

THEORETICAL BASIS OF EDUCATIONAL TOURISM: INTERNATIONAL ASPECT

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Abstract. International educational mobility plays a crucial role in the advancement of science and education, with far-reaching implications for socio-economic development. The growing number of internationally mobile students intensifies competition among host countries, which goes beyond the market for educational services. In the long run, it is the competition for human capital that is crucial for economic development. This study aims to deepen the understanding of educational tourism as a distinct form of educational mobility. The article reviews the literature and analyses existing approaches to the definition of educational tourism. By analysing different types of educational mobility, the paper proposes a classification based on the goals, age of travellers and stages of career development that better emphasises the unique features of educational tourism. Taking into account the interdisciplinary nature of educational tourism, the paper considers it within the framework of the concept that the authors call "MET: Mobility, Education, Tourism". This approach allowed the authors to propose a definition of educational tourism that better reflects the nature of this phenomenon and distinguishes it from other types of educational mobility. The authors have identified key factors that influence the development of educational tourism, including technological progress, globalisation of education, economic factors, government initiatives, educational innovations and current trends in the labour market. Based on the findings, this paper offers principles for promoting educational tourism, emphasising the concept of Tourist Lifetime Value (TLV). This approach takes a long-term view of educational travel, taking into account the potential for lifelong learning and repeat visits. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of educational tourism, providing a basis for developing effective strategies to stimulate its growth and enhance its positive socio-economic impact on both host and home countries.

Keywords: educational tourism, academic tourism, academic mobility, educational mobility, scientific and educational tourism, educational migration, Tourist Lifetime Value (TLV).

JEL Classification: I23, I25

1. Introduction

International educational mobility is a key driver of progress in science and education, with far-reaching implications for socio-economic development worldwide. The growing number of internationally mobile students is fuelling competition among host countries, which goes beyond capturing a share of the market for educational services. At stake is human capital, which plays a crucial role in enhancing the competitiveness of national economies and determining a country's place in a wider geopolitical landscape. New economic models can be tagged with different colours, such as the blue or orange (creative) economy. However, the common theme is the

changing role of labour as a factor of production, accelerated by advances in cognitive technologies. The paradigm shift is slow, but human-centredness as a guiding principle is already widespread. As such, the importance of human capital development extends beyond the boundaries of the economic domain. In a world where geopolitical rivalry can still take the form of military conflict and cyber or hybrid warfare, human capital is important not only for prosperity but also for sovereignty and independence. Geopolitical factors are increasingly shaping international educational mobility. The global market for education services is becoming less concentrated and new centres of education are gaining ground,

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attracting student flows from traditional destinations in Europe and North America. Given the contribution of educational mobility to the development of human capital, increasing the country's attractiveness to this category of learners and maximising the benefits of outbound mobility should be a top policy priority. This is particularly relevant for the EU as the largest destination region for international students, given its current economic, environmental and geopolitical challenges.

Educational mobility is a broad topic, so this article will focus on the theoretical foundations of educational tourism as a separate type of educational mobility that is not sufficiently studied. Although the volume of international educational tourism flows may be smaller than other types of educational mobility, its potential social and economic impact may be more significant, given the synergies between the education and tourism sectors. Moreover, educational tourism as a form of education has significant potential for development, given the changing requirements for education itself, the spread of lifelong learning, and labour market trends such as more frequent career changes, "quite quitting and hiring". In addition, an increase in the number of international students, the development of non-formal education and the impact of external factors such as automation, including cognitive technologies, are expected to contribute to the expansion of educational tourism. The concept of educational tourism, including its preconditions, drivers and challenges, requires a more comprehensive study in view of the current tectonic shifts in the global economy. For example, the move towards a knowledge-based economy is increasing the importance of intangible assets (intellectual capital) and activities related to their growth. Understanding the internal and external factors of this type of mobility will allow to formulate effective measures to increase the attractiveness of host countries and multiply the benefits of outbound flows of educational tourists.

The objective of this article is to enhance the comprehension of the concept of educational tourism. The objectives of this study encompass an examination of the state of the art, including an investigation of the key internal and external motivations of learners engaged in this category of educational tourism. Additionally, the study will elaborate on the definition of international educational tourism, examine key trends and determinants of this type of educational mobility, analyse the most effective practices for stimulating educational tourism and enhancing its positive socio-economic impact on both the host country and the country of origin, and finally, elaborate on the principles of promoting educational tourism.

