

## Article

# Pilgrimage in Slovakia—A Hidden Opportunity for the Management of Secular Objects?

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**Abstract:** The Slovak Republic is a country of a deeply rooted Catholic religion and rich cultural, religious and craft tradition. The authors, in their own research, primarily focus on a group of pilgrims, believers, mostly Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic, who are inhabitants of the Slovak Republic (not necessarily the region in which the object of interest is located). The research is based on geographic and sociological selection. The authors define the research object as cultural and historical secular monuments—museums, castles, chateaux, and the like—located in the centre attractive for this group of tourists, that is to say, in places connected with pilgrimage sites, cathedrals, historically important objects from the point of view of religious belief in individual regions of the Slovak Republic. The aim of the authors is to provide the management of these objects with valuable recommendations reasonably justified by the result of their research, in the context of attracting the target group to visit a selected cultural object not directly related to the tourist activity of the target group, but located in the region of which the target group expresses a strong interest, solely for reasons of religious belief and pilgrimage. The primary research phase target of the authors was to solve the problem of the existence of a specific spectrum of common dominant motivation factors of pilgrimage tourist participation as a target group of exploration of activities and an offer of secular objects in the region (see Materials and Methods, H1). We analysed the results of our research through the SPSS program. We used the factor analysis method to extract the key motivation factors, and we have extracted key factors using principal component analysis and VARIMAX rotation in the right-angle system (rotated solution), clusters, assuming that each corresponds to one of the expected motivation factors. Detailed research conception and methodology as well as the results are described in the article.

**Keywords:** pilgrimage; religion; management; secular monuments; motivation factors; visitor

## 1. Introduction

The World Tourism Organization considers humanity's culture and common heritage an inexhaustible resource to which tourism has certain rights and obligations (UN WTO 2005). Culture can be perceived in two key directions, the inner being the tradition and the cultural core, that is, what people do or create in the cultural field both in the past and now. The outward direction is a way of life (faith, gastronomy, traditions, etc.) as well as creative thinking (fashion, style, design, film, industry, etc.). It is important to understand that religious lifestyles are how people work out a combination of personal, familial, social, and similar relationships in regard to belonging, consumption, style, or persona more or less in a public or private way, but without obligation; that is, the privatization of religious life such that within wide bounds religious life is capable of being

socially ignored, yet personally meaningful, with or without perceivable consequences beyond the individual) according to Berzano and Genova (2011). The link between culture and tourism has been looked at by many authors (Šambronská 2015; Bednárová et al. 2014; Tej 2008; Halmo 2018; Hóghová 2019; Kalousová 2015) as a subset of tourism focused on the landscape or cultural region, which also includes the lifestyle of people in areas, people's history, art, architecture, religion and other customs and traditions. The relationship between cultural heritage and cultural tourism can be characterized as a dynamic interaction that should take the form of cooperation and cooperation between all stakeholders involved in the development of tourism (Lenovský 2008; Bačuvčík and Harantová 2016; Timothy and Boyd 2003; Horváthová and Chmielewska 2016; Tittelbachová and Tyslová 2016; Abrahám and Lžičar 2018; Rubáček 2017).

Religion plays and played an important and decisive role in every society. Various religious beliefs originated from written records and were part of the first societies (Bowker 2004). Over the past few decades, we would not have found a pope who, in his speech to believers, would not mention the phenomenon of tourism in the context of understanding between people, including among people of different faiths, which is one of the greatest values, worthy of development that tourism brings to the world today (Dancák 2005; Lukáč 2018; Hangoni and Imrichová 2010). For example, the Message of the Holy Father John Paul II on the 24th World Tourism Day (27 September 2003), dedicated to the fight against poverty, job creation and the establishment of social peace read: "Travel and tourism are always associated with encountering foreign cultures and people. Everywhere, but especially in developing countries, visitors and tourists cannot avoid contact with the painful reality of poverty and hunger. Our visit to them should be an opportunity for dialogue between people of equal dignity; it should be a driving force for a better understanding of the country's people, their history and culture, and at the same time a sincere effort to understand others that lead to concrete solidarity gestures. I strongly wish tourism to become an increasingly effective tool to fight poverty, to promote personal and social growth of individuals and nations, to consolidate reciprocity and cooperation between people, cultures and religions" (John Paul II 2003).

### *1.1. History and Present of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*

Thus, religious tourism and specifically pilgrimage generally represents a form of tourism where people of a particular religion travel individually or in groups for reasons related to religion or spirituality in their pursuit of a higher goal, and thus encompasses all kinds of travel that is motivated by religion and where the place of destination is religious site (Blackwell 2007; Busatta 2018, Raj and Morpeth 2007). However, Griffin (2007) points out that these religious or spiritual travellers are often ignored, as a different grouping, by traditional tourism research. Jongmeewasin (2016) presented religious tourism, so-called "Faith Tourism", as a form of tourism, whereby people of faith travel individually or in groups for reasons related to religion or spirituality in their quest for meaning. It could be under pilgrimage, missionary, or leisure purposes. Many of today's most popular tourist destinations are related to ancient places of worship or to the site of apparent miracles. In addition, pilgrimage, as a part of religious tourism, is the act of moving from one place to another, often traveling through foreign lands; an ordered march of a group of people, usually with religious connotation. It is a ritual journey with a hallowed purpose; every step along the way has meaning; the pilgrim knows that the journey will be difficult and that life-giving challenges will emerge (Rinschede 1992; Vukonic 2006; Busatta 2018). However, as Liutikas (2018) points out, it is necessary to realize that religious tourism is different from pilgrimage and considered to be an intermediate form between religious pilgrimage and secular tourism. Religious tourists visit religious objects and sacred places mostly for cultural motives. As mentioned by Busatta (2018), pilgrimage is "liminal", that is a religious ritual that removes temporarily pilgrims from their normal environments both physically and socially, across geographical and social thresholds, and creates new communities which give way to a wider common identity and equality, while pointing out the need to take into account the different meanings of pilgrimage as a "travel to foreign lands" and as a "journey to a sacred place", and of pilgrim as "foreigner" and as a "travelling devotee". Pilgrimage is a part of religious tourism, but in the Slovak Republic the religious issue itself was until 1989 on the edge of the interest of natural

or social sciences, since the political-social conditions covered by the principles of communism did not allow it to develop (Bubelíny 2011). The concept of pilgrimage as a form of tourism is defined by the authors (Rinschede 1992; Vukonic 2006) as a migration whose participants are during the journey and at the place of temporary stay strongly or exclusively religiously motivated, while with the exception of believers, i.e., pilgrims, including also the segment of tourists seeking cultural monuments and hence sacral objects purely from cognitive motives. Unlike religious tourism, pilgrimage has a higher goal, even if it uses trains, aircraft, and accommodation facilities. It is primarily a religious phenomenon- timeless that is tied to cult. Since the early Christian centuries, these basic goals have been: to see, pray, adore, to fulfil the promise and to hear pleas (Gavenda 2004). Pilgrimage is defined as moving from one place to another, often by traveling through foreign countries, usually with religious significance. It is understood as a ritual journey with a sacred purpose, every step along the way is meaningful, every pilgrim knows that the journey will be challenging and that life challenges will arise. The strong motive of pilgrimage was the great desire for its own transformation, to which the pilgrimage can give impulses (Dancák 2005). Pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of travel, as pilgrimages form one of the oldest forms of expression of religious worship. Pilgrim traditions have greatly influenced the spiritual and cultural character of Europe. Different pilgrimages are organized around the world, involving people with religious values whose motives can be significantly different from those of a religious traveller. They are one of the oldest forms of tourism and are an integral part of it. Pilgrimage is defined as the path of a pilgrim who travels from place to place, usually traveling long distances and a sacred place as an act of devotion, a ritual journey with a holy purpose (Gúčík 2010). Thus, according to Goeldner and Richie (2014), the pilgrims represent a specific, religiously motivated type of migration that accompanies humanity from its oldest history with a significant impact on many countries. The motive of wandering in its religious and spatial context is the visit of the holy place (*locus sacer*), where God's presence is the most striking and at that point performing religious acts, prayers as an external manifestation of faith. The etymology of the word pilgrim goes back to the deep Middle Ages and marks him as a person who travels to cult places of religious motives. As foreigners or pilgrims, people who were away from their place of residence and were outside their own region were labelled. The pilgrim is, therefore, a man who sets out on a long journey, usually to an unknown country, and will stay there some time. However, there is a difference between a tourist and a pilgrim. The tourist comes to historical places to culturally discover the sights of time. The pilgrim differs from the tourist by making his way through the marked places only admiring the beauties and monuments, but trying to survive and present the time of the saints who left in the places where he goes. The extinguishing examples of these faith witnesses are an encouragement and a boost to life for him. Pilgrims are the main stakeholders of pilgrimages (Dancák 2005).

