



Comparative Analysis of Tourism Safety and Security Indicators – Bulgaria and Neighbouring Countries

Petya Ivanova¹ 

Received: November 10, 2023

Revised: June 26, 2024

Accepted: July 8, 2024

Keywords:

Tourism safety;
Destination;
Comparative analysis;
Regional differences;
Indicators



Creative Commons Non Commercial CC BY-NC: This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits non-commercial use, reproduction and distribution of the work without further permission.

Abstract: *This research aims to study, analyze and evaluate the degree of security and safety of the following destinations: Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, North Macedonia and Turkey. The methodology includes a combination of research methods such as desk research, content analysis, comparative method, etc. The analytical part is based on publicly available, officially published data of established methodology of the World Economic Forum. The conclusions are mainly in two directions: first, indicators according to which Bulgaria is in strong and weak positions compared to neighbouring countries, and second, the positions of the studied countries in the interrelationship of the travel and tourism development index – security and safety. The originality of this chapter lies in the comparison between the countries and delineating the similarities in the region and the differences of the individual countries as safe destinations. It can be used for future analyses of the quality of the destination tourism supply. This chapter can influence and encourage other future comparisons ranging from the assessment of regional differences in various aspects of tourism development to the multifaceted perspectives of ensuring security and safety.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The economic and non-economic importance of tourism, and the scale with which it is carried out, have turned it into an important factor for international exchange between countries. Despite the problems and crises it goes through, today tourism is accepted as an element of people's quality of life. The level of global mobility reached, as well as the presence of significant safety issues, provoke increased scientific interest in these issues. It is a well-established scientific proposition that safety is a basic determinant in the hierarchy of human needs and plays a key role in decision-making and travel.

The above-stated determines the author's interest in this issue. In this regard, the aim of the present study is, based on the latest publicly available empirical data published by the World Economic Forum for 2019 and 2021, to make a comparison regarding the degree of safety of the destination Bulgaria (BG) compared to Romania (RO), Greece (GR), Turkey (TR), Serbia (RS) and North Macedonia (MK). This study is a continuation of the author's other studies on the subject. The findings and generalizations of the research are intended to serve as a basis for measures taken in destination management.

This chapter is structured as follows. The introduction emphasizes the relevance of the researched problem, and its significance for theory and practice, and outlines the research framework. The second part is devoted to a theoretical overview, in which the main categories related to tourist safety are clarified in a comparative aspect. This is done through desk research of scientific publications in refereed and indexed journals. The methodological framework is outlined in the third part, which presents the research apparatus, the data used and the research methods.

¹ Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov, Em. Chakarov, 2 str. 5250, Bulgaria

The fourth part includes an analysis and evaluation of the data and a comparative analysis of the degree of security and safety of the studied countries. The last part involves results and conclusions, thus being informational support for all interested parties.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Since the 1970s, when the first scientific paper on tourism safety was published, the number of research in this field has significantly increased (Toker & Emir, 2023). In the researched issues, the most frequently used terms are risk, safety and security. A review of the specialized literature shows that the definitions of these concepts are sometimes overlapping and this leads to ambiguity and confusion. According to Sönmez and Graefe (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998), safety concern is a parallel concept to risk. Other studies consider safety and security as subcategories of risk (Maser & Weiermair, 1998; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Maser and Weiermair (Maser & Weiermair, 1998) identify a range of travel-related risks such as disease, crime, natural disasters, hygiene, transportation, cultural/language barriers, and uncertainty of destination laws and regulations. Of these, crime is identified as a security risk, and natural disasters and hygiene as safety threats.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry define security as “freedom from danger, risk, or doubt” (Parasuraman et al., 1985), blurring the lines between risk, security, and safety. From this definition, it can be concluded that security is the opposite of risk and danger, which means that the absence of risk equals security, but the place of safety is not clear in this definition.

The scientific literature on consumer behaviour addresses the topic of financial, functional, physical, social, psychological, temporal, and satisfaction-related risks (Korstanje, 2009) (Schifman et al., 2010). Other publications examine risks related to equipment (Tsaour et al., 1997), situational risks (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2013), and risks related to possible losses (Fuchs & Reichel, 2006).

The majority of studies consider the concepts of safety and security as *distinct*, but some studies use these two terms interchangeably (George, 2003; Wichasin & Doungphummes, 2012). Some researchers accept that security is traditionally associated with issues of national security and political stability and point out that “for the tourism industry at least, security is now seen as more than just the safety of tourists” (Hall et al., 2004, p. 3). They accept that the term security resonates with a deep-seated desire to be safe and that safety and security are different but interrelated concepts. The cited authors define security in tourism from a political perspective. However, tourism security as a content has evolved, from being war- and defense-focused to global and people-oriented in nature. Added to crime, terrorism and national security are health, social and environmental issues in the scope of tourism security and tourism sustainability (Berce et al., 2021; Hall et al., 2004).

