Number 4

409 Editorial

413 Peacefulness at home: impacts on international travel
Cláudia Seabra, Elisabeth Kastenholz, José Luís Abrantes and Manuel Reis

429 The German source market perceptions: how risky is Turkey to travel to?
Rami K. Isaac and Vanessa Velden

452 The fear of terrorism and shift in cosmopolitan values
Vanda N. Veréb, Helena Nobre and Minoo Farhangmehr

484 The narrative rhythm of terror: a study of the Stockholm terrorist attack and the “Last Night in Sweden” event
Cecilia Cassinger, Jörgen Eksell, Maria Mansson and Ola Thufvesson

495 Destinations’ response to terrorism on Twitter
Danielle Barbe, Lori Pennington-Gray and Ashley Schroeder

513 Plan for the worst, hope for the best? Exploring major events related terrorism and future challenges for UK event professionals
Daniel Baxter, Jenny Flinn and Lucrezia Flurina Picco
City tourism destinations and terrorism – a worrying trend for now, but could it get worse?

The advent of the tragic events of 9/11 in the USA and subsequent terrorism attacks in global tourism cities such as Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Istanbul, London and Barcelona, to mention but a few, have resulted in major challenges for the tourism sector, including the events industry in cities. Although terrorism attacks continue to increase in number and magnitude, the phenomenon is hardly new historically, and scholars have suggested that the concept of organised terror on a wide-scale stretches as far back as the French Revolution in the eighteenth century or even some of the war tactics employed by Genghis Khan, ruler of the largest empire in history in the thirteenth century (see Edgell and Swanson, 2019). Academic research on the impact of terrorism on tourism has developed substantially over the last two decades both in terms of its breadth and depth as a reflection of the new world order we continue to navigate today.

Although a number of studies have analysed the impact of security concerns linked to terrorism on the events industry (e.g. Hu and Goldblatt, 2005; Gordon et al., 2008) and tourism (see Sönmez and Graefe, 1998; Goodrich, 2002), their scope to date remains somewhat limited with some considering economic impact (e.g. Pizam and Smith, 2000), visitor risk perceptions (e.g. Fuchs and Reichel, 2011), dark tourism (e.g. Seraphin, 2017), social theory (e.g. Mansfield and Pizam, 2006) or tourism demand (e.g. Araña and León, 2008), with very few adopting a more strategic outlook as regards tourism destinations (e.g. Beirman, 2003; Paraskevas and Arendell, 2007). This themed issue of the International Journal of Tourism Cities (IJTC) seeks to redress this balance by tackling a major knowledge gap in our understanding of the longer term impacts of terrorism on the resilience of tourism destination brands (see Avraham, 2015), their overall competitiveness in the global tourism market and their attractiveness to major international investors.

A recent study by Deloitte (2017) showed that most members of Generation Y – also known as the millennials – ranked “war, terrorism and political tension” as a top concern above healthcare, hunger, unemployment or the environment, to mention some of the highest ranked categories. This sentiment was more prevalent among young people in mature economies (56 per cent), particularly in Northern Europe, and less so (42 per cent) among people living in emerging economies. Similarly, a recent UK-based survey of the following generation – often referred to as “centennials” or “Generation Z” – showed that terrorism was a concern to 70 per cent of them, though unemployment claimed the top spot at 79 per cent (Hertz, 2016).

Although these two generations are not necessarily the tourism industry’s most affluent market segments yet, they are poised to shape and influence the industry’s medium-term prospects. All this whilst terrorism continues its likely development into a global phenomenon, no longer limited to a handful of high-risk destinations – for instance, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria or Syria – with a limited tourism sector (see Sharpley, 2018). Although research in tourist behaviour has shown that perceived risk, particularly linked to terrorism or potential armed conflict, is a key factor affecting tourists’ travel decision-making processes, this body of knowledge has not hitherto addressed the influence of tourists’ country of origin on this decision-making process.

This themed issue of the IJTC starts with an article by Seabra et al. (“Peacefulness at home: impacts on international travel”), which investigates tourists’ travel decision-making influenced by the level of peacefulness in their own countries of origin. The findings have major implications for...
tourism destination marketing to established outbound tourism markets (including the rather comprehensive young customer base in Northern Europe alluded to earlier) but, crucially, growing tourism from emerging economies with a lower ranking in the Global Peace Index and where younger generations seem to be somewhat less concerned by terrorism (Deloitte, 2017). Isaac and Velden’s article “The German source market perceptions: how risky is Turkey to travel to?” offers similar insights related to perception of risk related to political instability and conflict, though from the perspective of an older generation (50–59 years of age). Similarly, Veréb et al.’s article “The fear of terrorism and shift in cosmopolitan values” indicates that the resilience of travellers’ cosmopolitan convictions should not be underestimated as these personal values were found to be closely related to perceptions of risk in destinations facing terrorism threats. However, it is likely that our age of anxiety – partly induced by fear of terrorism – may yet test this resilience to new levels and, once broken, the authors point out that the resulting value shift in new generations of tourists could render long-term consequences for the tourism industry as a result of a growing preference for security in detriment of stimulation.

As Havari (2018) posits in his bestseller book 21 Lessons for the twenty first Century, a key vulnerability to terrorism by modern states and public sentiment linked to this rests on the very premise of those states’ legitimacy being based on their promise to keep the public sphere free of political violence, including terrorism. In line with this, the tragic deaths of a few people in Belgium, Nice or Barcelona will regretfully tend to draw comparatively higher levels of attention than the deaths of hundreds of victims of terrorism in Nigeria, Iraq, Yemen or Somalia, to mention but a few “hot spot” examples. Now, given that the words “public sentiment” remain key in this argument, how would rumoured or imaginary events (e.g. fake news) linked to terrorism impact the brand image of tourism cities in our post-truth world? Moreover, do the metaphoric ripples of these fake news via social media and online news media platforms bear a resemblance to the (physical) waves of an earthquake as a physical disaster “terror” event generated by nature itself? A study in this issue of IJTC by Cassinger and Eksell on “The narrative rhythm of terror: a study of the Stockholm terrorist attack and the ‘Last Night in Sweden’ event” uses rhythm analysis to examine how urban space is mediatised through digital media flows and concludes that imaginary terror attacks in a digital environment actually have a greater impact on the narratives of a tourism city than a real terrorist attack. In some ways, this digital PR-based concept linked to an (imaginary) terrorist attack could be interpreted as a new – and perversely more advanced – form of cyber-terrorism in as much as it would serve exactly the same purpose as more standard (and arguably more costly) cyber-terrorism or physical terrorist attacks: to spread fear and anxiety among people. Putting the study’s findings into a wider perspective, it could be argued that they could represent an early warning to the potential vulnerability of smart cities and smart tourism destinations to breaches in the security, reliability and credibility of their data and information flow networks.

The topic of information management and communication strategies within the European context of tourism cities subject to a terrorist attack is also explored in this issue by Barbe et al. in their article “Destinations response to terrorism on Twitter”. This study brings to the forefront an even more worrying weakness than vulnerability – inaction in the midst of a crisis. Indeed, evidence delivered by this study shows that some destination management organisations (DMOs) in major European destinations actually went offline – as regards Twitter activity – in the days immediately following a terrorist attack striking at their hearts. If local communities in tourism cities across the globe expect tourists to behave more responsibly, it would also seem appropriate for local or regional tourism authorities to reciprocate accordingly (Morrison, 2019), particularly with regards to the safety and welfare of those tourists (and residents) in line with basic principles of duty of care. It follows from this that tourism should be treated very much as an open system (Morrison et al., 2018) with DMOs having a much wider role than originally thought. This role includes handling negative publicity as part of their PR and communication functions. Indeed, it would appear that the flexibility and adaptability of an open systems approach would be particularly well suited to the dynamic and constantly evolving external influences on tourism destinations, which include politics, technology, terrorism, crime, disease and demographics, to mention but a few. It is against this backdrop that Baxter et al.’s article “Plan for the worst, hope for the best? Exploring major events related terrorism and future challenges for UK event professionals” offers insights into UK-based practitioner dilemmas and challenges related to risk-informed priorities for the organisation of major events.
Our understanding of public attitudes towards terrorism both at home and abroad continues to be plagued with gaps and, as a result of this, this topic remains a fertile area for academic research (e.g. Allouche and Lind, 2010). Regardless of its motive and geographical target(s), terrorism – including the many nuances surrounding this concept – is likely to evolve and escalate over the next decades into more sophisticated or lethal forms, including cyber-terrorism affecting infrastructures and information/knowledge hubs, chemical and biological terrorism (including the not-so-distant possibility of transmitting physical viruses through digital channels), radioactive terrorism (e.g. “dirty” bomb) and, ultimately, nuclear terrorism. Unfortunately, tourism will remain largely a “soft target” in this respect due to the very nature of the industry and its sheer diversity. Nevertheless, as modern states continue to protect their legitimacy based on their promise to keep the public sphere free of political violence, the challenge will be for tourism to stop being the Achilles heel of this open system. More specifically, DMOs and their key stakeholders (including events professionelle) in tourism cities will need to develop effective strategies to minimise risk on this front with crisis management contingency plans along the same lines of existing regulations related to workplace safety. Increasingly, governance aspects of DMOs in cities will involve the gathering, processing and sharing of intelligence data, which may increase the resilience of tourism cities to terrorism. Parallel to these operations management elements, the PR-based battle for the hearts and minds of tourists and visitors will continue, through using much more sophisticated branding techniques. This special issue of IJTC on “Terrorism in Tourism Cities” offers insights to some of these issues and offers suggestions for further research in this field. On a broader level, the message of this special issue intends to be one of hope rather than apprehension. Perhaps the words of the late Pope John Paul II, a victim of terrorism himself but also a great thinker and traveller, would seem appropriate here:

The world is becoming a global village in which people from different continents are made to feel like next door neighbours. In facilitating more authentic social relationships between individuals, tourism can help overcome many real prejudices, and foster new bonds of fraternity. In this sense tourism has become a real force for world peace (Pope John Paul II, 1989).

References


Peacefulness at home: impacts on international travel

Cláudia Seabra, Elisabeth Kastenholz, José Luís Abrantes and Manuel Reis

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to analyse the impact of peacefulness in the tourists’ country of origin in their main decisions and behaviours when travelling internationally.

Design/methodology/approach – A sample of 600 international tourists from 49 countries was divided into five groups according to each respondent’s belonging to a country with a specific level of peacefulness, assessed by the Global Peace Index, to test differences in international travel decision and behaviour patterns.

Findings – Travel safety is a critical issue to most tourists, while the peacefulness level of travellers’ country of origin is an important key factor for understanding different travel behaviours and safety perceptions held when going on an international trip, namely, regarding involvement, risk and safety/insecurity perceptions.

Research limitations/implications – This is one of the few studies investigating the impact of peacefulness in the tourist’s country of origin on travel decisions and behaviours, based on the Global Peace Index. Additionally, this study responds to the call of the Prospect Theory regarding general consumption contexts, and adds to the Experiential Consumer Perspective, here applied to tourism consumption.

Practical implications – This study provides guidance to destination and tourism industry managers to attract and segment their market according to tourists’ country of origin, in accordance with its respective level of peacefulness as defined by the Global Peace Index, especially in destinations more affected by terrorism, war, political turmoil, crime and other safety risks.

Originality/value – No published study has tested the impact of peacefulness at home on tourists’ international travel behaviours and decisions yet.

Keywords Tourism, Safety, Terrorism, Global Peace Index, Travel risk perception

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

According to the International Institute for Peace through Tourism, founded in 1986, travel and tourism is the world’s first “Global Peace Industry” — “an industry that promotes and supports the belief that every traveller is potentially an “Ambassador for Peace” (D’Amore, 2009, p. 566). However, apart from this belief and the research conducted on the existence of a causal relationship between peace and tourism (Litvin, 1998; Pratt and Liu, 2016), a question still remains: does peace lead to tourism or does tourism lead to peace instead? Moreover, if there is a link between peace at tourists’ country of origin and tourism, how does it influence their behaviours and attitudes, particularly attitudes towards risk in international travel?

The research on tourism and peace started in the 1980s (D’Amore, 1988). However, over time, studies conducted on tourism’s role in helping consolidate peace have been scarce (Moufakkir, 2010; Pernecky, 2010). Recently, there has been a new investment in the research attempting to assess the “possibilities for tourism to act as an agent for peace in post-conflict social reconciliation” (Causevic and Lynch, 2013, p. 146). However, the perspective that peace and “peacefulness at home” may lead to an increased predisposition for international travel, eventually associated with lower levels of travel risk perception, has been neglected in the literature. Also, the question of how diverse levels of peacefulness at home may determine diverse travel risk perceptions and consequently travel attitudes and behaviours has not been studied before. It is our aim to close these gaps.
The present study analyses the impact of peacefulness in the tourists’ country of origin, using the Global Peace Index (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015) on several aspects of travel behaviour and its determinants, specifically its impact on—behaviour in travel planning; involvement with international travel; travel risk and safety perceptions: risk perception, safety/insecurity sensation; and the determinant of risk awareness: interest in/attention to terrorism in the media.

This study draws on the assumptions of behavioural economics and consumer behaviour theories to understand how tourists react and behave in their decision-making processes, conditioned by the level of peacefulness in their own country of origin. Specifically, this work intends to answer the calls to extend knowledge in the field of consumer behaviour, namely, in the domain of the Prospect Theory, considering a “typical situation of choice, where the probabilities of outcomes are not explicitly given” (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979, p. 289). It also adds to the Experiential Consumer Perspective to balance and broaden the theory of consumer behaviour within a domain of consumption shaped by “consumer fantasies, feelings and fun” (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982, p. 139), where risk perceptions refer to expectations of novelty-involving hedonic experiences in a geographically and culturally distant, unknown environment (Kastenholz, 2010).

In the next section, the theoretical background that supports the study is presented and the main aspects of international tourist behaviour considered in this study accordingly introduced. In the subsequent sections, the methodology is discussed followed by the analysis of results. The paper concludes with the discussion of results and respective implications for science and management, also presenting the study’s limitations and future research directions.

2. Literature review

Considering the concept of “positive peace” (Galtung, 1996), that includes “a society based on social justice through equal opportunity, a fair distribution of power and resources, equal protection and impartial enforcement of law, and above all, mutual cultural understanding and respect” (Carbone, 2017, p. 61), tourism is clearly a way of promoting peace and mutual understanding (Wohlmuther and Wintersteiner, 2014), being considered as “an agent for peace” (Wintersteiner and Wohlmuther, 2014, p. 31). Tourism is often pointed at as a major force that leads regions to peace; in fact it constitutes “a primary component of sustainable development […] fostering and sustaining world peace” (Farmaki, 2017, p. 528).

Recently there has been a significant investment in researching the connections between tourism and peace. Many studies concluded that tourism has a significant impact not only in building peace (Ap and Var, 1990; D’Amore, 1988; Jafari, 1989; Litvin, 1998) but also in maintaining peace (Farmaki, 2017). The tourism industry has a “significant peace-stabilising effect” (Becken and Carmignani, 2016), contributes to the “democratisation of society”, encourages and strengthens international relations (Kim et al., 2007). Tourism as a social phenomenon that brings the contact between visitors and hosts increases the understanding between people from different backgrounds, cultures and races (Farmaki, 2017). Tourism establishes connections between divided communities (Causevic, 2010), influences international politics towards peace by reducing cultural and psychological differences between people (Nyaupane et al., 2008), encouraging cooperation among nations (Askjellerud, 2003; Causevic, 2010; Sonmez and Apostolopoulos, 2000).

The opposite connection is also evident but less studied. Some researchers claim that tourism is a beneficiary of peace rather than a cause of peace (Kim and Prideaux, 2003; Litvin, 1998). For a successful tourism industry, conditions like peace, safety and security are recognised and acknowledged as crucial (Becken and Carmignani, 2016). A study of 11 countries allowed the conclusion that tourism industry benefits from peace (Pratt and Liu, 2016). However, those few studies exploring the effect of peace in the tourism industry only analysed this effect in the visited countries. To the best of our knowledge, no study has yet explored the impact of distinct levels of peace and safety in the tourists’ country of origin on their travel behaviour and attitudes.

With the present study we try to close this gap analysing the impact of peacefulness in the tourists’ country of origin on their travel behaviour and its determinants, namely, travel planning, involvement, travel risk and safety perceptions; risk perception, safety/insecurity sensation and interest in and attention to terrorism in the media.
**Tourists’ decision-making behaviour**

The Prospect Theory and the Experiential Consumer Perspective form the theoretical basis to analyse tourists’ decision behaviours taking into account the level of peace in their own country of origin, in its impact on involvement, risk perception, attention to and interest in terrorism and safety/unsafety perceptions.

The Prospect Theory (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979) explains the psychological, social, cognitive and emotional factors that affect the economic decisions of individuals, namely, when risk is involved. According to the theory “people derive utility from gains and losses, measured relative to some reference point, rather than from absolute levels of wealth” (Barberis, 2013), meaning that if an individual is confronted with two options, one presenting potential gains and other with potential losses, the first option will be chosen.

Tourists are more and more demanding in their travel choices. The purchase of tourism products implies high-involvement decision-making, because tourists purchase highly valued experiences expected to occur at a destination. These are personally relevant, but intangible and subjectively distinctly lived and perceived, while tourism products are purchased at a distance in both space, time and frequently culture, making the decision more complex, risky and engaging (Kastenholz, 2010), also due to the substantial financial and non-financial costs they may involve (Sirakaya and Woodside, 2005). Consumers consequently spend considerable effort and time in the decision-making process to reduce the perceived risk.

The Experiential Consumer Perspective (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) examines the processes individuals use to select, use and consume products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and to search for hedonic responses, specifically fun and pleasure associated with “various playful leisure activities” (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982, p. 132), including tourism. Proposed as an alternative to the Information Processing Model (Bettman, 1979), the Experiential Consumer Perspective adopts a hedonic orientation “assuming the consumer as an experiential being who consumes for enjoyment rather than instrumental purposes (Lofman, 1991, p. 730).

According to this perspective, consumers’ individual differences and type of involvement influence the criteria by which the products and consumption consequences are evaluated (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). The purchase and consumption of tourism products involve multiple steps and variables (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Subject to sociodemographic and psychographic influences, the travel decision is determined by personal, social and commercial factors (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b). Human behaviour is essentially intentional and regulated by anticipation. Through anticipation, individuals motivate themselves to conduct their actions, anticipate images of a product, its uses and the consequences of its consumption. While forming different expectations, consumers can mentally try different alternatives and choose the one that will bring them more pleasure during its consumption (Bieger and Laesser, 2000).

**Purchase involvement**

Travel, especially leisure travel, should be a most enjoyable and relevant experience for an individual’s quality of life. This importance makes most tourists plan their travel carefully (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Purchase involvement is the degree of commitment consumers attribute to the various phases of the consumption process: product choice, search for information, decision making and purchase (Broderick and Mueller, 1999; Seabra et al., 2014; Zaichkowsky, 1985). It is, in fact, a central aspect in consumer behaviour research (Broderick and Mueller, 1999), especially when analysing the purchase decision regarding tourism products (Dimanche et al., 1991).

Some researchers use the concept “product involvement” to define the relationship between an individual and a product (Engel et al., 1986). The focus in this research area is the relevance or importance that a product or category assumes for consumers (Howard and Sheth, 1969; Hupfer and Gardner, 1971). More specifically, whenever the products are relevant to satisfy and address consumers’ needs and values, product involvement is high (Dholakia, 2001; Engel et al., 1986; Zaichkowsky, 1986). Product involvement in a multidimensional perspective has five main dimensions: knowledge, pleasure/interest, risk probability, risk importance and prestige (Gursoy and Gavcar, 2003; Park et al., 1994).
Markets are more and more global due to a combination of economic, socio-cultural, political and technological factors (Douglas and Craig, 1995). The world is becoming a single market (Levitt, 1983), in which an increasing number of products are offered simultaneously and similarly in different countries (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Tourism products are eminently global products and the globalisation of tourism has led to its expansion on an international scale (Levitt, 1983). The globalisation of tourism markets entails increasing global risks that are inherent to businesses that have undergone a global scale growth. Tourism, in fact, is one of the activities that are most likely to suffer from these global risk factors (Ritchie, 2004), given that, contrary to other product categories, in tourism it is the consumer who moves to the place of consumption, frequently over long distances.

Stability and safety at the destination and during travel are key factors for tourism development (Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008). If an event causes a disruption in this balance, it will cause a feeling of risk in tourists that will, in turn, cause a powerful negative impact on demand (Pizam and Mansfeld, 1996). Tourist demand is particularly sensitive to the tourists’ safety, health and well-being concerns (Blake and Sinclair, 2003). Perception of risk has been mostly associated with factors like political instability, threats to health, crime, violence, war, natural disasters and terrorism in destinations or in their surrounding areas (Coshall, 2003; Lepp and Gibson, 2003; Kozak et al., 2007). Those events are typically highly visible through contemporary media coverage. In this context, individual sensitivity towards risk in travel may be determined by the perceived safety and peacefulness experienced in tourists’ home environments (Pratt and Liu, 2016).

Risk perception relates to the amount and types of risk tourists associate to travel and international tourism. Two subscales can measure this perception: the generic types of perceived risk and perceptions of insecurity. Many studies adopted the five dimensions of generic risk suggested by Jacoby and Kaplan (1972): financial, performance, physical, social and psychological risk (Cheron and Ritchie, 1982; Mitra et al., 1999; Stone and Grønhaug, 1993). Roselius (1971) added weather risk to the tourism context, a perspective adopted in other studies (Stone and Grønhaug, 1993). Additionally, satisfaction risk (being unsatisfied with the trip) first appeared in studies on leisure (Cheron and Ritchie, 1982; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992). Finally, recent studies added other dimensions such as political risk (Sedighi et al., 2001; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b), and health and terrorism risk (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b).

In the present study, the above ten types of risk appear in an aggregate form. A separate measurement process would add unnecessary complexity, since the aim here was the evaluation of the effect of certain variables on the global risk perception (Laroche et al., 2003; Seabra et al., 2014). The general unsafety perception in national or international trips is also part of the risk perceptions that individuals associate with the tourist experience (Floyd and Pennington-Gray, 2004).

In the travelling decision-making process, people may come to disregard some destinations or products (Um and Crompton, 1990), because of their potential cost or perceived risk, especially if the media link them to terrorism or other war or crime situations. The psychological impact of terror may have less to do with its destructive power than with its ability to evoke fear and anxiety (Spilerman and Stecklov, 2009). The fear of terrorism is irrational (Sönmez et al., 1999), and influences clearly the individuals’ overall travel risk perceptions. In addition, media coverage and exploration of terrorist attacks can condition public opinion, damaging destination images, particularly in international travel (Sönmez, 1998). The power of media may even change and pre-condition pre-existing images and attitudes towards destinations that people used to consider safe. This happens because, in many cases, media information is the only source available to the audience or because people tend to think they are sources that convey enough knowledge to enable them to interpret the facts realistically (Weimann and Winn, 1994).

Tourists, in turn, reveal high levels of interest in and attention to news regarding terrorism, especially when they are associated with destinations they might consider visiting. They will undoubtedly keep this kind of information in their memory (Jin, 2003; Seabra et al., 2014).
3. Methodology

Data collection and measures

For the empirical component of the present study, a survey approach was used. First, a measurement instrument with scales, which had previously been identified in relevant literature, was developed. The scales used intended to capture the analysed concepts:

- The involvement concept was measured with scales adapted from Park, Mothersbaugh and Feick (1994) and Gursoy and Gavcar (2003). Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements related to tourism products, namely, tourism and travel regarding five dimensions: knowledge, pleasure/interest, perception of risk probability, importance attributed to risk and prestige.

- Risk perception was assessed for ten types of risks in international travel, on a scale ranging from 1 (very low risk) to 7 (extremely high risk): financial, performance, physical, social, psychological risk, risk of time, risk of (in)satisfaction, political instability/unrest, health and terrorism (Mitra et al., 1999; Seabra et al., 2013; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a).

- Attention to and interest in terrorism in the media was measured with a scale developed by Jin (2003) and Seabra et al. (2014). Tourists indicated their level of agreement with statements regarding their level of interest in and attention to (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) information about terrorism acquired in the media.

- To measure safety/unsafety perceptions, a scale from Floyd and Pennington-Gray (2004) was adapted, where tourists had to rate their level of agreement (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree) with statements regarding safety in travelling.

Experts gave their opinion on these scales, which were then translated into the languages: Portuguese, French, Spanish and German and subsequently back-translated to English. A pre-test was conducted with 30 international travellers, permitting Cronbach’s α reliability tests of the scales, which were considered sufficiently sound for the final survey instrument. Data collection was conducted from January 2009 to March 2009, surveying randomly amongst those travellers, who had gone on an international trip. These were approached in loco across three international airports: Madrid/Barajas (Spain), Lisbon/Portela (Portugal) and Milan/Malpensa (Italy). These three locations were selected since the respective countries present different levels of terrorism and risk. Two of this study’s authors applied the survey directly to travellers at the airport after checking in at their return trip. Self-administration of the questionnaire aimed at reducing bias. This approach resulted in 600 valid responses, equally distributed among the three airports. Table AI includes the questionnaire measures, constructs and scales adapted from literature relevant to the research context.

Data profile

Respondents’ places of origin reveal 41 countries: Portugal (10.8 per cent), Brazil (10.3 per cent), Spain (10 per cent), Germany (9.6 per cent), the UK (8.8 per cent), France (8.4 per cent) and the USA (6.7 per cent). Less represented are Italy (5 per cent), Sweden (2.1 per cent), The Netherlands (1.9 per cent), Denmark (1.9 per cent), Belgium (1.7 per cent), Ireland (1.7 per cent), Austria (1.5 per cent), Argentina (1.5 per cent), Czech Republic (1.5 per cent), Australia (1.5 per cent), Canada (1.4 per cent), Morocco (1.4 per cent), Romania (1.2 per cent), Turkey (1 per cent), Estonia (1 per cent) and Switzerland (1 per cent). Responses from countries with less than 1 per cent of the sample are: South Africa, Guinea, Japan, Venezuela, Luxembourg, Finland, India, Mexico, Israel, Poland, Kyrgyzstan, Ecuador, Slovakia, Russia, Bolivia, Norway, Hungary and Slovenia.

Respondents are mostly male (56 per cent) and with ages below 35 years (56 per cent). A large part (74 per cent) presents higher education levels; most present occupations include middle and senior management (22 per cent), executives (20 per cent), freelancers/self-employed (19 per cent) and students (15 per cent), with average monthly income ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 euros. Most respondents travel frequently, reporting an average of seven international trips, with duration, on average, of nine days, in a period of the last three years. Respondents also
show a high level of familiarity with the visited destination, having visited it on average 3.5 times before. Respondents reported an average of 15 days to plan their trips, with accommodation booking generally occurring 25 days in advance.

Data analysis

To analyse the mentioned dimensions of involvement, risk perception, safety/unsafety perceptions and contact with terrorism through media, and to examine the impact of peacefulness at home on these determinants of international travel decisions, the sample was divided, based on each respondent’s country of origin and corresponding classification within the Global Peace Index. This index incorporates data of 23 indicators from different sources and is elaborated by the Economist Intelligence Unit, regarding: level of safety and security in society, extent of conflict and degree of militarisation (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015).

The indicators are revised each year by a group of specialists and are used then to rank 162 independent states. The GPI assigns a weight of 60 per cent to internal and 40 per cent to external peace indicators. The experts allocate a heavier weight to internal conditions because it is the one that would determine most the perception of peacefulness as lived in a country. The lower the index score, the less peaceful is the country. Using the GPI, it is possible to divide the countries into five categories: very high, high, medium, low and very low peace conditions. The most peaceful countries have a very high GPI and the less peaceful countries have a very low GPI. Europe is the most peaceful region in the world and its countries present a very high GPI or a high GPI.

The respondents in the sample are mostly from countries with a high (50 per cent) or from a very high GPI conditions (26.1 per cent) and 19.2 per cent are from countries with a medium GPI. Only 5.2 per cent of responses are from countries with a low or very low GPI as can be seen in Table I.

The resulting groups were finally compared regarding the travel decision-making variables and respective determinants: involvement with international travel, travel risk and safety perceptions and interest in/attention to terrorism in the media.

4. Results

To assess the internal consistency the international travel behaviour determinants (involvement, risk perception, unsafety perceptions and interest and attention to terrorism) Cronbach’s $\alpha$ values were computed (Cronbach, 1951). All the factors presenting Cronbach’s $\alpha$ lower than 0.7 were removed from the analysis (Nunnally, 1978). In the involvement concept only three dimensions were maintained: knowledge; pleasure and interest; risk probability. The ten risk perception variables were all included in the analysis: financial, performance, physical, social, psychological risk, risk of time, risk of (in)satisfaction, political instability/unrest, health and terrorism risk. Regarding the unsafety perceptions dimensions only safety importance exhibits a good internal consistency. Finally, for interest in and attention to terrorism both dimensions showed a good internal consistency.

Next, possible associations between the GPI groupings and the previously identified most consistent travel-determinant dimensions were analysed through Kruskal-Wallis tests. In addition, a more specific analysis was carried out through pairwise comparisons to assess which pairs of GPI categories exhibited significant differences. It was possible to obtain the following results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPI Classification</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Japan, The Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Argentina, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>USA, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Morocco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low and very low</td>
<td>Guinea, India, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, South Africa, Turkey, Venezuela, Russia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding the involvement dimensions, tourists from countries with different levels of GPI showed no significant differences regarding knowledge ($p = 0.547$) and pleasure/interest ($p = 0.868$). However, the risk probability dimension showed a significant difference between GPI groups ($p = 0.004$). In a deeper analysis, significant differences were most evident among tourists coming from countries with low GPI and those who come from countries with medium or high GPI, with tourists from low GPI countries showing a higher involvement with international travel due to risk probability perception than the other two groups (see Figure 1).

When testing the influence of tourists’ GPI level on risk perception types, the results show that most of the risks have a low or very low influence: functional risk ($p = 0.153$), financial risk ($p = 0.889$), physical risk ($p = 0.753$), social risk ($p = 0.719$), psychological risk ($p = 0.652$), risk of satisfaction ($p = 0.108$), health risk ($p = 0.713$) and terrorism risk ($p = 0.760$). Only the risk perception of political instability varies according to the GPI of the country the tourists live in ($p = 0.037$). Significant differences exist among tourists from countries with a high GPI and those from countries with low GPI. Tourists from countries with low GPI have a higher risk perception of becoming involved in political turmoil than those who come from countries with a high GPI ($p = 0.027$). Likewise, the time risk perception differs according to the GPI level of country of residence ($p = 0.021$), with significant differences only found between tourists from countries with a high GPI and those from countries with medium GPI. Specifically, tourists who come from countries with a medium GPI are more likely to feel that a travel experience may last too long or that it may be a waste of time compared with tourists from countries with a high GPI ($p = 0.017$) (see Figures 2 and 3).

The unsafety perceptions dimension safety importance depends significantly ($p = 0.028$) on the GPI value of the tourists’ country of origin. There are only significant differences between tourists from countries with medium GPI and from countries with high GPI. Tourists who come from countries with medium GPI are, comparatively, those who assigned the greatest importance to their destinations’ security attributes (see Figure 4).

Finally, the tourists’ country of origin GPI does not influence significantly the dimensions interest and attention to terrorism ($p = 0.179$).

**Figure 1** Pairwise comparisons of GPI – involvement (risk probability dimension)
5. Discussion

Travel safety is a critical issue to tourists. Also, their country of origin may be an important key factor to understand the different behaviours and safety perceptions they hold when they go on an international trip. The main goal underlying the present study was to advance the knowledge...
on the relationship between peace and international travel. Some studies show the impacts of tourism activity on peace (D’Amore, 2009; Litvin, 1998; Pernecky, 2010; Pratt and Liu, 2016; Moufakkir, 2010). However, to the best of our knowledge, the impact of peace on tourists’ behaviours has never been tested before. Specifically, this is the first study analysing the impact of peacefulness in tourists’ country of origin on their travel behaviour regarding involvement, risk and safety/insecurity perceptions.

**Theoretical implications**

This paper provides a number of theoretically grounded and empirically validated contributions to the literature in consumer decision making and the role of safety and risk perception, providing important insights for an understanding of the dynamics between peace and tourism. Particularly, the results show that the peace in tourists’ country of origin impacts on some consumer decisions and behaviour dimensions.

It is interesting to note that tourists coming from countries with a medium or high GPI have a lower risk probability perception regarding their buying processes than those who come from countries with a low GPI. This may be due to the tendency of countries with a lower GPI being less developed, implying that tourists from those countries travel less and feel therefore less secure during their buying processes. Living in less secure, peaceful and organised environments may also make them fear similar environments and situations abroad and when travelling, further aggravated by the unknown and unfamiliar context. They are, thus, more aware of the risks involved in buying a trip. Consequently, they show to perceive more than those from more peaceful countries that when purchasing a vacation: they cannot be completely sure of their choice; they think that choosing a vacation destination is complicated; and when they face a variety of vacation choices, they feel a bit lost. They understand more easily that whenever a tourist buys a vacation, they never really know whether it is the right option. On the other hand, higher and medium GPI countries tend to be more developed and rich countries, where residents are more experienced travellers, with a greater travel knowledge; so they feel more secure about their choices. As far as the other involvement dimensions regarding the product “travel” are

![Figure 4: Pairwise comparisons of GPI – unsafety perceptions (safety importance dimension)](image)
concerned, there were no significant differences among the GPI countries of origin. Specifically, tourists from different countries did not show statistically significant differences related with knowledge and pleasure/interest revealing the importance of the tourism industry worldwide.

Regarding risk perceptions, the political instability and time risk dimensions were the only ones in which we could find significant differences. Tourists who come from countries with a low GPI perceive more than those coming from higher GPI-level countries that during international travel they can be involved in political turmoil of the country they are visiting. This may be related to the fact that these tourists come from countries that are not safe, so they feel constantly this risk in their own country. It is thus logical that they will project that fear to the destinations they visit. The level of safety and security in their home society, the extent of conflict and the level of militarisation of the country where tourists come from, thus, positively influence the risk perception they attribute to the countries they visit. On the other hand, regarding the risk of time, tourists from countries with a high GPI consider less than tourists from countries with a medium GPI that there is a risk of their travel experience being a waste of time. This tendency may be related to our previous argument regarding risk probability perception in the purchase decision, since tourists from higher GPI countries are typically from more developed countries, used to professional, efficient and generally satisfaction-generating travel services. There are no significant differences among tourists from different countries for all the other risk perception dimensions: financial, performance, physical, social, psychological risk, risk of (in)satisfaction, health and terrorism. This is an interesting result and it may be because tourists are aware of the safety measures that airline companies, airports, tour operators, hotels and destination authorities are implementing to reduce those risks, while time risk and political instability risks may be perceived as less controllable or more likely, particularly by those from countries with lower GPI.

However, as far as safety importance is concerned, there were significant differences between individuals coming from countries with high and medium GPI. Interestingly and as may be expected, tourists from countries with a medium GPI attribute more importance to safety than those coming from safer countries. They consider that it is important to have additional security measures at airports that will allow people to travel more safely. They think that safety is the most important attribute that a destination can offer. They also consider that safety is a major consideration to be taken into account when they choose a destination. This probably occurs because they are not certain that their own country has the best safety and security conditions to offer, so they expect to find those measures in the countries they visit. Perhaps those with higher GPI are not to the same extent concerned about travel safety, because they relativise these safety measures since they expect that visited countries have similar measures they are used to in their own countries.

