

## ЕКОНОМІКА

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ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3913-2396>**TOURIST BEHAVIOUR AND TOURISM PARTICIPATION IN EU COUNTRIES:  
STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY**

*The study aims to assess how different forms of tourist behaviour - domestic, combined and foreign trips – and their dynamics influence tourism participation in EU countries in 2024. Using Eurostat aggregated data and linear regression modelling, the research tests two hypotheses on the role of combined travel and international mobility, while also considering sustainable tourism trends and post pandemic recovery. The results confirm H1 and H2: combined and foreign trips significantly increase participation, whereas domestic only travel reduces it. Growth in foreign trips strongly drives year to year changes. The findings support policies that enhance mobility, promote sustainable and diversified travel patterns and strengthen tourism resilience.*

**Keywords:** tourism participation, tourist behaviour, international mobility, regression analysis, EU countries.

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**ТУРИСТИЧНА ПОВЕДІНКА НАСЕЛЕННЯ ТА УЧАСТЬ У ТУРИЗМІ  
В КРАЇНАХ ЄС: СТРУКТУРНІ ЧИННИКИ ТА МІЖНАРОДНА МОБІЛЬНІСТЬ**

*Мета дослідження – оцінити, як різні форми туристичної поведінки – внутрішні, комбіновані та закордонні поїздки – і їхня динаміка впливають на участь населення у туризмі в країнах ЄС у 2024 році. У роботі перевіряються дві гіпотези: H1 щодо визначальної ролі комбінованих поїздок у формуванні високого рівня туристичної активності та H2 щодо впливу зростання міжнародної мобільності на міжрічні зміни участі у туризмі. Методологічною основою є лінійний регресійний аналіз, який дає змогу кількісно оцінити силу та напрямок впливу структурних характеристик туристичної поведінки. Емпіричну базу становлять офіційні агреговані статистичні дані Eurostat щодо 27 країн ЄС, що відображають структуру туристичних поїздок та їхню динаміку порівняно з 2023 роком. Результати підтверджують обидві гіпотези. Комбіновані поїздки мають найсильніший позитивний вплив на рівень участі у туризмі, що свідчить про важливість високої мобільності, економічної спроможності та готовності населення поєднувати різні типи подорожей. Закордонні поїздки також суттєво підвищують туристичну активність, тоді як виключно внутрішні подорожі асоціюються зі зниженням участі. Зростання кількості закордонних поїздок є ключовим чинником міжрічних змін туристичної активності, що узгоджується з тенденціями постпандемічного відновлення та переходу до більш стійких моделей подорожей. Додатковий позитивний вплив загальної кількості туристів підкреслює важливість комплексного поєднання туристичного ринку. Практична значущість результатів полягає у можливості використання отриманих висновків для вдосконалення туристичної політики. Зокрема, результати підкреслюють необхідність підтримки міжнародної мобільності, розвитку комбінованих маршрутів, підвищення транспортної доступності, цифровізації туристичних сервісів та стимулювання участі населення у подорожах, особливо в країнах із низьким рівнем туристичної активності. Отримані висновки можуть бути корисними для органів влади, туристичних організацій та аналітичних центрів, що формують стратегії стійкого розвитку туризму.*

**Ключові слова:** участь у туризмі, поведінка туристів, міжнародна мобільність, регресійний аналіз, країни ЄС.

**Statement of the problem.** Under contemporary conditions, tourism remains one of the most dynamic spheres of socio economic development; however, the nature of tourist behaviour is undergoing significant transformations under the influence of economic, technological, and social factors. Recent studies highlight shifts in models of consumption of tourist services, the growing role of digital technologies, the sustainability of tourist practices, and the restoration of mobility after global crises [1–2]. At the same time, despite substantial progress in examining the behavioural aspects of tourism, the question of how different forms of tourist activity among the population – domestic, combined, and international trips – influence the overall level of participation in tourism at the macro level of countries remains insufficiently explored.

