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Sustainable development of Nagymaros

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ILilla Papp declare it, that the dissertation hereby submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Catering and Hotel Management at the Budapest Business School has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other institution. This thesis and the work presented in it are my own and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research; it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained therein has been duly acknowledged. I understand that my thesis may be made available to the public.



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH

Seven out of ten Hungarian citizens tend to choose domestic travel over abroad vacations in 2021. Bathing and recreation close to nature have been identified as primary tourist destinations. However Balaton is still the most popular for vacations, the Danube bend attracts same-day visitors from the capital city in great numbers as the area is part of the so-called Greater Budapest. (Hungarian Tourism Agency, 2021)

The market demand increase in the field of tourism, influenced Nagymaros in the overall tourism experience and overtourism become a threat. However various opportunities are given that are not discovered or used yet.

“The expansion of urban areas around the world and the application of the sustainability paradigm to tourism discourses has favored an increase in the number of people visiting natural protected areas (NPAs) in their leisure time. While tourism is desired to boost the economy of destinations, mismanagement can bring negative consequences for social–ecological systems (Andries & Arnaiz-Schmitz & Díaz-Rodríguez & Herrero-Jáuregui & Schmitz, 2021, p. 1).”

1.2 OVERVIEW

The overall field of research of the thesis is a case study about Nagymaros tourism development towards sustainable tourism that can be used as a tourism image-building activity but most importantly can offer solutions for manage overtourism. After an assessment of the local demand and already existing improvement ideas, a sustainable development plan can be formed to serve the above-mentioned goals.

The research problem includes the case of overtourism and exploitation in Nagymaros along with the lack of a plan for solving the difficulties that occurred in connection with traffic and parking. Same-day visitors with low willingness to spend are the most common type. With an outdated infrastructure, negative effects can possibly be larger than positives.

This research aims to define the role of tourism at Nagymaros and collect the risks and opportunities in order to help to create working management with the help of the local community. In this manner, the benefits of tourism can potentially be used as an important economic tool.

“Tourism is an important economic activity in the European Union. It comprises a wide variety of product and destinations and many different stakeholders are involved. Tourism has great potential as regards its contribution to achievement of several major EU objectives, such as sustainable development, economic growth, employment and economic and social cohesion (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012, p. 3).”

It is already known that tourism can be the biggest economic tool for cities but the market demand can not be ignored. Nagymaros already has the base tourist capital, since a rise in visitors' interest in the Danube bend area was observable, but has a lack in management strategy and infrastructure development. The importance of having a system comes to use when the number of tourists exceeds the capacity of the city.

1.3 RESEARCH AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

This research aims to identify the role of domestic tourism in Nagymaros, including the market demand and changing of trends due to Covid-19 to create a relevant comprehensive picture. Investigate the flaws and find solutions to motivate to compile an overall long-term destination development plan for the city, to function sustainably, and solve current difficulties connected to overtourism. The final aim is to create a unique image for the location with the help of local stakeholders to convert same-day visitors into responsible, quality tourists with a higher willingness to spend and balance the economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

To identify the market needs many components will contribute. A questionnaire among visitors was analyzed to assess the habits and demand of the market. As further resources for information collection, local stakeholders as Lili Miklósi from the catering industry, Nóra Keserű from the local hospitality sector, Botond Óri Kiss representing the musical and cultural life of the area, Tamás Gergely from the municipality, Frigyes Badér, Emma Heinzemann, Annamária Kuchta from the Dunakanyarkult were interviewed for reliable data and expert

evidence. Site visits and observation of the area were crucial to survey the actual existing situation.

After the mensuration of the current state, plans and suggestions in the past along with similar case studies were studied and analyzed in order to give recommendations to create a new sustainable destination development plan. An image building complex plan to reform quality tourism, that can support the city financially by connecting active tourism with other types of tourism, especially with ecotourism, and encourage visitors to stay longer in the area.

The following research questions are answered at the end of this thesis one by one. To assess the present and to make recommendations for the future.

1. What type of tourism is the most common in Nagymaros? Why do the tourists choose to visit and what are their preferences?
2. How Covid-19 affected domestic tourism in the area and what are the expectations for the future?
3. What are the main problems at the Nagymaros and the Danube Bend connecting to tourism? How does the city cope with these problems?
4. What could be an effective method for converting same-day visitors into multi-day, responsible tourists?
5. How could Nagymaros keep a healthy balance between development and preservation? Why is it important? (economic, social, environmental)

1.4 BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis could have notable practical importance in case of image building activity for the area in case of sustainable tourism. The beneficial outcome can be divided into three segments. Economic, social, and environmental benefits. All three are strongly connected and need to be balanced to fully function. Thus, an equally beneficial symbiosis can be borne between locals and tourists.

Economic benefits

Tourism development could serve as an economic stimulus tool and actually bring financial profit to the city. Local producers, caterers, and service providers get more financial benefits from tourism if the changing trends can be followed and the products are updated.

To satisfy the market needs, firstly a situation assessment is critical. The last detailed integrated urban development strategy for Nagymaros was established in 2010. Many elements of it are strongly outdated by 2021, due to the rapidly changing trends. Since the Covid-19 influenced the whole world, some travel habits took a great turn, including the increased need for nature close destinations and ecotourism.

An urban development concept was established in 2020 but there are no concrete suggestions for tourism development and it is questionable due to the shortness of longitude.

Social benefits

A socially sustainable plan could bring the local communities together, furthermore develops the communication between surrounding settlements. Improves living conditions while stimulates quality tourism in the area. Prevents the origin of the city and motivates locals to take an active part in the progress. The power of the community can influence the morale toward sustainability.

Also as the municipality stated on multiple occasions, the support of local producers and preserve cultural elements are some of the most important points of view (Municipality of Nagymaros, 2020). Popularize and serve local products for tourists can give a unique experience for visitors and also boost the local economy, meanwhile increase the quality of tourism.

Environmental benefits

The environmental component in the case of Nagymaros is decisive because of its nature-based values. Conserve natural resources, prevent overtourism and exploitation is a must. Tourism can have positive and negative effects. The goal is to maximize positive and minimize negative consequences. To motivate and lead people towards ecotourism is an overall solution for this mission.

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

It is a crucial element of the thesis to identify the limitations of the research and recognize the changes it might give in the outcome of the result or conclusion.

The depth and complexity of this topic require this research to limit and not mention some other, might be important elements due to longitude.

Various limitations can be found, mostly due to resources and time along with lack of experience. Despite this research is helped through stakeholders by providing information, the processing and analyzing part was done by one person in a limited time scale and no financial background was provided.

It is also important to mention the deficiency in the methodology used. Development plans and documentation are often not open for public use and despite some were used, not all were available. Also in connection with the questionnaire, a convenience, and voluntary sampling method was applied and the acquired material could not be necessarily representative due to the small number of participants and lack of some age groups.

All of these components gave a relatively narrow scope and limited resources.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF DISSERTATION

The dissertation is divided into five main parts. The Introduction, which contains the background and an overall introduction of the topic of the research along with the main aims and objectives, benefits, and limitations. The other four parts are the Literature Review, Research Methodology, Analysis and Evaluation of data, and Conclusion and Recommendations. All of the chapters start with an introduction. The Reference list and Appendices are included at the end of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves to give a background for the research. The literature review is divided into three main sections excluding the introduction and the definitions which help to have the basis of the vocabulary. The first part is an overlook on sustainable tourism on an international level. The second and the third parts are on a national and local level. Including already known facts and studies with development plans. Also the shortcomings of overtourism and possible alternative solutions.

2.2 DEFINITIONS

Tourism

“Tourism is a social activity which involves an individual or group aiming travel to stay outside their usual environment within a not too long period, for the purpose of satisfying leisure, business or other needs. Tourism has become a popular global activity. It brings in large amounts of income in payment for goods and services and creates opportunities for employment in the service industries associated with tourism (UNWTO, n.d.)”

Tourist and same-day visitor

The difference between a tourist and a same-day visitor (excursionist) is that while a tourist spends at least one night at the destination, a same-day visitor is not (UNWTO, 2008).

Rural tourism

"A type of tourism activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally linked to nature-based activities, agriculture, rural lifestyle / culture, angling and sightseeing. Rural Tourism activities take place in non-urban (rural) areas with the following characteristics: i) low population density, ii) landscape and land-use dominated by agriculture and forestry and iii) traditional social structure and lifestyle (UNWTO, n.d.)”

Active tourism

Active tourism is a leisure travel style or concept that incorporates aspects of adventure, environment, and culture, with a focus on low-impact and sustainable tourism, as well as the employment of local guides (Travel Industry Dictionary, n.d.).

Sustainable tourism

"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 (UNWTO, 2005)."

"Sustainable tourism refers to the sustainability of the tourism industry as a whole. Responsible tourism, on the other hand, are the individual actions that people, businesses, and destinations take to create a sustainable tourism industry (Angelina, 2020)."

Ecotourism

All types of nature-based tourism in which the visitors' primary purpose is to observe and appreciate nature as well as the traditional cultures that exist in natural places. Contains education and support of local community financially and through behavior (UNWTO, 2002). It reduces the detrimental effects on the natural and socio-cultural environment. Also, incorporates genuine community involvement, is lucrative, and is self-sustaining (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012).

Community-Base Tourism

„Community-based tourism (CBT) is normally regarded as a platform for local community to generate economic benefits through offering their products to tourists that range from the local communities, lifestyles, natural resources, and cultures. CBT is also characterized as a development programme which enhances the social and cultural benefits of local community through the social and cultural exchanges with tourists (Donny & Mohd, 2012, p.1)."

Overtourism

“The impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived. quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitors. experiences in a negative way (UNWTO, 2018, p.4).”

2.3 INTERNATIONAL LEVEL OVERVIEW

2.3.1 TOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY

Tourism overall has grown to become the world's largest industry in terms of employment and proportion of global GDP during the last few years. Over the last three decades, the tourism business has been extremely dynamic and rapidly developing. So far, this industry has provided jobs in locations with natural attractions, wildlife, and wilderness environments (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012).

“Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of tourists and host regions, protecting and expanding the possibilities for the future. Tourism can bring both advantages and disadvantages in the area. It can stimulate the development of other economic activities such as agriculture, local production of food and crafts, and help increase revenue (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012, p. 3).”

Minimizing negative consequences should be one of the most essential goals of sustainable tourism development. Other main characteristics by the point of destination are the followings: sustainable use of resources, education of locals and tourists, constant monitoring and developing management system, plan long-term integrational strategy, involvement of the local community, benefits locals and tourists, conservation of nature and cultural values, promoting and marketing ecotourism as a tool for nature conservation and prevent overexploitation of the natural resources. Prioritize quality over quantity. Tourism success is measured not by the quantity of tourists, but by the duration of stay, the distribution of spending, and the quality of the experience (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012).

“Sustainable and responsible rural tourism development is unachievable without the application of ecological thinking. Consequently, tourism ecology naturally helps develop the tourism of rural areas based on local natural, social and cultural resources. Nevertheless, it is

also an expectation that actors of the system, i.e. tourists must continue an active and responsibly sustainable practice (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012, p. 9).”

To establish sustainable tourism in any tourist location, all parties involved must work closely together: governments, local municipalities, regional offices, the hospitality sector and transportation, tour operators, and tourists. Everyone has a role to play in achieving sustainable tourism and, therefore, environmental conservation. Promoting ecotourism as a means for generating financial support to local people, encouraging tour operators to use local resources, building and sustaining a quality service system in ecotourism (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012).

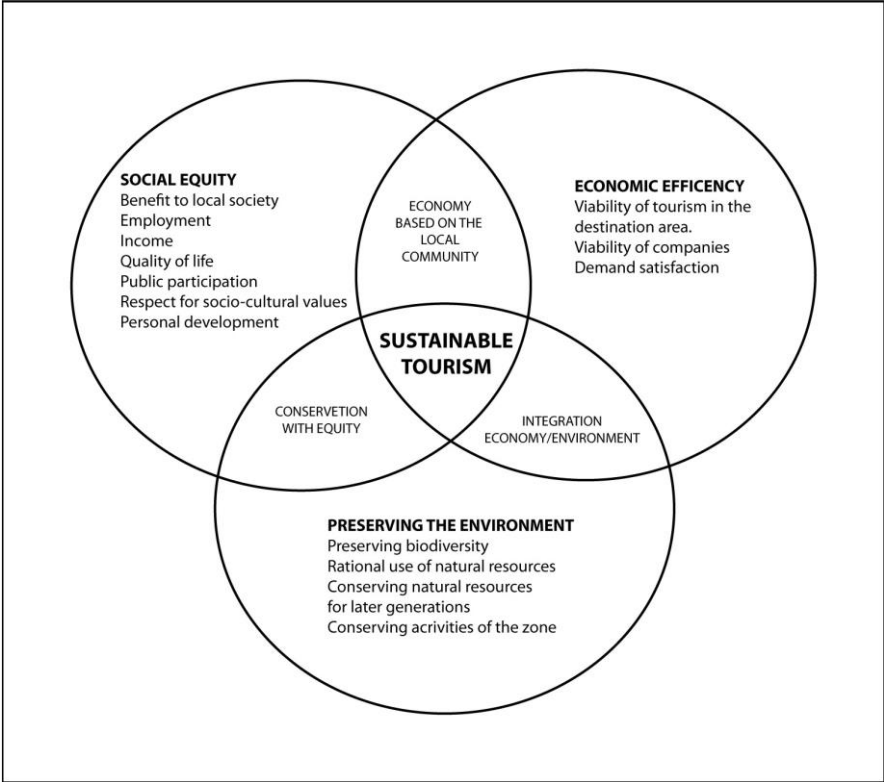


Figure1: (Dávid, 2011)

2.3.2 THE ROLE OF TOURISTS

Tourists should also be encouraged to exhibit interest in and respect for the place and the people who live there. With education, a wider group can be reached. Responsible ecotourists choose to visit clean, quiet areas and demand high-quality services and food prepared with local ingredients. They have a higher willingness to spend more and respect the

local environment, also open to cultural and educational programs. This group is mostly between 30- 59 years old, highly educated with a good social position, and has above average income (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu, 2012).

