

# THE CURATIVE FUNCTION OF THE VILLAGE – INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES, CURATIVE MATERIALS

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## KEYWORDS

spa, dominant function of a village, curative function

## ABSTRACT

The study involves an unusual function of the village, i.e. the curative function present in a small number of towns in Poland. The subject of research includes two Lower-Silesian villages: Przerzeczyn-Zdrój, Długopole-Zdrój and one village from the Świętokrzyskie Province – Solec-Zdrój. As is the case with most highly developed states, the contemporary village in Poland is no longer a settlement inhabited exclusively by farmers. It may serve various functions. A significant number of inhabitants in villages make their living through non-agricultural work performed either in or beyond their place of residence. One of these functions, uncommon for Polish villages, is the curative function found in places having curative potential, especially in the context of environmental conditions (the existence of curative mineral waters or a therapeutic climate) as well as infrastructural conditions.

## Introduction

In the most developed states around the world the village is no longer a settlement exclusively inhabited by farmers. This is also true for Poland. Villages can serve a variety of functions. A large number of their inhabitants make a living by working outside of agriculture either within or beyond their place of residence. There are villages in Poland which predominantly pursue the tourist function, including the curative function.

Curative tourism has its roots in the ancient times when people visited hot springs and bathing sites, as well as locations characterised by more favourable climatic conditions.<sup>1</sup>

There is a total of 45 spas functioning in Poland, the largest number of which is located in its central part (the Kujawy–Pomerania Province and the Świętokrzyskie Province), followed by those in the seaside zone (7). From among all the spas, 12 are rural spas (Dąbki, Długopole-Zdrój, Goczałkowice-Zdrój, Horyniec-Zdrój, Polańczyk, Przerzeczyn-Zdrój, Rymanów-Zdrój, Solec-Zdrój, Wapienne, Wieniec-Zdrój, Wysowa-Zdrój, Żegiestów).

As formulated in the encyclopaedic definition of the village (Latin: *pagus, rus*), a village is a “settlement unit characterised by a concise, clustered or dispersed architecture and existing agricultural functions or their respective functions related to services and tourism, with no urban rights or city status.” There are also other interpretations: “the village is a settlement the inhabitants of which are involved in the cultivation of plants and the animal husbandry;”<sup>2</sup> “a village is an assembly of people or settlements with the respective lands they own;”<sup>3</sup> “the village is a local community whose productive function is complemented by the family function in a uniform manner while maintaining social control;”<sup>4</sup> “a village is a territorial creation with a set of borders, a land layout, a farm house (homestead) which forms a spatial unit with its determined social bonds and legal regulations.”<sup>5</sup>

These definitions are in no way a reflection of reality and are not always applicable to the contemporary character of the village. The current situation is that the agricultural functions no longer have to be dominant in many villages, as is apparent e.g. in the conducted analyses and studies presented in this article.

The main aim of the research is to analyse a selected set of rural curative centres in the context of environmental determinants, their curative offer and available infrastructure, which constitute the curative potential that eventually decide upon the quality of provided tourist services.

## Research methods

The study comprises an analysis of selected spas with respect to environmental, social and landscape-related determinants, the curative offer and infrastructure, the authors of the study have made use of source material retrieved from personal observations (direct observation), which has the benefit of a providing a high level of data reliability and possibilities for their direct interpretation. The information found in the source material, which serves as a basis for the conducted research, is not stored by the information departments of national statistical services or other units operating in the domain of real estate. The comparative analysis method has been utilised in the analysis of data.

<sup>1</sup> N. Douglas, *Travelling for Health: Spa and Health Resorts*, in: *Special Interest Tourism: Context and Cases*, eds. N. Douglas, R. Derrett, John Wiley & Son, Milton, QLD 2001, pp. 260–282.

<sup>2</sup> M. Kielczewska-Zaleska, *Geografia osadnictwa*, Warszawa 1972.

<sup>3</sup> J. Szymański, *Nauki pomocnicze historii*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2004, pp. 640–671.

<sup>4</sup> J. Turowski, *Socjologia. Małe struktury społeczne*, Lublin 1993.

<sup>5</sup> J. Tkocz, *Organizacja przestrzenna wsi w Polsce*, Wydawnictwo UŚ, Katowice 1998.

This method is used to determine and evaluate the essential cause and effect relations present in the studied subjects.