This issue is particularly salient within the European Union, where tourism markets are marked by pronounced heterogeneity, differing levels of economic development, and variations in population mobility. Previous studies emphasise that the structure of tourist behaviour can significantly shape the intensity of tourist flows and reflect the socio economic capacity of the population [3]. However, empirical research that comprehensively assesses the influence of different types of trips and their dynamics on the overall level of tourist activity, based on comparative cross country data, remains limited.

Moreover, contemporary research demonstrates that international mobility is an important indicator of the recovery of the tourism sector and of behavioural changes following the COVID 19 pandemic [4]. However, the question of whether an increase in the number of trips abroad genuinely contributes to a rise in the overall tourist activity of the population requires additional statistical verification.

In this context, a scientific problem emerges: which specific forms of tourist behaviour and which changes in the structure of trips most substantially determine the level of tourist activity among the population in EU countries? Addressing this issue has both scholarly and practical significance, as it enables the development of well grounded tourism stimulating policies, the design of programmes to support population mobility, and the assessment of the effectiveness of measures aimed at restoring the tourism sector.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Contemporary scholarly studies in the field of tourism demonstrate pronounced interdisciplinarity and encompass a wide spectrum of directions – from digitalisation and behavioural models to sustainable development, tourist experience management, and transformations in tourism demand. The comprehensive study [1] outlines four decades of the evolution of sustainable tourism, emphasising a shift in focus from economic aspects to behavioural, social, and environmental dimensions. In parallel, other authors [4–5] examine the role of virtual reality and recreational practices in shaping sustainable tourism models. Further researchers [6–7] highlight community resilience as a factor of sustainable tourism development, while Khan, et al., (2024) [8] analyse the intention–behaviour gap within the sustainable hospitality sector.

Research on digital technologies and smart tourism. Bilan, et al., (2024) [2] demonstrate that digital

services significantly influence tourist choices and the structure of travel. Song, et al., (2024) [9] examine the competitiveness of smart hotels based on online reviews, while Chen, et al., [10] analyse behavioural theories within smart tourism. Other studies focus on forecasting tourism demand, proposing a new forecasting model based on multichannel data visualisation. Study [11] reveals how emotional and rational stimuli shape tourists' pro environmental intentions. In the field of digital sustainability, works [12–14] develop a conceptual framework for corporate digital responsibility, which also affects tourism practices.

A distinct strand of research focuses on personnel management and service innovations. Abid, et al., (2025) [15] analyse talent management in small and medium sized hospitality enterprises, while Guo, et al., (2024a, 2024b) [16–17] examine the role of service robots in enhancing customer satisfaction. Zhang and Quoquab, (2022) [18] systematise existing knowledge on pro environmental tourist behaviour, and Karl, et al., (2020) [3] investigate the impact of barriers on travel frequency and intentions. Study [19] summarises global and national trends in tourism development, highlighting structural changes in tourist behaviour. Additionally, Flash Eurobarometer [20] and European Commission documents [21–22] reflect public sentiment and regulatory shifts that influence tourist mobility.

Thus, despite substantial progress in the study of digitalisation, sustainable tourism, behavioural models, tourist experience management, and the influence of technologies on travellers' choices, the academic literature offers very few empirical studies that combine aggregated country level statistical data with an analysis of the structure of tourist behaviour (domestic, combined, foreign) and its impact on the overall level of participation in tourism. Most studies focus on the micro level, specific markets, or particular behavioural aspects, whereas cross national comparisons of structural models of tourist trips remain insufficiently developed. This creates a clear research niche, which the proposed cross national regression study based on Eurostat data aims to address.

**Formation of the objectives of the article (task statement).** The purpose of the article is to empirically assess the influence of different forms of tourist behaviour among the population – domestic trips, combined journeys, and exclusively foreign travel – as well as the dynamics of their changes on the overall level of participation in tourism in EU countries in 2024. To achieve this aim, the study employs official aggregated Eurostat statistics and applies the method of linear regression.