Another interesting result is that there were no differences regarding the attention to and interest in terrorism among the tourists of all GPI segments. This confirms the importance of media as the primary source of information about terrorism. Regardless of the country of origin, all tourists have interest in and pay major attention to terrorism news in the media. In fact, tourists from all countries are very interested in the news on terrorism, and the media exploration of terrorist attacks has the power to transform the public opinion on tourism, particularly on international travel (Sönmez, 1998). Media coverage of terrorist attacks consequently impacts on the image other destinations where those attacks take place, a finding in line with previous studies (Seabra et al., 2014).

The results respond to the Prospect Theory extension call (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979) since an international tourism experience itself presents a risky decision, even more when the consumers face instable contexts in their country of origin, being thus more aware and concerned about risks in their daily lives. In the decision processes, international tourists formulate the judgemental principles to evaluate gains and losses, influenced by their context, namely, the (more or less) peaceful environment in their home country. Specifically, those coming from countries with medium and low GPI show higher risk probability perception regarding their buying processes, higher risk perception of political instability and time risk, and also attribute more importance to safety measures than those coming from safer countries. In sum, the travelling decision is associated with the level of peace in the tourists’ country of origin, in so far as it depends largely on the perceived likelihood of that peace in diverse contexts, also in international travel, conditioned by what people are used to in their daily living context.
The study also adds an interesting angle to the Experiential Consumer Perspective (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982) by analysing the relationship between peacefulness at home and involvement and risk perception in international travel. Leisure activities carry an important symbolic value, prompting significant levels of interest and involvement. This study’s results corroborate this perspective since all tourists, independently of their country of origin, showed high levels of involvement, with differences only observable in risk probability perception, namely, between tourists coming from countries with low GPI and those from countries with medium or high GPI. Thus, individual differences associated with the safety level of the traveller’s country of origin proved to be relevant when trying to explain international travel decisions and behaviours, bringing the attention to the emotional dimension of tourism products consumption, namely, fear and anxiety (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982), dimensions which are in fact understudied in tourism and other fields of consumer behaviour.

Managerial implications

These results bring important insights to managers of tourist organisations and destinations. Factors like involvement and especially risk probability that relate directly with the tourists’ confidence when they buy tourist products, interest in and attention to terrorism in the media and safety perceptions are very important attributes managers have to take into account if they want to attract tourists from all around the world.

This study showed that the peacefulness in the tourists’ origin countries has an impact on their involvement, on some risk perception dimensions and on the importance that they attribute to safety. Especially countries more affected by safety, instability and terrorism risks need to be aware of travellers’ concerns and expectations and present, particularly to those travellers coming from less safe or unstable contexts themselves, convincing measure that may reduce those risks. Thus, the GPI may be a useful tool in identifying those markets where particular care must be given to the design and communication of travel services, attending the needs of particularly risk averse and concerned international travellers. The relationships which are identified here may thus serve as a very important insight helping tourist destinations and firms to develop successful targeting strategies. Attracting tourists from countries with medium GPI is a challenge, since they are particularly concerned with safety measures. Particularly destinations that want to attract tourists from countries that exhibit a low GPI should invest in increase safety measure and corresponding informational strategies, highlighting the safety of the destination and the measures to guarantee it to tourists.

However, the image of safety and security is apparently critical nowadays, so promotional campaigns should not neglect stability and safety features of the destination image, while all destinations should consider strategies not only to prevent events that may threaten stability and safety but also those mitigating the impact of such events, through sensible communication in the media and effective crisis management.

6. Research limitations and future research directions

The present research has some limitations. The first relates to the study setting; we collected data from tourists in three international airports, all located in Europe. Therefore, it only included tourists who were travelling by plane and eventually mostly in this continent, which may limit the generalisability of the results. In order to achieve the data generalisability, there should be an opportunity to gather data in other locations, in different continents and from tourists who are using different transportation means. Also, a larger sample may have helped obtaining more significant numbers of tourists travelling from countries with lower GPI, although a lower international travel intensity from these countries should be expected.

Future studies on this topic using the scale battery, presented here, would be interesting to test the instrument and the suggested model in other tourism and travel contexts. New items and factors may also be added that could highlight other facets of the phenomenon under study. Antecedents of involvement and risk perceptions in international travelling should also be investigated. It would also be interesting to explore the possibility of an analysis of behaviour and...
trip planning among tourists that come from countries with a high and a medium GPI. Finally, other indexes like the Organization for Economic and Co-operation Development (2018) safety index could also be used to assess different levels of “peacefulness/safety at home”.

References


**Further reading**

## Appendix

### Table AI: Factors, dimensions and measures of the questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement with international travel</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Compared to average person, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations Compared to my friends and relatives, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations Compared to people who travel a lot, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pleasure/Interest</td>
<td>It gives me pleasure to purchase a vacation Buying a vacation is like buying a gift for myself A vacation is somewhat of a pleasure to me I attach great importance to a vacation One can say vacation destinations interests me a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk probability</td>
<td>A vacation destination is a topic that leaves me totally indifferent Whenever one buys a vacation, one never really knows whether it is the one that should have been bought When I face a variety of vacation choices, I always feel a bit lost to make my choice Choosing a vacation destination is rather complicated When one purchases a vacation, one is never certain of one’s choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td>You can tell a lot about a person by the vacations destinations he/she chooses The vacation you buy tells a little bit about you If, after I bought a vacation, my choice proves to be poor, I would be really upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk probability</strong></td>
<td>Risk probability</td>
<td>When I face a variety of vacation choices, I always feel a bit lost to make my choice Choosing a vacation destination is rather complicated When one purchases a vacation, one is never certain of one’s choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety importance</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not reflect the individual’s personality or self-image Possibility that travel experience will not provide personal satisfaction Possibility that travel choice/experience will affect other’s opinion of individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Possibility that of becoming involved in the political turmoil of the country being visited Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>Possibility of becoming involved in the political turmoil of the country being visited Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk importance</strong></td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety importance</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety importance</strong></td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(In)satisfaction</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not reflect the individual’s personality or self-image Possibility that travel experience will not provide personal satisfaction Possibility that travel choice/experience will affect other’s opinion of individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Travel risk perception</strong></td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety importance</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unsafety perception</strong></td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety importance</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terrorism</strong></td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety importance</td>
<td>Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political instability</td>
<td>Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents) Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale:** 1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree

Adapted from Broderick and Mueller (1999), Seabra et al. (2014), Zaichkowsky (1985)

---

**Travel risk perception**

- **Functional**: Possibility of mechanical, equipment, organisational problems during travel or at destination (transportation, accommodation, attractions, etc.)
- **Safety**: Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent, Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination, Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents), Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination
- **Political**: Possibility of becoming involved in the political turmoil of the country being visited, Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents), Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination
- **Psychological**: Possibility that travel experience will not reflect the individual’s personality or self-image, Possibility that travel experience will not provide personal satisfaction, Possibility that travel choice/experience will affect other’s opinion of individual
- **(In)satisfaction**: Possibility that travel experience will not provide value for money spent, Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination, Possibility of physical danger or injury detrimental to health (accidents), Possibility of becoming sick while travelling or at the destination
- **Social**: Possibility that travel choice/experience will affect other’s opinion of individual
- **Terrorism**: Possibility of becoming involved in a terrorist act, Possibility of being involved in a terrorist act
- **Time**: Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time

**Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale:** 1 = very high risk; 7 = very low risk

Adapted from Seabra et al. (2013), Sedighi et al. (2001), Sönmez and Graefe (1998b)

---

**Travel unsafety perceptions**

- **Unsafety sensation**: Travelling is risky right now, Travelling is risky right now, Travelling is risky right now, Travelling is risky right now, Travelling is risky right now, Travelling is risky right now, Travelling is risky right now
- **Safety sensation**: I feel nervous about travelling right now, I feel nervous about travelling right now, I feel nervous about travelling right now, I feel nervous about travelling right now, I feel nervous about travelling right now, I feel nervous about travelling right now, I feel nervous about travelling right now
- **Safety importance**: Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer, Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer, Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer, Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer, Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer, Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer, Additional security measures at airports make travelling safer
- **Terrorism**: Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism, Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism, Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism, Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism, Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism, Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism, Toursists are not likely to be targets of terrorism
- **Unsafety importance**: Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer
- **Safety importance**: Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer, Safety is the most important attribute a destination can offer
- **Terrorism**: Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now, Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now, Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now, Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now, Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now, Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now, Because of terrorism large, theme parks should be avoided by tourists right now
- **Time**: Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time, Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time, Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time, Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time, Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time, Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time, Possibility that travel experience will take too much time or will waste time

**Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale:** 1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree

Adapted from Floyd and Pennington-Gray (2004)

---

**Interest and attention to terrorism**

- **Interest**: I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news, I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news, I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news, I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news, I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news, I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news, I am really interested about terrorist attacks reports on news
- **Attention**: When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news, When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news, When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news, When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news, When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news, When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news, When I have the opportunity I watch/read/ear reports about terrorist attacks on news

**Assessed through a seven-point Likert scale:** 1 = totally disagree; 7 = totally agree

Adapted from Jin (2003), Seabra et al. (2014)
About the authors

Cláudia Seabra is Associate Professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu—Higher School of Technology and Management. She also is doing her Post-PhD Project on “Terrorism and the EU 28: impact on citizens and organizations” from the Nova School of Business and Economics with a scholarship of the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology. She has publications in the Journal of Business Research, Tourism Management, European Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Management, Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology, among others. She is affiliated by the Nova School of Business and Economics and the Center for Studies in Education, Technologies and Health. Cláudia Seabra develops her research in: safety and terrorism, and tourism. Cláudia Seabra is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: cseabra@estv.ipv.pt

Elisabeth Kastenholz is Associate Professor at the Department of Economics, Management, Industrial Engineering and Tourism, Aveiro University. She is Member of the Research Unit of Governance, Competitiveness and Public Policies (GOVCOPP). She currently coordinates the field of Tourism Studies at the University of Aveiro, her research focusses on consumer behaviour in tourism, destination marketing, sustainable destination development, rural tourism and accessible tourism.

José Luís Abrantes is Professor in Polytechnic Institute of Viseu—Higher School of Technology and Management. He has publications in Journal of Business Research, Tourism Management, International Marketing Review, among other journals. He is affiliated by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology and Center for Studies in Education, Technologies and Health. José Luís Abrantes develops his research in: marketing, tourism, and pedagogy.

Manuel Reis is Assistant Teacher at the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu—Higher School of Technology and Management. He also is doing his PhD in Management from the University of Beira Interior. He has a BSc Degree is in Mathematics (New University of Lisbon) and an MSc Degree in Statistics (University of Porto). He is affiliated by the Center for Studies in Education, Technologies and Health.

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
The German source market perceptions: how risky is Turkey to travel to?

Rami K. Isaac and Vanessa Velden

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to get a better understanding of the influence of terrorism on risk perception and attitudes of the German travel behavior toward Turkey as a destination in crisis, which has been considered one of the biggest losers for 2016.
Design/methodology/approach – The research process involved an online self-administered method created with one of the leading research and web-based survey tools called Qualtrics. This tool has been considered useful to reach a wider target, the questionnaire filled in by 305 respondents.
Findings – The findings revealed a strong tendency of a low safety perception among the sample toward Turkey. Furthermore, a large proportion indicated a strong unlikelihood of traveling to the country within the upcoming 12 months independently of a past travel experience. In addition, Turkey and Egypt were the countries perceived as most unsafe among the mentioned destinations.
Research limitations/implications – The majority of the respondents of the study were aged between 50 and 59 years and were employed as commercial employee, office or administration workers. The outcomes might be different for a higher sample size with a tendency of various demographic characteristic such as age and profession. Furthermore, the study should be repeated while focusing on respondents with accompanied children on holidays, which only made up a minority for the present research study.
Originality/value – To the best of the knowledge, this is the first study to examine the influence of terrorism on risk perception and attitudes of the German travel behavior toward Turkey and their risk reduction strategies/preventive measures.
Keywords Terrorism, Turkey, Safety, Risk, Travel behaviour, German market

Paper type Research paper

Introduction
International tourism is extremely sensitive to safety and security issues (Pizam and Mansfeld, 1996). It is indeed one of the undertakings most vulnerable, changes in the world stage that may yield changes in consumer behavior (Coshall, 2003; Dimanche and Leptic, 1999; Levantis and Gani, 2000; Pizam and Mansfeld, 1996; Seabra et al., 2013). Safety and security fears strongly impact tourists’ decision-making processes (Beirman, 2003; Crompton and Ankornah, 1993; Fesermaier, 1988; Moutinho, 1987; Woodside and King, 2001; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989). Nowadays, the tourism industry is confronted with an increasing amount of global risks (Seabra et al., 2013), and if tourists feel insecure at a specific destination, an overall negative impression is expected to result (George, 2003). Accordingly, tourists who perceive a destination as unsafe will be replaced by safer ones (Beirman, 2003; Gu and Martin, 1992; Mansfeld, 1996; Sönmez, 1998). Tourists’ risk perception about their personal safety has a major influence on consumption patterns of tourism. Safety and security are significant issues at a destination level and, therefore, should be considered by DMOs as one of the most influential conditions for the development of a tourism destination (Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008). Risky or dangerous destinations may have difficulties to attract tourists and visitors (Beirman, 2003; George, 2003; Prideaux, 1996; Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2009; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b) and as a result, there may be a drop in the local tourism industry by a reduction of tourist arrivals (Sönmez et al., 1999). Several scholars tried to examine the connections between risk perceptions, safety concerns and tourist behavior. Specifically, there...
are studies on the effects of terrorism in the tourism decision-making process (Bonham et al., 2006; Cosnall, 2003; Floyd et al., 2004; Goodrich, 2002; Neumayer, 2004; Pizam and Fleischer, 2002; Ritchie, 2004; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a; Sönmez et al., 1999), the impact of risk and safety on travel behavior (Goodrich, 1991; Hunter-Jones et al., 2008; Irvin and Anderson, 2006; Kozak et al., 2007; Lepp and Gibson, 2008; Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992; Seabra et al., 2013; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b) and the influence of various elements on risk and safety perception (Barker et al., 2003; Lennon et al., 2001; Lepp and Gibson, 2003; Liu et al., 2016; Reisinger and Crotts, 2009; Reisinger and Mavondo, 2006). However, scarce research has been carried out on the linkages between terrorism risk perception, and attitudes of tourism demand. The choice of destinations typically influences the perceptions of risk and safety that tourists might associate with it, with each destination being affected by various types of risk in distinct ways. Chew and Jahari (2014) call for attention to the fact that this denotes a substantial weakness for the tourism industry and for many DMOs in particular, since tourist travel choices are frequently based on perceptions rather than reality. Arana and Leon (2008, p. 300) state “despite numerous case studies being conducted on the impact of tourism and terrorism, the impact of terrorism on tourism demand is still under-researched.” Additionally, to the best of our knowledge, no study has so far been published with a focus on the impact of perceived risk of terrorism and attitudes of the German travel behavior toward Turkey. The intension of this study is to help close this gap in literature. It is also important to analyze the influence that the perceived risk of terrorism may have on the decision to travel to Turkey. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to get a better understanding of the influence of terrorism on risk perception and attitudes of the German travel behavior toward Turkey, which has been considered among one of the big losers for 2016. The German travel segment has been chosen as the source market for the present study due to its importance as western market for Turkey’s tourism. According to Özen (2016), Germany has always been the largest for Turkish tourism among western markets, making up 15.4 percent of the total incoming foreigners.

Following this introduction, this paper will define concept of tourism and terrorism, risk perception and risk perception of international travelers, and how these have been explored in the literature, followed by a brief section on Turkey’s political unrest. This discussion then moves to a description of the methodology, the presentation of the findings and the implications for tourism destinations.

Literature review

Terrorism

Early research about terrorism and risk has been conducted by Sönmez and Graefe (1998a, b) who investigated the influence of such risk on foreign tourism decision.

As a general definition, political instability refers to “the propensity of a government collapse and involved sociopolitical turmoil” (Alesina et al., 1996, p. 2). Terrorism is defined as “premediated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against civilians and unharmed military personal by subnational groups” (US Department of State, 1996). Although those components might seem unrelated at first sight, closer examination underlines the fact that “terrorism can be the manifestation of political crisis” (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b). This statement implements that in several examples, terrorist activities have resulted from political unrest.

The threat accompanying with terrorism deters more visitors than any other human or natural disasters (Sönmez, 1998). The tourism industry in a specific destination, such as Tunisia, for example, suffers from terrorist attacks since it affected the perceptions of the destination’s safety. Much of the studies conducted in the terrorism arena accomplish that terrorist activity in a particular place increases the level of perceived risk and uncertainty and thus has negative effects on tourism demand and behavior, reflecting a drop in visitation patterns (Bar-On, 1996; Blake and Sinclaire, 2003; Enders and Sandler, 1991; Gartner and Shen, 1992; Mansfeld, 1996; Pizam, 1999; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992; Sönmez, 1998; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b; Wahab, 1996).
The increasing attention is given to the risk of terrorism associated with a steadily increasing number of empirical studies and publications on the topic both within generic and applied fields (Wolff and Larsen, 2017). Besides the research studies mentioned above, some other research focuses on how tourists perceive the risk of terrorism. Nevertheless, the impacts of terrorism on risk perceptions are not as extensive as could be expected from the above-mentioned studies (Wolff and Larsen, 2017). For example, Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) revealed risk perceptions to be correlated with travel anxiety, while Sönmez and Graefe (1998a,b) found that risk perceptions influenced destination choice. Sjöberg (2005) stated that perceived terrorism risk was rather low in a Swedish sample. Various research studies such as Fuchs et al. (2012) and Uriely et al. (2007) showed that tourists might disregard governmental travel advisors and travel to destinations threatened by terrorism.

Recent research of Jordan as MENA region conducted by Liu et al. (2016, p. 296) suggested that “for most MENA destinations, terrorism and political turmoil have developed into a sustained tourism crisis that has negatively affected the perception held by many source markets” (see also Avraham, 2013, 2015). Furthermore, it has been stated that destinations under political instability or involved with terrorism activities usually experience declines in tourist arrivals. Nevertheless, this claim appears to be highly dependent on the type of destination and the safety perception of a diverse range of travelers. Due to increased mobility, political instability and terrorism can expand from an internal and domestic to a regional or global level with the ability to negatively influence surrounding states and countries and hinder tourism development (Liu et al., 2016).

One of the most recent studies of tourism and terrorism has been conducted by Liu and Pratt (2017) investigating tourism’s vulnerability and resilience in terrorism. The authors argued that the mind-set of international tourists fundamentally changed. The authors stated that most studies until now focused on the impact of terrorism on tourism. Other studies found that while destinations can recover from individual incidents, the continued reinforcement of a destination as a constant trouble spot slowly deteriorate the destination’s image (Buckley and Klemm, 1993).

An additional remarkable point has been made by Saha and Yap (2014, p. 509) who found that “terrorist attacks actually increase tourism demand in low to moderate political-risk countries.” A linkage has been made to the trend for dark tourism demand or political-oriented tourism (Isaac, 2010; Isaac and Ashworth, 2012) implementing the desire of tourists to visit terrorism-impacted destination in a low-political-risk country.

Likewise, as the findings of Liu and Pratt pointed out, Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty (2009, p. 416) found in their research that “perceived terrorism risk only discourages tourist in the short run but do not have a long-term impact on tourist’s decision to travel internationally.”

Despite numerous case studies on tourism and terrorism, the impact of terrorism on tourism demand is still under-researched (Arana and Leon, 2008).

**Risk perception**

Consumer behavior is an act of risk, which was first introduced by Bauer (1967), because any individual action of consumption is linked with uncertainty, implying unanticipated – and possibly unpleasant – consequences (Seabra et al., 2013, p. 503).

Throughout tourism literature, it is commonly accepted that tourist’s risk perceptions can be classified into various categories and types of risk. Nevertheless, a lack of consistency exists particularly in tourism in the definitions, methodologies and measurement techniques of perceived risk of destinations by tourists (Fuchs and Reichel, 2006a). Risk perceptions are specific to each situation (Dowling, 1986), and should consequently be assessed using measurement tools appropriate to the tourist behavior context. Buying tourism services, in which tourism is a service, implies a high level of perceived risk (Hugstad et al., 1987).

Several scholars (Dolincar, 2005; Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b) argue that the relationship between risk perceptions and travel behavior are travel specific and context dependent, demanding elaborated scales for their evaluation. Generally spoken, risk perception has been considered as influential factor for decision making with regard to the
purchase of tourist products. Similar to other studies, Fuchs and Reichel (2006a, p. 84) make a link to the existence of different levels of perceived risk in tourism ranging from “disappointment in relation to expectations or promised experience, to inappropriate facilities through severe injury and even death.” In consumer behavior literature, perceived risk has been defined as “a consumer’s perception of the overall negativity of a course of action based upon an assessment of the possible negative outcomes and the likelihood that those outcomes will occur” (Mowen and Minor, 1998, p. 176). There exists a consistent literature on risk typology cited in different contexts of research, but for classical consumer behavior area as defined by Solomon (2002) and Shiffman and Kanuk (1997), some risks are more often cited. This is possibly because of the issue mostly used for risk analysis applied to different categories of products situations. It is clear, though, that there is no consensus in the literature on the general types of perceived risk that influence consumer behavior. Therefore, the main types of perceived risk used in the literature related to consumer behavior.

Risk perception of international travelers

In accordance with the findings of Liu et al. (2016) concerning spillover effects, Kozak et al. (2007, p. 240) suggested that “a single act of terrorism, natural disaster and spread of disease may sometimes lead to forming overall negative image of all the neighborhood countries, resulting in a global devastating impact in the region.” While Liu et al. (2016) considered demographic characteristics to be an unstable predictor of individual risk perception, Kozak et al. (2007) defined age as a stable predictor, stating, “Elderly people are less likely to change their travel plans if risk threat occurs.”

Furthermore, the study of Kozak et al. recommend that travelers’ risk perception decreased while their experience increased which is in accordance with the findings of other studies (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b; Liu et al., 2016).

As a valuable component of the research, the authors concluded that “travellers risk perceptions differ from one geographical region to another” and that each traveler perceives regions in different ways. Segmentation and clustering travelers in different risk groups might therefore be a useful tool for DMOs to better understand their target markets and set up better positioning strategies in the future.

As several theories previously mentioned underlined the complexity of risk perception, numerous factors deal as influential factor such as cultural background, past travel experience (PTE), sociodemographic factors and the overall level of perceived risk. Clustering and segmentation will therefore be considered for the present study to draw conclusions, which will be valuable for various stakeholders in the tourism industry.

Destination risk perception

Previous research has also identified internal personal factors that determine how strongly an objective risk is perceived by a person and these expose a diversity of relevant factors such as personality traits (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2005; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992); culture and nationality (Hofstede, 1983; Hurley, 1988; Kastenholz, 2010); past experiences, where experienced tourists feel less risk (Lepp and Gibson, 2003; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b); demographics (Gibson and Yiannakis, 2002; Lepp and Gibson, 2003); gender (Lepp and Gibson, 2003); and income and education (Floyd and Pennington-Gray, 2004; Mitchell and Vassos, 1997).

Research conducted in tourism segmentation approaches of the tourist market is based on risk perceptions (Dolincar, 2005, 2007; Floyd and Pennington-Gray, 2004; Lepp and Gibson, 2003; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992).

Fuchs and Reichel (2006b) explored the concept of destination risk perception by applying it to a highly risky destination namely Israel. The authors’ overall assumption is that each destination is characterized by both an overall risk perception and by specific categories or items. As already stated previously, the authors agree accordingly that a study of tourist destination risk perception during these times of international insecurity including terrorism and other far-reaching global uncertainties can be considered a valuable tool for dealing with unwelcoming and hostile environments. Another point addressed in their study is that they
demonstrated that “destination risk perception is a multidimensional concept.” As defined in the Oxford Dictionary, the term “multidimensional” implies “of or involving several dimensions.” In their research, Fuchs and Reichel proved this statement in relation to risk perception by showing that each type of risk mentioned in the literature is composed of subcategories. Next to an overall destination risk perception, each dimension is comprised of several questions or issues. In the case of Israel, the authors found that the risk perception of this tourist destination is composed of six risk types or factors namely human-induced risk, financial risk, service quality risk, socio-psychological risk and natural disaster and car accidents and food safety and weather. Finally, those findings go beyond identified types of risk and demonstrate the complexity and multidimensionality of the risk perception concept.

Recent investigation into source market perception conducted by Liu et al. (2016) made attempts to scrutinize individuals’ safety perception and travel intention associated with a destination located in a conflict-ridden region namely Jordan. Located in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) and bordered by other conflict-ridden regions, the country experienced several conflicts discussed with concerns by western media and resulting in negative perception and tourist’s hesitation to visit MENA destinations. An interesting point has been addressed concerning spillover effects, implementing individual’s cluster destination based on geography. Therefore, any event that takes place in one MENA destination naturally could affect tourist’s perceptions associated with another MENA country (Drakos and Kutan, 2003).

To fill an existing knowledge gap in the context of tourism and travel literature, the authors utilized the risk perception attitude (RPA) framework dealing as theoretical approach to classify individuals into four groups based on levels of perceived risk and efficacy beliefs: indifference group, proactive group, avoidance group and responsive group. The intended aim was to inspect the impact of terrorism-related RPAs on individual’s travel decisions.

The authors in addition found that the majority of the respondents did not perceive Jordan as being a safe destination and are very unlikely to visit the destination within the next six months. As previous studies suggested, the study of Jordan confirms that demographic characteristics cannot be considered as stable predictors of individual risk perceptions (Floyd and Pennington-Gray, 2004, Liu et al., 2013). On the other hand, PTE can, therefore, be considered as stable predictor, as tourist’s knowledge of a destination with in turn increases the familiarity and sense of confidence with a destination.

Segmentation by travel-related risk: integrated approach

Ritchie et al. (2017) took an integrated approach toward traveler risk segmentation by including psychological and behavioral variables.

In accordance with other researchers, Ritchie et al. (2017, p. 275) agreed that “in recent years, the number of travel health and safety risks has increased considerably.” Nevertheless, the authors claimed, “people continue to travel to certain destination despite travel warnings issued by government advisories,” indicating that perceived risk levels vary among travelers.

In their research, the authors consider risk reduction strategies, which can be defined as “the processes used by tourists to reduce uncertainty and dissatisfaction related to their travel experience” (Lo et al., 2011, p. 243). Some of the commonly used RRS are gathering information from independent travel reviews and consulting with the travel agent/tour operator. Furthermore, it was found that the type of RRS used differs by individual tourists and group travelers and by first-time visitors, light repeat visitors and heavy repeat visitors (Fuchs and Reichel, 2006a, 2010).

Finally, it should kept in mind that the study of Ritchie et al. (2017) focused on a broad set of risks rather than particular types of risks such as terrorism or infection diseases. As Kozak et al. (2007) found that travelers from different national cultures may have varying degrees of the perceived risk, the study of Ritchie et al. (2017) might only be generalizable to a limited extent as it focused on the Australian citizens. Therefore, the study should be proven by applying it to a different country/source market.
A model presented in by Sönmez and Graefe (1998a, b) suggest that decisions by tourists are influenced by several factors as they progress through a sequence of stages. Several of these factors have been considered potentially useful for the current study.

As can be retrieved from the model, external factors considered as influential for the awareness of risk associated with international travel due to terrorism and/or political instability have been media coverage of terrorism/political instability, government issued travel advisories and social interaction such as negative word-of-mouth regarding terrorist threat.

Internal factors considered were international travel experience, international travel attitude, and risk perception level and traveler personality type. According to the theory developed by Plog (1974), travelers may be classified into psychocentric (risk averse) and allocentric (risk taking) personality types. While allocentric individuals have been characterized as self-confident, adventuresome and prefer novel experiences, psychocentric are conservative, seek safety and prefer the familiar. Nevertheless, this theory seems to be limited for generalization as recent studies presented several ways on how to segment travelers according to their risk perception (Ritchie et al., 2017; Kozak et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2016).

Concerning the information search, travel professionals, literature and advisories, as well as various other sources, might be consulted at this stage (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b). The extend of information search has been considered to be dependent on previous experience, risk perceptions and the importance of the vacation. Interestingly to consider, the authors underline the fact that potential tourist may acquire information about terrorism or political problem at or near the stage of booking the vacation from media coverage, travel advisories or social interaction. All those sources have the potential to impact the decision which finally may lead to cancellation or choosing a different destination. Finally, the level of perceived risk may also dictate the amount of information research, which has been identified as a risk reduction strategy undertaken by the potential tourist (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992).

**Turkey as a tourism destination**

With an area of approximately 800,000 km², Turkey is one of the largest countries in Europe and the Middle East (Yolal, 2016). Due to its unique geographic location, it has the advantage of being located close to the European, Russian and Middle Eastern tourism markets (Egresi, 2016). Being blessed with a coastline of more than 8,300 km surrounded by three seas, attractive Mediterranean climate and beautiful beaches, “Turkey possesses the necessary resources for sun-sea-sand (3s) tourism” (Alvarez, 2010). In addition, the country offers numerous natural resources and historical and cultural heritage.

From the economic perspective, the tourism industry can be considered as an important sector for Turkey. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2017), “the direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP in 2016 was 87.9bn and making up 4.1% of the GDP.” A rise of 2.0 percent is forecasted for 2017. Important to notice is that the direct contribution primarily reflects the economic activity generated by industries such as hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transportation. In addition, it includes activities of the restaurants and leisure activities directly supported by tourists.

**Terror attacks and political unrest**

Since 2015, terrorist attacks in Turkey have repeatedly occurred, some of which specifically targeted foreigners. According to The New York Times (2017) “more than 400 people have been killed in major attacks throughout the country.”

One of the first targets of terrorist attacks has been a police station in the tourist hub of Sultanahmet on January 6, 2015, when a female suicide bomber blew herself up killing one police officer. Next to the popular tourist district Sultanahmet, several other places have been targeted for attacks and explosions in 2015, such as a police station on the Sultanbeyli district of Istanbul on August, 10, causing a fire that spread to nearby buildings and seven people injured (Al Jazeera, 2017).
Nevertheless, the terror attack on the peace rally in the capital city of Ankara on October 10, 2015, has been considered “the deadliest terror attack in Turkey’s history” (Letsch and Khomami, 2015). As reported by Letsch and Khomami (2015), two explosions “targeted hundreds of people who had gathered to protest against violence between authorities and the Kurdish militant group, the PKK,” leaving at least 95 people killed and around 250 wounded.

On January 12, 2016, another suicide bombing took place at the popular tourist district Sultanahmet in Istanbul. This time, a suicide bomber blew himself up in the middle of a German travel group close to the Hagia Sophia monument and the blue mosque. According to Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier (ZEIT Online, 2016), “eight Germans have been killed during the suicide bombing, and nine have been seriously injured.”

Followed by multiple terror attacks in Ankara and surroundings targeting mainly the police and military, a triple suicide bombing at Europe’s third-busiest airport Atatürk in Istanbul occurred on June 28, 2016. According to Tuysuz et al. for McKenzie and Sanchez (2016) “three men arrived by taxi at the international terminal and launched their horror armed with rifles and suicide bomb vests.” The death toll is 41, with an additional of 239 people wounded.

Furthermore, a failed military coup attempt took place on July 15, 2016, in Turkey with the aim to overthrow the government (McKenzie and Sanchez, 2016).

After two violent years for Turkey enduring a string of high-profile bombings and much political unrest, another terrorist attack occurred on January 1, 2017. During the New Year’s Night, “the gunman entered Reina, a club on the Bosphorus that has long been favourite of tourists” (Shaheen, 2017), killing 39 people.

Despite terror attacks, political instability, the weakened relationship with the EU and a higher safety and security travel advices, Turkey has experienced higher demand. With more than 600,000 tourists per month, Russian makes up the highest market for Turkey (Focus Online, 2017).

Methodology

The research setting

Many studies analyze the concept of perceived risk in tourism (Moutinho, 1987; Rohel and Fesenmaier, 1992). Risk, in addition, is identified as a fundamental concern of international travelers (Yavas, 1990). Therefore, the present study aims to analyze the influence of terrorism on risk perception and attitudes of the German travel behavior toward Turkey as a destination in crisis. As the preliminary research questions require the collection of standardized information of a large sample size, the main research method was based on quantitative information gathering through an online survey in a form of self-administered questionnaire. This research method was intended to give the authors the possibility to draw valuable conclusion based on a high respondents’ rate to present a realistic and clear level of awareness of the issue.

Survey instrument

The study employed scales previously established in the literature to develop the questionnaire, (Liu et al., 2016; Sönmez and Sirakaya 2002) combining effects of likely predictors, e.g., information sources used, socio-demographics factors and other variables such as PTE and familiarity (Kozak et al., 2007). Both consumer behavior and tourist decision-making literature suggest that personal experience is integrated into decision making as a passive or internal information search (Crompton, 1992; Evans and Berman, 1993; Um and Crompton, 1990). It has been suggested that future travel behavior may be influenced by the nature as well as extent of PTE (Mazursky, 1989). Past experience is also important as it can create awareness and knowledge of potential risks and may impact travel intentions (Sharifpour et al., 2013).

The appeal of Turkey as a destination was operationalized as a single-item five-point Likert scale/question (In general, how appealing is Turkey to you as a tourist destination?) ranging from 1 = very unappealing and 5 = very appealing.

The present research study did include demographic variables including age, gender, educational level, profession, income, marital status to provide additional background on
the respondents. As Seabra et al. (2013) point out, elements such as culture, nationality, past experiences, income and education and travel motivations are determinant in one’s interpretation of what is considered risky or unsafe. In addition, the variable “children in the household” serves as essential and inevitable for the case of the risk perception of the German tourist segment toward Turkey as the destination particular popular for families due to “its climate, good value for money spent and high food quality” (Özen, 2016).

Specific question to safety and security topic was included in the survey. Primarily, “the overall importance of safety when booking a holiday at the moment?” ranging from $1 = $ not important to $5 = $ very important was measured among respondents. Subsequently, the importance of additional aspects was investigated when going on holiday, such as price, weather, hospitality and relaxation in order to put the safety aspect in the context.

Travel behavior was examined as the extent of travel to a destination. Respondents were asked “Has your travel behavior been influenced by the recent terror attacks?” based on Liu and Pratt (2017) claiming that people get used to a heightened risk threats around the globe and “continue to travel to certain destinations despite travel warnings issued by government advisories” (Fuchs et al., 2012; Uriely et al., 2007; Ritchie et al., 2017). Likewise, the type of information search among respondents has been adapted to the survey. These aspects included questions investigating the participants’ opinion of the security advice published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the level of expertise of tour operators and most trustworthy information sources. General intension for future travel was gauged through one question “In the next 12 months, how likely are you going to travel to Turkey?” (1 = very likely to 5 = very unlikely). Spillover effects were considered as an interesting aspect to investigate, as it has been claimed that individual’s cluster destinations are based on geography (Liu et al., 2016).

Perception of safety: the survey questions asked respondents to assess their level of risk perception of safety for several countries, starting with Germany followed by an additional six popular holiday destinations some of which have been a target of terror attacks in the past: Spain, Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Italy, France, from Liker scale $1 = \text{very unsafe}$ to $5 = \text{very safe}$.

