

Bachelor Thesis

Adaptability and Tourism - Changes In Tourism
Consumption From Swedish Multi-Person Households



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Kevin Aoun

Abstract

This research project investigates the adaptability of travel consumption in Sweden to global crises, with a focus on families. Tourism is a major contributor to the global economy, but it is also highly sensitive to global crises such as natural disasters, political instability, economic recessions, and health pandemics. These crises can disrupt travel and have significant impacts on the tourism industry and destination communities. In response to these crises, tourists may alter their travel plans and behaviour, including choosing alternative destinations and engaging in budget travel. This study aims to compare the adaptability of tourists under global crises by reviewing relevant literature and examining interviews of how Swedish families and their tourism behaviours have responded to specific global crises.

Keywords: *Inflation, Tourism, Sweden, Family Tourism, Adaptability, Psychology, Global Crises, European Energy Crisis*

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1. Introduction

The following chapter introduces the topics that will be discussed throughout the research paper, as well as explain the focus area and reasoning behind this research.

1.1 The phenomenon

The phenomenon in focus for this research is the adaptability of Swedish residents that live in multi-person/family households as tourism consumers. It is explored and discussed throughout this research how different consumers in different locations, under different circumstances can adapt their tourism consumption. An example of this would be if a person were to reduce their purchases of certain luxuries in order to sustain their travelling habits due to rising travelling costs. Adaptability is a complex trait that involves both cognitive and behavioural components (Matthews, 2017).

Cognitive adaptability involves the ability to process and comprehend new information, while behavioural adaptability involves the ability to adjust one's actions and behaviours in response to new or changing circumstances (Wang et al., 2019). In the context of tourism, adaptability is an important trait for tourists to possess in order to navigate unfamiliar environments and situations (Matthews, 2017). To further illustrate the concept of tourist adaptability, I will examine a number of families in which tourists have had to adapt to global crises. These families will provide real-world examples of how tourists have responded to challenges such as economic recessions, natural disasters, and pandemics.

1.2 Background

This section aims to give the reader some background information concerning the key factors that generate new conditions for tourism consumers and that are creating the context for research. By defining each of the major forces constituting the current context of tourism consumption, this section shows how

seemingly independent factors can generate new and previously unknown circumstances for tourism consumption.

1.2.1 Inflation

Inflation that is under 4% on an annual basis is considered healthy as it supposedly promotes growth and is a regular occurrence when an economic cycle is in its expansion stage (Take profit, 2022). In 2022, inflation has reached global highs even with some economies going into recessions by the end of the year. Sweden reached 9.7% inflation in September 2022 with average hourly wages even decreasing by a couple of Swedish Kronor at the same time (Scb, 2022). At the same time there are rising interest rates for loans, meaning that less people may take loans and slow down economic growth (Take profit, 2022). Sweden was already considered as an expensive country, and now with the Swedish Krona devaluing against most currencies, inflation and the energy crisis, it is becoming a more and more difficult time for Swedish residents, especially families (Routes North, N.D). Inflation is very important to take into account and difficult to adapt to, as nearly everything revolves around purchasing power, especially basic human needs. If inflation is not noticed and unprepared for, a person may slowly find that they have much less purchasing power than before and would have to quickly change some purchasing habits that may be done in a detrimental way (Scholtz & De Ridder, 2021).

1.2.2 The European Energy Crisis

Another factor driving growing travel costs include the current energy crisis in 2022 and Russian aggression in Ukraine. The energy sector in Europe is diverse and complex, with a mix of different sources of energy being used to meet the region's needs. These sources include fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas, as well as renewable sources like wind, solar, and hydroelectric power. The mix of energy sources used in Europe varies by country, with some countries relying more heavily on fossil fuels and others placing a greater emphasis on renewable energy. Russia provides a large amount of resources for energy usage

in Europe (Eurostat, 2022). The energy crisis we are currently facing has been a talked about threat for years, with even a similar gas crisis between Russia and Ukraine occurring between 2005 and 2008 (Reuters Staff, 2009). Goldthau (2008) wrote about the potential consequences of having a single energy supplier, arguing that it could give that supplier too much political power and influence. It appears that this once-theoretical threat is now a reality.

In recent years, there has been a trend towards increasing the use of renewable energy in Europe, driven in part by concerns about climate change and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Sharma et al., 2021). As a result, many European countries have set ambitious targets for the share of renewable energy in their overall energy mix. However, the transition to renewable energy sources can be challenging, and there are often trade-offs to be made in terms of cost, reliability, and security of supply. Sweden mainly relies on domestically produced energy, energy prices are increasing, especially in the south of Sweden, at around the same rate as the rest of Europe due to so-called 'energy agreements' (Eurostat, 2022). This creates a joined trading market for energy and sets prices in the 'energy region' according to the 'highest' seller (European Commission, 2022). Sweden only imported about 33.5% of its solid fossil fuels, natural gas and crude oil needs in 2020, and most of its energy needs are fulfilled from hydroelectric and nuclear energy domestically produced (Eurostat, 2022)(Iea, 2022).

1.2.3 COVID-19

Families are also often more affected by health crises, such as pandemics, because they tend to have more interdependence and interconnectedness. For example, if one member of a family gets sick, it can have a domino effect on the rest of the family, leading to missed work, lost income, and increased healthcare costs. Additionally, families may be more likely to be caring for children or elderly family members who are more vulnerable to illness (Montauk & Kuhl, 2020).

COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus disease 2019, is a highly contagious respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. It was first identified in Wuhan, China in 2019 and has since spread globally, leading to a pandemic. The virus primarily spreads through respiratory droplets when an infected person talks, coughs, or sneezes. It can also be transmitted by touching a surface or object contaminated with the virus and then touching the face. At the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 started to spread around the world at an extreme rate, reaching every country within only a few months. This global pandemic crashed the stock market in the middle of March 2020 and almost instantly put tourism in a near standstill for a long time (Matiza, 2020).

Countries had varying restrictions, depending on the severity of their situation at the given time. Most people quickly adapted and others quickly protested to sudden changes in their lifestyles (Balanzá–Martínez et al., 2020). For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many people turned to domestic travel or found new ways to experience tourism, such as virtual tours or outdoor activities (El-Said & Aziz, 2022). Empirical data later in this study shows how some Swedish families' tourism consumption has changed, with many stating COVID-19 as a main factor.

1.2.4 Swedish Family Travels

Family households, in this research, are considered to be a household that has at least two individuals with at least one being under the age of 18 and one being over the age of 18. Families are one of the most negatively impacted groups when global/domestic economic and health situations arise (Khalid et al., 2020). This may be due to having household members that do not have sufficient income, such as single parent/income households, increasing household maintenance costs especially for necessities such as energy, food and clothing. Swedish families may travel in order to participate in cultural events, such as festivals, concerts, and sporting events.

According to an article by Roden (2017) and The Local (2016), a Swedish news website with articles written in English, Swedes prefer to travel internationally. Travelling can be an important way for families to bond and create lasting memories together. It can also be a way for families to relax and take a break from their daily routines. The most popular destinations for Swedes to travel to are Spain and Thailand, due to the warmer climate and cheaper goods and services (López, 2021). Other popular destinations for Swedes are Denmark, Finland, Norway and Germany due to them being close to Sweden, where Swedes can take a car or ground public transportation to reach these destinations (Ibid.). There are many reasons why Swedish families travel, and the specific reasons may vary from family to family. However, some common reasons include the desire to spend time together, to explore new places and cultures, to participate in leisure and recreational activities, and to relax and unwind (Durko & Petrick, 2013).

1.3 Problem Discussion

I believe that in Sweden, families could be the most negatively impacted group by changing economic circumstances. Sweden is already considered to be a country with high costs of living, although salaries are considered to be high and be enough for decent living, at the same time a family of four cannot live properly on the average single person income and therefore need at least 2 people to have an income (InterNations, N.D). Swedes in general travel a lot, and are considered to be some of the most 'well-travelled' individuals in the world (Roden, 2017). With inflation being high and living costs rising rapidly, I believe that although people tend to adapt/cope rapidly to situations, the current global situation may cause a decrease in Swedish tourism, especially from families.

Families are often at the forefront of feeling the effects of global crises due to their close-knit nature and reliance on each other for emotional and financial support. Economic downturns, natural disasters, and health epidemics can all disproportionately impact families, as they may struggle to make ends meet and provide for their basic needs. Unemployment or loss of income can lead to financial insecurity and difficulty paying for necessities such as housing, food, and healthcare. Natural disasters can disrupt daily life and cause damage to homes and possessions, leaving families to navigate the challenges of rebuilding and recovery (Foley et al., 2021).

Health crises, such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, can place a burden on families as they navigate changes in work and school schedules and try to protect their loved ones from illness (Paul et al., 2022). Global crises can also exacerbate existing inequalities and disproportionately affect marginalised families, who may have fewer resources and support systems to fall back on (Grech et al., 2020). The added stress and uncertainty of global crises can also take a toll on family relationships and mental health. Children may be particularly vulnerable during global crises, as they may be more reliant on the stability and structure provided by their families and may struggle to understand and cope with changes in their environment (Paul et al., 2022).

Strong and supportive family relationships can provide a sense of security and resilience during times of crisis, but the added stress and challenges can also put a strain on these relationships. It is important for families to seek support and resources during global crises, whether it be through community programs, government assistance, or mental health services (Rambaree & Nässén, 2020). It is also important for families to practise self-care and prioritise their mental and emotional well-being in order to better navigate and recover from the challenges of global crises.