2. Methodology

To investigate the current state of play through a literature review, a search of the Scopus database was conducted in October 2023 using keywords such as "educational tourism", "edu-tourism" and "learning tourism". As a result, there were 583 publications, which were grouped into categories based on their relevance to the topic of educational tourism, the country of authors' nationality and a set of other parameters extracted from the Scopus database. The keyword candidates were selected using the Google Books database, namely Google Books Ngram Viewer, for the period from 1950 to 2019, which shows a surge of interest in both academic mobility and educational tourism in recent decades. Academic mobility is a broader concept than educational tourism or even educational mobility. Thus, the focus is on the educational part of the Scopus search. Other terms, such as "academic tourism", were less popular during the period. Using the Google Books Ngram Viewer and the Scopus database, researchers searched for the most relevant concepts in the academic and general fields among published English-language texts.

Initial manual screening of the Scopus search results revealed a significant deviation in relevance to the topic of this study. Therefore, these 583 publications were processed to sort out outliers and less relevant sources. To accomplish this task, all abstracts and titles were converted from text to vector representation using the "text-embedding-3-small" model using the OpenAI API with the Python programming language. Using the Isolation Forest algorithm from the Scikit-learn library, the most rare abstracts and titles were found based on the generated embeddings. They were removed from the dataset after human review. Less relevant items were removed after comparing the embedding of titles and annotations with the embedding of the term "educational tourism" by calculating the distance between the corresponding vectors using the "cosine_similarity" package from the Scikit-learn library. It was found that a cosine similarity value above 0.5 is a useful threshold for narrowing down the list of articles with a sufficiently close semantic meaning to the research topic.

Nevertheless, a manual inspection demonstrated that this approach could result in the exclusion of pertinent material from the focus, while retaining in the dataset titles those with high cosine similarity scores that remain less relevant to the research. This issue arises, in part, from the broad definition of educational tourism as presented in numerous sources. Consequently, an additional technique was employed to delineate between publications of varying relevance. The "gpt-3.5-turbo-1106" Large Language Model, accessed via the OpenAI API, was employed

to generate topics for each abstract in the dataset. These topics were then converted into vector embeddings, which were subsequently compared with the embedding of the term "educational tourism" using the cosine similarity metric. A reasonable number of human checks were applied to ensure the accuracy of the results. This allowed to focus on the 183 most relevant publications instead of the 583 that were initially derived from the Scopus search results.

Vector representations of the abstracts were also used to group all publications using an unsupervised learning technique called "clustering". The K-means clustering algorithm from the Scikit-learn library was used. The optimal number of clusters was determined using silhouette scores. Based on the results obtained, it was possible to identify key areas of research in the field of educational tourism and related industries. Furthermore, some data analysis techniques were applied to explore the statistical parameters of the prepared publication dataset. To explore the popularity of this topic, two basic parameters are used, i.e., the number of publications and the number of authors involved. The latter indicator is less popular in such analyses, but it is believed to provide more useful information about the attention paid by researchers. Therefore, a grouping of all unique author identifiers was made according to the year of their first appearance (see Figure 1).

Hence, the data show that the first surge of interest in the topic occurred around 2010, the second and much more noticeable one in 2017, and the record high number of new entrants to the topic was recorded in 2023, when 67 authors published their first publications in this area, including co-authored ones. A total of 419 authors published papers on the topic (see Figure 2).

The data shows that educational tourism is still a niche research topic, with much less involvement from the research community than other topics in

related fields. However, this involvement is growing steadily and dynamically. This means that there are still many grey areas to be discovered; thus, the growing number of new researchers is contributing to the development of research in this area. In addition, a group of researchers is constantly publishing on the topic. Fifty authors have contributed to two or more publications, seven to more than three publications, and one to 7 publications on the topic.

3. Literature Review

In recent years, researchers have shown a growing interest in educational tourism. However, there are different approaches to defining this concept. While some researchers use the term "academic tourism" to refer to short-term tertiary and postgraduate programmes, another approach implies a broader view, encompassing educational school trips and other types of educational mobility without explicit time constraints. Given the interdisciplinary nature of this phenomenon, it is crucial to explore its nature in the context of broader concepts such as education, academic mobility and tourism. Previous literature reviews on the topic by other authors either include publications on a broader concept of academic tourism or focus on a narrow issue within the topic of educational tourism. For example, Leal A. et al. reviewed the literature on academic tourism. They grouped the available research into categories such as motivations and experiences of international students and economic, cultural and social impacts of international students, mainly based on the cases of Erasmus participants (Leal et al., 2019, p. 86). Since the release of this publication, many new studies have emerged that have complemented the above categories and developed new areas of research. Based on the literature review, the following categories (subfields) of research can be identified that are closely related to the concept of educational tourism:

- Theoretical foundations of the concept of educational tourism.

