

Chapter 5

Geography of Tourism in the Czech Republic

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Abstract Geography of tourism in the country is presented by discussing five different problem areas presented in the national literature, such as spatial organisation of tourism, its main forms and types, analysis of selected localisation, selective and realisation factors in tourism or applied research in the field of geographical problems in tourism. Geographical situation and natural preconditions for tourism in the Czech Republic are introduced in this chapter. The distribution of tourism resources focuses on the specificity of natural conditions with its unique landscape, climate, fauna and flora and water conditions. The geographical approach serves as a presentation of preserved territories of the country's area. The most important in this category are national parks, which are shortly described. An important, however brief, part of the chapter is dedicated to the description of the historical and cultural heritage of cultural centres and architectural monuments. The values potential is complemented by a presentation of basic and secondary infrastructure of tourism stressing the role of accommodation facilities and sport-recreational and transport infrastructure. The next part presents the inbound tourism with its dynamics, structure, seasonality and qualitative change of demand, as well as opinions of tourists about their visits and most preferred destinations. The main types of tourism shortly introduced here are as follows: urban, sport, congress and spa and wellness tourism. This chapter is summarised with a description of tourism regionalisation in the Czech Republic.

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5.1 Geographic Research of Tourism in the Czech Republic, Its Main Research Problems and Topics

Tourism has been a subject of research in the Czech Republic for more than 50 years and all that time it has had its classical and also specific topics. These topics arise both from necessary basic knowledge and also from particular professional specialisation of leading Czech geographers and other personalities giving shape to Czech geographical schooling. Czech geographical research has always had a lot in common with that in other countries around the world, although its complexity and extent might not be so wide and also the level of theoretical-methodological rudiments and approaches might not be so high.

The beginnings of tourism research in the Czech Republic date back to 1950s, when the first theoretical-methodological principles of the discipline were formed. From 1960s until nowadays, the classical topics in Czech geography have been the analysis of selected localisation, selective and realisation factors in tourism and also the analysis of spatial organisation in tourism and its main forms (e.g. Šprincová 1983). At the end of 1960s and the beginning of 1970s, a new phenomenon got to the centre of attention of Czech geographers, sociologists and urban economists for more than 20 years—short-term recreation of urban population. At the same time, Czech geography started to study its specific subject of interest—the phenomenon of second homes. Finally, since 1980s, in the manner of the rest of Europe, Czech geography started to apply modern geographic-cartographic approaches and methods in tourism (thematic maps, atlases). Last but not least, since the 1990s, the attention has also been paid to selected environmental issues in tourism (sustainable tourism, environment-friendly tourism).

This being said, we can now look into the 50-year-old history of tourism research in the Czech Republic and referring publications of Czech geographers. They all deal with the problem of tourism in the Czech Republic, and the main problem areas are as follows (Vystoupil and Kunc 2010):

1. Discussion on the subject of geographical research in tourism and recreation (assessment of the orientation and tasks that geography of tourism deals with, research methods in geography of recreation and second homes, theoretical-methodological issues of human potential in tourism, geographical approaches to regionalisation of tourism).
2. *Analysis of selected localisation, selective and realisation factors in tourism* (concepts and methods that study natural and cultural-historical factors and conditions of tourism, economic and social factors, analyses of basic and secondary infrastructure of tourism, assessment of the main cause, requirements and needs of people on holiday, regional research) (e.g. Mariot 1971).
3. Phenomenon of short-term recreation of (urban) population, recreativity (free time in cities—urban, transport and social problems, analyses of specific forms of free-time activities, recreation infrastructure in cities, spatial organisation of short-term recreation, intensity of recreation migration and its assessment, needs of people on short-term recreation, models of spatial distribution and dispersion

- of suburban recreation, time and spatial accessibility of weekend centres) (e.g. Vystoupil 1988; Vágner 2004).
4. Second homes (study of geographical and social problems of second housing, concepts of social-spatial diffusion of second homes, forming and spatial organisation of second homes on various spatial levels, formation and limitation of suburban recreational background, influence of second homes on rural areas development, accommodation facilities, analysis of distance factor, nature attractiveness factor, roots of turbulent development, spatial organisation of second homes, social-geographical context, prospects of second housing, regional analyses of second housing—mostly of people from biggest Czech towns) (e.g. Vystoupil 1981; Bičík et al. 2001; Fialová 2001; Vágner 2001).
 5. *Analysis of spatial organisation of tourism and its main forms and types*, which in fact is the oldest and most characteristic subject of geography of tourism (spatial models of tourism, functional-spatial typology of various resorts, regionalisation of tourism areas, intensity research, visiting rate structure, formation and heading of tourist and visitors streams, classification and typology of visited places in tourism, regional research of spatial organisation in small-size territories and in large areas in tourism, i.e. regionalisation, analysis of main forms and types of tourism—especially urban and rural tourism, areas with prominent winter or summer recreation or tourism, spa tourism, viticulture—regional differentiation of tourism with regard to its economic function, analysis of tourism development as well as the development of its individual forms, analysis of domestic and foreign visiting rates) (e.g. Vystoupil and Mariot 1987).
 6. Cartographic-geographic approaches and methods in tourism (thematic maps, publishing the first Atlas of Tourism in the Czech Republic, monitoring individual potential of tourism, cartographic representation of spatial organisation of tourism and recreation as well as its main forms and types) (e.g. Vystoupil et al. 1992, 2006).
 7. *Environmental issues and factors of tourism* (positive and negative impacts of tourism on the environment and the landscape or more precisely on the social-cultural environment, influences of geographic environment on tourism, tourism as an environmental factor of quality of life) (e.g. Pásková 2003).
 8. *Applied research in the field of geographical problems in tourism* (national and regional strategic documents in tourism, programme documents, applied research in tourism stressing the social-geographical problems arising in many research grants—within the competence of the ministries) (e.g. Vystoupil et al. 2007).

5.2 Assessment of Conditions and Factors for Tourism Development in the Czech Republic

Tourism preconditions are a set of natural and man-made aspects including their mutual multi-level interconnections that make it possible for tourism to be realised. P. Mariot (2000) suggested their functional-chronological segmentation into *localisation, selective and realisation preconditions of tourism*.

5.2.1 *Localisation Preconditions and Factors for Tourism Development*

Localisation preconditions for tourism include *natural preconditions* and cultural-historical (man-made) preconditions (Mariot 2000).

5.2.1.1 **Natural Preconditions for Tourism**

Natural preconditions and factors are the most crucial of all localisation factors for most activities of tourism and recreation—especially for forms that include staying at a place for some time. These preconditions also define basic functional-spatial dimensions and differentiation when we consider the utilisation of an area for recreational purposes.

When we assess the potential of tourism, we can do so from two points of view. The first one puts an emphasis on the assessment of partial segments of the potential. All researches that have been carried out until today to analyse the natural preconditions for tourism, shows a general agreement on the structure of factors that have an influence on the natural potential of an area. Mariot (1971), Kopšo (1992) and others defined the basic natural preconditions as follows: relief features, climatic, hydrologic and biographic conditions.

Among relief features that are most valued for tourism are mainly unusual and highly broken terrain features such as rock spires and rock formations, glens, waterfalls, glacier valleys, deeply cut romantic valleys, karst caves, abysses and others. Prominent hydrologic features are, for example, emergences or sinkings of all kinds of springs, mineral springs, natural courses of rivers (esp. meanders) and lakes. Attractive biographic features treasured by tourism are, for example, vast woodland areas, scrub pine areas, mountainous flora, wetlands, moors, occurrence of rare or protected plants, areas with findings of relict mammals and birds.

Besides assessment of partial segments of natural potential, we can also measure the level of attractiveness of an area with the help of synthesising characteristics and indicators (Šauer 2005). In the Czech Republic, this approach was practically used in 1980s (Regionalisation of tourism in Czechoslovakia, 1981, analytic part of Urban Concept of Czechoslovakia, 1988 or Proposal of New Regionalisation of Tourism in the Czech Republic from 2006). It was also implemented in spatial planning in Germany and Austria.