At the time of writing this thesis, there are no literary articles about adaptation and tourism relating to the current crises besides some news articles giving suggestions on how to adapt in general. Although inflation crises have occurred before, there may now be vastly different aspects and priorities. At the same time there is literature available about similar crises that have occurred before, but most of the time it was one crisis at a time impacting the average person.

1.4 Purpose

Despite the challenges posed by global situations over the ages, people have shown a remarkable ability to adapt and find new ways to enjoy travel and tourism (Khalid et al., 2020)(Watcharasukarn et al., 2011). The purpose of this research is to explore responses of Swedish family households to globally changing circumstances, with consideration of household diversity and drivers of their adaptation strategies.

Information about the current global inflationary impacts on Swedish family travel plans, behaviours and adaptations are important to explore as EU residents mainly travel for leisure or to visit relatives/friends (Eurostat, 2021). Also to try to find measures that can be done by the multi-person households to reduce impacts caused by inflation, or to at least find solutions for families to circumnavigate rising living costs.

1.5 Research Question

The research question formulated for this study is “How do Swedish family households adapt their tourism consumption in the wake of modern global political, economic, and health crises?”. ‘Modern’ in the question signifies about four years prior leading up to the year this research was written, at the end of 2022.

1.6 Delimitations

There is not much research done and available about Swedish family travel patterns, as well as the impacts of war and inflation on this group. Primary data will help fill in some gaps but will require further future research in order to fully comprehend the extent of the impacts. The study will only consider the perspectives of the tourists themselves, and not those of other stakeholders, such as destination marketers or tourism industry professionals. At the time of this research, the Russian-Ukrainian war is not over, and inflation has not gone back down to 'normal' levels, i.e. the targeted 2% level (Sveriges Riksbank, 2022). Therefore, impacts on tourism may get severely worse or change due to adaptations. The time frame for this research is about four years prior leading up to the end of 2022.

As humans, it is important to understand the impacts of global circumstances and our ability to adapt to them. We have proven time and time again that we can quickly adapt to most situations, but there are certain challenges that remain difficult to overcome, particularly those related to finances, such as costs and salaries. For tourists, adaptability becomes even more crucial during times of crisis, as they may be faced with unexpected challenges while travelling. For instance, a global pandemic can significantly impact tourism and the ability of tourists to adapt to new safety measures and travel restrictions.

However, it is generally believed that those with more disposable income have an easier time adapting to these challenges, as they have the financial resources to make necessary changes to their travel plans or to handle any unexpected expenses. Therefore, it is important to not only consider the adaptability of humans as a species, but also the adaptability of tourists in times of crisis and how financial resources can play a role in this.

1.7 Disposition

In the following Chapters

Methodology	The approach and data collection are described
Literature Review	Scientific literature and other theoretical findings are highlighted and defined
Empirical Findings	The empirical findings are shown and defined
Discussion + Conclusion	There is a discussion based on the empirical and theoretical findings of the research The contents of this research thesis are summarized and the research question is answered

2. Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed account of the research process and the reasons behind it. By outlining the methods and motivations behind this study, I aim to facilitate future research that may either build upon or challenge the findings of this study. In doing so, I hope to contribute to the ongoing advancement of knowledge in this field. Additionally, providing transparency in the research process allows for critical evaluation of the methods and results, enabling other researchers to build upon this work.

2.1 Research approach

2.1.1 Deductive approach

The deductive reasoning technique is ideally suited for this study, where the deductive approach is described as “*The researcher, on the basis of what is known about a particular domain and of theoretical considerations in relation to that domain, deduces a hypothesis (or hypotheses) that must then be subjected to empirical scrutiny.*” (Bell et al., 2018, p.11). The primary focus of this study was based on preexisting theory, and the research was supported by both theoretical findings and empirical results related to relevant topics. The research process began with the theory, and the collected empirical data was used to validate and support it.

The final discussion and conclusion were based on this combination of theoretical and empirical evidence. The selected method for gathering primary data in this study was a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the problem being studied, with the qualitative data providing in-depth insights and the quantitative data adding credibility and accuracy to the research (Saunders et al., 2019). As more information was gathered, such as additional articles, the research became more reliable.

Overall, the use of both primary and secondary data sources allowed for a comprehensive examination of the research question. By carefully selecting credible sources and employing a mixed method approach, I was able to gather reliable and valid evidence to support our findings. The combination of theoretical and empirical evidence provided a solid foundation for the final discussion and conclusion of the study.

2.1.2 Data analysis

This research focuses on Swedish family tourism and topics surrounding it. In empirical research, it is crucial to gather, comprehend, and accurately utilise relevant data, theories, and concepts. Therefore, it is essential to utilise specific keywords or phrases when searching for relevant information or crafting interview questions such as Inflation, Tourism, Sweden, and Family Life.

Statistics from verified sources, such as government .org websites, as well as interviews are used. Interviews with families/multi person households in Sweden are conducted in order to have a detailed understanding from different perspectives. Correlations between different and varying data are used. The qualitative approach is applied in order to appropriately conduct this research. The qualitative approach can be defined as “*a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data.*” (Bell & Bryman, 2011, p.386).

2.2 Research method

Interviews with Swedish families are prioritised as they are the main focus of this research. The criteria for selection of interviewees is very small, where the household has to have at least two individuals with at least one being under the age of 18 and one being over the age of 18, and all members have to at least have lived in Sweden for over 5 years. The interviews are semi-structured as some key factors must be mentioned and questioned, and room must be allowed for open-ended questions which may lead to answers that provide additional

details/viewpoints (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). By prioritising interviews with Swedish families and using a semi-structured approach, this research aims to gain a nuanced understanding of the experiences and perspectives of this particular group.

Content analysis is a research method that involves systematically examining and analysing the content of texts and documents to draw conclusions based on the data collected. This method is objective and systematic, using predefined categories to measure and analyse the content. While content analysis is often considered a quantitative method, there are still qualitative elements involved in the process, such as interpreting and analysing the meanings behind the data. The goal of content analysis is to objectively evaluate and understand the relevant material in order to make informed conclusions. As noted by Luo (2019), this method allows researchers to analyse and interpret large amounts of data in a systematic and structured way.

2.3 Quality and type of data

Interviews conducted with a diverse group of individuals are important to take into account. Although these may contain opinions and biases, there may be some facts behind those opinions as they may provide a general sentiment which can be gauged and can show the impacts of inflation and other circumstances. Snowballing is used as it helps in finding interviewees as it is difficult to find random families/households that would gladly accept an interview unless perhaps recommended by someone they know. Snowballing is a sampling method that allows for interviewees to recommend similar interviewees to the interviewer.

Due to distance and COVID-19 concerns, the interviews for this study were primarily conducted via phone call and digital zoom call, with some being conducted physically. Before beginning the interviews, I requested the participants' permission to record the conversation so that they could review it

afterwards and ensure that no important information was missed. All participants were guaranteed that they were to remain anonymous before the start of the interview.

Since I used a semi-structured interview format, it allowed for an open dialogue and the flexibility to adapt and evolve the questions as the conversation progresses (Rowley, 2012). This approach can provide more comprehensive and nuanced answers to the research questions (Raworth, 2019). To ensure the quality of the data collected during the interviews, I conducted quick test interviews and provided the opportunity for the participants to ask questions and reflect on their responses before conducting the recorded interview. The interviewees were asked the questions and were told that their answers are to be based on changes in their lives in the last 3 years in order to see what their habits were before and during the crises/situations.

To investigate the research question, I used a combination of primary and secondary data sources. Primary data, which is collected directly for the current study, was given the most weight and included empirical data, scientific articles, and other theses. It is important that primary data is accurate and unbiased, rather than being fabricated or biased. Secondary data, on the other hand, consists of information that has already been collected by reputable sources, such as government websites and data collection websites.

The sources I used were primarily found through Google Scholar, which is a database of scientific publications and other credible sources. I also ensured that the sources I used contained credible sources themselves in order to strengthen the validity of their claims.

2.4 Validity and reliability

Two factors that may be used to assess the research's quality are authenticity and trustworthiness. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are the kinds of markers that are linked to validity and reliability, which measure the trustworthiness in a qualitative research (Kumar, 2018).

Credibility refers to the extent to which the research findings are believable and accurate. In order to establish credibility, researchers should use multiple sources of evidence and triangulate their data, or use multiple methods to collect data on the same topic. This helps to ensure that the findings are not based on a single perspective or method and are more likely to be accurate. Another way is by being transparent in the reporting of the study, including full disclosure of any potential biases or conflicts of interest (Ibid.).

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study can be applied to other contexts or populations. This is particularly important in qualitative research, as the findings are often based on a small sample size and may not be generalizable to a larger population (Saunders et al., 2019). Researchers should carefully consider the context and limitations of their study and how these may affect the transferability of their findings. Transferability can be increased by using a diverse sample and carefully considering the external validity of the study

Dependability refers to the consistency and stability of the findings over time. This means that if the study were to be replicated, the results should be similar. Researchers should document their methods and data collection processes carefully in order to ensure that their study is dependable. Dependability is centred on my ability to collect empirical data in a trustworthy and independent manner (Saunders et al., 2019).

Confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings of the study are free from bias and subjectivity. This means that the researchers should be objective and transparent in their methods and analysis, and avoid interpreting the data in a way that confirms their preconceived notions (Hox & Boeijs, 2005). Ensuring confirmability is an important aspect of establishing the trustworthiness of the research. One way to increase confirmability is through the use of triangulation, or the use of multiple methods or data sources to validate the findings (Kumar, 2018).

2.5 Ethical and sustainable considerations

Ethical and sustainable considerations are crucial in research studies for several reasons. Firstly, they ensure that the values and principles guiding the research process align with societal norms and values. This is important because research has the potential to impact people's lives and shape societal norms and policies. Therefore, it is crucial that research is conducted in an ethical and responsible manner. Ethical and sustainable considerations are important because they help to minimise harm to people and the environment. Research has the potential to cause harm to people, animals, and the environment if it is not conducted with sensitivity and care. At the same time, ethical and sustainable considerations are important because they help to build trust and credibility in the research process. When research is conducted ethically and sustainably, it is more likely to be accepted and trusted by the public, which is important for the advancement of knowledge and the development of evidence-based policies (Connelly, 2014).

Ethical considerations refer to the principles of conduct that guide the research process and ensure that the rights and dignity of participants are respected. This includes obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting their privacy and confidentiality, and avoiding harm or discomfort. Researchers should also consider the potential risks and benefits of the study and ensure that the benefits justify any risks to participants. Diversity is an important factor when collecting

empirical data as people of different ethnicities, economic status, geographical locations, and social status can each be impacted and adapt to circumstances differently (Pietilä et al., 2019). In order to maintain anonymity, some details and answers provided by interviewees may not be used in the research if they are deemed unethical or not useful.

Sustainable considerations refer to the impact of the research on the environment and the long-term sustainability of the research (Connelly, 2014). This includes minimising the use of resources, such as paper and energy, and considering the environmental impact of the research. Researchers should also consider the potential long-term consequences of the study and ensure that it does not have negative impacts on the environment or the people being studied. It is essential for researchers to consider both ethical and sustainable considerations in order to ensure that their work is conducted in a responsible and respectful manner.

3. Literature review

The purpose of this chapter is to examine and analyse the existing research on the relevant topics to this thesis. The primary sources for this study are peer-reviewed scientific articles that have been widely cited by others. These articles include supporting evidence from various sources, including some that offer firsthand accounts. In addition to these scientific publications, other credible sources, many of which are from government sources, are also utilised.

3.1 Swedish tourism consumption

Tourist consumer behaviour refers to the actions and decisions made by tourists during their travel, including their purchasing habits and engagement with various travel-related products and services (Santos et al., 2021). Researchers have studied tourist consumer behaviour in order to understand the motivations and behaviours of tourists, and to identify trends and patterns in the travel industry (Tomić et al., 2019). There are several factors that influence tourist consumer behaviour, including personal, psychological, and social factors. Personal factors include age, income, education, and lifestyle, while psychological factors include attitudes, perceptions, and motivation. Social factors include cultural, family, and social group influences (Juvan et al., 2017).

One aspect of tourist consumer behaviour that has garnered significant attention is the decision-making process of tourists. This includes the factors that influence where tourists choose to go, how they plan their trip, and what activities they engage in during their travels (Baltescu, 2019). Researchers have identified several key influences on tourist decision-making, including personal characteristics, such as age and income, as well as external factors such as marketing efforts and societal influences (Santos et al., 2021).

Another important aspect of tourist consumer behaviour is the impact of cultural differences on travel decisions and behaviour. Researchers have found that cultural norms and values can influence the types of destinations and

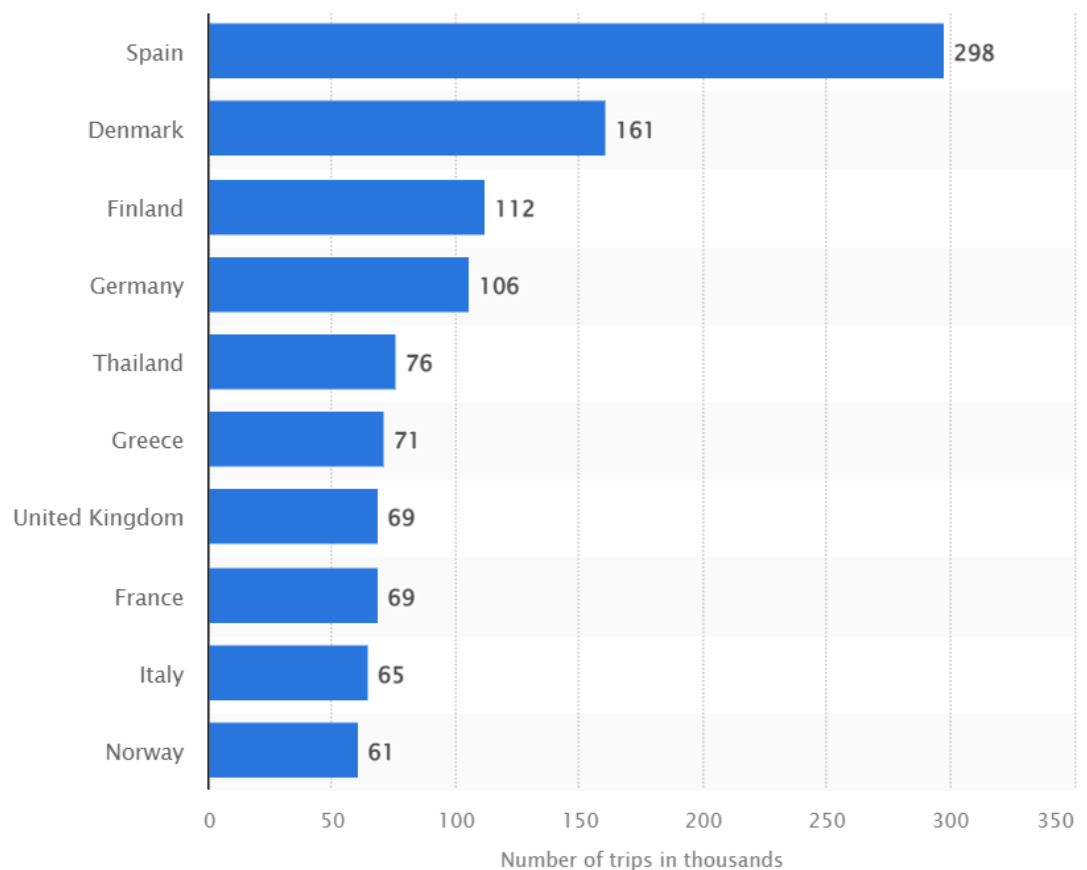
activities that tourists prefer, as well as their purchasing habits while travelling (Tomić et al., 2019). For example, tourists from collectivist cultures may be more likely to engage in group activities and seek out experiences that are authentic and culturally immersive, while tourists from individualistic cultures may prioritise personal freedom and flexibility in their travel plans (Ibid.).

Overall, the study of tourist consumer behaviour is an important field that helps researchers and industry professionals better understand the motivations and behaviours of tourists, and to develop strategies and products that align with the needs and preferences of travellers (Juvan et al., 2017). By understanding the factors that influence tourist decision-making and behaviour, researchers and industry professionals can better tailor their offerings to meet the needs of tourists and enhance the travel experience (Baltescu, 2019). Swedes are known for their love of travel and exploration. Many Swedes are drawn to the outdoors and enjoy hiking, skiing, and camping, which can be easily done within Sweden or abroad (Frändberg & Vilhelmson, 2011). Sweden's long, light summers and beautiful landscape make it a popular destination for travellers from all over the world (Ibid.).

One of the main reasons Swedes enjoy travelling is for the opportunity to experience different cultures and ways of life (Frändberg & Vilhelmson, 2011). Swedes are generally open-minded and curious, and they enjoy immersing themselves in different cultures and trying new things (Andersson, 2022). This is especially true for younger Swedes, who often take gap years or extended vacations to travel and explore new countries. Another reason Swedes like to travel is for the opportunity to relax and unwind. Sweden has a high standard of living and a strong work ethic, so many Swedes appreciate the opportunity to take a break and recharge their batteries (Svanberg & Lindh, 2019). Travel can provide a welcome escape from the stresses of daily life and allow people to disconnect and relax.

Swedes also travel for the opportunity to learn and grow, where many Swedes value education and personal development, and travelling can provide an opportunity to learn about new cultures, histories, and ways of life (Grech et al., 2020). It can also provide an opportunity to develop new skills, such as learning a new language or trying a new sport. Overall, travel is an important part of Swedish culture and is something that many Swedes value and prioritise in their lives (Ibid.).

Figure 1: Leading countries of destinations for international tourists from Sweden in 2020, by number of trips (López, 2021)



According to López (2021), many Swedes travel to destinations such as Spain and Thailand due to their warm climates and relatively low prices for goods and services. Other popular destinations for Swedish travellers include Denmark,

Finland, Norway, and Germany, as these countries are easily accessible by car or ground transportation from Sweden (Ibid.). Swedish families may travel for a variety of reasons, including the desire to bond with loved ones, discover new cultures, engage in leisure activities, and take a break from their daily routines (Durko & Petrick, 2013).

3.2 Tourism adaptability

There are several factors that can influence the adaptability of tourists in the face of global crises. These include personal characteristics, such as risk aversion and resilience, as well as external factors such as the availability of alternative travel options and the level of support provided by the destination (Watcharasukarn et al., 2011).