Three selected spas have served as the subject for direct observation: Długopole-Zdrój, Przerzeczyn-Zdrój and Solec-Zdrój. The research has been conducted on the basis of the direct and indirect inventory. The direct inventory involves field work: urbanist inventories, land inventories as well as photographs and sketches. Special attention has been paid to the environmental values of the spa serving as a potential subject for possible development as well as to the adaptation possibilities of each structure and elements related to tourism in its broadest sense, including spa tourism. This has been followed by an attempt to evaluate the functioning rural spas, also in the context of the functional relations between each spa and the permanent settlement unit.

The indirect inventory involves the gathering of information regarding the history of the construction of the studied spas and the functioning of each specific curative structure. This part of research has been based on the materials retrieved in the studied municipalities, community interviews and information included in the literature on the subject. The gathered information has been verified through the photographic documentation. In the course of the analyses, the authors have indicated the essential environmental values as contributing to the further development of the spa, both in the context of the curative function as well as the recreational function in its broadest sense.

This article is an introduction to the quantitative assessment of the selected spa village.

## Outlining the selected spas

Przerzeczyn-Zdrój is a small Lower Silesian village located by one of the most important communication passageways in Poland, the National Road 8 from Kudowa-Zdrój to Wrocław. Some of its most noteworthy values include: its climate, curative mineral waters (sulphidic, radioactive with calcium and magnesium, as well as ferrogenous waters) – due to their chemical composition they are unique not only in the scale of Poland, but also in Europe.<sup>6</sup> Climate comfort is commonly found in the spa.<sup>7</sup>

Długopole-Zdrój, just like Przerzeczyn-Zdrój is also a Lower Silesian village and the smallest, relatively unknown spa in the Kłodzko land, located near a road leading from Kłodzko to Międzyzlesie and the Międzyzlesie Pass. It is characterised by an extraordinarily mild montane medium stimulus climate typical of the Sudety valleys, as well as large differences in temperature and humidity per 24 hours. The climatic conditions in the area foster rest, rehabilitation and the restoration of health. The town is stretched out at a distance of circa 1 km, mainly along the left bank of the River Nysa Kłodzka. It is not as popular as other spas in the Kłodzko Valley, such as:

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<sup>6</sup> H. Piechaczek, M. Wyka, *Przerzeczyn Zdrój*, „Problemy Uzdrawiskowe” 1975, Part III, No. 4 (92), pp. 70–74.

<sup>7</sup> I., T. Kaczyński, *Polska. Najpiękniejsze uzdrowiska*, Sport i Turystyka – Muza SA, Warszawa 2006, pp. 31–33, 70–72, 259–261.

Kudowa-Zdrój, Polanica-Zdrój, Duszniki-Zdrój, which is why it is far more peaceful and not as crowded.<sup>8</sup>

Solec-Zdrój is a municipal village located in the Land of Sandomierz, in a lowland region, located about 25km away from the Busko-Zdrój spa.<sup>9</sup> The spa encompasses the entire municipality, which includes 19 villages of the Solec-Zdrój municipality. The spa is an ecological oasis (the village and all neighboring villages are fully connected to a gas supply). It is a quiet, serene town with clean air. The climate here is friendly for the body and is characterised by a minor spatial diversity of climatic conditions. Climate comfort is common in this area during almost half of each year.<sup>10</sup> The Solec-Zdrój spa has the more than 170 years old tradition of curative treatment, with the local medicinal waters being the most valuable natural resource available. The features of the studied towns have been represented below (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Outline of the studied curative villages

No.	Selected features	Przerzeczyn-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Dirsdorf</i> )	Długopole-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Langenau</i> )	Solec-Zdrój
1.	Location	Niemcza Municipality, Dzierżoniów County, Lower Silesian Province, in the foothills of the Sudety, at the foot of the Owl Mountains	Bystrzyca Kłodzka Municipality, Kłodzko County, Lower Silesian Province, at the foot of the Bystrzyckie Mountains, in the Nysa Kłodzka Valley	Municipal village in the Busko County, in the Świętokrzyskie Province, by the River Rzęska, on the south-eastern edge of the Solec Basin
2.	Number of inhabitants (registered for permanent residence)	700 inhabitants (as of December 2012)	610 inhabitants (as of December 2012)	900 inhabitants (as of December 2012)
4.	Area of village occupied	No data	78.6 ha	654
5.	Type of village	multi-street	small, linear	
5.	Total permanent employment		183	387
6.	Total permanent employment in the curative branch	No data	98	100
7.	Agricultural farms	No data	No data	No data
8.	Economic activity (number of business entities)	No data	No data	56

Source: own elaboration.

