

TOURIST ATTRACTIVENESS OF CONTINENTS AND COUNTRIES IN THE OPINION OF POLISH TOURISTS

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ABSTRACT

In 2017 in Kurozweki Estate – one of the most important tourist attractions in Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship (Poland), research survey was carried out which included 2665 people, 99.8% of whom came from Poland. The subject matter of the survey was to analyse the opinions of tourists on tourist attractiveness of continents and countries. The results of the research indicate that tourists find Europe the most attractive continent. Asia was the next most attractive continent. The following were Australia and Oceania, South America and Africa. At the same time, Poland was chosen as the most attractive country, followed by Italy, Spain and France. The USA, China, Japan, Australia and Egypt were pointed as the most attractive non-European countries. Statistically, every third respondent spends from 8 to 14 days every year to realise their touristic goals. Nearly 40% of the respondents spend PLN 2000 maximum, and every fifth spends more than PLN 5000 (1 Euro – 4.28 PLN).

Introduction

Tourism is a branch of industry which has been developing dynamically and which may generate substantial income. It represents a vital factor of social stimulation. It is a subject of interest for a wide group of various researchers who monitor and analyse tourism thoroughly. Moreover, they attempt to recognise preferences and expectations of tourists. Doing such research is of great importance as it enables to forecast the tendencies and changes in tourism to much better degree.

The objectives and methods of the research

It was assumed that each tourist has his/her subjective opinion about the touristic attractiveness of continents and countries. A substantial number of such opinions may have a considerable representation in statistics indicating the size of tourism. It may also be noticeable in the offers of travel agents.

Knowledge of up-to-date opinions and preferences of tourists is unquestionably vital to be able to choose new places which may generate potentially greater interest of tourists.

Therefore, the authors decided to take advantage of a considerable touristic potential of Kurozwęki Estate. The palace is one of the greatest attractions in Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship (Zieliński, Janeczko, 2016; Brambert, Zieliński, 2017). The main objective is to identify the touristic attractiveness of continents and countries.

Research survey was carried out, which included tourists who visited a maze, which is built annually out of corn and hemp. It lasts 3 months in a year and it is visited by a dozen thousands of people. In 2017 it was visited by nearly 12 thousand people, 11.5 thousand of whom were individual tourists (statistics provided by Kurozwęki Estate). The visitors, who finished the maze, were encouraged by the prizes and filled in the questionnaire providing their addresses. They are the basis to identify places they come from.

The voivodeships from which most visitors came to Kurozwęki Estate (more than 5%) were subject to the individual analysis. It was assumed that the number of visitors was big enough to consider the results objective.

The questions in the questionnaire were composed so as not to suggest any answers. The results which were obtained this way were the source of information and further analysis.

In 2017, the visitors were asked to point: 1) the most touristically attractive continent; 2) the most touristically attractive country; 3) the number of days per year they spend on realising touristic goals; 4) the amount of money they spend annually to realise their touristic goals.

The object and the characteristics of the research results

Kurozwęki is located in the southeastern part of Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship. It is a part of Staszów county, 7 kilometers to the west of Staszów. Until recently, this part of the region has not been of interest to tourists. Contemporarily, it is often visited by hundreds of thousands of guests (Brambert, Zieliński, 2017). Kurozwęki Estate, itself, is visited by tens of thousands (Figure 1).

The estate funded in Kurozwęki for many years has been one of the key attractions in Świętokrzyskie region. It owes its success to the heirs of the palace. It is thanks to them that the property, which originates from the second part of the XIV century, was redecorated and the surroundings recovered its original charm. It was achieved, among others, thanks to a well-designed and maintained park. The restored estate holds many investments of touristic nature.

In 2017, Kurozwęki Estate was visited by visitors from various parts of Poland (Figure 2). To make the research simple, all the visitors were considered tourists. 65.5% of the visitors come from outside Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship (Figure 2). It is 4.3% more than in 2016 (Zieliński,

Dziarmaga, 2017). Year by year, number of the visitors from outside Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship increases noticeably. The most numerous are the visitors from Podkarpackie Voivodeship (16.8%), Małopolskie Voivodeship (12.9%), Mazowieckie Voivodeship (12.6%) and Śląskie Voivodeship (8.3%).

The most noticeable increase of 4.8% in comparison with 2016, was observed regarding visitors from Podkarpackie Voivodeship. Undoubtedly, a newly built bridge on the Vistula River, in a close distance of Połaniec, has improved the communication between the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship and Podkarpackie Voivodeship. The same reason might be the cause of an increase of 4% of the number of guests from Mazowieckie Voivodeship. The residents of the region were provided with another convenient connection with southern Poland, which is located several kilometres from Kurozwęki Estate.