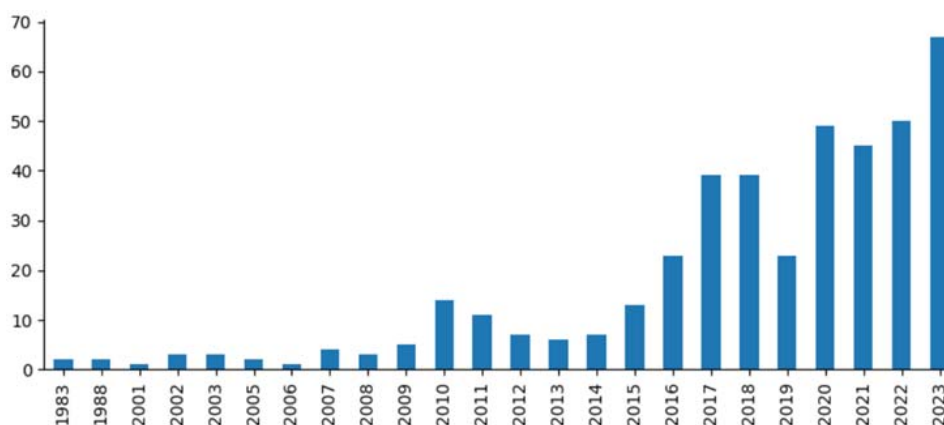


Figure 1. Number of authors who contributed to publications on educational tourism for the first time

Source: prepared by the authors based on the search results in the Scopus database

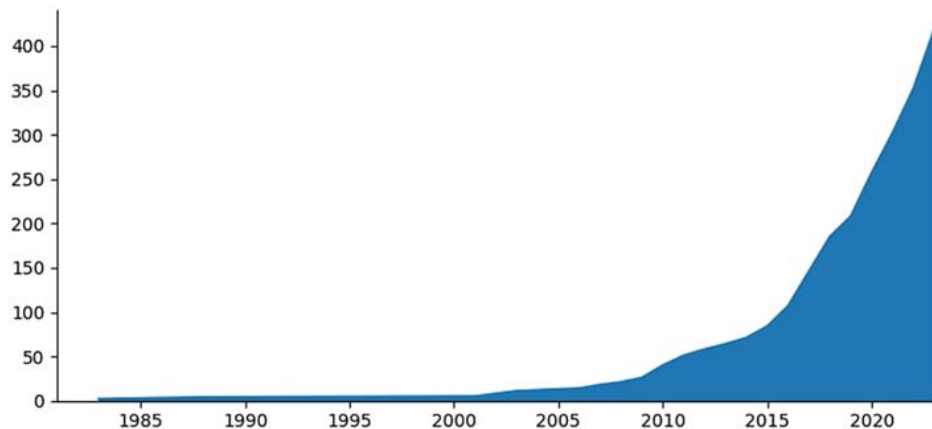


Figure 2. Cumulative number of authors who contributed to publications on educational tourism
 Source: prepared by the authors based on the processed search results in the Scopus database

- Economic, cultural and social impact of inbound educational tourism.
- Economic, cultural and social impact of outbound educational tourism.
- Motivation of international educational tourists, key push and pull factors.
- Experience of foreign students (educational tourists), loyalty to the destination.
- Educational technologies and educational tourism in the digital age.
- Sustainability of educational tourism, natural persistence and cultural awareness.
- Learning languages through educational tourism.
- Practice-oriented vocational education through educational tourism: learning farms, etc.
- Case studies on educational tourism in specific countries.

Ritchie B. et al. have developed a segmentation model for educational tourism that has significantly influenced the development of further research in this area. This model conceptualises "the relationship between education, tourism and the changing external environment", focusing on the following segments of the education tourism market, which also encompass the learning priority: "tourism first" covers general travel for education purposes as well as educational tourism for adults or the elderly; "education first" includes tourism by university and college students and educational school trips (Ritchie et al., 2003). Despite the obvious advantages of the simplicity of modelling education tourism, other researchers have explored and detailed the shortcomings of this approach. For example, McGladdery C.A. and Lubbe B.A. propose an "alternative process- and outcomes-based model of educational tourism" that emphasises the importance of "clearly defined and stage-appropriate outcomes" for effective learning on educational trips and broader synergies between educational tourism and other

sectors of the tourism industry, as well as for promoting global peace (McGladdery & Lubbe, 2017).