## Analysis of the studied spa villages

From a ruralist's point of view, the space of the analysed villages can be divided into two parts: the curative part located on the outskirts of the village near green areas (with sanatorium structures)

<sup>8</sup> M., R. Łazarkowie, *Uzdrowiska w Europie. Tężeńszczość i rys historyczny*, Wydawnictwo Akademickie Wyższej Szkoły Społeczno-Przyrodniczej im. Wincentego Pola w Lublinie, Lublin 2007, pp. 70, 90.

<sup>9</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>10</sup> E. Gonda-Soroczyńska, *Przestrzeń uzdrowiskowa w krajobrazie kulturowym wsi na przykładzie uzdrowiska Solec-Zdrój*, „Infrastruktura i ekologia terenów wiejskich”, Polska Akademia Nauk, Komisja Technicznej Infrastruktury Wsi, Kraków 2011, f. 1, pp. 39–49.

and a residential part with a low, single family architecture and a former post-factory architecture. It proves beneficial for the functioning of the spa and the use of rehabilitation and health restoration services when the curative part is separated from the rest of the village. Przerzeczyn-Zdrój is a town which existed since the year 1264 under the name of Pyrzyce (Slavic etymology). Bad Dirsdorf was the name used during the German colonisation, while Diersdorf functioned as its name until the end of the 19th century and also in the 20th century, up till 1945. The current name, functioning since after the second world war is Przerzeczyn-Zdrój.

As a village, Długopole-Zdrój mostly comprises of a villa-type architecture, typical for a garden-city and characteristic of spas. Most buildings in the spa requires conservation protection, as they form a relatively uniform set with features typical for the resort architecture of the turn of the century.<sup>11</sup> A large number of pensions and residential houses from the 1850s and the early 1900s still remain in the village.

**Solec-Zdrój** is a small lowland municipal village with circa 900 residents, located in the Busko County in the Świętokrzyskie Province. It has the status of a spa and is located on the outskirts of the Nida Basin, in the south-eastern edge of the Solec Basin, on a small incline on the edge of the Małopole Upland and the Sandomierz Basin, at an altitude of 160 m.a.s.l. and circa 20 km from Busko-Zdrój. The village is situated by the River Rzęska and exists since the 14th century. Its name is derived from the salty seepage spring area that once existed in the nearby meadows. From the 18th century on the local waters have been used to boil salt.<sup>12</sup>

Tables 2–4 include the basic information regarding environmental determinants, curative offers and spa infrastructure.

The spas selected for analysis offer treatment for a variety of illnesses, with Przerzeczyn-Zdrój having the least impressive curative offer available, but also having unique mineral waters at its disposal (sulphidic-radioactive waters). The remaining spas cover a much larger amount of illnesses based on their supply of curative waters. It should be noted that the resources found at Długopole-Zdrój can be considered practically inexhaustible, as they include waters which constantly refill themselves and undergo constant mineralisation with the contribution of the CO<sub>2</sub> that is still flowing from the depths of the earth. The chemism of these waters and their output may be subject to minor periodic changes depending on atmospheric conditions.

Throughout the ages the analysed spas have not changed with regard to their spatial-functional layout. All of them make use of a curative infrastructure whose beginnings can be traced to the first half of the 19th century (1824–1840). The true development of the spas occurred in the early 20th century, both in Poland (Solec-Zdrój) and in contemporary Germany (Przerzeczyn-Zdrój, Długopole-Zdrój), which resulted in the further reconstruction of the curative spa. A major factor for the location of spas are the environmental resources including medicinal water springs, the

<sup>11</sup> W.W. Gaworecki, *Turystyka*, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa 2003.

<sup>12</sup> E. Gonda-Soroczyńska, *Przestrzeń uzdrowiskowa w krajobrazie kulturowym wsi na przykładzie uzdrowiska Solec-Zdrój*, „Infrastruktura i ekologia terenów wiejskich” 2011, Vol. 1, Polska Akademia Nauk, The Rural Technical Infrastructure Commission, Kraków 2011, pp 39–49.

landscape, organised green areas including spa parks, which are an indispensable element of any spa, as well as non-developed green areas which create a specific atmosphere.

