

# MILLENNIUM TRAVELERS TOURISM CHOICES IN AN ERA OF GLOBAL THREATS OF TERRORIST ATTACKS – A CASE STUDY OF POLAND AND LITHUANIA

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## ABSTRACT

In the tourism sector, young tourists are considered to play an important part in its future development. The literature shows that Millennial travelers, representing the so-called Generation Y, will create about 50% of the total tourist sector in 2020. Millennials are more diverse as a group than non-Millennials and are more interested in international travel and having global cultural experiences. That Millennial travelers are more carefree, and, perhaps, therefore, more susceptible to various risks and threats, including terrorist attacks. The subject of the paper is young tourists from Poland and Lithuania and their choices regarding the tendency to travel and the choice a tourist destination. The aim is to assess the importance of travel costs and safety levels during the tourist decision-making process by the Millennium travelers from Poland and Lithuania in the context of terrorist threats existing in the world. This objective will be achieved through critical analysis of literature and empirical analysis of young tourists on the basis of a questionnaire survey carried out in Poland and Lithuania.

***Keywords: Millennium travelers, travel cost, safety level, terrorism threat***

## INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector has been seeing the influx of a new generation of tourists in the market [1],[2],[13]. The relevance of this phenomenon is supported by the increasing scientific research on this topic. The Millennial Travelers or Generation Y are people born between 1982 and 2002 [2]. In scientific literature, they are referred to as the future market [2].

Millennial Travelers area group of people who in the year 2020 will constitute about 50% of the tourism market [1]. Researchers raised the question, what distinctive characteristics they exhibit and what measures should therefore be used to target them and offer such tourism products which would meet their expectations (such factors, as ratio of price to safety). The challenge has become greater since the number of emergencies and crisis situations has grown worldwide in recent years. We also have had a growing number of tourist deaths caused by terrorist attacks in popular tourist destinations. For this reason, this challenge becomes even more important and requires multifaceted research. The subject of the research paper is young tourists from Poland and Lithuania, and

their choices regarding their tendency to travel and their choice of a tourist destination. The aim of the study is to assess the significance of travel costs and safety levels during the tourist decision-making process by the Millennium travelers from Poland and Lithuania in the context of the terrorist threats existing in the world. This objective will be achieved through critical analysis of literature. The empirical data analysis and its verification were carried out. Empirical analysis is based on the results of the survey research carried out in Poland and Lithuania among young tourists who belong to generation Y. To conduct the analysis, Statistical Program Statistica version 13 was used. To add, a statistical analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics (percentages, mode, median, mean, sum of ranks) and inferential statistics (Mann-Whitney U test and Chi-square independence test).

### MILLENNIAL TRAVELERS – WHO ARE THEY?

Pursuant to Strauss and Howe’s theory [11], a new unique generation of human nation emerges about every 20 years (Table 1).

*Table 1 Brief Overview of Current Generations in Tourism [11]*

Generation label	Approximate birth dates	Decision making	Earning and spending
Silent Generation	1925–1942	Barely active in the tourism market	Barely active in the tourism
Baby Boomers	1943–1960	Authority, brand, loyalty	Conservative, pay upfront
Generation X	1961–1981	Experts, information, brand switchers	Credit savvy, confident investors
Generation Y	1982–2002	Friends, little brand loyalty	Uncertain spenders, short-term wants, credit-dependent
Generation Z	2003 – 2012	Do not travel on their own and their travels depend on parents’ decisions	Depend on parents’ decisions
Generation Alfa	2013 –	Do not travel independently and their travels depend on their parents’ decisions	Depend on parents’ decisions

Each of the above listed generations is typical of a certain specific behavior pattern or model which affects not only their professional and personal life but also travelling. Table 2 lists characteristics of which travelers of Generation Y (the object of this article) are typical as well as their traveling peculiarities.

