

SUMMARY

Assessing Sustainable Travel Behavior and Carbon Footprint Climate Impact: a Study of Tourists' Transportation Choices in Budapest Hostels

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In this research, I aimed to assess the carbon footprint impacts associated with tourists' transportation choices when traveling to Budapest and to evaluate the potential of reducing these emissions through more sustainable alternatives. By examining emissions produced by various modes of transport, comparing the carbon footprint of air travel versus rail travel, and assessing tourists' awareness of their environmental impact, I focused to identify an effective way to enhance sustainable practices within the tourism industry, helping to ensure that tourism can be both enjoyable and responsible. This study contributes to the expanding collection of research on carbon footprint and sustainable travel, offering insights into how transportation choices specifically affect carbon emissions within the tourism sector. Focused on tourists staying in a hostel in Budapest, the study adopted a questioner to collect the data on their transportation choices, level of awareness on environmental issues and willingness to embrace more sustainable practices. This study concentrated on analyzing air and rail travel as these reflect different levels of carbon footprints. One of the challenges was the availability of precise data collected regarding to the distance traveled by the participants of the questionnaire as emissions changed according to the distance and particular travel routes. The research findings revealed a marked preference for air travel among tourists arriving in Budapest, consistent with trends noted in the literature review, which underscores the increasing demand for aviation. For visitors arriving from outside Europe, air travel remains the most practical and sometimes only realistic option due to the significant distances involved. While trains are considerably more environmentally friendly, their use is limited by geographical and logistical restrictions, particularly for long-distance and intercontinental journeys. This reliance on air travel for long-

haul trips, however, significantly amplifies the carbon footprint, as aviation generates considerably higher CO₂ emissions over extended distances than other forms of transport. By highlighting these patterns and preferences, this study emphasizes the need for promoting viable, lower-emission alternatives when possible and increasing awareness among travelers regarding the environmental impact of their travel choices.