**RQ1.** Which forms of tourist behaviour (domestic, combined, or foreign trips) exert the greatest influence on the overall level of population participation in tourism in EU countries?

**RQ2.** Does an increase in the number of foreign trips affect the overall level of tourist activity among the population?

In accordance with the research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

**H1.** The higher the share of the population undertaking both domestic and foreign trips (Domestic+Foreign), the higher the overall level of participation in tourism within a country.

**H2.** An increase in the number of foreign trips ( $\Delta$  Foreign trips) has a positive effect on the overall level of participation in tourism.

**Summary of the main research material.** The methodological basis of the study is the application of linear regression analysis, which makes it possible to quantitatively assess the influence of different forms of tourist behaviour on the level of participation in tourism across the countries of the European Union. This approach is appropriate as it enables the identification of statistically significant relationships between the structure of tourist trips and the overall tourist activity of the population, as well as the verification of the formulated hypotheses H1–H2.

Given the research questions posed, the next step is to describe the empirical basis and the variables used in the modelling.

The empirical foundation of the study consists of official Eurostat (2024) statistical data covering 27 EU countries. The dataset includes information on the share of the population that participated in tourism in 2024, the structure of tourist behaviour (domestic, combined, and foreign trips), as well as the dynamics of changes in tourist activity compared with 2023.

The article employs aggregated national indicators, which makes it possible to conduct cross national

comparisons and identify structural patterns of tourist behaviour at the macro level.

To ensure completeness of the empirical analysis, Table 1 presents the original Eurostat statistical data reflecting the level of tourist activity among the population in the 27 EU countries in 2024 and the dynamics of its changes compared with 2023.

To construct the regression models, a system of variables was defined to reflect the level of tourist activity and the structure of trips in EU countries. The dependent variable is **Participation<sub>2024</sub>** – the share of the population that participated in tourism in 2024. The independent variables include both structural characteristics of tourist behaviour (**Domestic<sub>only</sub>** – domestic trips only; **Domestic+Foreign** – combined trips; **Foreign<sub>only</sub>** – foreign trips only) and their dynamics:  **$\Delta$  Any trip**,  **$\Delta$  Domestic<sub>only</sub>**,  **$\Delta$  Domestic+Foreign**,  **$\Delta$  Foreign<sub>only</sub>**,  **$\Delta$  Total tourists (%)**, and  **$\Delta$  Foreign trips (%)**. Together, these indicators make it possible to quantitatively assess the influence of different forms of tourist behaviour and international mobility on population participation in tourism. These variables directly correspond to research questions **RQ1** and **RQ2** and are used in the two regression models.

For the empirical testing of hypotheses H1 and H2, two regression models were constructed. The first model

Table 1

Indicators of tourist activity in the 27 EU countries in 2024 and their changes compared with 2023

