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Travels organized via Airbnb: experiences of travellers in Lithuania



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Introduction

- The Airbnb platform unites types of actors: service providers (hosts), intermediaries and consumers (travellers / guests).
- Interconnections among them and provided services create advantages and disadvantages at micro, mezzo and macro levels.

Introduction

- The **research aim** is to identify and explore advantages and disadvantages of travells in Lithuania organized via Airbnb.
- The main research questions are the following:
  - Which expectations of travellers / guests in Lithuania were satisfied and which not satisfied? What are main problems?
  - How experiences interrelate with characteristics of hosts and travellers / guests?

Research methodology

- The main data source – a database created from the comments provided by the travellers / guests who booked accommodation via Airbnb during their trip in Lithuania.
- Criteria of search of cases were limited to:
  - Klaipėda County located in the West of the country and close to the Baltic sea;
  - accommodations for 2 adults;
  - accommodations available between July 1-31, 2019.

Research methodology

- In total, 300+ suitable cases of this sharing economy found.
- In the analysis, cases divided into groups according to price of accommodation for 2 persons / per month:
  - less than 1000 Eur;
  - between 1000 Eur and 1999 Eur;
  - 2000 Eur or more.

General findings

- Comments of quests usually are laconic and positive, especially on most expensive cases.
- Despite the latter, collected data allow to identify advantages and disadvantages when travels are organized via Airbnb.
- Some of these problems are typical for accommodations of according price but some of its – are general, don't relate to the price.

General findings

- Hosts and guests underline / pay attention on different aspects:
  - In description of their accommodations, hosts usually underline close distance to the sea and supermarkets plus coziness, tranquility.
  - Meanwhile, guests very often don't care too much about distance to the sea or other locations but underline comfort and easy to use the space.

Findings related to advantages

- Guests often mention flexibility of hosts: big plus if host adapt to the guests‘ check-in or check-out possibilities (e.g.: *even if we had some issues with our trip the host accepted it all*).
- Hospitality of hosts (e.g.: *greeted us with some delicious home grown fruits and vegetables;* welcoming, open and helpful owner).
- Big plus if host speaks guests language (e.g., underline excellent English).
- Guest often underline non-standard, interesting design of accommodation interior or recently renovated space ⇔ additional experience and value of property.

Findings related to disadvantages

- Great failure – canceled of reservation by host (e.g., the host canceled this reservation 3 / 5 / 19 / 35 / etc. days before arrival).
- Among greatest disadvantages, problems with:
  - bathroom equipment,
  - wifi.
- Questionable situations with pets: sometimes guests must accept pets of host (e.g.: guest's comment: *we love her cats and the house*; host's comment: *pet(s) live on property, old and kind - no biting*), complicated when it is related to allergy or other aspects.

Findings related to financial issues

- Financial issues may appear in various stages of the interaction between service provider and consumer:
  - before travel: consumer would like to know what will receive for particular sum of money he/she will pay;
  - during travel: sometimes real conditions aren‘t such as were promised / on what was agreed (e.g., the steady smell of fungus was found in accommodation);
  - after travel: sometimes service provider find that property is broken or need repair after the visit (therefore, sometimes hosts apply Security deposit of ~100–200 Eur).

Findings related to financial issues

- Most hosts apply monthly price discount even it varies between 1% to 50%, but trend is: as more expensive accommodation as less frequently discount applied.

Findings on accommodations < 1000 Eur

Guests often just describe accommodation / declare (without big complains) numerous problems in the accommodation, e.g.:

- nothing fancy, nothing stylish, but you will find a place to sleep
- had to climb to the fourth floor caring all our bags
- apartment is located next to very noisy motorway
- temperature inside apartment isn't friendly, rather cold inside
- little privacy
- etc.

Findings on accommodations 1000-1999 Eur

- Complains (if any) on accommodation guests express in more extensive way.
- Among most often problems:
  - bathroom equipment (hot water supply; shower);
  - parking (place, additional expenditures).

Findings on accommodations 2000+ Eur

- Complains very rare, usually only good comments.
- In case of problem, usually, it is added that it was solved shortly, and it was done in a proper way.
- Several times mentioned problems:
  - cancelled reservation;
  - improper bed/s (e.g.: *the second bed is actually a foldable sofa so i think the apartment is more suitable for couples*).

Conclusion

- Comments of Airbnb quests are suitable source for identification of experiences of accommodation / travel.
- Experiences of travelers depend on property, service providers' and guests' characteristics.

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Thank you for the attention!