**Table 2.** Basic information regarding the environmental determinants in the Przerzeczyn-Zdrój, Długopole-Zdrój and Solec-Zdrój spas

No.	Selected features	Przerzeczyn-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Dirsdorf</i> )	Długopole-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Langenau</i> )	Solec-Zdrój
I. Environmental determinants				
1.	Mineral water springs	self-refilling sulphidic water borehole no. 2 in the form of a 6 m deep shaft with 1.6 m <sup>3</sup> efficiency per hour; 70 m deep self-refilling radon-sulphidic water borehole no. 9 with an efficiency of 3 m <sup>3</sup> per hour; 182 deep self-refilling magnesium-calcium water borehole with an efficiency of 15 m <sup>3</sup> /hour	The “Emilia”, “Kazimierz”, “Renata” water intakes. The “Renata” spring provides 0.13% mineral bicarbonate, calcium, magnesium, sodium, silicon, ferruginous, water. The “Emilia” spring provides low mineralised 0.08% bicarbonate, calcium, magnesium, radon, ferruginous water. The “Kazimierz” spring provides 0.11% mineral bicarbonate, calcium, magnesium, sodium, ferruginous water	The “Karol” spring, which provides chloride-sulphide-sodium, bromide, iodide, boron, sulphidic water with a hydrogen sulphide content of 70 mg/l; the Solec Shaft intake providing 2.06% bromide, boron, iodide, sulphidic brine with a hydrogen sulphide content of 120 mg/l
2.	Existing curative mineral waters and other curative materials	Sulphidic and sulphidic-radioactive waters, peloids	Bicarbonate-calcium-sodium-magnesium ferruginous sorrels, radioactive sorrels, alkaline sorrels; herbalism, peloids, drinking therapy	unique water spring with hydrogen sulphide content in the brine eight times greater than contemporary springs (sulphide ion concentration – 103 mg/l, high mineralisation). The Solec sulphur is the strongest available curative water in Poland and on of the best in Europe
3.	Climate	“Central” bioclimatic region 4, weak, at times medium stimulus bioclimate, lowland and valley spa, favourable conditions for climatotherapy (areas with good air circulation and good air hygiene level, dry ground, average yearly sum of precipitation – 596 mm	“Submontane and mountain” bioclimatic region 6, medium, at times strong stimulus bioclimate type, average sunlight hours per year – 1,547 hours; relatively high speed of wind blowing along the axis of the Nysa Kłodzka Valley, best conditions for climatotherapy from May to October	Lowland climate, medium stimulus type, mildly modified by a pine forest complex, friendly towards the body, with relatively low spatial diversity of climatic conditions, climate comfort for almost half of each year, annual precipitation – 570 mm

Source: own elaboration based on: T. Kozłowska-Szczęsna, K. Błażejczyk, B. Krawczyk, D. Limanówka, *Bioklimat uzdrowisk polskich i możliwości jego wykorzystania w lecznictwie*, PAN, Warszawa 2002, pp. 99–112, 385–389, 418–421.

**Table 3.** Basic information regarding the curative offers available at the Przerzeczyn-Zdrój, Długopole-Zdrój and Solec-Zdrój spas

No.	Selected features	Przerzeczyn-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Dirsdorf</i> )	Długopole-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Langenau</i> )	Solec-Zdrój
II. Curative offer (curative materials)				
1.	Number of vacancies for patients	280	270	400
2.	Treated illnesses	Orthopaedic and traumatic disorders, rheumatologic diseases, neurological diseases	Orthopaedic and traumatic disorders, peripheral arthery diseases, digestive tract diseases, rheumatologic diseases, haematologic and blood diseases, liver diseases, diabetes, neurosis, gastric diseases, asthma, cardiovascular diseases, rehabilitation of mastectomy patients	Rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, soft tissue gout, radiculitis, post-traumatic conditions, discopathy, neuralgia, skin diseases, cardiovascular diseases and respiratory tract diseases, neurosis, heavy metal poisoning, osteoporosis
3.	Treatments	baths (curative baths in pools, curative baths in tubs), hydrotherapy, peloid therapy (peloid treatment), paraffin wax wraps, massages (underwater massages), inhalations, kinesitherapy (exercises)	Pearl baths with aromatherapy, carbonic acid baths, hydrotherapy (showers), peloid therapy (peloid treatment), elctrotherapy, ultrasound therapy, inhalations light therapy, heat therapy; kinesitherapy; phytotherapy (herbalism); dry CO <sub>2</sub> baths	Tub baths in brines and sulphidic waters, peloid therapy (peloid treatment), hydrotherapy, inhalations, dry and underwater massages, kinesitherapy (exercises), electrotherapy, light therapy

