

## GENERATION Y & Z TOWARDS WELLBEING TOURISM – CHALLENGE OR NECESSITY FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY?

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this article is to present the consumer behavior of two generations - Y and Z - in the tourism market and to show how the concept of wellbeing tourism fits the needs and expectations of the two analyzed groups.

**Design/Methods/Approach:** The article used a systematic literature review based on the SCOPUS database. A search for the term "wellbeing" in abstracts, titles and as keywords identified 107 571 articles. After applying search restrictions to the term "wellbeing tourism" and "social sciences," 12 articles were identified. After reviewing the content, only 9 articles referred to the concept under discussion, indicating a significant unstructured research gap in this area. The article further includes excerpts from reports and analyses, conducted as part of projects, on the implementation of wellbeing tourism in the South Baltic region.

**Findings:** Critical analysis of the literature and experience gained from wellbeing tourism projects revealed challenges of a socio-demographic and technological nature. These challenges result from changes in the macro-environment and are closely interrelated. For example, the changing attitudes of representatives of generations Y and Z toward tourism are closely related to their increased awareness of the importance of wellbeing in their lives. In addition, the development of digital marketing is closely related to the growing popularity of these services among young buyers.

**Research limitations:** The authors described tourists from generations Y and Z, in terms of their approach to wellbeing tourism. It should be noted that dynamic changes in the environment may affect the emergence of new behaviors that are not presented in the article. Therefore, there is a need to develop future research using qualitative and quantitative methods to develop a more accurate picture of the groups studied in terms of their evaluation of wellbeing offerings.

**Practical/social implications:** The article can help tourism companies understand the behavior of Generation Y and Z tourists and identify solutions that can contribute to the preparation of wellbeing offers that meet their expectations.

**Originality/Value:** A systematic review of the literature and an analysis of its content allowed the creation of a compendium of knowledge on wellbeing tourism aimed at generations Y and Z. In addition, steps have been taken to consolidate this approach within management science. These activities will likely make it possible to direct perspectives on the perception of this phenomenon, and also to sort out the conceptual chaos in this area. The review of the issues

and the general and synthetic considerations carried out are part of the stream of studies on consumer behaviour.

**Keywords:** wellbeing tourism, Y generation, Z generation, wellbeing offer, consumer behavior.

**Type of Article:** viewpoint, literature review, research paper.

## 1. Introduction

Pandemic times have changed the view of tourists, composed of increasingly younger generations, on how they spend their leisure time. This situation has been further aggravated by the lockdown and macroeconomic uncertainty. Adapting the tourism market to the needs of new groups of tourists seems to be the only way for tourism companies to survive on the global market.

"Slow travel" is characterized by limiting mobility and taking time to explore local history and culture, while supporting the natural environment. The goal of a trip for the modern tourist is relaxation, self-reflection, novelty-seeking, engagement and discovery (Journal of Travel Research, 2021).

According to UNWTO experts, the recovery in international tourism seen in the second half of 2021 will continue throughout 2022 and 2023 (2020 was the worst year on record for tourism, as international travel fell 73%). Depending on the scenario, it is estimated that the number of international tourist trips will increase between 30% and 78% in all of 2022 (compared to 2021), thus returning to the 50% or even 63% level of pre-pandemic times (UNWTO, 2022). The UNWTO Tourism Survey (2022) indicates that the easing of travel restrictions has had an impact on unlocking tourism around the world, giving tourism entrepreneurs a chance to recover from the crisis.

This trend is evident in international tourism, as well as in local tourism. Domestic tourism and travel close to home, as well as outdoor activities, rural tourism and demand for natural and local products are among the main tourism trends shaping tourism this year. More than 50% of tourists report that environmental impact is an equally important factor when choosing a destination and mode of transportation, and 56% of tourists suggest the degree of environmental friendliness when choosing a place to stay (Kelly, 2010).

There is a growing interest in tourism, including physical activity (e.g., ski trips), relaxation and tranquility (e.g., spas, meditation retreats, pilgrimages, yoga, detox from technology) and its new variations incorporating nature observation, e.g., experiencing dark sky and stars, or forest bathing. This fits in with the current lifestyle trend of Generation Y and Z (Gen Y and Gen Z) towards mindfulness and proactive health as a way to overcome the challenges of society such as stressful lifestyles, alienation, obesity and other civilization diseases (Munar,

2018; Pearce et al., 2011). Thus, one can clearly notice a shift in the approach to travel of Generation Y and Z compared to earlier generations and a shift towards sustainable tourism and, even more broadly, towards wellbeing tourism.