Other researchers focusing on tourism have identified four types of security issues detrimental to the industry: crime, terrorism, war, and civil/political turmoil (Pizam & Mansfeld, 2006). Safety, in turn, is associated more with health, accidents and misadventures, natural disasters and other non-human-caused incidents (Mansfeld & Pizam, 2006; Nardi & Wilks, 2007). In terms of this distinction, pandemics and tsunamis can be considered safety-related incidents, while terrorist bombings can be considered security-related. However, globalization processes and the high degree of mobility of tourists lead to outbreaks of disease (COVID-19 is a prominent example), where personal safety issues shift to a global biosecurity risk (Hall et al., 2004).

The scientific community is seriously concerned with these issues, there being an increase in the research interest with the appearance of global problems that affect security and safety in tourism. For example, after the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, there was an increased study of these risks, and the COVID-19 pandemic provoked many studies dedicated to health risks. Risk perceptions and their relationship with travel intentions are the focus of the contemporary research interest. The subject of analysis are the changes in tourist behavior under the influence of the pandemic, the most striking manifestation of which is the search for safety when choosing a destination, method of travel and place of accommodation. Cataclysms, threats and risks, whether objectively existing or subjectively perceived by tourists, lead to a decline in tourist flows, and regional and even global stagnation. It is undeniable that “contemporary tourism trends and the business environment are extremely changeable and innovative” (Trišić et al., 2023).

From the tourists’ perspective, safety issues are also related to how reliably they can overcome insecurity (Stankova & Kaleychev, 2022). The specialized literature review, based on content analysis, concerning the multidimensional concept of safety and security in tourism categorizes the problem into four sections: the concept of risk, safety and security; the research guidelines for safety and security in tourism; definitions and determinants of perceived risk; and the risk in a positive aspect.

The originality of this study lies in the comparative analysis of destination safety and security in Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, North Macedonia, and Turkey.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1. Data Collection

Publicly available information in official publications of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), and World Economic Forum (WEF) is used for the information base of the present study. The latest data of the World Travel and Tourism Index, WEF are for 2021. For the purposes of the analysis, the metrics for 2019 are also used in order to assess the direction of changes in the security and safety forming indicators. Limitations or biases of the study are determined by the data sources.

3.2. Methods

For the purposes of the theoretical overview in this chapter, the method of desk research of specialized literary sources published in refereed and indexed journals is used. The methods of induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, etc. are used. The basis of the empirical part is the comparative method between neighbouring countries. The choice is based on two main arguments. First, by means of comparison, well-defined characteristics of the object of study (the studied countries) are outlined, which is the basis of the research aim. Second, the geographical proximity of the countries implies the applicability of the comparative method regarding security and safety (the object of research).

3.3. Construct Measurements

The methodology of the Travel&Tourism Development Index of the WEF (World Economic Forum, 2021a) serves as the basis of the research. This index is formed by five subindexes, 17

pillars and 112 indicators. The first sub-index ‘Enabling environment’ includes the pillar Safety and Security, along with Business Environment, Health and Hygiene, Human Resources and Labour Market, and ICT Readiness (World Economic Forum, 2021a). The measurement is carried out in 117 countries.