**Table 2** *Y-Generation Travelers Mapped against Generational Traits [11]*

Features	Explanation of feature
Travelling more often	Average number of trips taken has increased in the last 5 years
Exploring more destinations	Take more trips outside the local region and explore new areas of the world
Spending more money on travel	As a proportion of their income, spend more than any other
Booking more over the Internet	Early adopters of new travel technology
Experience hungry	Want a range of different experiences often involving everyday life and culture of places visited, including contact with local people
Information hungry	Consult a greater number of information sources to plan trips
Intrepid travelers	Are not deterred by problems such as terrorism, natural disasters and epidemics – mitigate these risks through information
Getting a lot out of their travel	Travel makes them want to travel more, serving as a stimulus to learn and develop, including developing greater cultural understanding

The Millennial generation is one of the largest generations in history – even larger than Baby Boomers [8]. Researchers are unanimous in stating that they are a group of tourists who willingly invest their time and money in travelling [8]. As stated, they see travelling not as an object luxury but as the natural law – their birthright [5].

Millennials are more diverse as a group than non-Millennials (Generations Baby Boomers and X), they are interested in international travel and global cultural experiences [1]. Research shows that most often they try to avoid traditional, mass and popular tourist routes, they do not stay at luxurious hotels, they can afford spending up to two months travelling [5]. These tourists are more open to novelties and are more interested in the environment which surrounds them while travelling as well as in people they meet while visiting foreign countries [2],[9]. Besides they are not familiar with pre-internet life or ruck-sacs!, smartphone ‘addicts’-free and fast WiFi–suffer from the Fear Of Being Offline (FOBO), likely to return later in life and word-of-mouth advertisers –opportunity and threat [7], they are looking for authentic word-of-mouth information, but not only from family and friends and mainly from anonymous people [3]. The main differences between the generations of Baby Boomers and X are the following: travel motivations, planning sources, preferred destinations and vacation activities [12]. As Morrison et al. [9] observe, they focus more on search of information on social networks and care about the opinion of a certain field of experts. They review about 10 sources on average until they decide to buy a travel, book a hotel, etc. [9],[14].

Some other differences can also be noticed in terms of comparison of this group of tourists and the previous generations. One of them is travel price. As Barton et al. [1]. put it, these tourists care about the price point as Millennials are less willing to pay more for travel. It is said that “they’ve discovered that travel doesn’t need to be complicated or expensive” [5].

As can be seen, the Millennial travelers have set new requirements for the tourism industry. Since it is one of the biggest generations coming to the tourism market, we must respond to their needs and meet their expectations.

### **MILLENNIAL TRAVELERS AND TRAVEL RISK**

The chosen tourist group travels more often and their travel geography expands (thus increasing the risk of facing crisis situations and emergencies during the travel). This leads to new challenges to persons who are responsible for the enlargement of the tourism sector. Millennial travelers are more aware of travel risks' associations with digital and technology tools [12]. However, as noted by Woods and Davis [13] "millennials are also more willing to trade personal information in return for discounts, better products or more targeted offers".

Barton et al. [1] hold the view that the Millennial travelers are not so cautious since they tend to share personal information online, such as brand preferences, where they live, household composition, loyalty status and numbers, age and general personal information, frequent destinations, preferred airports, personal hobbies. As a result, they might become the target of terrorist groups since it is very simple to collect a sufficient amount of information about them and to use it for planning attacks.

This group of tourists is more likely to behave in a different way when a potential danger arises. Whereas older generations tend to refrain from certain travels, young tourists travel according to the plan prepared in advance [4]. For this reason, they are often defined as brave tourists who regardless of anything travel abroad to gain some experience [6]. However, as research by Mura [10] demonstrates, young tourists "play with fear...but not too much". Additional risks and participation in emergencies give their travels the taste of venture and savor, however, to a certain limit.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The aim of the paper was to assess the significance of travel costs and safety levels during the tourist decision-making process by the Millennium travelers from Poland and Lithuania in the context of the terrorist threats existing in the world. As indicated in the literature review, both travel costs and safety level during a tourist trip are one of the most important factors determining the tendency of tourists to travel, and what is important in the context of our study, which tourist destination to choose. To determine the significance of these factors, a survey research was conducted among respondents from Poland and Lithuania aged 18-36. The survey questionnaire was conducted among students at the Faculty of the Economics and Management University of Szczecin in Poland (N=849) and at the Faculty of Public Governance Mykolas Romeris University in Lithuania (N=652), who accounted for 63.2% and 50.2% of the total number of people studying there, respectively. Only respondents who are tourists have been subject to the analysis, which was checked by asking respondents whether they travelled and how many

times a year. Demographic and travelling characteristics of the respondents are provided in Table 3.

