attention should be paid to improving the infrastructure, institutional framework, marketing, and cooperation of all stakeholders in the field [100]. In the current era of striving to create the most sustainable mode of transport, it is very important to have guidelines on how to properly model and optimise implemented or existing shared electric mobility market services [101].

Ultimately, it is possible to refer to certain key aspects capable of effecting change in tourist and planner behaviours, destination management, and general modes of transport. Generally, the changes should concern choices of means of transport and ways of spending time that are as sustainable as possible. The figures show the types of transport involved in reaching a destination (Figure 1) and in the destination area (Figure 2) from the sustainability point of view (from left to right there is an increase in the level of sustainability of the mode of transport).

Access to an area: Both means of transport and infrastructure lie beyond the destination area. They may not be entirely, or mostly, designed and/or used for tourist purposes (aeroplanes or cruise coaches, the road or rail network). However, at the national level, such an impact may be greater when infrastructure (especially), but also means of transport (and consequently accessibility issues) become the subject of wise and logical planning. In this way, an influence on modes of transport use may be exerted, and in indeed an influence on destinations travelled to (the choice depending on general and local transport sustainability, destinations reachable by hybrid/electric public transport, etc.).

Transport at a tourist destination: In areas with especially valuable natural environments, public transport would tend to be preferred over individual transport. A need to invest in the development of railway transport is also denoted. Involved here are both the possibility of attractions being reached (from places of residence in a tourist destination) by rail or road transport, as well as other means that allow tourists to move around an area (e.g., bicycles or water equipment). Of particular importance in sustainable transport is public transport, which is generally better-developed in urbanised areas [102,103], but much less so in remote rural areas such as, for example, National Parks, mountains, and centres [104–106]. The differences between areas can be interpreted in terms of the convenience and comfort of moving within a tourist destination. This is also confirmed by another observation—namely that, in rural areas, the most important role is always played by the private car [103–106]. Increased use of private transport has been causing traffic jams and overloaded car parks-changes that many destinations were quite unprepared for. Users (tourists and local populations) potentially compete for transport in terms of access to public carriers, road space, parking, bicycle, and pedestrian paths. The aforementioned competition varies greatly in strength in line with the scale, type, and location of activity, but is of course and issue when it comes to ensuring the sustainable development of individual destinations [34]. Investment, policy, and promotion in public transport are all in keeping with a policy of sustainable development [94].



Figure 1. Sustainability of the mode of transport for tourism (access to the tourist destination). Source: Author's proposal.



less sustainable

Figure 2. Sustainability of the mode of transport at a tourist destination. Source: Author's proposal.

6. Conclusions

In summary of the paper, some future directions are proposed. Firstly, more emphasis should be placed on how to reach a tourist destination, addressing the issues of reducing mobility-related transport, especially by air, and, in particular, short-term travel over long distances. Secondly, short journeys over longer distances should be counteracted. It is important for there to be clear disincentives for nonessential and very short-term travel, consequently increasing need to promote trips and recreation enjoyed in the vicinity of people's place of residence (as also associated with an improved quality of everyday life). We can shorten the commute to holiday destinations or weekend trips and encourage greater appreciation of what is available and accessible. However, as any shortening of distances in terms of travel takes place, the further development of tourism may be affected significantly, with the new local outcomes being potential overcrowding. Thirdly, there should be better planning at tourist destinations with any subsidies offered being, at the very least, attached to requirements that more sustainable (social and environmental) practices be invested in, as others have proposed. At the same time, there is a need for better use of resources, allocated in a more just way, and used more sparingly. Fourthly, social and spatial justice is needed (solidarity, assistance, adaptation, and the increased significance of the local). This also requires new research and a redefining of the role and importance of tourism in the life of societies. From the point of view of transport, this offers greater possibilities for budget time to be planned with, on the one hand, sustainable transport, including new technologies, used, and on the other tourists being kept in one place. A longer stay at an attraction also means a shorter travel time. Increased importance should be placed on travel in the form of loops, with staying at a hotel being immediately associated with the opportunity to explore on foot, bike, segway or scooter over short distances, and returning to the same place. The result will be less interference in the environment, reduced energy consumption, less waste, and reduced generation of pollution.

While the pandemic has already affected transport and tourism greatly, the effects it will bring in the long run cannot be predicted as yet. However, the consequences of COVID-19 may offer an impetus for individuals to transform their travel behaviours, even though a transformation of the tourism system in its entirety would be extremely difficult to achieve.

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