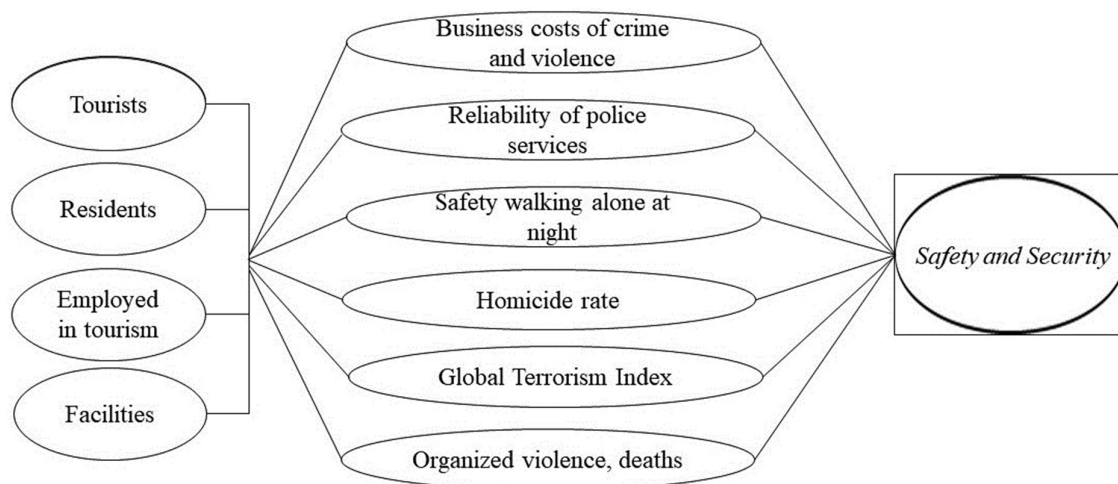


Figure 1. The conceptual model

Source: Own research

For the present study, the author uses the construct adopted by the WEF to form the information base for Tourism Safety and Security (Fig.1). Six indicators are included in the Pillar Safety and Security content. Specifically, the indicators in this pillar’s content are: (i) Business costs of crime and violence – BCCV; (ii) Reliability of police services – RPS; (iii) Safety walking alone at night – SWAN; (iv) Homicide rate – HR; (v) Global Terrorism Index – GTI; (vi) Organized violence, deaths – OVD. The scores according to the BCCV and RPS indicators are formed as a weighted average of the World Economic Forum’s Executive Opinion Survey. Legatum Prosperity Index provides data for SWAN, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – for HR, and Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Terrorism Index 2020: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism – for GTI. As for OVD, it is measured by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program; The World Bank, and World Development Indicators. Details regarding the indicators used for the Tourism Safety and Security pillar can be found in the appendix of the Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021 (World Economic Forum, 2021b).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Key Indicators for Tourism Development of the Countries under Analysis

The countries studied in this chapter have different levels of tourism development. Figure 2 shows that Greece has the best position in the general ranking with rank 28, and the country with the lowest tourism development is North Macedonia, which occupies 87th place out of a total of 117 countries according to the Travel and Tourism Development Index for 2021. Bulgaria occupies the 41st position and is second after Greece compared to its neighbouring countries.

The main indicators of tourism development are presented in more detail in Table 1. As is known, the following indicators are demonstrative of the development of tourism in a certain country: number of tourists who visited it for a certain period; travel expenses; contribution of

tourism to gross domestic product (GDP); employment that it provides, etc. The comparison of data between Bulgaria and the neighbouring countries shows that the country's economy depends to a large extent on the development of tourism. This industry provides 1.3% of GDP and 3.1% of employment in the country. Another distinctive feature of Bulgarian tourism is the low percentage of domestic tourists compared to international tourists. The data show that tourism is a significant sector for the economies of all studied countries, providing more than 1% of GDP, except for Romania.