Preventive measurements and their effectiveness to increase the sense of security have been included in the survey and adapted partially by research of Liu et al. (2016). Several measures were taken prior to travel such as registering with the embassy, searching for more information online or in travel guides about how to stay safe while others focused on measurement to be taken at the destination itself such as increased police presence or to adjust respectfully to the local and cultural conditions. Once again, all items were measured using the five-point Likert-type scale, from $1 = \text{ineffective}$ to $5 = \text{very effective}$ (Ritchie et al., 2017).

A pre-test was conducted with sample of 11 people, from the age groups of 18-29, 30-39, 50-59 and 60-69, whose results were used to further refine the questionnaire.

Data collection

The research tool for the present study has been based on a self-administered survey method created with one of the leading research and web-based survey tools called Qualtrics. This tool has been considered useful to reach a wider target. The data for this study were collected in the end of August 2017 until early September 2017. During this period, 340 responses have been collected. Due to missing data of partial responses, 305 valid questionnaires were finally included in the sample. It took approximately one and half weeks to collect all the responses. The sample of this study was German citizens over 18 years. Consequently, snowball sampling has been used and the questionnaire has been privately sent to people on the social media platform, Facebook, and published into several groups and has been forwarded by friends and family. Important to notice is the relevance of the topic giving the current situation of the country such as the Turkish presidential election, the countries relation with the EU and latest tourist attacks all together resulting in the immense amount of media coverage through television, radio channel and media newspaper online and offline. Intentionally or unintentionally, people are being confronted with the situation in Turkey, which may alter their risk perception or simply lead to feelings such as anger, frustration or defiance.
Results

Overall, 305 valid respondents have been collected. Most participants were between the ages of 50 and 59 years (30.8 percent, n = 94) (which is representative to the age category of German sample) followed by those between 18 and 29 years (26.9 percent, n = 82). The remaining respondents were either between the ages of 40 and 49 years (n = 76), 30 and 39 years (n = 26) or 60 and 69 years (n = 23). Only a small percentage was 70 years or older (1.3 percent, n = 4). Moreover, more than half of the respondents were female (54.4 percent, n = 166) and remainder were male (45.6 percent, n = 139).

When it comes to the educational level of the sample, it can be stated that the majority of respondents had received at least a high school degree which in German terms is referred to as “Realschulabschluss” (23.0 percent, n = 70), “Fachhochschulabschluss” (23.6 percent, n = 72) or “Abitur” (18.7 percent, n = 57). Furthermore, 15.4 percent of the sample (n = 47) hold a bachelor degree and an additional 14.1 percent (n = 43) a master degree. The minority of respondents had a lower educational level “Hauptschulabschluss” (5.2 percent, n = 16).

Based on the dominating age groups, more than half of the respondents were employed (71.7 percent, n = 218) and an additional 9.9 percent (n = 30) were students. Overall, most people were employed as commercial clerks, office or administration workers (54.1 percent, n = 118). An additionally 11.0 percent (n = 24) were employed in the service or sales sector, hold an academic profession (7.3 percent, n = 16) or worked as public official (5.0 percent, n = 11). Of the total sample, 5.3 percent were self-employed (n = 16). Other professions mentioned varied among the tourism industry including hotel and fair, gastronomy, IT and insurance.

Concerning the annual household income, 79.7 percent of the respondents (n = 243) stated their income category, while 19.0 percent (n = 58) did not want to specify or did not answer the question (1.3 percent, n = 4). Nevertheless, of the 243 respondents, a majority (25.1 percent, n = 61) had an annual income of €60,001 or more. The others were nearly equally divided between the categories of €40,001 and 50,000 (13.6 percent, n = 33), €20,001 and 30,000 (11.5 percent, n = 28), €10,001 and 20,000 (12.8 percent, n = 31) and finally 13.6 percent (n = 33) with an income of €5,000 or less.

When it comes to the marital status of the sample, the majority of respondents were either married (48.2 percent, n = 146), in a relationship (25.7 percent, n = 78) or single (19.5 percent, n = 59). Most respondents (76.0 percent, n = 231) had no children under the age of 18 years. Still, the remaining 24.0 percent (n = 73) had children between the age categories of 0 and 5 years (6.9 percent, n = 21), 6 and 10 years (6.6 percent, n = 20), 11 and 14 years (7.5 percent, n = 23) or 15 and 18 years (10.2 percent, n = 31). Finally, 88.9 percent (n = 64) stated to have accompanying on holiday trips while the remaining 11.1 percent (n = 8) did not travel with their children. Noticeable was that the majority of those children were between the ages of 15 and 18 years (Table I).

Table I
How important do you consider safety when booking a holiday at the moment? × Age cross-tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>18-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50-59</th>
<th>60-69</th>
<th>70+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How important do you consider safety when booking a holiday at the moment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When it comes to the overall importance of safety when booking a holiday at the moment, the results show a strong tendency to a high level of importance among respondents varying among either important (25.6 percent, \( n = 78 \)), very important (40.7 percent, \( n = 124 \)) and extremely important (25.2 percent, \( n = 77 \)). Only a minority of the sample considered safety to be either “less important” (6.6 percent, \( n = 20 \)) or “unimportant” (2.00 percent, \( n = 6 \)) (see Table II).

Furthermore, it has been found that the majority of respondents aged between 40 and 49 years (9.2 percent, \( n = 28 \)) considered safety to be extremely important, while most of the sample between the ages of 50 and 59 years considered safety to be very important (17.7 percent, \( n = 54 \)) (see Table II).

An important point of analysis is the fact that 6.6 percent \( (n = 20) \) considered safety to be less important. The majority of this category was found to be between the ages of 18 and 29 (2.6 percent, \( n = 8 \)) followed by those aged between 30 and 39 years of age (1.3 percent, \( n = 4 \)) and 50 and 59 years (1.3 percent, \( n = 4 \)). The remaining four participants were either between the ages of 40 and 49 years, 60 and 69 years or 70 years or older. Of the 20 respondents, 11 were male (3.6 percent) and 9 were females (3.0 percent).

From the 2.0 percent of respondents considering safety to be unimportant, two respondents were between 18 and 29 years and two between 50 and 59 years, the remaining two were between the ages of 30-39 and 40-49. None of the respondents from the age categories of 60-69 or 70+ considered safety unimportant. From the six respondents, three were male and the other three females.

Safety appeared to be very important for the majority of respondents with a child under the age of 18 years. Only a minority of two respondents with accompanied children between the ages of 0 and 5 years considered safety to be less important. In addition, one of those respondents indicated to be less likely to travel/fly abroad, while the other claimed not be influenced by current terror attacks.

Furthermore, two respondents with children between the ages of 15 and 18 years considered safety less important/unimportant, while one child did accompany the respondents on holiday trips and the other did not.

Overall, safety appeared to be more important for female respondents in comparison to male. Of the 124 respondents who considered safety to be very important, 26.2 percent \( (n = 80) \) were females while 14.4 percent \( (n = 44) \) were male. Nevertheless, among those considered safety to be less important, respondents were nearly equally divided among male and female and age category despite a small tendency of respondents between the ages of 18 and 29 years. Therefore, age and gender are not deemed stable predictor in the present study.

When asked the most important aspects when choosing a holiday, the answers were nature, landscape and surroundings (69.8 percent, \( n = 213 \)), followed by a good value for money (67.2 percent, \( n = 205 \)) and safety (62.0 percent, \( n = 189 \)). Likewise, weather (57.0 percent, \( n = 174 \))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II</th>
<th>How important do you consider safety when booking a holiday at the moment?</th>
<th>Children of the age category 0-5 years old</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How important do you consider safety when booking a holiday at the moment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely important</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and relaxation (51.5 percent, \( n = 157 \)) have been deemed important holiday attributes. Less than half of the respondents did consider attributes such as hospitality (44.3 percent, \( n = 135 \)), cultural attractions (43.0 percent, \( n = 131 \)) and discovering new things (42.3 percent, \( n = 129 \)) to be important when choosing a holiday.

In contradiction, nightlife and entertainment have only been considered by a minority (9.8 percent, \( n = 30 \)), including mostly respondents between the ages of 18 and 29 years (\( n = 16 \)).

Interesting to notice is that of 305 respondents, 38.0 percent (\( n = 116 \)) did not consider safety to be an important aspect when choosing a holiday. Furthermore, nature, landscape, surroundings, and a good value for money have been considered by a higher percentage of participants compared to safety.

The influence of recent terror attacks on travel behavior

One of the key questions of the present study focused on the influence of current terror attacks in countries such as Turkey, Egypt, Belgium, France and Spain on the travel behavior of German holidaymakers. While nearly the entire sample did agree with a change in their travel behavior (80.0 percent, \( n = 244 \)), a minority (20.0 percent, \( n = 61 \)) claimed not to be influenced by terrorism.

As can be seen from the cross-tabulation, the majority of those 20.0 percent were either between 18 and 29 years (6.9 percent, \( n = 21 \)) or 50 and 59 years (6.2 percent, \( n = 19 \)). Gender wise, respondents with a changing travel behavior were nearly equally divided into 44.3 percent (\( n = 135 \)) female and 35.7 percent (\( n = 109 \)) male participants. Likewise, of the 61 respondents who disagreed with a changing travel behavior, 10.2 percent (\( n = 31 \)) were female and 9.8 percent (\( n = 39 \)) were male (Table III).

Despite a relatively small percentage of people with an unchanged travel behavior, the outcomes showed that the majority (68.9 percent, \( n = 210 \)) tend to avoid visiting destination in/close to troubled countries. An additional 29.8 percent (\( n = 91 \)) of the sample only visit safe countries according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ travel advice. Still 27.9 percent (\( n = 85 \)) avoid all destinations with recent safety issues and 24.9 percent (\( n = 76 \)) are more concerned about the safety of their accompanied family members and friends. Nevertheless, only a minority (10.5 percent, \( n = 32 \)) was less likely to travel/fly abroad.

Additional aspects mentioned by respondents were the avoidance of big cities and crowded public places (18-29 years). Nonetheless, most statements focus on the avoidance of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Has your travel behavior been influenced by the recent terror attacks and intensified security situations?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Islamic and Arabic regions of participants among the ages of 18-29 and 40-49 years. Finally, one comment highlighted the political situation in Turkey by stating the need of not wanting to financial support “dictatorship.” Those aspects become particularly important for the present case study of Turkey. Although safety seems to be an important aspect for the majority of respondents when going on holiday, a great majority (92.1 percent, $n = 278$) of the sample have not canceled a trip due to safety concerns in the past compared to a remaining minority of 7.9 percent ($n = 24$).

On the question on the relevance and level of importance of the travel and security advice published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 16.8 percent respondents ($n = 51$) confirmed a usage prior to going on holiday, another 18.8 percent ($n = 57$) claimed to not check those advices. Of those respondents, the majority were between the ages of 18 and 29 years (7.6 percent, $n = 23$), followed by 4.0 percent ($n = 12$) aged between 40 and 49 years and an additional 4.0 percent ($n = 12$) between the ages of 50 and 59 years. Nevertheless, most of the respondents of the sample (64.4 percent, $n = 195$) stated that it depends on the destination whether checking those advices is appropriate and necessary.

However, in comparison to other information sources about a destination and its safety situation, the travel and security advice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been deemed helpful by a great majority (71.1 percent, $n = 217$) followed by online research (61.6 percent, $n = 188$). While an additional 43.6 percent ($n = 133$) found tour operators and travel agencies to be useful, 42.0 percent ($n = 128$) trust their family and friends. Less likely considered information sources among the sample were travel reviews (26.6 percent, $n = 81$) and social media (21.6 percent, $n = 66$). The minority of respondents (9.2 percent, $n = 28$) use travel magazines/books and movies for their information search about a destination and/or its safety situation. Finally, the majority of respondents follow the travel and security advice published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deemed as a useful information tool about destinations and their safety situation.

### PTE in the MENA region

In order to gain a better insight into the PTE in the MENA region of respondents, the sample was asked to indicate if they have ever visited the following destinations: Turkey, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Tunisia.

From all MENA regions mentioned, the majority of respondents have visited Turkey (55.4 percent, $n = 168$) in the past. Other noticeable regions were Tunisia (30.1 percent, $n = 90$), Egypt (23.2 percent, $n = 69$), the United Arab Emirates (15.1 percent, $n = 45$) and Morocco (13.4 percent, $n = 40$). Of the remaining seven regions, the majority of respondents had little or no PTE.

Respondents with a PTE in Turkey (55.4 percent, $n = 168$) were asked to indicate how often they spent a holiday in the country. While most respondents visited Turkey one time (40.5 percent, $n = 68$), 28.0 percent ($n = 47$) visited the country twice and another 31.5 percent ($n = 53$) have spent already three or more holidays in the country.

On the question how likely of traveling to Turkey in the coming 12 months, it appeared that the most common agreement among all respondents is the unlikelihood of traveling to Turkey in the upcoming 12 months. Of the entire sample, a great majority (82.0 percent, $n = 250$) indicated to be very unlikely to visit Turkey, followed by 7.9 percent ($n = 24$) who are unlikely and 5.9 percent ($n = 18$) considering to be rather unlikely. Contrarily, only 1.6 percent ($n = 5$) were likely and 2.6 percent ($n = 8$) were very likely to travel to Turkey in the upcoming 12 months.

It becomes particularly interesting to make a distinction between those respondents with a PTE in Turkey and those who never visited the country before. Remarkably, the findings indicated that respondents with a PTE in Turkey tend to have a very low travel intention to visit the country in the upcoming 12 months.

Overall, of 55.4 percent participants ($n = 168$) with a PTE in Turkey, 43.2 percent ($n = 131$) indicated to be very unlikely to travel to the country in the upcoming months. More precisely,
of 40.5 percent participants \((n = 68)\) with a one-time experience, 32.1 percent \((n = 54)\) were very unlikely or unlikely (5.4 percent, \(n = 9\)). Only one participant of this category (0.6 percent) stated to be likely to travel to Turkey again. The same counts for those having a two times experience. Of 28.0 percent participants \((n = 47)\), again the majority (22.6 percent, \(n = 38\)) indicated a very low travel intention (Table IV).

In agreement with the two other groups, the majority of participants who already spent three or more holidays in Turkey (31.5 percent, \(n = 53\)) showed a very low travel intention (23.2 percent, \(n = 39\)). However, seven respondents (4.2 percent) stated to be very likely to go on holiday to Turkey again.

A conclusion can be that of the eight participants of the entire sample with a high travel intention for Turkey, seven had a PTE of three times or more in the country. Of the remaining 135 respondents with no PTE (44.6 percent), a strong tendency of unlikelihood to travel to Turkey was noticeable (38.9 percent, \(n = 118\)). In conclusion, it can be stated that more than half of the sample had a very low travel intention for visiting Turkey, independently of a PTE.

As additional supporting justification, a low/moderate negative correlation with significance at the 0.05 level has been found between PTE and travel intention. For the general understanding, it should be noted that the variable “Turkey” is divided in those respondents with a PTE (Value 1 = yes) and those who never visited the country before (Value 2 = no). A negative correlation between yes (1) and travel intention has been interpreted as an underlined fact that the majority of respondents who spent time in Turkey in the past have the intention not to travel again in the upcoming 12 months due to increased political unrest and terror attacks.

Perception of safety

The respondents were asked to indicate their perception of safety for the following popular holiday destinations some of which have been a target of terrorist attacks: Spain, Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Italy and France. Among all six countries, Turkey and Egypt were considered the least safe countries. For the case of Turkey, 44.7 percent of the sample \((n = 136)\) had a very low safety perception, followed by an additional 39.1 percent \((n = 119)\) considering Turkey to be unsafe. Only a minority (3.3 percent, \(n = 10\)) considered the country to be safe. Analysis showed that four of those respondents also considered overall safety to be less important and one participant to be unimportant. Furthermore, a tendency of an unchanged travel behavior was noticeable for those respondents \((n = 5)\). Nevertheless, PTE does once again not seem to play a major role in the perception of safety (see Table V). Of 136 respondents (44.7 percent) with a very low safety perception of Turkey, 24.5 percent \((n = 74)\) had a PTE in the country compared to 20.5 percent \((n = 62)\) with no PTE in Turkey. An additional of 20.9 percent \((n = 63)\) of the respondents with a PTE considered Turkey to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often have you spent a holiday in Turkey?</th>
<th>One time</th>
<th>Two times</th>
<th>Three times or more</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very unlikely Count</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely Count</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rather unlikely Count</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely Count</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very likely Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Count</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV How likely is it that you will go on holiday to Turkey in the upcoming 12 months? × How often have you spent a holiday in Turkey? cross-tabulation
A high perception of safety was only noticeable for 2.3 percent ($n = 7$) of the respondents with a PTE. Four of those respondents have already spent three or more holidays in the country.

### Table V: Perception of safety Turkey × Turkey cross-tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of safety Turkey</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very unsafe</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatively safe</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Turkey – popularity as a holiday destination**

In order to gain a deeper insight into the perception and image of Turkey as a holiday destination among respondents with PTE and those who never visited the country, the respondents were provoked with three statements dealing with potential external and internal factors influencing the image. On a scale of five-point Likert, respondents could either strongly disagree to strongly agree. Overall, 37.0 percent ($n = 113$) did not perceive Turkey as an appealing tourism destination. Contrarily, a minority (16.4 percent, $n = 50$) and an additional 7.2 percent ($n = 22$) had a good image about the country in terms of tourism. Once again, PTE could be noticeable as a weak influential factor among respondents. Of the 22 respondents who strongly agreed with the statement, 6.6 percent ($n = 20$) had a PTE in Turkey, followed by 11.6 percent ($n = 35$) of the 49 respondents who agreed that they visited Turkey in the past. Nevertheless, of all respondents with a PTE in Turkey, still the majority (17.2 percent, $n = 52$) strongly disagreed with the statement.

These findings need to be understood within the context of the current political situation of the country. At first glance, it seems obvious to conclude that for those with a PTE and a familiarity with the country, Turkey appears to be an appealing holiday destination. In contradiction, those respondents without ever spending a holiday in the country before can only judge based on perception and are most probably affected by media or simply not interested in visiting a country like Turkey.

Respondents, in addition, were asked whether the current political situation in Turkey and the updated travel advice published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs discourage to spend a holiday in the country. Based on a clear outcome, 65.9 percent of the sample ($n = 201$) strongly agreed the statement and an additional 16.4 percent ($n = 50$) agreed likewise.

Thus, it can be concluded that the political situation is regarded as great influential factor for the travel behavior of German holidaymakers to Turkey. Only a minority (6.2 percent, $n = 19$) strongly disagreed. The respondents in this case were equally divided between having a PTE and never visiting the country before. Once again, the majority of disagreeing respondents with a PTE had visited the country three times or more (3.0 percent, $n = 5$). Nevertheless, a great majority of (39.3 percent, $n = 119$) respondents with a PTE strongly agreed with the current political situation being an influential factor.

By taking a closer look to the answers of those respondents (6.2 percent, $n = 19$), five people considered safety to be less important and for an additional three respondents safety appeared to be unimportant. Overall, 12 respondents likewise disagreed with a change in their travel behavior due to current terror attacks. In addition, a tendency of a relatively safe perception of
Turkey was noticeable among the majority of those respondents. This is highly important to keep in mind, as those respondents differ strongly in the opinion of the great majority of the sample.

The respondents were confronted with the statement that frequent holidays in the country have the potential to increase travelers’ sense of security. As can be seen in Table V, opinions varied strongly among respondents. While 17.7 percent ($n = 54$) agreed with the statement, contrarily another 17.0 percent ($n = 52$) strongly disagreed. Nevertheless, a dominating percentage of 32.1 percent ($n = 98$) rather disagreed. Attention catching was the fact that still 10.9 percent ($n = 33$) with a PTE strongly disagreed with an increased sense of security due to frequent holidays, followed by 17.2 percent ($n = 52$) who rather disagreed and only 3.0 percent ($n = 9$) with a PTE in Turkey who strongly agreed with an increase sense of security due to frequent holidays.

Overall, the outcomes of this statement disprove the overall hypothesis among various academic literature stating that frequent holidays and familiarity with a country increase the sense of security and decrease the risk perception of travelers. Once again, Turkey as a case study needs to be understood in its current political situation and other factors dealing with the relation between Turkey and Germany. Furthermore, the tendency of disagreement with this statement among PTE respondents can deal as a good justification. Finally, while the majority of the respondent had little to no PTE in the MENA region besides Turkey, Egypt, UAE, Morocco or Tunisia, the geographic region was found to be perceived rather unsafe due to political unrest and terror attacks.

**Effectiveness of preventive measures**

The sample was asked to rate the effectiveness of several preventive measures to increase their sense of security. It should be noted that of seven preventive measures, four were to be taken prior to a holiday while the remaining three preventive measures were to be taken at the destination itself.

Overall, the three preventive measures most commonly considered to be effective were “searching for more information on the webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published travel advice” (44.5 percent, $n = 134$), “increased police presence in tourist areas” (39.2 percent, $n = 118$) and “to adjust respectfully to the local and cultural conditions” (35.7 percent, $n = 107$). An additional 21.3 percent ($n = 64$) considered latest to be very effective.

Of all preventive measures to be taken prior to a trip, the travel and security advice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was deemed either effective (44.5 percent; $n = 134$) or very effective (15.6 percent, $n = 47$). In addition, searching for more information online about how to stay safe prior to travel has still been considered by 30.2 percent ($n = 91$) to be effective, while the majority (46.5 percent, $n = 140$) considered it to be partly effective. However, a tendency of ineffectiveness was noticeable for the measurement of searching for more information in travel guides on how to stay safe (28.2 percent, $n = 85$).

In the case of the registration with the German embassy at the destination, a discrepancy was noticeable among respondents. While 19.9 percent ($n = 60$) found this measurement to be effective, an additional 18.2 percent ($n = 55$) considered it to be ineffective. Overall, a majority (36.8 percent, $n = 111$) deemed the registration with the embassy to be partly effective. Interesting to keep in mind is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises German holidaymakers even during short-term stays to register in a so-called crisis prevention list (Krisenvorsorgeliste) of the embassy.

The majority of respondents have deemed all the preventive measures at the destination itself effective. Particularly, increased police presence (39.2 percent, $n = 118$) and to adjust respectfully to the local and cultural conditions (35.7, $n = 107$) count among the most effective preventive measurements. Contrarily, traveling with organized tours was still considered rather ineffective by 24.6 percent ($n = 74$) and ineffective by an additional 13.0 percent ($n = 39$), in comparison to only 2.0 percent ($n = 6$) for the two other measurements.

To conclude, most preventive measures, disrespectful of those prior to a trip or during the holiday itself, showed a strong tendency of partial effectiveness. As the formulation implies, those actions are only “preventive” without ensuring an absolute safety. Especially in the light of
the present situation around the world with increased incidents of terrorism, travelers are aware of the fact that there is no such of preventive measures, which ensure full protection, but only deal as preventive actions.

In addition, the respondents had to indicate whether they consider traveling with a tour operator as safer rather than a self-organized tour. Outcomes showed that the majority of respondents disagreed with the statement (63.25 percent, \( n = 191 \)), while the remaining 36.75 percent (\( n = 111 \)) considered traveling with a tour operator as safer rather than a self-organized trip. This outcome is in accordance with the fact that traveling with organized tours has been considered rather ineffective by 24.6 percent (\( n = 74 \)) and by an additional 13.0 percent (\( n = 40 \)) as ineffective. In addition, respondents had to indicate whether they believe that tour operators have sufficient expertise on safety issues related to tourist destinations. Outcomes show a large discrepancy among respondents. While 51.97 percent (\( n = 158 \)) agreed with the statement, the remaining 48.03 percent (\( n = 146 \)) disagreed.

### Conclusion, discussion and implications

German citizens over 18 years have been the population of the study. Next to general demographics such as age, gender, educational level, profession, income, marital status and accompanying children, the questionnaire focused on the overall importance of safety and the influence of terror attacks and intensified safety situation on the travel behavior of the sample. In addition, the usefulness of several information sources and preventive measurements were tested. PTE in the MENA region played a central role, followed by the perception of safety of various popular holiday destinations. Finally, the overall popularity of Turkey and the samples’ travel intension have been included in the survey.

Overall, the most important outcomes of the present research study demonstrated a strong tendency of a low safety perception among the sample toward Turkey followed by a strong unlikelihood of traveling to the country within the upcoming 12 months independently of a PTE. Only a very small percentage indicated to be likely to travel again to Turkey in the upcoming months and found the country to be relatively safe. Among those, the majority visited the country already three times or more and did not seem to be influenced by the current political situation.

Linking back to main aspects of the literature review, the study likewise found safety to be an important destination attribute (Liu et al., 2016) among German holidaymakers participated in the survey. Only a minority considered safety less important and indicated an unchanged travel behavior despite terrorism. Contrarily, the majority of respondents state to avoid troubled destination. In spite of the apparently continuous occurrence of terrorist attacks in popular tourism destination around the world (Liu et al., 2016), only a small percentage was found to be less likely to travel abroad. This finding is similar to the trend highlighted in the ITB Travel Trend Report 2016/2017 (Buck et al., 2016) stating that political unrest and terror attacks did not affect the overall volume of foreign trips but certainly the choice of destination. Nevertheless, safety did not appear to be the most important aspect when choosing a holiday. Next to safety, nature, landscape, surrounding and the price were highly considered destination aspect when choosing a holiday for the majority of German holidaymakers participated in the survey.

The main findings gathered through adapted research methods proposed by Liu et al. (2016) found that the majority of their study had little to no PTE in the MENA destinations. As expected, most people had a PTE in Turkey, which is a popular tourism destination among the German market. Most importantly however, PTE was to be a weak predictor of travel intension and perception of safety for the case of Turkey from the German perspective. This finding is contrary to the hypothesis claimed by Liu et al. (2016) who found that PTE acted as stable forecaster of one’s perception of safety and travel intension. Most commonly and independently of a PTE, a great majority of the present study perceived Turkey as an unsafe destination and was very unlikely to visit the destination in the upcoming 12 months.

One of the central points highlighted in the present study is the political situation of Turkey as influential factor on the German travel behavior. The case of Turkey as a tourism destination from the perspective of the German travel segment needs to be understood within the current political
context and can therefore be regarded as unique example. Several comments of respondents participated in the survey underlined an overall defiance and dislike of the current political situation in Turkey by describing it as kind of “dictatorship.” In addition, the statement of Buckley and Klemm (1993) can be supported who stated that though destinations can improve and recover from individual occurrences, the continual support of a destination as constant trouble spot gradually deteriorate the destination’s image. In the context of Turkey, this has been the case since the last two years, Turkey has been perceived as a constant trouble spot discussed highly by several media channels. Only a small percentage of the sample found Turkey to be an appealing tourism destination and perceived it as relatively safe. Of this minority, a strong tendency of a three times PTE in Turkey was noticeable among respondents.

Furthermore, updated travel and security advices published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were found by the respondents to be a useful and trustworthy information tool among the majority of the sample. While the Ministry calls for increased caution among tourist going to Turkey due to an intensified political situation, there is no travel warning for Turkey.

For the upcoming period, it will be highly interesting what will happen to Turkey’s tourism industry, which is obviously somewhat dependent on the political situation. According to Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty (2009), perceived terrorism risk only deters visitors in the short run but not have a long-term effect on the tourists’ decision-making process to travel internationally. Overall, this study found that most people were likely to travel abroad due to terrorism. Finally, it will remain relatively unclear whether there is a real “terrorism risk” among German holidaymakers for Turkey or rather a current “dislike due to the current political situation.” When comparing the perception of safety between popular tourism destination such as Turkey, Egypt and Spain, a strong tendency of a low safety perception was noticeable for Turkey and Egypt. The measurement of risk and safety perception of tourists will remain a complex type of research as it might vary strongly among types of risk, types of travelers and destinations and therefore needs detailed investigation. This study underlined the fact that Turkey as a popular holiday destination is counted among the most unsafe countries next to Egypt at the present state. Furthermore, PTE appeared to be a weak predictor of safety perception and travel intension mainly caused by political unrest.

Generally spoken, tour operators and travel agencies have to follow the travel and security advices published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As long as there is no travel warning for Turkey, holidays will always be offered.

Given the already complexity of the tourist’s decision-making process, a high-risk perception associated with an event that should be pleasant is problematic (Taylor, 2006). Consumer behavior is influenced by safety and risk that individuals hold about a destination (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b). Different levels of security and safety concerns may influence the assessment process and, therefore, the decision-making process.

The present study has both practical and theoretical implications. From a theoretical perspective, to our knowledge, no study exists with a focus on the impact of perceived risk of terrorism on the German source market toward Turkey as a tourism destination. The intension of this study is to help close this gap in literature. In addition, the current study adds insight into the preventive measures or risk reduction strategies, when planning a trip (prior to travel), their information search behavior and behavior during holidays to limit potential risks (Deng and Ritchie, 2018). As noted earlier, most previous studies examined statistical data indicating reduced tourist demand after an act of terror (Mansfeld, 1999). Nevertheless, the current research study focused on German risk perceptions and behavior, contributing to our knowledge in the literature. In addition, this quantitative analysis yielded interesting findings related to the German context.

From a managerial perspective, the DMO in Turkey must pay attention to the country’s image as a safe and secure destination. The reality of having a safe and secure destination for holidaymakers may not translate into positive perceptions about the same place since image is so subjective (MacKay and Fesenmaier, 1997). For example, Turkey is being seen as a “dictatorship” or violates human rights issues can have an impact of whether Turkey is viewed as a safe and secure destination. Sirakaya et al. (1998) in their results of an experiment study contended that inaction as decision makers continually reassessed their decisions on obtaining...
new information. Their evidence recommends that decision makers are very sensitive toward issues of safety and security at a destination. Thus, destination marketers’ contest is how to manage destination’s image that would eventually result into a positive behavioral intensions and outcomes in a climate of several terrorists’ attacks.

When destination marketers understand how German consumers react to safety, and risk perception regarding terrorism, they can create a more effective marketing campaign to influence consumers’ expectations and decision makers. DMOs and destination managers should be aware that safety is nowadays a key attribute that a destination can offer. Therefore, it must be considered very seriously and taken into account when choosing a destination. Accordingly, these could be improved by creating security and preventive measures such as increased police presence at touristic sites and resorts.

Destination marketers must, therefore, be concerned about minimizing the risk of terrorism and about the impact of terrorist incident activities on their image, which requires a careful marketing strategy. Eventually, investment in good marketing strategy with all involved stakeholders who are trustworthy helps in reducing the perception of risk. This study can help in creating more differentiated marketing and promotional campaigns for types of German tourists varying not only by socio-demographic variables but also importantly by risk and uncertainty affinities.

The authors suggest crisis and perception management plan, implying the need for DMOs to identify the major issues and keep an on-going research agenda of source markets. In the case of high perceived risk, DMOs need to educate visitors on ways to stay safe (Cahyanto, 2013; Schroeder, 2015). To ensure the credibility of a destination, on-going messages from a variety of sources are an essential part of perception management. Finally, clustering travelers in different groups according to their level of risk perception and PTE has been considered useful for DMOs.

Karl (2018, p. 144) “suggest a strategy seen with the promotion of group tours with specially trained tour guides that partly transfers the responsibility for tourists’ safety to the tour operator, thereby reducing the level of perceived risk and uncertainty for the tourist.” Tour operators have to keep on promoting the main assets of Turkey as a popular tourism destination, with a focus on the countries price sensitiveness as one of the most important aspects when choosing a holiday for the German travel segment. In addition, the study showed that the majority of respondents who were likely to visit Turkey had already spent three or more holidays in the country and can be regarded as good target group for tour operators.

Limitations and future research

As with every research, the present study needs to be understood within the context of its limitations. First, the majority of the respondents of the study were aged between 50 and 59 years and their professions were as a commercial employee, office or administration workers. Outcomes might be different for a higher sample size with a tendency of various demographic characteristics such as age and profession. Furthermore, the study should be repeated while focusing on respondents with accompanied children on holidays, which only made up a minority for the present research study. A future study could also focus at crisis management and recovery marketing. As Heath (1998, p. 26) states “crisis management is as much about dealing with human perceptions about the crisis as it is about physically resolving the crisis situation.”

References


Cahyanto, I. (2013), ”Modeling tourists’ evacuation decision while at the destination: effects of individual characteristic, travel related variables, information search and risk appraisal”, dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL.


Coshall, J. (2003), ”The threat of terrorism as intervention on international travel flows”, Journal of Travel Research, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 4-12.


Further reading


Corresponding author

Rami K. Isaac can be contacted at: isaac.r@nhvt.nl

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
The fear of terrorism and shift in cosmopolitan values

Vanda N. Veréb, Helena Nobre and Minoo Farhangmehr

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate how international tourists’ cosmopolitan values change due to the restraining fear of terrorism, and how this change affects their worldview, destination perception and travel preferences.

Design/methodology/approach – In-depth interviews were conducted with international travellers from all five continents to pinpoint the universal shifts in cosmopolitan values, specifically regarding risk perception in the face of terrorism.

Findings – Tourists’ personal values are changing due to the increased risk of terrorism (or the perception of it), which prompts international travellers to act less on their desire for stimulation and more for their need for security when travelling. Just as any change in values tends to be relatively permanent, this value shift might have long-term consequences for the entire tourism industry.

Research limitations/implications – Terrorism risk perception and its retreating effect regarding willingness to travel were established to be significant and universal. However, this study suggests that the strength of the travellers’ cosmopolitan orientation influences the extent terrorism risk is acted upon. Results indicate that the higher the travellers’ cosmopolitan conviction is, the less significantly they seem to be affected by the fear of terrorism.

Practical implications – The study offers cues on how managers and policy makers can enhance destination image that keeps up with the current realities of global tourism in the face of terrorism, and highlights a promising market segment, strongly cosmopolitan travellers who are less concerned with potential travel risks and react less negatively in troubled times.

Originality/value – Most of the previous studies considered tourists’ cosmopolitanism as a stable orientation rather than a context-specific state. This study addresses this gap by exploring how resilient the tourists’ cosmopolitan desire for openness and freedom is under the risk perception of terrorism, and what effect the fear of terrorism has on their travel habits.

Keywords Tourism, Cosmopolitanism, Destination image, Terrorism, Personal values, Risk perception

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Over the last six decades, tourism has experienced continued expansion and diversification to become one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. In 2016, the tourism sector generated up to $1.4 trillion being considered a key driver of social and economic progress through the creation of jobs and enterprises, export revenues and infrastructure development (UNWTO, 2017). The central requirement for the economic and social health of the tourism industry, nowadays, is not of scenic or cultural attractions, but of political stability (Richter and Waugh, 1986) and security (Clancy, 2012). The last years’ surge of terrorist attacks, in particular in Europe (Europol, 2017), brought significant short- and long-term consequences for the tourism industry as a whole (e.g. Araña and León, 2008; Liu and Pratt 2017; Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006). This reality pressures for the need to recognise and deal with the changes that a terrorism context brings for the tourism industry.