2.3.3 MANAGEMENT OF TOURISM

The number and pace of visitors to the world's natural parks and other protected natural areas are steadily increasing as a result of this growing sense of environmental responsibility. Nature conservationists have a widespread desire to extend the categorization of rural regions as national parks to preserve them for future generations. If not well-defended, growing interest and fundamental preservation functions may result in severe conflict during park maintenance and operation. Nevertheless, the formation of symbiosis is inescapable since national parks play a vital role in setting the groundwork for the social and economic reforms that are required to preserve environmental responsibility perceptions (Dávid, 2011).

The arrival of a large number of tourists may disrupt local residents' daily lives and cause permanent damage. Overtourism is one of the most threatening outcomes for a natural-based hosting area, that the only solution is well prepared, interactive, and symbiotic management (Dávid, 2011).

A responsible sustainable rural tourism management considers the following in the development strategy; integration of tourism, the interest of locals, information exchange between different shareholders and stakeholders as well, benefits of the native community, education of local human resources, accountable tourist marketing, and relevant development of policy (Dávid, 2011).

Ecotourism development may be realized by good management, to meet the ever-increasing and more demanding needs and expectations of today's tourists towards nature close destinations (Dorobantu & Nistoreanu & Tuclea, 2011).

While tourism is beneficial to destinations' economies, poor management can have detrimental repercussions for social-ecological systems. People tend to choose nature-based tourists destinations to ensure to maintain their mental wellbeing and physical health. Well-

managed tourism can be an important tool for socio-environmental sustainability and preserving the market value in order to not lose the supporting tourist base (Dávid, 2011).

The impact of the current COVID crisis on the social vulnerability of poor and dependent tourist destinations has undoubtedly highlighted the need to take tourism management seriously. This situation, on the other hand, may present a chance to rethink conventional tourism, reorienting it toward non-massive and dependency-generating models that promote local travel, socio-environmental respect, and local engagement. This strategy also should be discussed with community members to account for all potential stakeholders and social actors and to avoid future problems (Andries & Arnaiz-Schmitz & Díaz-Rodríguez & Herrero-Jáuregui & Schmitz, 2021).

2.3.4 COMMUNITY- BASED TOURISM

Community-based tourism encourages equitable benefit distribution and is consistent with various environmental, economic, and heritage development objectives (Andries & Arnaiz-Schmitz & Díaz-Rodríguez & Herrero-Jáuregui & Schmitz, 2021). It is regarded as one of the most important types of tourism in terms of the socio-environmental viability of the areas where it is established (Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011). It is distinguished by an organizational framework in which local inhabitants take a central role in tourist regulation and organization (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Campo Tejedor, 2020). Its proper function will help foster social cohesiveness and a sense of belonging inside the community (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernández-Ramírez, 2010).

Since a result, local community opinions and attitudes toward tourist growth should be included in land planning and management, as community support is crucial for running and promoting sustainable tourism, especially in sensitive rural areas (Niekerk, 2014), (Chiu & Chan & Marafa, 2016).

2.3.5 NEW NATIONAL TRAVEL TRENDS IN 2021

„Never before has sustainable tourism been so important and had such opportunity (Earth Changers, 2021)!”

The year 2020 had the most significant impact on travel in history. As a result, by 2021, sustainable tourism is expected to flourish in a number of ways. (Earth Changers, 2021).

According to Euromonitor International’s Voice of Industry Sustainability Survey, 64% of global consumers want to travel responsibly with a purpose, and 76% anticipate to be more concerned about sustainability following COVID. (2020).

New models of tourism concentrate quality over quantity and on supporting communities and conservation in the right way through tourism. In 2021 it is more likely that consumers will demand more responsible travel. Post-covid travelers will appreciate nature and experiences more and choose value over volume, local accommodations over busy hotels (Earth Changers, 2021).

For mostly safety reasons 94% of consumers will take holidays closer to home, meaning domestic tourism will recover the fastest. Remote employment also allows people to travel and remain longer in one location and blend work with travel, applying the so-called bleisure tourism (Earth Changers, 2021).

2.4 NATIONAL LEVEL OVERVIEW

2.4.1 NEW HUNGARIAN TRAVEL TRENDS IN 2021

In 2021, seven out of ten Hungarian citizens prefer local travel over international vacations. Bathing and outdoor leisure have been listed as popular tourist attractions. Despite the fact that Balaton is still the most popular holiday destination, the Danube Bend attracts a large number of same-day visitors from the capital city because the area is part of the so-called Greater Budapest (Hungarian Tourism Agency, 2021).

2.5 LOCAL LEVEL OVERVIEW

2.5.1 STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR TOURISM IN THE DANUBE BEND

The need for an up-to-date strategy plan is urgent. However, the already existing strategies have some basis, but the change in trends and demands are drastic. The Danube Bend Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy in 2006 was built around expectations that were not been fulfilled since. Therefore, it might be outdated but the ideas and goals are still accurate and needed. The most important point of this strategy was to develop a quality cultural, heritage, eco, active, and health tourism, that takes into account both environmental and economic sustainability and was based in part on hitherto untapped tourism potential. Also, increase competitiveness including local enterprises while remaining environmentally conscious since almost 50% of the area is covered by forests. Improvement and quality development in connection with the tourist reception capacity in accommodations and restaurants were pointed out. Next, the development of new tourist routes and the Danube, as a transport route, also the development of a tourist information system was also mentioned. Conscious uniform marketing activity and professionalism in human resources are also highlighted. Based on these plans a marketing strategy was established also in 2006 to expound the tools to market. The target market was mostly domestic tourists with different financial statuses. The aim was to implement a complex tourist offer in the Danube Bend, which generates a multi-day stay. Create a Danube Bend Tourist Cluster and turn the Danube Bend into a real destination, a unified tourism brand while preserving local values. Sales promotion and public relations are emphasized.

2.5.2 STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR TOURISM AT NAGYMAROS

Nagymaros established the latest Integrated Urban Development Strategy in 2010. Tourism got a negligible role in that paper. Most of the information about tourism development was superficial and remote. According to this strategy, costume supply development and marketing was the key to increase tourist attraction but connecting supply was also crucial. The base of the ideal type of tourism was to unique landscape and rehabilitation. Preservation of natural, historical, and cultural heritage was not a negligible point. Nagymaros wanted to appear in the area as a tourism organizing center but sustainable forms of tourism were preferable over mass tourism in any manner. The development strategy

already established overtourism as a danger factor. “The proximity of the settlement to the capital than for a short time stay, the source of the appearance of push-like weekend traffic (p. 170, Translated by L-Papp).” The solution for this event to come was to advertise in more remote areas, expand the offer, develop the location, provide adequate accommodation. Vainly the problem of overtourism was forecasted, a detailed solution plan is still not available after more than ten years.

2.5.3 THE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT OF CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM ON THE NATIONAL LIMES ROUTE

The development concept of cultural and heritage tourism on the national Limes route along the Danube, Szob, and surroundings design area was established in 2016. This recommendation had a detailed situation assessment and realized many potentials in the Danube Bend area. The city's economy, including tourism, had undergone significant change in the last 20-25 years. The population of Nagymaros had been growing steadily since 2008. The number of holiday properties was close to the number of dwellings, of which less than 10% were owned by locals and 73% were owned by people from the capital. The weekend population in itself already strained the capacity of the city.

“The biggest shortcoming in terms of local tourism is the lack of high-quality accommodation and the lack of a significant, even international-level tourist attraction, without which the conditions for a multi-day stay are not met (p. 19, Translated by L-Papp).” Since 2016 the number of modern and high-quality guesthouses operated by local owners has drastically grown and fulfilled a big gap on the market.

The settlements have a very diverse tourist attraction, a significant part of which is related to active tourism and cultural and heritage tourism. Such as the Julian Lookout Tower, the Hermit Cave, the Main Square, the Danube Bank, and the harbor. Thus, the variety of opportunities are wide.

This research established concrete development proposals, that can help Nagymaros to improve. The main suggestions were to create a Religious history exhibition, renovate the Kittenberger memorial house, develop shipping and water tourism, develop the cycling infrastructure, plan a Hegyes-tető thematic walking route, open a cycling and boat center.

Bigger investments were recommended, such as a luxury multifunctional recreation, sports, and leisure center, a mountain-roof lift from the Julian Lookout Tower, and a closed cable car between Visegrád and Nagymaros.

According to this development concept, the construction of complex attractions to encourage multi-day stays would be the solution. Although, they wanted to reach the audience of a large number of hotel ships along the coast and organize thematic programs. Suggestions to concentrate on active tourism, youth tourism, and cultural-religious tourism since these tend to be the most popular in the city and showed an increasing trend, were also made. It also recognized, that in recent years, the number of same-day visitors from or around Budapest has been growing rapidly and the influence it might have in the future is worth considering.

With the framework of a SWOT analysis strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and dangers of Nagymaros were described. Attractive built and natural environment, rich cultural heritage, complex tourist offers, significant visitor traffic, presence of international tourist routes, and positive image were marked as strengths. While few guest nights with fast transit guests and the general lack of interest of the service providers in the area along with a low number of stakeholders involved in the design and development of an appropriate quality tourist route were identified as flaws. Visiting time to be further shortened, which continues as a trend in tourism was already established as a danger factor. As well as due to the fiscal isolation of locations, creating a complex attraction was potentially more difficult.

2.5.4 THE HUNGARIAN TOURISM AGENCY PROPOSAL

The Hungarian Tourism Agency proposal of the Danube Bend priority tourist destination development of the region was established in 2017. The proposal indicated the problem of accessibility and walkability of the Danube Bend as a whole and the staleness of tourist offer development while the number of competitors increased significantly. New trends, as to arrive by car and pay more for better quality services were covered and considered. Thus, temporal and spatial concentration and load caused by visitor traffic exceed the capacity of the area was already an issue to be solved. The proposal concentrated mainly on infrastructural development. However, the car traffic was not opposed, the importance of

alternative means of transports, such as the EuroVelo6 bicycle route, the railway line, and Mahart shipping routes was emphasized. Construction of the two shores connecting cable cars was also mentioned. Suggested to potentially concentrate more on cycling tourism, as the EuroVelo6 has an international appeal and already was developed.

Besides the cycling route, the following popular sights at Nagymaros were also listed; Törökmező Educational Trail, Julian's Lookout, Maros Yacht Marina, Falcon Yacht Club and Harbor, Törökmező Tourist House, and Adventure Park.

The study determines the complex problem of lack of capacity and same-day visitors but no concrete solution was granted.

At Nagymaros only one suggestion was supported by The Hungarian Tourism Agency. The Danube Bank development for one billion forints for which the constructions were started in 2019 (Municipality of Nagymaros, 2019).

Various suggestions were declined by the same agency for mostly justified by irrelevance or unsustainability. For example, the drilling of a thermal well, the establishment of the Kittenberg Museum, creation of a sport and leisure center.

2.5.5 SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT OF NAGYMAROS 2020

A new Settlement development concept was established in 2020, by the municipality of Nagymaros, but due to the shortness, it cannot be considered detailed or relevant. In the 19-page long concept, problems were seen as opportunities but solutions were not provided. Basic goals were realized such as sustainability, climate awareness, equal opportunities, partnership, value protection but no actual plan. The most important points were to favor residents over tourists, supply expansion, unified development of the Danube tourist destination so a major tourist destination could be formed.

The municipality also stated: "Respecting its landscape and cultural heritage, providing a quality offer, is a guest-friendly small town, whose operation and development is a wide-ranging partnership and active community participation (p. 4, Translated by L-Papp)." While in practice this statement is strongly questionable according to the interviews in the following sections.

No information about reducing the traffic or prevent mass- and overtourism as a priority. Neither detailed consultation between settlements or between the municipalities and locals.

The establishment included the National Tourism Development Strategy 2030 with two signs; "Budapest plus one day" and "Every Hungarian must-see".

2.5.6 "THE GATE OF BÖRZSÖNY INNOVATION CLUSTER"

More and more resources are available for the development of the tourism potential of the Danube Bend, both for local governments and for the economic actors of the region, for the achievement of which cooperation at the regional level is essential announced György Grauszmann, the mayor of Verőce (Dunakanyar Régió, 2021).

In April of 2021, the local governments of Nagymaros, Kismaros, Szokolya, Verőce, and Kóspallag joined a cooperation agreement as founding members, called "The Gate of Börzsöny Innovation Cluster" (Dunakanyar Régió, 2021, Translated by L-Papp).

The goal of this partnership is to develop the infrastructure, preserve culture and health. Also, design sport and tourism industry of the region. Effectiveness in the long run and sustainability is a priority for the cluster while increase value in the area (Dunakanyar Régió, 2021).

2.5.7 DUNAKANYARKULT ASSOCIATION

"Searching for local historical, cultural, and natural values, especially in the Danube Bend, preserving and passing them on. Publishing online and offline products for dissemination purposes, facilitating the organization of exhibitions, events, festivals, and programs. Preservation of built and natural values, organization, and support of civil initiatives for this purpose. Embracing local bottom-up initiatives and representing civic interests and values together. Community organizing and development activities, facilitating the organization of such events. Dissemination, education, training activities, focusing on cultural and natural heritage and cultural transmission. Examination of social processes, good practices, adaptation, and dissemination. Development of quality tourism, organization of

local history walks and programs. Organizing environmental actions and shaping environmental attitudes, health preservation, recreation, and leisure sports activities. Ensuring cultural diversity, cultivating multilateral relations, supporting the maintenance of a community space for cultural purposes (Badár, 2020, Translated by L-Papp).”