**Table 3 Profiles of the samples**

Demographic and travelling characteristics		Country	
		Poland	Lithuania
Average Age	years	22.6	28.1
Gender (in %)	women	72.9	76.5
	men	27.1	23.5
Frequency of travelling (in %)	Less than once a year	7.5	11.8
	Once a year	16.8	29.1
	2- 3 times a year	42.8	39.4
	4 -7 times a year	20.6	14.0
	More than 8 times a year	12.2	5.7

The statistical package Statistica 13 was used for statistical analysis of the data. Descriptive statistics which is suitable for the Likert Scale was employed, namely, frequency expressed by means of percentage was used (ranging from 1=of no importance to 5=very important). Hypotheses for two independent samples were verified by applying nonparametric criteria of Mann-Whitney U test and Wilcoxon rank sum test. To compare the details of a few independent samples, Kruskal–Wallis test was applied. The statistical level of significance  $\alpha = 0.05$ , p value (Asymp. Sig.)  $\leq 0.05$  was chosen. The hypotheses were checked against the aim to find out whether the evaluation of significance of travel costs and safety level during the tourist decision-making process by the Millennium travelers depend on the country of studies (Poland and Lithuania), age, gender and frequency of travelling.

## RESULTS

First, it assessed how respondents evaluate the importance of factors determining their travel decision. As can be seen from the details of descriptive statistics (Table 4), both the level of security and travel cost are perceived as important or very important in Poland and Lithuania (over 70% of respondents).

Descriptive statistics (Table 4) indicate that in Poland the assessment of the importance of both factors determining the choice of tourist destination is on a similar level with a slight accent towards the level of security, while in Lithuania travel costs are assessed as a more important factor than the level of security. It is confirmed by such descriptive statistics as mode, number of modes, mean rank

and sum of ranks. Statistical verification by Mann-Whitney U test indicated (Table 5),

when grouping variable is country, that in assessing the level of security by Millennium travelers there is no statistically significant differences between respondents from Poland and Lithuania. However, there are statistically significant differences between the respondents from Poland and Lithuania in the assessment of the importance of travel cost as a factor determining the tourist trip.

**Table 4** *Assessment of the Importance of Tourist Factors According to Countries*

\* Scale for evaluation of the importance of tourist factors ranging from 1=no

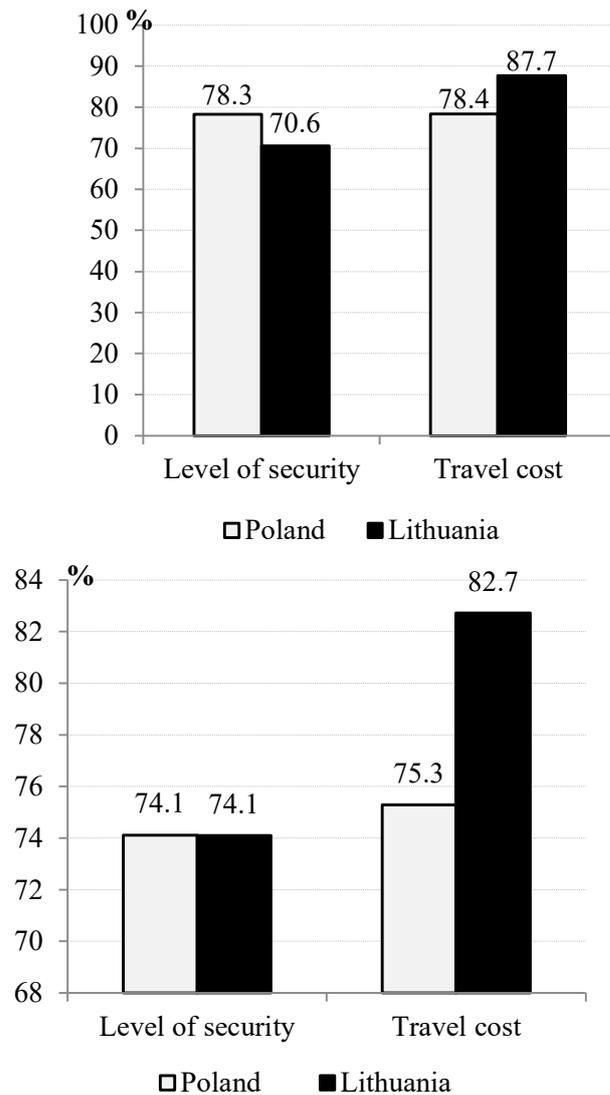
Cou ntry	Factor	N	Media n	Mode	Number of Modes	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
PL	Level of Security	849	4	5	379	4.11	653841.0
	Travel Cost	849	4	4	335	4.11	611705.5
LT	Level of Security	652	4	5	261	4.03	473410.0
	Travel Cost	652	4	5	295	4.27	515545.5

no importance to 5=very important.