In order to model the overall natural potential of tourism, we can use the assessment of prospective recreation areas. Such an assessment can successfully generalise natural conditions on the existing state and intensity of functional-spatial utilisation of an area. This, however, can be a rather inaccurate indicator to show just how attractive an area can be for tourism. That is why it is always advisable to take other analyses into consideration and complement it with assessment based on the system of nature preservation in the Czech Republic. There are several large

nature-protected areas that represent a compact complex of nature-oriented pre-conditions for tourism development. These are areas with high concentration of natural attractive features on the one hand, and, on the other hand, they are highly homogenous units with common characteristics.

The most attractive areas of the Czech Republic in terms of recreation are mountain areas (Šumava, Krušné hory, Lužické hory, Jizerské hory, Krkonoše, Orlické hory, Jeseníky, Beskydy) as well as their foothills. Among highly attractive areas, there are also sparsely populated woodland areas (Křivoklátsko, Brdy, České Švýcarsko, Rálsko, Chřiby, Moravský kras, Česká Kanada, etc.) and areas with a high share of water reservoirs (e.g. Třeboňsko). On the other hand, lowland areas with intensive agriculture are least attractive for tourism (especially Polabí—along the Elbe, Poohří—along the Ohře river, Dyjsko-svratecký úval and Dolnomoravský úval).

There are two types of protected areas in the Czech Republic. The first type is so-called specially protected areas which can be divided according to their size to small-size and large-size areas. Large-size specially protected areas are national parks and protected landscape areas (CHKO). National parks are areas under the strongest protection, areas that are unique either nationally or internationally. The system of protection is a little bit less rigid in the protected landscape areas. Such areas are divided into four zones and the system of nature protection is different in each zone. Different zones also determine different limits for farming and other utilisation of the natural potential. Small-size specially protected areas follow the same pattern of protection as the first and second zones of national parks and protected landscape areas. There are four types of such areas: national natural reservation, national natural landmark, natural reservation and natural landmark.

There are four national parks in the Czech Republic and they can be found in 6 regions—South Bohemia Region (28.6%), South Moravia Region (5.3%), Hradec Králové Region (20.7%), Liberec Region (9.8%), Plzeň Region (29.0%) and Ústí nad Labem Region (6.6%). Their overall proportion on the area of the Czech Republic is 1.51%. If we compare the share of national parks on the area of particular regions, we get the highest numbers in the Hradec Králové Region and the Liberec Region. There are 70 municipalities located in the Czech national parks.

There are 25 protected landscape areas in the Czech Republic. Their proportion on the area of the Czech Republic is 14%. The highest share on the overall area is in the Zlíns Region (nearly 30%), Liberec Region and Ústí nad Labem Region to contrast with Prague and the South Moravia Region where the share is the lowest.

Tourism in the Czech Republic has traditionally flourished in national parks and protected landscape areas. The high quality of natural conditions in these areas is reflected in the intensive recreational utilisation. Almost 32% of the capacity in collective accommodation facilities is located in large-size protected areas. The value of tourist-recreational function in these areas is also high above the average. The level of attractiveness is, however, quite different in individual protected areas. This is due to the different positions that particular areas have in spatial-organisational system of tourism. From the point of view of realised

attractiveness, the scale is dominated by mountain areas.¹ This is mainly due to the relief that is suitable for tourism development and winter recreation (downhill skiing). Second most important group of areas are places with large rock formations. About 12% of accommodation capacity in protected areas is located in such protected landscape areas (Broumovsko, České Švýcarsko, Labské pískovce, Český ráj and Kokořínsko) (Photograph 5.1).

If we consider the capacity of collective accommodation facilities in karst areas, we find out that they fall below their potential. Both Moravian Karst and Czech Karst are one of the least equipped protected areas. This is most likely a consequence to the fact that visits to karst formations tend to be short-term and that both these areas are located near big towns.

Horizontal articulation is another factor, why some areas are seen as attractive (especially in meanders of valley rivers and ponds and lakes). Valley of the Berounka river (Kokořínsko), the Dyje river (Podyjí National Park) or river meadows and ponds in the Třeboň area are very much sought after. Nevertheless, the vertical factor seems to be cardinal. Poodří and Litovelské Pomoraví are a proof of this phenomenon—horizontal articulation of these rivers is rather high but their flow goes through river meadows. They are not perceived as attractive for tourism. It must be said, though, that tourist attractiveness is not given with just one factor or uniqueness of a natural feature, it is rather a complex of components including the shape of the landscape and character of settlements (Table 5.1).

5.2.2 *Cultural-Historical Preconditions of Tourism*

There is one feature that is specific for all cultural-historical preconditions for tourism—they have been made by human intervention in the environment. That is why the character of cultural-historical preconditions is rather wide and very varied. This situation calls for some kind of specification or classification. Usually, they are divided into three groups (Holešinská 2005): cultural-historical sights, culture centres and culture events. In this paper, we shall only pay attention to the first two of them.

5.2.2.1 **Cultural-Historical Sights**

Cultural-historical sights are important evidences of historical development, way of life and the society from prehistoric times until today. They also reveal creative

¹Among the first ten protected areas with the highest capacity of beds, there are seven mountain areas.

Photograph 5.1 Czech Paradise (Source J. Wyrzykowski)



Photograph 5.2 Karlstejn Castle (Source M. Góralewicz-Drozdowska)



power and the work of man in all fields of human activity. Cultural-historical sights can be divided into three categories—movable sights, immovable sights and set of sights.

Within the cultural-historical potential of tourism, cultural-historical sights are the most important components that significantly participates in tourism development in the Czech Republic. Very often we can hear that while in other countries tourists come to see the sea, visitors to the Czech Republic come here to see the sea of cultural sights (Kesner 2005). This is a fact, really, as we can also see in the record of all Czech sights. There are more than 40,000 of immovable sights on this list.²

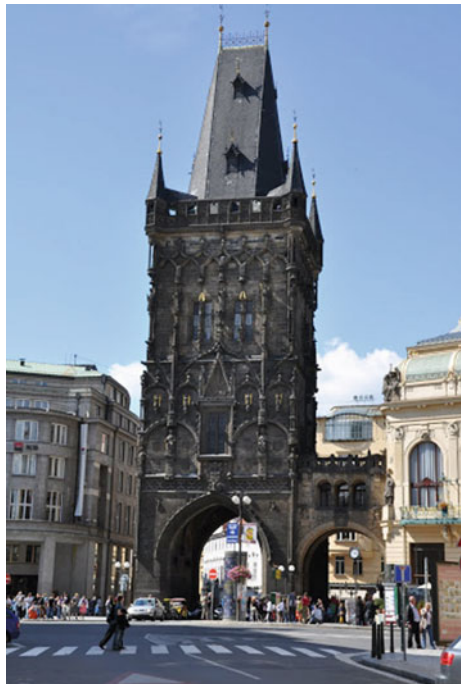
From the point of view of tourism development, *architectural sights* (immovable) are the most important. Seeing them is the most frequent reason for travelling

²For the list of Czech cultural sights go to the websites of the Czech National Heritage Institution at MonumNet, <http://monumnet.npu.cz/monumnet.php>.

Photograph 5.3 Holy Trinity Column in Olomouc
(Source M. Góralewicz-Drozdowska)



Photograph 5.4 Powder Tower, Prague
(Source D. Sidorska)



Photograph 5.5 Charles Bridge, Vltava, Prague
(Source D. Sidorska)



Photograph 5.6 Cathedral SS Vitus, Wenceslas and Adalbert, Prague (Source W. Maciejewski)



Photograph 5.7 Wenceslas Square, Prague (Source D. Sidorska)



Photograph 5.8 Absinth museum, Prague (Source M. Góralewicz-Drozdowska)



Photograph 5.9 The Church of Mother of God before Týn, Prague (Source M. Góralewicz-Drozdowska)



among the tourists. Therefore, we use the term *cognitive function* of cultural-historical sights.