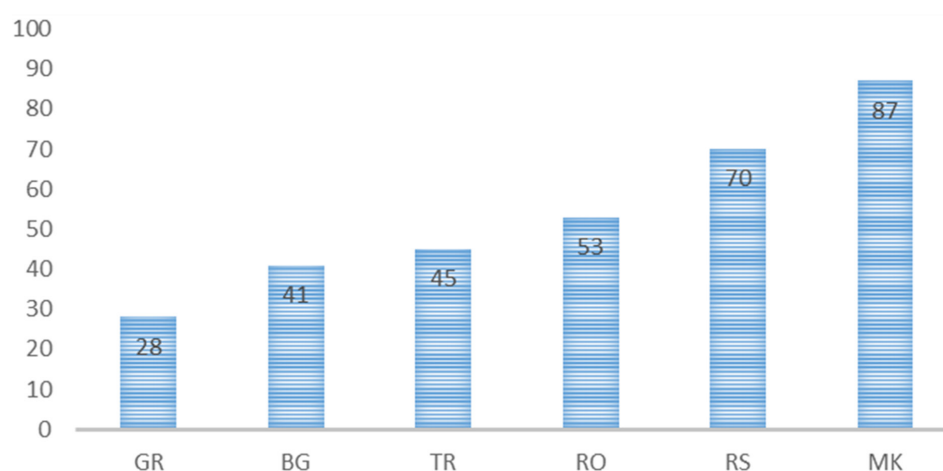


Figure 2. Country's Overall Rank, 2021

Source: World Economic Forum, 2021a

Table 1. Basic indicators for tourism development by country for 2021

| Indicator | BG | RO | GR | TR | RS | MK |
|---|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|-------|
| International tourist arrival, <i>thousands</i> | 9312 | 453 | 7217 | 15894 | 446 | 118 |
| International tourism inbound receipts (<i>inbound US\$, millions</i>) | 1624.1 | 1434.6 | 4932.9 | 10229.0 | 1248.7 | 252.1 |
| Travel and Tourism Industry GDP, <i>US\$ million</i> | 862.4 | 1845.4 | 5892.2 | 12287.6 | 498.5 | 147.8 |
| Travel and Tourism Industry share of GDP, <i>% of total GDP</i> | 1.3 | 0.8 | 3.0 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 1.2 |
| Travel and Tourism Industry Employment, <i>1000 Jobs</i> | 96 | 129 | 244 | 666 | 35 | 15 |
| Travel and Tourism Industry share of Employment, <i>% of total employment</i> | 3.1 | 1.5 | 6.4 | 2.5 | 1.6 | 1.9 |
| Domestic Travel and Tourism spending, <i>% of International Travel and Tourism spending</i> | 26.8 | 75.3 | 54.4 | 47.2 | 34.7 | 47.1 |
| Travel and Tourism Development Index, <i>1-7 (best)</i> | 4.3 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 3.8 | 3.5 |

Source: UNWTO, n.d.; World Economic Forum, 2021a

The comparison between International tourism inbound receipts and International tourist arrivals shows the low level of International tourism inbound receipts from one international tourist for Bulgaria (0.17). The indicator for Romania is 3.16, for Greece – 0.68, Turkey – 0.64, Serbia – 2.80 and North Macedonia – 2.14. The income per tourist in Romania has the highest value and in Turkey the lowest.

The range of the countries' overall Travel and Tourism Development Index, as can be seen in Table 1, is from 3.5 for North Macedonia to 4.5 for Greece. Among the neighbouring countries considered in this study, Bulgaria occupies a second place by the summarizing Travel&Tourism Development Index in 2021 with a score of 4.3 out of a maximum of 7.0.

4.2. Safety and Security: Comparative Analysis of Bulgaria and Neighbouring Countries

Pillar *Safety and Security* is formed by 6 indicators and measures the extent to which tourists, businesses and residents are exposed to security risks. A high crime rate deters tourists and makes the destination less attractive for business investment. The scope of this pillar includes the reliability of the police, violence, terrorism and armed conflicts.

Tables 2.1 to 2.6 present in a systematized form the value, score and rank of each of the studied countries for each of the indicators forming Safety and Security for 2019 and 2021.

Table 2.1. Safety and Security indicators - Bulgaria

| Indicator | Year | 2019 | | | 2021 | | |
|--|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | | Value | Score | Rank | Value | Score | Rank |
| <i>BCCV, 1-7(best)</i> | | 3.9 | 3.9 | 88 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 98 |
| <i>RPS, 1-7(best)</i> | | 3.7 | 3.7 | 85 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 71 |
| <i>SWAN, 0-1(best)</i> | | 0.5 | 3.9 | 64 | 0.6 | 4.4 | 64 |
| <i>HR per 100,000 pop</i> | | 1.1 | 6.8 | 40 | 1.3 | 6.7 | 40 |
| <i>GTI, 0-10(worst); score 1-7(best)</i> | | 0.3 | 6.8 | 28 | 0.2 | 6.9 | 28 |
| <i>OVD deaths per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 |
| Safety and Security - Total | | 5.3 | 5.3 | 62 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 54 |

Table 2.2. Safety and Security indicators - Romania

| Indicator | Year | 2019 | | | 2021 | | |
|--|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | | Value | Score | Rank | Value | Score | Rank |
| <i>BCCV, 1-7(best)</i> | | 5.5 | 5.5 | 16 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 54 |
| <i>RPS, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.8 | 4.8 | 44 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 60 |
| <i>SWAN, 0-1(best)</i> | | 0.5 | 4.2 | 54 | 0.6 | 4.7 | 54 |
| <i>HR per 100,000 pop</i> | | 1.5 | 6.7 | 39 | 1.3 | 6.7 | 39 |
| <i>GTI, 0-10(worst); score 1-7(best)</i> | | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 |
| <i>OVD deaths per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 |
| Safety and Security - Total | | 5.9 | 5.9 | 27 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 38 |

Table 2.3. Safety and Security indicators - Greece

| Indicator | Year | 2019 | | | 2021 | | |
|--|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | | Value | Score | Rank | Value | Score | Rank |
| <i>BCCV, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.8 | 4.8 | 54 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 85 |
| <i>RPS, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.2 | 4.2 | 68 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 49 |
| <i>SWAN, 0-1(best)</i> | | 0.5 | 3.9 | 54 | 0.6 | 4.7 | 54 |
| <i>HR per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.8 | 6.8 | 25 | 0.9 | 6.8 | 25 |
| <i>GTI, 0-10(worst); score 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.3 | 4.4 | 88 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 88 |
| <i>OVD deaths per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 |
| Safety and Security - Total | | 5.2 | 5.2 | 72 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 63 |