The tourism industry is highly susceptible to global crises, as events such as natural disasters, economic downturns, and pandemics can disrupt travel patterns and impact destination attractiveness (Santos et al., 2021). Previous research has examined the impacts of various global crises on the tourism industry, including the 9/11 attacks (Richards, 2003), the SARS outbreak (Forsyth & Witt, 2006), and the global financial crisis (Liu & Li, 2010). These studies have found that global crises can lead to significant declines in international tourism, as well as changes in the types of destinations and activities that tourists choose (Persson-Fischer & Liu, 2021).

In response to global crises, tourists may adopt a range of coping strategies, including changing their travel plans, seeking alternative destinations, and altering their activities while on vacation (Forsyth & Witt, 2006; Li et al., 2014). Research has also shown that tourists' adaptability is influenced by a variety of factors, including their risk perception, financial resources, and level of travel experience (Li et al., 2014). One study that has particularly relevant insights for our discussion is the research conducted by Li et al. (2014) on the adaptability of Chinese tourists during the global financial crisis. The study

found that Chinese tourists were more likely to adapt to the crisis by seeking alternative destinations and altering their travel plans, rather than cancelling their vacations altogether. Tourists with higher levels of travel experience and financial resources are more likely to adapt successfully in times of crisis (Abd Aziz et al., 2022).

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on Swedish tourists, with many people altering their travel plans and behaviours in response to the pandemic (Tegnell, 2021). One way in which Swedish tourists adapted to Covid-19 was by opting for domestic travel over international travel (Ibid.). Many people chose to explore more of their own country, with popular destinations including the Swedish archipelago, the countryside, and the mountains. This trend was likely influenced by travel restrictions and quarantine requirements, as well as concerns about health and safety (Ludvigsson, 2022).

As Sweden faces an energy crisis, high inflation, and a devaluing currency, tourists may feel uncertain about their ability to adapt to these changes while travelling. However, research in psychology has shown that people have a natural ability to adapt to new environments and situations (Montauk & Kuhl, 2020; Khalid et al., 2020). This adaptability is often referred to as psychological resilience, which is the ability to bounce back from challenges and setbacks (Ibid.). This process of adaptation is facilitated by a number of factors, including the tourist's previous experiences with similar challenges, their ability to cope with stress, and their overall level of psychological resilience (Scholtz & De Ridder, 2021).

Tourists can also increase their adaptability by staying informed about the situation in the country they are travelling to and making informed decisions about their travel plans (Tomić et al., 2019). This may involve seeking out alternative forms of transportation, finding ways to save money on expenses, or

simply being more mindful of their spending habits (Ibid.). Overall, the psychology behind tourist adaptability suggests that travellers can navigate through difficult times by staying positive, staying informed, and using their natural ability to adapt and bounce back from challenges (Montauk & Kuhl, 2020).

3.3 Inflation in Sweden

Inflation is a measure of how much the price of goods and services is increasing over time (Sveriges Riksbank, 2022). It is typically expressed as a percentage, with a higher percentage indicating a faster rate of price increases.

High inflation in Sweden can have a number of negative impacts on the economy and on individual households (Delbosc et al., 2019). One of the primary effects of high inflation is that it can erode the purchasing power of money, making it difficult for people to afford basic goods and services (Ibid.). This can lead to a decline in living standards, as people struggle to keep up with rising prices (Artuc et al., 2022). Another impact of high inflation in Sweden is that it can lead to an increase in borrowing costs (Petrović et al., 2021). As the cost of borrowing money increases, businesses may be less likely to invest in new projects, which can lead to a slowdown in economic growth. High inflation can also make it more difficult for individuals to access credit, as lenders may be less willing to extend loans due to the increased risk of default (Ibid.).

In November 2022, Sweden saw its annual inflation rate reach a 30-year high of 11.5%, following a 10.9% increase in October. This matched market predictions and was driven primarily by rising costs for food and non-alcoholic beverages (18.1%), housing and utilities (17.6%), health (5.4%), and miscellaneous goods and services (5.5%). Prices for transport, recreation and culture, and clothing and footwear, on the other hand, saw slower increases. On a month-to-month basis, consumer prices rose by 1%, fueled in large part by a significant increase in electricity prices of 16.8% (Trading Economics, 2022).

Figure 2: 25 year graph - inflation rate in Sweden (Trading Economics, 2022)



According to the graph, the inflation rate in Sweden spiked sharply between 2020 and 2023. This means that during this time period, the prices of goods and services in Sweden were increasing at a faster rate than they had been in the past. The specific causes of this increase in inflation are not clear from the information provided, but it could be due to a variety of factors such as increases in the cost of raw materials, changes in government policies, or shifts in the overall demand for goods and services (Artuc et al., 2022).

It is worth noting that while a certain level of inflation is generally considered normal, high levels of inflation can have negative impacts on an economy (Sveriges Riksbank, 2022). For example, high inflation can lead to increased uncertainty and reduced purchasing power for consumers, as their money may not go as far as it used to (Ibid.). It can also make it more difficult for tourists to plan for the future, as they may not be able to accurately predict what their costs will be (Baltescu, 2019).

In addition to the economic impacts, high inflation can also have social and political consequences (Calanter & Zisu, 2022). For example, it may lead to

increased social unrest and political instability, as people become frustrated with their declining standard of living and the inability of the government to address the problem. High inflation can also lead to increased uncertainty and unpredictability in the economy, which can make it difficult for businesses to plan for the future (Bouzahar & Necira, 2022).

Inflation can impact the affordability of vacation destinations, as it can make some destinations more expensive for tourists (Bocci et al., 2021). For example, if the local currency of a destination experiences high inflation, it may become more expensive for foreign tourists to visit, as they will need to exchange more of their own currency to purchase goods and services (Bouzahar & Necira, 2022). This can make the destination less attractive to tourists, especially families, who may choose to go elsewhere. The same can be said for the vice versa. For example, when the Swedish currency devalued against most, if not all, currencies, it became more expensive for Swedes to travel as exchanging their currency for others became less valuable (Bacchetta & Chikhani, 2020).

3.4 Energy crisis in Sweden

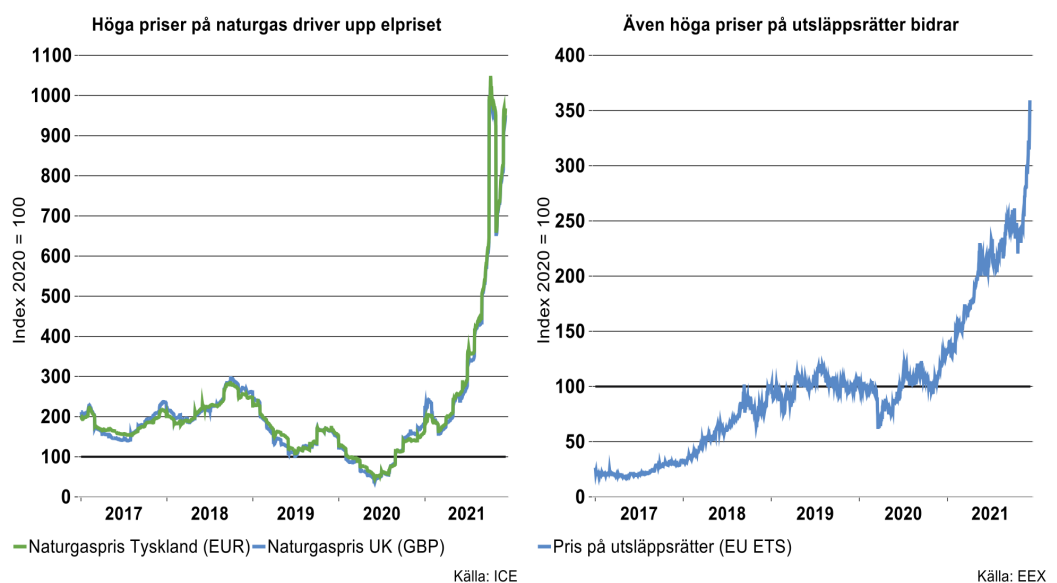
The energy crises that we are experiencing right now was a talked about threat that has been theorised back in 2008 and that is now more or less a reality (Goldthau, 2008). The article written by Goldthau (2008) talks about the possible outcome of only having one supplier that distributes energy which they theorised gave too much political power and influence.

Russia is a major supplier of energy to Europe, particularly in the form of natural gas (Popkostova, 2022). However, there have been concerns about the reliability and security of Russia's energy exports to Europe, and some have argued that Russia has used its energy resources as a political weapon to exert influence over European countries (Ibid.). One example of this is the Ukraine gas crisis of 2005-2008, in which Russia cut off gas supplies to Ukraine over a pricing dispute (Kovacevic, 2009). As a result, several European countries that

relied on Russian gas transiting through Ukraine also experienced shortages and disrupted supplies. This incident highlighted the potential vulnerabilities of Europe's energy dependence on Russia and the risks of relying on a single supplier (Reuters Staff, 2009).

Another issue is the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, which was a proposed natural gas pipeline that would run from Russia to Germany under the Baltic Sea, and was completed in September of 2021 (Zimmermann, 2022). The project has faced opposition from some European countries and the United States, who argue that it would increase Europe's dependence on Russian gas and could be used by Russia to exert political influence (Reul et al., 2022).