## 2. Wellbeing tourism and its role in the modern world

Although wellbeing tourism is a relatively new concept (the first project on the subject in the South Baltic Sea region was only launched in 2016), in practice this type of tourism has been around for years. The term wellbeing tourism is primarily associated with tourism that promotes personal health. It is sometimes confused with wellness, but the two terms are not the same, although they refer to physical, mental balance and social wellbeing. The terms have different shades of meaning. Wellness, which is a combination of the words: "wellbeing" and "fitness," does not have a clear and widely accepted definition (Huijbens, 2011; Konu et al., 2010; Mintel, 2004). This conceptual confusion is partly due to linguistic, translational, and cultural differences (Smith, Puczkó, 2009). Moreover, different disciplines approach these concepts in slightly different ways, resulting in scattered research and fragmented terminology.

Wellness tourism refers to travel to destinations where one can improve one's health and sense of wellbeing through physical activity, spa treatments, and conventional and unconventional medicine, among other things (DeMicco, Poorani, 2022). The term is more popular than wellbeing (Global Wellness Institute, 2022) and capacious in its semantics. In addition to wellness, the term wellbeing is sometimes equated with health and medical tourism.

As research indicates (Lindell et al., 2022, Björk et al., 2011), the concept of wellbeing tourism differs in its framework from sustainable, medical, health and wellness tourism (see Table 1), but draws on their principles.

**Table 1.**

*Wellbeing tourism and related types of tourism - links and definitional connotations*

Type of tourism	Description	Environmental aspects	Economic aspects	Social aspects	Physical aspects	Mental aspects	Spiritual aspects
Wellbeing	Tourism that focuses on harmonizing human wellbeing in relation to host communities and natural environment (comprehensive)	X	X	X	X	X	X

Cont. table 1.

Wellness	Travel to maintain, manage or improve personal wellness, beauty, and relaxation (pampering)				X	X	X
Health	Travel to maintain or improve health in combination with tourism activities (preventive)				X	X	
Medical	Travel to undergo medical treatment (curative or cosmetic)				X	X	
Sustainable	Tourism that focuses on minimizing negative impacts on the environment, respecting local culture, and supporting local employment	X	X	X			

Note: The environmental, economic, and social aspects are part of the traditional concept of sustainable development (Giddings et al., 2002) and refer primarily to the external world - the enterprise and/or the community. The body, mind and soul aspects refer to a person's individual wellbeing.

Source: Lindell et al., 2022.

It is worth mentioning that in consumer research, wellbeing is a frequent synonym for quality of life. Researchers try to measure its level using both objective (economic, social and environmental) and subjective (happiness and satisfaction) measures (Sirgy, Lee, 2006; Seligman, 2011). This is because wellbeing refers to both the basics of life that are measurable, such as standard of living, livelihood, education or availability of food and services (Malinowska, Szymańska-Brałkowska, 2021), as well as more abstract aspects such as freedom (Konu et al., 2011) or other wellbeing values such as being kind, aware, honest, sincere, caring, and joyful (SB WELL project, Lindell et al., 2022b, Good Practice Report).

As can be seen, giving a measurable framework to this concept is challenging, since human wellbeing is subjective in nature and strongly linked to a specific time, place, culture, and context. Its resources (economic, social, human, natural) can change over time, and in addition, its meaning is often understood differently in different cultures and languages (Smith, Puczkó, 2009, Lindell et al., 2019).

For the purpose of sorting out terminology, the SB WELL - Wellbeing Tourism in the South Baltic Region - Guidelines for good practices & Promotion project defines wellbeing tourism as "sustainable tourism that supports harmony and balance of body, mind and soul for guests and hosts in a sustainable interreaction with the local community and environment" (SB WELL project, Lindell et al., 2022b). It is thus a much broader term than sustainable tourism, although it is very much related to it (Burroughs, Rindfleisch, 2002; Gordon, Carrigan, Hastings, 2011;

Kristensen, Boye, Askegaard, 2011). This holistic definition treats the person as a whole and emphasizes the connection of body, mind, and spirit (Miller, Foster, 2010; Lindell et al., 2022). In addition to physical, mental, and social aspects, wellbeing is also influenced by interaction with the social, cultural, and ecological environment. Thus, health, in a broad sense, is seen as a balance of internal factors (physical, mental, spiritual wellbeing) and external factors (social structures, social relationships, sociocultural lifestyles, ecological environments) affecting an individual's life (Lindell et al., 2022; Müller, Kauffman, 2001; Nahrstedt, 2004).