Table 2.4. Safety and Security indicators - Turkey

| Indicator | Year | 2019 | | | 2021 | | |
|--|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | | Value | Score | Rank | Value | Score | Rank |
| <i>BCCV, 1-7(best)</i> | | 3.9 | 3.9 | 90 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 57 |
| <i>RPS, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.1 | 4.1 | 78 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 56 |
| <i>SWAN, 0-1(best)</i> | | 0.5 | 3.8 | 76 | 0.5 | 3.9 | 76 |
| <i>HR per 100,000 pop</i> | | 3.3 | 6.3 | 72 | 2.6 | 6.5 | 72 |
| <i>GTI, 0-10(worst); score 1-7(best)</i> | | 7.0 | 2.8 | 105 | 6.1 | 3.3 | 105 |
| <i>OVD deaths per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.9 | 5.7 | 109 | 0.7 | 5.9 | 108 |
| Safety and Security - Total | | 4.4 | 4.4 | 98 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 90 |

Table 2.5. Safety and Security indicators - Serbia

| Indicator | Year | 2019 | | | 2021 | | |
|--|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | | Value | Score | Rank | Value | Score | Rank |
| <i>BCCV, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.4 | 4.4 | 68 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 85 |
| <i>RPS, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.1 | 4.1 | 77 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 68 |
| <i>SWAN, 0-1(best)</i> | | 0.7 | 5.4 | 38 | 0.7 | 5.2 | 38 |
| <i>HR per 100,000 pop</i> | | 1.4 | 6.7 | 36 | 1.2 | 6.8 | 36 |
| <i>GTI, 0-10(worst); score 1-7(best)</i> | | 0.2 | 6.9 | 19 | 0.1 | 7.0 | 19 |
| <i>OVD deaths per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 |
| Safety and Security - Total | | 5.7 | 5.7 | 37 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 42 |

Table 2.6. Safety and Security indicators - North Macedonia

| Indicator | Year | 2019 | | | 2021 | | |
|--|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|
| | | Value | Score | Rank | Value | Score | Rank |
| <i>BCCV, 1-7(best)</i> | | 4.0 | 4.0 | 84 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 97 |
| <i>RPS, 1-7(best)</i> | | 3.5 | 3.5 | 93 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 94 |
| <i>SWAN, 0-1(best)</i> | | 0.6 | 4.8 | 50 | 0.6 | 4.8 | 50 |
| <i>HR per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.9 | 6.8 | 34 | 1.2 | 6.8 | 34 |
| <i>GTI, 0-10(worst); score 1-7(best)</i> | | 0.6 | 6.6 | 23 | 0.1 | 6.9 | 23 |
| <i>OVD deaths per 100,000 pop</i> | | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 | 0.0 | 7.0 | 1 |
| Safety and Security - Total | | 5.5 | 5.5 | 57 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 60 |

Source: Own research

Bulgaria's overall security and safety score for 2021 is 5.5, which is an improvement compared to 2019 (5.2), and the scores are higher than the average – 3.5. All other countries have an overall security and safety score above the average for 2021, with Serbia and Romania having the best (5.7), and Turkey having the lowest (4.8).

Within the pillar Safety and Security, Bulgaria has above-average scores regarding the formative indicators. It has relatively better positions in terms of Homicide rate, Global Terrorism Index, Organized violence, deaths.

Studies have shown that users are highly sensitive to property and street crime and this influences their choice of visitation (Fe & Sanfelice, 2022). Knowledge about what economic consequences crimes have for the visited place gives us the Business costs of crime and violence indicators. The data for the BCCV indicator within the pillar Safety and Security are collected with a survey question “In your country, to what extent do the following impose costs on businesses: Incidence of crime and violence”, with answers on a scale of 1 = To a great extent – imposes huge costs; 7 = Not at all – imposes no costs. Regarding Business costs of crime and violence, Bulgaria has the lowest score compared to its neighbours for 2021 – 3.7. Among the countries compared, Bulgaria has the highest costs for business from crime and violence, which is an unfavourable finding.

The data for the BCCV indicator within the Safety and Security Pillar are collected with a survey question “In your country, to what extent do the following impose costs on businesses: Incidence of crime and violence”, with answers on a scale of 1 = To a great extent – imposes huge costs; 7 = Not at all – imposes no costs. Regarding Business costs of crime and violence, Bulgaria has the lowest score compared to its neighbours for 2021 – 3.7. Among the countries compared, Bulgaria has the highest Business costs of crime and violence, which is an unfavourable finding.