2.5.8 EGYMEDER GROUP

“A group covering several professional fields was organized along the conscious shaping of the Danube Bend area to help create human- and environment-oriented tourism along with common values. URBANUM seeks to launch a professional discourse on issues of transport, sustainability, and gentrification, considering the urban and cultural character of the region (Hype&Hyper, 2021, Translated by L-Papp).”

The Egymeder group was established in 2021 and founded by multiple participants from all over the Danube Bend. Szőnyi Camp (Zebegény), Tandem, PIKNIK Manufaktúra, Office Workation and Co-Working (Nagymaros), Kertünk Bar and Lookout (Vác), DunakanyarGO Tourist Portal (Kismaros), URBANUM (Budapest), Dunakanyarkult Association (Verőce) (Hype&Hyper, 2021).

The goal is eco-conscious development, sustainability, community building while promoting urban development and innovation. To connect stakeholders on a regional level and share ideas (Egymeder, 2021).

The KanyarGo map was established in July of 2021 by the cooperation of the Egymeder group and the DunakanyarGO Tourist Portal. The initiative aims to continuously develop the region by involving tourists and locals. This map was a response to the urbanization and rising traffic of the region (Turizmus.com, 2021).

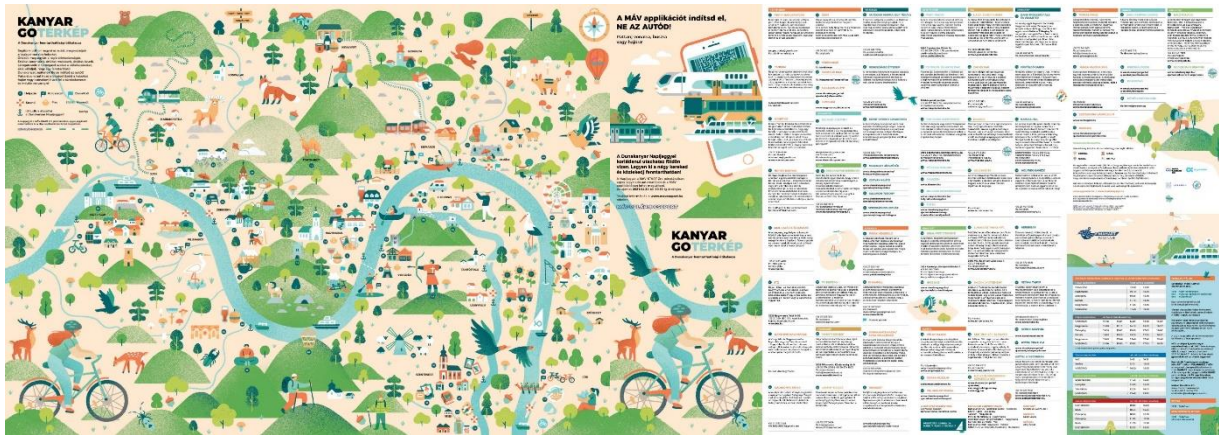


Figure2: KanyarGO map (Egymeder, 2021) Figure3: KanyarGO map (Egymeder, 2021)

This map considers the newest needs and trends coworking with sustainability. The main driving force behind this idea is to join local businesses and support each other while try their best to be sustainable. Drives attention to a better future and alternative ways to live and vacation together. Emphasize paying attention to the surrounding environment to sustain and preserve the values the area has (Turizmus.com, 2021).

“The Egymeder Group was formed to gather the small deeds needed for the right change and amplify them by pushing them into a bend (Hype&Hyper, 2021, Translated by L-Papp)”

2.5.9. GROWING VEHICLE TRAFFIC

Despite the variety of means of transport in the area many of the visitors tend to choose to arrive by car. This rising tendency of traffic is characteristics at the whole Danube bend. This likewise behavior can not be sustained any longer. The significance of the problem is so high, that the Municipality of Verőce and the Environmental Working Group established a Resolution and package of proposals for the municipality of Verőce in connection with the growing vehicle traffic and traffic regulation of the Danube Bend in 2021. The proposal started with an explanation of the problem and then suggested relevant and achievable forms of solutions.

That drastically increasing car traffic turnover is causing more problems than the benefits. It is caused by transit, visiting, and local traffic. Traffic control and mitigation are crucial in the case of sustainability and preservation of values. Road 12 traffic is congested at Verőce and continues through Kismaros and Nagymaros.

Parking is still free in the whole Danube Bend area and not regulated. In addition, the alternative modes of transports are not strategically supported or promoted by local municipalities. Disadvantages caused by traffic can be categorized as the following. Increasing risk of accidents, faster deterioration of the built environment and transport infrastructure, environmental pollution (air, noise, dust, water), loss of confrontation and security, the decline in a quality tourist attraction.

The Danube Bend has been declared a priority tourist area between 2017 and 2030. Developments listed in the decision include “park and hike” establishment of parking points and car panoramic points. The mayor of Verőce also encourages the building of two parking lots for hundred cars which would cause further green area reduction and invite further traffic to surrounding settlements as well.

Since the area does not have a traffic reduction concept, nor a village development strategy, an elaboration of a sustainable, long-term, traffic reduction concept and strategy on a regional level was advised. Other important factors that were highlighted are transparent participatory planning and comprehensive information on each step of the process.

Besides an overall petition for the municipalities, a package of the proposal was collected to demonstrate the variety of solutions. The main statement was that “More paved surfaces = more cars”. It is recommended to avoid building more parking lots or expanding road capacity because this would lead to a further increase in car traffic. The message should be conveyed to visitors that the possibilities of car transport in the Danube Bend are limited, the number of parking spaces is small, but at the same time, public and local alternative transport is reliable and of a high standard.

In the transport development concept rail transport, boat and bus services and other alternatives should get a great emphasis. While parking restrictions and speed limitations are introduced. Discounts and quality improvements to further encourage the use of alternative transports are preferable. Building a parking lot is only recommended in the immediate vicinity of the motorway exit where the EuroVelo6 is accessible.

2.5.10 ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR CAR RELIEF

A positive case study for car relief is the five settlements in Italy called Cinque Terre. The villages are closed to car traffic and the best way to travel between the five villages is a ferry. The ferry is one of the biggest attractions connecting the areas and an overall great experience is also provided with a functional alternative mode of transportation (Travel + Leisure, 2017).

Another case study is Zermatt, a Swiss city in the Wallis Alps. The special feature lies in the restriction of car traffic to prevent air pollution. The city banned internal combustion motor vehicles. Electric vehicles, cog railways, or taxis can be used for local transport (Urban Access Regulations in Europe, 2021).

2.5.11 ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION IN THE DANUBE BEND ALONG WITH NAGYMAROS

Railways

The most concentrated tourist traffic comes from the capital. The easiest way to arrive is by train which runs from the Western train station and the travel time is 38 minutes to Visegrád-Nagymaros station.

Máv also introduced a Danube Bend Day ticket with an unlimited number of trips in the Danube Bend on MÁV-START, MÁV-HÉV, Volánbusz, and MAHART Passnave flights. The offer is valid from 24.04.2021 until 10.31.2021 but comes back yearly. The price of the day ticket is 1999 forints and 1499 forints for under 26 years (MÁV-csoport, 2021).

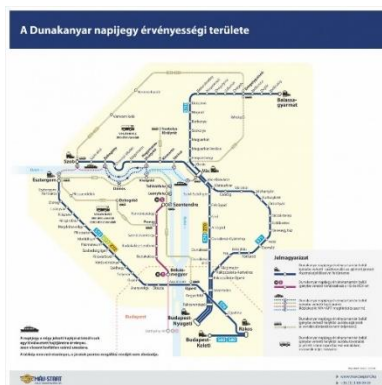


Figure4: The territory of the day pass (MÁV-csoport, 2021)

Figure5: The train between Szob and Budapest (Own photo, 2021)

Water transport

The public shipping is operated by Mahart. Ferries to connect the two shores are between five locations including Visegrád – Nagymaros.



Figure5: The passaw between Visegrád and Nagymaros (Own photo, 2021)

Other hop-on hop-off cruises operated by Mahart on the Visegrád-Nagymaros-Zebegény-Dömös-Nagymaros-Visegrád route, Esztergom-Szob-Zebegény, Szentendre-Leányfalu-Tahitótfalu-Visegrád, Vác-Verőce-Visegrád. The daily ticket price is uniformly 1000 forints on the route, with a dog or a bicycle, an additional 500-500 forints. Day tickets will have to be purchased separately for each round trip if they are used in combination by passengers (Mahart Passnave, 2021).

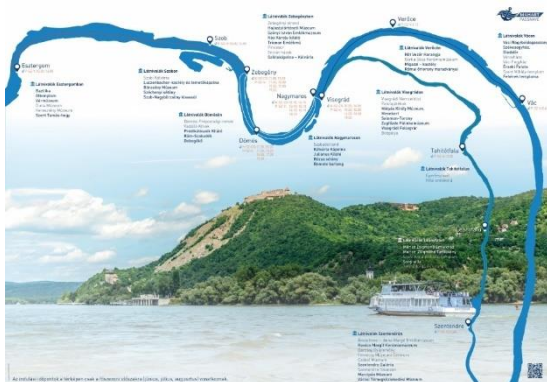


Figure6: Mahar map (Mahart Passnave, 2021)



Figure7: Mahart station (Own photo, 2021)

Individual canoe and boat rental in Nagymaros is also available and other water sports also have a strong role in the area.

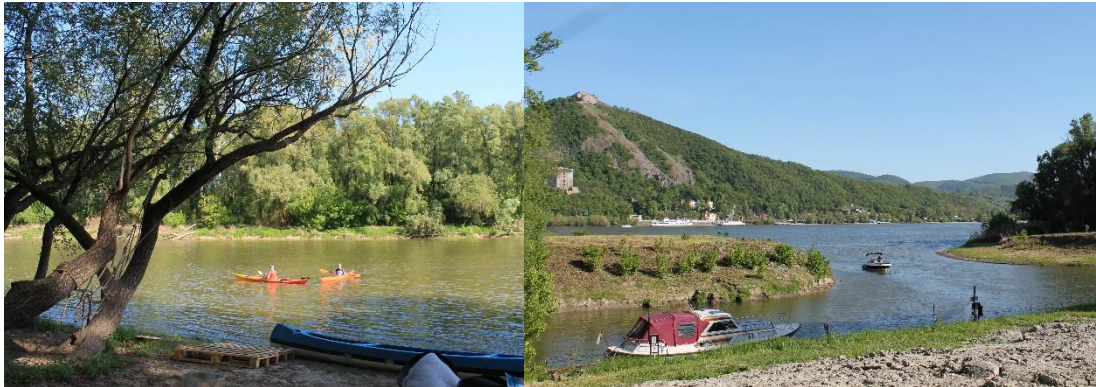


Figure8: Water sport at Nagymaros (Own photo, 2021)

Figure9: Port at Nagymaros (Own photo, 2021)

Bicycle

The EuroVelo6 bicycle route is an international attraction. The European Cycling Network contains twelve long-term cycling routes across Europe. The total length of these roads is more than 60000 km, of which more than 20,000 km have already been completed (Futás.Net, 2021). In the Danube Bend, a significant number of bicycle traffic is presented but the related services are not yet developed on a high-quality level.



Figure10: PIKNIK Manufaktúra bike traffic by the EuroVelo6 (Own photo, 2021)



Figure11: Bike traffic by the promenade (Own photo, 2021)

Dunaroll

Dunaroll is an electric scooter rental equally for locals and visitors to make transportation more quickly and effortless (Dunaroll, 2021).



Figure12: Dunaroll electric scooters in front of Tandem (Own photo, 2021)

Taxi

There is no taxi company in the area.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the methodology chapter is to have a better understanding of the methods that have been used to implement the primary and secondary research. It describes the research aims and objectives. Moreover, it evaluates and justifies methodological choices and evaluates the reliability and validity of the research.

3.1.2 TYPE OF RESEARCH DATA

Primary data: collected first-hand (interview, experiment, survey, observation)

Secondary data: has already been gathered by someone else

Qualitative research methods: focus on words and meanings

Quantitative research methods: focus on numbers and statistics

Mixed-method research methods: both qualitative and quantitative methods are used

Descriptive research: collects data without affecting any factors

Experimental research: to identify cause and effect, manipulates and regulates variables

(Scribbr, 2019)

3.1.2 TYPE OF SAMPLING, TIMESCALE, AND LOCATION

Probability sampling: the finding can be generalizing to a larger population

Non- probability sampling: conclusion can only be valid for the research's specific subjects

Cross-sectional timescale: collect information at a single point in time

Longitudinal timescale: collect information at various periods throughout time

Field research: occurs in a natural or real-life environment

Laboratory research: occurs in a well built and regulated environment

Fixed research: Before data collecting begins, the subjects, timeframe, and place are determined.

Flexible research: subjects, timescale, and location may emerge as a result of the data collecting method

(Scribbr, 2019)

3.1.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH AIMS

Basic research: aims to expand one's knowledge, beliefs, and forecasts (expand scientific understanding)

Applied research: aims to create methods, goods, and procedures (practical problems)

Exploratory research: aims to investigate the key features of a subject that has received little attention.