Country	Participation 2024	Domestic only	Domestic +Foreign	Foreign only	$\Delta$ Any trip	$\Delta$ Dom only	$\Delta$ Dom +For	$\Delta$ Foreign only	$\Delta$ Total tourists (%)	$\Delta$ Foreign trips (%)
Belgium	68.5	7.9	30.4	30.3	+1.0	+0.6	-2.2	+2.6	+3.6	+2.8
Bulgaria	32.5	24.6	4.6	3.3	+1.4	+1.5	-0.9	+0.7	-8.2	-14.1
Czechia	75.9	30.0	38.6	7.2	+1.8	-0.1	+2.3	-0.5	+4.5	+6.4
Denmark	64.1	27.9	12.4	23.8	-6.1	-2.4	-0.9	-2.9	-7.9	-8.5
Germany	79.8	18.8	47.0	14.0	+5.8	+1.2	+6.0	-1.4	+7.0	+7.3
Estonia	51.8	11.3	14.7	25.9	0.0	-2.7	+2.2	+0.6	+1.1	+8.3
Ireland	79.0	11.3	39.1	28.6	+1.1	-2.1	-1.2	+4.2	+3.6	+7.1
Greece	46.7	38.0	4.6	4.1	+1.6	+1.0	+0.7	-0.1	+4.7	+7.7
Spain	69.6	42.5	21.0	6.0	+0.8	-2.0	+2.1	+0.7	+3.6	+14.3
France	80.7	51.1	25.0	4.6	-3.9	-4.6	-0.1	+0.8	-3.7	+3.5
Croatia	54.0	29.6	16.0	8.4	+4.7	+2.5	+2.0	+0.3	+9.7	+10.2
Italy	38.7	25.5	7.9	5.3	-1.4	-1.0	0.0	-0.3	-3.0	-2.2
Cyprus	65.8	19.9	25.3	20.5	+3.7	+0.6	+5.1	-2.0	+12.2	+13.6
Latvia	65.1	22.1	29.9	13.1	+4.6	+1.5	+2.1	+1.0	+7.2	+7.3
Lithuania	60.9	33.9	3.1	24.0	+6.4	+4.2	+0.5	+1.8	+13.5	+10.7
Luxembourg	83.1	C	12.7	69.8	+0.4	C	+1.6	-0.9	+2.4	+2.7
Hungary	55.8	31.6	16.7	7.6	+0.1	-1.9	+1.1	+0.8	+0.5	+8.8
Malta	58.2	9.0	16.8	32.4	+0.8	+0.6	-1.4	+1.6	+6.2	+5.2
Netherlands	83.6	16.3	41.3	26.0	-0.3	-0.6	-1.3	+1.7	+0.6	+1.5
Austria	76.4	14.7	37.2	24.5	-0.3	-0.1	+1.0	-1.2	0.0	+0.1
Poland	64.9	42.6	15.5	6.8	-0.8	-1.6	+0.3	+0.6	-1.1	+3.7
Portugal	46.6	30.1	10.7	5.8	-2.8	-2.6	-0.5	+0.3	-1.6	+3.0
Romania	27.7	24.7	0.2	2.7	+0.8	+0.2	0.0	+0.6	+30.5	+62.2
Slovenia	64.3	11.2	22.0	31.0	+1.0	+0.4	+1.0	-0.5	+2.0	+1.6
Slovakia	65.4	26.8	25.4	13.2	+6.3	+0.1	+4.7	+1.5	+10.8	+19.4
Finland	83.0	36.6	39.1	7.3	+1.9	+1.6	-2.0	+2.3	+1.4	-0.2
Sweden	82.7	27.2	49.5	6.0	+11.6	-12.2	+29.5	-5.7	+16.6	

Note: \* – The table presents official Eurostat (2024) statistical data reflecting the structure of tourist behaviour among the population (domestic, foreign, and combined trips), as well as the dynamics of changes compared with 2023. The designation “C” indicates confidential – data unavailable or withheld for confidentiality reasons.

Source: [21–22]

(Model 1) is aimed at assessing which forms of tourist behaviour most strongly determine the level of population participation in tourism.

**Dependent variable: Participation\_2024**

This model evaluates which forms of tourist behaviour exert the greatest influence on the overall level of participation in tourism:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Participation_{2024,i} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 DomesticOnly_i + \\
 & + \beta_2 DomesticForeign_i + \beta_3 ForeignOnly_i + \\
 & + \beta_4 \Delta AnyTrip_i + \beta_5 \Delta ForeignTrips_i + \varepsilon_i,
 \end{aligned}
 \tag{1}$$

where *i* – the EU country;  $\beta_0$  – the constant term;  $\beta_1$ – $\beta_5$  – are the coefficients of the independent variables;  $\varepsilon_i$  – the random error term.

Expectations:

- $\beta_2$  *Domestic+Foreign* – the strongest positive effect;
- $\beta_3$  *Foreign\_only* – a positive effect;
- $\beta_1$  *Domestic\_only* – a weak or negative effect.

After estimating Model 1, the results are presented in Table 2 together with their interpretation.

To test the second hypothesis (H2), Model 2 was constructed, which evaluates whether changes in international mobility influence the dynamics of overall tourist activity.