Source: own elaboration based on: I., T. Kaczyński, *Polska. Najpiękniejsze uzdrowiska*, Sport i Turystyka – Muza SA, Warszawa 2006, pp. 31–33, 70–72, 259–261.

**Table 4.** Basic information regarding curative infrastructure

No.	Selected features	Przerzeczyn-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Dirsdorf</i> )	Długopole-Zdrój (German: <i>Bad Langenau</i> )	Solec-Zdrój
1	2	3	4	5
III. Curative infrastructure				
1.	Sanatoriums	4 sanatoriums: “Forsycja” (Forsythia) – the town’s largest spa facility (60 vacancies); “Akacja” (Acacia) with a treatment complex, a gym, a services office, body care and health offices; “Buk” (Beech); “Cis” (Yew) (162 beds), natural therapy resort in the “Akacja” sanatorium	The “Mieszko” sanatorium (100 vacancies); The “Ondraszek” sanatorium (54 vacancies); The “Dąbrowka” sanatorium (70 vacancies); The “Fortuna” sanatorium (46 vacancies); The “Karol” natural therapy resort; The “Ondraszek” spa clinic	The “Hotel” sanatorium (from 1918), the “Jasna” villa, a sanatorium (from 1910), the “Prus” villa (from 1918), the “Irena” villa, the „Krystyna” rehabilitation and recreation centre, the “Solanna” curative pension and spa and sanatorium

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Curative infrastructure	1824 – Spa House; 1840 – its reconstruction and modernisation, works begin on the construction of a Spa Park, rehabilitation pool	Well-room by the “Emilia” spring (Brunnenfuhlhaus) built in 1840 replacing a wooden bathroom from 1817 – currently the “Karol” natural therapy resort, 16 Zdrojowa st. from 1839, reconstructed in the years 1870-71, wooden walking hall – currently the Spa House on 2 Wolna st. from the beginning of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century, reconstructed in 1930, the “Horus” café – the former Evangelical Church in the Eastern Park from 1893, the “Zdrojowa” café – former walking hall from 1840	Treatment, bathing and housing structures from 1837; spa structures, the natural therapy resort from 1923-1925, the “Zdrój Solecki” building, the Curative Services Office Pavilion from 1910, the “Hotel” sanatorium from 1918, the “Jasna” villa sanatorium from 1910, the “Prus” villa from 1918, the “Irena” villa, the “Krystyna” rehabilitation and recreation centre, the “Solanna” curative pension and spa and sanatorium
3.	Spa Park	3.0 ha, dating from the 18th century, changes in the first half of the 19th century; a stream, waterfall and fitness trail within the park	Spa Park with the old tree stand, decorated with a 600 m long linden/maple alley and fountain with adjacent gazebo	11 ha; with a retention reservoir, an equipment rental shop, a beach volleyball field and beach; the Rzęska river crosses the park and forms a picturesque composition with the landscape; there is a unique tree stand with exotic tree specimens within the park
4.	Other green areas	Park near the palace, fruit orchards, allotment gardens, non-developed green areas, environmental-educational trail	Fitness trails	A mixed forest complex with the dominance of pine trees adjacent to the Spa Park (120 ha)
5.	Elements of small architecture	fountain, aesthetic benches, trash bins, lanterns, pergola	fountain, aesthetic benches, trash bins, lanterns, pole shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary	fountain, aesthetic benches, trash bins, lanterns

Source: own elaboration.