It is worth noting that differences between countries in the assessment of these factors (level of security and travel cost) are greater among the younger part of Millennium travelers. Figure 1 shows a positive assessment of the level of security and travel cost in Poland and Lithuania according to age, ie. among respondents aged up to 24 and respondents over 24 (this is due to the fact that the majority of people aged 24 ends academic education). The difference in the assessment of the importance of the level of security, depending on the age, is 0.0-7.7 percentage points, while in the assessment the travel cost is 7.4-9.3 percentage points. However, the influence of age on the assessment of factors by respondents was not confirmed by the Mann-Whitney U test ( $p > 0.05$ ).

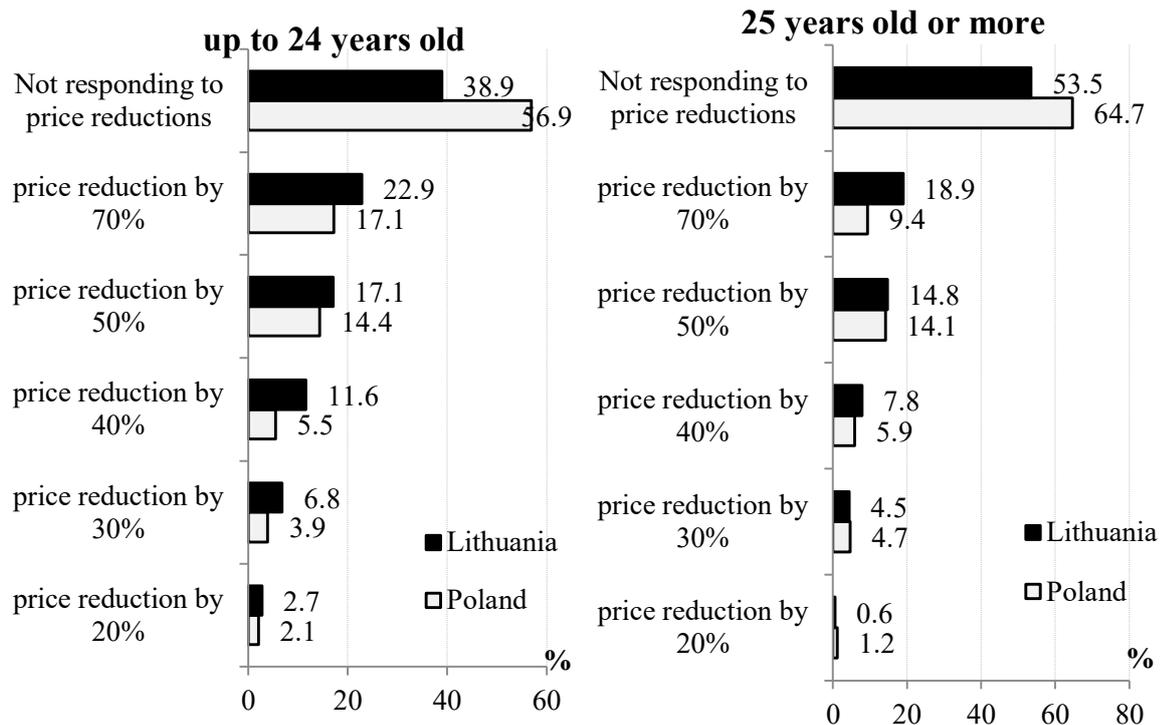
up to 24 years old

25 years old or more



**Figure 1.** Share of respondents in Poland and Lithuania who claim that level of security or travel cost are important or very important factors determining their trip

Conclusion of decisive importance travel cost for Lithuanian respondents is confirmed by data on the inclination of Millennium travelers to choose a trip with a lower level of security when there is an economic incentive in the form of price reduction of the total cost of tourist trip (Figure 2). In Poland, 57.7% of respondents (and depending on the age 56.9-64.7%) do not react to price reductions, while in Lithuania 53.1% (depending on the age 46.5-61.1%) react to price reductions. Millennium travelers from Lithuania are more willing than Polish travelers to go to a less secure country when they receive an appropriate price incentive.