Police services are a type of service providing security and safety and have both preventive and follow-up effects. The scientific literature states that efforts in crime prevention initiatives are taking place in both ways whereby the first being via conventionally combating the crime itself and the second one by the methodology of enhancing public perception of police's service performance (Saruji et al., 2018). Data on the Reliability of police services indicator are collected with a question from a questionnaire "In your country, to what extent can police services be relied on to efficiently enforce law and order?" on a scale: 1 = Not at all; 7 = To a great extent. Regarding the Reliability of police services, Bulgaria also occupies the penultimate position compared to the other studied countries, only North Macedonia has a lower score.

Safety walking alone at night is an indicator of people's perceived safety when walking alone on the streets at night and how safe they feel in their respective countries. This perception may not always match crime rates. Factors outside of crime, such as the presence of dangerous animals or urban planning, can affect feelings of safety. The data are from the Legatum Prosperity Index 2021 score based on the percentage of people who responded "Yes" to the Gallup question: Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live? With this indicator, all the other countries studied in this chapter have a higher score than Bulgaria, except for Turkey.

The homicide rate is considered a key indicator of serious crimes. The data for this indicator are from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The organization collects statistical information from national offices and international institutions such as Interpol, Eurostat, UNICEF, World Health Organization, etc. The scores of the studied countries regarding Homicide rate are approximately the same. Score 6.7 for Bulgaria and Romania, and 6.8 for Greece, Serbia and North Macedonia and the lowest Homicide rate per 100,000 population is 6.5 for Turkey.

Except for Greece and Turkey, the Global Terrorism Index (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2020) in the region has good indicators. Romania and Serbia have the best positions with a best score of 7.00, and Bulgaria and North Macedonia with 6.9. The Global Terrorism Index is formed according to four components: incidents, fatalities, injuries, and hostages.

As regards Organized violence, deaths per 100,000 population, all the countries in the analysis, except for Turkey, have the best possible score and rank 1 for this indicator among all 117 countries assessed by the WEF. We can conclude that the countries under study provide a high degree of security regarding this indicator.

4.3. Interrelationship between Overall Tourism Development and the Countries' Security and Safety

The graphical arrangement of the countries of the Sub-Regional Group: Balkans and Eastern Europe and Southern Europe compared to the index Average can be seen in Figure 2.

The majority of the countries analyzed are above the average level of security and safety (5.3), except for Turkey, which is below the average level. Serbia and North Macedonia fall in the quadrant below the average level of tourism development. Bulgaria, Greece and Romania are the countries that are above the average level by both indicators.

The data show that the studied set of countries forms a region that has good levels of security and safety and Travel and Tourism Development Index. Bulgaria, Romania and Greece fall in

the most favourable quadrant with an above-average level by both indicators. Serbia and North Macedonia have an above-average level of Security and Safety, but their Travel and Tourism Development Index is slightly below average. Of the countries studied in this chapter, Turkey is above average by the Travel and Tourism Development Index, but below average on the pillar Safety and Security.