The interest in the topic of wellbeing among tourists, especially those representing younger generations, is no coincidence. For many years, the current times have been referred to as VUCA (Bennet, Lemoine, 2014). The term, which originated in the US military, has been adopted by the business world, emphasizing such features of reality as VOLATILITY, UNCERTAINTY, COMPLEXITY, and AMBIGUITY. In the wave of events initiated by the outbreak of COVID-19 (Śledzik et al., 2021), the acronym VUCA was replaced by another. For Jamais Cascio, listed as one of Foreign Policy Magazine's top 100 Global Thinkers and called "a leading futurist with a long career of thoughtfully contemplating the outlines of tomorrow, referred to the current reality as the world of BANI. The abbreviation deftly characterizes its main features, emphasizing that the world is BRITTLE, ANXIOUS, NONLINEAR and INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

Thus, looking for ways to improve wellbeing, health and quality of life, to reduce stress, and to enjoy moments of respite and pleasure, both for themselves and their loved ones, tourists are increasingly not only opting for sustainable travel, but they go one step further - looking for wellbeing destinations and services. This is due in part to increased economic affluence, demographic changes, the growth and commercialization of leisure time, and changes in values and lifestyles (Hjalager et al., 2011; Yeoman, 2008). Moreover, consumption has become a culturally accepted way of seeking happiness, prosperity, and a better quality of life (Burroughs, Rindfleisch, 2002). There are times when the relationship between consumer lifestyles and wellbeing is questioned by researchers (Burroughs, Rindfleisch, 2002; Inglehart, 1997; McLarney, Chung, 1999; Yeoman, 2011), yet it is undeniably the development of civilization that has led to a turn toward the search for meaning in life, self-development, and the search for new experiences.

Wellbeing can be defined as a comprehensive state of balance and harmony (Lindell et al., 2022). It challenges, among other things, systems thinking, the need for changes in supply chains, borderless interactions, inclusivity and consideration of the tourist's health and emotional state in the offer. It involves combining, collaborating, and co-creating economic, environmental and social aspects with values associated with wellbeing - engagement and respect for the body, mind and soul.

Wellbeing-oriented tourism implies an intention to do good, to have a positive impact on people (both guests and hosts), on the environment, on the planet, in the present and in the future (Lindell et al, 2022). It also responds to the new needs of the Generation Y and Z audience. Thus, it is becoming the future of tourism.

### **3. Tourism market potential vs. Generation Y**

Millennials, or Generation Y, have quickly become one of the most powerful forces in the travel industry. They are creating a huge market, and their travel spending now accounts for about 40% of all travel spending. This is a generation that includes today's adults between the ages of 24 and 35. They want to use the money they earn for experiential travel. At the same time, they are looking for different experiences than their parents (Generation X) and grandparents (the Baby Boomers generation).

In Europe, the younger segments of tourists mainly travel to Germany, the UK and France. Instead of all-inclusive vacations, they look for unique bargains on the Internet. They shy away from mass tourism. Living in a world where offline mixes with online, the development of technology and social media influences their perception of certain values, approach to life and hence also travel. Starting with its planning, Generation Y looks to social media for inspiration and information about travel deals. They value the opinions of influencers and their friends. At the same time, in order for Millennials to pay attention to the content, it must be authentic and real, preferably created by other travelers. For them, information provided by marketers is insincere and not worth paying attention to. According to the Traveler Insights Report (2022, Q2), Millennials are most often inspired by travel photos posted by their friends or by travel experts, as well as travel blogs and posts. They browse reviews on TripAdvisor, look for information on travel brands or destination websites, or simply talk to friends and read posts by people who have visited a certain place. Studies show that Millennials are 23% more likely to search for travel brands through vlogs or celebrity reviews (so-called celebrity endorsements; Roy et al., 2021) than Generation X, and 19% more likely to search for deals through blogs created by influencers.