Explanatory research: aims to explain the reasons and effects of a certain situation

Inductive research: "aims to develop a theory"

Deductive research: "aims to test a theory"

(Scribbr, 2019)

3.1.4 RESEARCH METHODS USED FOR

Experiment: to test cause-and-effect relationships

Survey: to gain a better understanding of a population's overall features

Interview: to obtain a deeper grasp of a subject

Case study: to learn more about a certain population or setting

Observation: to comprehend how something happens in its natural environment

Literature review: to place your study in the context of previous work or to assess trends within a research area (Scribbr, 2019)

3.1.5 APPLIED RESEARCH DESIGN

Secondary data were used to create the literature review and collect further information to gain a better understanding of the topic. The content was critically analyzed.

Primary data were collected to conduct further research and identify problems and their sources in practice to search for proper solutions. These data were analyzed thematically to be as transparent as possible.

Multiple research methods were used to identify different perspectives and not just one so the thesis can be reliable. A survey was conducted along with multiple in-depth interviews with professionals. Real-time field research and observation were also necessary to support the theories.

Since there is no proper and enough secondary database about overtourism specifically at Nagymaros, it was an exploratory, applied research with an inductive research approach.

A mixed-method has been applied in this dissertation, mostly with qualitative-based interviews and a half quantitative half qualitative-based questionnaire. This was a cross-sectional case study. Due to the current relevance, and overlap of information the present state was enough to be observed. According to the renewable and expanding information the research was flexible.

3.2 SECONDARY RESEARCH

Secondary research, also known as desk research, is a sort of study that relies on previously gathered information. Existing data is summarized and collated to increase the overall efficacy of research. Secondary research refers to material found in research reports and other similar publications. These documents can be found in public libraries, online, and data from previously done surveys, among other places. Some government and non-government organizations maintain data that may be accessed and used for research purposes. (QuestionPro, 2018).

Secondary sources can be journals, books, dissertations, political commentary, newspaper articles, biographies, dictionaries, artwork, music (UNSW, 2021).

3.2.1 LITERATURE SEARCH

The objective of the literature review was to have a better understanding of the theory of sustainable tourism and alternative forms of tourism, along with the upcoming travel trends due to Covid-19. The following section was included to acknowledge the already existing material connecting to past and future development plans at the Danube Bend, including Nagymaros. Moreover, the other aim was to theoretically assess the current situation at Nagymaros through different plans and proposals.

Google Scholar was used to searching for literature. Academic database registration was completed, but the system was not user-friendly and the difficulties made the browse impossible. Other sources that were not available online for the public, were sent by the consultant teacher. The official website of the municipality of Nagymaros provided formal information about the state of tourism development. Articles also were used to supplement the research. Due to lockdowns and the opening hours of the academic library, visits did not happen. Difficulties occurred from the language barrier and the lack of official information about Nagymaros.

3.2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature was categorized by narrowing down the topic. The first section started with an overall introduction of tourism and social, environmental, and economic sustainability connecting to tourism. The importance of tourist behavior and management. The main management type was community-based tourism to be analyzed. In the second section, new international and national travel trends were realized concerning Covid-19. The third part was written on a regional level, concentration on the Danube Bend within that, Nagymaros. In this section, various strategies and development concepts were highlighted. Management problems and issues connecting to overtourism were mentioned and already existing solutions or proposals were described.

It is important to concentrate on the issue but see the overall picture and connections in the background to give proper recommendations by implementing already existing solutions or examples.

3.3 PRIMARY RESEARCH

3.3.1 PRIMARY DATA

The purpose of primary data collection is to get an answer to the research questions and have a better understanding of the topic with first-hand information from questionnaires, interviews, or observations that are conducted by the researcher and have not been done before. Collecting primary data is time-consuming and might require a budget to answer specific research questions the researcher needs.

Qualitative data is more descriptive, aims to understand concepts, thoughts, or experiences. Provides an in-depth insight on more complicated topics. Often used in interviews with open-ended questions to explore concepts and theories (Scribbr, 2019).

Quantitative data is more generalizable and used to gather numerical information. Often used in surveys with closed-ended questions (Scribbr, 2019).

Writing this dissertation, qualitative data provided more meaningful information, therefore mostly qualitative methods were used.

3.3.2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS USED

Various methods were used to get an overall picture from different aspects from different stakeholders.

Questionnaire

For the questionnaire, a mixed-method was used, due to the larger number of participants.

The questionnaire was conducted online, through google form. It was openly available on Facebook and Danube Bend-themed groups between 05.12.2021. and 07.15.2021. The questionnaire aimed to represent the tourist side, common characteristics, and interests along with their general opinion about the location. The result might not be representative, since the fillers could represent one group and not the others who could not get to express their opinion. It was important to get a clearer picture from the visitor's side and in the background work but the significance of it in the dissertation is smaller compared to the

interviews. However, the results mirror the same problems as other methods did. Site observation gave real-time and also interpretable data.

The questionnaire contained qualitative and quantitative data as well. It was built up from 24 questions in total and was filled out by 117 participants of which 93 provided usable data. Convenience sampling crossed with voluntary response samplings was used. All respondents were kept anonymous and unidentified.

Observation and terrain crawl

Site visits were a must to identify and check theoretical problems risen. Exactly 14 times Nagymaros were visited for different purposes.

- March 6.- During the Covid-19 lockdown the most popular excursion route to the Julian Lookout Tower on the Hegyes-tető walkability and popularity was inspected.
- April 24.- The official end of the quarantine and opening of catering establishments. Infrastructure overload measurement.
- May 9.- Assessment of the Eurovelo6 biking route from Vác to Nagymaros. Survey of the quality of the road and the Széchenyi and the Béla Promenades.
- May 11.- Observation of the Hermit Cave and the Dobozi Pinnacle. Detailed visit at Nagymaros city (buildings, memorials, squares). Tandem bar and bicycle resting point exploration along with other catering units in the area. Checking ship schedules and ports.
- June 1.- Multiple interviews were conducted.
- June 5.- Musical event at Zsigi Büfé. Interview with Nóra Keserű.
- June 6.- Assessment of the shoreline and strand services, sports facilities.
- June 20.- A group interview was conducted.
- June 25.-AZNAP Projekt concert at PIKNIK Manufaktúra.
- July 9.- An interview with Tamás Gergely was conducted and the KanyaGo map was obtained.
- July 18.- Visit different restaurants and bars near the beach.
- July 21.- Assesment of the Gesztenyés educational trail.
- Aug 6.- Analog Garden, outdoor cinema at Tandem
- Aug 18.- Zsengélő opening event, the new cultural center at Verőce

Interviews

The interview was chosen to be the largest literature for primary data collection for this thesis because the written pieces of literature are highly defectives and they do not reflect the whole reality. Also, self-generating events accelerated unequally quickly compared to unequivocal official reactions and solutions. The interviews were sound recorded or noted down.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews with open ended-questions with local stakeholders were conducted from 06.01.2021. to 07.09.2021. All interviews were located at the Danube Bend and were created in person. All interviewees are local citizens at the Danube Bend and are working on developing the region and solving upcoming problems and complications but from a different approach.

Two main interviews were the basis of the research. One was from the civil cooperation side, a 150 minutes long group interview with Frigyes Badár; the President of Dunakanyarkult Association, Emma Heinzemann; member of Dunakanyarkult Association, the founder of Egymeder Company, Creator of the Table in the wilderness, event organizer and Annamária Kuchta; member of Dunakanyarkult Association, member of Egymeder Company. They participated in creating the DunakanyarGO map, a sustainability guide at the Danube Bend in 2021. The interview was recorded on 20.06.2021.

The second main interview was from the official site. A 105 minutes long in-depth interview with Tamás Gergely; The chair of the Financial and Economic Committee, Member of the Committee on Urban Development, Tourism Development, and Environmental Protection at the mayor's office at Nagymaros. The interview was recorded on 07.09.2021.

Three other shorter additional semi-structured interviews were conducted. Firstly, with Lili Miklósi; catherer at PIKNIK Manufaktúra, event organizer, lasted 45 minutes. The interview was recorded on 06.01.2021.

Secondly, a short interview lasted 10 minutes with Botond Őri Kiss; musicians, event organizers. The interview was recorded on 06.01.2021.

Finally, a 10 minutes long interview with Nóra Keserű; owner of the Csicsergő guesthouse at Nagymaros. The interview was recorded on 06.05.2021.

3.3.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

As it was mentioned in the introduction chapter, the main objectives of this research were to identify the market demand at Nagymaros, connecting to tourism. The second part was to find solutions for upcoming problems with the help of professionals. The interviewees from various sectors were approaching problems from different perspectives and consider other sources of solutions. Communication is extremely inefficient between stakeholders. This thesis aims to connect these different sources and encourage communication in favor of effectiveness.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

3.4.1 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

Six most common quantitative data analysis methods can be used.

1. Qualitative content analysis: Used to evaluate patterns within one or more pieces of content, focuses on the frequency of ideas, and identify patterns. Often use codes and categories. To do so, specific questions and goals need to be formulated in advance. This method is the most popular but time-consuming and multidimensional, thus focuses on a very specific timeline.
2. Narrative analysis: To extract meaning, it focuses on people's stories. Puts a great emphasis on the way a story is being said. The disadvantage of this method is the difficulty of reproduction.
3. Discourse analysis: Use to analyze language within a social content. Takes culture and history into consideration while focuses on language use. For using this method, clear research aims and objectives, and questions needed to be fixed in advance. It is also time-consuming.
4. Thematic analysis: Collects and sorts themes and patterns of meaning in a data set or interviews. Groups data according to similarities. Identifies key themes in large bodies of texts. Can help to identify people's opinions and perspectives, experience, and view. This is an exploratory method, thus the research questions can develop and change through the analysis but this can be time-consuming.

5. Grounded theory: This method aims to create a new theory based on the data. Requires an open mind through the research that develops from the data, not from a theory, and builds from the ground up. This method is often used in cases when researching a new topic with little existing literature.
6. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): Focuses on personal experiences of a subject like a personal interpretation of a determinative life event. This method is very subject centered and due to the small sample size, it could not have a broad conclusion. Also, personal biases could easily negatively impact the research.

The use of multiple methods in the same research is called triangulation.

(Gradcoach, 2020)

For this research, Thematic analysis was chosen to be used. Since the interviewees had different viewpoints and approached the problems from different positions, categorize data and searching for key themes is suits this research the best. Also, personal opinions are expressed in every interview, due to the personal involvement and importance of livelihood but all parties described the same problems but saw the solutions into other approaches.

The process of analysis and evaluation of data was divided into five main steps. The first one was to prepare and organize the data already gathered. The second is to review and explore the data collected. The third is to create a coding scheme for the data. Forth, Assign data to codes. Fifth is to look for recurrent patterns (Scribbr, 2019).

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains all the primary research collected for this thesis. In the first part, the quantitative and qualitative from the questionnaire were categorized and analyzed. The second part contains the interviews and their thematic analysis. Comparing the different viewpoints. The qualitative answers were translated by the L.Papp.

4.2 QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was conducted online through Google Forms. The data was gathered between 05.12.2021. and 07.15.2021. All responders' identities remained anonymous. Convenience sampling and voluntary response samplings were used. It was built up from 24 questions in total and was filled out by 117 participants.

60% of responders were female and 40% were male. 60,7% were between 19 and 25, 17,9% were between 26 and 35 years old. 34,2% were students, 33,3% were workers, 21,4% were students with a job. 94% were Hungarian. 53,8% were from Budapest and 25,6% live close to the Danube Bend.

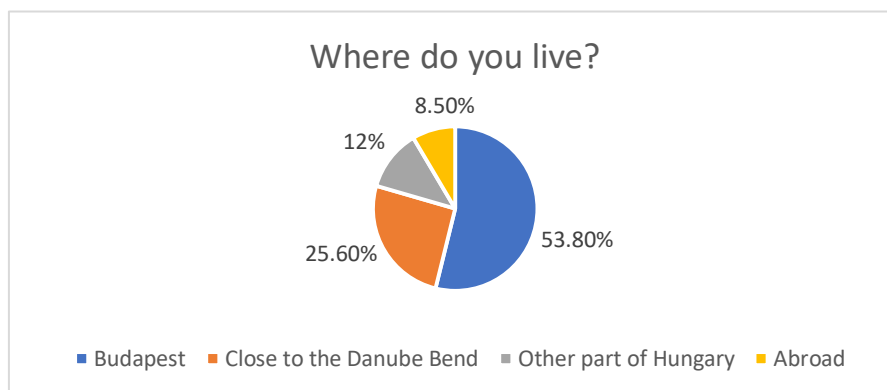


Figure13: Distribution of arrivals by geography (Own questionnaire, 2021)

So in conclusion average responders were Hungarian students or workers, between the ages of 19 and 25, with easy accessibility to the area.

79,5% of the total respondent visited Nagymaros. The rest justified their decision not to visit by the following. They had not heard of Nagymaros or any reason to visit there, lack of free time or money, Balaton is preferred by responders, not worth the distance, they do not like to travel and some want to visit but had not had a chance yet.

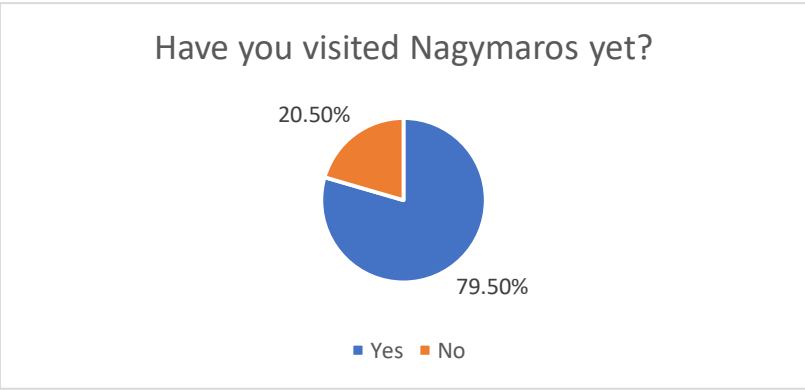


Figure14: The percentage of new visitors compared to returning (Own questionnaire, 2021)

These first two questions were filter questions, thus the following percentages apply to the 93 responders.