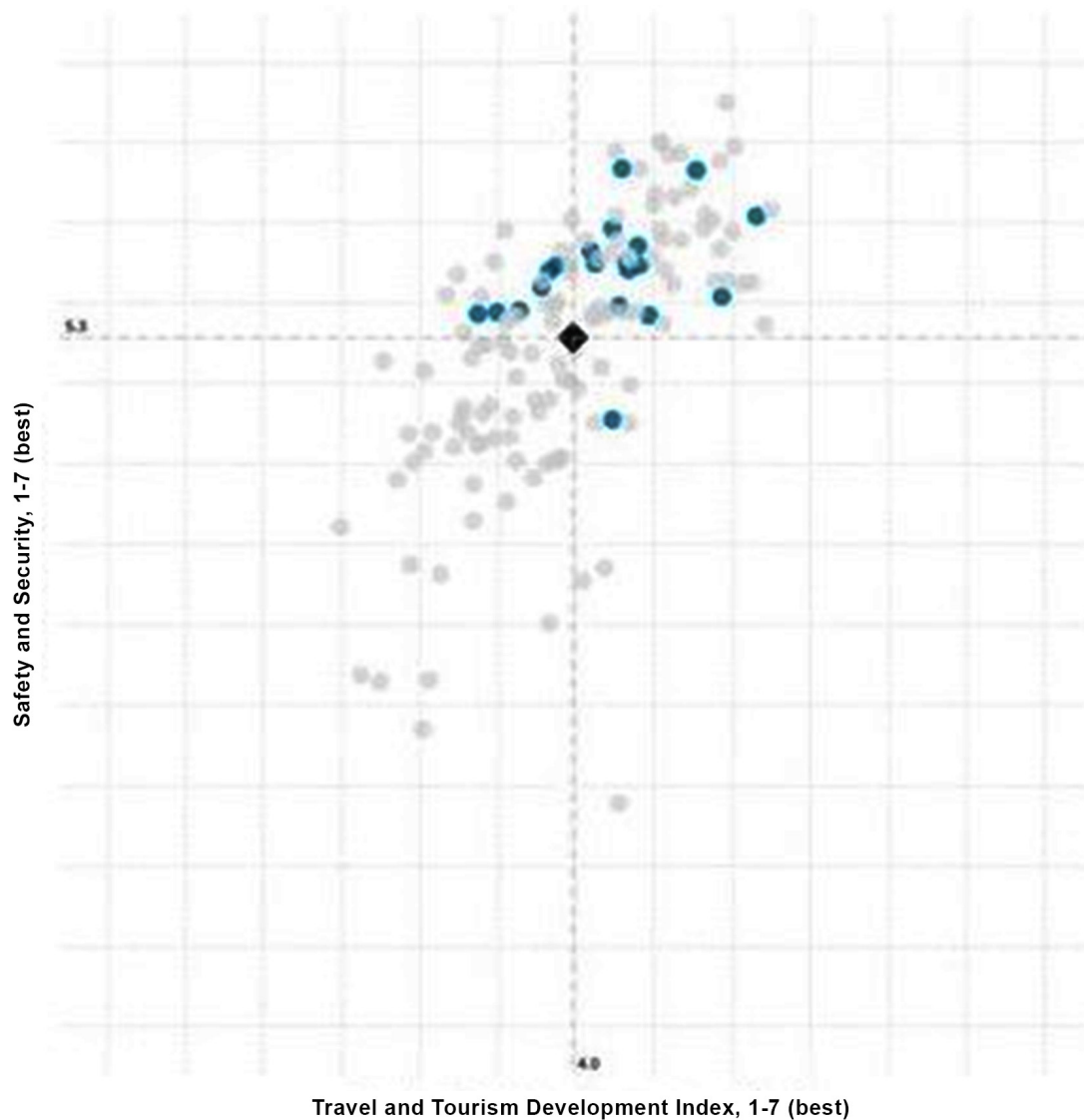


Figure 3. Relationship: Travel and Tourism Development Index, Safety and Security

Source: World Economic Forum, 2021a

5. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The results of this analysis will be used by the author in future studies and research on security and safety in these and some other countries. The author plans to expand the circle to more countries. In this way, it will be possible to highlight the strengths and weaknesses in terms of security and safety in a wide geographical region.

Also, a contemporary issue is the safety of people from cybercrimes. In the absence of effective regulatory, legal and ethical frameworks, Internet users and organizations can be exposed to significant economic, social, emotional and even physical risks.

6. CONCLUSION

What has been discussed in this chapter allows us to make the following important generalizations and conclusions: concerns about safety and security in destinations are growing among tourists, as well as among businesses, academics and public policymakers with an interest in tourism.

The low level of International tourism inbound receipts from one international tourist for Bulgaria necessitates that decisions for the better valorization of tourism should be made. The comparison with neighbouring countries also shows the low levels of internal tourism in Bulgaria, which is also a field of making necessary decisions related to destination management.

The comparison of the six indicators forming the pillar Safety and Security allows us to highlight three of the indicators that have an unsatisfactory level in Bulgaria compared to other countries and these are: Business costs of crime and violence, Reliability of police services and Safety walking alone at night.

Despite the differences in the level of their tourism development, the countries of the region have above the world average level of security and safety. An exception is Turkey, which is among the countries with a slightly below-average level of this pillar.

The comparative analysis can provide important information that is useful to the entities involved in tourism planning and development.

Acknowledgment

This research is funded by the Institute for Scientific Research of “D. A. Tsenov” Academy of Economics, Svishtov, Bulgaria, grant Scientific Project IP1-2023.