Despite their many digital similarities, Millennials do not form homogeneous groups in the same way as earlier generations. Indeed, they range from newlyweds to parents in their 30s with children and stable incomes. Many continue to be single and choose either not to have children or decide to have them only later in life. Despite their heterogeneity, they are usually portrayed in the media as innovative thinkers and influential buyers.

When traveling, Millennials value authenticity, fulfillment and sustainability in personalized experiences tailored to their own tastes and preferences. Unlike earlier generations, X and BB, they do not seek out popular destinations just to have their picture taken

like a postcard, nor do they follow a guidebook or want to travel according to a strict, predetermined itinerary. Before deciding to go, they do extensive online research by surfing the Internet. They consider relaxation, disconnecting from the digital world, according to the JOMO (Joy-of-Missing-Out) concept, and having fun to be the most important part of the trip. Thus, they choose places and experiences from their to-do list, not out of the pages of guidebooks. Millennials avoid travel products that seem fake or staged for tourists, they recognize and appreciate a balanced approach to tourism by hosts. They are not just looking for quality, but personalized, top-notch service at a reasonable price. Thanks to ubiquitous social media, Millennials share travel experiences with their loved ones and online friends. They travel with friends more often than other generations, and thanks to social media, they are in constant contact with them. Table 2 shows the activities Millennials look for during their travels.

**Table 2.**  
*Examples of experiences for Millennials*

Customer Experience	Travel activities
Acquiring new skills	Sailing, learning new languages combined with a trip to a country and sightseeing, photography course, handicrafts, cooking lessons, yoga, painting, martial arts, scuba diving, dance lessons such as tango or salsa
Sustainable development	Experiences that teach and promote local cultural and environmental heritage
Adventure	Paragliding, caving, rafting, kayaking, "surfaris" or surf vacations, bungee jumping, glider flying, kayaking, scuba diving, snorkeling, mountain biking, trekking, climbing, sandboarding, snowboarding, zip lining, jungle trekking, horseback riding, SUP boarding
Experience Design	Authentic and unique experiences
Immersion in locality	Coachsuring and Airbnb - living in private homes in the absence of the owners, and peeping into the lifestyles of the residents by eating at their favorite places, living at their homes, talking to them, discovering farm-to-table experiences (Farm-to-table strategy)
Discovering gems	Collecting amber on the beach, searching for gold, amethysts, striped flint, etc., archaeotourism
A broader view of history, customs, monuments, etc.	Using technology (VR, AR) to enrich the travel experience
Hiking tours	Guided walking tours to explore the area, city, district, village, etc.
Taking care of health and shape	Traditional healing treatments, yoga, meditations, detox, cleansing, rejuvenation

Source: Author's elaboration based on the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI, 2021).

According to the Market Research Report (2019), more than 30% of Millennials choose short city breaks and 50% choose luxury vacations. At the same time, luxury is defined differently by them than by Generations X and BB. For earlier generations, luxury was associated with a sense of comfort and prestige, while Millennials define it as unprecedented experiences they can share with friends. It is a feeling rather than a category or an affiliation, and thus include unusual and limited editions, rare, customized, and sustainable experiences.

Millennial influencers will be indispensable in travel sector recovery according to GlobalData (Travel & Tourism, July 3, 2020), young travelers are key to the recovery of the travel sector after the pandemic, when the number of travelers outside of Europe dropped to

almost zero. Due to the financial impact of the pandemic and rising inflation, Millennials are planning shorter and less costly trips, but they do not want to give traveling up. Hence, they are more inclined to travel locally or to neighboring countries than to make distant, exotic journeys.

#### **4. Travel motivations of the Z Generation**

With new generations come new values and ideals. The number of young people going on vacation is growing for each year. This is fostered by improved global mobility, technological advances and thriving economic, cultural, and political exchanges.

Generation Z is defined as people born between 1997 and 2012 (i.e. between 10 and 25 years old in 2022). They are highly adaptable, intelligent, and tolerant. They are "hyper-connected", born into the world of the Internet and thus are among the most digitally oriented generations, combining physical and digital experiences. They are growing up with the challenges of forced population migration, terrorism, climate change, pandemics etc.