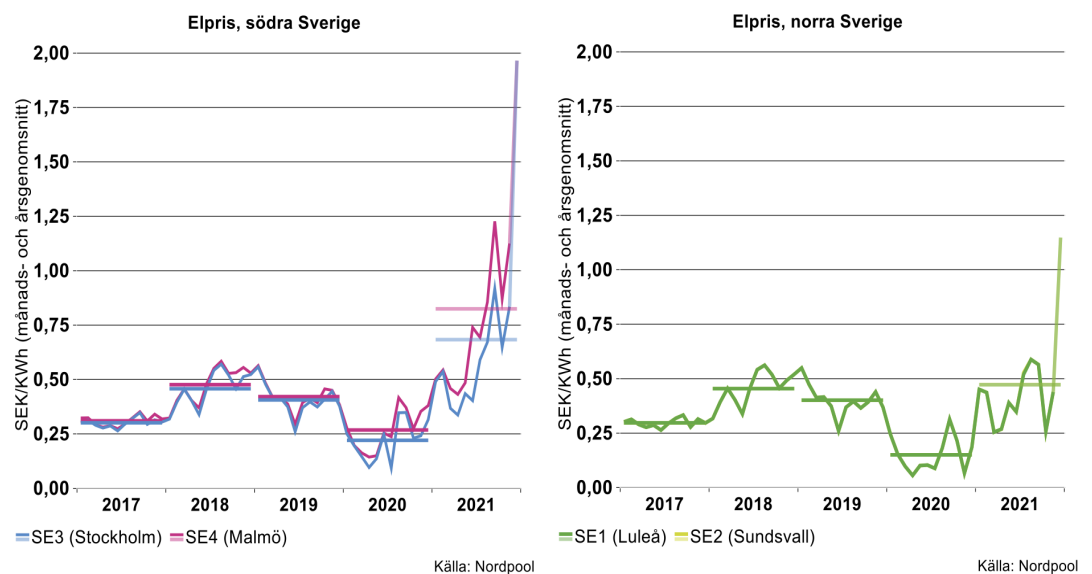
Figure 3: Price of natural gas in Sweden from different exporters (Teknikföretag, 2021)



The graph above is from the end of 2021, which is before the Russian-Ukrainian war, and the price for gas has not decreased on average since then. In addition to these specific incidents, there are also broader concerns about the potential for Russia to use its energy exports as a tool of foreign policy. Some have argued that Russia has used its energy resources to try to influence the foreign policies of European countries and to divide the European

Union (Mohanty et al., 2014). Overall, while Russia is a significant supplier of energy to Europe, there are concerns about the reliability and security of its exports and the potential for them to be used as a political weapon (Clifford, 2022). These issues highlight the importance of diversifying Europe's energy sources and reducing its dependence on a single supplier (Oxford Analytica, 2021). Finding alternative ways to import energy from others is still a struggle which has affected the economy and made it hard for many families and individuals in Sweden (Von Homeyer et al., 2022).

Figure 4: Price of household electricity in Southern and Northern Sweden (Teknikföretag, 2021)



Although the graph above is from the end of 2021, the price for electricity in Sweden has not decreased on average since. The energy crisis in Sweden has led to a significant increase in the price of household electricity usage, where this has likely had negative impacts on family tourism consumption in the country. When the cost of household expenses, such as electricity, increases significantly, it can put a strain on family budgets (Nair & Sinha, 2020). This can lead to a decrease in discretionary spending on things like vacations and travel (Yun & Yoon, 2019).

Families may choose to cut back on travel in order to afford necessary household expenses, or they may opt for more budget-friendly travel options. The energy crisis may also make Sweden a less attractive destination for tourists, as the higher costs of electricity may be reflected in the prices of goods and services throughout the country (Caber et al., 2020). Tourists may choose to visit other destinations where the cost of living is lower (Ibid.).

The energy crisis could have broader implications for the Swedish economy as a whole. If the high cost of electricity leads to a decrease in tourism and other forms of consumer spending, it could have a negative impact on businesses and the overall health of the economy (Hartgen et al., 1979). It is important for the government and other stakeholders to address the energy crisis in a way that minimises the negative impacts on families and the economy (Ibid.). This could involve implementing measures to reduce the cost of electricity or finding alternative sources of energy.

4. Empirical findings

This chapter aims to provide a detailed view of the empirical data found for this research. The questions are first explained and given the reasoning behind them. Then the relevant and important answers are highlighted and analysed in the context of this thesis. The full interview responses are in the appendices and the responses are summarised, and discussed to a small extent, in this chapter.

4.1 The questions

The questions for the interviewees were focused on gathering information about an individual's household's travel habits, including their motivations for travelling, changes in their buying and travelling habits, and plans for future travel. The questions also delve into the impact of the global situations (specifically the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation, and energy crises) on the household's everyday life and travel decisions. The questions ask about the economic situation of the individual's household, including the number of household members, employment status, and any periods of unemployment. The interviewees were asked the questions and were told that their answers are to be based on changes in their lives in the last 3 years. The interview questions were as follows:

- Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)
- How did your buying habits change?
- How did your travelling habits change?
- Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go?
- Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?
- Tell me, how are the global situations (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

- How are they affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?
- How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?
- How did Covid impact your travels?
- How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?
- How many household members are currently working?
- Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?
- Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

4.2 Analysis of interviews

When analysing an interview, it is helpful to consider the context in which the interview was conducted, including the purpose of the interview and the background of the interviewee. It is also important to consider the structure and organisation of the interview, including the questions asked and the responses provided. Analysing an interview may involve identifying the key themes and ideas discussed, as well as any patterns or trends in the responses. It may also involve examining the language and style used by the interviewee, as well as any underlying assumptions or biases present in the responses. Overall, analysing an interview involves critically examining and interpreting the information and ideas presented in order to better understand and evaluate the interviewee's perspective and experiences. It is important to note that the interviews were held for about 20 minutes at most.

Respondent 1: In this interview, the respondent discusses their usual travel habits, which primarily consist of leisure travel to the US and Canada to visit family and friends and experience different cultures. The respondent also mentions that they previously travelled for longer periods of time and visited multiple states and cities in the US, including Boston, Miami, and New York. However, their travel habits have changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and

restrictions, as well as rising costs, resulting in less frequent and shorter trips. The respondent also mentions that international travel has become more complex due to the pandemic and requires more precautions.

The respondent's buying habits have also changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic challenges, including a focus on saving money and cutting back on expenses such as dining out and unnecessary energy and water usage, *“My electric bill is one of my biggest concerns right now. We cut down on getting food from restaurants as well as trying to conserve power and water.”* The respondent also mentions that they have had to make decisions about whether to spend money on vacation or save it for potential future challenges, including inflation and the energy crisis. The respondent also expresses concerns about the rising costs of gasoline and is considering switching to an electric car, but is weighing the costs and benefits of this decision.

Overall, the respondent's travel and buying habits have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic challenges, and they are making decisions about how to prioritise and manage their expenses in response to these challenges.

Respondent 2: In this interview, the respondent discusses their usual travel habits, which primarily consist of vacation travel with family and friends to countries and destinations they have not previously visited. The respondent's travel habits have negatively changed over the past few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in less travel overall and a preference for closer destinations with low exposure to the virus. The respondent has primarily been travelling domestically, exploring different areas in Sweden.

The respondent's buying habits have also changed due to the current economic situation, with a focus on purchasing only necessary items rather than more

expensive or discretionary products. The respondent mentions that they have been more mindful of their spending due to global inflation and have been saving more money rather than spending it on unnecessary items.

The respondent's household financial conditions have also been impacted by the global inflation, leading to more careful spending and a focus on getting by with only necessary items. *“With the current economic situation, I’ve been less lenient on buying expensive products and more inclined to buy products I need rather than products I want.”* The respondent's travel decisions have also been affected by the economic challenges, with a preference for cheaper flights and purchasing tickets before high season in order to get the best deals. The respondent's employment status has not been affected by the economic challenges, as they are currently working part-time and studying for their master's degree. CSN loans have helped them with their expenses. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted the respondent's travel plans, as the required PCR tests and vaccinations have made them less inclined to travel overseas.

Respondent 3: In this interview, the respondent discusses their usual travel habits, which primarily consisted of leisure travel to experience new cultures and visit friends and family. The respondent has travelled internationally in the past few years, including to Australia with their family and to Southeast Asia on an exchange program. They have also had travel plans that were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The respondent's buying habits have not changed significantly and they have maintained their lifestyle with the help of annual pay raises. However, the respondent has noticed the impact of inflation on the cost of living, including energy prices and food products, which has required them to be more mindful of their spending. *“We maintained our lifestyle from the yearly pay raises I received, but now the pay raises are less than the inflation rate. Also the cost*

for electricity is through the roof. We started buying some cheaper brand products, but not the cheapest as we still want some quality of life.”

The respondent's household financial conditions have been impacted by the inflation, with a greater percentage of their salary being required to meet necessary expenses. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted the respondent's travel plans, causing delays and changes to their intended destinations. In response, the respondent is considering cheaper destinations for their future travel plans. The respondent's employment status has not been affected by the economic challenges, as they are currently working and need to maintain their employment in order to pay their bills.

Respondent 4: In this interview, the respondent discusses their usual motivations for travelling, which include experiencing new cultures and making memories with family and friends. They mention that their buying habits have not changed significantly other than “*buying less often the expensive products such as sushi and steak*”, and that they tend to save up for larger purchases in advance. The respondent's travelling habits have also remained consistent, with a focus on enjoying the experience to the fullest despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the past few years, the respondent has travelled to the United Kingdom and completed an internship in a real estate company, and they have future plans to visit Italy and Greece to experience the local cultures and cuisine.