One of the most significant changes in the leisure tourism is a consequence of the shift in consumer values of global travellers (Dwyer et al., 2009) moulded by two conflicting forces. First, safety and personal well-being is the highest ranking concern for international tourists
due to the constant and unpredictable threat of terrorism, potentially lethal insecurity (Clancy, 2012), and an emerging xenophobic movement called “new racism” connecting fear to race (Koskela, 2010). This fear restrains the willingness to travel (Floyd et al., 2004; Popcorn, 1992) and explore other cultures with an open mind (Araña and León, 2008; Milman and Pizam, 1995) shifting value orientation towards values that are more self-enhancing even at the expense of others (Konty et al., 2004). Second, the acceleration of global economies and societies offered room to emergent cosmopolitan values (Cleveland et al., 2011). Cosmopolitan values consist of open-mindedness (Skrbis et al., 2004), embracing of cultural diversity (Caldwell et al., 2006; Featherstone, 2002), appreciation of novelty (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009) and high-risk tolerance, the willing to take risks in exploring the world (Riefler et al., 2012) and to be shaped by it (Levy et al., 2007) through travelling (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999). There is substantial literature listing the changes in values, motivations and expectations of tourists (e.g. Dwyer et al., 2008). However, there is a lack of research regarding how these changes in values cooperate to shape consumer profile and travel preferences (Dwyer et al., 2009) or destination perception (Hsu and Huang, 2016; Souiden et al., 2017). Hence, this study aims to investigate how international tourists’ cosmopolitan values change due to the restraining fear of terrorism, and how this change affects their worldview, destination perception and travel preferences.

Besides the importance given in the academic literature to individual values in shaping destination image and willingness to travel (Hsu and Huang, 2016), the clarification on their role and dynamics as facilitators of destination image still lacks comprehensive research (Souiden et al., 2017). The validity of this study is sustained on the evident notion of cosmopolitanism (Beck and Sznaider, 2006), as the most fearless and open-minded travellers are restrained by the global and constant threat of terrorism, so certainly all others, more security concerned, will experience similar or even more intense feeling, turning the findings indicative for the entire traveller population. The study’s main relevance lies in the long-term implication that if the tourism industry indeed experiences a shift in travellers’ values due to the increased risk perception of terrorism, this shift, as any change in values, is relatively permanent strongly impacts behaviour (Roccas and Sagiv, 2017), thus, entailing long-term consequences for the entire industry.

**Universal human values**

Individual values are a set of universal criteria used to evaluate alternatives and to guide final action (Feather, 1988, 1992; Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973; Roccas and Sagiv, 2017; Schwartz, 1992, 2006; Williams, 1968). In the same way personal values are considered the foundation in the process of destination image building (Hsu and Huang, 2016; Pike, 2012; Young, 1999; Woodside and Lysonski, 1989) and in the forming of an intention to travel (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Kim and Chen, 2015). For example, Pike (2012) found that travellers who uphold the value of security travel mostly with the aim to refresh, relax and recharge and evaluate destinations’ attributes as well as form a destination image through the lenses of security. This study contends that if these lenses of security (values) are changed, the destination image and the intentions to visit that destination may change, too.

Building on the pioneering research of Rokeach (1973), Schwartz (1992) proposed a theory and structure of personal values, which quickly became the dominant theory in the field (Roccas and Sagiv, 2017). The value theory (Schwartz, 1992, 1994, 2006) defines ten universal values (power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security) according to the motivation that underlies each of them, and describes a dynamic relationship between them along two orthogonal value dimensions (self-enhancement vs self-transcendence and openness-to-change vs conservation) (Figure 1). The more important a value is to a person, the more he/she is motivated to act on it (Davidov et al., 2008). The closer any two values are in either direction around the circle, the more similar behaviours they will guide. Accordingly, the more distant they are in the circle, the more antagonistic behaviours they will induce (Roccas and Sagiv, 2017). The main features of human values are, besides motivating actions, that they are universal across cultures (Schwartz, 1992, 1994, 2006) as recent cross-cultural studies have validated (Davidov et al., 2008; Schwartz and Bardi, 2001), and relatively stable over time (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), as well as across different situations.
Once individual values are formed they stay fairly constant over the course of a lifetime (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004) as several longitudinal studies demonstrated (Milfont et al., 2016; Vecchione et al., 2016). Personal values are at the very core of one’s identity, and even if one wished to change them, it would be a difficult and unlikely undertaking (Roccas et al., 2014).

Changes in human values and behaviour

Values can change sometimes, however (Roccas and Sagiv, 2017). Major life events can influence values, as people tend to adapt their values according to their changing circumstances by upgrading the importance of the values they can readily attain and downgrading the importance the others difficult to achieve, e.g., becoming a parent (Schwartz, 2005). Values can change both through effortful and spontaneous means (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011). Bardi et al. (2014) found that different life transitions, like migration, education or vocational change, spontaneously lead to strengthening of situation appropriate values. Likewise, major terrorist incidents (or simply the remote threat of it) can induce changes in values from self-transcendence to self-enhancement (Konty et al., 2004), as well as temporarily able to raise the importance of security values, and more permanently capable of lowering the importance of stimulation values even long after the incident (Verkasalo et al., 2006). As values are cognitive structures (Feather, 1992; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992), one can deliberately and effortfully change the level of importance attached to certain values. For example, cosmopolitan values can be reinforced by a deliberate effort of travelling and keeping an open mind to acquire more cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1987). Openness-to-change can also be consciously enhanced and security values effortfully repressed, if the circumstances require, just as the increase in openness-to-change values after the fall of the communist regime in the Czech Republic, due to the need for attitude change in the post-communist work environments (Danis et al., 2011). The conscious effort of downgrading the importance of values that cannot be pursued is not applicable for all values (Schwartz, 2005). In the case of some values, like security values, which are based on Maslow’s (1968) deficit needs, the inability to fulfil them would not cause their abandonment but on the contrary, it would lead to an increase in their importance (Schwartz and Bardi, 1997), as seen in the sky-rocketing security concerns after the 9/11 attacks (Verkasalo et al., 2006), and after the bombing at the London underground in 2005 (Goodwin and Gaines, 2009).

Figure 1 Value theory and structure of Schwartz

![Diagram of value theory and structure of Schwartz](Image)
During a shift in the importance of values, the circular structure of values and their dynamic relationship is stable (Schwartz, 1992, 2005). If one value is decreasing in importance the opposing value will automatically increase in its ability to lead behaviour (Schwartz, 2005). Opposing values can be both upheld, but one has to prevail over the other in any given situation to drive behaviour (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011; Schwartz, 2005). Building on this notion, higher concern for security values does trigger a drop in the opposing stimulation values, and it has also been demonstrated in terrorism-related settings (Konty et al., 2004; Verkasalo et al., 2006). However, an individual can satisfy his/her need for stimulation in other ways, as Popcorn (1992) suggested that global travellers might find their craving for travelling in other ways in the face of terrorism, like travelling locally, visiting different ethnic restaurants, or possibly “cocooning”. One of the objectives of the current study is to understand how a potential value change due to the fear of terrorism is manifested among travellers.

Cosmopolitan values of global travellers

Hannerz (1990) was the first to draw similarities between cosmopolitanism and tourism (Cannon and Yaprak, 2001). Tourists are similar to cosmopolitans in their love to travel and experience new ways of life (Hannerz, 1990). Thompson and Tambyah (1999) also pointed out that tourists, just as cosmopolitans, consciously look for diversity and personal challenge as travel motivation, which makes them an excellent example of cosmopolitans. More recent studies further provide empirical evidence that the main motivation for tourists is an out-of-ordinary cosmopolitan experience, like adventure seeking (Buckley, 2012), personal challenge (Caber and Albayrak, 2016) and cultural novelty (Chiang et al., 2015). International travelling contributes to the development of a cosmopolitan orientation (Cannon and Yaprak, 2001; Thompson and Tambyah, 1999) and also fulfils the main cosmopolitan desire to interact with the host country’s culture, people and traditions (Alden et al., 2006). While global travel is an antecedent of cosmopolitanism, travelling is also an expression of the cosmopolitan worldview. Hence, this study contends that the concepts of global travels and cosmopolitanism are intertwined and so investigating the changing cosmopolitan values of international tourists can be used as an indicator for all travellers.

Previous consumer behaviour research showed a strong cross-cultural link between cosmopolitan characteristics and their individual values (Cleveland et al., 2011). The key value of cosmopolitans is their openness towards other people and cultures, where this openness reflects their empathy and their interest in others (Skrbis et al., 2004). Despite the inherent interest in other cultures, in-depth cultural knowledge is not a necessary trait for cosmopolitans (Cannon and Yaprak, 2001); it is their willingness to engage with other cultures (Hannerz, 1990) and to learn from them (Levy et al., 2007) that makes cosmopolitans distinct. Another key value of cosmopolitan orientation is the respect and appreciation of diversity in the world (Featherstone, 2002). Rather than uniformity, cosmopolitans embrace cultural diversity (Caldwell et al., 2006) and are characterised by a search for contrasts (Hannerz, 1990). Based on openness and positive disposition towards diversity, Riefler et al. (2012) suggested that cosmopolitan consumers are willing to take risks in exploring the world, different products and experiences. These authors also found that cosmopolitan consumers tend to be more innovative and receptive to novelty. A cosmopolitan orientation also manifests itself in a conscious consumption of foreign products and services, places, experiences originating from other cultures than their own (Caldwell et al., 2006). Cosmopolitans have a higher tendency to consume international media, foreign books, music and movies (Beck, 2002), ethnic food (Martens and Warde, 1999) and other cultural commodities (Fine and Boon, 2007; Regev, 2007), and also, as argued above, to travel (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999).

The drivers of global travellers and the values of cosmopolitans overlap. The value dimension of “openness-to-change” (Figure 1) reflects the nature of cosmopolitans (Cleveland et al., 2011; Riefler et al., 2012) as well as the drive of global travellers (Thompson and Tambyah 1999), as willingly embracing diversity entails being open to change. Individual values of this value dimension also reiterate the cosmopolitan characteristics of global travellers: self-direction motivates global travellers to explore different places and peoples (Levy et al., 2007; Skrbis et al., 2004); stimulation drives them to search for novelty even in the face of risk (Riefler et al., 2012); and their hedonism aims for excitement and pleasure seeking in travelling (Buckley, 2012;
Caber and Albayrak, 2016). The value dimension of “self-enhancement” (Figure 1) motivates them for self-enrichment (Arnould and Price, 1993), personal growth (Caber and Albayrak, 2016) and building a diverse cultural capital through travelling (Bourdieu, 1987). Their power value aims to enhance their prestige and social status by a worldly outlook in the eyes of one’s peers through travelling (Belk, 1998; Morris, 1988). The characteristics of global travellers and cosmopolitans are also evident in the value dimension of “self-transcendence” (see Figure 1). Universalism value of travellers is displayed in their tolerance, appreciation and understanding of others (Merton, 1957; Szkris et al., 2004) in line with cosmopolitans’ openness towards other people and cultures (Riefler et al., 2012). Cosmopolitanism is negatively related to the values of tradition, conformity and security (Cleveland et al., 2011; Riefler et al., 2012), which provides ground for the assumption that global travellers with cosmopolitan characteristics will not be particularly hindered by tourism risks, like terrorism.

Most previous studies conceptualised and studied cosmopolitanism as a stable orientation rather than a context-specific state (Cole et al., 2005; Riefler et al., 2012), or argued for a gradual transition in cosmopolitan orientation (Thompson and Tambyah, 1999) but without solid empirical validation. The current study by analysing a possible value shift in cosmopolitan orientation addresses this gap in the cosmopolitan literature and strives to answer if a “major shock” (like a terrorist attack or a fear of it) “can dampen cosmopolitan orientation” (Riefler et al., 2012, p. 300).

The value of (in)security of global travellers

The most recent global statistics show that the number and scope of terrorist incidents have been declining globally (US Department of State, 2017). However, due to the heavy media coverage of the most current attacks and the public policies related to “war on terror” (Fekete, 2004), the public atmosphere is fearful (CNBC, 2017; (The) Independent, 2018) and hatred-filled against all who are different ((The) HuffingtonPost, 2018; Reuters, 2017; Time, 2018), increasing the sense of (in)security in the society. The importance of the perception of (in)security also stands for tourism (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992), as “perceptions of political stability and safety are a prerequisite for tourist visitation” (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996, p. 117). The perception of the individual tourists rather than the actual level of security shapes tourism demand and destination image (Sarman et al., 2016), as tourists make destination choices based on their perception of risk (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992), rather than the actual risk at the destination (Fuchs and Reichel, 2006b; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a). Risk perception, therefore, has a direct impact on destination preference and willingness to travel (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b). High-risk perception encourages the decision to avoid a destination (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a), sometimes can even lead to avoid international travels all together (Floyd et al., 2004), and devastate to the local tourism industry (Goodrich, 2002). Even tourists who consciously seek thrills by aiming for risky destinations prefer minor risk within a “protected bubble” (Belhassen et al., 2014).

Tourists’ risk perception is influenced by several individual factors, as risk perception, being a psychological concept, is anchored in the individual person and his/her characteristics (Karl and Schmude, 2017; Ritchie et al., 2017). Hence, risk perception is found to be shaped by personality (Lepp and Gibson, 2008; Morakabati and Kapucinski, 2016; Zuckerman, 1971) and even self-confidence (Valencia and Crouch, 2008), country of origin (Kozak et al., 2007; Seabra et al., 2013; Wolff and Larsen, 2014), familiarity of the travel destination (Morakabati, 2013; Rittichainuwat and Chakrabory, 2009; Seabra et al., 2013), previous travel experience (Fuchs and Reichel, 2011; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b; Valencia and Crouch, 2008), as well as sociodemographic characteristics, like age (Kozak et al., 2007) and gender (Azim, 2010; Qi et al., 2009), but more directly family and marital status (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992) as well as educational background (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b). Risk perception is also shaped by numerous environmental factors, because it is interlinked with the environment (Karl and Schmude, 2017), so influenced by culture, politics and society (Kasperson et al., 1988), as well as news (Altheide, 2006; Kapucinski, 2014; Kapucinski and Richards, 2016) and political media (Fekete, 2004), the entertainment industry (Korstanje and Tarlow, 2012), the source of travel (risk) information (Jonas and Mansfeld, 2017; Mitchell, 1999) and the extent of the local security measures (Taylor and Toohey, 2005).
Travel risk perception significantly influences destination perception and travel decision (Alvarez and Campo, 2014; Floyd et al., 2004; Sarman et al., 2016). However, Lapp and Gibson (2008) found that travellers with a dominant sensation-seeking personality trait (defined as openness to novelty and interest in diversity, Goldberg, 1993) mirroring the essence of cosmopolitanism, while perceiving travel risk just the same way as low sensation seekers, are not particularly affected by travel risk and their risk perception does not influence their destination perception or travel decision. The current study strives to clarify this contradiction by investigating if cosmopolitan travellers are an exception, and despite of being aware of the risk concerning travelling to a specific destination, are not swayed by it. This research addresses the gap in risk perception literature of “how risk perception as one important determinant of destination choice acts as an influencing factor in the destination choice process” (Karl and Schmude, 2017, p. 137) and in shaping destination perception (Perpiña et al., 2017). The study also inquires whether cosmopolitans can be the answer for the quest in searching for “market segments can be identified as which are less concerned with potential travel risk, and may thus react less negatively in troubled times” (Seabra et al., 2013, p. 503).

Travel preferences in the face of terrorism

It is understandable that when tourists perceive the risk of terrorism they become more cautious towards their travel plan. Numerous risk reduction strategies are identified in the literature (Fuchs and Reichel, 2011), like searching for more information (Byzalov and Shachar, 2004; Isaac and Velden, 2018; Ritchie et al., 2017); relying more on organic information sources, e.g. friends, independent media, independent travel reviews (Jonas and Mansfeld, 2017; Mitchell, 1999; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b); brand loyalty (Mitchell et al., 2003); looking for recommendations in the (social) reference group (Tan, 1999); requiring warranty strategies (Tan, 1999); travel insurance (Mitchell and Vassos, 1997); preferences for short trips and inexpensive holidays (Fuchs and Reichel, 2006a); preference for governmental guarantees of tourists’ personal safety (Law, 2006; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b); transparency of information related to risk incidents, existence of surveillance or other protection and safety measures (Law, 2006). Unconventional means are also listed as risk reduction strategies, as “careful incremental consumption of tourism products” (Hales and Shams, 1991), plan of multi-destination trips (Tideswell and Faulkner, 1999) or substitution of the destination tied to terrorism risk with another destination (Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2009). This last strategy of substitution can lead to a regional spillover or neighbouring effect, where the negative influence on tourism in one destination is caused by another destination in crisis in the same region (Steiner et al., 2006). For instance, in the Mediterranean, where high level of terrorism risk perception can eliminate tourists from the whole region (Drakos and Kutan, 2003). While some countries experience a negative indirect effect, terrorist attacks increase tourism demand in other close-by and low- to moderate-risk countries (Saha and Yap, 2014). For example, after 9/11 attacks Hawaii experienced a boom in tourist numbers (Bonham et al., 2006). The same with Dubai that represent a safe regional option for popular tourism destinations destroyed by war, like Lebanon or Syria (Clancy, 2012).
This atmosphere of ever-present danger is also likely to affect where people travel and how people travel. When it comes to where, it may be that people will travel more regionally, where the sensation of otherness is not so strong (Milman and Pizam, 1995; Popcorn, 1992). To support the notion that threats are increasingly associated with certain group of people, Araña and León (2008) found that the 9/11 attacks had long-lasting and substantial effects on the American travellers, who at disproportionately large extent have been avoiding destinations with a high percentage of Muslim population. Regarding how people will travel, Oriol (2004, p. 17) argued that due to the general fear of the 9/11 attacks “many tourists prefer a world of fantasy to contact with actual societies”, and Clancy (2012) suggested that as global citizens are living their lives in growing isolation and protection, so they will travel in the same manner (see also Yoon and Shafer, 1997). Global tourist will likely to travel with perceptual and/or real barriers, and the major tourist product will be safety and isolation. Tourism providers have already moved in this direction with special offers for free-standing, all-inclusive resorts (e.g. TripAdvisor, 2018) as well as cruise tourism (e.g. Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association, 2018; Statista, 2018). Global citizens are increasingly living their lives segregated and with physical (gated communities) or technological (alarm systems) barriers that insulate them not only from violence but also from perceived threats often associated with the poor or those from different races (Clancy, 2012).

In the aftermath of 9/11, safety and security processes of airports, embassies and public venues were reexamined and additional surveillance systems were installed and related risk management support was increased (Kennedy et al., 2003). Due to the fear of terrorism, people are now more open to accept these rigorous security measures in exchange for their safety (Viscusi and Zeckhauser, 2003) and, as Taylor and Tooney (2005) noted in the case of the 2003 Rugby World Cup, these security measures even somewhat enhanced the attendees’ level of enjoyment of the game. However, there is a great debate if and to what extent civil liberties can/should be sacrificed to prevent terrorism (Kaplow and Shavell, 2002). Many argue that civil liberties are guaranteed rights that cannot be compromised, while advocates of risk control claim that as long as any individual is at risk of being killed involuntarily, the risk must be reduced. If civil liberties were not compromised, the terrorism risk would be enormous. Hence, to fight terrorism risk in an effective way would require abandoning most of the current civil liberties (Viscusi and Zeckhauser, 2003). And thus, fear stands...

Methodology

Measurement approach

Most of the tourism studies on destination (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991; Stepchenkova and Mills, 2010; Pike, 2002) and travel risk perception (Karl and Schmude, 2017; Verkasalo et al., 2006; Williams a Baláž, 2015) were conducted through quantitative methods. This particular research adopted a qualitative perspective to aid balancing academic literature and to gain novel insights in these domains. The study applied an interpretative approach, known as phenomenography (Marton et al., 1977), an empirical-based methodology that captures the meaning of an aspect of reality (Fournier, 1998; Sandberg, 2000) from various points of views and through different interpretations to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon and its effects (Marton, 1981).

Sample

In order to investigate the same phenomenon (terrorism) in a specific context (leisure tourism) along with the feelings it creates (retraining fear) and the implications it brings about (acting predominantly on conservative values) from as many different angels as possible, 27 in-depth interviews were conducted with people from highly diverse backgrounds and nationalities. Participants were selected based on maximum variation sampling method. The group of participants include 14 countries (Angola, Brazil, Hong Kong (China), Hungary, India, Iran, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Syria, the UK, the USA and Vietnam) representing all the five continents, working in the private, public and non-profit sectors including religious institutions. There are employees, entrepreneurs, students and stay-at-home parents in the group. Their age range is between 20s and 60s. The group covers a spectrum of religious values
of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and atheism. However, all of the participants have extensive international experience and clear cosmopolitan orientation. Clear cosmopolitan orientation was used as the qualifying criterion to participate in the study.

Cosmopolitanism instead of nationality was used as a selection criterion, as cosmopolitan conviction transcends national identity (Merton, 1957). Furthermore, previous “findings support the cross-cultural applicability of a translation of the cosmopolitanism construct” (Cleveland et al., 2011, p. 941).

As “cosmopolitan orientation comprises the disposition towards and experience of tourism, living and working abroad” (Riefler et al., 2012, p. 287) and that expatriates represent an archetypal cosmopolitan population (Skrbis et al., 2004), an expatriate community, living in the city of Porto (northern region of Portugal), was considered. Expatriate people freely choose an expatriate lifestyle, which is already a strong evidence for their cosmopolitan openness towards and interest in foreign cultures. Besides, only those respondents who scored above average on the C-COSMO scale of Riefler et al. (2012) were interviewed.

Portugal, as the country of analysis, was considered based on its lowest attributed terrorism risk (US Department of State, 2018; GDT, 2018), and its prevailing perception among international travellers as a safe destination (Seabra et al., 2014; Wolff and Larsen, 2016). In this way, neither the security-concerned, nor the thrill-seekers are excluded from the examined traveller population. Focusing on a destination perceived as risky would reduce or possibly eliminate the highly risk-sensitive travellers, thus, compromising the research results (Wolff and Larsen, 2016).

Sampling procedures and instruments

The C-COSMO scale measures cosmopolitan orientation through three dimensions: open-mindedness, diversity appreciation and consumption transcending borders (including international travels), Riefler et al. (2012) developed the C-COSMO scale refining and integrating previous cosmopolitan scales (Cannon et al., 1994; Cleveland and Laroche, 2007; Cleveland et al., 2009 as cited by Riefler et al., 2012), grouping people into four distinct groups based on the strength of their cosmopolitan orientation. Cosmopolitans are considered to be those who score higher than the middle of a seven-point scale. The highest scoring group is categorised as pure cosmopolitans, expressing a high level of cosmopolitanism and low level of local attachment. The local cosmopolitans, the next group, are highly cosmopolitan while have a high level of appreciation for the locality. The ones scoring just above the middle score were qualified as moderately detached consumers (equally attached to both their cosmopolitan and local lifestyles but neither of them over dominating their consumption choices). The last category, scoring below the middle score, the alienated consumers, is considered non-cosmopolitan consumers. These categories also correspond to the existing classifications in the literature (Cannon and Yaprak, 2001, 2002): local and global cosmopolitans (in line with local and pure cosmopolitans), global parochials (close to moderately detached consumers) and local parochials (who cannot be considered cosmopolitan just as the alienated consumers).

All of the study participants obtained a score above 3.5 (out of 7) proving their clear cosmopolitan preference. Most (63 per cent) of the participants scored above 5.5, qualifying either as pure cosmopolitans (Riefler et al., 2012), expressing high level of cosmopolitanism with low level of local attachment, or as local cosmopolitan (Cannon and Yaprak, 2002; Riefler et al., 2012), highly cosmopolitan while having a high level of appreciation for the locality. The rest of the participants (37 per cent) were categorised as moderately attached cosmopolitan consumers, being equally attached to both their cosmopolitan and local lifestyles. This group with moderately strong cosmopolitan orientation was considered as a control group in the analysis of the influence of strong cosmopolitan values on travel risk perceptions.

Cosmopolitanism as a highly desired quality (Bourdieu, 1987) is prone to respondent bias (Brenner and DeLamater, 2016). Therefore, the participants were selected based on their evident cosmopolitan-traveller lifestyle, an indicative score of the cosmopolitan orientation scale (Riefler et al., 2012) and a clear value preference for oneness to change over conservation values (Schwartz, 1992).
Values preference and their dynamic change were collected through self-reported questionnaires, based on the notion that values are cognitive structures (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992) and, therefore, people are aware of their own values (Roccas et al., 2014) and any changes in them (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011; Schwartz, 2005). The participants were asked to fill the short value questionnaire of Schwartz (Lindeman and Verkasalo, 2005) to gain an objective and detailed picture of their value pretences. All participants showed preference for openness-to-change in comparison to conservation value dimensions, in line with previous studies linking cosmopolitan values and personal characteristics (Cleveland et al., 2011). This also suggests further evidence of the participants’ cosmopolitan orientation and suitability for the study.

Bias can be expected when people talk about their own value shift regarding being less open-minded and more fearful (Karl and Schmude, 2017; Roccas and Sagiv, 2017). In-depth interviews, in contrast with questionnaires, can prevent this (Brenner and DeLamater, 2016) as they allow for a series of probing questions to clarify respondent perceptions and opinions. Phenomenology, in particular, entails that participants talk freely about their own evaluation, feelings and opinion regarding a phenomenon, so personal narratives can validate or discredit the initial reports about personal values.

Data collection and analysis

The in-depth interview scripts focused on three main research questions:

RQ1. How personal values change due to the fear of terrorism?

RQ2. How does this potential change affect day-to-day life including travelling?

RQ3. How does this potential change affect destination perception?

Participants were asked unstructured, context-specific and clarifying questions to guide the flow of the conversation, but keeping the free flow of their personal narratives, as followed by phenomenological methodology. The conversations were transcribed and if deemed necessary further clarified with the interviewees.

The finalised scripts were analysed first in the traditional way: reading through the scripts and categorising each sentence. The initial categories of analysis resembled the research questions that guided the interviews. Further categories and subcategories showed up from the analysis of the personal narratives (Figure 2). The coded scripts were then organised into strongly or moderately cosmopolitan groups, based on the cosmopolitan score of the interviewees, as measured by the C-COSMO scale (Riefler et al., 2012). Each group of scripts was analysed separately. This analysis consisted of reviewing the phenomenological relationships detected between the created categories and assigning causal and linear or horizontal connections. Phenomenological analyses assisted us to draw hypotheses of cause and effect relations around the phenomenon and create subcategories for a deeper understanding of each pattern detected. Common patterns in both groups were detected and compared between them. The variations between those patterns were heighted and contrasted to reveal the most persistent differences between strongly and moderately cosmopolitan groups. Further literature was reviewed for each unusual pattern found in the data to find support of its validity. The small sample size was taken into consideration and the infrequent themes were discarded when opposing literature was found, in order to ensure integrity of the phenomenographic results (Marton, 1981). Notwithstanding, if a pattern was recurrent, even in view of opposing or contradictory related literature, the theme was considered and discussion on which “side of the debate” the current study found evidence for was offered. During the interviews all possible means (e.g. probing questions, re-phrasing and summarizing the information shared) were used to ensure that the interviewees stated explicitly what they meant. Special attention was also given to their language barriers, personality or cultural traditions that can impact their message.

Afterwards, the data were reanalysed through NVivo (version 12.0) software to gain possible novel insights through the use of different types of data analysis techniques. First, each transcript was assigned the appropriate attributes, like strong or moderate cosmopolitan orientation, and to
the appropriate cases, like countries and age group. Second, the labels, which were created during the initial manual analysis of the transcripts, were assigned to each sentence/paragraph in the software as nodes. Then, based on labels (nodes) cross-referencing, categories were created. Finally, horizontal, vertical and causal phenomenological relationships between the categories were re-established through the software (Saldana, 2016), hence, increasing the validity and reliability of the qualitative results (Zapata-Sepúlveda et al., 2012).

Word frequency query was performed on each transcript to validate the main categories referred by the interviewee and point to new themes. The same query was run for each group of cosmopolitans and for the overall sample as well. This analysis provided a great insight into what was in the heart of the discussion: people. It also produced a great visual representation of the themes found in the overall data set (Figure 3). Text search was performed to further investigate the context of the most frequently used words and phrases, and directly validate the recurring common patterns of each interview, the groups and the overall data set. In line with the nature of cosmopolitanism, the words “fear” and “concern” were used much less than the words “travel”, “see”, “know”, “feel” and “think” (Figure 3 and Table I). Semantic analysis was performed on the most frequently used words to get a deeper understanding of the information conveyed by the respondents. For example, the word “people” (or “people”, “peoples”) was mentioned the most often by the respondents highlighting the main focus of interviews. “People” were most of the times paired with verbs of “see”, “know”, “observe”, “meet”, “accept”, “love” and “respect” demonstrating the cosmopolitan mindset of the respondents when talking about “different people” and “other people”. However, “kill”, “judge”, “manipulate” and “fear” was also frequently mentioned along with the word “people” when talking about terrorism. The word “terrorism” was frequently used in the context of “fear of terrorism”, “terrorism risk”, “victim of terrorism” and “target of terrorism”. “Terrorist” was usually used as “terrorist attack” and the word “random” and “potential” was frequently observed together with this expression, also pointing to one of the main patterns of the study, the belief that terrorism is random and can happen at any time in any place. Interestingly but not unexpectedly, the word “fear” was mostly used by the moderately cosmopolitan group, while the respondents with stronger cosmopolitan orientation mostly used “concern” along with “terrorism”, and they mentioned “fear” in a negative sense, like “don’t fear” or “won’t fear”.

Figure 2 Treemap of categories (nodes) highlighting the frequency and hierarchy of each theme
A coding query was next performed in the overall data set to display the interlinking categories. This test also implied which links are more common in each of the groups and provided several novel insights. For example, it demonstrated that the majority of the Christian participants (regardless of the strength of cosmopolitan orientation) mentioned faith in God as a way to their peace of mind in the face of the terrorism. Matrix coding provided a great assistance in comparing...
the strong and moderate cosmopolitan groups with regard to all mentioned patterns (categories) and highlighted the extent to which these categories were discussed in each group, like the impact of media was discussed in close to equal length/times in both groups, but the importance of self-congruity when choosing a destination was more of an issue for the moderately cosmopolitan group.

Results and discussion

Terrorism is seen by most of the participants as a constant risk that can happen in any place (in any country, city and area) and at any time (at high-profile events or a weekday at a grocery store). While most of them did not feel that they represented a target for terrorism, they were aware that they could be a victim of it. There was a difference in the understanding of terrorism depending where the interviewee came from, which is understandable, as there is no agreed-upon definition of the term terrorism, neither among different governments or legal systems, not even in the academia (e.g. Clancy, 2012; Weinberg et al., 2010). Travellers coming from the Middle East and Asia took terrorism more personally and viewed its definition more broadly. They described it as any practice that violates human rights and creates fear, including current prosecutions they personally face, while travellers from the west had a more detached view on terrorism associating it only to international travelling and supposing that it is not likely to happen in their own country or directed personally at them, except by accident. This result might be explained by the bias that “home is always safer regardless where it is” (Wolff and Larsen, 2016).

More security conscious travelling

Fear is essentially an emotion that has the ability to transform into behaviours that could lead to avoid situations or launch into defence mechanisms that may even disregard reality (Öhman, 2008). Existing literature found that the fear of terrorism affects travel behaviour and could lead to avoiding destinations (Floyd et al., 2004; Isaac and Velden, 2018; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b) or to preference for travelling in isolation to keep away from the destination’s actual reality (Clancy, 2012), even opting for fantasy vacations (Oriol, 2004). The fear of terrorism also seems to make travellers more prone to use travel risk avoidance strategies (e.g. Fuchs and Reichel, 2011) up to the point of accepting sacrificing civil liberties for security (Viscusi and Zeckhauser, 2003). In line with both psychological and tourism literature, findings indicate that people tend to adopt a more cautious travel style when facing terrorism, which is more prominent in the group of moderately cosmopolitan travellers and less obvious among the travellers with the stronger cosmopolitan orientation (Table II).

More hesitant to discover new destinations

The cosmopolitan values of novelty seeking and diversity appreciation usually have a significant positive impact on the desire to explore culturally different destinations, and destinations that deemed riskier. It seems, however, that the fear of terrorism heightened the sense of risk awareness among all participants. It generally manifested in preference for a relaxing rather than a thrill-seeking or culturally challenging holidays. Travellers with strong cosmopolitan orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II</th>
<th>Strong vs moderate cosmopolitan opinions on the restraining effect of terrorism risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong cosmopolitan orientation</td>
<td>Moderate cosmopolitan orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I always loved travelling. I know rationally that terrorism is a threat and I am going to be more careful, but it wouldn’t stop me. I would still go everywhere. It is the explorer or the adventurer in me” – a British primary school teacher in her 20s</td>
<td>“The fear of terrorism definitely changes the way I travel. I prefer countries considered less propitious to terrorist attacks. For example, I wouldn’t feel safe travelling around in the Middle East. I’m not willing to take that [terrorism] risk. I like to take risks in certain personal and professional aspects, but not in this case” – a Portuguese PhD student in his 20s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reported to be more aware of the travel risk now than before, and majority of them opted for less boundary breaking but still stimulating holidays. All the moderately cosmopolitan participants reported that their main aim is to rest and relax when on holidays and showed little interest in destinations where the cultural values were inconveniently different, and the safety and security standards were worrisome.

This finding reflects the notion of self-congruity in tourism motivation domain. If the perceived image of the destination does not match the traveller’s self-concept, the traveller is less likely to choose it (Beerli et al., 2007; Chon, 1992). Self-congruity might also be the reason behind the open-mindedness of the highly cosmopolitan travellers, as they are able to match their self-concept with a wider variety of cultures (Alden et al., 2006) because they are not attached to a single locality (Merton, 1957) but view themselves as the citizens of the world ( Featherstone, 2002). Further building on self-congruity, majority of the interviewed travellers implied that they would avoid visiting a destination where they do not support the political system or agree with the cultural values. However, in the case of highly popular destinations this effect was not so strong. For example, the desire to visit Dubai despite of cultural differences and security concerns of the region was shown to be strong among the participants, just as in the case of the USA as demonstrated in previous studies (Stepchenkova and Shichkova, 2017). Clancy (2012) and Van Niekerk and Pizam (2015) also argue that multidimensional destinations are less affected by the negative effect of terrorism risk perception (Table III).

Higher importance of risk reduction strategies

Terrorism was regarded as unpredictable and difficult to prepare for. Nevertheless, some risk reduction strategies represented a common pattern in the interviews. The main strategy to reduce terrorism risk was to avoid high-risk destinations, as established by previous studies (e.g. Isaac and Velden, 2018; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a). However, the definition of high-risk destination was different between the participants with strong and moderate cosmopolitan orientation. Travellers with strong cosmopolitan orientation classified a destination as high-risk predominantly based on official travel advisories, like the Travel Advisory of the US Department of State, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the UK Government or the Global Terrorism Database and personal experience, while travellers with moderate cosmopolitan orientation relied more on the public perception of the destination and general media communication, both about general safety and terrorism risk. Active war zones, political instability (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996) and destinations with repeated terrorist incidents (Liu and Pratt, 2017), in line with previous studies (e.g. Isaac and Velden, 2018), were commonly highlighted as high-risk destination to avoid. Avoidance strategy was also the most generally preferred when travelling with family, especially with young children to both less safe and less culturally similar destinations, where guarding and caring for children are less convenient. The same practice was found by other studies, too (Roehl and Fesenmaier, 1992). Not fully avoiding but postponing the visit to a certain destination was also commonly referred especially after recent terrorist attacks at the destination.