Significant clusters of cultural-historical sights, that often form town centres, are declared urban monument reserves or urban monument zones. There are 40 urban monument reserves and 255 urban monument zones in the Czech Republic. Their distribution is significantly influenced by the structure of settlements (see Fig. 5.1, Photograph 5.10).

Photograph 5.10 Celetna street, Prague (Source M. Góralewicz-Drozdowska)



Besides urban monument reserves and zones, there are a number of solitary sights in the Czech Republic (Photographs 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9). The most prestigious of them are pronounced national cultural sights. There are 304 of them located in 198 municipalities or towns around the Czech Republic. The largest groups of them are castles and chateaus (97 objects), also religious sights are rather plentiful.

We most often use the number of visitors³ of a particular sight to indicate the level of its significance for tourism. To illustrate the situation in the Czech Republic, see the table below with a list of most popular sights (with the highest number of visitors) in the Czech Republic (regardless of the year) (Table 5.2, 5.3).

Internationally, the highest level of protection is devoted to sights that have been listed among the UNESCO world cultural heritage sights. There are 12 of them in the Czech Republic (see Fig. 5.1).

³Number of visitors is recorded in all sights around the Czech Republic that require an entrance fee. According to available data from National Information and Consultation Centre for Culture (NIPOS), there were 277 objects with the total number of visitors over 11.5 mill people in 2008.

Table 5.1 Classification of large protected landscape areas

Name of area	Number of beds in collective facilities	Characteristic features	Prevailing forms of tourism
KRNAP—Krkonoše	36,134	Mountains	Winter and summer active recreation
Šumava	16,429	Mountains	Winter and summer active recreation
Beskydy	14,792	Mountains	Winter and summer active recreation
Jizerské hory	13,151	Mountains	Winter and summer active recreation
Jeseníky	12,885	Mountains	Winter and summer active recreation
Kokořínsko	7775	Sandstone rocks	Nature tourism
Žďárské vrchy	7080	Countryside	Winter recreation, rural tourism
Třeboňsko	6334	Water	Summer water recreation, spa tourism
Český ráj	4650	Sandstone rocks	Nature tourism
České středohoří	4394	Veldt	Nature tourism
Bílé Karpaty	4153	Mountains	Nature tourism
Železné hory	3220	Countryside	Summer water recreation, rural tourism
Orlické hory	3176	Mountains	Winter and summer active recreation
Broumovsko	3131	Sandstone rocks	Nature tourism
Č.Švýc. + Lab.písk. České Švýcarsko and Labské pískovce	3060	Sandstone rocks	Nature tourism
Lužické hory	2975	Mountains	Summer active recreation, second homes
Křivoklátsko	2529	River valleys, forests	Nature tourism, second homes
Pálava	2136	Veldt	Nature tourism
Slavkovský les	1981	Mineral springs, moorland	Nature tourism, spa tourism
Český les	1386	Mountains	Nature tourism, second homes
Podýjí	1250	River valleys, forests	Nature tourism
Moravský kras	1229	Karst caves	Nature tourism
Český kras	1188	Karst caves	Nature tourism
Blanský les	550	Countryside	Sub-urban recreation
Blaník	400	Countryside	Nature tourism
Poodří	292	Floodplains and floodplain forests	Sub-urban recreation
Litovelské Pomoraví	253	Floodplains and floodplain forests	Nature tourism

Source Own analyses

Table 5.2 The most popular sights in the Czech Republic in 2013

Sight	Location	Number of visitors (in 1000)
Prague Castle	Praha	1493
ZOO Park	Praha	1115
Old Town Hall	Praha	456
Chateau and arboretum Průhonice	Průhonice	340
Castle complex Český Krumlov	Český Krumlov	316
Chateau Lednice	Břeclav	313
Ossuary Sedlec	Kutná Hora	310
Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul	Brno	306
Chateau Hluboká nad Vltavou	Hluboká nad Vltavou	252
Karlštejn Castle	Karlštejn	231
Chateau Dětenice	Dětenice	195
Old New Synagogue	Praha	170

Source Kultura České republiky v číslech/Czech Culture in Numbers (2014)

Table 5.3 The most popular castles and chateaus in the Czech Republic in 2013

Castle/chateau	District	Number of visitors (in 1000)
Prague Castle	Praha	1493
Castle complex Český Krumlov	Český Krumlov	316
Chateau Lednice	Břeclav	313
Chateau Hluboká nad Vltavou	Hluboká nad Vltavou	252
Karlštejn Castle	Karlštejn	231
Chateau Dětenice	Jičín	195
Archbishop palace and gardens in Kroměříž	Kroměříž	130
Pernštejn Castle	Brno-venkov	134
Silesian Ostrava Castle	Ostrava	129
Chateau Konopiště	Benešov	111
Chateau Sychrov	Liberec	107
Křivoklát Castle	Rakovník	103

Source Kultura České republiky v číslech/Czech Culture in Numbers (2014)

5.2.2.2 Culture Centres

The second group of cultural-historical potential is represented by culture centres that have both **cognitive function** and **social function**. This correlates with their character, and they tend to be fixed in time. Culture centres are divided into three categories: museums, galleries and memorials, theatres and observatories and planetariums.

The statistical data show that museums, galleries and memorials belong among the most important culture centres in the Czech Republic. In 2014, there were 509

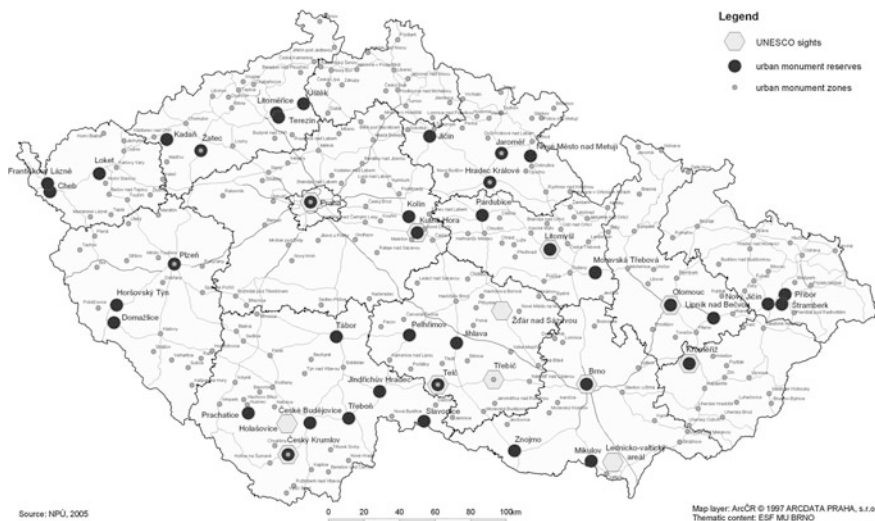


Fig. 5.1 Urban monument reserves, urban monument zones and UNESCO sights (Source Vystoupil et al. 2006)

cultural centres of this type and they were visited by more than 11.6 million people. Museums have got the largest share on the total number, in most cases they are situated in big towns and cities.

From the economical point of view or from the point of view of added value generation, theatres occupy the first place among all establishments offering cultural services. There were 211 theatres in 2014 in the Czech Republic, offering about 27.5 thousand performances and attracting nearly 6.1 million theatre lovers. Spatial localisation of theatres is closely connected with cities and that is why the vast majority of them are located there.

Observatories, planetariums and other astronomic facilities are not dominant tourist attractions. There are about 50 establishments of this kind in the Czech Republic; on average, they attract 570,000 visitors a year.

5.3 Basic and Secondary Infrastructure of Tourism (Realisation Preconditions for Tourism)

Infrastructure in tourism is a system of organisational-technical preconditions that enable to fulfil the need of participants in tourism in a particular destination (transport, roads, electricity supplies, drinking water accessibility, sewage system, shops, banks, exchange offices, cultural centres, places of entertainment, sport facilities, etc. (Zelenka and Pásková 2002, p. 127).