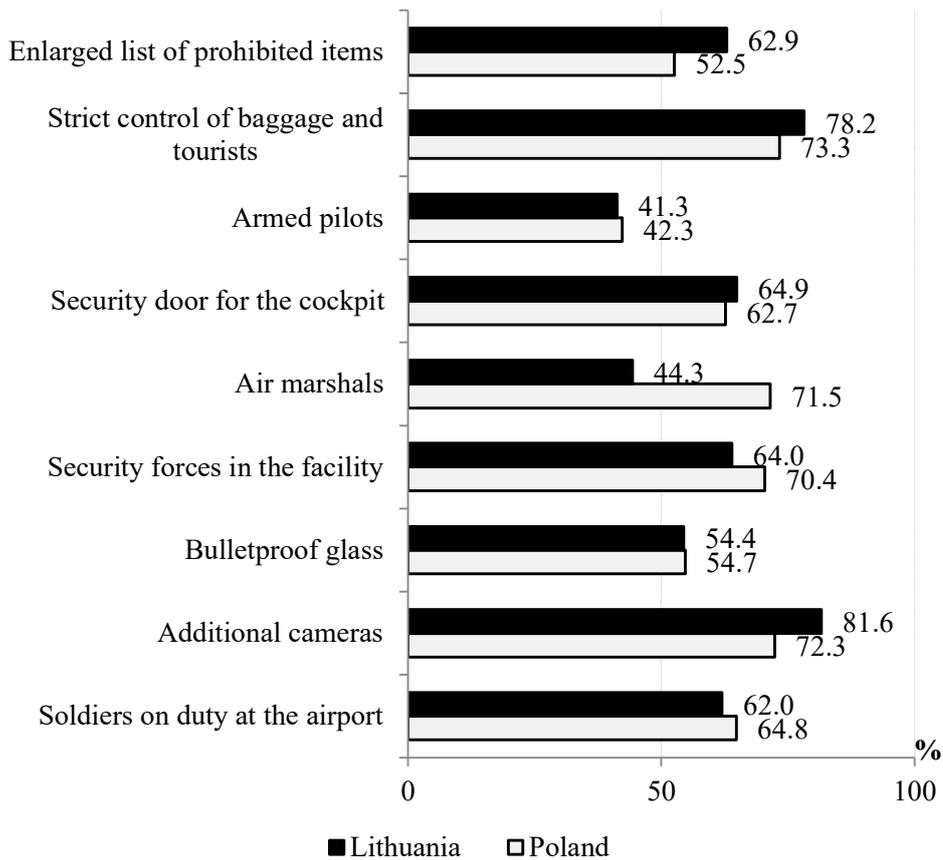
**Figure 2.** Price reduction of the total cost of tourist trip that would have persuaded of respondents in Poland and Lithuania to choose a trip to a country with a lower level of security

Statistical analysis by Mann-Whitney U test (Table 5) indicated that there are statistically significant differences between the respondents from Poland and Lithuania in answering the question whether they would be willing to choose the travel to a country that has lower level of security (a tourist destination with a higher risk rating) when a price reduction occurs. It is worth adding that there are differences in the assessment of this factor among respondents from Lithuania depending on their age. The result of Mann-Whitney U test according to age is  $p=0.000$  ( $Z=-3.67$ ). Younger Millennium travelers from Lithuania are more likely to go to a country with a low level of security when the price for the trip will be reduced.