Travel information search, established as an important risk reduction strategy (e.g. Fuchs and Reichel, 2004; Isaac and Velden, 2018; Jonas and Mansfeld, 2017; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong cosmopolitan orientation</th>
<th>Moderate cosmopolitan orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I would visit all different places, if only there is a specific recommendation against it from the Russian Foreign Ministry or the US or British Ministries” – a Russian non-profit consultant in her 30s</td>
<td>“I wouldn’t visit the Middle East […] because it is Muslim, because it is culturally different, and maybe because I just feel uncomfortable […]. As far as spending my own social relaxing time, I probably wouldn’t relax too much in the Middle East. I don’t share the values of Saudi Arabia, of Dubai or of Qatar, so why would I go there?” – a British headmaster in his 40s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was the second most mentioned strategy to reduce and discern terrorism risk among both types of participants. They mentioned to look for two types of information to reduce travel risk: cultural information to be comfortable with local values and customs, and security information to be able to follow necessary safety precautions. The former echoes the cosmopolitan drive to get to know different cultures and learn from them (Skrbis et al., 2004), and the latter is a way to reduce travel risk (Jonas and Mansfeld, 2017). The most reliable information sources the participants listed were: personal experience with the destination, friends and family who had personal experience with the destination and independent travellers’ reviews – also referred to as “organic sources” by previous studies (e.g. Fuchs and Reichel, 2006a; Kim and Chen, 2015; Seabra et al., 2014). Official travel advisories were also considered as highly reliable source of travel information by the participants.

Another terrorism risk reduction strategy mentioned by several interviewees with strong cosmopolitan orientation and travel experience at high-risk destinations was to blend in into the local culture or at least not to stand out, like respecting the restrictions of the local dress code, staying in local hotels and eating in local restaurants, which are less targeted by terrorists. This idea seems reasonable in light of the argument that western travellers seem to be more targeted by terrorist (Bianchi, 2006; Clancy, 2012). Previous studies also found that “adjusting respectfully to the local and cultural conditions” is one of the top three most effective preventive measures (Isaac and Velden, 2018, p. 15).

Participants with moderate cosmopolitan orientation reported a strong preference to “keep on the beaten tourist track”, like choosing a travel destination with acceptable safety and convenience standards, relying on tour operators to help organise the trip in higher-risk or unfamiliar destinations, not wondering off to explore risky neighbourhoods or events that are not recommended for tourists, as well as keeping more isolated from local matters. These precautions point to a current trend in international travels of travelling in isolation from the reality of the destination (e.g. Clancy, 2012; Oriol, 2004) to avoid both the local insecurities and inconveniences.

Some of the more security conscious interviewees said to feel safer with police presence at the airports, crowded events and tourist attractions, in line with previous studies reporting that some guests felt that security measures contributed to enjoying the event more (Taylor and Toohey, 2005). However, if targeted by intrusive search and hindered by extra waiting time the trade-off feels more burdensome, just as was demonstrated by Viscusi and Zeckhauser (2003).

The extreme of security measures is to trade off civil liberties for safety. Basic security measures, as demonstrated in other studies considered as an effective risk reduction strategy (Law, 2006), were welcomed or at least tolerated by all participants. They accepted the additional inconveniences for the higher good of the society. But, the extensive security procedures at the airports and the invasive information provision for the immigration authorities that seemed unnecessary were protested against. The strength of cosmopolitan orientation alone does not clearly separate travellers who embrace the full extent of security measures and the ones who draw a clear limit. This issue might point beyond the love for travelling, as while basic security measures are effective ways to reduce travel-related risks (Law, 2006), a more comprehensive trade-off is touching on ideological differences, like Benjamin Franklin said, “Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety”.

More restrained towards different people

While cultural tolerance and appreciation of diversity are the most important distinctive values of cosmopolitans, they are the most affected by the heightened sense of risk perception insecurity. There is substantial literature in tourism discussing the grievous effect of linking fear (e.g. Clancy, 2012; Koskela, 2010) and specifically the fear of terrorism to race (e.g. Araña and León, 2008; Fekete, 2004; Seabra et al., 2013). In line with this, travellers with moderate cosmopolitan ordination seemed more reserved and suspicious towards people who had a different cultural or national/ethnic background, thus, having less interest and confidence in visiting their countries. Travellers with strong cosmopolitan orientation showed less restraints and more curiosity, which was also demonstrated in their willingness to explore
different cultures. This clear difference in behaviour between the strong and moderately cosmopolitan group supports the validity of the cosmopolitan dimensions of Riefler et al. (2012) used for categorising cosmopolitans: open-mindedness, diversity appreciation and border-transcending consumption, like foreign travels (Table IV).

**Factors influencing terrorism risk perception**

Some situational and personal factors were found to enhance cosmopolitans’ all-embracing nature, while some other factors seemed to escalate travellers’ fear of terrorism. First, participants with extensive international experience (including extensive international travelling, expatriate lifestyle as well as multicultural origins and upbringing) shared the practice of rigorously fighting back prejudices and consciously keeping an open mind judging only by character. Relying on substantial personal experience with different destinations and cultures, as opposed only to information from the media or friends, assists travellers in building their judgement on more diverse information and stripping it free from prejudice (Wolff and Larsen, 2016). Expatriates in both groups of the study reported that living in another country shaped their character and influenced their personal values to be more open-minded. This premise was also found by previous studies that changes in circumstances and personal life cycle initiate changes in values (e.g. Bardi et al., 2014; Roccas and Sagiv, 2017; Schwartz, 2005). Expatriate experience did not necessarily push the participants to adopt foreign views and practices, but as they suggested it helped them to understand different worldviews and learn how to live and deal with such views, even if they did not agree with them. And this is the essence of cosmopolitan cultural tolerance (Cannon and Yaparak, 2001; Featherstone, 2002; Skrbis et al., 2004; Riefler et al., 2012).

Second, Christian values, built on the main commandment to love (Mark 12:28-31; Matthew 22:36-40), seemed to shape significantly the attitude of the Christian travellers. Even if the initial emotional reaction to strangers is fear and reservation, their resolute attitude is marked by love. This mindful attitude resembles the conscious approach of cosmopolitans who are aware of their own biases and effortfully strive to overcome it (Skrbis et al., 2004). The Christian interviewees of the sample, regardless of the strength of their cosmopolitan orientation and thus their level of initial sentiments, reported to act with less reservation towards people with different cultural and religious background. This tendency for prosocial behaviour of people who believe in God was previously demonstrated both in- and outgroup settings (Ahmed, 2009; Preston and Ritter, 2013). Religious values were also found to affect risk perception (He et al., 2013), besides influencing judgement and attitude (Poria et al., 2003). Christians in the sample reported that they did not feel particularly anxious about terrorism or any other travel risk during a trip. It contradicts previous findings suggesting that religious travellers perceived more risk than nonreligious travellers (He et al., 2013). The reason for the contradicting finding could be that He et al. (2013) used self-reported questionnaires when sampling religious travellers. Previous studies demonstrated that when people are prompted to declare their believes during direct measurement, they are prone to respondent bias (Brenner and DeLamater, 2016). As opposed to He et al. (2013), the Christian sample of the current study is active members of a Christian congregation. Also, while the previous study used questionnaires, the current study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong cosmopolitan orientation</th>
<th>Moderate cosmopolitan orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;When I was in Turkey, I stayed at a Kurdish family. They were very nice people, but Turkish people treated them as terrorists [...] They are treated as terrorist by the people we treat as terrorists&quot; – a Brazilian writer in his 30s</td>
<td>&quot;I feel a bit suspicious or mistrustful and reserved regarding strangers; and if the stranger also has a different cultural background than what you are familiar with, this feeling of apprehensiveness amplifies. And on top of that, if you also hear from the media they are typically the people who could initiate a terrorist attack then your negative feelings towards them will grow even stronger&quot; – a Hungarian marketing manager in her 30s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
followed a qualitative metrology with in-depth interviews where the actual religious conviction and belief of a person can be more accurately judged.

Third, travellers interviewed for this study, who personally experienced terrorism either by being on site or by being in close proximity to feel the immediate impact of an attack, reported to be more aware of the risk of terrorism but less frightened by it. Preceding personal experience with terrorism was found to fuel the fear of terrorism (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a). However, other studies, in line with the current findings, demonstrated reduced sensitivity to terrorism risk due to previous personal experience (Yechiam et al., 2005).

Fourth, participants in the current study who came from a war-torn country faced political prosecution or experienced similar insecurities reported to be more security concerned in general, be it when travelling or in any other area of their lives. Maslow’s (1968) theory on deficiency needs could explain this finding. The seeming contradiction regarding risk perception between people who personally experienced terrorism and people who experienced other security issues might be rooted in the notion of value change (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011). For people who experience a single security incident or repeated ones in a short period of time, the environmental cue that activates value change and subsequent behaviour is accessible only for a short time, so its effect is short-lived, while for people who experience insecurity for decades, the permanent environmental cues leave a lasting impact on personal values and character.

Fifth, the effect of the media in creating a xenophobic atmosphere (Fekete, 2004) and amplifying the fear of terrorism (Altheide, 2006; Kapuściniski and Richards, 2016; Seabra et al., 2007) is already well established. Current findings strongly support this position. The media’s influence is substantial in shaping the overall image of a destinations and the public approach to its local culture (Avraham, 2015; Beerli and Martín, 2004). The media also greatly contributes to cultural predispositions, especially in the case of the travellers with less personal memory to compensate for the mainstream influence (Wolff and Larsen, 2016). The participants with stronger cosmopolitan conviction seemed more aware of their potentially overrated terrorism risk perception, and this leads them to consciously look for objective information to counterbalance their bias, while the interviewees with moderate cosmopolitan orientation seemed more affected by the fearful public atmosphere reinforced by the mainstream media (Table V).

**Overall value shift due to the fear of terrorism**

As demonstrated above, in the face of terrorism even cosmopolitan travellers were found to be reasonably more cautious when travelling and more restrained to embrace the full extent of cultural diversity. As value change manifests in changing behaviour (Schwartz, 1992, 2005; Roccas et al., 2017; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), we could rightly speculate that an overall value shift, to prefer security values over stimulation values, occurred. According to the theory of value change, personal value preference is relatively stable; however, it can experience a shift due to environmental cues (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011). Environmental cue triggers one value to decrease in importance and the opposing value to automatically increase in its ability to lead behaviour (Roccas and Sagiv, 2017). Opposing values like stimulation values and security values can be upheld, but one has to prevail over the other in a given situation, like travelling, to drive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table V</th>
<th>Strong vs moderate cosmopolitan opinions on the effect of media in influencing terrorism risk perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strong cosmopolitan orientation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Moderate cosmopolitan orientation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The media doesn’t affect me that much. I am conscious of its nature and its effect, so I try to think through rationally what I hear. But it does still influence my perception about terrorism even if a bit, regardless of how rational my approach is” – a Portuguese management consultant in his 30s</td>
<td>“By listening to the local news, I feel a bit uneasy to visit some places and have contact with different people. You can’t help but being affected by what you hear. If you hear the same message from the media over and over again, you will start fearing some things and people” – a Hungarian small business owner in his 30s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
decision and behaviour (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011; Schwartz, 2005). The higher concern for security values due to terrorism risk does trigger a drop in the opposing stimulation values (e.g. Konty et al., 2004; Verkasalo et al., 2006). The main aim of the current study was to find out how cosmopolitan travellers, whose drive for stimulation is essential, are affected by these opposing values when travelling. Popcorn (1992) suggested that global travellers might find different outlets for their inherent desire for travelling when facing terrorism, like travelling locally, visiting different ethnic restaurants or possibly “cocooning”. The current study found that higher concern for security triggers value shift among cosmopolitan travellers. It was demonstrated that this value shift does not stop cosmopolitans from international travelling, but it prompts them to adopt a more restrained and selective approach in choosing a destination and in their style of travelling. So, cosmopolitans still satisfy their craving for stimulation by travelling, but they travel differently.

One of the most powerful environmental cues that keep security values in the forefront of the mind and subsequently influence behaviour (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011) is the media. In the midst of the fear-inducing media communication about the terrorist incidents (Fekete, 2004; Kapuściński and Richards, 2016) that affect international travel routes and target tourists, terrorism has been linked to global travelling (Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006). When people think about international travelling, terrorism as an inescapable cue comes to mind (Kapuściński and Richards, 2016). This increases risk estimates (Fischhoff et al., 2005; Seabra et al., 2014) and changes travel behaviour to be more reserved (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b) and even selective (Floyd et al., 2004). Behavioural change due to the fear of terrorism as an environmental stimulus is evident in both previous and the current studies. However, as opposed to mainstream literature on terrorism risk perception (e.g. Araña and León, 2008; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a, b; Woodside and Lys bonski, 1989), the current study found that this restraining effect of the fear of terrorism is not universal. A fiercer concern for security is seen among moderately cosmopolitan travellers. Travellers with strong cosmopolitan orientation, while aware of and affected by the heightened terrorism risk, are shown to be less concerned with terrorism and less inclined to a radical behavioural change (Table VI). This finding mirrors other studies pinpointing the risk averse nature of high-sensation-seeking travellers (Lepp and Gibson, 2008), one of the main characteristics of cosmopolitans (Riefler et al., 2012).

The results imply evidence for shifting value preference in the cosmopolitan sample, which is expected to be “not risk averse or susceptible to normative influences” (Riefler et al., 2012, p. 299). Therefore, it could be speculated that the same value shift (more security concerned) and a subsequent change in behaviour (more reserved and selective) are also applicable with an even greater extent for travellers with less strong original value preference for openness and diversity appreciation, covering the rest of the travelling population.

**Summary**

This exploratory study aimed to gain a better understanding of how travellers are affected by the ever-present fear of terrorism. Open-minded and diversity-embracing cosmopolitans were used as a proxy of global travellers in order to investigate how the drive for travelling is shaped by the fear of terrorism. The fear of terrorism was indeed present among the interviewed global

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table VI</th>
<th>Strong vs moderate cosmopolitan opinions on and value preference in the face of terrorism risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong cosmopolitan orientation</td>
<td>Moderate cosmopolitan orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I am well aware of terrorism, but if you allow the fear of terrorism to influence you and stop you from traveling, to stop you from feeling free, then surely you have achieved the objective of the terrorists. The terrorist will not put fear into my life [...] Obviously, I will be more cautious, but it will not stop me from traveling” – a British non-profit worker in her 50s</td>
<td>“Probably, this fearful atmosphere has affected me to be more conservative. However, I may not be more conservative as a result, but more zealous about my views, and the fear of terrorism just happened to fuel it even more [...] I am more careful planning my trips now. And, if it takes me too much research, security checks and insurance, I wouldn’t go” – an Angolan stay-at-home-mother in her 40s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
travellers, who showed, as a direct impact, an increased concern for security. According to Maslow’s (1968) rule, the fundamental need for security would gain importance if threatened (as now due to the fear of terrorism). This security concern seems to affect travel preferences and cultural openness. Global travellers appear to be more restrained with people who are different, more apprehensive to discover places that have significantly different local values and lower safety standards, more cautious when travelling and more open to use risk reduction strategies up to the point of trading civil liberties for security. Figure 4 encompasses the main findings of this exploratory study.

Besides listing the main behavioural changes of global travellers due to the fear of terrorism, the main contribution of the current study is to indicate that travellers with strong cosmopolitan orientation, while apparently aware of the potential terrorism risks, are less affected by them than travellers with moderate cosmopolitan orientation. As opposed to the mainstream literature that states that risk perception and its retraining effect regarding willingness to travel are significant and universal (e.g. Alvarez and Campo, 2014; Floyd et al., 2004; Sarman et al., 2016), the current findings are in line with the results of Lepp and Gibson (2008). These authors pinpoint a particular type of traveller with high-sensation-seeking traits (similar to the novelty and diversity-seeking cosmopolitans), who, while clearly aware of the risk of travelling, seems to be more tolerant to it and less prone to behavioural changes as a result of it.

Study implications

Practical implications

The current study focuses on cosmopolitan travellers. Their importance for city tourism lies in their characteristics and travel motivation. Riefler et al. (2012, p. 300) characterised cosmopolitans “to be relatively young and internationally experienced, and to reside in urban areas”. Besides being mostly city residents, cosmopolitans’ travel interest also focuses more on the cultural heritage of a destination that is mostly concentrated in urban areas. This fulfils their cosmopolitan desire to experience other cultures and learn about and from them (Alden et al., 2006; Skrbis et al., 2004). In line with previous findings, majority of the participants in the current study also showed a strong preference for destinations known for their cultural and historical peculiarities as opposed to destinations only with great natural scenery. This suggests that cosmopolitan travellers are an important consumer segment for the city tourism industry.

![Figure 4](image-url)
According to previous profiling studies, cosmopolitans are relatively young, well-travelled and highly educated, speaking international languages, mainly city residents, highly risk tolerant and even thrill-seekers, open-minded and prefer personalised experience (Bianchi, 2006; Buckley, 2012; Cannon and Yaprak, 2001; Caldwell et al., 2006; Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009; Riefler et al., 2012; Kendall et al., 2009). Tourism practitioners could consider these specific consumer attributes of cosmopolitans when segmenting and targeting their market, as majority of global travellers have strong cosmopolitan orientation (e.g. Cannon and Yaprak, 2001, 2002; Thompson and Tambyah, 1999; Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009; Riefler et al., 2012).

Marketing massages can emphasise the aspects that are more appealing to this market segment, like authenticity (Beveland and Farrelly, 2010), ethnicity and culture (Grier et al., 2006), as well as exotic aspects (Holt, 1998). This market segment is also highly appreciative of novelty, and particularly receptive to innovativeness, either as a company strategy, a marketing message, medium of communication and the product/service itself (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009). The findings of the current study point beyond the traditional country-based segmentation strategies, cosmopolitanism calls for well-informed and elaborate tactics. For example, American travellers do not visit Iran, but the cosmopolitan participants of the study were more restrained by their American passport than by their cultural biases or safety concerns. Syrians feel concerned to travel around in the Middle East, not because they do not think that it is safe in general, but because it is not safe for those who oppose the local regime. Indian Christians feel restrained travelling across the states of their own country expecting religious prosecution. These could be indicative for tour operators to focus their marketing efforts wisely, distinguishing who is their target and carefully profile “problematic groups” as they might need extra support in order to travel, not because their interest is lacking, but their circumstances.

Personal values of openness to new experiences do not diminish among cosmopolitan travellers. However, a more reserved and selective approach in travelling and traces of cultural and racial prejudice were apparent in the sample due to the current fearful atmosphere. Tourism practitioners, therefore, could strive to counterbalance the fearful environmental cues by prompting cosmopolitan values. They could remind global travellers of their open-mindedness and diversity appreciation, as well as the benefits of building a diverse cultural capital through their foreign experiences. “[S]uch a prime will ‘remind’ the person that the value in question is important for him/her, consequently increasing the likelihood of acting on that value” (Roccas and Sagiv, 2017, p. 31). Regarding how to prompt travellers’ cosmopolitan values, managers can rely on the practical examples of previous studies proving several prompting techniques. For example, explicit priming (Armit et al., 2010; Ariely et al., 2009; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011; Maio et al., 2009), consistency maintenance (Arieli et al., 2014; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), deliberate self-persuasion (Arieli et al., 2014; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), identification (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), adaptation (Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), self-confrontation (Maio et al., 2009) and increasing the desirability of values-related emotions (Tamir et al., 2016).

In the face of heightened sense of terrorism risk awareness (e.g. Konty et al., 2004; Verkasalo et al., 2006), reassuring tourists about existence of safety measures yields great benefits for the destination as well as the particular tourism business (Van Niekerk and Pizam, 2015). As argued by previous studies, this represents a competitive advantage for a tourism destination when travellers compare multiple alternatives (Huan and Beaman, 2003; Seabra et al., 2014). However, “an appropriate balance in the extent of overt safety measures so as not to exceed the acceptable safety threshold of tourists” is shown to be essential (Rittichainuwat, 2013, p. 199). Keeping an appropriate balance first, in the security communication by not creating the impression that a security incident is usual and expected, and second, in the deployment of security measures by not causing unnecessary inconvenience for the travellers is critical. In the case of airport screening, Viscusi and Zeckhauser (2003) confirmed that travellers are in general willing to trade off some civil liberties for safety, especially when there is significant efficiency gain in it, like reduced waiting time. This finding was consistent with the result of the current study that the strongly security-concerned travellers of the sample felt safer and more reassured by the extensive security measures. However, the more free-spirited travellers aimed to avoid them, and this highlights the vital importance of an appropriate balance in security measures.
Faced with a terrorist attack, it is the control over the situation and over our life that we lose. This loss of control amplifies fear, sometimes even to an irrational level. Anything that can help to regain control can help to manage fear (Lewis et al., 2008). For example, it was highlighted by the participants that knowing more about the circumstances of a terrorist attack can provide some peace of mind over the situation, as well as discernment for future travels. Destination risk perception literature shows that it is not the magnitude, but the frequency of terrorist attacks that impacts the most the perception of a destination (Pizam and Smith, 2000), so providing information about the terrorist attack and highlighting its isolated nature (if it is the case) can help travellers to regain their trust in the destination’s safety. Security-concerned travellers in the current study suggested that it is reassuring to read reports on recovery progress after an incident regarding both reinstated security standards and local mood of the destination. Destinations that have a better safety perception recover faster from the negative association of a terrorist attack (Woodside and Lysonski, 1989; Mansfeld and Pizam, 2006; Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2009; Sönmez and Graefe, 1998b; Goodrich, 2002). Interviews also confirmed this notion. Participants referred that they tend to believe that in countries with established safety systems, everything would go back to normal the day after the attack. Destinations should strive to build a stronger image of safety over time through intensive destination marketing tools (Van Niekerk and Pizam, 2015), more specifically, relying on organic information sources, like independent traveller reviews, social media and word-of-mouth recommendations of friends and family, rather than marketing campaigns that people tend to trust less (Tasci et al., 2007; Beerli and Martín, 2004; Kim and Chen, 2015; Fuchs and Reichel, 2006a). Not only destinations that experience terrorism but the ones that are associated with terrorism due to their geographical location or prejudiced cultural values can also benefit highly from a unified fact-based communication strategy including all tourism stakeholders (Seabra et al., 2014, Sönmez, 1998; Van Niekerk and Pizam, 2015). It can diminish the effect of the subjective prejudices and the actual circumstantial damage. Previous studies have shown that including all destination stakeholders in building an overall destination image can create a more innovative and demand-driven image fitting for ongoing challenges (Warren and Dinnie, 2017). A unified communication strategy about security measures and crisis management procedures that are in place can reassure the potential travellers and build their confidence in the destination’s ability to protect its visitors. Such unified communication programmes could be best centrally led and coordinated, and as Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty (2012) suggest, these government initiatives are justified based on net returns for a country.

Governments can coordinate and offer safety training including crisis management education to hoteliers and ensure the security of public areas (Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2012). Crisis management planning and the development of survival strategies are also an important practical matter (Van Niekerk and Pizam, 2015). It is already actively practiced in international chain hotels more prone to natural disasters, but destinations in general would benefit of its widespread use. Government support in providing freely accessible guidelines are crucial for the local medium and small hotels in both crisis management and survival strategy planning (Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2012). Travellers in the sample also suggested that they followed how the governments dealt with the crises, as it could provide them with useful insights on how capable and efficient the country was, thus, leading to the assumption of how reliably it cares for its tourists. Policy makers should make sure that the official communication channels are accessible, and their content is accurate regarding travel risks, furthermore in line with global and governmental travel advisories, which were consistently referred in the interviews as reliable source to discern the actual terrorism risk.

**Academic implications**

The study progresses cosmopolitan literature. First, the study provides further evidence that cosmopolitanism should be studied as a progressive and context-specific rather than a stable orientation supporting the original notion of Cannon and Yaprak (2002, p. 31) that “cosmopolitans are made and not born”. Second, the study answers Riefler et al. (2012, p. 300) “whether major shocks”, like terrorism, or the fear of it, “can dampen a cosmopolitan orientation while fuelling ethnocentric tendencies” by suggesting that cosmopolitan orientation is affected by the fear of terrorism. Third, the study implies, based on its cosmopolitan sample, that
cosmopolitan values, like openness-to-change, self-enhancement and universalism (Figure 1) (Schwartz, 1992) appears to be a more accurate predictor of cosmopolitan behaviour than nationality or even sociodemographic characteristics when it comes to international travelling.

This research also advances risk perception literature. First, it contributes to the understanding of “how risk perception as one important determinant of destination choice acts as an influencing factor in the destination choice process” (Karl and Schmude, 2017, p. 137) by listing the main behavioural changes of global travellers due to the fear of terrorism, such as, the heightened sense of security, security conscious travelling, restraint towards people of different backgrounds, apprehensiveness to discover new destinations, use of risk reduction strategies and tolerance of security measures when travelling (Figure 4). Second, opposing to the main stream literature that states that risk perception and its retraining effect regarding willingness to travel are significant and universal (e.g. Alvarez and Campo, 2014; Floyd et al., 2004; Sarman et al., 2016), the results suggest that travellers with strong cosmopolitan orientation are less affected by terrorism risk than travellers with moderate cosmopolitan orientation, while equally aware of the potential risks. Third, this paper attempts to provide an option in the search for “market segments can be identified as which are less concerned with potential [travel] risk, and may thus react less negatively in troubled times” (Seabra et al., 2013, p. 503) by pointing to the strongly cosmopolitan travellers and their less radical behavioural change in the face of terrorism.

This study deepens tourism literature by providing a better understanding how travellers’ values are changing due to current fear of terrorism vs the emerging cosmopolitan mindset, and how this internal struggle shapes tourist profiles, travel preferences (Dwyer et al., 2009) and destination perception (Hsu and Huang, 2016; Souiden et al., 2017). Global travellers were long theorised to change their values of open-mindedness and cultural tolerance in the face of terrorism (e.g. Popcorn, 1992). While change is certainly happening, based on the reports of the current sample, it appears not to be as straightforward and universal as predicted.

Limitations and avenues for future research

This study aimed to analyse the fear of terrorism and its effects from as many angels as possible through the interpretations of a highly diverse interviewee group. But due to this very diversity that constitutes the essence of a phenomenology (Sandberg, 2000), full saturation of new information would be challenging to reach (Guest et al., 2006; Ryan and Bernard, 2006). This is the main limitation of this research. However, communicative validity (ongoing dialogue in which alternative knowledge claims are debated throughout the research process (Kvale, 1989)), and reliability as interpretative awareness (acknowledging that the researchers cannot escape from their interpretations, but must explicitly deal with them throughout the research process (Sandbergh, 1997)) was strived for.

The study could not directly compare value preferences before and after the surfacing of the fear of terrorism, but it could pinpoint the types of behavioural changes that result from it. Future studies can further investigate the validity and extent of these behavioural changes through quantitative means. They could investigate if people indeed travel less to culturally different destinations, if they indeed travel with more security requirements and if they indeed have less contact with culturally different people now than before, when terrorism showed up less in the forefront of the news and our minds, for example, before the 9/11 attacks or the 1972 Munich Olympic Games.

This study examined the view of a cosmopolitan group with extensive international experience disregarding sociodemographic categories. The influence of personal characteristics and experiences on risk perception and travel preference is acknowledged (e.g. Sönmez and Graefe, 1998a), and their influence is evident in the current study (e.g. expatriate lifestyle, personal experience with terrorism, Christian believes, etc.). Hence, further research could clarify how the specific sociodemographic categories, like country of origin, country of residence, type of international experience, educational background, specific religious values and profession, influence the perception of terrorism risk when travelling and relating to others from different cultures. Future research could also investigate the effect of terrorism on a strongly conservative
group who upholds the values of conservation against the values of openness-to-change (Schwartz, 1992). Finally, further validation of findings through quantitative methodology to achieve study generalisability is recommended.

Conclusions

The exploratory findings of this study indicate that the cosmopolitan values of cultural tolerance and appreciation freedom are not immune of the current restraining fear of terrorism. An overall value shift, from openness-to-change towards conservation values, is apparent among the travellers of the sample due to the growing awareness of terrorism risk. However, its extent depends on the original strength of the cosmopolitan orientation, as well as on personal and situational factors that can further enhance or repress this change. The most important situational factors that balance out the restraining effect of terrorism are the international expatriate and travel experience, furthermore personal religious values encouraging an all-embracing attitude. The strongest opposing factor that heightens the sense of risk perception is the tone and intensity of the media communication reporting about the ever-present risk of terrorism and its implications.

The study clarifies a doubt in the cosmopolitan literature (Riefler et al., 2012), and demonstrates that cosmopolitan orientation should not be considered as a stable position, like previous studies did, but rather an adaptable tendency. First, because cosmopolitanism as a set of convictions on open-mindedness, diversity appreciation and novelty seeking is enhanced over time when exposed to further personal experience (Cannon and Yaprak, 2002; Thompson and Tambyah, 1999). Second, because the strength of this conviction is rooted in personal values that can shift in the face of the environmental cues (Bardi et al., 2014; Bardi and Goodwin, 2011), just as demonstrated in the current study. In line with previous studies arguing that travellers’ psychological attributes contribute more significantly to traveller profiles than situational or sociodemographic features (Ritchie et al., 2017), the exploratory findings suggest that the traveller profiles of cosmopolitans are best build on individual characteristics, like personal values rather than nationality or sociodemographic features. The personal value preferences of cosmopolitans were found to be a stronger predictor of their travel preferences than their nationality or sociodemographic characteristics. So, cosmopolitan values can be a more accurate, therefore a more successful, method for tourism marketing segmentation, as well as for academic research.

This analysis also advances destination image literature by shedding light on how the dynamic interaction of values acts as a facilitator in destination perception (Souiden et al., 2017). The relevance of the study is rooted in the clear cosmopolitan notion (Beck and Sznaider, 2006) that if the most open-minded and tolerant part of the society has become more reserved and distrustful of diversity due to the ever-present risk of terrorism, so has the rest of the society. In this sense, the greatest challenge for both industry managers and policy makers is to proactively coordinate a unified communication strategy that can help clear cultural and security-related biases and encourage people to see and experience the reality for themselves, as “now is time to understand more, so that we may fear less” (Marie Curie).

References


Huan, T.C. and Beamian, J. (2003), "Contexts and dynamics of social interaction and information search in decision making for discretionary travel", *Tourism Analysis*, Vols 8-4 No. 2, pp. 177-82, available at: https://doi.org/10.3727/108354203774076698


Kapucinski, G. (2014), *The Effects of News Media on Leisure Tourists’ Perception of Risk and Willingness to Travel with Specific Reference to Events of Terrorism and Political Instability*, Bournemouth University, Bournemouth.


Further reading


Corresponding author

Vanda N. Veréb can be contacted at: vanda.vereb@gmail.com
The narrative rhythm of terror: a study of the Stockholm terrorist attack and the “Last Night in Sweden” event

Cecilia Cassinger, Jorgen Eksell, Maria Mansson and Ola Thufvesson

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine how the mediatisation of terror attacks affects the brand image of tourism cities.

Design/methodology/approach – Informed by theories of mediatisation and space, the study analyses two different types of terror attacks in Sweden during 2017 as media events. The focus of analysis is on identifying spatial and temporal patterns that underpin the narrative rhythm of the discussions of the events on Twitter and online news platforms.

Findings – The findings demonstrate that the unfolding of the events can be divided into three phases of varying intensity in rhythm and implications for city brand image. The manifestation of an imaginary terror attack in a digital environment had a greater impact on the narratives of the city than an actual one.

Research limitations/implications – Rythmanalysis is introduced as a useful device to examine how urban space is mediatised through social media and online news flows.

Originality/value – The study contributes with novel knowledge on the mediatisation of city space on digital media platforms in a post-truth world. It shows that city administrations need to deal with both real and imaginary terror attacks, especially when there is an already established negative image of the city.

Keywords Brand image, Narrative, Terrorism, Rhythm, Space, Mediatization

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The 9/11 terror attacks made it apparent that terror can appear anywhere and at any time. Contemporary terrorism targets places in which civilians from many different countries gather, such as airports, shopping malls, city centres and tourist attractions, in order to attract highest international media attention (Liu and Pratt, 2017). Such acts are often spectacular and aim at destabilising the public experience of safety and security and install fear in the civilian population (Howie, 2015; Cavarero, 2009). In recent years, there has been an increased interest in how to embed safety and security in the branding of places (Coaffee and Rogers, 2008). Security branding has emerged as a new paradigm through which to understand and configure brand images of cities (Coaffee and Van Ham, 2008; Avraham, 2009). The development of a secure image is now a fundamental strategic place-brand asset that requires marketing and management (Coaffee and Rogers, 2008). Tourists are an important stakeholder group, which is particularly vulnerable to terrorism. Yet, previous research on place branding show that infrequent terrorist attacks, despite attracting high global media attention, do not have a long-term impact on the brand image of the city (Anholt, 2006) and tourists’ perceptions of the city (Liu and Pratt, 2017). The tourism literature has devoted considerable attention to the link between tourism demand and terrorism (Walters et al., 2018). Walters et al.’s (2018) study on tourist behaviour in relation to perceived high-risk destinations demonstrate that tourists make changes to their travels plans as regards accommodation and travel company when the perceived risk of terrorist threat is increased due to governmental and other warnings.
Similarly, Larsen et al. (2009) concluded that tourists worry about various risks before travelling; however, the worries have less impact when travel decisions are made. Moreover, the tourism literature has been concerned with the resilience and response strategies to deal with negative images of destinations resulting from terrorist attacks (e.g. Avraham, 2004, 2009).

Both news media and social media play a significant role for tourists’ perceptions of security and safety in cities (Avraham and Ketter, 2017). While it is well established that news media’s way of framing violent attacks and incidents promote civic narratives of fear (Altheide, 1997), less is known about the logic of social media narratives and how this logic impacts the brand image of the city. Narratives of fear and unsafety may be amplified on digital platforms, which are characterised by the speed of information and fast circulation of text and images (cf. Doosti et al., 2016). The circulation of fake news, and so-called post-truth statements, also make the media landscape more complex. Post-truth is defined by the Oxford Dictionaries (2016) as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief”. In a post-truth world, there is a greater insecurity around information and a lack of trust in information. Despite the rapid dissemination of fake news and false rumours about destinations across social media platforms, there is a scarce knowledge of the logics of such imaginary narratives and what they may mean for city image.

The research aim in this paper is, therefore, to advance knowledge of the mechanisms of how terror in the tourism city is shaped in and through media events. The focus here is on actual, rumoured and imaginary events (Couldry and Hepp, 2018). To this end, a study is undertaken of the flow of media narratives of terror attacks in tourism cities on the so-called open internet that anyone can access. Lefebvre’s (2004) rhythmanalysis is used as a means to investigate the rhythms of media narratives and counter-narratives of terrorism and their implications for city brand image.

The paper is structured in the following way. First, it gives an account of the concept of media events and mediatisation as means of theorising how the public image of tourism cities is affected by fast-circulating information in the digital landscape. Second, narrative rhythm and spatio-temporality are introduced as theoretical tools for analysing terror acts in cities as media events. Third, in the methodology section, analyses of the mediatisation of an imaginary event and a real event are discussed. Two events, in the Swedish cities of Stockholm and Malmo, are used as cases in point. Fourth, in the analysis of the data, the rhythms of the imaginary and real media events are analysed. Finally, in the last section, it is argued that the events follow different narrative rhythms that have different consequences for the brand image of the cities.