The historical basis of pilgrimage can be seen in ancient Greece, when the primary motives for travel were healing (Epidauros), but also wandering to the temples of gods and to the fortune-telling sites e.g., in Delphi, the ancient Greeks basically laid the foundations for incentive, curative and pilgrimage. Long-distance travel, mainly associated with pilgrimage, was, according to Chorvát (2007), somewhat institutionalized as early as the 13th–14th centuries, much earlier than other forms of travel were institutionalized. According to him, the most common form of so-called voluntary travel was in Europe with the Christian pilgrimage. That is why Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostella were the three most frequented travel destinations in the Middle Ages.

According to Krogmann et al. (2017), it can be stated that the differences between religious tourism and pilgrimage are currently being blurred, more precisely the boundaries between them are very difficult to identify. While in the past wandering was the only option for temporary abandonment, today, not only religious elements appear in pilgrim tours in Eastern and Central Europe (e.g., pilgrim trip to Medjugorje offers a day at the seaside).

Nowadays, traditional religiously motivated journeys have already become an important sector of modern tourism (Timothy and Olsen 2006). Religious centres, spiritual sites and sacred destinations are often turned into visitor attractions to bring economic benefits to local residents and communities, while creating the necessary financial resources to preserve and restore cultural

heritage (Raj and Griffin 2015). What is now called “religious tourism” has already evolved from a small narrow market to one of the most advanced forms of tourism (Collins-Kreiner 2010; Digance 2003; Timothy and Olsen 2006).

Internal motivational impulses and external motivational incentives contribute to the motivation of the tourist participant. According to Bubelíny (2011), the motivational impulse in the conditions of pilgrimage tourism—i.e., the inner stimulus for the pilgrim is the need for extraordinary activity, or more precisely the act of trying to incline God, the Virgin Mary and the saints to their side with the belief that what the pilgrim asked for (healing, protection from a threat, solving problems in his life, etc.) will be fulfilled. If these requests have already been fulfilled by the deity, the believer often needs to visit the pilgrimage site with a desire to thank for the graces shown.

The external incentive is based on the traditions of wandering to the destination center, predominantly in pilgrims, for whom pilgrimage becomes a stereotype and an essential part of their spiritual life (Gavenda 2004). The main motive of the journey is solely religious, such as adoring, praying, fulfilling a promise, humility, sensitivity, helping others (Matušíková 2019). Participants aim to reach a holy place and spend time on prayers, religious rituals and meditation on the road. They are crucially linked to holy places during the journey. Some of the pilgrimage participants do not have spiritual motives to participate in pilgrimages and come only for tourist purposes, or as escorts of another person. The holy place is not usually the destination of the trip, but is located on the route of the tourist route.

### *1.2. Slovak Republic in Terms of the Possibilities for Pilgrimage and Religious Tourism*

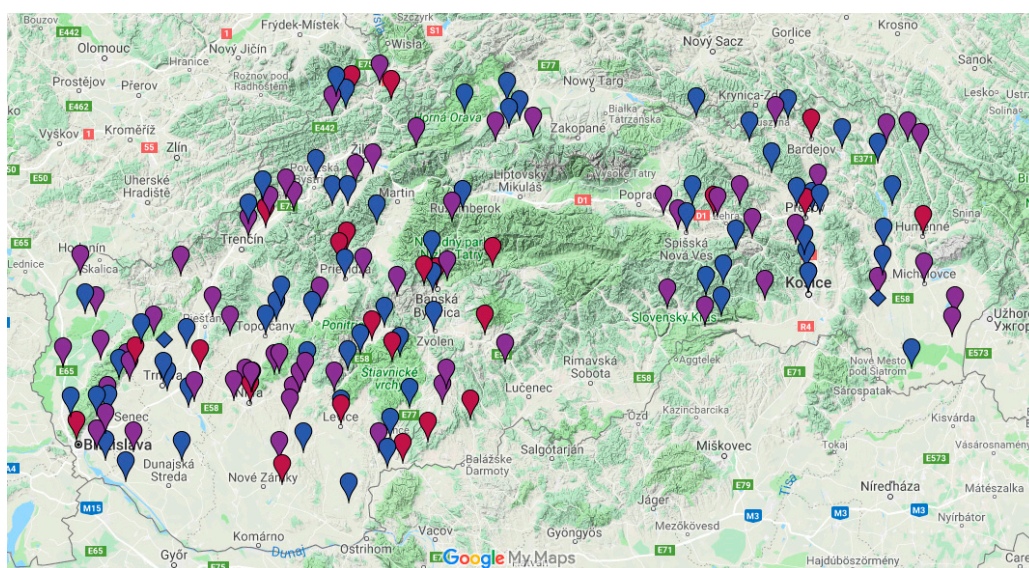
Slovakia is a very interesting and colourful country in terms of tourism, whose nature is based on the natural environment and structures created by human activity. One of the main natural conditions of tourism is surface diversity, climatic conditions, and hydrological conditions, but especially the richness of cultural and historical and, therefore, also religious, monuments. For international tourism, the geographical position of Slovakia is significant, through which pass the road networks from north to south, east to west and vice versa. Specifically, pilgrimage has a longstanding deep tradition here (Čábyová and Ďurková 2006). This is evidenced by the large number of pilgrim sites that have irreplaceable religious significance; also the godliness of the Slovaks and their desire to go to these sacred places are demonstrated by the annual statistics on the number of pilgrims. However, these pilgrim sites are not only of spiritual significance. They are a part of the country and history of a particular region. Each of these regions has its own identity and their natural or historical wealth offers the visitor a unique picture of the specificities of each region. Linking the pilgrimage visit with other natural and cultural-historical sites in their vicinity, therefore, brings a new perspective on the territory's riches, where, in addition to the material perception of individual sites, the spiritual enrichment of every pilgrim or visitor who comes to these places is at the forefront. The beginnings of tourism are in the territory of Slovakia placed in the period of founding Roman baths. The causes of tourism development were different. First, they were business trips, later pilgrimage routes (Jarábková 2007). In the 19th century, holidaymakers became interested in mountain areas. The cultural-historical monuments of Slovakia started to be appreciated from the point of view of tourism only in the 20th century.

The pilgrimage routes are mainly based on the historically strong Christian foundation of the Slovaks. According to another Slovak census, Roman Catholics with 3,347,277 (62% of the population), the Evangelists—316,250 (5.9%), Greek Catholics—206,871 (3.8%). Such are the numbers of members of the three largest religious denominations in Slovakia (Statistical Office of the SR). As a result of historical development, Christian confession dominates the religious structure of the Slovak population, which also emerged from the last 2011 Population and Housing Census.