According to Hotelmize (a portal catering to hotels and travel agencies, [hotelmize.com](http://hotelmize.com)), travel and hospitality companies often underestimate this group of travelers, thinking they are not interested in traveling. Meanwhile, for 43% of the Generation Z, travel remains a top priority. Projections show that 72% of them are planning or considering spending money on a big trip in 2022 and 2023, while the figure is 68% among Generation Y, 60% among Generation X and 51% among Baby Boomers (Travel Perk, 2022). More than half of the Z's choose to travel abroad, while 37% plan to vacation locally. According to Condor Ferries (2021), 40% of them travel to relax, and for 65% of this generation, "traveling and seeing the world" is the most important way to spend money (Telus International, 2021).

Generation Z is more likely to personalize their own experience with a company or brand by engaging on social media compared to Millennials. As digital natives, they expect brands to have no problem identifying their preferences. 90% of Generation Z travelers confirmed that they make international travel decisions specifically through social media (Expedia, 2018), and nearly 60% of them use smartphones for inspiration and exploration (Mandich, 2021). According to the European Travel Commission (2020), it is the smartphone that is the most important device for Gen Z. They use it to search for deals, make reservations, or cancel trips.

Gen Z individuals are also more likely than earlier generations to choose sustainable travel options (Expedia, 2018). 56% say they would like to stay in ecological or environmentally friendly accommodations, and 60% look for environmentally friendly transportation options when they arrive at a destination (Telus International, 2021). Although, perhaps surprisingly, the Z's value luxury far more than Generation Y. However, this applies to accommodation, not travel. Thus, they prefer hotels with higher standards (4-5 stars) but juxtaposed with the relatively low cost of a flight (European Travel Commission, 2020). This is because they view



the flight as getting from A to B and not part of the travel experience. Meanwhile, quality accommodation is an opportunity to create experiences and, subsequently, share them with peers. More than half of Gen Z's (54%), while 48% of Millennials, state they are willing to pay a higher price for using a travel provider that demonstrates environmental responsibility (Telus International, 2021).

## 5. Design of wellbeing offerings for Generation Y and Z

In order to enable building a positive travel experience for generations Y and Z, it is first and foremost necessary to change the way people think about the entire travel process. The table shows the general characteristics of generations Y and Z, summarising the content of the previous sections.

**Table 3.**

*Millennials and GenZ characteristics*

Generation Y (Millennial Generation)	Generation Z (Post-millennials, GenZ or iGeneration)
They are creators and early adopters of new trends, used to new technologies, optimistic, non-linear thinkers, innovative in problem solving.	
Born between the eighties and the start of the new millennium.	Born at the beginning of the new millennium.
Defined by the internet and increasingly globally connected world.	Highly sophisticated media and computer environment is something this generation experiences as a normal state.
Optimistic persons, social, open to changes and have high expectations from themselves and others. They are more entrepreneurial, realistic, have a shorter attention span and higher expectations than previous generations.	Tend to be more individualistic, less focused, better multi-taskers, entrepreneurial, more globally oriented with higher expectations.
Generation Y and Z are more likely to explore less visited destinations, while they are more than ever characterized as digital nomad population (they tend to use digital technology). They prefer to travel to a different world region, for a longer period.	

Source: Scott, 2008; Postolov, Sopova, Iliev, 2017; PrincetonOne, 2017; Lundin, 2018; Beall, 2017.

As Anne Dimon, president of the Wellness Tourism Association, said, "Travelers seeking empowerment or wanting to start living healthier will have a specific goal in mind, whether it's learning how to become more mindful or finding new ways to sleep better, and pursuing that goal will lead to a niche experience."

Thus, the first step in designing a wellbeing offering is to understand the consumer behavior characteristic of each generation. Next, it is necessary to identify the motives for their travel. In research done in three international projects on wellbeing tourism, carried out between 2016 and 2022 under the Interreg South Baltic Program and under the auspices of the Swedish Institute, the following target groups were identified:

- Peace of Minds - tourists in this group are mainly well-educated, middle-aged people, often working in large corporations, who want to slow down and focus on seeking their inner self while on vacation. They want to feel the harmony of body and mind through, among other things, light physical activities, mental relaxation (meditation or yoga), organic food and natural ways of healing and relaxation.
- Curious explorers - are tourists who love to be active outdoors and enjoying amazing experiences. Wellbeing for them is a sense of pleasure in discovering new places, and spending leisure time in nature. They are interested in everything that is new and unexpected in nature. They prefer local products and services, so instead of going to restaurants known from guidebooks, they will choose small establishments while observing local communities, and on vacation they will choose walking, biking, paddling, sailing, bird- or star watching, etc. They are equally interested in experiencing modern and traditional lifestyles, food, and local culture.
- Sustainable idealists - these tourists care about the environment at home and on vacation. They use eco-friendly cosmetics, cleaning products and fabrics, etc. They do not like to buy products and prefer investing in experiences. Thus, they choose places that emphasize sustainability. They try to avoid traveling by airplane, and instead choose train and other public transportation, or better yet, eco-friendly transportation. They are willing to pay more for sustainable products.