4. The Importance of Research in the Field of Educational Tourism

Educational travel has a long history. The Grand Tour, for example, was a popular adventure for young European elites between the 17th and 19th centuries. Although the modes, geographical patterns and demographic structure of educational mobility have changed significantly in recent decades, the idea of travelling to acquire knowledge and new experiences remains relevant. The development of international transport, globalisation and increased competition in the global education market have contributed significantly to the growing trend of individuals seeking education outside their home country. Economic development outside the Global North and targeted policies aimed at facilitating cross-border student mobility have been reinforcing this trend in recent decades. In addition, international cooperation and integration processes, such as the European Higher Education Area and the Bologna Agreement, have played a crucial role in shaping the modern system of educational mobility. As a result, the number of internationally mobile students in higher education worldwide has increased significantly (see Figure 3).

Like other forms of tourism, educational tourism has a diverse socio-economic impact on the host country. Each trip involves various expenditures such as transport, accommodation, food and entertainment. The economic impact is amplified when tourists make repeat visits. The magnitude of this factor depends largely on the experience gained during the first educational trip. In addition, educational tourism can be a source of income for educational institutions and other providers of educational and related services. Beyond the material

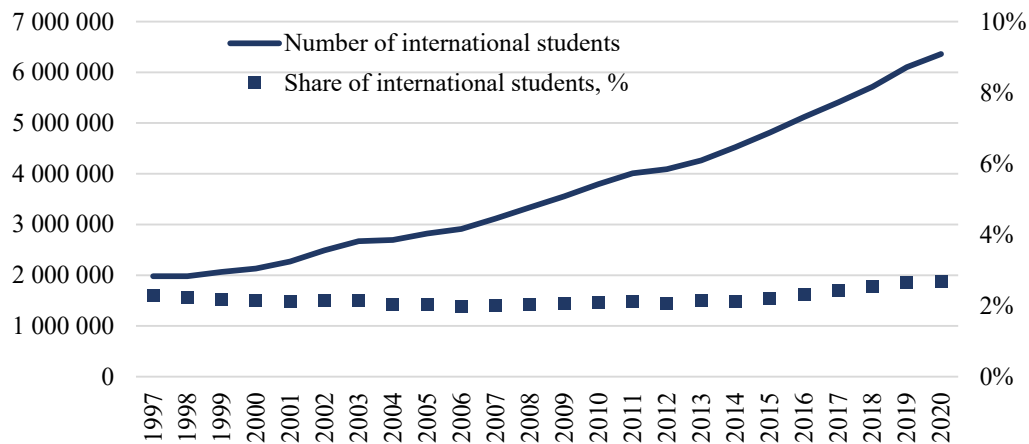


Figure 3. The number of international students and their share in the total number of students in higher education institutions worldwide, 1997-2020

Source: (UNESCO)

values, educational tourism offers significant socio-cultural benefits for both the host country and the country of origin of the tourists.

Despite increasing attention from scholars, the lack of sufficient statistical data remains a bottleneck for developing research on the economic impact of educational tourism on host countries. However, Hussein S. et al. have highlighted the significant impact of educational tourism on the economic development of host countries. Using a panel dataset of 11 countries, the researchers conclude that "a 1% increase in educational tourism demand, merchandise exports and FDI inflows will increase economic growth by 0.66%, 0.08% and 0.32% respectively, controlling for the effects of merchandise exports and FDI inflows" (Hussein et al., 2021, p. 183).

Therefore, educational tourism is an important and promising area of research. A better understanding of this phenomenon should help to develop effective measures to stimulate its growth and enhance its positive socio-economic impact on both the host country and the country of origin.

5. Education, Mobility, Tourism – Educational Tourism

The analysis of publications on academic mobility has revealed the need for a unified approach to the interpretation of different types of travel for educational purposes. A broader consensus on the theoretical foundations of educational tourism may affect the quality of statistical data in terms of their sufficiency and comparability. Meanwhile, some researchers use different terminology to refer to similar phenomena or, conversely, combine different, albeit interrelated, concepts. For example, in the context of educational mobility, the terms "education/educational mobility", "learning mobility", "academic mobility" and "student mobility" are used interchangeably.

However, they all refer to different types of mobility, although education is a common theme.

In order to propose a definition of educational tourism, it is necessary to first consider the higher-level concepts – education, academic mobility and tourism – on which the definition is based. These concepts are interconnected and can be illustrated by using the "MET: Mobility, Education, Tourism" framework (see Figure 4).

The educational process is the most important component of academic mobility and educational tourism. Bento et al. summarised the results of research on internal and external factors influencing academic mobility conducted by researchers from different countries (Bento et al., 2020). Given these findings, the reputation of the host institution is one of the dominant external factors, i.e., an attractive motivation for international student mobility. Certainly, there may be differences in motivation related to socio-economic and cultural differences between regions and countries.