Relatively more (in comparison to other voivodeships) visitors to Kurozwęki come from Łódź (3%) and Lublin (2,9%) Voivodeships. There were also tourists from abroad (from France, Sweden and Great Britain). Their number, however, was low and was not of any statistical importance. This group constituted approximately 0.2% of the visitors in 2017.

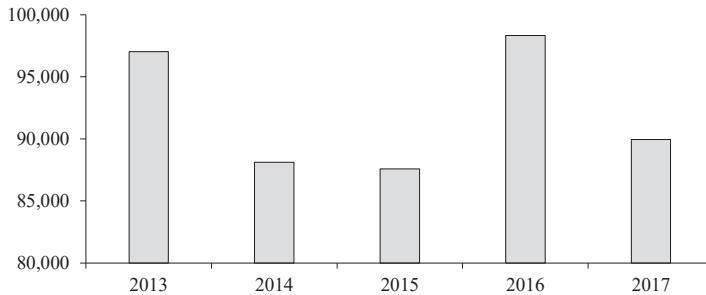


Figure 1. Number of tourists who visited Kurozwęki in 2013–2017

Source: data of Kurozwęki Estate.

A considerable number of tourists and a great diversification of places where the visitors come from make the research objective. The analysis of the scientific results indicates that tourists consider Europe to be the most attractive continent (63.9%) (Figure 3). Undoubtedly, such a result may be caused by the fact that the subjects of the research come from this part of the world and, thus, have greater knowledge about it. Asia was indicated to be the second most attractive continent (11.3%). It is not surprising for the authors of the research since it is the biggest continent in the world. It is characterised by a great diversification of cultural geographical environment. Australia and Oceania were mentioned by 7.7%, South America by 6.7% and Africa by 6.0%. It is worth mentioning that the assessments of rating numbers of the continents are very close. The last places were given to North America (3.7%) (Figure 3) and Antarctica (0.7%), which is the last discovered continent and the only one uninhabited by residents.

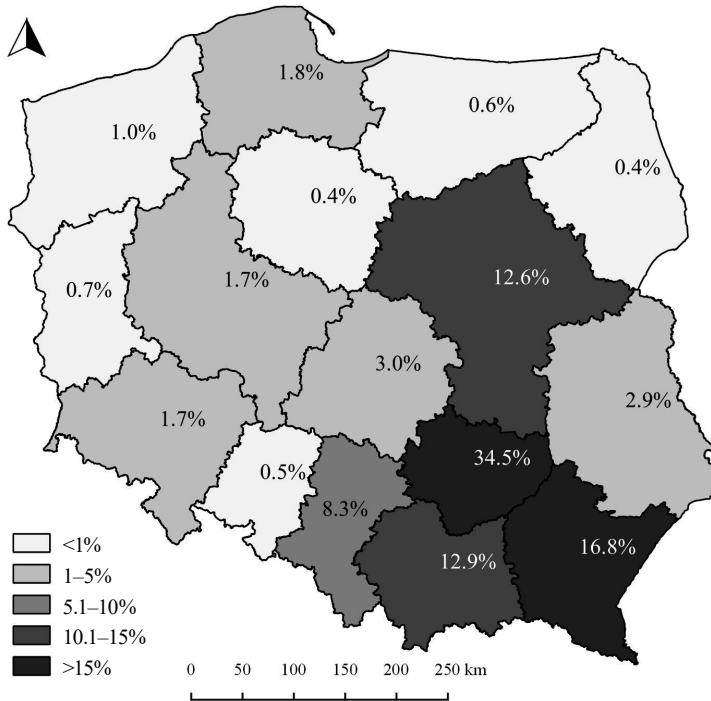


Figure 2. Structure of the number of tourists visiting Kurozweki according to the administrative division of Poland into voivodeships

Source: authors' own research data.

Interestingly, touristic attractiveness of Europe is appreciated mainly by the residents of Śląskie Voivodeship (69.2%), and the least by those who come from Mazowieckie Voivodeship (52.0%). Such a diversification of the assessment of Europe's attractiveness may result from a strong emotional link of the residents of Śląsk region to the area they live in. It is worth emphasising that the residents of Mazowieckie region assessed the attractiveness of other continents much better than the rest of the groups. According to them, the second was North America (22.2%), Africa (17.8%), Australia and Oceania (17.0%) and Asia (14.1%).

It seems that tourists from Mazowieckie Voivodeship possess much greater knowledge about continents, which results from, among others, the presence of numerous companies which represent foreign countries as well as international companies globally. Another reason is that Warsaw is the most convenient communication centre in Poland. Its central location and the presence of two international airports helps, especially local residents, with the communication with all continents. Moreover, the financial resources which local residents from Mazowieckie Voivodeship possess and may spend on touristic goals, may be a major factor. This problem will be presented in the further part of the work.