Geographical research in the Czech Republic as well as in most European countries concentrates mainly on a crucial segment of tourism infrastructure—accommodation facilities and selected sport-recreational and transport-recreational infrastructure. The following chapter deals with the analysis of the development and spatial localisation of this infrastructure in the Czech Republic.

5.3.1 *Accommodation Facilities*

Type, structure and spatial differentiation of accommodation facilities in the Czech Republic have always gone hand in hand with the level of attractiveness of a particular area. Tourist facilities, since the very beginning, have been concentrated mainly in Prague, other big cultural and commercial centres and in spas. In 1921, for example, more than 1.3 thousand accommodation facilities (mainly B&B's) were located in about 700 municipalities. The overall capacity was 25 thousand beds (Catalogue of Hotels in Czechoslovakia, 1921). 70% of the capacity was concentrated in Bohemia, of that 10% in Prague. 25% was cumulated in spa towns (35 locations). In Moravia, the most significant was Brno (840 beds), followed by Ostrava (500), Luhačovice (430), Olomouc (370), Jihlava (200), Opava (200), Šumperk (200) and Jeseník (150). Since the end of 1920s, building works also moved to the mountain areas, specifically to Krkonoše, Jizerské hory, Orlické hory, Jeseníky and Šumava (besides spas located in these areas). At the end of 1930s, the estimated number of beds in the Czech Republic was around 50,000, and the spatial distribution was very much the same as it was at the beginning of 1920s (mentioned above).

After the WWII (1946–1960), the development of accommodation portfolio was stagnating as can be proved with data from 1960. The output of the Czech Statistical Office, hotel lists and guide books shows that in 1960 there were about 60,000 beds located in more than 900 municipalities. The most significant tourist centres were Prague (5000 beds), Špindlerův Mlýn (2000), Karlovy Vary (1400), Brno (1200), Mariánské Lázně (1000), Janské Lázně (650), Děčín (600), Liberec (600), Pec pod Sněžkou (570), Gottwaldov, Plzeň, Luhačovice and Olomouc (450 beds).

In the 1960s, we could see a new trend of tourism starting to thrive, which lasted until the end of 1980s. At that time, it was typical to participate in various forms of “socialist” mass tourism. People would spend their holidays in facilities owned by various trade unions or they would prefer any other form of mass social tourism. This led to a dynamic growth of accommodation possibilities, which was typical for a period starting in the mid-1960s and lasting through the 1970s and culminating in the 1980s. This trend is also illustrated in the Fig. 5.2.

In 1976, there were 110,000 beds available in “independent” tourist facilities (regular types of facilities, of which 63,000 beds were in hotels) and other 162,000 beds in “controlled” tourism (selective recreation, recreation provided by trade unions, spa facilities—mainly in the mountains and in water resorts). These

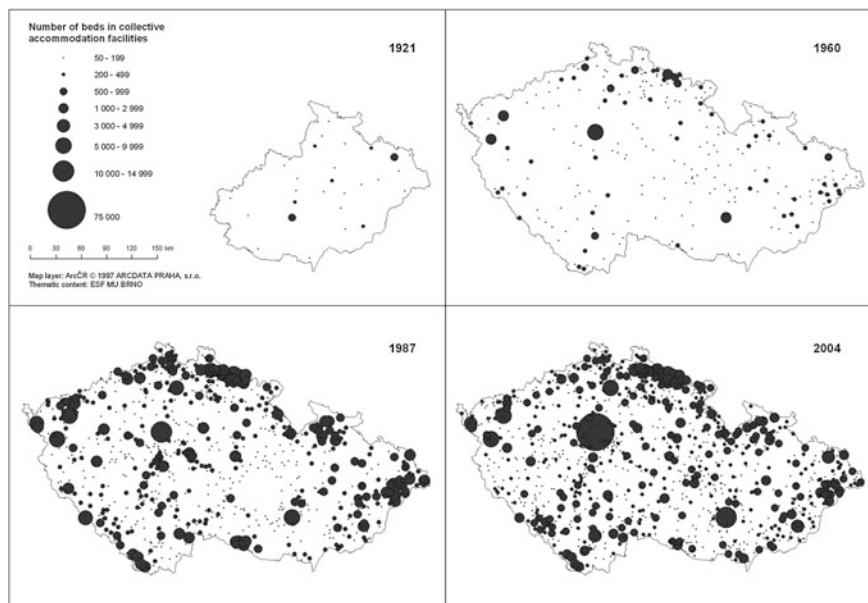


Fig. 5.2 Number of beds in Czech collective accommodation facilities in 1960–2004

facilities were located in 950 municipalities. Most often, these facilities were used for selective recreation and recreation provided by trade unions.

1990 was a breaking point in the development of accommodation portfolio. The first feature of that time was the transition of accommodation facilities belonging to trade unions into private hands, and the same process underwent in case of spa facilities (however, not to such an extent). Secondly, many facilities were built at that time and, last but not least, there was a huge qualitative improvement of accommodation facilities (the share of 4-star and 5-star hotels increased due to the construction of new and modern facilities and also due to the reconstruction of already existing ones). During 1987–2014, the total number of beds in tourism in the Czech Republic increased from 360,000 to 520,000, that is by 44%. New construction activities were mainly centred in Prague (39% of the total increase of 160,000 beds). At the end of the 1980s, there were around 25,000 beds in Prague, and in 2014, it was already as many as 88,000 beds of a completely different quality than before (more than a half of the total number of 80,000 beds in 4- and 5-star hotels in the whole Czech Republic were located in Prague). Besides Prague, new construction was also underway in areas with highly attractive natural scenery (Šumava, South Bohemia, Krkonoše, partially also Vysočina and ski resorts in Jesníky, spa towns around the entire country—renovation) and in selected historical towns. Construction works took place mainly in areas that were attractive for the new foreign clientele coming mainly from Germany, the Netherlands and Austria. This reflected the new geopolitical situation in Europe. For the same reason,

Table 5.4 Capacity and output in Czech accommodation facilities in 1987

Region	Number of beds (in thousands)	Number of overnight stays (in thousands)
Prague	10,149	3017
Centra Bohemian Region	31,689	3330
South Bohemian Region	30,384	4115
West Bohemian Region	49,743	8726
North Bohemian Region	48,574	4880
East Bohemian Region	65,248	7376
South Moravian Region	48,146	5716
North Moravian Region	51,553	6403
Total the Czech Republic	335,485	43565

Source Sčítání občanské vybavenosti v roce 1987/Census of community facilities in 1987 (1988)

construction of new accommodation facilities stagnated in what suddenly appeared as less attractive areas, such as Moravian-Slovak border area.

The functional structure of up-to-date tourism in the Czech Republic shows these facts: 45% of all beds can be found in centres of urban and cultural tourism, 16–17% are in resorts of water recreation, 19–20% in mountain resorts, 8% of beds are in spa towns, and 10% of the total capacity remains for other tourism centres, mostly in the country.

According to the latest data from 2014, the number of collective accommodation facilities in the Czech Republic was 9013 with the total capacity of 519,909 beds. The proportion of beds in various types of collection accommodation facilities was as follows: 59% in hotels and similar establishments (of that 27% are in 4- and 5-star hotels), 41% in other types of collective accommodation facilities (29% of that in holiday dwellings and hostels for tourist). Individual accommodation (at somebody else's place) covers 8% of the overall capacity (not monitored since 2002).

Looking at the geographical distribution of collective accommodation facilities, it is obvious that the geographical differentiation is quite significant and that they are very much concentrated in centres with important cultural-historical potential, as well as centres with important natural potential and preconditions (mountain areas such as Krkonoše, Jizerské hory, water reservoirs and some rivers especially Berounka, Sázava, Vltava rivers). Spa towns undoubtedly belong among places with high concentration of facilities, too (Table 5.4, 5.5).

5.3.2 Sport-Recreational and Transport Infrastructure

Although transport undoubtedly plays numerous functions in the entire system of tourism, we shall concentrate only on its relation to sport-recreational infrastructure.