An interesting area of research in the field of motivation for participation in international academic mobility is the identification of priorities among various decision-making factors, taking into account regional specifics, demographic distribution and other relevant parameters. The results of the above-mentioned studies indicate the existence of internal factors for making a decision to study in another country (the so-called push factors), which include the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, as well as factors not related to the educational process. For example, a common motivation is the desire to learn the language of the host country (or the language of study), to immerse oneself in a different culture and to gain new experiences. Kosmaczewska J. and Jameson S. investigated the distribution of priorities between academic and recreational goals of international

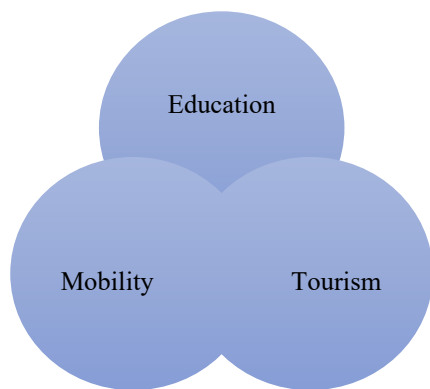


Figure 4. MET: Mobility, Education, Tourism

Source: prepared by the authors

mobility on the example of international students in Poland. They concluded that tourism-related decision-making factors may have a dominant influence (Kosmaczewska et al., 2021). In addition, these researchers emphasised that the motivation of students seeking academic mobility is significantly influenced by various factors, including personal wealth, i.e., the amount of available savings and the expected length of stay in the host country. In addition, the country of origin of international students also matters. These results confirm the initial assumption, highlighting the need for a comprehensive global study of the motivation for educational mobility. Such studies should include clustering techniques to analyse the impact of host and home countries, as well as demographic and other relevant factors.

This paper highlights the importance of recreational motivations in educational mobility, especially for short-term trips. This aspect underlines the importance of considering educational tourism, as a type of educational mobility, as a separate niche of the tourism sector. However, the proposed MET concept considers education, mobility and tourism as equally influential components. The exact impact of these factors on the motivation of educational tourists is likely to vary depending on the individual characteristics of each tourist, the host country and the country of origin.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) defines education as "the process of promoting learning or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits". The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) distinguishes between formal, non-formal and informal learning (UNESCO, 2011). Given that the latter is incidental or accidental, it is not considered within the framework of educational tourism.

Formal education is institutionalised and planned by public or private institutions that make up the national education system. Qualifications obtained through formal education are therefore widely

recognised. In addition to initial education, vocational education and training, special needs education and certain types of adult education can also be classified as formal education, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Formal education aims to provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to enter the labour market or to engage in productive activities. Individuals of different ages may share these goals, including experienced workers seeking to upgrade their qualifications or change careers. It is important to emphasise this aspect to distinguish educational tourism from youth tourism. The age restriction implied by the term "youth", i.e., people under 30-35 years old, limits the potential of educational tourism. Although adult education accounted for only 1% of total Erasmus+ educational mobility in 2021, this type of education may be developing more dynamically. Adult educational tourists can also have a more significant socio-economic impact on the host country. This group of tourists usually has a higher purchasing power and may be more inclined to the educational aspects of their travel.

Non-formal education is also institutionalised and planned by education providers. However, as a rule, it does not lead to qualifications that are recognised by national authorities as equivalent to formal ones. This type of education can be a powerful driver for the development of educational tourism, given the spread of the concept of lifelong learning and the labour market trends mentioned below. Avoiding the boundaries of a standardised, formal educational pathway can provide more opportunities to adapt educational programmes to the needs of the labour market, focusing on both professional and personal growth. Examples of non-formal learning include short-term courses, seminars and workshops, such as summer language courses and programming camps. The knowledge and skills acquired through non-formal education may be sufficient to obtain the desired job or contribute to career development. For this reason, the quality of educational services and the recognition of qualifications by employers are crucial factors. The issue of recognition of diplomas can be resolved with the help of authoritative certificates.

In this paper, educational levels are used to define the age limits and structure of educational tourism. Taking a broader view of the types of educational mobility that can be classified as tourism, it is suggested that a lower boundary of 13-15 years of age be used, i.e., when individuals can already be classified as "youth". This approach takes into account legal aspects, including the ability to travel independently and age-specific norms of consumer behaviour, as well as decision-making patterns specific to each age group, including the influence of parents

and relatives. Thus, the concept of educational tourism covers part of the second level of education, all secondary and vocational education (levels 3-5), as well as higher education, postgraduate and further education (levels 6-9), according to the levels of education defined in the ISCED standard (UNESCO, 2011).