The current curative infrastructure is subject to protection due to its high cultural value. The sanatoriums and well-rooms are true pearls of curative architecture from the 19th and early 20th century. During a search for rock salt deposits in 1815 rich sources of mineral water with medicinal properties have been found that were similar to the waters existing in the Busko-Zdrój spa town. As a result of the later geological research, a source of mineral water unique on a worldwide scale was discovered in the vicinity of the spa. The content of hydrogen sulphide in the brine was eight times greater than that found in contemporary springs. The Solec sulphur is the strongest available curative water in Poland and one of the best in Europe. The mineral waters located in this area contributed to the founding of the spa, the development of the village, especially in the curative context, and to the survival of the difficult years of the governmental transformation in Poland, which was especially damaging towards rural areas. The mineral waters helped the town survive the hardest of times.



As claimed by Woodroff<sup>13</sup>, Zeithaml<sup>14</sup>, Hallem *et al.*,<sup>15</sup> the development of spa treatment is based on environmental resources, the tradition of the lands and the curative infrastructure the beginnings of which can be traced to the 19th century. The developing countries are interested in looking for new ways to promote their infrastructure and abilities and to attract medical tourists, increase their number and, most importantly, increase their satisfaction. There is no doubt that preventive health care, taking care of one's well-being, relaxation and active recreation are an integral element of the 21st century tourism.<sup>16</sup>

One may observe that such transformations also take place in the studied spas, while part of the facilities within them are being privatised.

Curative protection zones have been established in order to protect the natural materials required to pursue and develop spa treatment and to develop other environmental factors for the spa (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Curative protection zones in the analysed spa towns (ha)

No.	Spas	Curative protection zones „A”	Curative protection zones „B”	Curative protection zones „C”
1.	Przerzeczyn-Zdrój	60.10	259.9	4,128.00
2.	Długopole-Zdrój	40.10	592.00	1,574.10
3.	Solec-Zdrój	84.00	544.00	8,490.00

Source: own elaboration.

Three curative protection areas have been delineated in the spas. The “A” zone is characterised by the most severe restrictions.<sup>17</sup> The “A” curative protection zone is a functional extension of the nearest vicinity of the spa treatment facilities and structures. The main goal pursued through curative protection is to ensure that urban development does not eliminate, limit or transform the natural conditions of the spa. The “B” zone is a buffer zone of the spa's very centre and usually serves as an area of development related to services, tourism and housing, with no negative impact on the curative properties of the spa. The “C” protection zone is a buffer zone for zones “B” and “A”, encompassing the area which influences the maintaining of values related to the landscape, the climate and natural curative material deposits. A set of prohibited activities is established for each curative protection zone.

<sup>13</sup> R.B. Woodroff, *Customer Value: the Next Source for Competitive Advantage*. “Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science” 1992, No. 25 (2), pp. 139–153.

<sup>14</sup> V.A. Zeithaml, *Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality and Value: a Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence*, “Journal of Marketing” July 1998, 52, pp. 2–22.

<sup>15</sup> Y. Hallem, I. Barth, A. Triki, *Customer Perceived Value of Medical Tourism: an Exploratory Study. The Case of Cosmetic Surgery in Tunisia*, in: *Health, Wellness and Tourism: Healthy Tourists, Healthy Business?*, Proceedings of the Travel and Tourism Research Association Europe 2010 Annual Conference, 1–3 September, Budapest, Hungary 2010.

<sup>16</sup> A. Rapacz, A. Mroczek-Czetweryńska, *Kierunki rozwoju rynku usług SPA & Wellness na Dolnym Śląsku*, Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Ekonomiczne Problemy Turystyki nr 2 (26), Szczecin 2014, pp. 247–262.

<sup>17</sup> Curative protection zones are established on the basis of the Act on spa treatment, spas and curative protection areas and spa municipalities from July 28, 2005.

## Discussion

The weaknesses of the studied spas include: the low standard of a part of the accommodation infrastructure (shared sanitary units, lack of modern equipment); the small amount of parking spaces located around the sanatorium structures; the insufficient level of activities related to recreation, tourism, culture and entertainment offered in the towns (cafés, restaurants, stores); the unaesthetic character of the towns' infrastructure. As for threats which have a negative impact on the development of the towns, these include: delays in and slow execution of eliminating natural environment pollution, including the lack of sewage plants; heavy automobile traffic in the town centres, unecological CO boilers using solid fuels (coal, coal dust). The towns have insufficient funds for investment, modernisation and effective promotion.<sup>18</sup> The flood risk (e.g. in Długopole-Zdrój) is a serious issue. The Nysa Kłodzka is a dangerous river. July of 1997 brought about the flood of the century, which inflicted massive damage. Flood risk is a real threat for Nysa Kłodzka, as flooding may reoccur in the case of similar catastrophic rainfall. The flood protection work undertaken after the 1997 flood do not guarantee the full safety of the spa, as it is impossible to predict the size of a potential future storm.