Table 5.5 Capacity of collective accommodation facilities in tourist marketing regions 2014

Tourist marketing region	Number of facilities	Number of rooms	Number of beds	Number of places for tents and caravans
Prague	757	40,520	87,961	967
Central Bohemia	610	12,255	32,199	5206
South Bohemia	833	14,893	42,098	8667
Sumava	616	9001	26,797	6184
Plzensko and Czech Forest	276	6624	18,396	2712
West Bohemian Spas	439	15,105	30,786	1152
North-West Bohemia	446	8463	22,047	1825
Ceskolipsko and Jizerske Mountains	505	8740	26,568	2132
Český ráj (Bohemian Paradise)	193	3241	9711	2125
Krkonose and Podkrkonosi	951	14,689	41,919	2032
Kralovehradecko	309	5264	14,976	2331
East Bohemia	335	7272	20,363	1821
Vysocina	452	8362	24,031	3399
South Moravia	816	17,635	44,213	5666
East Moravie	445	10,058	25,767	1431
Central Moravia and Jeseniky	461	8801	22,621	1148
Total the Czech Republic	9013	202,482	519,909	50,837

Source Czech Statistical Office

In this case, it is possible to interpret transport as an instrument that enables the participants in tourism to travel within a tourist destination or helps enjoy sport and recreation in the place. Should transport have this wide definition so closely tight with tourism, then the following elements are all included:

- infrastructure for winter sports (facilities for downhill and cross-country skiing),
- infrastructure for walking and hiking (marked footpaths, thematic and natural trails),
- infrastructure for cycling (marked cyclepaths),
- other specific types of transport services that can be included in the category of sport-recreational infrastructure (summer cable ways, ski buses and cycle buses, marked hippo paths, marked paths for wheelchair users).

5.3.2.1 DownHill Skiing and Skiing Slopes

Together with cross-country skiing, downhill skiing is one of the most significant activities that are typical of winter tourist season. In comparison with cross-country skiing, however, downhill skiing is rather disadvantaged due to its localisation and realisation demands. These are the basic conditions for a successful development of downhill skiing:

- suitable configuration of the terrain and favourable physical-geographical conditions (slope that must fulfil a number of criteria, e.g. length, slant, exposure to cardinal points, etc.),
- favourable climatic conditions (suitable length of winter season, thermal characteristics, height of snow cover and suitable length of time when it lasts, etc.),
- huge investment for construction of the skiing resort and its infrastructure (fast and high-capacity transport equipment, e.g. lifts, technology for artificial snow making, treatment and lighting of the slopes),
- difficult position of the resort keepers with authorities dealing with environmental protection. Projects for downhill skiing developments are often seen as a strong intervention into the function of ecosystems.

Although the natural conditions in the Czech Republic might not be very suitable for downhill skiing development (lower altitude, shorter length of potential slopes, shorter winter season)—especially in comparison with some other European countries—it has had a long tradition. That is why most Czech skiing resorts tend to be rather small. In most cases, they are located in mountainous border areas, such as Krkonoše, Jizerské hory, Krušné hory, Šumava, Orlické hory, Jeseníky and Beskydy. A few less equipped skiing resorts can be found in lower altitude mountain ranges such as Český les, Českomoravská vrchovina or Bílé Karpaty.

In the Table 5.6, you can see a list of the biggest skiing resorts in the Czech Republic. They have been ordered according to the overall length of downhill skiing slopes that are located there.

In order to assess the quality of a particular skiing resorts, however, the overall length of downhill skiing slopes is not the only criteria. The level of its infrastructure is of no less importance (fast transport equipment with high capacity, technology for artificial snow making, treatment of the slopes, automatic operating systems, facilities for snowboarding, parking facilities, etc.). Unfortunately, for most Czech skiing resorts some degree of under equipment with infrastructure is quite typical. This fact shows mainly in low quality and low capacity of transport facilities (even if the situation has been improving, the number of rebuilt or newly open lifts has been rising). This leads to long waiting times at the lifts and to certain extend spoils the skiing experience. In some resorts, all available lifts are not integrated in one system and there may be several tariffs available. This is a nuisance for skiers.

5.3.2.2 Winter Sports and Recreation—Cross-Country Skiing

It was already mentioned above, that along with downhill skiing, cross-country skiing is the most significant activity typical for the winter tourist season in the Czech Republic. If we compare the two disciplines, cross-country skiing has got a certain advantage as it is less demanding on localisation and realisation preconditions.

Table 5.6 Biggest resorts of downhill skiing in the Czech Republic (resorts with more than 8 km of slopes)

Resort	Length of slopes								Interconnection into one network
	Total		Out of which						
	Metres	(%)	Blue		Red		Black		
			Metres	(%)	Metres	(%)	Metres	(%)	
Černá h.— Pec	40,770	100.0	15,810	38.8	23,235	57.0	1725	4.2	yes
Špindlerův Mlýn	24,345	100.0	9020	37.1	12,950	53.2	2375	9.8	yes
Rokytnice n.Jiz.	21,526	100.0	14,132	67.9	6049	26.3	1345	5.8	yes
Klínovec	18,200	100.0	7480	41.0	6900	38.0	3800	21.0	yes
Skiregion Valašsko	14,500	100.0	3990	27.5	9360	64.5	1150	8.0	no
Herlíkovice	12,350	100.0	6420	52.0	4950	40.0	980	8.0	yes
Kouty nad Desnou	11,500	100.0	7935	69.0	2990	26.0	575	5.0	yes
Skiresort Buková hora	10,400	100.0	6500	62.5	3900	37.5	0	0.0	yes
Paseky n. Jiz.	10,030	100.0	6230	62.1	3800	37.9	0	0.0	yes
Lipno	9600	100.0	7680	80.0	1920	20.0	0	0.0	yes
Dolní Morava	9400	100.0	4700	50.0	4136	44.0	564	6.0	yes
Ještěd	9200	100.0	2610	28.4	5670	61.6	920	10.0	yes
Ramzová	8660	100.0	1990	23.0	5450	63.0	1220	14.0	yes
Karlovy	8600	100.0	4320	49.0	3850	44.0	630	7.0	no
Ski Kraličák	8600	100.0	4560	53.0	3190	36.1	850	9.9	yes

Source <http://www.holidayinfo.cz>, 2015

1. Unlike downhill skiing, the only existing basic requirement for cross-country skiing is a sufficiently long period with unbroken snow cover. The other requirements on physical-geographical preconditions are not so strict (as for suitable relief features, flatlands and gentle slopes are more convenient for cross-country skiing, steep mountainous relief with long slopes is not ideal for this sport).
2. The expenses necessary for the development of cross-country skiing in an area are also much lower than in case of downhill skiing. Besides some kind of technology used for the treatment of skiing tracks (and perhaps some lighting for short skiing circuits), no other investment is necessary.
3. Last but not least, another advantage of cross-country skiing is its spatial dispersion. As a consequence of that, its impact on the environment is much lower than that of downhill skiing.