Travel habits

The first section contained a survey of interests and travel habits.

The reason of visit predominantly was leisure by 86,7%. The rest was work-related purposes or school activities.

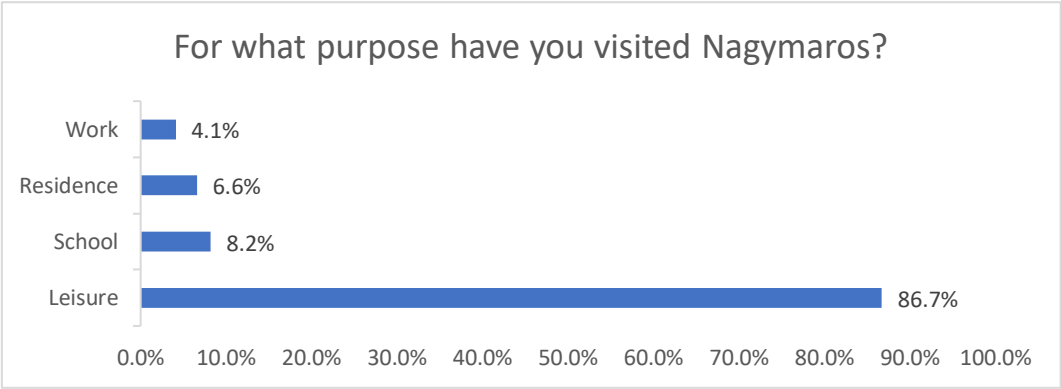


Table1: The motivation of visit (Own questionnaire, 2021)

Active tourism is dominating in the area since 72,2% chose hiking and 55,7% walking as interest at Nagymaros. Interest in other leisure activities at Nagymaros was the following. Family programs 40,2%, Gastronomy 39,2%, Stranding 39,2%, Bars 38,1%, Concerts 35,1%, Cultural programs 33%, Local market 32%, Water sports 24,7%, Other sport activities 18,6%.

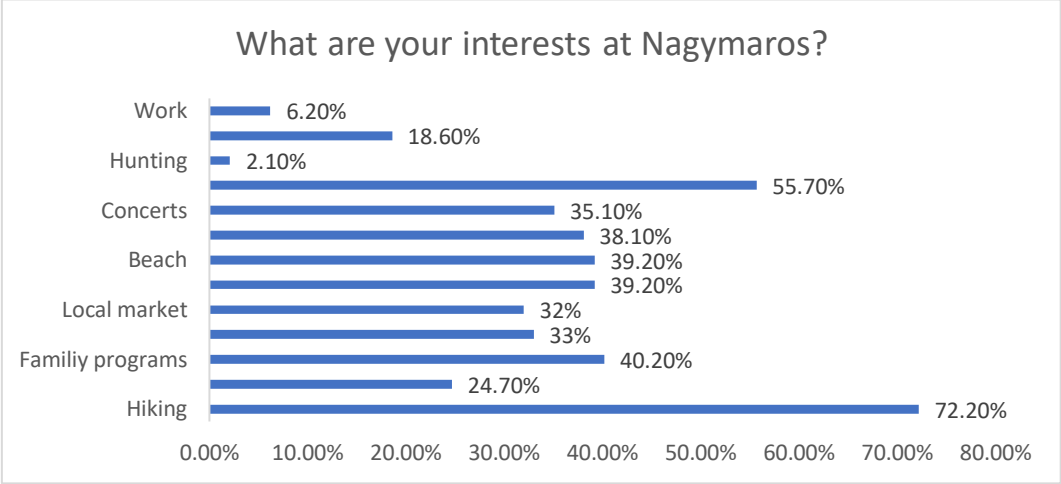


Table2: Distribution of interests in the area (Own questionnaire, 2021)

83,5% of the respondents travel with friends and 75,3% with family. Only 15,5% travels alone.

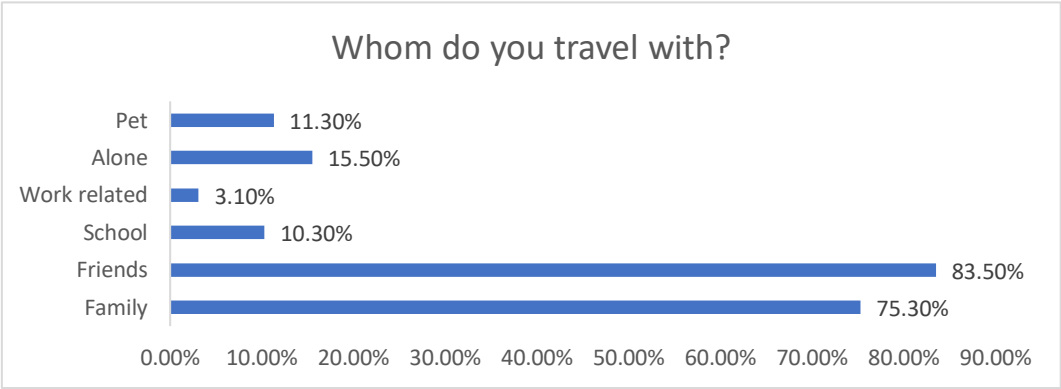


Table3: Company during travel (Own questionnaire, 2021)

The most popular mean of transport to visit Nagymaros is by car (71,1%), by train (68%) and by bicycle (34%). The use of ferry or other Mahart boats is negligible (13,4%).

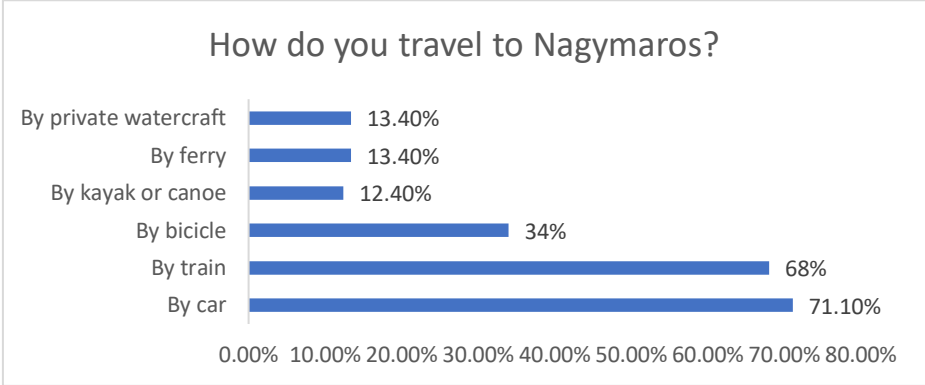


Table4: Mode of transportation (Own questionnaire, 2021)

28% have been visited only once, the rest are returning guests.

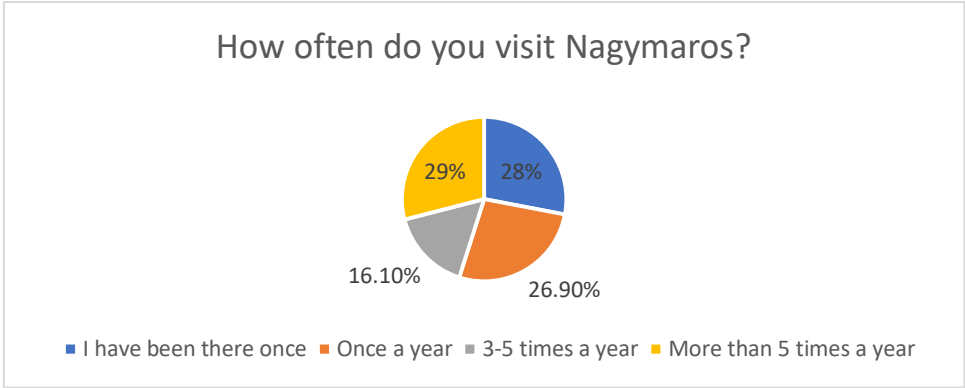


Figure15: Frequencq of visits (Own questionnaire, 2021)

The high season according to the questionnaire is Summer but Spring and Fall are also popular.

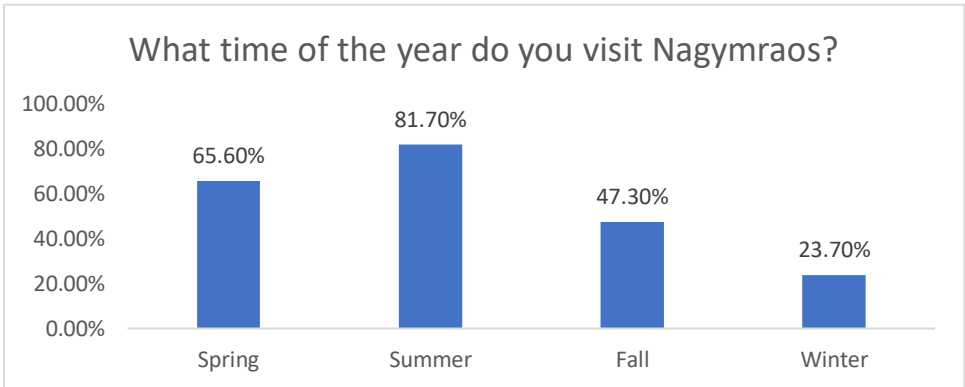


Table5: Load distribution by seasons (Own questionnaire, 2021)

45% spend half a day or less and 34,4% spend a day but not stay for overnight, only 20,6% spends one or more night at Nagymaros in average.

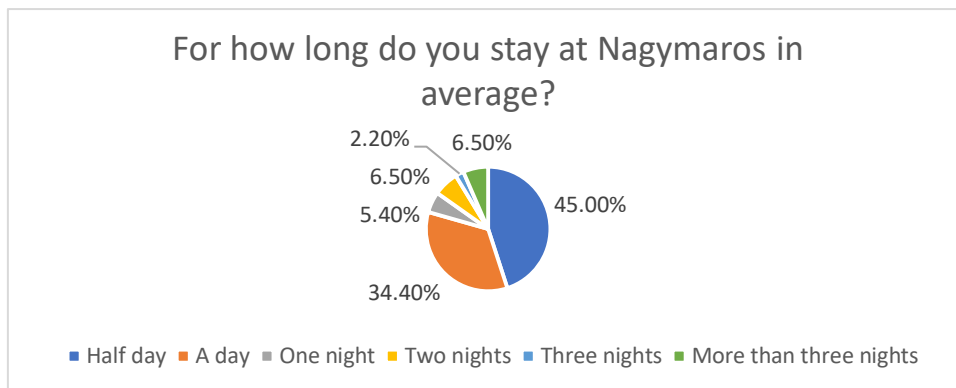


Figure16: Duration of stay (Own questionnaire, 2021)

55,9% claimed that they never stay overnight. The most popular accommodation form is to stay with friends or family. Guesthouses (9,7%) and camping (7,5 %) use are negligible among the fillers.

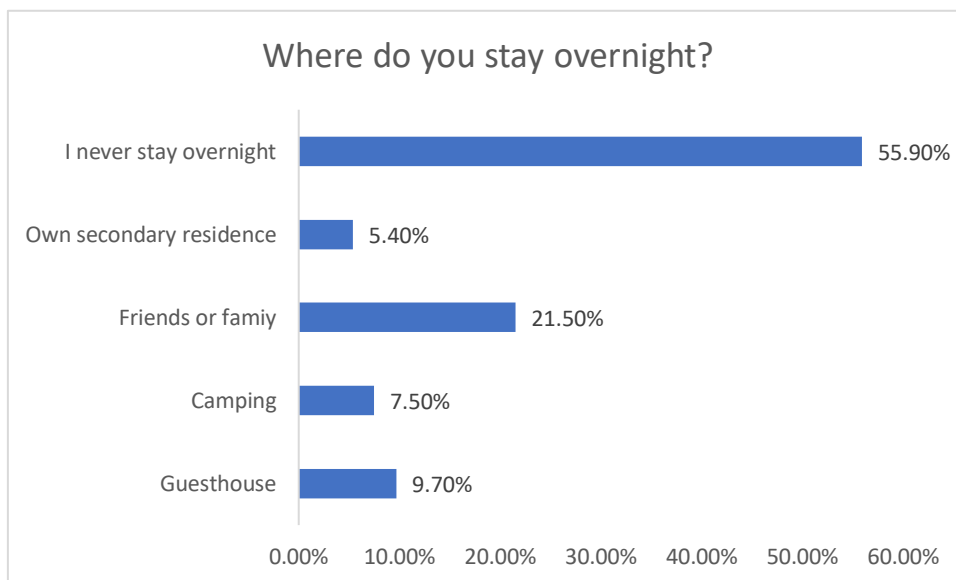


Table6: Popularity of accommodation types (Own questionnaire, 2021)

Almost two-thirds visit other cities while their stay at Nagymaros.