2. Terror attacks as media events

Terror attacks are here conceptualised as media events to underscore the role of digital narratives in shaping the city’s brand image (cf. Nossek, 2008). According to Couldry and Hepp (2018), media events may be understood as a particular type of spatio-temporal symbolic power in a global world where boundaries between nations are shifting and complex. They define a media event as a form of mediated ritual; a situated, thickened and centred performance of mediated communication on a specific theme (Hepp and Couldry, 2010). Media events leave digital traces, which in take part in constructing the event (Couldry and Hepp, 2018). Moreover, these events work through a wide range of representations that are characterised by heterogeneity and contradictions. Couldry and Hepp (2018) further argue that media events are the emblem of contemporary globalisation and deep mediatisation. Mediatisation has a long history. Hjarvard (2009, p. 160) defines mediatisation as “the process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic”. The concept underscores the institutionalisation of the media and the dialectical relationship between the media and social institutions (e.g. family, work, politics, war, etc.). War and terror are particular susceptible to being turned into global tabloidised spectacles in news media’s quest for audience attention (Howie, 2015; Kellner, 2009; Altheide, 1997). The Vietnam War is sometimes proclaimed as the first televised war (Horton, 2011) and Baudrillard (1995) argued that the 1991 Persian Gulf War was a simulacrum of war due to its aestheticisation and visual orchestration in the media. The media, however, is ambiguous and difficult to control. Depending on closeness to the events, media can
serve both as an ally and as an enemy in times of war (Avraham, 2009). While media’s presence may be wanted in technically distanced warfare, where attacker and victim are anonymous to each other, its presence becomes more problematic in violent encounters on the battlefield. Digital media introduces another media logic. For example, terrorist attacks are commonly portrayed through the eyes of terrorism’s target audience – witnesses – who use mobile technology to document and disseminate accounts of terror (Howie, 2015; Mortensen, 2015). Today, social media – especially Twitter – and online news media platforms play an important role in the mediatisation process of terror and war. In this paper, the focus will be on these two digital media outlets for understanding narratives of terror on digital media platforms and their implication for city brand image.

2.1 Narrative rhythm and space

In order to be able to operationalise terror events as media narratives that unfold in time and space, the concept of rhythm is employed as a theoretical lens. Rhythm is a useful concept here, since digital media events are composed of spatio-temporal flows (Gotved, 2006). In addition, rhythm helps us to better understand the mediatisation of space (Edensor, 2009; Lefebvre, 2004). This paper proposes that images of cities are formed on the basis of spatio-temporal regimes of narrative rhythms. The French Philosopher and Activist Henri Lefebvre (2004) developed rhythmanalysis as an approach to study the rhythms of urban spaces in order to understand parallel, overlapping and non-synchronous times, moments and situations under the conditions of capitalism. He demonstrated that rhythms play a major role in acts and practices of civil resistance and struggles of appropriation. Rhythms transform the urban space into a place for encounters, intrigues, diplomacy, deals and negotiations (Lefebvre, 2004). Rhythms reveal the appropriation of, and struggle over, public space. Rhythms shape human experience and pervade everyday life and place; they give a temporal understanding of place and space (Edensor, 2010a, b).

The focus of rhythmanalysis, then, is on “particular formations of tempo, timing, duration, sequence, and rhythm as the mutually implicating structures of time” (Edensor, 2010a, p. 202). In particular, rhythmanalysis is useful when examining the patterning of temporalities, for example, calendric, lunar lifecycle, somatic and mechanical, whose changes are crucial to experiences and organisation of social time (Edensor, 2010a). It is important to note that a rhythm can only crystallise in relation to other rhythms and may be fast, slow and so on. A rhythm can be understood as a form of repetition bound in time and space (Lefebvre, 2004). There are two primary forms of repetition: linear and cyclical (Lefebvre, 2004). Cyclical rhythms refer to alternations and short intervals with determined frequency and new beginnings (e.g. solar rhythms, lunar rhythms, day and night). Linear rhythms refer to successions, routines and planning. Linear time is repetitious and possible to measure, and calculate. Another type of rhythm is arrhythmia, which refers to a disruption of already existing rhythms (Lefebvre, 2004; Edensor, 2009). Disruption in rhythms may be caused by interventions such as an accident or a post that changes the direction of the discussion on a digital forum. In the analysis of the data, these three rhythms are used to understand the mechanisms of media narrative events of terrorist acts in cities.

3. Methodology

Mediatised narratives shape the brand image of the city. Here, online and social media narratives are the focus of study. What differentiates online narratives from those in traditional news media is that they are disseminated faster, have a greater reach, and that it is sometimes difficult to separate the sender from the receiver. The study relies on two media events, which occurred in Sweden during 2017. The events are treated as critical incidents situated in time and space and as constituent of experiences of and actions in the city (cf. Ochberg, 2012).

The first incident concerns an alleged terror attack caused by a statement made by Donald Trump (hereafter Trump) on 19 February 2017, just before the American presidential election. Trump misleadingly implied that there had been a major terror attack in the Swedish city of Malmo. This city is a typical example of a post-industrial city, which during the past few decades
has invested in cultural events and developing a destination profile. Being a place with a history of gang crimes and violence, the city is in need of a positive image. Malmo also served as the major transit city during the refugee crisis in 2015. The rebuttal to Trump’s claims is commonly referred to as “Last night in Sweden”. The second incident concerns a deadly terrorist attack in the Swedish capital city Stockholm that occurred on 7 April 2017 when a truck entered the main tourist and pedestrian street, Drottninggatan, at full speed with the intention to massacre as many people as possible. In the attack, 5 people were killed and 15 were injured. In this paper, this incident is referred to as the “Stockholm Terrorist Attack”. The city centre of Stockholm has a strong positive image and is the heart of Swedish foreign tourism. In 2006, the capital was ranked the second with the safest city image in the Anholt-GMI City Brands Index (Anholt, 2006).

3.1 Research design and methods

The research design had the character of a mixed-methods approach (Johnson et al., 2007). Qualitative and quantitative data were collected on the open internet consisting of tweets and online news media articles covering the two aforementioned media events. Twitter is a social networking and microblogging service. Registered users can read and post short messages, so-called tweets, which are limited to 140 characters. Users are also able to upload photos, short videos or share posts. In 2017, Twitter had 330m active monthly users (Twitter, 2018). The selection of tweets was based on hashtags (#) used on Twitter for the respective event. Hashtags can be short-lived and disappear rapidly, but they can also create ongoing conversations and event movements. Using hashtags as a selection strategy is useful, since a community of followers is usually formed around the hashtag (Small, 2011). As an event evolves, one or two hashtags are typically established as the most prominent to use when commenting on the event on Twitter. The main or the most commonly used hashtags within a set of associated hashtags are sometimes called meta-hashtags (Rocheleau and Millette, 2015). These hashtags become significant markers of the event itself, and make relevant data relatively easy to access (Brun and Burgess, 2013). The tweets that followed the events after the terror attack in Stockholm were collected under #stockholmattacks, #drottninggatan and #openstockholm. It was deemed useful to track and collect tweets for an extended period of time in order to follow the development and rhythm of the events. Tweets were collected from 7 April to 31 December 2017, and also during the Remembrance Day on 7 April 2018. The tweets that were published on the events that emerged in the aftermath of Trump’s claim of terror in Malmo were collected under #lastnightinsweden from 19 February to 31 December 2017.

News articles published in online media covering the events were also collected. To get a wide selection of articles providing broad coverage and ample perspectives, online news media providing news in English from different parts of the world were selected. More specifically, some of the biggest news media platforms were selected: Yahoo News, RT, The Guardian and Al Jazeera. News articles that covered the “Last Night In Sweden” incident were collected from 19 February to 28 February 2017. News articles covering the events after the terrorist attack in Stockholm were collected from 7 April to 14 April 2017.

3.2 Analysis

The focus in the analysis was on the intensity and mechanisms of the mediatisation of city space through online news platforms and Twitter. The analysis of the media events involved identifying conflicting narratives, how they were negotiated and their implications for city image. The focus of the analysis was on examining the image of Malmo and Stockholm, respectively as a process of becoming in spatio-temporal rhythms. Rhythms were understood as regularised patterns of speech and analysed in terms of duration, intervals, sequencing, pace and so on.

An interpretive analytical approach was used in the analysis (Spiggle, 1994). Tweets and new articles were coded to develop patterns in the data that could be aggregated and synthesised into more general categories. In this process, both a priori and in vivo codes (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) were used. To arrive at a higher level of deep structure in the analysis, the researchers employed an abductive research strategy (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000), alternating between the empirical data and the theoretically informed schema. A priori codes were formed on the basis...
of the theoretical lens of rhythmanalysis. The a priori codes were based on Lefebvre’s (2004) conception of rhythmanalysis and its applications by Adam (1998). First, the narrative patterns were identified and linked to time in terms of tempo, duration, sequence and rhythm (Edensor, 2009). In this stage, counter-rhythms, arrhythmia, linear and cyclical rhythms were noted. In addition, movements, actions and repetition were noted. Thereafter, in vivo codes were identified that guided the analysis that aimed to identify different mechanisms that underpinned the different rhythms of the media events. Since rhythms are relationally constituted, attention was paid to the interplay of rhythms and how they were connected and disconnected. In the later stages of the analytical process, Adam’s (1995, p. 66) work was used to highlight how the understanding of “when, how often, how long, in what order and at what speed” are guided by “norms, habits and conventions about temporality”. In addition, the two media events were compared in order to highlight similarities and differences as well as analysing the deep structure of the data. The analytical processes resulted in the three general empirically derived phases in the processual unfolding of the events: initiation, appropriation and assimilation. Next, these phases are developed further.

4. Findings

In this section, the unfolding of the actual and imaginary events of terror are identified and analysed. Lefebvre’s (2004) rythmanalysis is used as a tool to investigate the rhythms of the media events under scrutiny. The analysis traces the emergence of the events along a timeline consisting of three phases. The findings of the study are summarised in Tables I and II, which show the typical rhythms of the unfolding of the events in the main hashtags, #lastnightinsweden and #stockholmattacks.

### Table I  The narrative rhythm in #lastnightinsweden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of tweets</th>
<th>Phase(s)</th>
<th>Dominant expressions, themes, and hashtags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 February 2017</td>
<td>3,446</td>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>What has happened? What did Trump say? International actors, jokes about Trump, praise of Trump, fake news, Swedish chef #fakenews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 February 2017</td>
<td>5,220</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Polarisation. Different international actors, jokes about Trump, Sweden’s problems, #alternativefacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 February 2017</td>
<td>3,228</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Polarisation, jokes, Sweden’s problems with migration, incidents in Swedish deprived areas, #factcheck #swedenattacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 February 2017</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>No go zones, building of a mosque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 February 2017</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Alt-right movement, racist posts, counter-arguments, social multiculturalist fake utopia #factcheck #swedenattacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 February 2017</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Alt-right movement expressions, racists posts, #swedenattacks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table II  The narrative rhythm in #stockholmattacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of tweets</th>
<th>Phase(s)</th>
<th>Dominant expressions, themes, and hashtags</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 April 2017</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>What has happened?, witness testimonials, #prayforstockholm, #prayfrosweneden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 April 2017</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>Victims, perpetrator, #openstockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 April 2017</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Polarisation, we standunited, open city empowerment, #islam, #Trump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 April 2017</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>Appropriation</td>
<td>Polarisation, honour the victims, word of wisdom, flowers at the attack site, empowerment, #Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 April 2017</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Detailed reflections about the perpetrator, earlier mistakes made by the police and the secret service, scapegoating, #police, #migpol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 April 2017</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Occasional reflections, questions, attempts to start discussion #sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responses to the alleged terror attack in Malmo that Trump referred to in a speech on 19 February 2017 were posed under #lastnightinsweden the following day. Even though the hashtag was filled with all kinds of posts, the discussion quickly became polemic. The hashtag was active during six months, but in January 2018, the rhythm of the account was slow with a low frequency of posts; most of the posts were expressions of alt-right populist views. In the tables, the intensity of postings during the first six days is included to demonstrate how it may have affected visitors’ image of the cities.

In contrast to the imaginary event, the Stockholm terrorist attack had a clear beginning and end. Whereas the imaginary event was quickly hijacked and appropriated by different agendas, the actual event was more resistant to appropriation and followed a circular rhythm.

4.1 Initiation phase

The initiation phase in the case of the imaginary media event is characterised by an intense flow of voices and fast exchange of views. The initiation phase has no distinct end, since the Twitter community never agree on what actually happened. The phase seamlessly merges into the second phase of appropriation.

#lastnightinsweden took off after a speech held by Trump at a campaign-style rally in Florida, USA. At the meeting Trump stated:

We’ve got to keep our country safe. You look at what’s happening in Germany, you look at what’s happening last night in Sweden – Sweden, who would believe this? Sweden. They took in large numbers. They’re having problems like they never thought possible (Topping, 2017).

The statement created confusion with regard to what had happened in Sweden. In response, thousands of tweets were immediately posted under #lastnightinsweden about different events that allegedly had taken place in Sweden. Questions were put to Sweden’s official Twitter account, which is controlled by a different Swede each week. The answer was widely circulated and read:

No. Nothing has happened here in Sweden. There have not been any terrorist attacks here. At all. The main news right now is about Melfest [TV-music event] (@sweden, 19 February 2017).

In addition, a Swedish former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister wrote: “Sweden? Terror attack? What has he been smoking? Questions abound” (@CarlBildt 19 February 2017). Even Trump posted a clarification: “My statement as to what’s happening in Sweden was in reference to a story that was broadcast on @FoxNews concerning immigrants & Sweden” (@realDonaldTrump, 19 February 2017). Few in the Twitter community, however, noticed Trump’s clarification, and continued to incessantly post comments, which formed a number of media narratives (see further under the section of appropriations). In contrast to the discussion on Twitter, within hours of the statement, the consensus in online news media was that nothing had happened in Sweden and that the statement originated in a Fox News documentary on immigration and crime in Malmo aired on 17 February 2017 (e.g. Al Jazeera, 2017; Fox News, 2017; The Guardian, 2017).

The initiation phase of the Stockholm terror attack is also marked by an intense flow of posts and fast dissemination of information and rumours. At the outset, for a very short period of time, the posts reveal confusion and limited knowledge about what has happened. Thereafter, it is revealed that the driver is a 39-year-old asylum seeker from Uzbekistan who sympathises with the extremist organisation ISIS. The police quickly labelled the act as terrorism (The Guardian, 2017) and captured the perpetrator on day of the attack. In the week following the attack, there were news reports worldwide. On Twitter, comments were predominately posted under #stockholmatteck. In time, however, other hashtags came to dominate the Twitter flow.

The rhythm of the initiation phase is marked by an exchange of information and facts to discover what has happened. Articles from online news media are shared and there is a strong reliance on news to solve the mystery. Intensity is also created by a large number of individuals, organisations, and probably a number of bots (mainly re-tweeting messages), contributing to the Twitter flow. The narratives in this phase follow a linear rhythm in terms of being synchronous in the shared experience of the events, and following habits and norms of how to respond and
report on them (cf. Edensor, 2009). The instantaneous and rapid flow of tweets and news also created a synchronised choreography of the events, which contributed to a collective experience of what happened. Shortly afterwards, however, the rhythm changed as other narratives entered into the discussion in the second phase of the events.

4.2 Appropriation phase

The rhythm of the second phase is characterised by a high-level of activity and struggle over meaning. In this phase, various actors appropriate the media events and make them part of different agendas. The events are merged with other narratives, hashtags and places in order to mobilise them for diverse purposes. The linearity of rhythm in the initiation phase is disrupted and counter-rhythms are introduced. Conflicts and struggles predominately occur in relation to the imaginary event where a polarisation of views is noticeable. A few hours after Trump’s statement, the first narratives critiquing his precedency emerged. These narratives revolve around different kinds “fake news” and his suspected connections to Russia. Many of the posts portray the president as a villain and joker who has been mistaken previously, for example by referring to his false claims of a massacre in Green Bowling. For example, in response to Trump, Chelsea Clinton tweeted: “What happened in Sweden last night? Did they catch the Bowling Green Massacre perpetrators?” (@chelseaclinton, 19 February 2017). The post has since then been retweeted 39,527 times. Using the Swedish incident to advance critique towards Trump is underscored by the common use of hashtags, such as #notmypresident and #alternativefacts.

The critical narratives are countered by a set of tweets and news reports in support of Trump. Over time #lastnightinsweden is appropriated as an ongoing support for Trump’s presidency and is followed by hashtags such as #trumpbally and #presidentsgiving. The narratives depict him as competent, heroic and that “he is right once again”. In support of Trump, it is common to share information about Sweden’s assumed problems with gang rapes, no-go zones, sharia laws and mass migration. Other prominent narratives that enact the imaginary media event are connected to anti-Islamic and extreme right wing groups, which use Sweden as a horror example of a multi-cultural society. There are different narratives within this group. One set of narratives discusses the specific problems in Malmo and Stockholm, such as violence, riots and migration. News articles on these problems are predominately in Swedish, but there are also examples from American and British news agencies. In particular, an incident taking place in a deprived area with a large migrant community in Stockholm is used to provide evidence of Sweden’s problems. In the incident, youths threw stones and burned cars, while the police responded with firearms. There are actors that appropriate the conversation under #lastnightinsweden in order to strengthen a pre-existing narrative that there are major problems in Sweden spiralling out of the control of the government. Another set of narratives involves ideas that Sweden and Europe are swamped with ISIS supporters who pose a threat to everyone in Europe. Tweets under hashtags such as #whitegenocide #raperefugees are deeply racist and convey negative stereotypes of Islam. Hence, #lastnightinsweden becomes a site for mobilising a far right agenda by means of Malmo and Sweden.

4.2.1 Counter-rhythms. In the case of the real terror attack in Stockholm, a different type of appropriation is used. The narratives enacting this media event are more fact-based than those performing the imagined event. For example, those in #stockholmtattack seek to provide neutral and fact-based accounts of what happened. The posts focus on disseminating information about the attack, people’s stories and experiences and follow-ups on the victims of the attack. There are also tweets expressing respect and condolences to those affected by the attack. A second notable narrative created in the #stockholmtattack was to connect the terrorist attack to other attacks in Europe. Apparently, the commentators were trying to appropriate the hashtag to create an ongoing and evolving narrative on attacks on European cities. In this appropriation, the use of hashtags such as #LondonAttacks, #NiceAttacks and #BarcelonaAttacks were important to create a sense of community and solidarity, but also to underscore that Stockholm is not the only city that has been affected. Terror attacks happen in every metropolitan city.

A third narrative that can be discerned in relation to the Stockholm attack is a distinct counter-narrative to the alt-right one by positioning Stockholm as an open city using #openstockholm. It introduces a counter rhythm in the flow of tweets by shifting attention from
the attack to the openness and solidarity of citizens in Stockholm. This is an attempt to create a more positive image of the city under attack and to deal with an image in crisis by defending Stockholm against the far right narrative. Terror should not dominate the image of the city, but is countered with love. Solidarity, resilience and love were a major counter narrative created by a large number of tweets published in #stockholmattack. The tweets use statements such as “stronger together”, and “never surrender to terrorism”:

Solidarity followed the attack in Stockholm yesterday. People used the hashtag #openstockholm to offer a ride, a meal or a place to sleep (@swedense, 8 April 2017).

#openstockholm was established shortly after the attack, to help those affected. The hashtag connects to the initiatives taken in other cities affected by terrorist attacks, such as #openberlin, and #PorteOuverte used after the attacks in Paris. Initially, the #openstockholm was used together with #stockholmattack, but later it formed a community on its own. On the first day, many tweets focussed on solidarity and hospitality. People offered free meals and a place to stay for the night if you could not return to your home. Two days after the attack, the hashtag was used to gather people for a public demonstration on not surrendering to terror. The strategic use of the hashtag is similar to Avraham and Ketter’s (2008) response strategy of recovering images of cities that are perceived as unsafe by delivering a counter message on how to tackle perceptions of unsafety.

In contrast to the imaginary event, in the actual event counter narrative dominates the conversation. There are several explanations for why this happens. Stockholm has an already established positive image based on safety (Anholt, 2006), which is stronger than images of no go zones and crime. Therefore, the negative narrative does not seem to stick to the image of Stockholm. Narratives of openness, safety, love, and resilience are more aligned with its established image, and therefore more authentic and credible.

### 4.3 Assimilation phase

The initiation and appropriation phases are relatively short. They are followed by the third phase, assimilation, which is characterised by low-key rhythmic activity. The rhythm and development are slow in comparison to the earlier phases. In the assimilation phase, the disparate narratives converge into a dominant one, establishing a consensus in the discussion. The phase is characterised by a linear rhythm in which the narrative is chronologically unfolded to comments on events occurring in real time.

In #lastnightinsweden, there are only eight to ten tweets per month posted between May and December 2017. The majority of tweets in the hashtag focus on messages related to crimes committed by immigrants, and recirculate or develop anti-Islamic and alt-right posts in the earlier phases. Hence, the tweets form a general narrative of discontent with Swedish politics and government. Similarly, in #stockholmattack there are only three to five tweets per month between May and December 2017. Hence, the narrative rhythm is slow. The majority of the tweets focus on information on and remembering similar attacks in London, Manchester, Nice, Berlin, Paris, Brussels, and St Petersburg. In this way, the narrative flow naturalises the terror attack in Stockholm by stating that it was inevitable. The #openstockholm tweets follow a similar rhythm. There are approximately 20 tweets between May and June 2017, and thereafter only one to two tweets per month. Most of the tweets concern remembrance of the victims of the terror attack. The intensity of the rhythm of the hashtag increased as the annual Remembrance Day to honour the victims of the attack approached (Nordlund, 2018). However, in comparison to the intensity of the two previous phases, the increase in the pace of the rhythm is marginal. The real event is marked by a cyclical rhythm through the ritualisation of the performance of the annual memorial.

To conclude, the assimilation phase is marked by low-key rhythmic activity. The narratives created in this phase consist of generic narratives with clear ties to the narratives established in the appropriation phase. The media event Last Night in Sweden with the hashtag #lastnightinsweden is characterised by linear time, but the media event Stockholm terror attack with the hashtags #stockholmattack and #openstockholm show signs of cyclical time.
5. Discussion and conclusion

This study contributes with novel knowledge on the role played by the fast circulation of digital narratives in the mediatisation of tourism cities. It demonstrates that city administrations need to deal with both imaginary and deadly terror attacks. Indeed, the narratives of the imaginary terror attack in a digital environment had a greater impact on the image of Malmo than the ones of the actual terror attack. Previous research on place branding shows that it is difficult to change positive images of cities and nations that have been established in the public mindset over time (Anholt, 2006). Sweden and Stockholm have traditionally had a strong brand story, even if this story nowadays is challenged by the regularity of mutated and even fake news about Sweden’s problems with migrations. By contrast, at the time of the event, Malmo city is relatively unknown internationally and already suffered from a negative image, which made the city vulnerable to extremist and populist narratives. The media attention was relatively quickly shifted from the city of Malmo to the country of Sweden. The Last Night in Sweden incident was treated as a problem on the national level and not handled by the city administration in Malmo. In the beginning, the focus is on the location where the attack is assumed to have taken place, but with time, the place is extended. Eventually, the narrative concerns Sweden. Given that it is not possible to locate the imaginary event to a specific place, the place becomes ephemeral and dynamic. The fact that no one knew what had happened and the vague image of Malmo opened up a space in which speculation and conspiracy fantasies can grow. Real and imaginary elements are woven together into different stories of what took place. By contrast, in the Stockholm attack there was no ambiguity with regards to the event. Stockholm also had a positive image onto which the populist narratives did not stick. This finding underscores the importance of developing distinct images of cities that can make them resilient to attacks and negative media narratives. This is especially important in a post-truth era in which facts are relativised and the boundaries between what is true and false are fluent. The media narratives appropriate certain places and use them as symbols for certain types of agenda. References to places seem to be necessary in order to make claims legitimate and authentic. In the actual event, however, the place is fixed. The event took place. The discussion is more focused on micro-localities exploring the truck’s path on the main tourist and shopping street Drottninggatan. Nevertheless, attempts are made to connect the attack in Stockholm to socially deprived areas in the city’s outskirts.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the unfolding of the media events follows the three chronological phases: initiation, appropriation and assimilations. The phases are interrelated and overlapping, but the duration, configuration and rhythm are different in the imaginary event and the real event, which has consequences for city image. In the actual case, the initiation phase is very short and there is joint recognition in the community of the hashtag that an attack has taken place. However, in the imaginary case, no agreement on what has actually happened is achieved in the Twitter community. Over time, the actual event was ritualised and integrated into cyclical time, while the imaginary event, characterised by counter-rhythms and arrhythmia, took on a life of its own. To conclude, this paper shows that tourism in cities is affected differently by terror attacks depending on the mediatisation of the city space and the image of the city as a tourism destination. Tourists will probably still travel, despite violent attacks, if the overall image of the tourism city is positively perceived.

References


Edensor, T. (Ed.) (2010a), Geographies of Rhythm: Nature, Place, Mobilities and Bodies, Ashgate, Farnham.


Fox News (2017), “Trump clarifies ‘Sweden’ remark, says he was referring to Fox News report”, 19 February.


Further reading


Corresponding author

Cecilia Cassinger can be contacted at: cecilia.cassinger@isk.lu.se

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
Destinations’ response to terrorism on Twitter

Danielle Barbe, Lori Pennington-Gray and Ashley Schroeder

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to understand the online communication strategies used by destination management organizations (DMOs) during a terrorist attack. In particular, this study analyzes Twitter use during seven terrorism incidents in six European cities (Paris, Brussels, Nice, Berlin, London and Barcelona) between 2015 and 2017.

Design/methodology/approach – Twitter content was collected via NCapture, a web browser extension of NVivo, one week prior to the attacks, the day of, and two weeks following to determine the timeframe in which DMOs communicated about the crisis, the types of messages being communicated, and whether these messages are effective. This study uses Coombs’ Situational Crisis Communication Theory as a guide to analyzing the effectiveness of the crisis communication strategies.

Findings – The findings of this paper indicate that DMOs are not effectively using Twitter during a terrorist attack. Few tweets relating to the attacks provided tourists with information regarding their safety, with the remaining only communicating as victims. Many DMOs went offline in the days immediately following the attacks and each DMO’s crisis communication on Twitter only lasted up to one week following the attacks.

Originality/value – This study provides insight into the ways DMOs are using social media for crisis communication. These results inform DMOs on their responsibility in communicating information during a terrorist attack. Messages of support are useful in the recovery stage, but tourists need information on how to stay safe and Twitter is often the first source people go to for information (Simon et al., 2014).

Keywords Social media, Tourism, Twitter, Crisis communication, Terrorism

The threat of terrorism in tourist destinations is currently at the highest level seen in years. In 2016, the number of terrorist attacks increased 14 percent worldwide (AON, 2017). Of all regions, Western countries are experiencing the greatest increase in terrorism, with an increase of 174 percent (AON, 2017). Many countries who experienced the greatest number of tourism arrivals in 2016 similarly saw increases in their terrorism risk levels. Particularly, France and the UK are now in the top 20 most terrorism-afflicted countries, with Germany also making its way up the list after experiencing 17 terrorist attacks in 2016 (AON, 2017). These incidents have left the tourism industry at a loss of words, wondering what can be done to prevent or mitigate the risk of terrorism.

When terrorism occurs, destination image is affected and, subsequently, the destination can experience a decrease in tourism arrivals. While there are many events that have negative consequences on tourism, terrorism is perhaps the most detrimental (Baker, 2014; Sönmez, 1998; Sönmez et al., 1999). Terrorism is not accidental, is difficult to prevent, and has a widespread affect, particularly when it is in a destination that attracts visitors from various parts of the world. Terrorism is an intentional act with the purpose striking fear for hopes of political gain (Sönmez, 1998; Sönmez et al., 1999). It is because of these characteristics that the risk or threat of terrorism to a destination has severe impacts on its tourism industry.

Strategies to reduce the effects of terrorism on a destination include incorporating a crisis management plan and increased marketing efforts to restore the destination’s image. Both of these strategies include crisis communication tactics. Crisis communication is vital when a terrorist attack occurs as tourists will be seeking information and their safety needs to be reassured.
While crises, such as terrorist attacks, are negative for a destination, they also provide an opportunity for the destination to increase their image and reputation by providing an appropriate response (Ulmer and Sellnow, 2002; Ulmer et al., 2017).

With the proliferation of social media, platforms, such as Twitter, are becoming increasingly popular channels for organizations to communicate and engage with their stakeholders. As such, social media is also being used as a tool for crisis management, enabling organizations to detect potential crises, monitor public discourse, understand public perceptions and communicate with their stakeholders during crisis events (Liu et al., 2015). Twitter, in particular, is a vital channel of communication during a crisis because it is often the first source people go to for information online (Simon et al., 2014). Twitter, as a form of “news medium,” states the headlines first and provides links to other media forms for supplementary information. Twitter is known to provide faster updates than traditional media channels, allowing it to be a better communication tool during a crisis period when the most up-to-date information is needed (Simon et al., 2014). Compared to Facebook, Twitter focuses on “what’s happening” (Hays et al., 2013) and, as a result, is considered to be a more useful tool for crisis communication.

The purpose of this study is to understand the strategies used by destination management organizations (DMOs) on Twitter during and after a terrorist attack occurs, as well as their impact. Through an analysis of seven terrorist incidents in six different European cities, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. Are DMOs using Twitter to communicate during and after a terrorist attack?
RQ2. What crisis communication strategies are being used by DMOs on Twitter?
RQ3. What is the time period for crisis communication on Twitter? In other words, how long are DMOs communicating about the incident?
RQ4. How are stakeholders engaging with the messages?
RQ5. Do the communication strategies on Twitter change in the post-crisis recovery period?

Literature review

The threat of terrorism in tourist destinations is not new and has been impacting the industry since the mid-1900s. The number of destinations being affected by terrorism, however, is increasing in recent times. Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) (2017) found that more countries experienced at least one death from terrorism in 2016 than any time in the past 17 years. At least 106 nations experienced at least one terrorist attack, with 77 countries experiencing at least one death from terrorism. The growth in terrorism-affected countries can be seen in the comparison from 2015, where 95 countries experienced terrorism and 65 experienced at least one terrorism-related fatality (IEP, 2017). In Europe and other developed countries, 2016 was the deadliest for terrorism since 1988 (excluding the September 11 attacks).

Defining terrorism is not easy as there is no universally accepted definition. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2018) defines terrorism as “the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion.” In the academic literature, terrorism is defined as the premeditated use or threat of violence against civilian targets for political, religious or ideological objectives through intimidation of a large group of people (Ganor, 2002; Enders and Sandler, 2002; Lutz and Lutz, 2013; Ranga and Pradhan, 2014). Similarly, IEP’s Global Terrorism Index (GTI) defines terrorism as “the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation” (IEP, 2017). This definition sees terrorism as not only physical, but also psychological, impacting societies for years following. Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, the GTI criteria for determining what constitutes as terrorism are used to select the destinations for analysis. These criteria include the following: the incident must be intentional; the incident must involve violence or the threat of violence; the perpetrators must be sub-national actors; the act must be aimed at attaining a political, economic, religious or social goal; the act must include an intention to coerce, intimidate or convey a message to a large audience; and the act must be outside the principles of international humanitarian law (IEP, 2017).
AON partners with The Risk Advisory Group and Continuum to provide annual reports on global terrorism and political risk. For the third year in a row, there was a net growth in political violence and more countries experienced increased risk levels than decreased (AON, 2018). The global risk level in 2017 was the highest since the 2012 Arab Spring, and increased again in 2018. These scores, however, are not reflective of the number of deaths from terrorism. In fact, since the peak in 2014, the number of deaths from terrorist attacks in 2017 declined by 22 percent (AON, 2017). The increased risk levels are instead reflective of the spread of terrorism. AON’s most recent report found that 40 percent of all countries were exposed to terrorism and sabotage risks, with 46 countries rated as having high or severe risk levels (AON, 2018).

Western countries, in particular, experienced the greatest increase in terrorism violence, with a 174 percent increase in attacks and 25 percent increase in causalities. The risk scores worsened for Germany, the UK, and the USA (AON, 2017), as well as Spain (AON, 2018). In 2016, the UK was in the top 20 most terrorism-affected countries. Germany, however, saw one of the greatest increases with a rise from two terrorist attacks in 2015 to 17 in 2016. Four of these events resulted in 77 injuries and 14 fatalities, the worse of which occurred in Berlin on December 19. In terms of terrorist attacks, Germany is now comparable to the UK, France and Belgium (AON, 2017).

Of the 189 fatalities in Western countries in 2017, 99 (52 percent) were a result of vehicle attacks. For the first time ever, the use of vehicles as improvised weapons became the most lethal form of attack in western countries (AON, 2017). The impact of these vehicle attacks can be seen in the cases of Nice, Barcelona, Berlin and London (which represent five of the seven attacks analyzed in this study). These vehicle attacks are less sophisticated, easier to execute, and less costly, making them more difficult to detect (IEP, 2017).

Terrorism in western countries tends to occur in areas that are unsecured, crowded, can yield mass casualties, and can cause high levels of disruptions (AON, 2017). These factors cause the tourism industry to be particularly vulnerable (AON, 2017). More than 80 percent of all terrorism-related fatalities in 2017 occurred in locations with high volumes of tourists, with at least 44 attacks targeting critical sectors of the tourism industry, including hotels (20), attractions (13), transportation (6), concerts (2) and others (3). In Barcelona, 73 percent of fatalities from the vehicle attack in August 2017 were foreign tourists (AON, 2018). These attacks are having severe consequences on the industry. Destinations such as Barcelona, London and Las Vegas each experienced the economic impacts of cancellations, decreased tourist arrivals and lower ticket sales after attacks in 2017 (AON, 2018).

**Terrorism and tourism**

The current increase in terrorism in tourist destinations is not unwarranted. With the purpose of terrorism being to create fear among large populations, tourist destinations provide areas where a broad international audience can be reached, forcing more media coverage, political involvement and a greater overall impact. The increase in terrorism has been attributed to modernity, globalization (Dobreva, 2015) and the growth of mass communications (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998). With the purpose of terrorism being to use violence and intimidation to achieve political aims, terrorists target multiple nationalities forcing political parties from other nations to get involved. For example, citizens of countries with large political power, such as the USA and UK, are often a target for terrorism as it requires their government to step in on the issue. Similarly, targeting citizens of multiple nationalities helps guarantee that the message of their terrorist attacks gains international media attention. By providing an area for people of multiple nationalities to gather, tourism becomes vulnerable to terrorism (Tarlow, 2014).