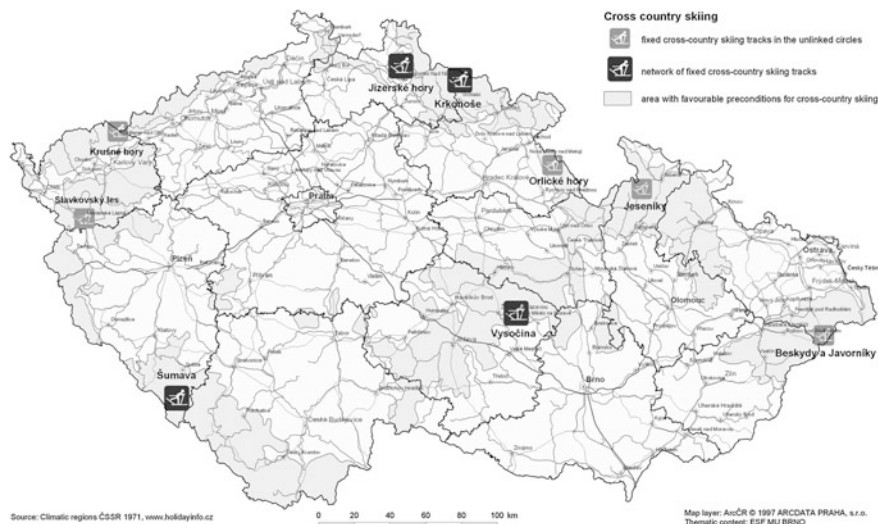


Fig. 5.3 Winter sports and recreation—cross-country skiing (Source Climatic region ČSSR 1971, www.holidayinfo.cz)

There are quite a lot of regions in the Czech Republic with relatively good physical-geographical preconditions for cross-country skiing development. If we consider only basic climatic conditions (average duration of unbroken snow cover for at least 2–3 winter months, i.e. 60–90 days, regular sufficient height of snow cover, low average temperature in the winter season, a high number of freezing days—days with minimal temperature below zero), then with the help of climatic maps, we can define areas with some potential for cross-country skiing development. They are mainly located in mountain areas: Beskydy, Nížký and Hrubý Jeseník, Rychlebské hory, Králický Sněžník, Orlické hory, Broumov Corner, Krkonoše and a part of its foothills, Jizerské hory, massif of Ještěd and Lužické hory, Krušné hory, Smrčiny, Slavkovský les, Český les, Šumava, Blanský les, Novohradské hory, Českomoravská vrchovina and some other minor parts (see Fig. 5.3).

It is very useful to compare the areas with some potential listed above with the list of areas where the potential is practically made use of. In order to define such places correctly, we look for resorts where the cross-country skiing tracks are regularly fixed with some kind of machine. Thanks to this methodology, it is possible to point out locations where the existing natural potential is further developed in order to make it more attractive for tourism. As a consequence, some related effects can appear (e.g. inflow of capital into the area, new working places, etc.)

To illustrate areas in the Czech Republic where the existing potential for cross-country skiing is utilised, see picture below (data from 2006). On the basis of the picture below, the following conclusions can be stated:

- the existing potential is best utilised in Jizerské hory, Krkonoše, Šumava and Českomoravská vrchovina (individual tracks are interconnected into a network with several starting points),
- the existing potential is not so well utilised in Krušné hory, Slavkovský les, Orlické hory, Jeseníky and Beskydy,
- the survey is to a certain extent complicated with the fact that in all Czech mountain areas there are commonly used cross-country skiing tracks that are not mechanically fixed (including marked tracks run by the Czech Hikers' Club).

5.3.2.3 Hiking Paths and Natural Trails

The system of hiking paths marking has had a long tradition in the Czech Republic. Leaving aside some activities of German clubs in border areas of the Czech Republic at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, we now consider that the network of marked hiking paths of the Czech Hikers' Club appeared first in 1889. Nowadays, it maps the most interesting and attractive places all over the country. The length of marked paths grew rapidly, and in 1920, there were 25,000 marked km and in 1938 as many as 40,000 km (in the whole former Czechoslovakia).

WWII and the years 1950–1954 were critical for the marking system—it was not kept properly and the whole network was quite damaged. In 1954, the Czechoslovak government passed a resolution on new organisation of hiking and tourism in Czechoslovakia and in 1958, a unified system of paths marking was suggested. Thanks to this, the system was restored and improved with large-size maps and signposts. The network gradually extended. After 1989, the marking was also made in long inaccessible areas along the Austrian and German border.

At the present time, there are about 40,000 km of marked hiking paths in the Czech Republic (data from 2008). 1470 km of that are a part of international long-distance hikes of the European Ramblers' Association (ERA). The highest density of marked hiking paths in the Czech Republic is generally in three types of places: in attractive mountain areas, in other places of natural interest (karst areas, rock formations, large woodlands, etc.) and in the suburban areas of big cities.

If we transform the general definition of areas with the highest density of marked paths into specific geographic names, we get a list of the following areas: Beskydy, Hrubý Jeseník, Rychlebské hory and Králický Sněžník, Orlické hory, Teplice-Adršpach Rock Area and Broumov Walls, Krkonoše, Český ráj, Jizerské hory and the massif of Ještěd, Lužické hory, Kokořínsko, Českosaské Švýcarsko, České středohoří, Krušné hory, Slavkovský les (especially the surrounding of spa towns Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně), Šumava, Povltaví (along dams on the Vltava river south of Prague), Český kras and Křivoklátsko, certain parts of Českomoravská vrchovina, Moravský kras and Lednice-Valtice Complex.

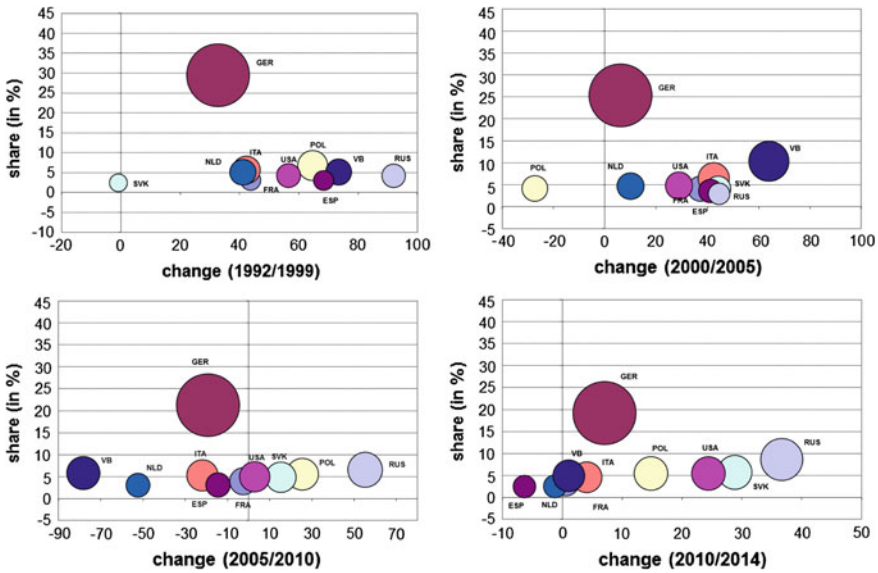


Fig. 5.4 Number of foreign visitors by their countries of origin 1992–2014

5.4 Visitors and Number of Visits (Selective Factors of Tourism)

Number of visits to the Czech Republic reveals that tourism in this country has got a relatively average performance. According to the data from WTTC (2015) and the Czech Statistical Office (2015), the Czech Republic is under the European and worldwide average. A direct contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP in 2013 was CZK117bn (2.9% of GDP). On the other hand, the data from the Czech Statistical Office are to a certain extent inaccurate due to a large number of estimates and also due to a relatively strong black economy in this sector.

Regardless of the statistical problems and the relevance of statistical data, we are able to analyse the development and structural trends in Czech tourism. Looking at the statistical data, we can state that the volume of demand of tourism in the Czech Republic has been stable for some time ranging around 100 million trips a year. However, from financial point of view it has been rising, as people tend to spend more.

The demand structure is quite unbalanced, both with the number of trips and the amount of expenditure. One-day visits generate the largest portion of trips, 45% of the overall volume. According to the data from the Czech Statistical Office, these trips are both traditional holidays and recreation and also one-day shopping trips. Domestic tourist forms the second biggest group of tourists, as they make more than 25% of all trips. But only 1/4 of them stay in collective accommodation facilities. The others seek B&B’s (individual accommodation facilities) or stay at their friends’

Table 5.7 Demand in tourism in 2003–2013 according to the visitors' origin and category (in thousands)

	2003	2005	2007	2010	2013
Foreign visitors	18,580	22,856	24,538	21,941	26,336
Tourists (total)	7641	9404	10,162	8629	10,300
<i>in collective facilities</i>	5076	6336	6680	6334	7310
<i>others</i>	2565	3068	3482	2295	2990
One-day visitors	10,939	13,452	14,376	13,312	16,036
Domestic visitors	102,126	104,677	99,167	93,924	75,353
Tourists (total)	37,561	32,561	28,481	27,614	29,215
<i>in collective facilities</i>	6271	6026	6281	5878	6558
<i>others</i>	31,290	26,535	22,200	21,736	22,657
One-day visitors	64,565	71,116	70,686	66,310	46,138

Source Czech Statistical Office 2015

or relatives'. This is the principal difference between them and foreign visitors, as only 28% of them stay outside collective facilities. One-day trips prevail also among foreign tourists but not as much as among domestic ones (Table 5.7).