The length of stay in the host country (educational institution) is another important parameter for understanding the concept of educational tourism. In this regard, it is useful to consider the concept of educational mobility within the framework of MET. The Council of Europe defines academic mobility as study, teaching or research in a country other than the country of permanent residence (Council of Europe, 1995). Return to the home country is usually mandatory. This condition helps to distinguish mobility from migration, but it requires a more precise definition to distinguish between mobility and temporary migration. Both types of students return to their home countries, but may exhibit different consumption behaviour, which is important for educational tourism. Since Erasmus+ programmes usually cover up to two academic years, it is proposed to classify longer stays as temporary educational migration.

Similar to educational mobility, educational tourism also involves a "return ticket", i.e., a requirement to return to the home country. Unlike temporary educational migration, where goals can change during the stay in the host country and potentially lead to permanent migration, the goals of educational tourists remain constant. The length of stay plays a crucial role in the decision to return, as it covers a wider range of internal and external factors that can change. In addition, temporary educational migration may be a hidden form of migration, as the true motivation of students may differ from the declared one. This aspect is extremely important when considering the socio-economic impact of educational tourists (migrants) on the host country and the country of origin. Therefore, these factors should be taken into account when developing measures to stimulate or restrict student flows, taking into account the economic, social, migration and educational policies of the countries involved.

Most researchers agree that longer trips also involve other consumption behaviours that resemble those of residents, as opposed to short-term trips. For example, short-term trips typically involve hotel stays, while full bachelor's programmes often require dormitory accommodation or long-term apartment rentals. This approach applies to meals, transport and leisure activities. In addition, short visits may result in a busier schedule, while longer stays may have a greater emphasis on recreational activities.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the above definition of academic mobility includes travel by students and teachers. The latter category of visitors should be considered separately from educational tourism, as their trips are work-related. However, within the Erasmus+ programme, it is recognised as a type of learning activity that contributes to professional development. Thus, the term "educational mobility" emphasises this educational aspect. Furthermore, it is useful to distinguish between educational mobility, which encompasses all levels of education and lifelong learning practices, and academic mobility, which refers specifically to educational trips undertaken by students at levels 6-8, i.e., higher education and postgraduate education, within formal education programmes.

In order to establish the timeframe of educational tourism, it is necessary to analyse the main approaches to the definition of tourism and its key components, in particular the visitor and the tourist. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines visitors as persons travelling to a destination outside their usual environment for a period of less than one year. The main purpose of these trips may include various activities, such as business or leisure, with the exception of employment in the host institution. Visitors can be classified as tourists if their trip involves an overnight stay, according to the UNWTO classification. This classification can also be applied to educational trips, where visits can be considered short-term, i.e., lasting no more than one day. At the same time, tourism involves trips lasting two days or more, including an overnight stay, but not more than one year (see Figure 5).

In addition to the timeframe mentioned above, educational tourism can be characterised by its purpose and participants. The UNWTO defines "educational tourism" as a form of travel that is primarily for the purpose of learning, self-improvement, intellectual development, and the acquisition or improvement of skills. This broad definition covers a variety of educational activities, including academic study programmes, short-term skills development programmes, educational school trips, professional development courses and language courses. Thus, educational tourism can be classified on the basis of its purpose and the level of education to which it relates:

- Educational school trips as part of formal secondary education programmes.
- Vocational trips are designed to acquire specialised knowledge for specific professions through formal and non-formal educational programmes.
- Academic trips that involve higher education or postgraduate education within the framework of formal educational programmes.

One-day visits	Tourism	Other mobility	Temporary migration	Migration
No more than one day, overnight only	From one day overnight to one year	From one to two years	More than two years, but not on a permanent basis	Permanently

Figure 5. Classification of educational trips by the duration of stay in the host country
 Source: prepared by the authors

– Self-development trips aimed at acquiring knowledge and skills through non-formal educational programmes.

There are three main groups of participants involved in educational tourism: educational service providers, providers of related services and travellers themselves. The latter can be classified by age. Specifically, the category of youth usually includes people aged 13-15 to 30-35 years, while the adult population includes people aged over 30-35 years. In addition, taking into account the different stages of career development, the following groups of travellers can be distinguished: people with no work experience, young professionals, experienced professionals and career changers with limited or inappropriate work experience in the industry they want to change. In addition to travellers, educational tourism involves various actors providing educational, tourism and travel-related services. These can include both host organisations, such as educational institutions, and professional intermediaries, such as travel companies and organisers of educational events.