The respondent also discusses the impact of inflation on their daily life and travel decisions, noting that it has made it more difficult for some friends to keep up with monthly bills and daily expenses. “*In Sweden, inflation is very high, but luckily the job I have pays me well, so I believe I am stable for now, but I have friends that get paid way less and they tell me how hard it is to keep up with monthly bills and even daily purchases. This is making them cut down on many things that were not even considered expensive in the first place.*”

They also mention that they have had to adjust their travel plans to account for the economic impact of COVID-19, such as opting for economy flights and Airbnb accommodations instead of business class and hotels. In terms of their household's economic situation, the respondent is currently employed and their husband is unemployed, while their son is a student. The respondent mentions that they were unemployed for eight months during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. *“Good thing I had a lot of money saved up, but now it's really crucial that I am working again.”* Overall, the respondent emphasises the importance of travelling as a means of experiencing different cultures and expanding one's perspectives on life.

Respondent 5: The interviewee typically travels to visit family and friends and has had to cut back on travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, choosing to focus on domestic travel instead. They have also had to make cutbacks in their household budget due to inflation, including reducing their spending on non-essential items. The global situation, including the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation, has had a significant impact on the interviewee's everyday life and travel decisions. *“We don't spend as much money on things as we did before, like eating out in fancy places or doing activities such as go-karting.”*

They have had to be more careful about their travels and have also had to find cheaper options for holidays, such as cheaper flights and accommodations. The economic situation has also impacted their household financial conditions, as they have had to make cutbacks in order to manage the impact of inflation and high household electrical costs. The interviewee has faced unemployment for longer than 6 months in the past two years. Despite these challenges, they have been able to get through it and have even discovered some beautiful places to visit within Sweden. *“More or less we also felt better when we stopped buying unnecessary things and we looked over our grocery shopping list on what we actually needed. It had a positive effect for us.”*

Respondent 6: It seems that the global situations, specifically the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation, have impacted the individual's household's travel habits and decisions heavily. *“Initially during Covid I did not travel at all more than domestically to meet our family during summer and christmas holidays and then we went mostly by bus since it was cheaper than the trains.”* They have had to be more mindful of the cost of travel, opting for cheaper options such as taking the bus instead of the train, and are considering travelling domestically by plane due to it being cheaper than taking the train, according to the respondent, but are reluctant as the environmental impact is something they consider when travelling. The individual has also had to be more conscious of their spending, particularly on groceries, and is trying to find cheaper alternatives/brands. The weak currency in the Turkish side of Cyprus has made it a more attractive destination for the individual and their family.

The individual's household has also had to follow certain regulations and requirements when travelling abroad, such as COVID tests and health checks, which have impacted their travel decisions negatively as they found them to be a hassle and turned them away from travel. The individual has been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the past 2 years while they were studying, but is currently looking for a job and living off saved money. The individual also mentioned that they believe that people have been opting for less popular travel destinations due to the high prices of popular ones. *“A lot of my friends want to go to France for example, but choose not to as it is very expensive due to all the people that haven't travelled due to Covid travelling recently, as well as inflation and the Swedish Krona losing its value in the last 2 years.”* Overall, it seems that the global situation has had a significant impact on the individual's household's travel habits and decisions, as well as their household finances.

Respondent 7: The person in this interview enjoys travelling for leisure and with family. They have travelled internationally to a variety of countries, including America, New Zealand, Australia, Chile, Bolivia, South Korea, and Canada. They have had to adjust their travel habits due to the pandemic, including changing their plans and being unable to travel internationally for a period of time. Inflation has also impacted their household financial conditions, causing an increase in prices of everyday items. The global situation, including Covid regulations and the energy crisis, has affected their everyday life, household financial conditions, and travel decisions. *“Also because of the electricity prices we are doing the laundry less often.”*

The pandemic caused them to have to cut their trip in 2019 short and return home, and also caused a halt to their international travel for a period of time. Inflation has also affected their household financial conditions, as they have noticed an increase in the price of certain items in their weekly shopping. Despite these challenges, the individual and their family have remained working and have continued to plan and look forward to future trips, finding creative solutions to manage their household finances. *“Now we travel mostly within Sweden and we are very careful, but much less than before. Also we research the restrictions and regulations of the places we intend to travel to in order to be prepared.”* The person interviewed is married and has a 5 year old son, and both they and their spouse are currently working.

Respondent 8: It seems that the global situation, specifically the Covid pandemic and related travel restrictions, has had a significant impact on the interviewee's travel habits. They have not been able to travel outside of Sweden in the past two years and have had to adjust their spending habits in order to save money due to increased living expenses and inflation. The interviewee is the sole earner in their household and has had to make lifestyle changes in order to make ends meet. They have also had to prioritise their spending, moving from purchasing more expensive meat and fish products to cheaper fruits and

vegetables. The individual is the only working member of their household and has not been unemployed for more than six months in the past two years. It appears that the interviewee's financial situation has been negatively impacted by the global situation and they have had to make adjustments in order to cope with these changes. They also mention sending money to support their family in Syria. *“Living expenses have gone up and it has become considerably harder to send money overseas to help support my family in Syria.”*

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter aims to discuss and analyse and connect the empirical data to the rest of the research. At the same time, this chapter aims to answer the research question and talks about limitations and potential for future research.

5.1 The data collected

Based on the interviews with the eight participants, it seems that the global situation, including the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation, has had a negative impact on their travel habits and household financial conditions. The pandemic has caused disruptions and challenges in their ability to travel, whether it be having to cut a trip short or halt travel altogether for a period of time. At the same time there is a common theme within the interviews that there has been increased domestic travel and a decrease in international travel in the last two years for the interviewees. It did not make a difference whether the household had only two individuals or five, where all of their situations were very similar and enough of the individuals were employed or saved enough money to adapt, at least to some extent, to their situations. Adapting does not necessarily mean that their standards of living have remained the same.

Inflation has also affected their household finances, as they have noticed an increase in the price of certain items in their weekly shopping. Despite these challenges, many of the participants have continued to work and have found ways to adapt and make the best of the situation, such as by finding creative solutions to manage their household finances and planning future trips more carefully. These experiences highlight the widespread impact of global crises on these family households and their daily lives. According to a recent Swedish news article, an increasing number of households in Sweden are unable to pay their household bills (The Local, 2023). This makes sense since a number of interviewees said that their salary has not increased an equal relation to inflation as well as electrical prices.

A common theme in the answers from the interviews is that COVID-19 was the biggest influencer on the families tourism consumption. Whereas the other crises, i.e. the energy crisis and inflation, have impacted the families goods and services consumption in general. The strong similarities between the interviews and correlation with the theoretical and literary findings proves that Swedish family households are indeed heavily and negatively impacted by the current crises. The literature review talks about Swedish tourism consumption, tourism adaptability, inflation in Sweden, and the current energy crisis in Sweden.

5.2 Answering the research question

The main research question “How do Swedish family households adapt their tourism consumption in the wake of modern global political, economic, and health crises?” is answered by the research itself, as the theoretical, literary and empirical findings correlate and support the thesis.

The purpose of this research was to explore responses of Swedish family households to globally changing circumstances, with consideration of household diversity and drivers of their adaptation strategies. This research project has focused on the adaptability of travel consumption in Sweden to global crises, specifically in relation to families. Tourism is a vital part of the global economy, but it is also highly susceptible to global crises such as natural disasters, political instability, economic recessions, and health pandemics. These crises can significantly disrupt travel and have a significant impact on the tourism industry and destination communities. In response to these crises, tourists may adjust their travel plans and behaviour, including opting for alternative destinations and practising budget travel.

This study aimed to explore the adaptability of tourists under global crises by reviewing relevant literature and analysing interviews of how Swedish families and their tourism behaviours have responded to specific global crises. The results of this research highlight the importance of understanding the

adaptability of travel consumption in the face of global crises and the need for destination communities and the tourism industry to be prepared for and responsive to such events. Overall, the research suggests that Swedish families are capable of adapting their travel consumption in the face of global crises, though the extent of this adaptability may vary depending on the specific crisis and individual circumstances.

5.3 Limitations and future research

It is expected that this study will provide insight into the adaptability of tourists under global crises and the factors that influence their ability to adapt. The results of this study may be useful for tourism practitioners and policymakers in developing strategies and interventions to support tourists during global crises. This research mainly focuses on the Swedish family perspective, where this means that there is no empirical data collected comparing perspectives from Swedish businesses, nor family households from countries undergoing similar crises. This means that this thesis does not prove that Swedish family households are more heavily and negatively impacted than others, but does fulfil the purpose of this study, as stated in the introduction chapter, “to explore responses of Swedish family households to globally changing circumstances, with consideration of household diversity and drivers of their adaptation strategies”.

Future research about the business perspective and/or non-family household, in Sweden or other countries, may help to understand different perspectives. The business perspective may be important in order to understand why the businesses are increasing their prices and how they adapt during times of crisis. Understanding why businesses have increased their prices for goods and services and their adaptability in times of crises may help researchers connect and correlate data.