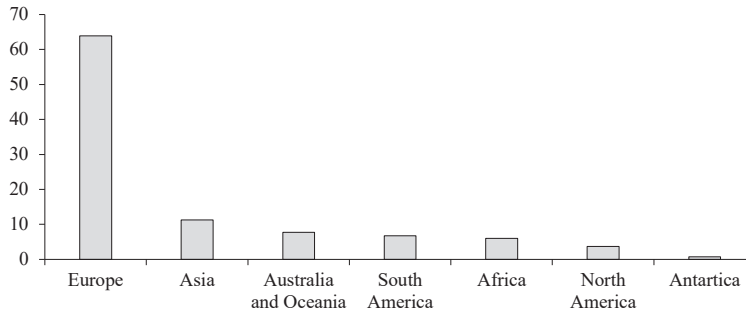


Figure 3. The most attractive continents in terms of tourism (participation in %)

Source: authors' own research data.

According to the research, the most attractive country in terms of tourism is Poland (33.1%) (figure 4). Its value was mostly appreciated by the residents from Śląskie Voivodeship (38.4%), whereas it was poorly ranked by the residents from Małopolskie (24.3%) and Mazowieckie (29.7%) Voivodeships. Undoubtedly, high notes of the Republic of Poland are the result of patriotism and the greatest knowledge of the nation. The next country was Italy (9.1%), Spain (8.8%) and France (6.3%). It is worth mentioning that 6 European countries were amongst top 10 most attractive countries in the world (Figure 4). 7 countries from outside Europe were amongst 20 of the ranking table. All the countries, except for Portugal, are in the Mediterranean region. They are Poles' most favourite travel destinations and their value is highly assessed. According to the authors of the ranking, tiny Croatia and Portugal were very successful. The USA (4.9%), China (3.6%), Japan (2.8%), Australia (2.5%) and Egypt (1.8%) were considered the most attractive non-European countries. In Asia, in the top 20 of the most attractive countries in terms of tourism, were 4 which are situated on the continent entirely and 2 which are partially situated on the continent: Russia (at 15th place) and Turkey (at 18th place). Furthermore, there are 2 countries from North America, 2 countries from South America and 2 from Africa (Figure 4).

There were a lot of other, exotic countries outside the top 20 most attractive countries. Altogether, all those countries acquired 10.6% in total.

Certainly, the political situation in the world, especially terrorist attacks, have an influence on such a classification. That is why, according to the authors, some countries did not receive the adequate share in the rating.

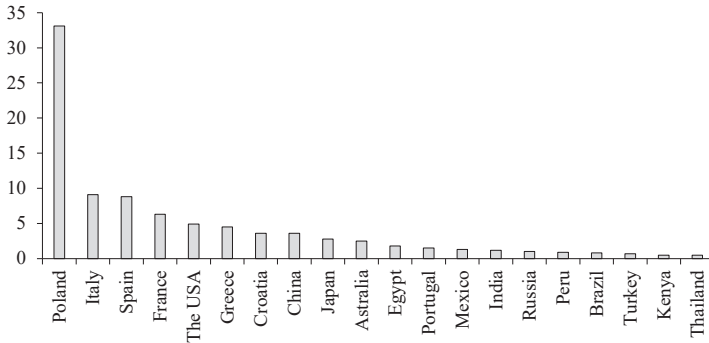


Figure 4. The most attractive countries in terms of tourism (participation in %)

Source: authors' own research data.

The pattern of the days tourists dedicate to reach touristic goals annually is worth mentioning (Figure 5). 31.1% of the respondents declared that they spend from 8 to 14 days. Most of them come from Podkarpackie Voivodeship (43%), the fewest from Mazowieckie (24.5%) and Małopolskie (26.6%) Voivodeships. 23.2% of the respondents spend from 15 to 21 days annually. The greatest part of them in this section come from Mazowieckie Voivodeship (27%), the fewest come from Podkarpackie Voivodeship (17.2%). It is interesting to emphasise that 28.5% of tourists from Małopolskie Voivodeship and 27% from Mazowieckie Voivodeship dedicate over 28 days annually for touristic goals, which is significantly diverge from the national average which is 16.4% (Figure 5).

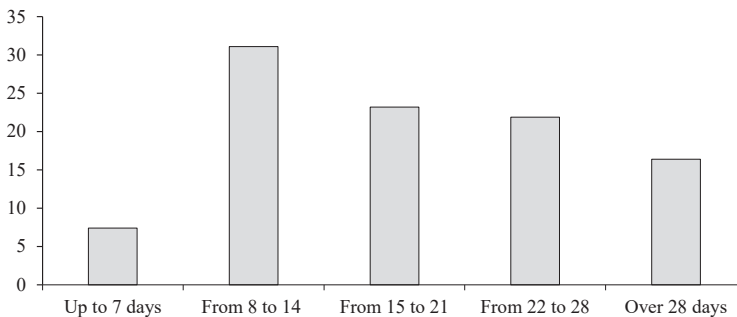


Figure 5. Number of days in a year, which tourists dedicate to reach touristic goals (participation in %)

Source: authors' own research data.