In addition, wellbeing tourists may also include so-called "cultural rechargers", i.e., people who seek quiet to indulge in reading books, relaxation exercises and observing local people. They want to spend their free time in nature, prefer local cuisine and learning about local customs. The second, optional group is "luxury yin-yangs". They travel to faraway places to taste exotic life, new foods, indulge in luxury spas, and want their senses to be "pampered".

Despite their young age, generations Y and Z value exploring local cultures and traditions, non-obvious excursions and traveling with friends. So, the choice of travel destinations for them ranges from a vacation in a not-so-popular place to learn about local customs, to picking fruit in an orchard, hiking in the mountains, experiencing forest bathing, visiting heritage tourist attractions, a culinary or mindfulness vacation, or a luxury spa.

From their accommodations to their experiences at every stage of their trip to their return home, Y and Z tourists want to feel relaxed and while relaxing, nourish not only their body and mind, but also their soul.

Research indicates that young people manifest a strong desire for a simpler life. Surveys conducted among Polish representatives of Generation Z have shown that the concept of work-life balance is close to their hearts. Implementing measures to gain and maintain mental balance positively affect their vacation time (Nieżurawska, Gałaś, 2022).

The survey results show that for the youngest generation, flexibility at work and during vacations is very important. Thus, it is worthwhile to extend their vacation time instead of accumulating all the attractions in a few days or on a weekend. Another important motivator

for Generation Z is health and beauty programs. In contrast, discounts and loyalty programs, family picnics, or free tickets to tourist attractions, etc., are irrelevant or minimally relevant (Nieżurawska, Gałaś, 2022).

Given the needs of the two generations surveyed, it is critical to accommodate them in stylish, fun and smart places, such as boutique hotels or apartments from AirB&B apps. It is also important to have a good internet connection on site and to use smart technology in as many places as possible. Especially since young people, often combine business travel with leisure, or conversely, leisure travel with business travel, which is referred to as "bleisure travel." Although 37% of Generation Z worry that technology is undermining their ability to maintain strong interpersonal relationships and social competence (Tala et al., 2011).

65% of Gen Z respondents say they would rather go on a dream vacation than buy a new car. Experiences matter! The essence of any experience is the so-called USPs - the differentiators of the offering and the way messages about them are communicated (short video content, opportunities to engage users, and even creating a sense of FOMO (Fear-of-Missing-Out - literally: fear of missing out on something, the term refers to people who are afraid that not having access to the Internet might cause them to miss some important information or event). Since Gen Z follows new experiences, any ideas from wellbeing hosts about organizing special theme nights, exclusive events and other non-obvious activities are the best differentiators on offer.

If a travel service host does not actively promote itself on social media, it is potentially missing an opportunity to reach a growing market with disposable income. For both Generation Y and Z, reviews are key. 68% of Gen Z read at least three reviews before making their first online purchase, so following up on guest reviews is key. 63% of Generation Y representatives admit that recommendations from friends are the most reliable source of knowledge for them. This is due to the fact that they do not have time to invent interesting deals, among the many on the market. Without recommendations or reviews, these generations are unlikely to go to a place they find interesting and noteworthy. In the case of publicly visible bad reviews, the chances are even lower - no matter how good a company's marketing campaigns are. In the case of Generation Y, inviting influencers to stay for free and then having them promote a place, service or wellbeing product will gain their followers. For Generation Z, it is not the influencers that are important, but rather the natural ambassadors (opinion leaders). 90% of Millennials and Gen Z say that social media influences international travel decisions, but the same principles apply to local attractions. Instagram, Youtube, Twitter and TikTok are used most often to find inspiration about travel (Travel & Tourism, 2020).

For Generation Y and Z, mobile-friendly bookings are extremely important. This is because young people are not as savvy as other guests who grew up with traditional booking methods such as phone and email.