There is, however, a number of strengths to the spas which can be indicated. These include: the valuable resources, such as natural curative waters; the diversity of treatment profiles; specialist treatment profiles; good opinions regarding the curative values, efficiency and quality of therapy among individual and institutional clients; an experienced medical staff, the professional activity and qualifications of the employees; the partially modernised accommodation spa infrastructure adapted for the disabled; the modernised treatment infrastructure and specialist treatment equipment; values related to small towns, the peaceful conditions for one's stay, a close connection with nature; social activity.

## Conclusions

The analyses conducted for the selected rural status spa towns have allowed to formulate the following summary:

1. Rural spas are usually quiet, serene places providing a pleasant stay for their visitors. They provide the patients with the proper conditions for rest, regeneration and a return to health.
2. Natural environment, the accompanying vegetation, the delineated resting areas, the medicinal effect of the curative waters and the high quality of equipment used in treating illnesses make the spas fully deserving of the status which they lack and which is typical of larger curative centres.
3. As once was the case with agriculture, tourism – including curative tourism – should produce its own forms determining the properties of a territory. The growing tourist space

<sup>18</sup> E. Gonda-Soroczyńska, *Innowacyjny klaster Zdrowie i Turystyka elementem współpracy na rzecz rozwoju turystyki uzdrowiskowej w województwie świętokrzyskim*, Prace Naukowe UE nr 157, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2011, pp. 437–446; E. Gonda-Soroczyńska, *Niewykorzystany potencjał uzdrowiska wiejskiego*, „Acta Scientiarum Polonorum” 2011, nr 10 (2), Architectura, pp. 25–34.

- including curative tourism space – in the studied towns, is a source of new meanings and values within rural culture.
4. There are delineated protection zones in the spa (including the rural spa). Their area allows for the introduction of new sanatorium structures and curative facilities. The protection of spa resources in these zones has a significant impact on the economic and aesthetic dimension of the spa's functioning.
  5. Rural towns with a large potential for development in the area of agritourism should utilise it to the highest possible degree. It is also favourable to introduce new curative and recreational centres in their close vicinity and to utilise the existing reserves of manpower resulting from unemployment for the purpose of tourism management.
  6. Some factors inhibiting the possibilities for development for rural spa centres include: an underdeveloped technical infrastructure, especially in respect to the water and wastewater management; the bad condition of local and district roads; an underdeveloped social infrastructure, especially with regard to culture, sports and recreation; the lack of strong service centres available to the customers and for tourism management; the insufficient level of managing the existing tourist routes.

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## UZDROWISKOWA FUNKCJA WSI – INFRASTRUKTURA, ZASOBY PRZYRODNICZE, TWORZYWA UZDROWISKOWE

### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

spa, dominującą funkcją wsi, funkcja uzdrowiskowa

### STRESZCZENIE

Celem podjętych badań jest analiza wybranych wiejskich ośrodków uzdrowiskowych w kontekście uwarunkowań przyrodniczych, oferty leczniczej i infrastrukturalnych uzdrowiskowej, stanowiących potencjał uzdrowiskowy, decydujący zarazem o jakości świadczonych usług turystycznych. Przedmiot badań obejmuje dwie wsie dolnośląskie: Przerzeczyn-Zdrój, Długopole-Zdrój i jedną osadę z woj. świętokrzyskiego – Solec-Zdrój. Jak to jest w przypadku wysoko rozwiniętych państw, również polska wieś nie jest już zamieszkała wyłącznie przez rolników. Współczesna wieś może spełniać różne funkcje. Znaczna liczba mieszkańców wsi zarabia na życie wykonując prace w działach pozarolniczych, często pracę poza ich miejscem zamieszkania. Jedną z funkcji pozarolniczej wsi, jest funkcja uzdrowiskowa, charakterystyczna dla miejscowości posiadających potencjał leczniczy, zwłaszcza w kontekście warunków środowiskowych (występowanie leczniczych wód mineralnych, sprzyjający klimat), jak również warunków infrastrukturalnych.