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Appendices

Interview responses

Respondent 1

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

Every 1 to 2 years, for leisure, family, and friends. I usually travel to the US and Canada to experience a different culture, go sight seeing as well as explore new locations each time. My family is pretty big and we are scattered all over the North American continent. We usually visit each other, whether it's for wedding purposes or it has been a long time since we have seen each other.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

In the last year I've been focusing more on trying to save money to be able to make my payments at the end of the month. My electric bill is one of my biggest concerns right now. We cut down on getting food from restaurants as well as trying to conserve power and water. Every once in a while I treat myself by getting food that we crave but can't have everyday because it's rather unhealthy or expensive. I also would save up to go out to fancy dinners with my friends after a long day's work.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

Yes. Not travelling as much as before due to the recent pandemic and restrictions, as well as less money left for us to spend on travelling due to rising costs. When we travel, we take into account the covid restrictions in the destination we are bound to. Before Covid I was very social throughout my travels, meeting new people from different cultures, getting to know the beautiful differences we have but also sharing the common things we have as humans.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time (last 2 years) ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

International travel was more complex due to the pandemic and we were concerned about it, it required lots of precautions. We would usually go to the US and Canada once a year, but in the last 2 years my family and we have only travelled to 1 US state (Texas) for a week. We used to go for about 2 to 3 weeks at a time and to multiple states, as well as go to Canada for a week on our way back. In the US, we would also visit Boston, Miami, and New York. Boston was very classy in terms of the people's dress code and actions, their casinos were over the top and it was a nice experience. Miami felt like a movie and it felt just right to be and live there. Beautiful weather, food, and it was a mini version of Cuba. New York was the least favourite for me due to the constant traffic and not to mention the unhelpful people and pollution.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

We plan to travel to the US in the beginning of 2023 to try and find work for my career and establish a new life for me and my family, as I feel that saving money would be easier there. I would also like to visit Canada and look for a job as well just to have a backup plan. Canada is very similar to the US, the only thing I would mind is the cold. Other than that, I believe both have opportunities that can be very beneficial for my family and I.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

We feel Covid regulations are restricting us to go out less than usual, and inflation and the energy crisis are worsening over time and it is getting tougher by the month. I have a V6 Diesel vehicle and cannot cope with the gas prices. I'm thinking of leaning towards an electric car to help save bills but even though I save money on gas, I will have to waste money on electricity to charge the car up, hence why I am still trying to make my mind up. At the same time, prices for electric cars are insane right now.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

It's making me triple think if I should spend my money on vacation or keep it for darker days to come, as I don't see things getting better very soon, but at the same time as I have mentioned before, our family lives across the continent and visiting them is important to us. It's a predicament that has to be solved by sacrificing parts of our lifestyle.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

We cut down on eating out and changed the location of where we usually shop for food and clothing. It's also tough providing for the kids such as buying them toys and school appliances and taking them to sporting activities.

How did Covid impact your travels?

The hassle of getting your Covid travel papers/documents as well as paranoia have affected my liking for travel negatively.

Economic situation**How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?**

4 people total, with 2 of them being under the age of 18.

How many household members are currently working?

2.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

Yes, I was unemployed for about 1 year until I found a job again a few months ago. My wife has been employed the entire time and was under financial strain while I was unemployed.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

Overall it's just been tough for me and my family, as we recently have been living less comfortably than before.

Respondent 2**Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)**

It's usually for vacation with family and friends to go to countries and sites we haven't seen before.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

With the current economic situation, I've been less lenient on buying expensive products and more inclined to buy products I need rather than products I want. In general, I buy things to help us get by.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

Over the past 3 years, we've been travelling less due to the risk of exposure to Corona. If we were to travel it would be to a country that's close to us and with low exposure to Corona, or simply travel within Sweden.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

Recently, we've gone to the mountains in Sweden and Norway, exploring places we haven't seen before. We would usually go either with friends or family and sleep in a hotel for around 2 or 3 nights to get a feel of the place we are visiting.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

We are planning to go to Cyprus for around a week with a couple of close friends since it has been a while since we've travelled and it's the most convenient place to visit regarding its prices and location, and on top of that I own an apartment there, thus reducing our costs for travelling even more.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

With the current global inflation, life has been harder and it has caused us to save more money rather than spend it on useless things for our pleasure. So instead of going to the supermarket and getting a bunch of snacks, I think twice and get things we need to get by.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

It has definitely made me go for cheaper flights with transits and buy tickets before the high season to get the best deals possible. Since I don't travel internationally that often, I wouldn't say that I am travelling that much less than before, but still less.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

As I mentioned before, we've been more careful with what we spend and get things we only need in order to live our daily life. Almost everything is much more expensive than 2 years ago, and my salary has not increased enough to compensate for that.

How did Covid impact your travels?

It has caused me to not travel whatsoever due to the PCR tests and vaccinations that passengers were obliged to take. Many complications plus exposure of COVID-19 had made me less inclined to travel overseas.

Economic situation

How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?

We are a family of 4 with my daughter being the only one under the age of 18.

How many household members are currently working?

2 of us currently have a job while 1 is unemployed and the other is still in highschool.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

No, I currently work part time while studying for my masters degree. I can't picture myself living without a job with the current inflation.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

As soon as I finish my masters degree I will be looking for high paying jobs within engineering. That should leave us financially comfortable for a long time.

Respondent 3

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

We travel to experience new cultures across the world, such as going to Thailand and South Africa. I also travel to visit friends and family whom we have not seen in years.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

Our buying habits have not changed much and have been mostly consistent until the last 2 years. We maintained our lifestyle from the yearly pay raises I received, but now the pay raises are less than the inflation rate. Also the cost for electricity is through the roof. We started buying some cheaper brand products, but not the cheapest as we still want some quality of life.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

Not really as we wouldn't travel multiple times a year even before the crises, but we do tend to try to save more money these days such as booking cheaper flights and hotels.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

I travelled to Australia with my family for a few months. We also visited South East Asia for 2 weeks for the weather.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

Our current plan is to travel to the United States and visit my friend in the state of California for a week. We are also looking at potentially visiting Poland later in the year.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

Covid has made it harder to travel due to the requirements needed and constant safety screenings at airports. Travel plans were also cancelled for two years due to the pandemic. Inflation has made everything more expensive, especially energy prices and food products, which has required me to think twice about what I'm purchasing.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

I'm now looking at cheaper destinations, cheap countries in Europe such as Hungary and Poland instead of a general trip to the US or Asia.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

We still purchase what is needed but it has definitely taken a greater percentage out of my salary. So we are trying to eat out less and use public transportation more often if only one of us needs to leave the house.

How did Covid impact your travels?

It delayed my travel plans and changed the destination of certain countries we had intended to travel to.

Economic situation

How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?

We are 3 people in the household and one is currently under the age of 18.

How many household members are currently working?

My mother and I are working while my brother is still in highschool.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

No. I need to be employed in order to keep paying the bills.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

No.

Respondent 4

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

We don't travel that much, but when we do we usually travel to experience different cultures and look at what the different parts of the world have to offer as well as make memories, whether it is with family or friends.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

Our buying habits have not changed much, other than buying less often the expensive products such as sushi and steak. I tend to save up for what we want in advance, especially if it involves travelling expenses.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

Travelling habits have not changed that much, as we did not travel much in the first place. We also try to forget about the Covid situation and just enjoy it as much as possible.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

Recently, we travelled to the United Kingdom for three things: to see my cousin, enjoy good food, and work in an internship stage as an agent in a real estate company. The internship was for a month and 2 weeks. Our whole stay lasted for 3 months in which I completed my internship, visited museums and ate a lot of food.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

We are thinking of going to Italy and Greece to experience the culture and taste their local dishes. Italy has good food and Greece has beautiful beaches. All in all I expect to have a great time with my family.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories.

In Sweden, inflation is very high, but luckily the job I have pays me well, so I believe I am stable for now, but I have friends that get paid way less and they tell me how hard it is to keep up with monthly bills and even daily purchases. This is making them cut down on many things that were not even considered expensive in the first place.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

I currently help some family members by providing them with financial assistance which prevents us from going all out like we used to do on our travels. So now when I usually book for a flight, we take economy rather than business, and use Airbnb rather than well known hotels.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

Like I mentioned previously I am currently financially helping family members, and with inflation increasing their costs, it increased mine even more as I have my immediate family's costs as well.

How did Covid impact your travels?

We love to travel so Covid is not a big game changer for us, we just have to be more careful with our hygiene when on the plane and in the airports and all will be fine. Of course when Covid began, I had a flight I had to cancel but now with the laws and regulations on Covid being lifted and more flexible, I am back to my old habits of travelling, other than economy class and Airbnb.

Economic situation**How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?**

We are 3 people. Me, my husband and our son who is 15 years old.

How many household members are currently working?

Only me.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

Once covid began, I was unemployed for 8 months. Good thing I had a lot of money saved up, but now it's really crucial that I am working again.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

Travelling made us experience many things and changed my views on different aspects in life. For those who have not travelled before or have not travelled enough, I encourage you to do so because it is very important for families to bond and experience such differences and find similarities between our human nature.