Looking at the structure of demand from the point of view of consumption expenditures, we get a rather different picture. Data from the Czech Statistical Office shows, that although domestic tourists prevail in number, their contribution in consumption is lower than that of foreign visitors to the Czech Republic. Foreign visitors make about 60% of the consumption volume. For resources in tourism, a foreign tourist is the most valued one. He/she is four times more "financially beneficial" than a Czech one. The same applies with one-day visitors (Table 5.7).

Trends in the number of visits to collective accommodation facilities in the Czech Republic after 2000 are as follows:

1. Stagnation from the side of domestic tourist and a rapid growth of the number of foreign tourists coming to the Czech Republic gradually led to superiority in numbers of foreign tourists over Czech ones. Changes in the number of stays are even more visible. Number of overnight stays of domestic tourist has dropped dramatically, while number of overnight stays of foreign tourists has been slowly growing. This resulted in decreasing numbers of overnight stays as such (Table 5.8).
2. While in the 1990s, the length of stay was growing; since the year 2000, the situation has been quite the opposite. Since that time the length of stay has been continuously decreasing. During the last nine years, it has become two days shorter. This trend is typical for all categories of tourists; however, it is much faster among domestic tourists.
3. Even if the number of foreign tourists in the Czech Republic has been growing, the position in international tourism has not changed too much. In recent years, the Czech Republic has held a position in the second half of the thirty most visited countries around the world (UNWTO 2015).

4. Most foreign tourists coming to the Czech Republic are from Germany. They make 19% of all visits. Other significant source countries are Great Britain, Russia, Slovakia, Poland, the USA, Italy and France. This structure has been quite stable for the last twenty years (besides significant decrease of visitors from Israel and Denmark), but the relative importance of individual countries has been going down. The structure of source countries has been widening, which results in more fragmented geographical structure of incoming tourism to the Czech Republic. In 1992, the first ten countries made up 84% of all foreign arrivals to the Czech Republic compared with 58% nowadays.
5. The structure of countries of origin of incoming foreign tourists has been changing. From the charts below, it is obvious that the importance of Germany and the Netherlands has been decreasing, while the Russian market has flourished. Although there has been a visa requirement since 2000 for Russian tourists (arrivals dropped by 50%), there has been a growing interest in the Czech Republic, especially among the ever richer Russian middle class. While in the second half of the 1990s and first few years of the new millennium, a typical tourist arriving in the Czech Republic was from West European countries (Italy, France, Spain, the USA, the UK), and over the last few years, we can see a growing interest from East European countries (Russia, Poland, etc.) (see Fig. 5.4). This trend is weakening by the recent development of outbound tourism from Russia. The performance of Russian economy is declining and has an impact on decreasing numbers of arrivals to the Czech Republic.
6. Differentiation of foreign tourists coming to the Czech Republic from the point of view of the length of their stay has been fixed for some time. While tourist coming from Russia, Germany, Israel and the Netherlands stayed longer than the average, the Austrians and the Poles stayed the shortest.
7. The dispersion of foreign tourists in regions of the Czech Republic is mainly caused by the reason of their visit. The Czech Republic is usually perceived as a destination with a high cultural-historical value. This image is made thanks to the status of Prague and is supported by the phenomenon of the UNESCO sights. They have been introduced to the Czech Republic only after 1989 and significantly helped to change the presentation of Czech cultural heritage abroad. The UNESCO sights have become prominent places of tourist interest although the benefits for particular locations are often controversial. Tourists coming to these places usually come for just one day and therefore do not generate sufficient economic effects.

5.4.1 Seasonality

The Czech Republic is one of the countries where the demand is quite balanced throughout the year and grows considerably in the summer. As much as 28% of all overnight stays are registered in July and August contrasting with December and

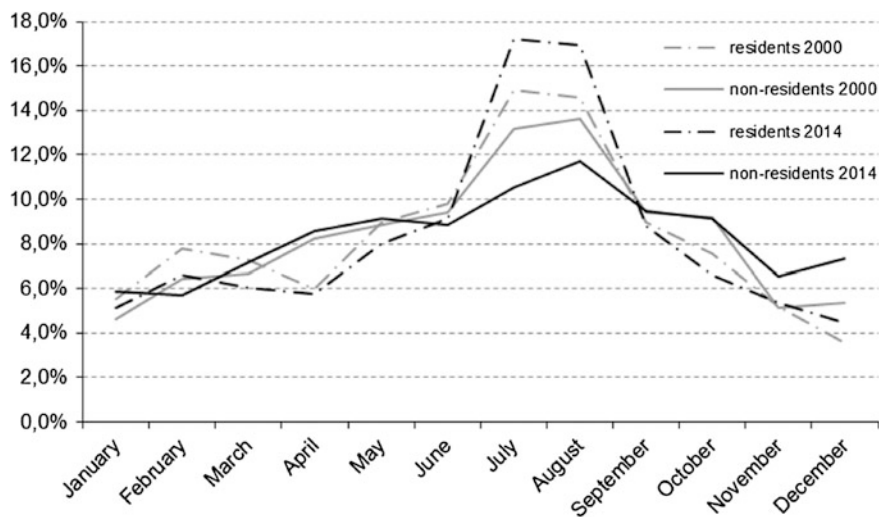


Fig. 5.5 Seasonality of the number of overnight stays in collective accommodation facilities (Source Czech Statistical Office)

Table 5.8 Visitors in collective accommodation facilities in the Czech Republic

Year	Number of visitors (in thousand)			Number of overnight stays (in thousand)		
	Total	Foreigners	Czechs	Total	Foreigners	Czechs
2000	10,864	4773	6091	44,200	15,597	28,603
2002	10,415	4743	5672	37,110	15,569	21,541
2004	12,220	6061	6158	40,781	18,980	21,800
2006	12,725	6435	6289	41,448	20,090	21,357
2008	12,836	6649	6186	39,283	19,987	19,286
2010	12,212	6336	5878	36,909	18,366	18,543
2012*	15,099	7647	7452	43,278	21,794	21,484
2014*	15,587	8096	7491	42,947	22,110	20,838

Source Czech Statistical Office 2015

*Register of accommodation establishments was updated and data on capacity and occupancy for 2012, 2013, 2014 were revised. For this reason, time series are broken. New comparable time series are published from 2012 onwards

January as months with least visits. If we search for reasons of relatively balanced demand, we have to consider the character and importance of foreign arrivals to the Czech Republic. Quite unusually, Czech domestic tourism is very seasonal (kurtosis $\gamma_2 = 1.25$), while foreign tourist behaves quite the contrary (kurtosis $\gamma_2 = -0.70$). In most countries, the situation is the other way round. Foreign visitors to the Czech Republic prefer less seasonal forms and types of tourism such as urban tourism, cultural tourism, shopping trips or spa tourism (Fig. 5.5). In this context,