Slovakia has a rich history of pilgrimage. Allegedly, history dates back to 1377 in the oldest village of Marianka. Historians have written a traded legend of a hermit who lived in this area and carved a statue of the Virgin Mary from pear wood (it was in 1030 according to Ľudovít Kummer) (Mariánka 2016). In Slovakia, pilgrimage sites are a very important part of the country's religious life. Most of the pilgrimage sites in the area were built in the 16th and 17th centuries, i.e., during the re-

Catholicization. The pilgrimage tradition and the oldest pilgrimage sites date back to the Middle Ages. These pilgrimage sites include Saint Beňadik (11th century), Levoča (13th century), Košice (13th century) and Spišský Štvrtok (14th century). In the 16th century, more than 30 important pilgrimage sites were established in Slovakia, including Obišovce (16th century), Marianka (17th century), Šaštín (17th century), Staré Hory (17th century), Nitra (18th century), Trnava (18th century), Lutin (19th century), Gaboltov (20th century) and Litman (20th century) (Fekete 1947). Matlovič (2001a) considers Levoča as the most important place of pilgrimage with international significance, Nitra with Šaštín and Staré Hory with nationwide significance.

From the point of view of localization of pilgrimage sites in Slovakia, Fekete (1947) pursues two main concentrations. The first is the area in the southwestern part of Slovakia in the Danube Lowland; the second is the region of eastern Slovakia with the historical regions of Spiš, Šariš and Zemplín, which crosses the boundaries between Catholic Western rites (Roman Catholic Catholics) and the Eastern Rite (Greek Catholics). In other parts of Slovakia the number of pilgrimage sites is low. Examples include Central Slovakia (Banská Štiavnica, Staré Hory), southern Slovakia (Biňa) or Orava and Kysuce (Turzovka) (Fekete 1947; Verba and Pasternák 2016). On the other hand, Matlovič (2001b) divides pilgrimage sites in Slovakia into two categories: Pilgrimage sites associated with the worship of the Crucifixion of the Lord (crucifixion of Jesus Christ, Son of God, on the cross in Jerusalem)—a calvary built from the 16th century to simulate the conditions in Jerusalem; Pilgrimage sites associated with the cult of Our Lady (cult of Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ worshiped by believers in Christianity)—the largest group of pilgrimage sites. The pilgrimage sites of Greek Catholics, located exclusively in the eastern part of the country, also have a significant position in the Slovak pilgrimage sites. The eight most important of them are Lutina, Litmanová, Čirč, Šašová, Buková Hôrka, Rafajovce, Krásny Brod and Klokočov, which became religious centers for incoming pilgrims and special religious places of this specific religious group. Its spirituality has its roots in Eastern Christianity, which was brought to Slovakia by the Byzantine mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius, whose traces were most pronounced in Eastern Slovakia (Petrík 2012). Poláček and Judák (2005) rank among the important ecclesiastical sites in Slovakia the basilica minor, pilgrimage sites, calvary and cross roads. At present, 13 churches have the title Basilica Minor, of which 11 are Roman Catholic and 2 Greek Catholic. Calvary and cross places are 113 (Poláček and Judák 2005). Within the Catholic pilgrimage sites, we identified 159 sites in 137 settlements in Slovakia (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Pilgrimage sites in Slovakia (total of 159). (Note: Blue—Churches/Chapels, Red—Calvary, Purple—Cross Way. Source<sup>1</sup>).

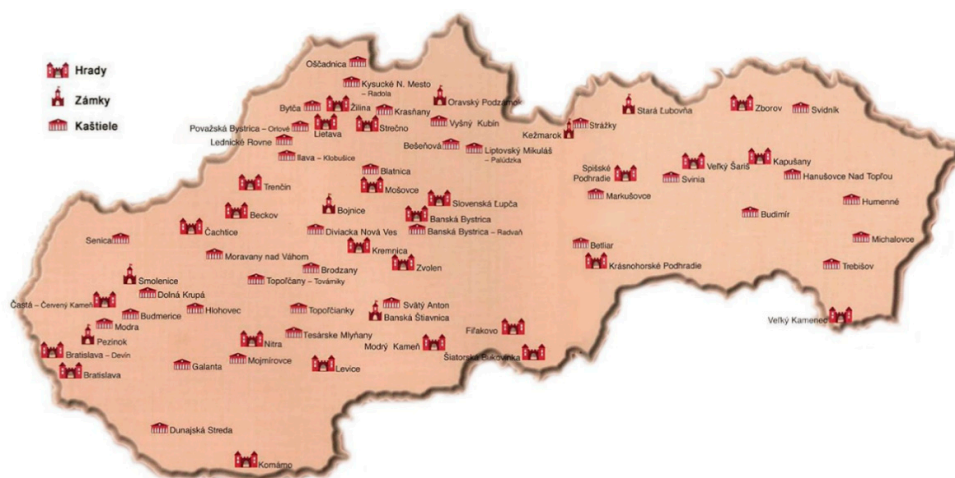
<sup>1</sup> [www.putnickemiesta.sk](http://www.putnickemiesta.sk).

Almost 67% of Catholic pilgrimage sites within the administrative division of Slovakia at NUTS<sup>2</sup> 2 level are located in western Slovakia (52) and in eastern Slovakia (46). The most famous pilgrimage routes, which are often linked by pilgrimage sites in the administration of volunteer associations, have been in recent years: Pilgrim's House-United Hands, Central European Marian Road, St. James' Way, Slovakia Marian Way, Cyrilo-Methodian Way, Barborská Path, European Cultural Path, St. Elizabeth Path.

Religious pilgrimages and ceremonies are a goal for believers, but religious tourists enter pilgrimage sites as well as those who are not religious. Places of pilgrimage can be visited throughout the year, not just during officially declared pilgrimages. Those who are not religious are coming to places with both physical and spiritual motives, strength, encouragement, joy and peace. In addition, these places are real in rural areas, which also offer other possibilities to enrich the pilgrimage participants, especially in the context of the existence of secular cultural and historical objects directly linked to the lives of saints near the pilgrimage sites in the Slovak Republic.

## 2. Results

The presentation of the results is structured and reflects the main objectives of the article which is part of the research under the VEGA 1/0720/19 project. By exploring the regions of the Slovak Republic in terms of their potential in terms of cultural and historical heritage and effective management of the territory of the author, they have come to motivate to focus on pilgrimage development in these regions in view of the high incidence of pilgrimage sites (Figure 1) and, in particular, the strong historical tradition associated with the Catholic religion of the country's population (Table 1). The objects of the authors' exploration are objects of pilgrimage and pilgrimage sites as well as secular objects historically associated with the given place in the site and its close proximity—primarily manor houses, museums, castles, and chateaux (Figure 2). For these secular objects, we assume, and at the same time we are based on geographic facts that they are directly or indirectly connected with the pilgrimage site, for example, that the saint has been actively working here during his lifetime, or in connection with his life pilgrimage the object is operating an exhibition or other demonstrations from his life and work. The target group of the survey are pilgrims, i.e., religiously founded tourists, Roman and Greek-Catholic, strong believers, primarily traveling in Slovakia and at the same time Slovaks.