Respondent 5

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

We usually travel to visit family and friends because everyone lives so far apart from each other. So when me and my family travel we either visit my parents or my wife's and sometimes we also look in with our friends to see if they want to hang out and have a get together since we seldom see each other so much nowadays.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

They sure did change due to inflation. We don't spend as much money on things as we did before, like eating out in fancy places or doing activities such as go-karting. Now I really take my time to see what is really needed to buy compared to before where it was more "I don't need it but I want it" kind of thing. It's been hard for us but we just have to manage for the time being.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

We started to minimise the amount of times we travelled compared to before. We thought that because of Covid we should take it a bit easy when travelling because we could never know if someone we meet might have it or had a small flu. So rather than take the chance and risk that either anyone in our family got Covid we started to travel less and met our close family members fewer times in case we carried the disease and made them sick.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

We didn't travel so much internationally but more domestic travel. We went to hike in the mountains that we have when we felt like it, and we went on bike trips and had picnics in some forest or field or near lakes. Usually it wasn't far from our house.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

Depending on how the inflation is going, hopefully we could travel internationally and have a family vacation somewhere warm and be by the ocean, maybe visit some family that we have outside the country.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

We have been making cutbacks on some guilty pleasures that we have to manage like I had to cut back on snus. I don't really use as much as I did before due to how much the cost became every month on that. We started to buy only what's necessary when we went to the grocery store. Chips and candy weren't on the list anymore and sweets weren't anything we bought either.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

We are looking for a cheaper travel option and something that all of us can agree that it might be something we are gonna enjoy. It has been very hard but we know that it can't be helped.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

With the cutbacks we've made we haven't had so much impact even with the inflation. We have managed well I would say.

How did Covid impact your travels?

We love to travel as a family but we understand that there is a risk of getting sick so we have been very careful and take it easy with travelling. We started to travel more around the country and see what we have here, which has changed our perspective. We found some beautiful places which we thought we should come back to again sometime.

Economic situation

How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?

Me and my wife and our only child.

How many household members are currently working?

2.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

Yes.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

Even though there has been a struggle sometimes for us we have managed to get through it. I bet it's hard for many but for us I think we've been lucky to have enough without major drastic changes like selling our car or anything like that. But even though things have turned out like they did, we loved to travel internationally before but now our perspective has changed when we started to travel more in the country. More or less we also felt better when we stopped buying unnecessary things and we looked over our grocery shopping list on what we actually needed. It had a positive effect for us.

Respondent 6

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

My family and I usually travel for leisure.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

I don't shop a lot so my habits changed mostly when buying food. I try to find cheaper alternatives to what I usually eat and do not spend as much on fancy food just for taste.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

I have travelled recently to study for my masters thesis. Due to Covid, travelling with the family has been much less frequent, but with less restrictions and Covid in general we are searching for flights again. Nowadays we usually travel to Spain over and over again since we purchased an apartment there a few years ago. The apartment is in a cheap area and the depreciation of the Swedish Krona hasn't been very noticeable as it is very cheap there anyways.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

We have travelled less by train domestically and more by bus since train tickets are extremely expensive nowadays. I don't want to travel domestically by plane because of the environmental impact of it but am considering it more and more since it can sometimes be way cheaper and much faster than going by train across Sweden.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

I want to travel with my girlfriend and family to Cyprus as we have not been for a while due to Covid and being abroad studying, however it all depends on if we can even afford it, therefore we are trying to save money for it to go this upcoming summer.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

Covid doesn't affect me a lot as of now, however the rise in price of groceries does impact the amount of money I am spending and able to save. The energy crisis is not affecting me per se however my parents have been extra cautious with how much electricity we are using at home. They are more careful with what lights they have on, how long showers they are taking and so on.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

Even though I could consider going anywhere else I think that Cyprus will be the place we go based on the fact that it will be cheap. Both because their currency is weak and that we know a few people we could stay with instead of hotels.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

Unsure for now as I am freshly back in Sweden but so far it has me thinking more about the cost of groceries and trying to find cheaper alternatives.

How did Covid impact your travels?

Initially during Covid I did not travel at all more than domestically to meet our family during summer and christmas holidays and then we went mostly by bus since it was cheaper than the trains. However, now when studying abroad there were a lot of things I had to do to enter Japan, like Covid tests and health checks. It all depends on the country you go to I guess but it would feel better to go to a country with regulations still to not catch the virus but it would also be somewhat of a hassle.

Economic situation

How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?

5, 2 under 18 in highschool.

How many household members are currently working?

I am currently looking for a job. Both my parents are working.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

Yes, since I've been studying for the last 3.5 years but I have been taking CSN loans. Right now I am living off saved money until I find a job. My parents have had stable jobs for the last 4 years.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

I feel as if people in general are going to less popular travel destinations because of the prices in common ones. A lot of my friends want to go to France for example, but choose not to as it is very expensive due to all the people that haven't travelled due to Covid travelling recently, as well as inflation and the Swedish Krona losing its value in the last 2 years. On social media there are also a lot of advertisements for travelling to more unpopular places, such as Albania (I think it was Albania).

Respondent 7

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

One of the biggest reasons we decide to travel is to go away from home for a while. The feeling of leisure together with family and exploring other countries is very important for us.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

My family has drastically been buying less and less, as well as lower quality, products in the last year. At the same time we have been eating out at cheaper restaurants and less often.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

After my wife and I got our baby we did a lot less travelling to “risky hiking adventures”. But nowadays we shifted to more comfortable locations with stunning views.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

Yeah, So me and my wife actually met in Dublin and we started to travel as travelling partners in the beginning, and would keep revisiting Dublin. We both love to go hiking and explore cities so since that first time we met we both have shared the love for travelling internationally. We’ve been to America, New Zealand, Australia, Chile and La Paz in Bolivia. In the last 2 years we only travelled twice, to South Korea and Austria.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

This year we are planning to go to Japan during the summer. After being in Korea last year we wanted to continue travelling in Asia. Because we love the people and food here.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

The pandemic was really hard for us especially when we were in South Korea when it first started at the end of 2019. Everybody got told to be Isolated and get ourselves tested constantly. But luckily we never got it right there and then, we managed to fly home the whole family safely. This was very stressful as it probably was for so many other people of course. Now with inflation and the crazy electricity prices we barely have money left over to travel comfortably. And like I said before, we are eating out at cheaper places and less often.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

This has had a huge effect on us because we did as little international travelling as possible, whereas before we did quite often. But instead of feeling sorry we have been planning our next trip to Japan for a long time. So we can continue where we started in 2019 in South Korea. Now we are familiar with certain things that can not go as planned and I think both me and my wife are now better at coping with it. But I think that many people would probably think that we are too crazy for travelling this much. But at the end of the day this is what we both live for. At the same time we are booking cheaper flights and hotels, and are looking at cheaper areas to visit.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

The Inflation has impacted us in a sense that we are noticing it in our weekly shopping, lots and lots of stuff have now doubled or tripled in price. This has of course affected us economically but our solution to this problem is what can we do with what we already have? For example my wife loves baking so she bakes bread for us that lasts the entire week. Also because of the electricity prices we are doing the laundry less often.

How did Covid impact your travels?

As I said earlier Covid has affected us the most when we were in South Korea and we had to end the trip immediately and isolate ourselves. It was hard, because we did not know what to expect or how deadly it was when it first came in 2019. We were lucky and did not get it at the beginning of the pandemic. Now we travel mostly within Sweden and we are very careful, but much less than before. Also we research the restrictions and regulations of the places we intend to travel to in order to be prepared.

Economic situation

How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?

Just the three of us. Me, my wife, and our 5 year old son.

How many household members are currently working?

My wife and I are both working currently.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years?

No, but we were working from home during the pandemic since we both have office work. It was no big problem with working from home.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

Nothing in particular that I have in mind. All I can say is that me and my wife will continue to travel and take our son on as many adventures as possible. Thank you!

Respondent 8

Why do you travel usually? (do you travel for leisure, or visit family and friends?)

I usually travel with my little brother to visit my family back home in Syria.

How did your buying habits change? Did they?

I reduced my spending habits on consumer discretionary products and have allocated a larger portion of my income to savings.

How did your travelling habits change? (If yes ask to elaborate)

My travel habits have changed since the pandemic began. Travel restrictions combined with an increase in ticket prices have limited our ability to come and go as we please.

Can you tell me more about your travels during this time ... where did you go? And so on ... (international vs. domestic)

We did not leave Sweden in the past two years. I took this time as an opportunity to explore the country itself and took a road trip from Stockholm to Dalarna for two weeks.

Can you tell me about your plans for travelling this upcoming year of 2023?

We would like to return to Syria and visit my family. This is highly unlikely since the airlines have raised ticket prices for all international travel. In addition to expensive tickets, the average price of basic goods and services in Sweden has increased dramatically. Everything from my groceries to my electricity bills.

Specific questions about global situation impact on their travel patterns

Tell me, how is the global situation (think of covid regulations/ inflation/ energy crises) impacting your everyday life? Tell me some stories

Covid has made travel nearly impossible outside of Sweden in the beginning of the pandemic. Everyday things are more expensive and my salary increase can't keep up with inflation. I had to make some lifestyle changes like staying home more and spending less money on unnecessary things such as jewellery and certain social activities.

How is it affecting your travel decisions, holiday choices?

I have not travelled anywhere outside of Sweden since the pandemic began.

How has inflation impacted your household financial conditions?

I moved from buying a lot of meat and fish produce to cheaper fruits and vegetables. My brother and I have definitely become much healthier when trying to save money, which is a positive thing.

Economic situation

How many people live in your household, and how many are under the age of 18?

My brother is the only person who lives with me. He is sixteen years old.

How many household members are currently working?

I am the only household member who is working.

Have you been unemployed for a period longer than 6 months in the last 2 years? No I have not. I have been employed as a painter for the last three years.

Please think about the past two years, is there anything more that you would like to share with me about it?

Only that living expenses have gone up and it has become considerably harder to send money overseas to help support my family in Syria.