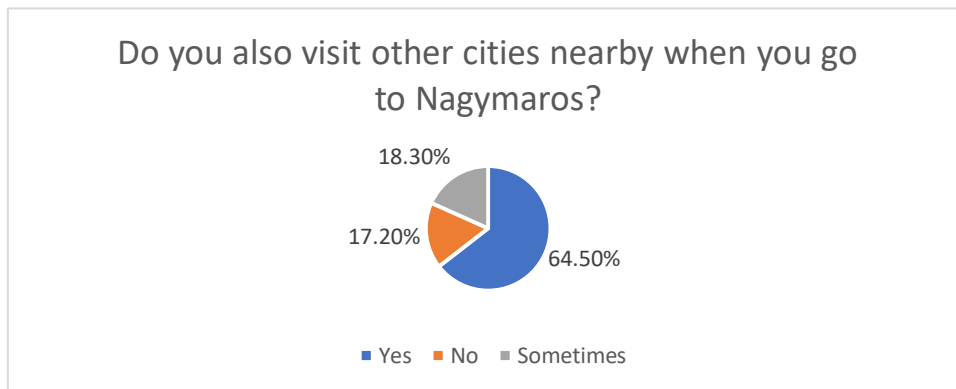


Figure17: (Own questionnaire, 2021)

Personal experiences and feelings

The next section applied to personal experiences and feelings. From here, it is visible that most fillers had an overall positive experience during their stay.

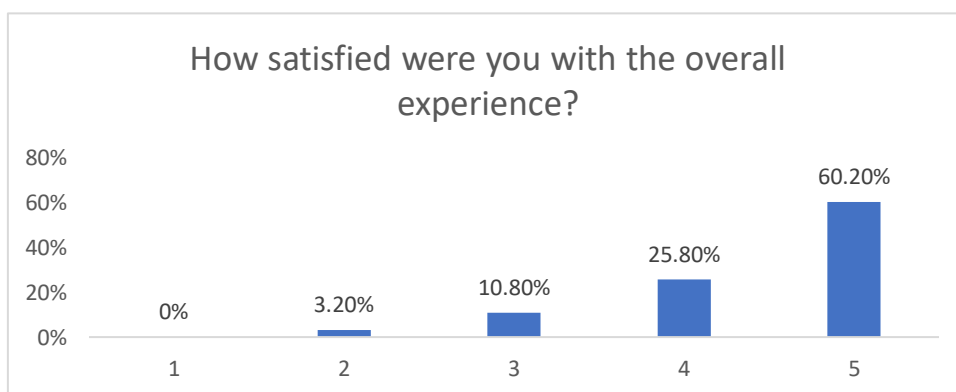
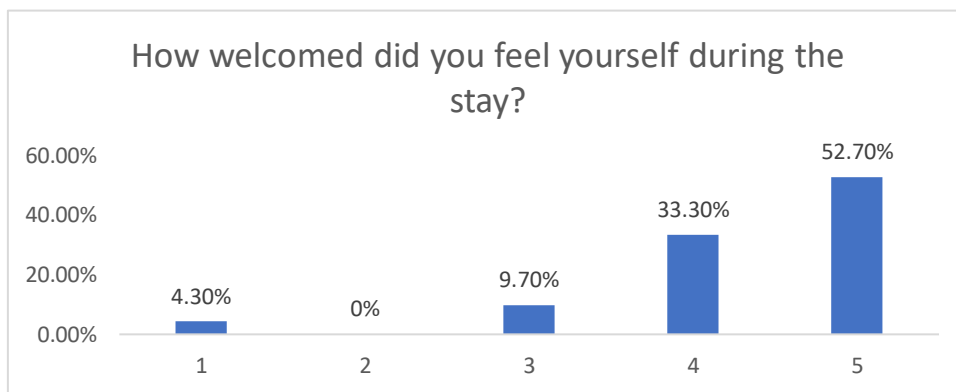


Table7: Level of satisfaction among guests (Own questionnaire, 2021)

Table8: Level of satisfaction among guests (Own questionnaire, 2021)

Moreover, only 2,2% responded “No” to the question, if they would like to visit Nagymaros again. 88,2% gave a clear “Yes”.

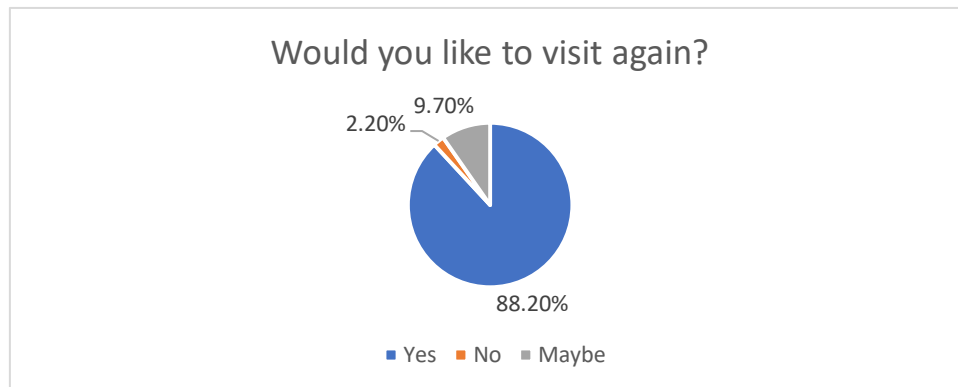


Figure18: Willingness for return (Own questionnaire, 2021)

The other questions were explanatorily connecting to personal views and opinions. For the first question; „What do you like about Nagymaros?“ the most common answer was „Nature“ and „The Danube“. Almost all respondents referred to some kind of natural endowment. Also, recreation, hiking, and biking opportunities were mentioned. Restaurants and bars were also written down multiple times.

- “Nature, proximity to the Danube, youthful atmosphere, restaurants.”
- “The panorama of the Danube, the mountains above it.”
- “The quiet atmosphere, the beautiful fauna, and flora, which creates the perfect environment to relax from the hardships of the big city and to spend a few days off in a calm, peaceful environment.”
- “The bike path and the fact that next to it there are a lot of good places where you can sit and sip something. And, of course, that the Danube is there. Nice, good radiance.”
- “Great variety of recreational opportunities.”
- “Possibility to go swimming, restaurants.”

For the question „What you do not like about Nagymaros?“ 22 fillers indicated that they did not perceive any problems during their visit. The most common response was in connection to difficulties with parking, other infrastructural underdevelopment was almost always mentioned as a disadvantage. Overtourism and crowd were mentioned 17 times.

- “The recent crowd at the center in case of good weather, which is not tolerated by the downtown and return trips, the limitations of road 12.”
- “Excessive littering can be very annoying for visiting tourists.”
- “Too many people are coming lately.”
- “Underdeveloped infrastructure.”
- “In summer the crowds on the banks of the Danube -> parking is difficult at this time.”
- “Unfortunately, it became more and more crowded, cycling towards Zebegény on a weekend I counted more than 120 people on the bike path, long ago it was maybe 10-15. The issue of parking is unresolved, a lot of people leave their cars on the main road thus obstructing traffic.”
- “Sometimes bad bike path, would need to be renovated.”
- “The ferry rarely goes.”

Ideas and recommendations

The last question was purposed to let the responder express their ideas and recommendations for destination development.

Developing the biking path along with other often used public spaces was advised by many. The following comments represent the most common problems to be solved.

Infrastructure

- “The bike path is in poor condition and is used by many.”
- “In other tourist-attractive Danube-side towns, locals complain about the crowds, and to avoid this, perhaps sports and walking opportunities could be developed, diverted to places on the banks of the Danube and on forest routes that do not disturb the local population as much.”
- “Accessibility by ferry is itself an attraction that should be given more emphasis.”

Parking and traffic

- “In terms of traffic organization, the whole Danube Bend is approached, and the parking of tourists is solved in the outer parts of the settlements.”
- “The accessibility of the railway station in Nagymaros leaves something to be desired, not a 21st-century solution. The issue of parking will definitely have to be solved for the future because by making the parking lot in the main square toll, many people will park on the main road, thus obstructing traffic. There are places where people have been slowly bypassing the same pits for 20 years. Keeping public spaces clean would also be important, but it also depends heavily on the behavioral culture of visitors.”
- “More and more people are coming, can not bear the city in this form.”

Development

- “The real curiosity of the region is the closeness to nature, the green areas. Improvements should highlight these and hiking - not eliminate them.”
- “Creating and supporting as many LOCAL small businesses (including community spaces) as possible, passing on the atmosphere, kindness, and knowledge of the people there. By providing labor for the residents of Nagymaros.”
- “It would be important not to go in the direction of “integration”.”
- “I think it is always important to include new tourism trends. Also, the development of existing services is important.”

Accommodation and catering

- “There are few accommodations, many retro-style restaurants/buffets”
- “Some restaurants would have time for XXI. century quality and services.”
- “There could be a little more restaurants (like some cauldron place) and less rubbish.”

Summary

In conclusion, Nagymaros is a quite popular destination among domestic travelers. Visitors had an overall positive experience and would return. Leisure and within that, various sports activities are the most popular. Nature is clearly the most important value and

'attraction' for tourists to be a guest of Nagymaros. Active tourism is the pulling industry. Hiking and cycling are outstanding but walking by the river and cultural programs are as well interests the tourists. Travel by car is a big problem in the area, and from this questionnaire, it is visible, that despite the disadvantages many choose to arrive by car instead of alternative public transports. Ferry and passive are not as popular because it does not exist so much in the public consciousness due to lack of advertisement.

The high season is in Summer but Spring and Fall are also popular. Same-day visitors, who tend to explore other surrounding cities tied together are by far the most common.

Situation assessment and problems formulated in the questionnaire by fillers.

Many responders did not see any problem during their stay. However, others noticed similar problems. After, conducting the observation and interviews it becomes clear, that all opinions regarding problems mostly coincide on every side. It might be difficult for a tourist to see the problems of a destination since the spent time is short and during vacation, it is more likewise to concentrate on positive experiences.

As it was mentioned in the upper section the most common problem the tourist faced was crowd and traffic. The infrastructure is overloaded and it is a confounding factor. Popular public places are the most overused on summer weekends.

Solution proposals and justification

In this section, detailed solution forms were not reasoned. Although, modernization and following trends were advised, along with preservation and renovation but not building-in the area. Renovate the Eurovelo6, the beach, and the coastal area and develop the overall infrastructure.

4.3 INTERVIEWS

According to the questionnaire, site visits, and interviews, the same problems were identified. It becomes clear, that every stakeholder acknowledges mostly the same problems. However, opinions differ on every possible level and communication and compromise are the weakest points. There is no concrete decision or developed plan. It is difficult to create a list

of categories because all the problems are connected on a deeper level. Patterns can be identified but can not be demarcated.

In this section, the interviews are broken down and categorized by problems mentioned by interviewees and possible solutions.

4.3.1 TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Major problems connecting to traffic and parking were mentioned in the first place by every interviewee. Also in the questionnaire, many mentioned it as a problem. During sight visits, the problem was observable mainly on the weekends but weekdays also in the high season. It was said by Tamás Gergely and Frigyes Badár as well that, the growing traffic in the Danube Bend starting from Verőce is unbearable. The traffic jam of Road 12 limits the locals in their everyday life and heavily pollutes the environment. Thus, a deterioration in the quality of life started in the area. Same-day visitors choose to arrive by car from the capital or other areas. However, the settlements in the area do not have the holding capacity. It was mentioned in the literature review, that the Municipality of Verőce and the Environmental Working Group established a Resolution and package of proposals for the municipality of Verőce and the recommendation they had to reduce the negative effects.

Although everyone acknowledged the problem, different interviewees had different opinions about solving the difficulties.

Statement on traffic and parking by Tamás Gergely representing the municipality

Tamás Gergely- The chair of the Financial and Economic Committee, Member of the Committee on Urban Development, Tourism Development and Environmental Protection

First of all, he highlighted that this problem is so serious and complex, that it would need a well-put-together plan by professionals but the municipalities do not have an agreement and the capacity to fabricate one. Instead, the mayor of Verőce decided to build two parking lots for the arriving cars. Opinions inside the municipality of Nagymaros also differ. However, he thinks that building parking lots would not solve the problem since, the land does not have a natural capacity and all built lots would fill up eventually, if tourists see, that the area is great for parking. The most of Nagymaros, parking is not permitted but still, many parks are on the

side of the road. There is no parking supervisor in the area so fines and wheel clamps are nowhere to be found. The municipality does not have the financial support to apply for a public space maintainer since the income from fines goes directly to the state. The first step would be to higher the price of parking even more and limit the parking time as well, since it was free before 1 July 2020 it would implicate a quite big impact. Supervise of parking would also be necessary. For locals, they have a 2500 Ft half-year permit to park but they are planning on the limit the parking time as well in the center area. It is not possible to ban all cars from the area but unfavorable regulations for car users could limit the traffic. The municipality is currently working on a plan for a new parking system.

Tamás Gergely also mentioned that advertising the alternative forms of transportation is not going to be efficient enough because people who have cars will prefer to arrive by car if possible. Since trains are often late, overcrowded and uncomfortable in case of many packages. So according to him, alternative transportation is not going to replace car traffic nor solve the problem soon enough.

The municipality is rather clueless about what would be the real solution but not supporting the idea of transportation should be an attraction. They do not want to attract more people to the area, rather desire to have fewer visitors.

Solutions suggestions for traffic and parking problems by Frigyes Badár and the Egymeder group

Frigyes Badár- the President of Dunakanyarkult Association

Emma Heinzelmann- a member of Dunakanyarkult Association, the founder of Egymeder Company, Creator of the Table in the wilderness, event organizer

Annamária Kuchta- member of Dunakanyarkult Association, member of Egymeder Company

They are one of the creators of the DunakanyarGO sustainability guide that came out in 2021, while this dissertation was in progress and had a major impact on it.

They said that that the best concept would be to consult with local experts and local people before anything being done. In their opinion, more parking space would not solve anything but it would make it even worse. If people see they can park in the area, they would

surely arrive by car instead of public transport. Supervising illegal parking and higher parking fee is a small step and is necessary but the compensation and offering better alternatives should be stressed.