<sup>2</sup> NUTST—The current NUTS 2016 classification is valid from 1 January 2018 and lists 104 regions at NUTS 1, 281 regions at NUTS 2 and 1348 regions at NUTS 3 level. The NUTS classification (Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics) is a hierarchical system for dividing up the economic territory of the EU for the purpose of: Socio-economic analyses of the regions—NUTS 1: major socio-economic regions; NUTS 2: basic regions for the application of regional policies; NUTS 3: small regions for specific diagnoses. In the conditions of Slovakia there are 8 administrative units.

**Figure 2.** Cultural and historical objects in Slovakia (Source<sup>3</sup>).**Table 1.** Numbers of believers in Slovakia (SR).

Churches and religious societies		Census 1.3.1950		Census 3.3.1991		Census 26.05.2001		Census 21.05.2011	
		Believers	%	Believers	%	Believers	%	Believers	%
1	Roman-Catholic Church	2,623,198	76.20	3,187,383	60.43	3,708,120	68.93	3,347,277	62.02
2	Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia	443,251	12.88	326,397	6.19	372,858	6.93	316,250	5.86
3	Greek (Byzantine) Catholic Church in the Slovak Republic	225,495	6.55	178,733	3.39	219,831	4.09	206,871	3.83
4	Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia	111,696	3.25	82,545	1.57	109,735	2.04	98,797	1.83
5	Orthodox Church in Slovakia	7975	0.23	34,376	0.65	50,363	0.94	49,133	0.91
6	Religious Society of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Slovak Republic			10,501	0.20	20,630	0.38	17,222	0.32
7	Evangelical Methodists in the Slovak Republic			4359	0.08	7347	0.14	10,328	0.19
8	Christian Corps in Slovakia			700	0.0	6519	0.12	7720	0.14
9	Apostolic Church in Slovakia			1116	0.02	3905	0.07	5831	0.11
10	Baptist Union of the Slovak Republic			2465	0.05	3562	0.07	3486	0.06
11	Brethren Church in the Slovak Republic			1861	0.0	3217	0.06	3396	0.06
12	Seventh-day Adventist Church			1721	0.03	3428	0.06	2915	0.05
13	Jewish religious communities	7476	0.22	912	0.02	2310	0.04	1999	0.04
14	Czechoslovak Husite Church in Slovakia	2825	0.08	625	0.01	1696	0.03	1782	0.03
15	Old Catholic Church in Slovakia			882	0.02	1733	0.03	1687	0.03
16	Bahá'í Community in the Slovak Republic							1065	0.02
17	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints							972	0.02
18	New Apostolic Church in the Slovak Republic							166	0.00
	Other	10,722	0.31	6373	0.12	6294	0.12	23,340	0.43
	Believers	3,432,638	99.72	3,840,949	72.82	4,521,549	84.05	4,100,237	75.97
	Without confession	9679	0.28	515,551	9.80	697,308	12.96	725,362	13.44
	Not identified			917,835	17.40	160,598	2.99	571,437	10.59
	Population of the SR	3,442,317	100	5,274,335	100	5,379,455	100	5,397,036	100

Source<sup>4</sup>:

### 2.1. Main Results of Analysis

The primary research of the authors was to solve the problem of the existence of a specific spectrum of common dominant motivation factors of pilgrimage participation as a target group of exploration of activities and offer of secular objects in the region (see Section 4, H1). We analysed the results of our research through the SPSS program. We used the factor analysis method to extract the key motivation factors, taking into account the questions from the second part of the questionnaire (No.5–No.26). On the basis of factor analysis, we have extracted key factors using principal component analysis and VARIMAX rotation in a right-angle system (rotated solution), clusters, assuming that each corresponds to one of the expected motivation factors of the potential target group participation in the offer of secular objects near the pilgrimage site; we call these F1, F2, etc. We have transformed Questions 5–26 as items o5–o26 for the purpose of factor analysis. Detailed statistical outputs are presented in the following schemes (Figure 3). In their research, the authors proceeded to determine two key hypotheses (for a methodological statistical description see Section

<sup>3</sup> [www.slovenskehrady.sk](http://www.slovenskehrady.sk).

<sup>4</sup> [www.culture.gov.sk](http://www.culture.gov.sk).

4 and results see Sections 2.1 and 2.2). H1 is defined as a key research hypothesis about the potential existence of motivational factors of target group participation in visiting the secular, usually a cultural-historical monument directly or indirectly with the pilgrimage site in the region, which is not directly related to the purpose of the visit. The hypothesis H2 is complementary to the main research and discusses the existence of relational links between the respondent's age, gender, education and marital status, but at the same time we look for possible connections between these target group identifiers in the partial hypotheses (if the partial hypotheses H2.1–H2.4 are confirmed) and assumed participation factors. We do not know the number of predicted factors, therefore we carry out scree plot analysis (three key components according to number assigned to statistical outputs are important, others are minimal weights as shown in the graph) and the component matrix in rotated space (we see clusters of questions SPSS statistical program). Using these methods we can identify on the basis of the questionnaire o5–o26 the number of possible motivating factors and their content (the questionnaire questions were defined based on the available literature, studies, as well as interviews with object management and regional representatives in the field of cultural development, to reflect in some groups of questions the possible motivating element of the interviewed tourist to participate in activities and offer secular objects near pilgrimage sites). Based on these analyses, we have obtained three confirmed components, that is to say, what we call the factors but are not yet able to define at the moment. We do this based on the content of the questions asked by the respondents, which “saturate” these factors- see the rotated component matrix. Within this matrix we see which questionnaire question, more precisely groups of questions that are relevant for each component of the three confirmed previous calculations. We will then call these components F1, F2 and F3 and we assign definitions to them according to the content of the questionnaire originally asked (F1—gaining closer knowledge of life, work and society-wide reference to the work of the saint, his contribution to society, the culture in which he worked, F2—gaining a sense of belonging, some survival not only by teasing and sacrificing, but also by little things in the life of the saint, trying to live with his feelings, love and suffering, getting to know the milestones of his life, F3—building awareness and enlightenment about the existence of other places connected with the life and work of the saint near the pilgrimage site and the path of the mire itself). Each factor and its weight has been repeatedly verified by reliability analysis, by recalculating Cronbach's Alpha to avoid misinterpretation of the weight of the factor. We illustrate the structure of the identified factors in a three-dimensional graphical presentation of factor analysis outputs.

The subject analysis explains 85.210% variability of the original variables, the remaining 14.790% is unexplained by the model.

As can be seen in Table 2, for the first three factors identified, the cumulative sum of component percentages is 85.210%, so we can consider them relevant. The dominant one is the first identified factor—clearly dominant also with respect to the slope of the curve in the graphical representation of the scree plot (Figure 4). The percentage of explained variance within selected components obtained by the principal component analysis extraction method is shown for the identified components in italics (Table 2). The saturation of these factors is described in Table 3.

By evaluating the answers to the scale questionnaire questions, we clearly define three key factors motivating the target group to participate in activities and offer secular objects near pilgrimage sites. The extracted factors are saturated by items o5–o9, o14–o17 and o24–o26 for factor F1, items o10–o13 and o18–o19 for factor F2, items o20–o23 for factor F3. Components o5–o26 in the Table 3 refer to the questions.