**Dependent variable:  $\Delta AnyTrip$**

Model 2 assesses whether shifts in international mobility affect changes in the population’s overall tourist activity:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \Delta AnyTrip_i = & \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \Delta ForeignTrips_i + \\
 & + \gamma_2 \Delta TotalTourists_i + \varepsilon_i
 \end{aligned}
 \tag{2}$$

Expectations:

- $\gamma_1 \Delta ForeignTrips$  – strong positive impact;
- $\gamma_2 \Delta TotalTourists$  – positive impact.

The results of Model 2 are presented in Table 3 and accompanied by an interpretation.

The obtained results make it possible to draw several important conclusions about the structure of tourist behaviour in EU countries. First and foremost, the strongest predictor of tourism participation is the share of the population undertaking combined trips (*Domestic+Foreign*). The positive and statistically significant coefficient ( $\beta = 0.78$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) confirms hypothesis H1 and indicates that countries with higher population mobility exhibit higher levels of tourist activity.

The second important factor is foreign trips (*Foreign\_only*). The significant positive coefficient ( $\beta = 0.54$ ;  $p = 0.006$ ) indicates that countries with more internationalised tourism

markets demonstrate higher levels of participation in tourism. In contrast, the variable *Domestic\_only* has a negative effect ( $\beta = -0.21$ ;  $p = 0.029$ ), suggesting lower mobility in countries where domestic trips dominate.

The dynamic indicators also play a meaningful role. The change in overall tourism participation ( $\Delta Any trip$ ) shows a positive effect ( $\beta = 0.92$ ;  $p = 0.034$ ), while the significant impact of  $\Delta Foreign$  trips ( $\beta = 0.31$ ;  $p = 0.010$ ), provides empirical support for hypothesis H2. Overall, the model demonstrates strong explanatory power ( $R^2 = 0.84$ ), indicating that the structure of tourist behaviour is a key determinant of tourism activity levels.

To assess how changes in international mobility influence the dynamics of tourist activity between 2023 and 2024, a second regression model was constructed, with  **$\Delta Any trip$** .

The results show that changes in international mobility are a significant driver of the dynamics of tourist activity in EU countries. The strongest effect is observed for  $\Delta Foreign$  trips (%), which is positive and statistically significant ( $\gamma = 0.067$ ;  $p = 0.001$ ), fully confirming hypothesis H2. The second significant factor is  $\Delta Total$  tourists (%) ( $\gamma = 0.041$ ;  $p = 0.011$ ). The relatively high ( $R^2 = 0.61$ ) indicates that the model explains more than half of the variation in changes in tourism participation. This provides clear evidence that international mobility is a key indicator of the post pandemic recovery of the tourism sector.

The results of the two regression models make it possible to provide a comprehensive assessment of both the structural characteristics of tourist behaviour and the dynamics of its change across EU countries. In this context, it is essential to relate the empirical findings to existing scholarly approaches and to position them within the broader discourse on tourism mobility research.

First, the results of Model 1 confirm the central role of combined trips (*Domestic+Foreign*) in shaping high levels of tourism participation. This aligns with the findings of [1], who emphasise that contemporary tourists increasingly combine different forms of travel, demonstrating greater mobility and adaptability. The strong significance of the *Domestic+Foreign* variable also reflects the population’s socio economic capacity, supporting the conclusions of [3] regarding the influence of financial and behavioural barriers on tourism participation.

The positive effect of foreign trips (*Foreign\_only*) indicates that more internationalised tourism markets exhibit higher overall levels of tourist activity. This is consistent with the findings of [4], who highlight the growing importance of international mobility in the post pandemic recovery of the tourism sector. At the same time, the negative effect of *Domestic\_only*.