„Visitors and tourists coming to the area are going to happen constantly, no matter what. We need to work on a solution together and not blame each other for the problem”

Car exemption is not feasible in the short run, but that would be a goal in the long run. Working with experts to create a Livable Danube Bend Concept.

The main concept of the DunakanyarGO tourist portal and the Egymeder group is to popularise alternative transportation use in the area and connect every participant for a sustainable future. This means that they tend to make transportation an attraction and an experience as well.

They claim, that it is important to convey a message that public transport is way more beneficial to use, than a car. Communication and cooperation are the keys by far. They collectively have to communicate toward tourists, that on one hand, they are not welcomed by car and may occur many difficulties during the ride, also while parking due to the small capacity of parking spaces and the high fee of parking. On the other hand, they are very much welcomed if they arrive by any other alternative transportation. It is an attraction itself and more comfortable and cost-efficient as well. The area is strong for connecting various transportation lines and creating an overall great experience for visitors.

The Danube Bend is strong for two main transport forms. One is the Budapest-Szob train line by Máv-Start and the other is the ferry and passnave by Mahart. The KagyarGO map tends to present and popularise the alternative options for traveling. Cooperating with Mahart, Máv-Start, Máv-Hév, and Volán to provide the best complex service possible. As it was mentioned in the literature review, they offer a Danube Bend day ticket in the name of sustainability for 1999Ft and 1499 Ft under the age of 26. This ticket provides unlimited use of various transports on both sides in the area and one chosen passnave round trip for unlimited trips. The passnave could be further developed but it is more than a good start.

Other than these, biking is a notable means of transport due to the development of the EuroVelo6 biking route next to the Danube. This route is popular with Europewide and many visits just to enjoy the natural beauty while biking through all the settlements at the shore.

However, the route due to overuse can be further constructed and the infrastructure next to the path is also underdeveloped. Few bicycle shops and rentals can be found and electric bike rental is stronger on the other side. They think it would be beneficial to concentrate on stopping the passing through bikers even for a night or more, by creating ideal infrastructure such as roadside rest, bicycle storage, accommodation.

Kaya and canoe rental and port is strong in the area and widely popular along with other private sports equipment.

There is a locally developed electric scooter, called Dunaroll. Similar to Lime at Budapest but it is more sustainable and safe to use. It can be used between settlements or short distances. There are designated areas to park so can not be left on the side of the road or floodplains. There are speed limits as well which are automatically controlled through GPS so it is safer in bends, protected areas, promenades, public spaces, etc.

There is no taxi company, so that could be a niche since the distances could be long for walking to the train station and trains are not running at night. Youngsters from surrounding areas enjoy the cultural nightlife of Nagymaros and a taxi company would provide safe transport.

All of these mentioned above can be a great memorable experience for the whole family or group of friends by visiting not just Nagymaros but surrounding settlements which motivates same-day visitors to stay the night and become a tourist. This could be the main solution for same-day visitors and increase the willingness to stay and spend more if well connecting the area and develop infrastructure.

It seems that many locals think the same way and want to work out a sustainable system, especially the residents of Verőce since they are the most affected. It was mentioned in the literature review that the environmental working group and the municipality of Verőce created an eight-page long Resolution and package of proposals on the increasing motor and vehicle traffic on the Danube Bend and the traffic regulation for the municipality of Verőce.

In this resolution, the problems and negative effects are clearly defined but different solutions are also attached. It is visible that, this was written by consulting professionals and searching for cooperation and clarity. It is stated that more parking would cause more traffic and it would be the worst possible solution. A traffic reduction concept is advised since there

is not any. Advised not just one but multiple starting possibilities such as; high parking fee, „Danube Bend card” for further discounts, compression of public transport services, promotion of water transport, promoting „bike and hike”, force cars to park at Vác train station or build a parking lot near the highway exit, a promotional campaign of Danube Bend public transport, development of cycling infrastructure, tightening parking, cooperation of municipalities and examining the impact of developments on traffic and support it accordingly.

4.3.2 OVERTOURISM AND SAME-DAY VISITORS

Overtourism is the overall problem, that creates all the difficulties. In recent years the Danube Bend has become a rather popular destination for domestic tourism. The outstanding natural landscape and the closeness of Budapest generated a perfect getaway destination. Moreover, the Hungarian Tourism Agency promoted the Danube Bend as a highlighted tourism development area on a national level. However, the promotion itself was not enough, since a thoughtful plan was not conducted at the same time. All the development plans are outdated and financial supports are not unified as was mentioned in the literature review.

Moreover, Covid-19 had a determining impact on the overtourism situation. It caused an explosive growth in the number of same-day visitors which puts a heavy strain on the infrastructure. In parallel, moving in and population growth causes many problems for the city. This gives various disadvantages at the same time, such as environmental, social, and economic disadvantages.

- Environmental disadvantages: littering, noise pollution, air emission, disturbance of wildlife, visual pollution, water pollution
- Social disadvantages: deterioration in the quality of life, decline of public mood, price rise, crowd, culture clashes
- Economic disadvantages: more expenditure than income, infrastructure overload, congestion, seasonality

Tamás Gergely said that however, this phenomenon is the cause of every problem, it was impossible to forecast and came as a shock to everyone. Made the shareholders impossible to react in such a short period of time. This is the reason that there are no plans at

all for a scenario like this. Financial support deficit and disagreement are other crucial problems. However, overtourism was mentioned as a danger factor in 2008 in the Integrated Urban Development Strategy at Nagymaros.

In contrast, Frigyes Badár said, that it was forecastable and for many years from now it was an ever-accelerating process. Everyone knew about it, but pointed fingers instead of making progress. Covid-19 influenced negatively on a higher level and made the situation unbearable and nearly irreversible. Without a consensus, nothing can be done and time is running out. The lack of management is the driving force behind the collapse of the system.

Solution suggestions for over-tourism By Tamás Gergely and the municipality

The newest attempt for reorganization was to found the so-called “Cluster” in 2021 by five local governments in the Danube Bend. Nagymaros, Kismaros, Szokolya, Verőce and Kóspallag joined a cooperation in order to enforce interests and unify goals. This cooperation aims to coordinate the attractions and to disperse the mass.

The primary goal in this state of Nagymaros would be to stop tourism but this is not possible so all measures would aim to support and benefit the local community in the first place. Financial support is crucial but difficult to get from the government. This is the main reason for the “Cluster” system to get more attention to the area and the need for investments. There is no proper income from tourism but the costs are high and most of the cities do not have the financial background to develop.

One of the solutions that the municipality sees is to find an external investor who could build a high-quality hotel complex at Nagymaros and attract tourists with a high willingness to spend.

There are no big hotels at Nagymaros since the original plan was to have the hotels and other accommodation on the other side of the Danube, at Visegrád, and have the natural and sports attractions at Nagymaros. However, in recent years many guesthouses had been opened by locals and newcomers. This niche for natural close accommodation is filling up rapidly, but the income from tax is low due to illegal operation. The municipality hopes to see

an increase in income and according to them, there would be a high demand for a hotel like this. There is no official survey for this.

There is a plan for consulting with an external group to create a new development plan but it is time-consuming and money intensive. The initial target direction is to disperse the crowd by organizing programs and build attractions other than the downtown and connecting settlements.

Solution Suggestions by Frigyes Badár and the Egymeder group

Overtourism is caused mostly by domestic same-day visitors from the capital or surrounding areas. The value of nature went up and more people want a unique experience at a remote place, rather than visiting bigger cities. The solution to reducing overtourism would be to convert same-day visitors into longer-staying tourists according to Frigyes Badár and the Egymeder Group. The Eurovelo6 bicycle road gives an extra opportunity to stop transit traffic and boost multi-day tourism. Infrastructure development in a sustainable way and education could be the key to attract an ideal target market. Without cooperation with the community, it is impossible to reach appropriate goals.

The main initiative was started by the Egymeder group, who created the KanyarGO map, sustainability guide in 2021. This was the first big step forward but to identify the real needs and target markets, interdisciplinary research is needed. URBANUM, an emerging interdisciplinary urban platform, currently helps to assess needs and possibilities to develop and aims to reach the second big goal, to have an overall picture and progress plan to form the area. To be sustainable in a social, environmental, and economic way as well. The involvement of experts from different fields and communication is the key to decision making and management.

The KanyarGO project was the first big step forward for the region in case of development. Since the municipality was unable to reject on a decent mode, locals formed a community and tried to prepare a complex plan starting from scratch.

They believe in community-based management and local support but tourist education is crucial as well. It is important to recognize new trends and follow them to have benefited from tourism. Preserve natural values and participate on a deeper level in the life of the city is now a rapidly rising trend among wealthier tourists. If the area can attract ecotourists, they

would be open to help and support the local community and be responsible. If the communication toward tourists is strong and clear, a mindset can be formed. A unified positive image forming and promotion can alert the target market. Reduce the disadvantages caused by tourism by educating people on sustainability and ask for their help is advised.

They think that there is no need for big investors or hotels since, that would cause more pollution, disturbance of nature and distorts the architecture of the city.

Interview with Nóra Keserű

According to Nóra Keserű, the owner of the Csicsergő guesthouse, the characteristics of the guesthouses are perfect for the nature close experience and a great income for locals which boost the economy. There are various types and sizes of houses to choose from but most of them are modern and well-equipped. Perfect for a group of friends or families to stay for the weekend or more. It reduces seasonality since many choose to visit not just in summer but spring and autumn, even winter. More and more younger people tend to visit to enjoy the calmness and relax. The most common programs are hiking, participating in boat trips, biking, relaxing. Guesthouse owners and local business owners are supportive of each other and often offer local programs and places for their guests. Most guests are responsible, respectful, and open to new experiences. They often returning guests and spend more in place.

She cannot see why the growing number of guesthouses could be a problem if the market demands more. She also said that the control of legal operations should not be negligible.

4.3.3 OTHER INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

There are many undergoing and planned development, that is important to be mentioned.

The Hungarian Tourist Board established a paper called; Hungarian Tourist Agency development proposal of the priority tourist destination in the Danube Bend region in 2017. The supported and not supported development proposals are listed.

4.3.3.1 SUPPORTED DEVELOPMENTS

In the case of Nagymaros, the only supported development was the development of the environment of Nagymaros and the Danube bank of Nagymaros to improve the attractiveness of the settlement. It was supported by one billion HUF and planned to be finished in 2021. In 2019 Nagymaros established a preliminary feasibility study of the Danube Bend Panorama Promenade. The goal was to create a complex and unified image and modern information system. It includes The Széchenyi, The Béla, and The Károly Róbert promenades development.

Constructions have been started but it is far from ready due to the unexpected events of Covid-19. According to Gergely Tamás, there were many complications during the implementation and a reorganization with new planning is necessary for the future. He said, that the most problematic part is the maintenance of the area. There is no significant income and the municipality needs to employ a caretaker.



Figure 19 and 20: The Széchenyi and the Béla Promenades developments (Own pictures, 2021)

4.3.3.2 NOT SUPPORTED DEVELOPMENTS

Thermal well drilling

“We cannot support the investment professionally, as tourism product supply parallelism and deviation from the regional role, given that Visegrád plays a decisive role in the health tourism offer of the destination (Translated by L-Papp).”

The estimated cost was 0.20 billion HUF and the risk of the ineffectiveness of the thermal well drilling was estimated very high. However, in 2021, the municipality hopes to find financial support to implement the drilling. They know the cost is extremely high and the risk to find not usable water is also notable but it would bring great income and opportunities to

the city. It is one of the directions that they are looking forward to. They think, there would be a demand for a thermal bath in the area.

Creation of a sports and leisure center

The concept of establishing a sport and leisure center is not supported on the demand side and the development idea is incomplete. The development is not tourist-focused and its sustainability and return of investment are doubtful beyond the relevance of tourism. The estimated cost was 1.50 billion HUF.

Although the idea was not supported by the Hungarian Tourist Agency, the municipality of Nagymaros has plans to find a private investor and build this recreational center. They would be open to combining the sports complex with a high-quality hotel. They think there is a demand on the market. They also think it would be beneficial for the locals as well. The municipality stated that the most important party, is the local community and every development should focus on the benefits of the local residents.

The Egymeder group states that there is no need for such a big construction in nature. Natural resources are finite and green area destruction could not be avoidable. It would attract crowds and mass tourism. Alienates the landscape and destroys the experience of the wilderness and country life. Not sustainable in any manner and supports big corporations and urbanization. According to them there is no big construction needed. Instead, clear communication toward tourists, cooperation with stakeholders and a unified image in the Danube Bend are necessary components. The idea of the "Cluster" was essential but the implementation was poor and documents are encrypted that should not be. A publicly open round table discussion would be appropriate but politicians are reluctant to the idea.

4.3.4 THE CULTURAL CENTER OR THE NEW BALATON

From all the issues, the future of Nagymars and the whole Danube Bend seems to depend on the act that is being formed in the present. From the standpoint of the Egymeder group and Frigyes Badár, the decision is up to the people if the area recovers to be a cultural center once again or becomes „the new Balaton”.

Tamás Gergely said that since it is impossible to stop mass tourism in the area the solution would be to create income by finding public or private investors for implementing bigger projects. However, the conservation of cultural values is a priority, but the concept of „culture” radically differs from the modern concept of what the Egymeder group represents. They do not want to cooperate with them, because they think the new moving in population destroys the life of the city and forces their new, modern habits and high prices on the old natives. The municipality wants to preserve the Swabian folk heritage through village days and gastronomic gatherings and Swabian ball. Folk traditional festivals are important for the older generation but in their opinion, attracts every generation and interest tourists and have community goal. The latest big event supported by the municipality was the VÉNégy festival but smaller events like this are common.