Component Plot in Rotated Space

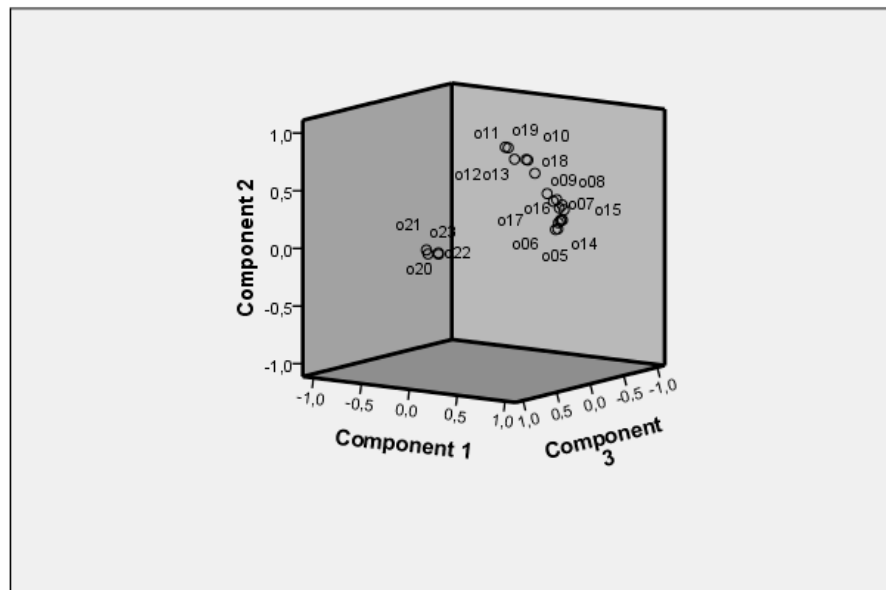


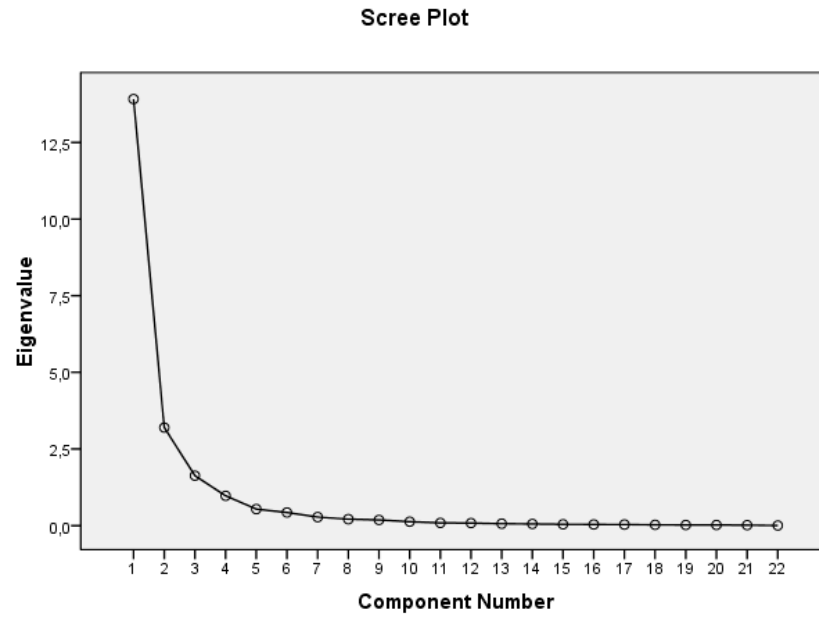
Figure 3. Component plot in rotated space (source: own processing (SPSS)).

Table 2. Total variance explained.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	13.916	63.257	63.257	13.916	63.257	63.257	9840	44.725	44.725
2	3200	14.543	77.800	3200	14.543	77.800	5397	24.532	69.257
3	1630	7410	85.210	1630	7410	85.210	3510	15.953	85.210
4	0.975	4430	89.641						
5	0.540	2454	92.095						
6	0.430	1957	94.052						
7	0.280	1272	95.323						
8	0.211	0.957	96.280						
9	0.187	0.852	97.132						
10	0.129	0.589	97.721						
11	0.091	0.411	98.132						
12	0.083	0.376	98.508						
13	0.064	0.293	98.801						
14	0.056	0.256	99.058						
15	0.044	0.198	99.256						
16	0.040	0.180	99.435						
17	0.035	0.159	99.594						
18	0.027	0.123	99.717						
19	0.021	0.097	99.814						
20	0.020	0.091	99.905						
21	0.016	0.072	99.977						
22	0.005	0.023	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: own processing according to SPSS statistical program.



**Figure 4.** Scree plot analysis of examined motivational factors (source: own processing according to SPSS statistical program).

**Table 3.** Rotational matrix of key motivation factors.

	Rotated Component Matrix		
	Component		
	1	2	3
o5	0.873	0.229	0.177
o6	0.871	0.229	0.138
o7	0.882	0.296	0.120
o8	0.776	0.455	0.020
o9	0.731	0.515	0.098
o10	0.442	0.768	−0.001
o11	0.264	0.864	0.054
o12	0.577	0.671	0.062
o13	0.420	0.788	0.141
o14	0.911	0.308	0.128
o15	0.871	0.381	0.044
o16	0.862	0.405	0.104
o17	0.890	0.308	0.117
o18	0.471	0.767	0.017
o19	0.333	0.874	0.111
o20	0.159	0.048	0.902
o21	0.064	0.043	0.922
o22	0.159	0.059	0.904
o23	0.043	0.074	0.917
o24	0.882	0.284	0.146
o25	0.837	0.417	0.027
o26	0.800	0.455	0.104

Source: own processing according to SPSS statistical program.

For a comprehensive and complementary confirmation of the existence of the identified factors, we decided, in addition to factor analysis in the statistical evaluation, to develop a reliability analysis based on the conversion of relevant Cronbach's Alpha values (Table 3) reflecting the internal consistency of the motivational factors examined. The average score was calculated for each of the factors F1–F3. Based on these calculations, we have merged in the reliability analysis all the questionnaire entries for each of the predicted output factors (F1, F2, and F3) and then calculated Cronbach's Alpha outcomes using the SPSS statistical program. These calculations are presented in the following tables, including the individual description of both research and output for each of the assumed motivational factors examined. In all the analyses in question, 2898 returned fully completed questionnaires (92.1% of the total number of distributed questionnaires).

When investigating the motivational factor F1, we use the definition of a cluster of items defined in the previous questionnaire reference table no. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 25, 26, which defined the predicted motivation factor. The Cronbach's Alpha value for this factor is 0.985 (Table 4). If any of the items in the statistical calculation are removed, the Cronbach's Alpha value does not change significantly and represents statistically reliable values in the range of 0.983–0.985.

**Table 4.** Reliability analysis for F1 factor.

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>
0.985	12
<b>Cronbach's Alpha if Item is Deleted</b>	
o5	0.984
o6	0.984
o7	0.983
o8	0.985
o9	0.985
o14	0.983
o15	0.983
o16	0.983
o17	0.983
o24	0.984
o25	0.984
o26	0.984

Source: own processing according to outputs of SPSS statistical program.

In examining the motivational factor F2 from the definition of the cluster of items o10–o12, o18, o19 the questionnaire reference no. 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, by which the predicted motivation factor has been defined. The Cronbach's Alpha value (Table 5) for this factor is 0.952. If any of the six items in the statistical calculation are removed, the Cronbach's Alpha value does not change significantly and represents statistically reliable values in the range of 0.938–0.946.

**Table 5.** Reliability analysis for factor F2.

<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>
0.952	6
<b>Cronbach's Alpha if Item is Deleted</b>	
o10	0.942
o11	0.946
o12	0.945
o13	0.944
o18	0.940
o19	0.938

Source: own processing according to outputs of SPSS statistical program.

When investigating the marketing factor F3 as a motivation factor, we are based on the definition of a cluster of items o20–o23 reference to questionnaire no. 20, 21, 22 and 23, by which we have defined the predicted motivation factor. The Cronbach's Alpha value for this factor is 0.939 (Table 6). In case of removal of any of the four items from the statistical calculation, the Cronbach's Alpha value does not change significantly and represents statistically reliable values of 0.919–0.923.