The results of the research survey presented above seem to be connected to the data of the financial amounts which tourists dedicate to spend on the performance of touristic objectives annually (Figure 6). The greatest share (22.5%) constitute those who spend between PLN 1,000 to

PLN 2,000. 16.4% of the respondents spend less than PLN 1,000. Those two groups of tourists make 38.4% of the interviewees. Interestingly, the smallest part of the respondents are those who dedicate from PLN 3,000 to PLN 4,000. Every fifth of the respondents declared to spend more that PLN 5,000. Most of them are the residents from Mazowieckie Voivodeship (29.6%), the fewest from Podkarpackie Voivodeship (14.1%). The respondents from Podkarpackie Voivodeship were the most numerous group of tourists who spend less than PLN 1,000 (27.6%). The smallest share in this group were tourists from Śląskie (10.1%) and Małopolskie (10.3%) Voivodeships. 100% of the tourists who participated in the survey from abroad and came to Kurozwęki emphasised that they spend several times more than average tourists from Poland.

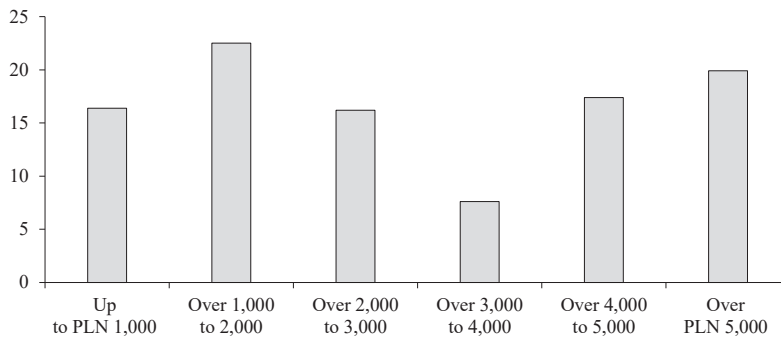


Figure 6. Amount of money (PLN) tourists spend on the performance of touristic objectives (participation in %)

Source: authors' own research data.

Conclusions

Although, carrying out the research as well as laying down the data are time-consuming actions, it is undoubtedly worth undertaking the challenge to find out the opinions and preferences of tourists. A considerable number of questioned respondents make the research objective. A clear diversity of touristic preferences which were determined regionally was noticed. The studies allowed for diagnosing the perception of the attractiveness of continents and countries. They showed the amount of time and money tourists spend on reaching their touristic goals. On the basis of the research and its analysis the following conclusions may be formulated:

1. Europe is the most attractive continent for tourists, followed by Asia, Australia and Oceania, South America and Africa.
2. Poland is the most attractive country for tourists, followed by Italy, Spain and France.
3. The USA, China, Japan, Australia and Egypt are the most attractive countries for tourists from outside Europe.
4. 31.1% of tourists spend from 8 to 14 days annually to obtain their touristic goals.

5. 38.9% of respondents spend maximum of PLN 2,000, and every fifth respondent – more than PLN 5,000.

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ATRAKCYJNOŚĆ TURYSTYCZNA KONTYNETÓW I PAŃSTW W OPINII POLSKICH TURYSTÓW

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

turystyka, atrakcyjność turystyczna, Polska, kontynenty, państwa

STRESZCZENIE

W 2017 r. w Zespole Pałacowym w Kurozwekach – jednej z ważniejszych atrakcji turystycznych w województwie świętokrzyskim (Polska), przeprowadzono badania kwestionariuszowe, którymi objęto 2665 osób, z których 99,8% przybyło z Polski. Celem badań była analiza opinii turystów na temat atrakcyjności turystycznej kontynentów i państw. Wyniki prac badawczych wskazują, że turyści za najbardziej atrakcyjny kontynent zdecydowanie uznali Europę. Na drugim miejscu w tej klasyfikacji znalazła się Azja, a za nią Australia i Oceania, a następnie Ameryka Południowa i Afryka. Badani Polkę wskazali jako najbardziej atrakcyjne państwo. W dalszej kolejności uplasowały się Włochy, Hiszpania i Francja. USA, Chiny, Japonię, Australię i Egipt uznano za najbardziej atrakcyjne wśród pozaeuropejskich krajów. Statystycznie prawie co trzeci ankietowany na realizację celów turystycznych przeznaczają od 8 do 14 dni w roku. Niespełna 40% badanych na turystykę przeznaczają do 2000 zł, a co piąty ankietowany kwotę większą od 5000 zł.