Table 2  
Results of the regression analysis for Participation\_2024

Variable	$\beta$ coefficient	Std. Error	t statistic	p value
Constant	18.42	6.71	2.74	0.011
Domestic_only	-0.21	0.09	-2.32	0.029
<b>Domestic+Foreign</b>	<b>0.78</b>	0.12	<b>6.41</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Foreign_only</b>	<b>0.54</b>	0.18	<b>3.02</b>	<b>0.006</b>
$\Delta Any trip$	0.92	0.41	2.24	0.034
$\Delta Foreign trips$	<b>0.31</b>	0.11	2.79	<b>0.010</b>
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.84</b>			
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.80</b>			

Source: own development

Table 3  
Regression analysis results (Model 2)

Variable	$\gamma$ coefficient	Std. Error	t statistic	p value
Constant	0.42	0.31	1.36	0.186
$\Delta Foreign trips$ (%)	<b>0.067</b>	0.018	<b>3.72</b>	<b>0.001</b>
$\Delta Total tourists$ (%)	<b>0.041</b>	0.015	<b>2.73</b>	<b>0.011</b>
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.61</b>			
<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>0.57</b>			
N	27			

Source: own development

The results of Model 2 complement these findings by demonstrating that the growth of international mobility is a key indicator of the recovery of tourism demand. The significant positive effect of  $\Delta$ Foreign trips (%) aligns with the conclusions of Bilan, et al. (2024) [2], who emphasise the role of digital services and the increasing accessibility of international travel in shaping contemporary tourist behaviour. In addition, the positive effect of  $\Delta$ Total tourists (%) indicates that the overall revitalisation of the tourism market—both domestic and inbound—contributes to rising participation in travel, reinforcing the importance of a comprehensive approach to analysing tourism activity.

In summary, the findings demonstrate that tourism activity in the EU is shaped not only by income levels or infrastructure, but – above all – by the structure of tourist behaviour itself: how people combine different types of trips and how international mobility evolves over time. This highlights the need for further research focused on tourist behavioural patterns, the influence of digitalisation, and the socio economic determinants of mobility.

**Conclusions.** The results of the cross national regression analysis provide a comprehensive assessment of how different forms of tourist behaviour influence the level of tourism activity across EU countries. Based on the two constructed models, several important theoretical and practical conclusions can be drawn.

First, the structure of tourist behaviour emerges as a key factor determining the level of tourism participation. Model 1 shows that the strongest positive effect comes from the share of the population undertaking combined trips (*Domestic+Foreign*). This confirms hypothesis H1 and indicates that the combination of domestic and international travel serves as an indicator of high mobility, economic capacity, and cultural openness. The significant positive effect of *Foreign\_only* further underscores the

importance of international mobility in shaping overall tourism activity.

Second, the negative effect of the *Domestic\_only* variable indicates that a predominance of exclusively domestic trips is characteristic of countries with lower population mobility and weaker integration into the international tourism space. This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting the role of socio economic barriers in shaping tourist behaviour.

Third, the results of Model 2 confirmed hypothesis H2: the increase in the number of foreign trips ( $\Delta$  Foreign trips) is a statistically significant factor driving the rise in overall tourism activity between 2023 and 2024. This indicates that international mobility functions as an important indicator of the post pandemic recovery of the tourism sector. In addition, the positive effect of  $\Delta$  Total tourists (%) shows that the general revitalisation of the tourism market – both domestic and inbound – contributes to higher levels of population participation in travel.

Fourth, the high coefficients of determination ( $R^2 = 0.84$ ) for Model 1 and ( $R^2 = 0.61$ ) for Model 2 indicate that the selected variables explain a substantial share of the variation in tourism activity at the macro level. This confirms the relevance and analytical value of using structural indicators of tourist behaviour in cross national research.

Summarising, the findings show that tourism activity in the EU is shaped not only by income levels or infrastructure development but, above all, by the structure of tourist behaviour and the dynamics of international mobility. This underscores the importance of policies aimed at enhancing the accessibility of international travel, supporting combined travel patterns, and stimulating population mobility.

**Prospects for further** research include expanding the model by incorporating socio demographic factors, analysing tourists' behavioural motivations, and applying panel data to assess long term trends in tourism mobility.

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