**Table 6.** Reliability analysis for factor F3.

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.939	4
Cronbach's Alpha if Item is Deleted	
o20	0.921
o21	0.919
o22	0.920
o23	0.923

Source: own processing according to outputs of SPSS statistical program.

F1, F2 and F3 are described in the Discussion section as the dominant motivation factors of the target group participation, i.e., pilgrimage participants. The internal structure of the predicted factors was confirmed by both factor analysis and Cronbach's Alpha analysis, and unambiguously this structure corresponds to three dominant defined predicted factors F1–F3 as a motivation factor for participation.

## 2.2. Additional Analysis Results

Subsequently, the authors proceeded to evaluate the second- additional research problem, namely by analysing the motivational factors of the participation of target groups in the offer of activities of secular objects in the vicinity of pilgrimage sites in relation to the social and demographic characteristics of respondents. As inputs for the statistical research we used the answers of questionnaires submitted to target groups to questions 1–4 in the first part of the questionnaire, focusing on defining gender, age, education degree achieved and family status. Within the framework of the fulfilment of the scientific objective 2 set in the research methodology, we defined the research problem 2 and the H2 hypothesis, while we set four partial hypotheses reflecting selected social characteristics of the target group (V1–V4 reference to the questionnaire o1–o4). The hypotheses were verified by correlation analysis (in relation to items of questionnaire o5, o7, o9, o10, o11, o12, o13, o14, o16, o18, o20, o21, o24 reflecting different motivation factors of respondents participation in further education) in the statistical program SPSS. Due to the pairs of ordinal variables (scale 1–5) we used the Spearman correlation method. A specific description and definition of individual sub-hypotheses is provided in the Section 4.

We performed Spearman correlation analysis (Table 7) between items o1, o2, o3, o4 and o5, o7, o9, o10, o11, o12, o13, o14, o16, o18, o20, o21, o24. Given the correlation analysis and significance values (Sig) > 0.05, a statistically significant correlation was found only between V1—o10/o13, V2—o11/o16, V4—o5/o26. Based on a consecutive correlation analysis, we have shown a statistically significant relationship between the V1 and O10 phenomena, i.e., the respondent's family and motivation to participate in the offer other than pilgrimage in the region in view of the need for a deeper understanding of the life and work of the saint ( $\alpha < 0.01$ ). The value of the Spearman correlation coefficient  $R = 0.783$  is high and indicates a significant positive relationship between the phenomena analysed. At the same time, we have demonstrated a statistically significant link between the V1 and o13 phenomena, i.e., the respondent's family and the motivation to participate in a non-direct pilgrimage activity because of being interested not only in the lifelong work and bondage of the saint, but also in his little things as his place of residence, relationship its relatives and local populations, and the like. Spearman correlation coefficient  $R = 0.765$  ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). On this sample, the H2.1 hypothesis was confirmed. Based on a series of correlation analysis, we have shown a statistically significant relationship between the phenomena V2 and o16, i.e., the gender of the

respondent and motivation to participate in other than direct pilgrimage activities in the region because of the effort to know about the life of the saint, not only his sorrows and sacrifices ( $\alpha < 0.01$ ). The value of the Spearman correlation coefficient  $R = 0.840$  is high and indicates a significant positive relationship between the analysed phenomena. On the given sample, the H2.2 sub-hypothesis was confirmed.

We rejected the partial hypothesis of H2.3 because there was no statistically significant connection between the respondent's achieved education and the motivational factors of his participation in the offer of secular objects near the pilgrimage site.

Based on a series of correlation analysis, we have shown a significant correlation between the V4 and o5 phenomena, i.e., the family status of the respondent and the motivation to participate in the offer of secular objects in the region in terms of survival of lifetime tutelage and saint's legacy ( $\alpha < 0.05$ ). The value of the Spearman correlation coefficient  $R = -0.123$  is considerably low and indicates a negative relationship between the phenomena analysed. It is not possible to accept a partial hypothesis of H2.4 on a given sample.

Table 7. Pivot Table.

	Spearman's Rho	o5	o7	o9	o10	o11	o12	o13	o14	o16	o18	o20	o21	o24	o26
V1	Correlation Coefficient	−0.004	−0.043	0.052	0.783	0.008	0.034	0.765	−0.038	0.028	0.054	0.088	0.018	−0.051	0.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.944	0.399	0.308	0.002	0.880	0.503	0.041	0.462	0.585	0.287	0.084	0.724	0.318	0.252
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386
V2	Correlation Coefficient	0.086	−0.001	0.001	0.054	0.741	0.034	0.007	−0.013	0.840	0.030	0.067	−0.033	−0.021	0.021
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.093	0.982	0.979	0.292	0.094	0.499	0.894	0.798	0.003	0.556	0.192	0.518	0.678	0.688
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386
V3	Correlation Coefficient	0.107	−0.018	−0.033	0.055	−0.051	0.039	−0.023	−0.023	0.023	0.028	0.055	−0.051	−0.034	0.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.136	0.721	0.522	0.277	0.316	0.447	0.653	0.647	0.651	0.590	0.284	0.322	0.502	0.837
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386
V4	Correlation Coefficient	−0.123	−0.040	−0.044	−0.068	−0.048	−0.027	−0.035	−0.048	−0.005	−0.043	−0.059	−0.047	−0.038	0.214
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.016	0.438	0.393	0.183	0.345	0.603	0.490	0.350	0.918	0.399	0.247	0.357	0.457	0.644
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386	386

Source: own processing according to outputs of SPSS statistical program.

### 3. Discussion

Given the results of the research carried out in terms of factor analysis and analysis of Cronbach's Alpha, the dominant motivation factors for the participation of the target group, i.e., pilgrimage participants, on the offer of activities of secular objects connected with the cultural-historical or religious character of the given place in the given region, namely near the pilgrimage site, were: F1—gaining closer knowledge of life, work and society-wide reference to the work of the saint, his contribution to society, the culture in which he worked, F2—gaining a sense of belonging, some survival not only by teasing and sacrificing, but also by little things in the life of the saint, trying to live with his feelings, love and suffering, getting to know the milestones of his life, F3—building awareness and enlightenment about the existence of other places connected with the life and work of the saint near the pilgrimage site and the path of the mire itself. To expand the offer, or to create a new offer for pilgrimage participants, cooperation and networking are needed as church subjects (such as church monument managers, a diocese that manages pilgrimage sites and others) as well as administrators of secular objects and cultural organizations and institutions that are certainly in a way (historical personality, event) associated with a place of pilgrimage, pilgrim or martyr. Primarily we considered objects connected directly with the cultural characteristics and traditions of the past, such as manor houses, castles, chateaus, museums, i.e., not urban buildings, rather buildings near pilgrimage sites outside the urbanized network. The product created in this way would contain the essence of participation in the pilgrimage; in the real product would be offered the expansion of knowledge, the possibility of contemplation or knowledge of the environment in which the historical

event happened, and whether there was a person associated with the pilgrimage site (the one to whom the revelation was given). As part of the expanded product, it would be more connected to the secular offer. In the case of the real and extended product, taking into account the results of the supplementary analysis (demonstrating the diversity of approach and interest in the target group in relation to age and gender), these activities could be linked to the results of the investigation as primary goals of marketing management of selected cultural objects:

- in connection with the time of pilgrimages in the nearby secular building, organize an “amateur theatre” realized by its administrator or volunteer association in the form of, for example, a period of demonstration from the life of a saint or how a revelation happened, how he lived, ideally in the mansion, castle or temple where the saint was or was directly related or indirectly related to the objects near the place;
- in suitable premises, such as a museum of a castle, a castle or a chateau, a discussion with the author of a book about the saint, about miracles and the like, including a tour of the museum with an expanded exposure to a selected theme (time-limited), more precisely an exhibition associated with the life of a saint with a personal commentary and a verbal description of his life;
- thematic animation activities could always be provided by volunteers under the auspices of the local cultural object in the church school, parsonage, mansion or cultural house—always in connection with the life of a saint covered by experts from cultural objects near pilgrimage sites
- to design and gradually implement an informal cycling route- a tourist route, on the basis of voluntary activity of local associations, where 3–4 (or more) pilgrimage sites would be connected (e.g., with the possibility of sleeping- accommodation in the manor, parish, believers etc.). There are similar pilgrimage routes in Slovakia and in the world. Thus, it would be a modification of the offer or linking, for example, two roads and adding sporting activity with defined stops for contemplation, or visiting secular objects associated with the life of a pilgrim, such as a stop at the castle and providing refreshments to the tourist in the form of local food and the like;
- the release of special “bedekers”, pilgrims’ bedekers, which, in addition to describing the pilgrimage site, the revelation, or the life of the saint, the pilgrim, very closely related to religious beliefs, would be extended to secular parts, very closely linked and solely focused on the perception of religious themes such as locks, manor houses, castles with which the work of the saint was related.

In Slovakia, several activities are currently being carried out in the context of this exploration, which can be considered as excellent examples of the implementation of findings in practice, such as “Summer at the Castle”—a music festival, in the area of the Levice Castle, where gospel bands are presented, but also the common artists. At the festival they come to their families with children, the young generation, but also lovers of gospel and folklore<sup>5</sup>. We also pay attention to the “Spiritual cycling weekend with prayer”—South Moravia, Znojmo, through naturally spent free time, space for the creation of new friendships and acquaintance with new people, relax from everyday things in a pleasant and good company, visit historical monuments, hiking Podyjí National Park, St. Mass in Mikulov<sup>6</sup>. The “Spiš Jerusalem”—a cultural and spiritual festival - Spišská Kapitula, Spišské Podhradie- already 7 years and more than 4000 visitors every year. A cultural-spiritual festival, bringing the familiarity with the history of the site, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site and a cultural-spiritual program coupled with unique commented tours of the Way of the Cross. A unique spiritual event in the Spiš Castle, which has identical name as one of the oldest calvary in Slovakia<sup>7</sup>.

Subsequently, we investigated the statistically significant correlation between selected motivational factors of the target group and its predefined social and demographic characteristics by

<sup>5</sup> [www.krestanskapolicaajnaasociacia.sk](http://www.krestanskapolicaajnaasociacia.sk).

<sup>6</sup> [www.vyveska.sk](http://www.vyveska.sk).

<sup>7</sup> <https://osvetasnv.sk/spissky-jeruzalem-2018-3>.

researching the target group for the complexity of the research. In simple terms, the statistical process is defined for a clear explanation to the reader in Section 2.1.

We put the respondent's gender at the forefront, assuming the diversity of attitudes toward attending the pilgrimage in both men and women, as well as in the younger and older generation, so age became the second indicator. The third factor was defined as the highest level of education, where we expected a higher interest in the knowledge of the life of a saint, depending on the degree of educational attainment of the pilgrim. The fourth factor was family status in terms of pilgrimage as a family with children, a family without children, and an individual. Based on the test characteristics of the Spearman correlation coefficient, we have demonstrated a statistically significant correlation between the following key phenomena:

- V1 and o10, i.e., the respondent's family and motivation to participate in the offer other than pilgrimage tourism in the region in view of the need to know more about the life and work of the saint (H2.1);
- V1 and o13, i.e., the respondent's family and motivation to participate in a non-direct pilgrimage activity because of being interested not only in the lifelong work and bond of the saint, but also his life in tiny things like his place of residence, his relatives and the local population similarly (H2.1);
- V2 and o16, i.e., the gender of the respondent and motivation to participate in other than direct pilgrimage activities in the region due to the effort to know in detail the life of the saint, not only his sorrows and sacrifices (H2.2);
- V4 and o5, i.e., the family status of the respondent and motivation to participate in the offer of secular objects in the region from the point of view of survival of the lifelong pilgrimage and the legacy of the saint (H2.4).

Subsequently, we stated the confirmation of partial hypotheses H2.1 and H2.2. We rejected the partial hypothesis of H2.3 because there was no statistically significant correlation in relation to the achieved education of the respondent. Given the proven but very weak link between the investigated phenomena, the partial hypothesis of H2.4 cannot be accepted on a given sample, but remains conceptually open for further discussion.

#### 4. Materials and Methods

The main aim of the authors' research was to define the motivational factors for the participation of the target group defined as "pilgrimage participants" from the point of view of the visit to the cultural secular object located in this attractive tourist region for the group, i.e., the region defined by the existence of pilgrimage offer. At the same time, on the basis of a questionnaire survey, the authors proceeded to identify the socio-demographic characteristics of the target group, i.e., the pilgrimage actors, in four research aspects on the expected significant connections: age, gender, education and marital status. By defining socio-demographic characteristics, the authors subsequently identified direct links between these characteristics of the target respondent and the preference for the investigated motivational factors for possible participation in religious tourism. These criteria are part of sociodemographic research but have not been defined as key, and in particular these four criteria were of interest to us because of the three factors obtained and the possible correlation of these identifying elements. This means that, in the context of research, for example, the composition of tourists in terms of age, etc. was not a significant factor, but we considered whether if we consider three factors, which we then determined, the age of the tourist is significantly related to any of them. Subsequently, based on the identified motivation factors of the target group to participate not only in the pilgrimage but also in the religious tourism in the regions, the authors defined possible steps of effective management of cultural objects in the vicinity of the pilgrimage sites in order to attract tourists who are in the region, but have not yet been interested a visit to these secular cities due to targeted participation only in pilgrimage.

The material we used to accomplish the main tasks and objectives of the survey represent domestic and foreign sources, statistical data, internal statistical and educational materials available

within the cultural-historical objects, strategic documents of the Slovak Republic and the European Union (EU) related to the issue of tourism and the management of historical buildings in the country. We also used available and published information from ministries, statistical offices, public institutions and volunteer associations to deal with issues of cultural traditions, religious tourism and preservation of history and heritage for future generations. The source of the information needed for the processing of the issue was the materials obtained by primary and secondary research. After an initial analysis of the available secondary data, we conducted a questionnaire survey in 159 pilgrimage centres in 8 regions of the Slovak Republic, in March–May 2019. A questionnaire consisting of two parts was compiled; in the first part we examined selected social and demographic target group characteristics: age, gender, education and marital status. These data enabled us the subsequent analysis of motivational factors of target group participation in the offer of activities of secular objects near pilgrimage sites in relation to social and demographic characteristics of respondents, based on statistical inputs obtained based on answers to questions 1–4 of questionnaires submitted to target groups. These questions defined the target groups and researchers from the perspective of the selected socio-demographic criteria, namely gender, age, education degree achieved and family status. To meet the scientific objective 2 set out in the research methodology, we defined the research problem 2 and the hypothesis H2 and set four partial hypotheses reflecting selected social characteristics of the target group (V1–V4 reference to items o1–o4). In the second part of the questionnaire, we defined groups of questions aimed at identifying motivational factors of pilgrimage participants in activities, respectively, to offer other secular objects near the pilgrimage sites of the region.