There is a strong inverse correlation between tourism and terrorism. While terrorism benefits from targeting tourists, tourism suffers from terrorism. Dobreva (2015) states, “as the 21st century faces tourism as the leading economy, it also faces terrorism as the leading threat.” An increase in terrorism increases tourists’ risk perceptions and, as a result, they may change their travel plans to avoid going to certain destinations or cancel their plans completely (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998). This can significantly impact the number of tourist arrivals, affecting the economy of a destination and its host community.
The decline in tourist arrivals brings with it a vast economic impact. As a major economic industry in many countries, an attack on tourist destinations negatively impacts the country’s economy. The threat of terrorism was blamed by the World Tourism Organization for $105bn in lost tourism dollars in 1985 (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998). Two months following the attacks in Paris, hoteliers reported losing hundreds of millions of dollars, and the attacks in Brussels, Belgium are estimated to cost $57.9m per day (Mindock, 2016). The increase in terrorism has caused high perceptions of risk in traveling to certain destinations and regions (Sönmez and Graefe, 1998), leading to declines in tourism numbers and a negative effect on the industry as a whole.

To combat the negative effects of terrorism, it is imperative that destinations invest in risk and crisis management programs. On a national level, counterterrorism approaches are aimed at increasing security measures and initiating policies to counter or prevent violent extremism. While these measures can benefit both residents and tourists, the industry also needs to be involved and reassure tourists about the safety of the destination. As terrorist attacks are unpredictable and immediate, strategic crisis communication aimed at tourists is pertinent in providing immediate, accurate information about how they can be safe. After an attack has occurred, successful crisis communication strategies can allow a destination to become more resilient to the negative effects that terrorism causes.

**Crisis communication in tourism**

When a crisis, such as terrorism, occurs, it is crucial that stakeholders are provided with information that ensures their safety. As the tourism industry is severely impacted by crises (Faulkner, 2001; Pför, 2006; Ritchie et al., 2004; Ritchie, 2004; Stafford et al., 2002), communication is not only critical for providing information to tourists, but also in maintaining their reputation and image. Effective crisis communication can reduce the negative impacts caused by terrorism by limiting the negative media coverage and managing perceptions during as well as after the crisis occurs (Ritchie et al., 2004). Strategic crisis communication presents an opportunity to help reposition the destination as safe, repairing the damage caused by the crisis (Coombs, 1999). Absence or lack of communication is viewed more negatively than providing information that could increase perceptions of risk, as it reduces the public’s trust (Seeger, 2006).

Crisis communication in the tourism literature is prevalent, however, few studies have focused on DMOs as a communication source (Pennington-Gray, London, Cahyanto and Klages, 2011; Pennington-Gray, Thapa, Kaplanidou, Cahyanto and McLaughlin, 2011; Pennington-Gray et al., 2009). Those that have studied DMOs focus mainly on overall crisis management and crisis planning (Avraham, 2015; Blackman et al., 2011; Blackman and Ritchie, 2008; Fall, 2004; Wang and Pizam, 2011; Young and Montgomery, 1997), very few concentrate on crisis communication by DMOs (Pennington-Gray, London, Cahyanto and Klages, 2011). There is an even greater gap in the tourism literature on crisis communication during terrorism (Avraham, 2013; Mair et al., 2016; Sönmez et al., 1999) and even fewer look particularly at the use of Twitter for crisis communication (Pennington-Gray and Schroeder, 2013). DMOs are the organization responsible for the management and marketing of a destination (World Tourism Organization, 2004). In both their role as managers and marketers of the destination, communication is vital in ensuring the destinations’ success. Additionally, due to the ability of social media to instantly distribute information to large masses (Sigala, 2011), this medium is a successful tool for crisis communication (Tourism Crisis Management Initiative, 2013).

Terrorism provides a unique frame to study crisis communication as the destination has no fault in the event and is itself a victim. This lack of responsibility for the crisis often results in a recovery-centered approach, where the destination focuses on communicating after the event occurs (Coombs, 2007a, b). However, the destination is also responsible for the safety of its guests and, therefore, needs to be proactive and provide information during the event that will increase tourists’ safety. Coombs’ (2014) Strategic Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) discusses several ways in which an organization can communicate during a crisis. SCCT uses an attribution approach to understand and recommend a strategic crisis response. This study employs SCCT to understand the strategies used by DMOs on Twitter.
SCCT suggests that there are three components which are required when communicating a strategic crisis response. First, instructing information is used to explain the crisis to stakeholders. Second, adjusting information assists stakeholders in coping with the crisis. Finally, reputation management is the actual response used by the organization to address the crisis in an attempt to protect reputational assets (Coombs, 2014). Reputation management has four postures: denial, diminishment, rebuilding and bolster (Coombs, 2014). Each contains common strategies used in crisis response. Denial is an attempt to deny responsibility. Diminishment occurs when excuses and justifications are made by the organization. Rebuilding is an organization’s apology for a crisis and/or allocation of some form of compensation. Lastly, bolstering occurs when the organization portrays themselves as a victim (Coombs, 2014).

Social media have significantly changed crisis communication practices (Schroeder et al., 2013). With more than 1.59bn social media users (Chaffey, 2016), information can be spread at a faster rate and to larger audiences than ever before. As an electronic word-of-mouth medium, information on social media are seen as more reliable and has substantially longer carry-over than traditional information sources (i.e. news coverage) (Trusov et al., 2009). Social media enables real-time communication between those providing information and those seeking it (Sigala, 2011), allowing it to be an important tool for crisis communication.

Microblogging platforms, such as Twitter, are often the first source people go to for information online. Twitter, as a form of “news medium,” states the headlines first and provides links to other media forms to provide supplementary information. Previous literature has shown that Twitter is a prominent tool during terrorism. For example, Simon et al. (2014) found that during the Westgate Mall terrorist attack in Nairobi, Kenya, emergency responders, government agencies and security personnel each used Twitter as a predominant way to communicate information while the events were unfolding. Similarly, Cheong and Lee (2011) found that for both the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India and Jakarta, Indonesia, Twitter was the first medium that reported news of the incident. Critical to both these cases is the need for not only timely, but also accurate information. In the study of Mumbai and Jakarta, information was led by citizens (not official sources) and, therefore, the risk of spreading misinformation to the public is greater (Wendling et al., 2013). When a crisis occurs in a tourist destination, it is critical that information from the DMO is first, honest, and accurately conveyed to the visitor. Particularly, when that information involves specific instructions about area evacuations, safe locations, hotlines or emergency contact numbers.

As DMOs play a key role in the crisis management of a destination, assessing their online communication strategies during a terrorist attack will provide greater insight into their effectiveness in maintaining tourists’ safety. Hays et al. (2013) explored DMOs’ social media use and categorized this use into multiple categories, namely, customer service, promotion, contest-related, request for user-generated content and information providing. The researchers used both Facebook and Twitter and found that although the purpose of each platform differs, DMOs posted similarly on each platform, leading to ineffective social media strategies (Hays et al., 2013). The primary strategies used by DMOs on social media were promotional and marketing.

Between 2015 and 2017, six major tourist destinations experienced a total of seven terrorist attacks that each resulted in a minimum of 5 fatalities and 50 casualties. The Twitter accounts of these DMOs were analyzed to better understand their online crisis communications strategies.

**Background of cases**

**November 2015 attacks in Paris, France.** On Friday, November 13, 2015, a series of coordinated terrorist attacks unfolded in Paris, France. All of the attacks began between 21:00 and 22:00 Central European Time and consisted of three groups of three men each. In the first attack, three suicide bombers struck outside the Stade de France football stadium during a match in which French President Francois Hollande was present. Four deaths, including the three suicide bombers, resulted (Parlapiano et al., 2015). Several mass shootings and a suicide bombing followed where attackers targeted people outside restaurants and cafes (Vidon and Stanglin, 2015). The largest of these attacks occurred at the Bataclan theatre, where a death metal concert
was taking place. Three men entered the venue and began shooting at an audience of approximately 1,500 people. The attack lasted 20 minutes and the attackers then took 60 to 100 hostages (Phipps and Rawlinson, 2015).

The attacks resulted in a total of 137 fatalities and 413 injuries, 29 of whom were foreign nationals. France is consistently the most visited tourist destination in the world, with the 84.5m international arrivals in 2015 (World Tourism Organization, 2017). These terrorist attacks amounted to about €2bn in losses, largely from consumer spending and tourism (Estrada and Koutronas, 2016).

March 2016 attacks in Brussels, Belgium. On the morning of March 22, 2016, three coordinated suicide bombings occurred in Brussels, Belgium. Two of the attacks took place in the check-in area of Brussels Airport and one took place at Maalbeek metro station, near the European Commission headquarters. The attacks resulted in 35 fatalities, including the perpetrators, and 340 injuries (Drozdiak et al., 2016). Over half (56.2 percent) of the deaths were foreign nationals, including four Americans. In the aftermath of these security incidents, Belgium saw a 10 percent decrease in tourist arrivals in 2016 (World Tourism Organization, 2017). According to the Visit Brussels’s (2016) annual report, the city experience significant losses from March until the end of summer and did not return to normal until October.

July 2016 attacks in Nice, France. On July 14, 2016, during the Bastille Day celebrations in the popular Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France, a 19 tonne cargo truck traveling at around 90 km/h (56 mph) drove onto the pedestrian walkway killing 86 people and injuring 458 others (Breeden, 2016). Of the 86 fatalities, 43 (50 percent) were nationals of 18 countries other than France (Wright, 2016). IEP (2017) listed the attack in Nice as one of the top 20 most fatal incidents worldwide in 2016. This attack marked the beginning of a trend of vehicular attacks which occurred in the remaining incidents to be discussed.

Nice is the second most popular tourist destination in France, after Paris (Meet in Nice, 2018). The city receives around 5m visitors annually. While the economic impact of the attack in Nice alone is unknown, France experienced a 2 percent decrease in tourism arrivals in 2016 (World Tourism Organization, 2017).

December 2016 attacks in Berlin, Germany. On the evening of December 19, 2016, a truck drove deliberately through a Christmas Market in Berlin, Germany, marking the deadliest terrorist attack in Germany since 1980. A total of 12 people were killed and 56 injured (Eddy, 2016). Of the 12 victims, five were foreign nationals. Berlin is the third most popular European tourist destination, following London and Paris, attracting over 31m overnight visitors a year (Visit Berlin, 2018). Despite the terrorist attack, Berlin saw a 1.8 percent increase in visitors in 2017 (Visit Berlin, 2018).

March and June 2017 attacks in London, UK. On March 22, 2017, a car drove into pedestrians on the walkway along the side of Westminster Bridge in London, UK. The vehicle then drove into New Palace yard outside Westminster Palace, the seat of the British Parliament, where the perpetrator fatally stabbed a police officer before being shot by another officer and dying at the scene (Lawless et al., 2017). A total of six people died, including the attacker, and 49 were injured. Many of those injured were foreign nationals. Shortly after, on June 3, 2017, a similar incident occurred in which a van drove into pedestrians on London Bridge. After crashing, the three perpetrators then entered the popular Borough Market area where they began stabbing people in and around restaurants before being shot and killed by armed police officers (Dodd, 2017). The attack resulted in a total of 8 fatalities and 48 injuries, of which only one was of British citizenship. The remaining victims were Australian, Canadian, French and Spanish (Davies, 2017).

The UK is the second most popular tourist destination in the world in terms of tourism arrivals, following France (World Tourism Organization, 2017). As a result of increased terrorism threats, London’s attractions industry has suffered losses in ticket sales (AON, 2018).

August 2017 attacks in Barcelona, Spain. On August 17, 2017, another vehicle attack took place, this time along the busy tourism area of La Rambla in Barcelona, Spain. A van drove into pedestrians, resulting in 13 fatalities and 130 injuries. Several other attacks occurred nearby on the same day; a
vehicle attack nearby Cambrils, an explosion in the town of Alcanar and a police shootout in Subirats. The total result of the attack included 16 fatalities and 152 injuries (Bergen and Cobain, 2017). A majority of the deceased were visitors to Barcelona. Spain is the world’s third largest destination in terms of international arrivals (World Tourism Organization, 2017). According to a report by Euromonitor International (Bremner, 2017), the attack in Barcelona is likely to lead to a loss of 200,000 tourists. While Spain welcomed a record breaking 81.1bn tourists in 2017, Catalonia, the region where Barcelona resides, experienced a decline in the last three months of the year (Pellicer, 2018).

Each of these events were claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant or considered an Islamist terrorist attack. Although differing in severity, number of casualties and the type of attack, the motive of terrorism was present and resulted in severe psychological effects worldwide and economic consequences.

Method

To achieve the purpose of this study, the Twitter accounts belonging to the official DMOs of six major European tourism cities were included in a content analysis. NVIVO NCapture collected all tweets one week prior to the attack, the day of the attack and two weeks following the attack. Two weeks were used because some DMOs continued to mention the terrorism event over one week after its occurrence and many went completely offline (did not use Twitter) and did not resume social media activity until the week following the attack.

The terrorist attacks analyzed in this study were selected based on three criteria: the location in which the attack occurred must be a well-known tourist destination, seeing over 1m tourist arrivals in 2016; the incident must be characterized as terrorism (mass shootings are not included in this study); the incident must be considered large in scale, having resulted in at least 5 fatalities and 50 injured and garnered global media coverage. Each of these criteria were used to identify situations in which crisis communication to tourists is critical for ensuring their safety. Using AON’s Political Risk map, seven terrorist attacks were identified in six tourism cities: Paris, Brussels, Nice, Berlin, London and Barcelona.

All of the tweets from each of the DMO Twitter accounts one week before, during, and two weeks after the terrorist attack were coded and content analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. All tweets were categorized by whether or not they were related to the terrorist attack. Tweets that were related to the attack were then categorized using Coombs’ (2014) SCCT to assess the crisis message component (instructing information, adjusting information and responding). If the message was a form of response, then the four response strategies were analyzed (denial, diminishment, rebuilding and bolstering).

During preliminary analysis, it was found that the SCCT strategies were insufficient in understanding the communication methods used during a terrorism event. As mentioned, terrorism is a unique situation where the organization, or destination, is viewed as a victim. Therefore, the bolstering strategy was used when the DMOs communicated as a victim. However, many of the response strategies also included information and updates on closures of attractions, events, airports or other information for tourists. These were directly related to the incident, but providing information and updates is not a recovery strategy in the SCCT framework. Therefore, the coding scheme developed by Hays et al. (2013) in analyzing the use of Twitter by DMOs was used to understand the different types of messages (promotion, information, customer service, requesting content, contest and congratulatory). These categories were used to code all tweets, including those unrelated to the terrorist attack, to help understand how the Twitter strategies changed before-during-and after the terrorism event. Engagement with the posts (likes, retweets and comments) was also analyzed, as well as the content (use of hashtags, links, photos/videos and mention of other users).

Results

As of October 2017, each of the DMOs actively used Twitter and engaged with at least 10,000 followers (Table I). A total of 745 tweets were collected from the DMOs’ Twitter accounts.
London’s Twitter account was the most active, with 224 tweets within the study period for the June 2017 attack and 155 tweets within the study period for the March 2017 attack. Berlin (n = 54) and Nice (n = 55) were the least active. As shown in Table II, most of the content from the DMOs were original posts, with the exception of Visit Barcelona who retweeted as often as they posted original content.

In regards to the message content, 472 posts (63.4 percent) contained at least one hashtag, 382 posts (51.3 percent) mentioned (@_____) other Twitter users, 465 (62.4 percent) included a web link to external content and 632 (84.8 percent) included a photo or video. The most used hashtags were related to the city, with #London and #Brussels both being used over 50 times. Nice Tourisme used hashtags and photos/videos the least. However, 60 percent of their tweets contained a link (Table III).

Using the Hays et al. (2013) message-type classifications, most of the posts were promotional (79.5 percent), followed by information (8.2 percent) and customer service (7.4 percent). Over half (57.3 percent) of all information-related messages were from Paris CVB. Similarly, both Nice Tourisme (29.1 percent) and Visit Brussels (27.2 percent) used more customer service strategies on Twitter than the other DMOs. In June, Visit London demonstrated strong promotional efforts.

Table I  Twitter background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name of DMO</th>
<th>Handle</th>
<th>Joined date</th>
<th>Number of tweets (000s)</th>
<th>Number of followers (000s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Paris CVB</td>
<td>@ParisJetaime</td>
<td>June, 2009</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels</td>
<td>Visit Brussels</td>
<td>@Visitbrussels</td>
<td>February, 2009</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>Nice Tourisme</td>
<td>@Nice_Tourisme</td>
<td>March, 2011</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>Visit Berlin</td>
<td>@visitberlin</td>
<td>January, 2009</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>Visit London</td>
<td>@visitlondon</td>
<td>April, 2009</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>578.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barcelona</td>
<td>Visit Barcelona</td>
<td>@VisitBCN_EN</td>
<td>July, 2010</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II  Number of tweets in study period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DMO</th>
<th>Original posts n</th>
<th>RTs n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Contains Hashtag n</th>
<th>Contains link n</th>
<th>Photo/video n</th>
<th>Total n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris CVB</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Brussels</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice Tourisme</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Berlin</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (March)</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (June)</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Barcelona</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table III  Number of tweets total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DMO</th>
<th>Contains Hashtag n</th>
<th>Contains link n</th>
<th>Photo/video n</th>
<th>Total n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris CVB</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Brussels</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice Tourisme</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Berlin</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (March)</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (June)</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Barcelona</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(89.7 percent of all of Visit London’s posts during the June study period were promotional). The DMO also used their Twitter the most frequently for requesting user-generated content (85.8 percent) and contests (61.5 percent):

**RQ1. Are DMOs using Twitter to communicate during and after a terror attack?**

Of the 745 total tweets collected, 87 (11.7 percent) were related to a terror attack. Paris CVB had the most terrorism-related tweets (35.6 percent), followed by Nice Tourisme (26.4 percent) and Visit Brussels (19.5 percent). As shown in Table IV, a majority of the DMOs’ tweets about the attacks (85.1 percent) were in the days after the incident had occurred. Paris, Brussels and Barcelona were the only DMO accounts who communicated about the crisis as it was occurring:

**RQ2. What crisis communication strategies are being used by DMOs on Twitter?**

Consistent with the finding that a majority of terrorism-related messages took place after the terrorist attacks, the most frequently used SCCT strategy was “Response” (86.2 percent). Instructing information (12.6 percent) was used during the attacks to provide information on tourist safety. The SCCT strategy of adjusting information was used once (1.1 percent). Of the tweets that used the response strategy, 48 (65 percent) were bolstering messages. In these cases, the DMO communicated as a victim. For example, Paris CVB tweeted “Moved by the support from all around the world. Thank you dear friends.”

Only three of the five message-type classifications were used in the DMOs’ terrorism-related tweets: information (44.5 percent), customer service (35.6 percent) and promotional (19.5 percent). Many of the SCCT response strategy tweets provided information to tourists. Examples include:

- #Brussels #museums & cultural institutions are back on track! https://visit.brussels/en/ @BrusselsMuseums #Bruxelles. @VisitBrussels
- RT @BarcelonaInfoEN: Our Call Centre is answering all those affected by the #TerroristAttack in Barcelona (24 hours) 932853832 y 932853834. @VisitBCN_EN

Similarly, many DMOs also used Twitter to provide customer service to their followers in relation to the terrorist attack. For example, Nice Tourisme tweeted “@jacketvpsychic @touristissimo Hi Jackie thank you very much for your love and support.” The differences based on the message type for terrorism-related tweets and non-terrorism-related tweets were significant ($\chi^2 (5) > 317.386, p < 0.001$) for information and customer service messages, with more than expected present for terrorism-related messages.

In terms of characteristics of the terrorism-related messages, 40.5 percent contained hashtags, 43.7 percent mentioned other users in the tweet, 28.7 percent contained a link and 37.9 percent contained a photo or video. $\chi^2$ analysis indicated that there were significant differences between messages that were related to the attacks and those that were not in terms of their use of hashtags ($\chi^2 (1) > 22.691, p < 0.001$), links ($\chi^2 (1) > 47.633, p < 0.001$) and photos/videos ($\chi^2 (1) > 168.397, p < 0.001$). Each of these were included less in terrorism-related tweets than expected:

**RQ3. What is the time period for crisis communication on Twitter?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DMO</th>
<th>During n</th>
<th>During %</th>
<th>After n</th>
<th>After %</th>
<th>Total n</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris CVB</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Brussels</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice Tourisme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Berlin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (March)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (June)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Barcelona</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>74</strong></td>
<td><strong>85.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of the DMOs resumed their regular Twitter activity within five to seven days following the attack (Table V). The attack in Paris occurred on November 13, 2015. Between then and November 18, 2015, Paris CVB tweeted a total of 34 times and 29 (85.3 percent) of those posts were related to the attack. Between November 14 and November 18, all but one of Paris CVB's tweets were terrorism related. On November 19, six days following the attack, the DMO began resuming their regular activities with four tweets, all unrelated to the terrorist attack. Similarly, from the day the attack occurred in Brussels until March 27, all of Visit Brussels’ posts were terrorism related. On March 29, one week later, Visit Brussels stopped tweeting about the attack.

In contrast to the aforementioned DMOs, Nice did not tweet about the crisis on the day that it occurred. However, all but one of their tweets were terrorism related from July 15 to July 21. The account then went silent on July 22, eight days after the attack. When they returned on July 25, they tweeted once about the attack and then the following tweets were no longer terrorism related. Likewise, Berlin did not post about the terrorist attack on the day that it occurred. However, the day following the attack, Visit Berlin tweeted twice. Both tweets were terrorism related. The account

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DMO</th>
<th>Date of tweets</th>
<th>Crisis-related message</th>
<th>Unrelated</th>
<th>Related</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris CVB</td>
<td>Before November 6, 2015 to November 12, 2015</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During November 13, 2015</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) November 14, 2015 to November 18, 2015</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) November 19, 2015 to November 27, 2015</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Brussels</td>
<td>Before March 15, 2016 to March 20, 2016</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During March 22, 2016</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) March 23, 2016 to March 27, 2016</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) March 29, 2016 to April 5, 2016</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice Tourisme</td>
<td>Before July 7, 2016 to July 13, 2016</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During July 14, 2016</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) July 15, 2016 to July 21, 2016</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) July 25, 2016 to July 28, 2016</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Berlin</td>
<td>Before December 12, 2016 to December 18, 2016</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During December 19, 2016</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) December 20, 2016</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) December 24, 2016 to January 2, 2017</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (March)</td>
<td>Before March 15, 2017 to March 21, 2017</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During March 22, 2017</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) March 27, 2017</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) March 28, 2017 to April 5, 2017</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit London (June)</td>
<td>Before May 27, 2017 to June 2, 2017</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During June 3, 2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) June 4, 2017 to June 5, 2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) June 9, 2017 to June 13, 2017</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Barcelona</td>
<td>Before August 10, 2017 to August 16, 2017</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During August 17, 2017</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 1) August 18, 2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After (week 2) August 22, 2017 to August 31, 2017</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>658</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was not used again until December 24, when an unrelated message was tweeted. Likely due to the holiday season, Visit Berlin’s account was not used again until December 31.

The first attack in London occurred on March 22, 2017. Visit London’s Twitter account went silent for four days following the attack. Then, on March 27, they tweeted seven times. Only one tweet was terrorism related. This was the only terrorism-related message by Visit London. The response to the second attack in London (on June 3, 2017) was very similar. However, the DMO’s crisis communication strategies were slightly improved. Visit London did not tweet on the day of the attack, but they tweeted four times in the following two days. All of these tweets were terrorism related. Then the account fell silent again for three days. When the account resumed activity on June 9, 2 of their 11 messages were terrorism related. Thereafter, all messages were unrelated to the terrorist attack.

Finally, the attack in Barcelona occurred on August 17, 2017. On this day, Visit Barcelona tweeted about the attack three times. Another three tweets were posted the following day, before falling silent from August 19 to August 21. On August 22, the DMO tweeted once about the attack. On August 23, one week after the attack, regular (non-terrorism related) Twitter activity resumed.

**RQ4.** How are stakeholders engaging with the messages?

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare engagement in DMO tweets related to the attacks and tweets that were unrelated. Engagement was measured through the number of retweets, likes and comments. There was a significant difference in the scores for the number of retweets and likes. The mean number of retweets was significantly greater for tweets related to the attacks ($M = 44.5$, $SD = 62.6$) than tweets unrelated to the attacks ($M = 17.9$, $SD = 21.9$); $t(741) = −7.864, p = 0.00$). The mean number of likes was also significantly greater for tweets related to the attacks ($M = 63.3$, $SD = 105.0$) than tweets unrelated to the attacks ($M = 46.3$, $SD = 62.4$); $t(741) = −2.158, p = 0.03$). When assessing the differences in engagement across the SCCT strategies, MANOVA indicated that the differences were not statistically significant: $F (6, 160) = 2.5, p = 0.024$; Wilk’s $Λ = 0.8$, partial $η^2 = 0.08$.

To understand whether user engagement with the DMO’s Twitter content changed following the attacks, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare measures of engagement before, during, and after the attacks. The homogeneity of variance assumption was tested and considered not satisfied, as Levene’s $F$-tests were statistically significant ($p > 0.05$) for both the number of retweets and likes. Therefore, Welch tests were used to test significance. These tests indicated that although there were differences in the variances between groups, the differences in the mean number of likes and the mean number of retweets were statistically significant before, during, and after the attacks. Specifically, the mean number of retweets ($F(2,34.3) = 16.4, p = 0.000$) was significantly greater during the attacks than before and after, while the mean number of retweets after the attacks was significantly greater than before. Interestingly, the mean number of likes ($F(2,36.4) = 3.8, p = 0.032$) were significantly greater after the attacks than before. Although the mean number of likes were greater during the attack, the results were not statistically significant when compared against those before or after:

**RQ5.** Do the communication strategies on Twitter change in the post-crisis recovery period?

Following a crisis, destinations may engage in strategies to reduce the impact of the crisis. To understand if the DMOs in this study altered their messaging strategies post-crisis, $χ^2$ analyses were conducted to test differences between message type and stage of the event. Terrorism-related messages were excluded from this analysis to provide a better understanding of the differences in Twitter communication before the terrorist attacks and after. There were significant differences between the observed and expected variables before and after an attack ($χ^2 (10) = 31.5, p < 0.001$). Information and customer service tweets were lower than expected after the attack. Promotional and congratulatory tweets were higher than expected after the attack. Table VI displays the differences in messages for each DMO.

**Discussion**

The results show that terrorism-affected DMOs are using Twitter for crisis communication. However, some accounts were used more effectively than others. Although Visit London had the
greatest number of tweets within the study period for both events studied, they were the least active when it was related to the attack. Paris CVB, on the other hand, was the most effective at communicating during and after a terrorist attack. Surprisingly, looking at the background of Paris CVB’s Twitter account, they had the least number of total tweets as of October 2017. This indicates that they were less active on the social media platform than the other DMOs. However, during the study period, Paris CVB tweeted the most and had the most terrorism-related tweets. Visit Berlin was the least active in the study period. However, the terrorist attacks in Berlin took place so close to the holiday season that this may not be attributed to lack of communication, but lack of available personnel.

Many of the DMOs posted original content within the study period, with the exception of Barcelona. A deeper look into the content of the tweets shows that a majority of Paris CVB’s retweets were during the terrorist attacks – sharing information posted by the Paris Police on

### Table VI  Message type differences pre- and post-terror attack

| DMO twitter account | Type of message | Before | | | | | After | | | | | | Total | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|                     |                 | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Paris 2015 Attack   | Customer service | 0 | 0.0 | 3 | 8.1 | 3 | 4.5 |
|                     | Promotional     | 19 | 65.5 | 26 | 70.3 | 45 | 68.2 |
|                     | Contest         | 2 | 6.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 3.0 |
|                     | Request of UGC  | 1 | 3.4 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.5 |
|                     | Information     | 6 | 20.7 | 5 | 13.5 | 11 | 16.7 |
|                     | Congratulatory   | 1 | 3.4 | 3 | 8.1 | 4 | 6.1 |
|                     | Total           | 29 | 100.0 | 37 | 100.0 | 66 | 100.0 |
| Brussels 2016 Attack| Customer service | 6 | 16.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 10.9 |
|                     | Promotional     | 29 | 78.4 | 17 | 94.4 | 46 | 83.6 |
|                     | Contest         | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 5.6 | 1 | 1.8 |
|                     | Request of UGC  | 1 | 2.7 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.8 |
|                     | Information     | 1 | 2.7 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.8 |
|                     | Total           | 37 | 100.0 | 18 | 100.0 | 55 | 100.0 |
| Nice 2016 Attack    | Customer service | 1 | 4.3 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 3.1 |
|                     | Promotional     | 20 | 87.0 | 8 | 88.9 | 28 | 87.5 |
|                     | Information     | 2 | 8.7 | 1 | 11.1 | 3 | 9.4 |
|                     | Total           | 23 | 100.0 | 9 | 100.0 | 32 | 100.0 |
| Berlin 2016 Attack  | Customer service | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 25.0 | 1 | 1.9 |
|                     | Promotional     | 42 | 87.5 | 2 | 50.0 | 44 | 84.6 |
|                     | Information     | 5 | 10.4 | 1 | 25.0 | 6 | 11.5 |
|                     | Congratulatory   | 1 | 2.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 1.9 |
|                     | Total           | 48 | 100.0 | 4 | 100.0 | 52 | 100.0 |
| London March 2017 Attack | Customer service | 3 | 3.3 | 2 | 16.2 | 5 | 2.2 |
|                     | Promotional     | 86 | 93.5 | 54 | 94.7 | 140 | 94.0 |
|                     | Contest         | 2 | 2.2 | 1 | 1.8 | 3 | 2.0 |
|                     | Congratulatory   | 1 | 1.1 | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.7 |
|                     | Total           | 92 | 100.0 | 57 | 100.0 | 149 | 100.0 |
| London June 2017 Attack | Customer service | 3 | 3.0 | 2 | 1.6 | 5 | 2.2 |
|                     | Promotional     | 86 | 85.1 | 109 | 89.3 | 195 | 87.4 |
|                     | Contest         | 5 | 5.0 | 5 | 4.1 | 10 | 4.5 |
|                     | Request of UGC  | 7 | 6.9 | 5 | 4.1 | 12 | 5.4 |
|                     | Congratulatory   | 0 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 0.4 |
|                     | Total           | 101 | 100.0 | 122 | 100.0 | 223 | 100.0 |
| Barcelona 2017 Attack | Customer Service | 2 | 5.7 | 1 | 2.2 | 3 | 3.8 |
|                     | Promotional     | 33 | 94.3 | 44 | 97.8 | 77 | 96.3 |
|                     | Total           | 35 | 100.0 | 45 | 100.0 | 80 | 100.0 |
| Total               | Customer Service | 15 | 4.1 | 9 | 3.1 | 24 | 3.7 |
|                     | Promotional     | 315 | 86.3 | 260 | 89.0 | 575 | 87.5 |
|                     | Contest         | 9 | 2.5 | 7 | 2.4 | 16 | 2.4 |
|                     | Request of UGC  | 9 | 2.5 | 5 | 1.7 | 14 | 2.1 |
|                     | Information     | 14 | 3.8 | 7 | 2.4 | 21 | 3.2 |
|                     | Congratulatory   | 3 | 0.8 | 4 | 1.4 | 7 | 1.1 |
|                     | Total           | 365 | 100.0 | 292 | 100.0 | 657 | 100.0 |
closures and areas to avoid. This is another way in which Paris engaged in effective crisis communication. By sharing safety information from official accounts, the credibility and trust in the messages, as well as in Paris CVB are increased (Westerman et al., 2014). Barcelona also retweeted (shared) information from official sources related to the attack. However, a majority of their retweets (like the other DMOs) were promotional – sharing photos and videos of the destination posted by others.

In regards to the SCCT strategy used, it is not surprising that a majority of Twitter accounts’ communication utilized a “response” strategy and bolstering. While the destination is a victim of the attack and communicating their gratitude for support from around the world is an appropriate strategy following the attacks and in the recovery stage, the lack of instructing information and adjusting information during the attacks indicates that there is still room for improvement. Proactive, real-time communication to tourists will not only help in ensuring their safety, but will also assist the destination in recovering faster because the visitors will feel that the destination is making their safety a priority (Mair et al., 2016).

On Twitter, hashtags act as a keyword link for users to narrow down search about a specific topic (Kwak et al., 2010). When tweets were not related to the terrorist attacks, the DMOs successfully used hashtags with their destination name or other promotional hashtags to attract visitors to their content. However, the lack of hashtags in content relating to the attacks is problematic, especially when the tweets contain important information and instructions on how tourists can remain safe. The lack of hashtag use can make it difficult for the tourist to locate this information online, particularly when they are not already following the DMO’s Twitter account, as hashtags have been found to increase the likelihood of reaching a wider audience (MacKay et al., 2017).

For tourists who may not speak the language of the destination, finding and understanding information may be difficult. While official police and security accounts may provide more detailed and timely information, DMOs can and should share this information and provide translations for tourists who are unable to understand the host destination’s language. Similarly, when searching about a topic, the information may be cluttered with unofficial sources. This may result in obtaining misinformation. For example, during the Westgate terrorist attacks, the many different accounts on Twitter each provided different information. This made it difficult for the public to follow and led to security breaches and misinformation being disseminated to the public (Simon et al., 2014).

Twitter is restricted in the amount of characters a message can contain. Having a link to external content from an official information source (or even to the DMO’s website) allows the source to provide more details and would be an effective way to surpass the character restrictions. DMOs should consider having a webpage where they can direct tourists from social media so that they can provide information on safe locations, emergency hotlines, closures, protective measures and other critical safety information.

The timeline of crisis communication on Twitter provided valuable insight as to what is currently deemed an appropriate amount of time to communicate about a terrorist attack. Each of the accounts used roughly the same one-week span before they returned to their normal Twitter activity. This is likely attributed to the “here and now” essence of Twitter (MacKay et al., 2017), as the platform is centered on the exchange of real-time messages that create immediate awareness of issues (Kietzmann et al., 2011). However, many DMOs violated this real-time immediacy of Twitter when they did not tweet in the days following the attacks; thereby providing no information to tourists.

A major finding was the increased engagement the DMOs received on their Twitter content following the attacks. Both the average number of retweets and likes per post increased for the terrorism-related messages and for the non-terrorism-related messages following the attacks. This could be a result of increased followers on the DMO’s Twitter account or increased exposure from users searching for updates on the attacks and coming across the DMO’s content. This increased exposure provides an advantage to the DMOs in their post-crisis recovery efforts, as they can utilize marketing tactics which highlight the safety of the destination and attempt to lure visitors. This ultimately has the potential of limiting the negative outcomes of terrorism on the affected destination.
Conclusion

Overall, more negatives than positives were found in the analysis of DMO’s Twitter use in times surrounding terrorist attacks. While DMOs actively communicated about the crisis, the strategy most commonly used reflected a more reactive approach to crisis communication than a proactive one. The lack of communication by several of the DMOs immediately following the attacks reflected their reactive responses. Although times surrounding a terrorist attack are difficult and the destination may be apprehensive in discussing the attacks to avoid negative consequences on their image, not communicating may show lack of concern or consideration on part of the destination. In order to address this reactive approach, DMOs should prepare themselves for not only the management of the destination during a terrorist attack, but also to communicate effectively with tourists who are in their city at the time of the attack. DMOs need to have crisis communication plans prepared prior to the event of a terrorist attack. They should consider who should be responsible for communicating, when and how often they should be communicating, where the information should be communicated, and what types of basic information tourists might need (e.g., contact information for the DMO, emergency services, maps of the affected area, etc.). By preparing before a terrorist attack occurs, it is more likely that the affected DMO will be among the first to respond when an attack does occur (which is a hallmark of effective crisis communication).