References

- Berce, J., Lacmanović, D., & Raspor, A. (2021). Impact of Terrorism on Tourism Demand in the EU and the Mediterranean. In V. Bevanda, & S. Štetić (Eds.), *6 International Thematic Monograph: Modern Management Tools and Economy of Tourism Sector in the Present Era* (pp. 73-93). Belgrade: Association of Economists and Managers of the Balkans. <https://doi.org/10.31410/tmt.2021-2022.73>
- Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2013). Destination countries' risk image as perceived by Finnish travellers. *Matkailututkimus*, *9(1)*, 21-38.
- Fe, H., & Sanfelice, V. (2022). How bad is crime for business? Evidence from consumer behavior. *Journal of Urban Economics*, *129*, 103448. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2022.103448>
- Fuchs, G., & Reichel, A. (2006). Tourist Destination Risk Perception: The Case of Israel. *Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing*, *14(2)*, 83-108. https://doi.org/10.1300/j150v14n02_06
- George, R. (2003). Tourist's perceptions of safety and security while visiting Cape Town. *Tourism Management*, *24(5)*, 575-585. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177\(03\)00003-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0261-5177(03)00003-7)
- Hall, C. M., Timothy, D. J., & Duval, D. T. (2004). Security and Tourism: Towards a New Understanding? *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *15(2-3)*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1300/j073v15n02_01
- Institute for Economics and Peace. (2020). Global Terrorism Index 2020: Measuring the Impact of Terrorism. <https://reliefweb.int/attachments/93b527d8-5b8d-3ea1-bc5e-f810e42d45df/GTI-2020-web-2.pdf>

- Korstanje, M. (2009). Re-visiting risk perception theory in the context of travel. *e-Review of Tourism Research*, 7(4), 68-81.
- Mansfeld, Y., & Pizam, A. (2006). Tourism and Safety Issues. *Tourism, Security and Safety*, 139-141. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-7506-7898-8.50013-8>
- Maser, B., & Weiermair, K. (1998). Travel Decision-Making: From the Vantage Point of Perceived Risk and Information Preferences. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 7(4), 107-121. https://doi.org/10.1300/j073v07n04_06
- Nardi, M. D., & Wilks, j. (2007). Tourist water safety: surf life saving initiatives for the Japanese inbound market. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 13(3), 275-283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766707077700>
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, V. V. (1985). A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, 49(4), 41-50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251430>
- Pizam, A., & Mansfeld, Y. (2006). Toward a Theory of Tourism Security. *Tourism, Security and Safety*, 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-7506-7898-8.50004-7>
- Reisinger, Y., & Mavondo, F. (2005). Travel Anxiety and Intentions to Travel Internationally: Implications of Travel Risk Perception. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43(3), 212-225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287504272017>
- Saruji, M., Ahmad, Y., & Zainuddin, A. (2018). Perception on Reliability and Responsiveness of Polis DiRaja Malaysia (PDRM): A Study among Citizens in Putrajaya. *Journal of Administrative Science*, 15(3).
- Schiffman, L. G., Kanuk, L. L., & Wisenblit, J. (2010). *Consumer behavior (10th ed.)*. UpperSaddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Sönmez, S. F., & Graefe, A. R. (1998). Determining Future Travel Behavior from Past Travel Experience and Perceptions of Risk and Safety. *Journal of Travel Research*, 37(2), 171-177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004728759803700209>
- Stankova, M., & Kaleychev, S. (2022). Balkans - Safe and Secure Destination for Tourism. Analysis of the Situation. *Tourism & Hospitality Industry 2022. Trends and Challenges* (pp. 281-293). Opatija: University of Rijeka. <https://doi.org/10.20867/thi.26.16>
- Toker, A., & Emir, O. (2023). Safety and security research in tourism: A bibliometric mapping. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 34. <https://doi.org/10.54055/ejtr.v34i.2871>
- Trišić, I., Milojković, D. S., Ristić, V., Nechita, F., Maksin, M., Štetić, S., & Candrea, A. N. (2023). Sustainable Tourism of Important Plant Areas (IPAs)—A Case of Three Protected Areas of Vojvodina Province. *Land*, 12(7). <https://doi.org/10.3390/land12071278>
- Tsaur, S.-H., Tzeng, G.-H., & Wang, K.-C. (1997). Evaluating tourist risks from fuzzy perspectives. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(4), 796-812. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0160-7383\(97\)00059-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0160-7383(97)00059-5)
- UNWTO. (n.d.). <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-statistics/tourism-statistics-database>
- Wichasin, P., & Dounghphummes, N. (2012). A comparative study of international tourists' safety needs and hai tourist polices' perception towards international tourists' safety needs. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology*, 67, 1372-1378.
- World Economic Forum. (2021a). *Travel and Tourism Development Index*. <https://www.weforum.org/reports/travel-and-tourism-development-index-2021>
- World Economic Forum. (2021b). *Travel and Tourism Development Index*. Appendix C. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/travel-and-tourism-development-index-2021/appendix-c-a5c971e13b>