When determining the anticipated sample of respondents in the questionnaire research, we were based on the average number of pilgrimage participants registered in the Slovak pilgrimage sites for one month of the 2018 season, i.e., the year preceding the year of the survey; 3147 respondents were included in the research. We assumed that there would be a certain percentage of incomplete or non-return questionnaires, the actual structure of respondents will be different from the originally selected representative sample. The questionnaire return was 92.1% (2892 questionnaires for processing). From the point of view of socio-demographic criteria, it was 1456 surveyed men and 1691 surveyed women (return for men 1366 and women 1526). In terms of age, respondents were classified as children and adolescents (10–24 years, number of respondents 632), young people (25–39 years, number of respondents 814), middle-aged (40–59 years, number of respondents 916) and older people (over 60 years, number of respondents 102). We used the standard breakdown recommended by Institute of Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Number of evaluated questionnaires, in case of the number of respondents we consider only with questionnaires suitable for processing in the research—completely filled out, etc. From the point of view of the achieved level of education we started from ISCED classification valid for the territory of the Slovak Republic, namely basic education including incomplete, secondary vocational school, complete secondary general education, complete secondary vocational education, higher and higher education, without school education. In defining family status, we defined a group of respondents with the status of single (763), married without children (422), married with children (1023), divorced (441) and widowed (243).

The logical continuation of the exploration and problem-solving procedures was the selection of appropriate methods subordinate to the scientific goal and the pursuit of exploration. During the gradual fulfilment of the objective, we used various methods of research, especially methods of scientific abstraction, analysis (causal, classification, relational), synthesis, induction, deduction and comparison. The authors also used the interviewing method and mathematical-economic methods and mathematical-statistical methods appeared to be useful in the processing of results. We used the method of scientific abstraction to elaborate theoretical knowledge on the solved issue, but also to clarify the influence of support of appropriately chosen motivational factors on the participation of the target group in religious tourism, not only pilgrimage. The method of analysis was of particular importance in analysing the factors affecting the behaviour of individual subjects, in deeper understanding (causal analysis), classifications (classification analysis) and knowledge of

relationships (relationship analysis) that affect them. The synthesis method allowed the authors to formulate theoretical and practical suggestions and recommendations for providing expert advice, particularly in the field of secular object management, in support of a promotional strategy for religious tourism. The empirical research method was used by the authors to identify the potential of pilgrimage and religious tourism in the region in terms of its potential development and the definition of key actors. The method of induction will be used as an empirical approach in formulating and designing model motivation factors for target group participation in religious tourism. The method of deduction and comparison was applied by the authors when comparing expectations of target groups from participation in pilgrim tourism and real benefits for their mental enrichment in case of acceptance of the offer of religious tourism. To obtain objective data, the authors used a questionnaire method as one of the explorative methods, with respondents being a group of pilgrimage participants specified above. The mathematical and statistical methods were used by the authors to process the obtained research data, especially when summarizing and interpreting the results using graphs, schemes and tables. By synthesising the knowledge of the material, selecting the appropriate indicators and the procedures for their use, and after formulating the methods of the solution, it was possible to elaborate a methodology for examining the issue.

The aim of the authors was to define the dominant motivation factors of the target group of the pilgrimage to visit the secular, usually cultural-historical monument directly or indirectly with the pilgrimage site in the region, which is not directly related to the purpose of the visit (H1). Another objective is to identify statistically significant links between defined motivation factors for the participation of the selected target group to visit the temporal site defined in this way near the pilgrimage site and the social characteristics of the target group within the selected parameters (H2, parameters 1–4). Based on the findings of the authors, they formulate recommendations and suggestions of systemic character for the management of these secular objects with the aim to point out the possibility of using the potential of the given region while cooperating effectively with all participating objects and ensuring a full-value, benefit experience for the first-time destination visitor. Research problems and hypotheses have been identified as follows in accordance with defined research objectives:

Issue 1: Is there a specific spectrum of common dominant motivation factors for pilgrimage participation as a target group of exploration and activities of secular objects in the region?

**Hypothesis H1.** *We assume that there are specific uniform motivational factors for pilgrimage participation as a target group of exploration on activities and offer of secular objects in the region.*

Issue 2: Are there differences between the motivational factors of the target groups to participate in the activities of secular objects in the vicinity of pilgrimage sites following the selected social characteristics of these groups?

**Hypothesis H2.** *We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between the motivational factors of target groups to participate in the activities of secular objects in the vicinity of pilgrimage sites in relation to selected social characteristics of these groups.*

**Hypothesis H2.1.** *We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between the motivational factors of target groups to participate in the activities of secular objects near pilgrimage sites following the respondent's age.*

**Hypothesis H2.2.** *We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between the motivational factors of target groups to participate in the activities of secular objects in the vicinity of pilgrimage sites following the respondent's gender.*

**Hypothesis H2.3.** *We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between the motivational factors of target groups to participate in the activities of secular objects in the vicinity of pilgrimage sites following the respondent's education.*

**Hypothesis H2.4.** *We assume that there is a statistically significant correlation between the motivational factors of target groups to participate in the activities of secular objects near pilgrimage sites in relation to the respondent's marital status.*

Through the gradual process of scientific investigation, we verified the hypotheses that we formulated and verified or negated under predetermined conditions and assumptions.

## 5. Conclusions

At present, there is an increasing number of theoretical concepts on innovation in governance and strategic approach to managing marketing promotion for cultural objects, for example Masár (2012) or Kruliš (2016). As such, tourism is emerging as one of the key factors for regional development. The fragmentation of the ownership of cultural objects within the Slovak Republic—private, public, in the administration of the Church—creates space for discussions on effective management as well as the approach to managing these objects in relation to defined target groups and their dominant characteristics. From our point of view, there is no link between a coherent strategies aimed at the growth of the region in relation to individual entities active in it. Missing networking, there is a lack of collaboration. In the context of regional organization, the Slovak Republic offers a wide range of target destinations, but any research on the definition of target groups is lacking. Cultural objects are controlled inefficiently, strategic planning does not take into account the potential of the area or the tourist attractiveness of the region in a wider context. Returning to the roots, it is necessary to realize the enormous potential of each region in terms of religious tradition and the emerging beliefs of the past centuries. Individual autonomous units— geographic units in the country—have a predisposing wide range of attractive tourist sites and sites linked to these historic milestones. It is necessary to realize, and what the authors point out at the same time, is that there are also a number of cultural objects that escape the interest of tourists in these locations. If we define the target group of the survey as a group of believers, in the case of the Slovak Republic we are talking about Roman and Greek Catholic beliefs, then this group is in addition to the dominant visit of the region in the context of its ideology potentially a target group and for cultural objects located there. In any case, the basis is cooperation, exchange of information, networking of individual entities.

As already mentioned above, the aim of the authors' research was to define the motivational factors for the participation of the target group defined as "pilgrimage participants" from the point of view of the visit to the cultural secular object located in this attractive tourist region for the group, i.e., the region defined by the existence of a pilgrimage offer. By defining socio-demographic characteristics, the authors subsequently identified direct links between these characteristics of the target respondent and the preference for the investigated motivational factors for possible participation in religious tourism. Based on the identified motivation factors of the target group to participate not only in the pilgrimage but also in visiting the secular, usually cultural-historical monument directly or indirectly with the pilgrimage site in the region, which is not directly related to the purpose of the visit, the authors defined possible steps of effective management of cultural objects in the vicinity of the pilgrimage sites in order to attract tourists who are in the region, but have not yet been interested in a visit to these secular cities due to targeted participation only in a pilgrimage, further defined in the Discussion section. As described above, the motivational factors will help people we have discussed as the representatives of culture and church in the county and object administrators, etc. by means of which they can define interesting packages of attractions and programs that will attract status to both church and religion for those people in the region.

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