Within the Egymeder group, there is a joint action of the catering units at Nagymaros to better validate their interest. The members are the PIKNIK Manufaktúra, Tandem, Zsigi, Sigil galery and cafe, Danu Bár. By forming a community they can support their goals better and be stronger together. They have a quite unified image and have a sustainability agreement. They are extremely supportive of musicians and welcome every live musical event.

Botond Óri Kiss a freshly graduated musician from Verőce, gave a clearer picture of the state of the musical and cultural life of the area.

Nagymaros was the hometown of György Szabados composer, the creator of free jazz, the event called the „Adyton workshop” guards the memory of his work every year. With this base, it would be appropriate to continue this line of music. Botond thinks that the alliance of the Egymeder group will help to stronger and keep the modern, alternative community together. They have a common direction and artistic interest which worth carrying on.

„Nagymaros was the cultural center of the Danube Bend and still it is. It gives place to many light music concerts and social gatherings for every generation. These bars and restaurants provide space for young talents to perform and stronger the community. Helps to introduce to the younger generation the beauty of slow life with a buzz and teach appreciation to nature and culture (Translated by L-Papp).”

He also has this own live music event series called the „Dunakorda” which he started to organize three years ago with great success. There are also other cultural events like the Szőnyi Kino Garden film festival. All these events are almost always full house and very popular.

He claims that the younger generation is more than interested in these kinds of activities and there is a high demand for likewise events. Not just the surrounding area but from Budapest, it is a common program to come and enjoy the evening with a group of friends.

He said that he has various band formations to play and they have multiple chances to play on every week in the summer season. This is a great help for emerging talents and brings a good feeling to be able to play music in his hometown. Sadly the older natives and the municipality often make their actions impossible by claiming noise pollution, despite all the places are closed at ten. They rather support the outdated folk traditional events which leave the youngsters uninterested.

Lili Miklósi, a staff member of PIKNIK Manufaktúra talked about the progress of the catering units inside this unity and how they differ from a regular bar or restaurant in the area. She claimed that basic sustainability starts with thinking simple and local. There is no big change needed, just one small step one by one. They use recyclable packaging, have an oil-free kitchen. The syrups are from a local small producer, the majority of the vegetables are from local foil tents, the compost is collected separately, as well as the coffee grounds. Selective garbage collection is impossible for now because there is no proper garbage transportation in the area but solving this problem is one of the prime concerns. Local support is one of the most important factors and should be kept in mind. „Forming a livable community was the goal and we are glad to see it happening. Everyone is doing their little part and this is what makes the community going forward (Translated by L-Papp).”

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this final last part, the answers to the research questions, conclusions, and personal recommendations can be read. It also includes important progress that took place close to the writing of this thesis, which can have a determining impact on reforming tourism in the Danube Bend.

5.2 CONCLUSION

1. What type of tourism is the most common in Nagymaros? Why do the tourists choose to visit and what are their preferences?

The characteristic of a typical tourist in Nagymaros is the following; Domestic, same-day visitors, from Budapest with relatively low willingness to spend. They mostly choose to visit for leisure purposes, to enjoy nature and relax or practice active tourism. It is highly popular among young generations from the capital or other settlements.

2. How Covid-19 affected domestic tourism in the area and what are the expectations for the future?

Covid-19 affected the area positively correlated with the numbers of domestic visitors. The lockdown and feeling of insecurity led the people in the direction of choosing domestic tourism, within that rural tourism to escape the cities, instead of going abroad for vacations. However, the infrastructure of Nagymaros and even the whole Danube Bend was not ready for such high demand and a great increase in numbers. Thus, the system of management nearly collapsed and caused controversy and panic among locals.

For the future, there are various solutions from different organizations as was mentioned in chapter four. Two main lines can be followed. The one solution is preferred by the local municipality is to attract private investors or government support and rely on their financial backing to build revenue-generating establishments for the city, while putting together a long-term destination development plan. Working together with other

settlements in hopes of more financial and non-financial support in the Danube Bend is also part of the plan.

The second standpoint is that it would be more beneficial not to rely on external investors for a big project which is destructing the values of nature and attract mass tourism. Instead, Nagymaros should use the new trend of sustainability and responsibility toward nature and culture. It would be more constructive for the community to encourage cooperation and get more control over management. Also, concentrate on protecting the natural landscape and promote the area as a rural experience for eco-tourist.

3. What are the main problems at the Nagymaros and the Danube Bend connecting to tourism? How does the city cope with these problems?

The major issues are infrastructure and management. The lack of actual planning led to a major sharp contrast between opinions and ideas about possible solutions. The acceleration of overtourism made an imprint on every segment of life in the city of Nagymaros. The current state of events is peaking at the moment and everybody tries to search for a good solution as soon as possible.

The major problem however in my opinion from what I see, is the dissension and the withdrawal from each other's opinions and ideas. There are no common forums where shareholders can share their ideas and recommendations, where they can get information and active involvement.

The establishment of the Egymeder group was a response to this, but it still involves just a small part of the community who are more open to changes and modernization. Nonetheless, it generates distaste in others because in their opinion preserving culture is more important than applying new trends like sustainability.

4. What could be an effective method for converting same-day visitors into multi-day, responsible tourists?

Consulting with Frigyes Badár, it turned out that the Dunakanyarkult and the Egymered group is working on it for the last few years but it is more important and current than ever before. Their goal is to get the locals together and form a community to create a bigger voice and can get more insight and control over the management of the city.

The KanyarGO map was the first step to draw visitor's and tourist's attention to the importance of sustainability and preservation of nature. Also, forming an active community that involves tourist participation awake a sense of engagement in them and therefore to acts more responsible. Of course, financial support is also needed to develop the infrastructure but image creation has the biggest influence on attitude.

5. How could Nagymaros keep a healthy balance between development and preservation? Why is it important?

The base has to be the primary consideration of sustainability and the interest of nature and the local community by involving every possible group that has implications in the topic. Also, establishing a good managemental system that meets the criteria of Dávid Lóránd (2011).

Care must also be taken to the equal balance of economic, social, and environmental sustainability of tourism. To be the most beneficial and lower negative consequences of the high number of tourists in the area.

I will further explain my recommendations in the next chapter.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Consensus and Progress

One of the first milestones would be to make a consensus among locals in order to form an active community. To reach this goal, the alleviation of public mood is needed. The magnitude of tension makes the community split apart and distant. The majority of antipathy may come from misunderstanding or lack of information. This could be managed by educating and informing people.

The recommendation of mine would be to create platforms and forums where the population could get information and answers for their questions while everyone could express their opinions and ideas and discuss them. Organized by the local municipality but experts in different topics are also invited and a crucial part of the discussion. For the common future of the city, it is essential to form a working community that can stably manage upcoming crises.

Preservation of local values

Upon my research, the preservation of local values is a priority for everyone but the interpretation is different. According to me, preservation could be successful if it can be integrated with trends. In this way, an added value can make a unique experience for tourists. If the older generation wants to protect cultural values, it is crucial to get the attention of the younger generations. In the modern world, it is not an easy mission but can be reached if an extra added element can make it unique. Since the Egyszered group seems to arouse the interest of a younger audience easier, it would be advised for the Municipality to work together with them.

Natural values can be protected by working closely together with the local forestry and monitor restrictions. Also, respecting the landscape and only build additional construction after analyzing the impacts.

Sustainability as a new profile

Besides rural tourism, the popularity of eco-tourism is also rising, the importance of sustainability is gaining more attention. The area should use this as an opportunity to push back mass tourism and gain actual profit from visitors and tourists.

Branding is a hard and complex process but with the help of experts and civils is possible. The KanyaGO sustainability map has already made a big step to promote active participation and responsibility. As I mentioned before education should play a great part in planning in order to motivate participants toward being responsible.

It always gives a unique profile to a destination if they support local entrepreneurs and use local resources. It also brings the community together more and boosts the local economy.

Slow tourism and active tourism are some of the most suitable types of tourism that fit the circumstances of Nagymaros and are also popular at the moment.

The Danube Bend as a destination

As it was mentioned various times in the thesis an alliance of the settlements in the Danube Bend would help the area to get more attention and support, thus can develop faster.

There have already been initiatives, as the “Cluster” but a bigger and more open collaboration would be needed.

The best solution would be to create a unified destination and develop the area as a whole. To modernize and establish a clear message for tourists about the destination, thus creating an image for the place. It would also relieve the overload while promoting multi-day stay at different settlements and offering a quality experience. Quality over quantity should be the baseline.

Infrastructural development

In order to solve the problem of traffic, it would be advised for the municipalities to work together and take into account the Resolution and package of proposals for the municipality of Verőce in connection with the growing vehicle traffic and traffic regulation of the Danube Bend in 2021 established by the Municipality of Verőce and the Environmental Working Group.

Besides the regulation of traffic, the limitation of cars would also be a good idea to higher the quality of experience in the nature. Building more parking lots is not necessary and as it was mentioned by Frigyes Badár it would just invite more car arrivals.

Positive marketing about an alternative such as public transportation of the area can be strongly used. The KanyarGO map already made the base. The city would need to communicate a strong and clear message about responsibility and sustainability. This can be reached by giving more benefits for the tourist using alternative transportation forms and restrict the ones who choose to arrive by car.

5.4 BREAKING NEWS

National Tourism Development Strategy until 2030, Tourism 2.0

The 4D; Esztergom, Szentendre, Vác and Visegrá tourism organizations released the newest touristic profile for the Danube Bend at a conference held at Szentendre on the 16 of September in 2021. It is a major step for connecting the cities and creating an overall attraction for a different type of tourist. The packages are made for one, two, and three nights in the are made by professionals, broken down by seasons. The package contains the

accommodation, restaurant, program opportunities, services, recreational opportunities, transport options, hiking trails, city descriptions, etc. Developing the Danube Bend app is also in progress for online branding (Turizmusonline, 2021).

The effects of Tourism 2.0 on Nagymaros (the personal opinion of the author)

Nagymaros is not ready to be joined to this association at the moment because of the major flaws in the infrastructure and management. However, it is a great opportunity to inspect and learn from the effect in the future. After detailed planning, it would be beneficial to join but the sustainability triangle needs to be prioritized.

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APPENDICES

Questions asked in the questionnaire:

Have you visited Nagymaros yet?

If not, why not?

For what purpose have you visited Nagymaros?

What are your interests at Nagymaros?

Whom do you travel with?

How do you travel to Nagymaros?

How often do you visit Nagymaros?

What time of the year do you visit Nagymraos?

For how long do you stay at Nagymaros on average?

Where do you stay overnight?

Do you also visit other cities nearby when you go to Nagymaros?

How satisfied were you with the overall experience?

How welcomed did you feel yourself during the stay?

Would you like to visit again?

What do you like about Nagymaros? (e.g. nature, programs, services, view)

What you do not like about Nagymaros? (e.g. parking, crowd)

What would you improve at Nagymaros?

What would you improve at Nagymaros and why?

Gender

Age

What is your status?

Are you Hungarian?

Where do you live?

Do you have any experience or suggestions you want to share in connection with the topic?

Questions asked on the semi-structured interviews:

With Lili Miklósi

How would you describe the state of Nagymaros and the Danube Bend in tourism?

What are the major problems that you see connecting to tourism?

Whom do you recommend to talk to about the topic?

What are the possible changes you seek in the close and far future?

What civil cooperations are working at the moment and what are their goals?

How would you describe the situation at your workplace?

How the PIKNIK Manufaktúra is different from the „traditional” catering units in the area?

With Tamás Gergely

What type of tourists came to the area? What are their characteristics?

How does tourism change in the past few years?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in the area?

How these problems could be solved?

To whom is the municipality cooperating to solve upcoming difficulties?

What ongoing developments are supported by the local municipality?

What other developments would be necessary?

Where does the municipality get the financial support?

What would be the main objectives of a new tourism development strategic plan?

With Frigyes Badár, Emma Heinzelmann, Annamária Kuchta

What type of tourists came to the area? What are their characteristics?

How does tourism change in the past few years?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in the area?

How these problems could be solved?

Why did you feel the need to establish the Dunakanyarkult and the Egymeder group now?

What are the benefits of these organizations?

How is the relationship between the civil cooperations and the municipality, also the local community?

What developments would be beneficial for the area?

Why do you think local participation and sustainability are important?

What would be the main objectives of a new tourism development strategic plan?

With Nóra Keserű

How would you describe the features of a guesthouse?

For whom would you recommend to stay in a guesthouse?

Who are the target groups to stay in a guesthouse?

Is it helps to reduce seasonality?

Is there a niche and need on the market for guesthouses?

What are the problems with the growing number of guesthouses?

Does the guesthouse owners supportive toward each other?

With Botond Őri Kiss

Where does the musical background of the area come from?

How would you describe the cultural life of Nagymaros and the Danube Bend?

How is the ambiance toward these kinds of events from the different stakeholders?

Is there a future for cultural and musical events at the Danube Band? What are your expectations for the future?

Pictures (By Lilla Papp)



Figure21 and 22: EuroVelo6 biking path (Own pictures, 2021)



Figure23 and 24: Bars along the EuroVelo6 biking path, Zsigi Büfé, Tandem (Own pictures, 2021)



Figure25 and 26: Bars along the EuroVelo6 biking path, A halas, PIKNIK Manufaktúra (Own pictures, 2021)



Figure27 and 28: The Széchenyi and the Béla Promenades developments (Own pictures, 2021)



Figure29 and 30: The Széchenyi and the Béla Promenades developments (Own pictures, 2021)