

## Preparedness Level of European Cultural Institutions and Catering Establishments Within the Sanitary and Epidemiological Dimension During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract :** Introduction: In December 2019, the first case of an acute infectious disease of the respiratory system caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus was recorded in Wuhan in Central China. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization restrictions, among others, in the travel industry. Aim: The aim of the study was the assessment of the preparedness of European cultural institutions and catering establishments within the sanitary and epidemiological dimension during the COVID-19 pandemic by Polish tourists and their sense of safety in selected destinations. Material and methods: The study involved 300 Polish tourists (125 females, 175 males, age 46.5+/-12.9 years) who traveled during the COVID-19 pandemic to Southern European countries. 5 most popular travel destinations were selected: Italy, Austria, Greece, Croatia, and Mediterranean islands. The tourists assessed cultural institutions and catering establishments with the use of a proprietary questionnaire which concerned the preparedness regarding the sanitary and epidemiological requirements and the tourists' sense of safety. The number of respondents was deliberate - 60 persons per each country. Results: The more stringent sanitary regimes, the higher the sense of safety in the study group of females aged 45-50 ( $p < 0.005$ ), while the more stringent sanitary and epidemiological issues are implemented, the shorter the stay ( $p < 0.001$ ). Less stringent restrictions resulted in increased sense of freedom and mental rest in the group of studied males ( $p < 0.005$ ). Conclusions: The respondents' opinions revealed that the highest level of safety with regard to sanitary and epidemiological requirements (masks covering mouth and nose worn by both personnel and society, the necessity to present the COVID passport, the possibility to disinfect hands) was observed in Austria and Italy, while shorter length of the stay in these countries resulted from high prices, particularly in catering establishments. According to the respondents, less stringent restrictions, among others lack of the necessity to own the COVID passport, were linked to Croatia and Mediterranean islands. The sense of safety was satisfying, while the sense of freedom and mental rest was high. declared a string of COVID-19 cases a pandemic. Most countries implemented numerous sanitary and epidemiological

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