As for the mobility of scientists (researchers), it is suggested that this activity should be considered as scientific tourism, distinct from educational tourism. However, these two types of mobility can be integrated into a broader concept, such as scientific and educational tourism. The latter may include, among other things, events that combine scientific, educational and practical elements, such as conferences, symposia, roundtables and other formats for the exchange of research results and professional experience. Such events do not always require a research infrastructure, allowing them to attract tourist flows to destinations outside of traditional tourist routes.

Thus, educational tourism can be defined as a trip lasting from two days to a year with the aim of gaining knowledge and skills, supplemented by recreational activities.

6. Factors Influencing the Development of Educational Tourism

The following key factors influence the development of educational tourism.

1. Technological progress. The rapid development of technology has led to the fact that people are constantly in need of upskilling or retraining to change careers. This trend has become increasingly common in recent years. Although there is limited data on the proportion of workers who change careers during their lifetime, experts suggest that the younger generation may have to do so more than once. The emergence of cognitive technologies, artificial intelligence, and large-scale language models (LLMs) has expanded the range of processes that can be automated. As a result, people need to continually upskill themselves, including learning new technologies, to increase productivity and explore new career opportunities.

2. Globalisation of education. Students today have greater access to educational programmes around the world, both online and offline. However, despite the availability of online learning, the number of international students who prefer to study locally is growing, creating a huge potential for the development of educational tourism.

3. Economic factors. Economic development outside of the Global North has significantly increased the number of potential educational tourists, including those who can afford repeat visits. In addition, the growth of the knowledge-based economy has increased the importance of skilled human capital, stimulating activities related to its development.

4. Government initiatives. Governments around the world are increasingly interested in attracting foreign students, including through educational mobility schemes. They offer scholarships, grants and various forms of support to mobile students, as well as promote the development of cross-border partnerships between educational institutions. Hence, the provision of such state support and the implementation of targeted policies have the potential to stimulate the development of educational tourism.

5. Educational innovations. The proliferation of hybrid learning and shortened versions of traditional degree programmes, such as MicroMasters and Mini-MBA programmes, provide individuals with more flexible opportunities to acquire new skills. The expansion of the microlearning approach also

allows individuals to focus on specific skills, technologies or their practical applications. Non-formal education programmes may become particularly popular in industries where practical experience or specialised knowledge is more valuable than a standard diploma. All of these learning formats with online (offline) components open up opportunities for the growth of educational tourism.

6. Work trends and the labour market.

a. According to the Future Forum Pulse, the COVID-19 pandemic and other stressors in both professional and personal life have led to an increase in burnout. This hinders the productivity and efficiency of employees and can lead to a decrease in economic activity (Future Forum, 2023). In this context, the recreational aspect of educational tourism can play a crucial role in promoting more effective recovery. Taking into account the specific needs and requirements of employees, employers can use educational tourism to achieve longer-lasting effects compared to the traditional format of employee recreation during annual leave.

b. Employers are increasingly investing in employee training through corporate universities or funding employee-selected educational courses to prevent "quiet quitting", mitigate staff turnover and strengthen human capital. Another emerging practice is the provision of sabbaticals, which involve extended absences from work with or without pay. For example, a study by Schabram et al. shows that some employees use sabbaticals for training, certification, and other career development activities (Schabram et al., 2023). These researchers emphasise that employers can also use this practice to prevent burnout by facilitating a successful return to work instead of leaving the company. Employers should explore the potential of this solution, including in cooperation with educational tourism providers. For example, they can offer paid or partially paid sabbaticals, subject to completion of certain educational programmes along with recreational activities. Gartner, a well-known research and consulting company, highlights the trend towards "quiet hiring", i.e., a shift in focus from finding new employees to engaging existing employees more, mainly through upskilling (Gartner, 2022). This may also increase the demand for educational tourism.

c. Recognising the growing trend towards non-linear career development of employees, employers must transform their assessment methods during the hiring process. According to Gartner, this means de-emphasising diplomas and experience and prioritising the ability to perform specific job functions effectively (Gartner, 2022). This trend can stimulate non-formal and adult education, and educational

tourism is the preferred format for acquiring new knowledge and skills.

d. A significant proportion of people entering the labour market are dissatisfied with the level of preparation provided by their education. According to Gartner, experts highlight a lack of social skills and a poor ability to concentrate for long periods of time as the main concerns (Gartner, 2022). While the recent COVID-19 pandemic may have exacerbated this problem, it is important to recognise that academic curricula often prioritise memorisation of knowledge over the targeted development of social and communication skills. Non-formal educational programmes in the format of educational tourism can solve this problem.