Finding new experiences is a huge part of Generation Z's travel experience. As more and more of this generation is ready to reinvent their own country, there has never been a better time to promote "staying put." Generation Z places a high value on physical and mental health (wellbeing). While the traditional gym is still popular, other activities such as meditation, yoga, walking, or hiking are helping to keep this generation on track.

Moving away from the issue of services, it is worth focusing on the strategy of designing new products for these generations. Millennials and Generation Z view shopping in a very different way than previous generations. For them, it means more than just physically acquiring an item. When buying items, they expect novelty, surprise, and personalization. Products should not only be original, aesthetically pleasing, but also respond to their individual, and unique needs. Uniqueness is highly valued, which is why Millennials and Gen Z's choose products from limited collections or personalized products. Moreover, these two generations are growing up with an awareness of climate change, so they are likely to focus more on sustainable, ethical, inclusive, and responsible travel. 72% of these Gen Y and Z representatives say they are more likely to buy from companies that contribute to social causes than others.

They pay attention to what's behind the brand - whether production is not harmful to the environment and whether products are supplied by local manufacturers. They value history and provenance, and the path the products have taken before they land on the shelves in the store is important. That's why wellbeing products fit perfectly into this philosophy. Young people care about the planet and sustainability and are more likely to buy from places that adhere to the same ideals. In fact, 73% of Generation Z shoppers said they would be willing to pay 10% more for sustainable products.

## **6. Discussion**

The article presents the concept of wellbeing tourism along with a description of the target groups that were identified during the project work on the implementation of the concept in the South Baltic region from 2016-2022 by a group of researchers, representatives of regional authorities and non-profit tourism organizations from Sweden, Lithuania, Germany, Denmark and Poland. They pointed out how this type of tourism focused on supporting localism and nurturing a region's cultural and environmental heritage, as well as promoting activities to improve wellbeing, exploded during the pandemic and made a shift in consumer attitudes toward more sustainable practices. This is all the more so because the current times, full of uncertainty and threats, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic, have often led many people to chronic fatigue, feelings of loneliness, fear and doubt, and even mental health problems.

Generation Y and Z, described in the article, were more vulnerable than other generations to the effects of lockdown, and thus the severance of social ties, due to their age. Researchers have no doubt that this condition can be improved by taking care of one's wellbeing (Cloninger, 2006). By regaining composure, accepting one's limitations, and dealing with fears and conflicts, people can learn to flourish and be more self-controlled. And by improving mindfulness, they can learn to work better with each other.

Domestic travel spending is estimated to reach \$1.1 trillion a year by the end of 2022, exceeding pre-pandemic levels by 11.3% (Thomaselli, 2021). This includes so-called "revenge travel," the re-booking of vacation destinations and types of tourism that were previously interrupted by the pandemic. This is the main motivator cited by 70% of tourists. However, the pandemic and the uncertainty of the current times have caused tourists' attitudes to change. 87% of consumers want to travel more sustainably, and 68% are actively seeking sustainable travel brands for their upcoming trips (Elliot, 2020). This just goes to show that tailored offerings aimed at improving people's wellbeing is the direction of the future. These changes in consumer values and behavior will define the coming months and years.

The impact of the wellbeing concept on travel culture and spending is profound - and how each company in the industry responds to these trends will be critical to its success.

## 7. Conclusion

The purpose of the article was to present the consumer behavior of two generations - Y and Z - in the tourism market and how the concept of wellbeing tourism fits into the needs and expectations of these groups.

In order to fill this research gap, this study analyzes how the described concept is defined in consumer research and how it is used in the tourism industry. First, based on previous literature, the similarities and differences between wellbeing tourism and related types of tourism are examined. And second, based on qualitative data from reports and analyses produced by wellbeing tourism projects, its supply side was examined. The literature review presents a framework for health-related consumption, traces differences in attitudes about tourism among younger generations, and discusses wellbeing tourism in the Baltic Sea region.

It was pointed out that the defining characteristic of the audiences studied is that they make decisions based on their values and experiences. These elements drive the decisions of these groups, as more than eight in ten Generation Z and Millennials are looking for unique experiences on their next trip (Expedia, 2018). The prioritization of experiences over the purchase of material things by these generations is just one of the opportunities facing the travel industry.

Generation Y and Z travelers are still discovering their consumption preferences, which is a huge opportunity for the travel industry, and learning about their expectations and gaining a better vision of what a travel offering should be based on will go a long way toward achieving their satisfaction.

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