This study also shows that social media can be an effective tool for real-time communication in the event of a crisis. However, DMOs first need to realize the benefits that social media platforms offer in providing real-time, immediate communication that can reach large audiences. In the event of a terrorist attack, social media can be extremely efficient in proactively communicating to tourists because it increases the likelihood of the message being received. This is particularly true if hashtags are used and if the DMO retweets information from other sources that are deemed as being credible (e.g. local police, government, etc.).

A limitation of this study was the analysis of one social media platform. Future research should consider the use of multiple platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to assess whether different strategies are used on different platforms. Future research should also explore the effects of previous exposure to terrorism on DMOs’ crisis communication tactics. In this study, Paris CVB was the most effective in communicating. However, the destination has been exposed to terrorism in the past and may have a more concrete crisis communication strategy in place as a result. Exploring the influence of past exposure to terrorism on crisis communication could provide insight into whether DMOs have adapted their practices based on their previous experience. Lastly, future research should explore if and how different stakeholders in the destination may use a consistent message when a terrorist attack occurs in their city. This research should focus on the crisis communication network structure and include both stakeholders within and outside of the tourism industry.

References


Corresponding author
Danielle Barbe can be contacted at: dbarbe@ufl.edu

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
Plan for the worst, hope for the best? Exploring major events related terrorism and future challenges for UK event professionals

Daniel Baxter, Jenny Flinn and Lucrezia Flurina Picco

Abstract
Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate major event related terrorism and the resulting challenges that event professionals may face when hosting major events in cities as part of a destination marketing strategy.

Design/methodology/approach – The research was based in the UK due to the significant rise in terrorist activities that have taken place in its urban cities in recent years. The exploratory nature of this study utilised semi-structured interviews with UK event professionals, enabling a preliminary, in-depth investigation of the challenges that events professionals face as a result of major event related terrorism.

Findings – The research findings identify three challenges faced by event professionals when organising major events: knowledge and understanding in relation to major event related terrorism; the impact of major event related terrorism in terms of responsibility and accountability; and managing for major event related terrorism in budgetary terms.

Research limitations/implications – The research is limited to the UK, other destinations will pose their own unique challenges when hosting and managing events. It is suggested that this research be evaluated against similar studies in other destinations. This is a preliminary study and each of the topics identified within the findings warrant further exploration in their own right.

Originality/value – The paper offers an insight into the challenges faced by event professionals in the UK when delivering major events as part of a destination marketing strategy. With the increase in major event related terrorism in cities the findings of this research are of relevance not only to event professionals but anyone with a role in destination and tourism development.

Keywords Cities, Urban, Challenges, Terrorism, Event professionals, Major events

Paper type Research paper

Introduction
In an increasingly homogenised world, cities, regions and nation states often seek to develop a portfolio of cultural assets as a means to create and enhance their destination image; positioning themselves in an ever competitive marketplace (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). Major events regularly form a central part of this portfolio, acting as a showcase for the destination. They act as drivers of tourism, bringing large numbers of people to the host city and provide a unique opportunity to market the destination to a potentially global audience through the media attention that they attract (Dredge and Whitford, 2011; Raj et al., 2013). Event professionals therefore play an increasingly important role in contributing to the overall image of the city. However, while events bring numerous benefits, if they are not managed correctly they can also garner negative attention that will detract from the destination’s appeal (Kissoudi, 2010). As has been witnessed in recent times, the nature of major events makes them susceptible to terrorist attacks, which can be detrimental to the destination image. Not only do events afford the opportunity to inflict
Major events have historically been linked to terrorist activities with the attacks on the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich and the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games appearing to be the most noteworthy in the context of MERT research (Yarchi et al., 2015; Spaaij and Hamm, 2015). Since 9/11, western societies have experienced an increase in terrorist activities (IEP, 2016) with major events considered as a sought after target (Spaaij, 2016). Much of the academic literature surrounding MERT has focussed specifically on major sporting events (Carroll et al., 2014; Yarchi et al., 2015) including those mentioned above and more recently the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing and 2015 Paris attacks, which impacted upon the security measures and budget for the 2016 UEFA Championships (Shepard, 2016). However, the recent rise in lone actor attacks indicates that cultural events are being increasingly targeted by terrorists, as can be seen in examples such as the 2016 Nice attack and 2017 Manchester Arena bombing. This justifies the need to explore event professional’s perceptions of MERT and the implications for managing events safely and securely in western cities. The purpose of this paper is therefore to investigate MERT and explore the resulting challenges that event professionals may face when delivering major events in cities. It offers an insight into the issues faced by event professionals when delivering major events as part of a destination marketing strategy, highlighting the potential challenges that may arise when hosting future major events. The research is based in the UK due to the significant rise in terrorist activities that have taken place there in recent years (IEP, 2016); thus, enabling a preliminary exploration of the challenges that events professionals face within cities.

Understanding terrorism

Terrorism has been a topic of academic research for over 50 year yet no concise or widely accepted definition has been agreed upon (Schmid, 2004, 2011; Giuliannotti and Klauser, 2012; Dominguez, 2015; Tofangsaz, 2015; Sandler, 2016; Horgan, 2017). Any definition of terrorism will depend upon the observer’s perception, location and opinion as explained by Teichmann (1996, p. 5) who states that, “the same kind of action will be described differently by different observers, depending on when and where it took place and whose side the observer is on”. In defining terrorism for the purpose of this paper, no association is made with the generally positive connotation of a freedom fighter. Rather terrorism is found to utilise characteristics such as the unlawful use of violence; victimization of non-combatants; motivation by religious, political, or ideological belief; and the desire to reach international attention (Taylor, 1988; Enders and Sandler, 2002; Schmid, 2004; Department of Defence, 2016; Sandler, 2016). Terrorism has various complex social, political and economic characteristics (Giuliannotti and Klauser, 2012; Tofangsaz) and can also be identified in different forms (NACTSO, 2009). Schmid (2004) provides an encompassing description of the key characteristics of terrorism that is applicable to a variety of contexts, irrespective of the country in which terrorism is occurring or the industry(s) it is affecting (see Table I).

Since 9/11, western countries have become more aware of their vulnerability as targets for terror-related activities with an Al Qaeda propagandist stating that inflicting damage and
significant human losses at major events “is very easy, since there are numerous [...] targets such as crowded sports arenas, annual social events, large international exhibitions [and] crowded buildings [...]” (Abu Mus’ab al Suri, 2012, p. 249). This testimony demonstrates that major events are officially on the target list of terrorists. The Global Terrorism Index highlights the recent transnational tactics of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) combined with lone actor attacks as driving terrorism to its highest ever level. The increased frequency of terrorist threats and attacks (particularly in the UK, France and the USA) are impacting upon the public, various industry sectors and governments economically, socially and culturally (Baker, 2014; Berrebi and Klor, 2010; Marlett et al., 2003). Several member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have reported a sharp rise in acts of terror over the last three years; culminating in a 650 per cent increase in deaths from terrorism between 2014 (77 deaths) and 2015 (577 deaths), of which half resulted from attacks inspired or directed by ISIS (IEP, 2016). More recently, a change in tactic has been observed, with attacks increasingly carried out by lone actors (e.g. Boston Marathon bombing) and popular methods including vehicle-driven attacks (e.g. Berlin attack), home-built devices (e.g. Manchester Arena bombing) or the use of everyday objects (e.g. Nice attack). These changes are considered to be of significance for city tourism practitioners and event professionals, as lone actors and homemade devices are considerably harder to detect than a large terrorist cell or sophisticated explosives.

Major event related terrorism

As outlined previously, the 1972 Munich Olympics and 1996 Atlanta Olympics are regarded as the main MERT incidents prior to 9/11 (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009; Giulianiotti and Klauser, 2012; Spaaij and Hamm, 2015; Spaaij, 2016) with the Munich attack being considered to have had a significant impact on security arrangements for future events. As Spaaij (2016, p. 452) postulated, the incident was a “landmark in the intersection of terrorism and the Olympics”. While both attacks undoubtedly led to stricter security measures for Olympic Games, 9/11 is thought to be the key turning point that has accelerated and amplified the course of security requirements for major events more generally (Spaaij, 2016). Despite the growing relationship between major events and terrorism no academic consensus appears to have been reached regarding which major events to include in studies on MERT in a post 9/11 context (Spaaij and Hamm, 2015; Yarchi et al., 2015; Spaaij, 2016). In order to demonstrate the evolution of MERT, a timeline of ten terrorist attacks which have either occurred at a major event or have had a direct impact on events in the period between the 1972 Munich massacre and the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing is presented in Table II. This highlights the variety of events that have been targeted and points to an increased frequency of attacks following 9/11 and particularly since 2013. While this timeline does not attempt to include every incident that occurred within the chosen period it highlights those attacks that have had the most saliency in the media, with many of these events having occurred too recently to be mentioned in academic studies. While the

### Table I  Defining characteristics of terrorism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Key characteristic element of terrorism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The demonstrative violence against human beings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The (conditional) threat of (more) violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The deliberate production of terror/fear in target groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The targeting of civilians, non-combatants and innocents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The purpose of intimidation, coercion and/or propaganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The fact that it is a method, tactic or strategy of conflict waging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The importance of communicating the act(s) of violence to larger audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The illegal, criminal and immoral nature of the act(s) of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The predominately political character of the act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Its use as a tool of psychological warfare to mobilise or immobilise sectors of the public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table II: Representative timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Terrorist Attack</td>
<td>Direct impact on security measures and budget of large sporting events (Spaaij, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Terrorist Attack</td>
<td>Direct impact on security measures and budget of large sporting events (Spaaij, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Terrorist Attack</td>
<td>Global impact across a variety of industries, including the event sector. Stringent security measures start to be introduced in public areas, predominantly airports, and at events (Spaaij, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sporting event</td>
<td>Impacted the allocated security budget (more than £550m) and terrorism was identified as the greatest threat for the London Olympics. Occurred one day after the announcement of winning the did for the 2012 Olympics (Home Office, 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sporting event</td>
<td>Introduced awareness about vulnerability of public sporting events that are not confined to a securable venue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cultural event</td>
<td>Significant and direct impact on security measures and budget of the 2016 UEFA Championship (Shepard, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Business event</td>
<td>Introduced awareness about vulnerability of business events which have low security in place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
The majority of MERT research tends to be focussed on major sporting events (Leopkey and Parent, 2009; Fourie and Santana-Gallego, 2011; Carroll et al., 2014; Yarchi et al., 2015; Spaaïj and Hamm, 2015; Spaaïj, 2016) the timeline demonstrates a clear shift in focus from sporting to cultural events. This can be explained by the increasingly stringent security measures adopted by sporting events (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009; Sugden, 2012) and the shifting modus operandi of terrorists outlined above.

The various factors outlined in the examples above have led to a tightening of security measures at major events, especially in the initial aftermath of an attack (Heward, 2017; Reuters, 2017; Scally, 2017). Several events in the UK adopted more stringent security as a result of recent attacks: Wimbledon 2017 was protected with a ring of steel (Sawyer, 2017), Glastonbury 2017 introduced extra bag searches and separate search lines (Express, 2017) and anti-terrorism barriers were installed at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2017 to prevent terrorists from driving vehicles into crowds (BBC, 2017). As a result of the threat of terrorism, the organising process for major events appears to have become much more complex and a professional approach towards risk management strategies and the implementation of security measures is required. While the risk of terrorism is just one amongst many to consider when planning and hosting an event (Leopkey and Parent, 2009; Piekarz et al., 2015), the consequences of a successfully carried out attack are severe. An event security plan must therefore include strategies to “deter such [acts of terrorism] or to at least minimise their impact” (NACTSO, 2009, p. 5).

Ibrahim (2016) provides a useful study on the methods used by event professionals to manage the risk of terrorism with the risk management methods discussed being seen to reflect the security measures that are currently implemented at major events in the UK as is highlighted in Figure 1. The method of providing more employee training appears to have become more important in the UK: The Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds specifically mentions the certification requirements for stewards at spectator events (DCMS, 2008, Section 4.8). Choosing to increase the number of security staff can also be observed at various events, for example, security presence was increased at Glastonbury 2017 in response to the London and Manchester attacks (Express, 2017). Regionally, in the UK, the organisers of TRNSMT festival in Glasgow decided to add more security staff and also employ civilian clothed police officers who monitored the crowd and looked for suspicious behaviour (McCool, 2017). Undertaking destination research and working with local stakeholders, including all security partners allows access to expert knowledge and shared resources. No indication is given as to whether the graph refers to attendee screening prior to the event or screening at egress and ingress points. Screening of bags before entering an event venue has, however, become common practice and restrictions on bag sizes have frequently been imposed (The SSE Hydro; Wimbledon). While all of these methods intend to make events more secure, they have subsequently led to an increase in security costs with an analysis conducted by the Wall Street Journal in 2004 highlighting the sharp rise in the security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2016, Nice Attack</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Nice, France</td>
<td>Cultural event</td>
<td>Introduced awareness about vulnerability of public spaces which are highly frequented during cultural events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2016, Berlin Attack</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>Cultural event</td>
<td>Highlighted the challenge of securing cultural events in public places, despite awareness of vulnerability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2017, Manchester Arena Bombing</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Manchester, UK</td>
<td>Cultural event</td>
<td>Highlighted vulnerability in securing perimeters of protected event venues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II
expenditures of the Summer Olympic Games post 9/11 (Sugden, 2012). Since this time, security costs have remained between $1bn and $2bn (McBride, 2016). International sporting events such as the Olympic Games are expected to have sophisticated security measures in place and therefore require access to large security budgets (Giulianotti and Klauser). However, that this is not always the case with major events organised on a national scale that, despite their international recognition, will still be required to address security; but on a reduced budget. While there is limited data available, it can be suggested that increased measures of security will have a significant impact on the future budgets of major events such as Glastonbury, Wimbledon and the Edinburgh festivals. This suggests that the organisational costs for such events might increase in the future, potentially impacting upon their long-term sustainability.

MERT and the urban city

Events continue to be a key element used to develop and market destinations (Getz, 2008). They have a complex ambassadorial role for nations and regions, and have considerable economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts (Yeoman; Stokes). Event tourism within cities is an industry that is growing rapidly. Already established as a multi-million-pound industry event tourism engages planned events as a pull factor to attract tourists to the destination (Rajesh, 2014). Such initiatives encourage boosterism and provide the opportunity to develop the image of the city (Jones, 2001; Getz, 2005, 2013; Dansero and Putilli, 2010). Moreover, it encourages media attention, combats seasonality and attracts significant numbers of people. However, this can also bring various challenges to the destination.

It has been demonstrated that it is the very characteristics that make major events attractive to host destinations that also make them attractive to terrorists. They afford the opportunity to inflict maximum human losses and the presence of the media ensures that any attack is communicated to a large audience (Spaaij and Hamm, 2015; Yarchi et al., 2015). As mainstream and social media reporting on major events continues to grow, so to a platform to communicate to a large audience is created, thereby increasing the attractiveness for a terrorist attack (Giulianotti and Klauser, 2012). It is therefore imperative that such events are delivered safely and securely in order to reflect a positive image that positions the city as both a dynamic and safe destination. Rather than hoping for the best, event professionals are challenged to plan for the worst and terrorism undoubtedly falls under the category of worst outcomes possible.

The increase in terrorism incidents in the UK have impacted the events industry significantly (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009; Giulianotti and Klauser, 2012; Spaaij and Hamm, 2015; Spaaij, 2016) with Silvers (2008) suggesting that event professionals require not only a large scope of
knowledge, but also an awareness of the legal and ethical responsibilities commonly associated with events. As a result, event professionals will face new challenges when organising major events and by exploring their knowledge on MERT, this will act as a viable tool in creating synergies between event professionals and city tourism practitioners when using major events to develop city tourism strategies.

Research methodology

The study at hand seeks to address the development of MERT and investigate the resulting challenges that UK event professionals face when delivering major events. The exploratory nature of this study meant that an interpretivist paradigm was most appropriate with Black (2006, p. 319) suggesting that such an approach allows “the complexity and meanings of situations” to be addressed. This is further supported by Shaw (1999, p. 70) who argues that interpretivism lends the researcher the ability to “embrace the complex and dynamic quality of the social world and allows (him) to view a social research problem holistically, get close to participants, enter their realities and interpret their perceptions”. Shaw’s statement is considered to be of considerable relevance for this research as the subjective perceptions and opinions of UK event professionals are researched, interpreted and analysed. The observational nature of the research meant that an inductive approach was followed with Hyde (2000) defining this as a theory building approach that starts with observations and seeks to generalise the phenomenon that is being investigated. Rather than seeking to explicitly test one theory, the research aims to add to existing knowledge surrounding the challenges MERT presents to city destinations.

As the focus of the research sought to gain personal insights of UK event professionals, a qualitative research approach was considered to be the most appropriate strategy. This permitted for the flexibility required of the subject area (Creswell, 2013) and allowed for primary data to be gathered in the natural environment of the UK event industry. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method enabling an in-depth understanding of the interviewee’s views and opinions to be gained (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). To prevent subjectivisms and impairing the research, careful attention was paid to the verbalisation of probing questions.

A staged sampling procedure was followed as outlined by Wilson (2014); first, the overall population was defined as event professionals who had been exposed to major events within the UK. Second, the sampling frame was selected from the researchers’ networks and contacts which extended to both academics and practitioners with knowledge of the subject area. A combination of purposive sampling (Bryman and Bell, 2015) and convenience sampling (Wilson, 2014) was utilised to identify potential participants for the research. The sample size was then decided with Hoinville and Jowell (1985) arguing that sample size is a matter of judgement rather than calculation. Using an interpretivist approach and researching the phenomenon of MERT allowed for a small sample size. As the research was not looking to generalise findings or represent the opinions of an entire population, a sample size of five to ten participants was deemed to be appropriate for allowing in-depth knowledge to be gained and comparison of opinions to be made. Of the 12 event professionals contacted to participate a sample of five was gained. As can be seen in Table III these professionals demonstrate a range of expertise within the event management profession, creating a viable sample for this initial exploratory study. While it is acknowledged that the findings are not representative of all event professionals in the UK it should be noted that this research does not seek to create new theories but rather explore the phenomenon of MERT and understand the opinions and perceptions of UK event professionals, thereby determining the future challenges posed when organising major events in cities.

Interviews were conducted during July 2017 with the following research questions providing the underpinning for the interview schedule:

**RQ1.** What is the extent of knowledge of the UK event professionals in relation to terrorism and terrorism development?

**RQ2.** How do UK event professionals perceive the event industry to have been impacted by major event related terrorism?
RQ3. What are the resulting challenges faced by UK event professionals in delivering future major events?

Despite the fact that this research adopted an inductive approach, an a priori (deductive) coding approach was adhered to when analysing the interview data. Using such an approach meant that emphasis was given to similarity of answers rather than the frequency of individual words when analysing the data. Three themes emerged which reflected the research questions posed: knowledge and understanding of event professionals in relation to MERT; the impact of MERT in terms of responsibility and accountability; and the future challenge of managing for MERT in budgetary terms. These themes are explored within the results section below.

Results

Knowledge and understanding

It was important to understand how event professionals defined and understood the concept of terrorism, as this would influence the way in which they managed for potential terror attacks. All of the participants identified at least one of the elements of terrorism discussed in the earlier literature review. They specifically highlighted the changing nature of terrorism and a shift from domestic terror attacks to those conducted on an international scale. As explained by Participant 2, “I think we have become far more aware of global terrorism as a whole world population. The levels of extremism have probably drifted from, in many respects, what would have been more considered domestic extremism probably 40-50 years ago to more global extremism”.

It was evident that event professionals recognised terrorism as a global issue and they further acknowledged that its focus and purpose is evolving with Participant 1 suggesting:

In the past, it was more about making a statement. And if you look back to a significant number of the previous forms of terrorism that we dealt with, particularly in the UK, it seems looking back that it was the statement that was the important issue. Whereas I would suggest now it’s the actual damage that can be done to individuals that seems to be the motivation […] I think there was less of an intention to harm people than perhaps the modern forms of terrorism we are seeing now from radical Islamic terrorism and also to a lesser extent the extreme right wing terrorism that has been starting to surface in Western societies.

This evolution appears to have placed the general public more at risk of attack as evidenced by the 650 per cent increase in terror-related deaths reported in OECD member countries between 2014 and 2016 (IEP, 2016). Several of the participants alluded to the increased frequency of attacks with Participant 3 highlighting that attacks have “absolutely spiralled”. With major events often being the subject of significant media coverage (Yarchi et al., 2015) they remain a significant target for terrorists. This is of concern not just to event professionals but wider city tourism practitioners as any such attack on a major event would have negative implications not only for the event but also the destination image and tourism potential of the city more widely as explained by Kissoudi (2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Current profession</th>
<th>Areas of expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Academic practitioner</td>
<td>Tour management, artist management and representation, crowd safety management, event management, festival marketing and promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Resilience and contingencies manager (public sector)</td>
<td>Testing, exercise and readiness, contingency planning, crisis management, major sporting events, risk management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Event company director (private sector)</td>
<td>Event logistic, event delivery, transport planning and management, contingency planning, crowd management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Project manager (public sector)</td>
<td>International relations, government policy, external engagement, project management, communication, MICE sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Senior event management researcher</td>
<td>Crowd management, risk management, event planning and delivery, event tourism and policy, cultural events, mass participation sporting events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While all participants identified that there had been an increase in terrorist attacks and a shift from domestic, regionally contained terrorism towards acts of terror on a global scale general understandings of terrorism were varied and appeared to be very much dependent upon the individual’s own experiences and how they perceived media reporting of terrorism. This reflects Teichmann’s (1996) notion that definitions of terrorism will depend very much on the perception, location and opinion of the individual. It is important to consider that city tourism practitioners will also have their own understandings of terrorism, which may differ from those of event professionals. As such, this could lead to differences of opinion as to how best to plan and manage for MERT within urban destinations. This was recognised by the participants who recognised that security strategies would be dependent upon the specific event and host city.

There was a consensus supporting the need to develop and implement coherent understandings of terrorism and its potential implications for managing major events. It was recognised that this would require event professionals to enhance their knowledge and understanding of this area, as it had not been embedded in their initial training and education. Despite there being an increase in training provision across the UK (DCMS, 2008) there was some disagreement amongst participants as to the quality and relevance of existing provision. Reflecting on their own experience of attending training Participant 3 stated that it was a “load of s***e”. It can therefore be surmised that while there is a need for training as outlined in Ibrahim’s (2016) model, it is essential that when delivered it is relevant and of a high standard. Content must enable employees to provide efficient and effective security when hosting major events.

It was evident that UK event professionals had an awareness of terror developments but this was somewhat varied, being shaped by their own prior knowledge and world-view. The sector in which they worked had clearly influenced their understandings of MERT and how it could best be planned and managed for. What is of interest here is how this view may differ from that of city tourism practitioner’s and other key stakeholders whose understandings will be based on their own experiences and sector; this raises questions surrounding responsibility and accountability in relation to MERT.

Accountability and responsibility

There was a considerable difference of opinion when participants were questioned as to whether they felt that events were a legitimate target for terrorists. On the one hand, it was acknowledged that major events could be viewed to be at considerable risk due to the large crowds that they attract and associated media coverage that they gain (Spaaij and Hamn, 2015; Yarchi et al., 2015). However, a number of arguments were also presented as to why events may no longer be such a legitimate target. Most specifically, the participants felt that the enhanced security now present at major events lessened the risk of them being targeted by terrorist activities. As Participant 5 stated, “major events have that security ring around them. So although they seem like a good target, actually it would probably be much easier to just go and walk into a shopping centre”. This echoes the views of Boyle and Haggerty (2009) and Sugden (2012) who point out the increasingly stringent security measures now adopted at sporting events in particular. However, with the shift in the modus operandi and focus of terrorists (e.g. London attacks, 2017) it could be argued that events do remain at threat. As Participant 5 purported, the emotional and shocking aspect of targeting an event ensures that they remain at risk. A number of practical steps have been adopted in major event settings to enhance safety and security, including increased security presence, bag searches, roadblocks and other infrastructure. It could be argued that some of the security measures put in place go beyond what is required but as Participant 5 suggests, due to the proliferation of media coverage terrorist attacks receive, consumers are now far more aware of potential risks posed when attending events. This reflects the earlier points made regarding the global nature of terrorism. Hence, the perceived image of safety associated with the host city is important. Participant 5 further explains that some of the steps taken by event professionals do not always actually make the event any safer but they give a feeling of safety to the consumer. While safety is not something that consumers should have to consider when attending events, it is now a reality. Discussing an increase in security personnel at major events, Participant 1 points out that event organisers face a difficulty in that “in many ways if
nothing happens and security don’t really have anything to do, that’s a good result. But from the
organiser’s perspective it might seem like an unnecessary expense”.

It became apparent that the participants felt that the increased need for security measures is
exploited by some with Participant 2 stating that, “a lot of people have used the incidents that
have taken place to charge a lot more money for security”. They further argue, “everybody was
coining, everybody was trying to get in on the action”. It is therefore evident that while the security
for major events within the UK has been heightened, this has come at a cost. As with any
business when supply costs increase, questions will arise relating to the impact this will have on
the consumer and the participants indicated that this could affect the sustainability of some
events. Additionally, it also needs to be considered who should be absorbing such costs, the
consumer, the organiser or the host city. Nevertheless, participants highlighted that event
professionals are required to increase security measures to reduce terror attacks even if there is
also a detrimental effect to the overall event experience. For example, Participant 3 discussed the
security measures put in place for a large concert which took place following the Manchester
Arena bombing in 2017, stating that the additional search requirements, necessitated by the
change in UK security level meant that attendees had to queue for considerable amounts of time,
negatively affecting their experience of the event.

While the likelihood of terror attacks occurring within major events has been minimised, it could
be suggested that these risks are in fact being shifted to the perimeter of the event. As Participant
4 suggests, “event managers are stuck in a bit of a predicament they need to enhance their
security checks at venues before the audience gets in. But all this is actually doing is creating a
much softer target outside of a venue”. This was exemplified in the case of the Manchester 2017
bombing where a homemade device was detonated within the public foyer of the arena rather
than within the event itself. This attack led to venues and events across the UK enhancing security
checks on entry (e.g. SSE Hydro, 2017) but in turn, this led to considerable queues forming
outside venues (as mentioned above) which present a risk in their own right. As Participant 2
points out, “what we have done is push the incident from the locus”. With terrorists now targeting
the softer perimeter and outer areas of event, this raises serious questions regarding the point at
which responsibility for crowd safety begins and ends. While event professionals are accountable
for the event and its perimeter they are not responsible for wider security within the city. It is
therefore vital that city tourism practitioners and other key stakeholders work alongside event
professionals to not only ensure that the event itself is safe but that event attendees and tourists
are safe throughout the city as ultimately any attack will reflect badly not only on the event but the
destination image. As such, a co-ordinated approach to managing safety and security for future
major events is advocated.

This notion of collaboration at the destination level was highlighted by participants who
suggested that event professionals should prioritise stronger links and communication with key
stakeholders within the city such as police and emergency services. Participant 2 supported this
by establishing that greater communication links would “allow [access to] local emergency
services knowledge and multi-agency knowledge”. An understanding of the local environment
and the ways in which relevant agencies operate will be vital to the successful delivery of major
events and may lead to the sharing of best practice across events and destinations. This can be
seen to reflect Ibrahim’s (2016) suggestion that more destination research and communication
will enhance security. This is particularly important in the planning of international events, as while
this research has focussed on the UK perspective, it is evident that different countries and even
different areas within countries will potentially present their own risks and security challenges.

Balancing the budget
A growing need to balance tight security budgets with the requirement of making major events as
secure as possible was discussed, with Participant 5 highlighting, “it is essential to evolve with the
industry and that costs money”. Numerous steps have been taken in relation to managing and
planning for MERT with an increasingly professionalised approach to security and risk
management being adopted at events across the UK. Security measures such as hiring more
personnel, imposed searches, communication with law enforcement partners and further training
have made events in the UK more secure but this has come at a price, with a significant increase in security budgets and hence the costs of such events. Each of the professionals identified that with the pressure to increase security the challenge was cost with Participant 2 stating that “adding additional security staff is a good idea but it’s costly”. Although there was a consensus around increased budgets when hosting major events in cities, there was still scepticism with regards to the need for some of the measures being adopted with Participant 2 suggesting that event professionals were being “fleeced” due to the increased pressured placed on them to ensure event attendees safety. Additionally, Participant 4 postulated that “private security firms cost money and they will only do what they are paid to do”. There was little doubt that event professionals recognise the need to increase security measures with Participant 1 highlighting that “with the diversity of audiences attending events, so new strategies and security services need to be offered and to do this more training and resources are needed which costs money”. However, questions were raised as to the value of some of the enhanced measures that event professionals are expected to implement and whether these do in fact deter MERT. This could be seen to reflect the challenge noted above regarding differences in understandings relating to terrorism, how it can be defined, managed and planned for.

It is evident that budgeting and increased costs are a significant challenge for major events and their organisers with a key consideration with regards to managing and planning for MERT relating to who should be responsible for absorbing these increased costs. This was particularly highlighted by Participant 2 who, when discussing the increased cost of policing events, suggested that the public sector “were failing the event organiser”. While both event professionals and city tourism practitioners acknowledge the need for increased security measures and to manage for MERT the predicament of who should be absorbing these costs is a considerable challenge. Furthermore, as was noted previously debate exists as to where responsibility for securing events and the wider city begins and end.

Concluding remarks

The exploratory nature of this study means that it is not possible to draw firm conclusions from the findings or generalise these to a wider population; this was beyond the remit of the research. However, the research has highlighted a number of key challenges facing event professionals and city tourism practitioners with regards to the hosting of major events that warrant further exploration. The UK event professionals who participated in this research were found to be very knowledgeable with regards to terrorism and its developments. This can be attributed to the fact that their field of employment has been – directly and/or indirectly – impacted by terrorism. While all participants were knowledgeable about terrorism and its implications the varied definitions and understandings reflected the on-going academic discourse of how terrorism itself should be defined. Furthermore, it was noted that with definitions and understandings of terrorism being influenced by sector and world-view it is likely that city tourism practitioner’s understandings of terrorism and MERT more specifically might differ from those of event professionals. This could lead to potential conflict between key stakeholders as to how MERT may best be planned for and managed. As such, it is suggested that further exploration as to how key stakeholders within major events view and understand terrorism and more specifically MERT is required.

Despite differing opinions, all participants agreed that the UK event industry has been considerably impacted by the increased number of attacks/threats and the changing methods of attack. These shifts are identified as having significantly impacted security measures at major events across the UK. Event professionals are increasingly expected to possess knowledge and skills to manage the risk of terrorism. This has professionalised approaches to security and risk management at events with more stringent security measures being employed. It was recognised by the event professionals that further education and training was required in relation to this with concerns being raised by some participants as to the quality and relevance of current provision. As such, it is suggested that further research is required to assess the current levels and content of training provision for event personnel in order to identify potential gaps in provision as well as cases of best practice.

It was noted that while events continue to be a legitimate target for terrorists the enhanced security measures put in place to manage for MERT could be seen to make them less attractive.
However, it was subsequently recognised that these enhanced measures can create softer targets at the event perimeter and outside of its boundary. Therefore, a key challenge for event professionals will be how they can secure the event venue/location without simultaneously creating a soft target outside of this secured perimeter. Furthermore, significant questions are raised as to where responsibility and accountability for event audiences begins and ends. This is a challenge for both event organisers and city tourism practitioners who would both be adversely affected by any attack either within or outwith the event. This further highlights that in order to best prepare for hosting a major event, collaboration and partnership working is required in order to share knowledge and expertise. With many cities and events managing this in different ways further exploration as to how this can best be managed is required.

The higher cost of security measures was pointed out by all participants with the need to balance tight security budgets with the requirements of making major events as secure as possible being viewed as a significant future challenge for major events. While other security considerations may also impact the budget, it can be argued that an increase in terrorism will make the balancing act of securing an event whilst working within the boundaries of a restricted security budget even more challenging in the future. Furthermore, questions may be raised as to who is responsible for absorbing the cost of additional security measures – the host city or event organisers. With city tourism practitioners and event professionals having responsibility for delivering a successful event and both academic literature and destination development strategies continuing to identify the use of events in enhancing a city’s image, the challenge pertaining to who pays will remain prolific. Where in the past it could be argued that the benefits of hosting major events outweighed the costs, public perceptions are changing and as costs increase citizens are frequently calling into question whether these investments offer value for money. This further highlights the need to move beyond the exploratory scope of this initial research into a greater empirical study.

Each of these areas requires further research in its own right with it being acknowledged that this research has been limited to the UK. Other destinations will pose their own unique challenges when hosting and managing events. What is clear is that despite enhanced security measures, major events will continue to be impacted by terrorism. It is left open for discussion if planning for the worst and hoping for the best will be the correct strategy. What has become clear from this research is that unpredictability is the new norm and that event professionals and destinations must plan accordingly when organizing future major events.

References


Corresponding author

Daniel Baxter can be contacted at: daniel.baxter@gcu.ac.uk

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
Emerald is excited to announce a recent partnership with Peerwith, a platform that provides authors with a variety of services.

The Emerald Peerwith site can be found here: https://authorservices.emeraldpublishing.com/

Peerwith connects academics seeking support for their work with a relevant expert to get their research submission-ready. Peerwith experts can help with the following: language editing, copy editing, scientific editing, translation services, statistical support, funding application support, visuals, video, publication support, literature search, peer review and indexing services. Authors post their assignments on the Peerwith site, experts provide a quote, and the fee and conditions are then agreed upon directly between the author and the expert.

While we are not, of course, guaranteeing publication upon use of Peerwith, we hope that being able to direct academics to this resource either before submission or during the peer review process will help authors further improve the quality of their papers and increase their chances of positive reviews and acceptance.

Academics with relevant expertise can sign up as an expert on the Peerwith system here: https://www.peerwith.com/services/offer
Preserving over 100 years of management research online

A lifetime investment for your institution, Emerald Backfiles will significantly enhance your library’s offering by providing access to over 125,000 articles from more than 260 journals dating back to 1898.

Visit emeraldinsight.com

Get Backfiles Collections for your library
Recommend Backfiles to your librarian today.
Find out more: emeraldpublishing.com/backfilescollections
Volume 4 Number 4 2018

International Journal of Tourism Cities

Number 4

409 Editorial

413 Peacefulness at home: impacts on international travel
Claudia Seabra, Elisabeth Kastenholz, José Luís Abrantes and Manuel Reis

429 The German source market perceptions: how risky is Turkey to travel to?
Rami K. Isaac and Vanessa Velden

452 The fear of terrorism and shift in cosmopolitan values
Vanda N. Veréb, Helena Nobre and Minoo Farhangmehr

484 The narrative rhythm of terror: a study of the Stockholm terrorist attack and the "Last Night in Sweden" event
Cecilia Cassinger, Jörgen Eksell, Maria Mansson and Ola Thufvesson

495 Destinations' response to terrorism on Twitter
Danielle Barbe, Lori Pennington-Gray and Ashley Schroeder

513 Plan for the worst, hope for the best? Exploring major events related terrorism and future challenges for UK event professionals
Daniel Baxter, Jenny Flinn and Lucrezia Flurina Picco