7. Principles of Educational Tourism Promotion

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation No. R (95) 8 on academic mobility on March 2, 1995 (Council of Europe, 1995). These recommendations contain valuable strategies for promoting academic mobility and can serve as a basis for principles to stimulate the development of educational tourism. The following recommendations remain highly relevant and should therefore be taken into account when developing policies aimed at promoting educational tourism.

1. Encouraging academic mobility is crucial for both individuals and home institutions (countries), as it helps to overcome knowledge and skills gaps for both participants. In addition, it promotes cooperation between educational institutions.

2. Educational mobility between different regions is important for promoting intercultural exchange and achieving integration goals. For example, the recommendations emphasise the need to promote mobility between Western and Eastern Europe.

3. Recognition or simplification of legalisation procedures for documents confirming knowledge and skills acquired outside the country of residence is also crucial for expanding educational mobility. Intergovernmental agreements and arrangements play a significant role in shaping the scope and geographical structure of educational mobility. It is important to establish the possibility or simplify the procedure for transferring credits between different educational systems, optimising the learning process that includes an element of mobility. It is also important to create a comprehensive data system to track individual academic achievements.

4. Infrastructure development is another important aspect of promoting educational mobility, especially given the potential of independent travellers. The recommendations emphasise the need to

establish a network of mobility services to facilitate processes such as information dissemination, advice, reception and accommodation of mobile students. Such infrastructure should support and enhance the overall mobility experience.

Therefore, to foster the growth of educational tourism, it is important to consider the following principles:

1. Reciprocity. Recognise the importance of both inbound and outbound tourist flows. Outbound tourism contributes to the country's intellectual capital.
2. Complexity (interdisciplinarity). Consider educational tourism as a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses mobility, education and tourism.
3. Tourist lifetime value (TLV). When evaluating investments in educational tourism infrastructure, educational programmes, government policies and incentives, consider the long-term value of each educational tourist. This approach takes into account the potential for lifelong learning and the likelihood of repeat visits for educational and leisure purposes, similar to the concept of Customer Lifetime Value (CLV).
4. Sustainability. Implement sustainable practices in the development of educational tourism. This niche has greater potential for sustainable development than many other types of tourism.
5. Minimising administrative barriers. Streamline migration policy for educational visits and unify educational standards. This is crucial for the development of international educational tourism. Creating more favourable conditions for educational tourists and facilitating the recognition of qualifications is essential.

8. Conclusions

Educational tourism is becoming an increasingly popular means of acquiring knowledge and skills. It is important to recognise that educational travel is a separate niche in the tourism industry, mainly due to the impact of both educational and recreational factors on the motivation of such tourists. With the growing prevalence of different forms of mobility, it is necessary to distinguish between academic mobility and educational mobility, as the latter covers the acquisition of new knowledge and skills outside of higher education or postgraduate programmes.

This article aims to explore different approaches to the definition of educational travel and delve into the essence of this phenomenon. As a result, this paper

defines educational tourism as a trip lasting from two days to a year with the aim of acquiring knowledge and skills, supplemented by recreational activities. For further classification of educational tourism, the authors propose to consider its goals in relation to the level of education (secondary, vocational, academic, self-development), age of participants (youth and adults) and stages of career development (no work experience, young professionals, experienced professionals and those who change their profession).

Educational tourism is an interdisciplinary phenomenon, given its interconnectedness with mobility, education and tourism. The authors visualise this interdependence using the "MET: Mobility, Education, Tourism" framework. In addition, the classification of educational mobility based on the purpose and duration of stay in the host country distinguishes between one-day visits, tourism (from two days to one year), other types of educational mobility (lasting from one to two academic years), temporary educational migration (over two years, but not indefinitely) and migration.

The article also analyses the prerequisites and factors contributing to the development of educational tourism. The main principles of stimulating this type of mobility are identified, including reciprocity, complexity, sustainability, tourist lifetime value (TLV) and minimisation of administrative barriers. It is important to emphasise the relevance of applying the TLV concept as a principle for promoting the growth of educational tourism. In particular, when assessing investments in the development of educational tourism, the long-term value of each tourist should be taken into account, especially in terms of the need for lifelong learning and the likelihood of repeat visits for educational and recreational purposes.

Promising areas for further research in the field of educational tourism include developing a methodology for analysing educational tourism, conducting comprehensive studies of its impact on host and home countries, studying the investment attractiveness of the educational tourism industry and government policies to stimulate its growth. In addition, a global study of the motivations and experiences of educational tourists, taking into account various combinations of host and origin countries, demographic characteristics and other parameters, will allow for a better understanding of the general and specific external and internal factors that shape educational tourism.

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