**Table 5: Evaluation of the importance of factors determining respondents' decisions about their trip - Mann-Whitney U test statistics**

Grouping variable	Country			Gender					
	Poland/Lithuania			Poland			Lithuania		
Test statistics	U	Z	p value	U	Z	p value	U	Z	p value
Level of security	260532.0	1.95	0.051	49043.5	6.97	0.000	36080.0	1.03	0.304
Travel cost	250880.5	-3.11	0.002	62206.0	2.83	0.003	32490.0	2.79	0.005
Price reduction	246211.5	3.67	0.000	55228.5	5.02	0.000	33451.0	2.32	0.021

Due to the fact that the level of security in both Poland and Lithuania is important, but for Lithuanians, travel cost is a more important factor than the level of safety, so it was investigated how Millennium travelers assess the occurrence of various security measures during a tourist trip (Figure 3). The results of research in assessing the importance of security measures at the airport by the respondents indicate that Millennium travelers from Lithuania prefer hard security measures, ie. additional camera, enlarged list of prohibited items, strict control of baggage and tourists. On the other hand, Polish people prefer to see security measures, but they do not necessarily consent to limit their privacy. These tendencies of respondents and differences between countries in the perception of security measures may explain why tourists from Poland pay more attention to safety than tourists from Lithuania.



**Figure 3.** Security measures at the airport which are important or very important to respondents in Poland and Lithuania

Analyzing the survey data, it was found that the assessment of factors affecting the tourist preferences of Millennium travelers may depend on gender. Research results indicate that the importance of the given factors (level of safety, travel cost, price reduction) when making a choice about travel to a given tourist destination, depends on the gender of the respondents (in Poland, for the studied factors the average rank is respectively for women: 4.29; 4.18; 5.26, for men: 3.63; 3.95; 4.74, and in Lithuania for women, respectively: 4.06; 4.32; 4.97, and for men: 3.94; 4.08; 4.64). Women in both countries pay more attention to safety and security than men, and when it comes to prices, they are more likely to give up security (mode in Poland and Lithuania) for any price, or require very large, 70% price reductions. Data analysis by Mann-Whitney U test (Table 5) indicates that there are statistically significant differences in the assessment by respondents in Poland depending on the gender for all of studied factors, and in Lithuania when assessing the importance of travel cost and price reduction. The analysis shows that differences in assessment between women and men are greater in Poland than in Lithuania.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Research results indicate that Millennium travelers are a group of tourists who willingly invest their time and money in travelling and are more diverse as a group than non-Millennials, they are interested in international travel and global cultural

experiences, and are more open to novelties. These tourists care about the cost of the package/holiday and are less willing to pay more for travel. Besides this group of tourists are more brave, ie. compared to older generations and travel according to the plan prepared in advance to gain some experience regardless of anything.

Discussing the postulates raised by literature, it should be stated that the results of the research have confirmed that Millennials pay considerable attention to the issue of travel costs. In addition, it can be seen that they are willing to take greater risks in tourism and travel to destinations with lower levels of security, but not at any price. This may be confirmed by the fact that the majority of respondents in both countries consider the price to be a very important factor determining their tourist trip. In Lithuania, price is even a more important factor than security level), but at the same time, about half of the respondents (to a greater extent in Poland) would be willing to pay extra if the travel destination was characterized by too low level of security.

Research results by the authors indicate that most of Millennium travelers in Poland and Lithuania greatly appreciate the importance of safety and security and travel cost levels (around  $\frac{3}{4}$  of respondents). However, there are statistically significant differences between respondents from Poland and Lithuania in assessing the importance of travel cost as a factor determining a tourist trip. Respondents in Poland perceive travel cost as an important factor affecting their tourist choice, while in Lithuania travel cost is assessed as a very important factor, and even more important than the level of security. Differences in assessment between respondents in both countries occur regardless of age (although this difference is slightly higher among younger tourists).

Research results indicate that Millennium travelers from Lithuania are more willing than Polish travelers to go to a less secure country when they receive some incentive in the form of a price reduction. In Poland, over half of respondents do not react to price reductions when it concerns a low level of security, while in Lithuania just over half of respondents would be willing to react to the price factor in such a situation. Studies indicate that in Lithuania this is influenced by age (younger tourists show a greater lack of reaction to a low level of safety).

It was also stated that Millennium travelers from Lithuania prefer hard security measures, while Polish travelers like to see security measures, but do not necessarily consent to limit their privacy.

Research results also indicate one important conclusion: gender influences the assessment of the importance of factors determining the choice of a tourist destination. In Poland, women value safety more than men, and for any reduction in price they are not willing to give up security, while in Lithuania gender differences occur when assessing the importance of the travel cost.

The analysis carried out in the paper indicates that there is a need for further research in this area.

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