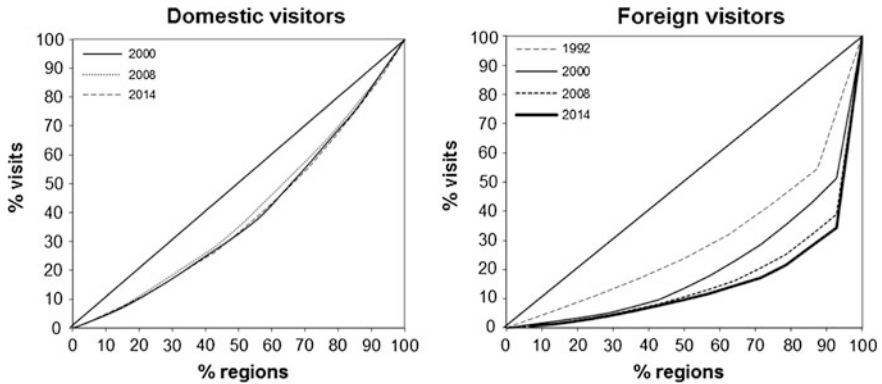


Fig. 5.6 Spatial concentration of domestic and foreign tourists (*Source* own analyses based on Czech Statistical Office 2015)

Prague together with West Bohemian spa towns is a dominant tourism destination for foreign visitors. Domestic tourism is much more centred in the summer months when most Czechs enjoy their longest holiday, and consequently, the prevailing forms and types of tourism at that time are summer water recreation, recreation in the mountains and rural tourism. It is also interesting to pay some attention to the way seasonality develops through the time. As a whole, seasonality in the Czech Republic has been slightly decreasing. However, we can observe two antagonistic trends. Foreign arrivals in the Czech Republic tend to be less and less concentrated in the summer months, while domestic tourism develops in quite the opposite manner (Fig. 5.6).

5.4.2 Qualitative Change of Demand

During the last twenty years, there has been a significant shift in the tastes of participants in tourism. They began to prefer facilities of higher standard. This trend can be illustrated if we look at the changing numbers of visitors in particular types of accommodation facilities. The tables below prove that the demand has become stronger for facilities with higher quality of services. Number of nights grew only in hotels, especially four- and five-star ones. Quite surprisingly, this trend is not only caused by foreign demand but also by domestic tourists. Especially in case of luxury hotels, this growing demand has resulted in growth of offer. However, the same rule does not work with B&B's and campsites—although the number of nights in these facilities dropped it was not followed by a decrease of available beds. On the contrary, the capacity increased. It can therefore be expected that the consolidation of market is still yet to come for these facilities. The growing capacity

in B&B's and campsites is drawn by new investments and rising quality, but the low-quality facilities do not shut down (Table 5.9).

5.4.3 Regional Differentiation of Domestic and Foreign Tourist Coming to the Czech Republic

The distribution of tourist in the Czech regions tends to be quite uneven. However, there are some fundamental differences between domestic and foreign tourist demands. The two charts below reveal two basic distinctions. Firstly, the spatial misbalance is much more visible with foreign tourists. And secondly, the development trends of spatial concentration of domestic and foreign tourists are quite distant from each other. In the long term, foreign tourists tend to concentrate more and more, while the level of spatial concentration of domestic tourists has been stagnating or even going down. These trends are caused mainly by different characters of behaviour of the two segments. Foreign tourists concentrate mainly on the hottest attractions of a particular country, which in case of the Czech Republic is undoubtedly Prague. Also, the number of foreign tourist coming to the Czech countryside or to the mountains (the Dutch and the Germans) has been decreasing as the competitiveness of these areas has suffered due to the growing power of Czech crown and lagging quality of services. On the other hand, a Czech tourist prefers traditional tourist locations in Czech mountains, spas or areas of water recreation.

Considering the distribution of foreign visitors into the Czech regions, there is a prominent feature—foreign visitors are to a great extent concentrated in Prague. From this point of view, the position of Prague is quite extraordinary, even in the European context.⁴ In 2014, as much as 65.6% of all foreign visitors to the Czech Republic stayed in Prague. None of the remaining Czech regions reach over 10%. More than 5% share on the total number of foreign arrivals in the Czech Republic was recorded only in Karlovy Vary Region and South Moravia Region (both 6.4%). Beside Prague, foreign tourists tend to concentrate on West Bohemian spas, the Krkonoše mountains, Jizerské hory, border area of South Bohemia and Brno with its trade fairs (Table 5.10).

If we look at the national structure of visitors to the Czech Republic in individual regions, it is clearly dominated by the Germans. Besides three regions (South Moravia Region, Zlín Region and North Moravia Region), all Czech Regions have the majority of foreign visitors coming from Germany. The largest national groups

⁴Share of London on overall foreign visits to UK is below 50%, Budapest does not go over 55%.

Table 5.9 Structure of overnight stays of foreign and Czech tourists in collective accommodation facilities in 2000 and 2014

Type of accommodation	Number of beds		Number of nights (in thousands)			
			Czechs		Foreigners	
	2000	2014	2000	2014	2000	2014
Hotels*****	5966	12,661	68	135	1041	2455
Hotels*****	23,476	71,970	451	2381	3222	9830
Other hotels	127,629	132,297	8921	6127	6922	6962
B&B's	60,593	89,502	3215	3073	1734	724
Campsites	24,116	31,917	2051	1913	1181	282
Hostels, cottages	60,580	62,684	2165	1706	255	319
Other	135,080	118,878	11,732	5503	1242	1537
Total	437,440	519,909	28,603	20,837	15,597	22,110

Source Czech Statistical Office

Table 5.10 Spatial differentiation of the number of visitors in Czech collective accommodation facilities in 2014

	Foreign tourists		Czech tourist		Average number of nights
	Total	(%)	Total	(%)	
Prague	5315	65.6	781	10.4	2.4
Středočeský Region	184	2.3	616	8.2	2.5
Jihočeský Region	365	4.5	811	10.8	2.7
Plzeňský Region	203	2.5	366	4.9	2.5
Karlovarský Region	517	6.4	259	3.5	5.8
Ústecký Region	149	1.8	283	3.8	2.7
Liberecký Region	143	1.8	557	7.4	3.2
Královéhradecký Region	219	2.7	718	9.6	3.3
Pardubický Region	53	0.7	306	4.1	2.8
Vysočina Region	66	0.8	382	5.1	2.6
Jihomoravský Region	515	6.4	985	13.1	2.0
Olomoucký Region	108	1.3	379	5.1	3.3
Zlínský Region	99	1.2	505	6.7	3.1
Moravskoslezský Region	160	2.0	543	7.2	2.8
Total	8096	100.0	7491	100.0	2.8

Source Czech Statistical Office

of foreign visitors in South Moravia Region are the Poles, and in the Zlín Region and the North Moravia Regions, the Slovaks. Tourists from the Netherlands, Slovakia and Poland are other most important visiting nations in all Czech regions but Prague. Karlovy Vary Region is a small exception to this rule as, due to its spa attractions, it is very sought after among the Russians.

5.5 Main Forms and Types of Tourism

The Czech Republic has got the best preconditions for—and also a long tradition in—these types of tourism: **urban** and **cultural tourism** (cultural heritage, historical towns, cultural and historical sights, technical and religious sights, museums, theatres, etc.), **natural tourism** (camping, water recreation, summer and winter recreation in the mountains, rural tourism and agro-tourism, regional and specific products, etc.), **sport and active tourism** (all forms of common sport activities, hiking, cycling, winter sports, water sports, hippo-tourism, hunting, golf, etc.), **spa and wellness tourism, congress and incentive tourism**. Further characteristics of these forms of tourism will follow.

5.5.1 Urban Tourism

Historical progress and development of tourism in the Czech Republic have always been closely related to the city attendance, primarily due to a plentiful offer of cultural, historical, architectural sites and landmarks in the cities and because of their statute as natural centres of business, culture and services on the other hand. The significant statute of spa towns and mountain resorts shall not be neglected. An overall importance of towns in tourism within the Czech Republic could be documented by statistical figures describing capacities and performance of accommodation facilities. For example, in the 1920s, more than 70% of accommodation capacities were situated in towns and almost 80% of total amount of lodging nights from the total number in the Czech Republic were realised there (including spa resorts), in the 1960s it was almost 55% of the capacity and 50% of lodging nights, in 1987 almost 45% of the capacity and 45% of the lodging and finally, in 2014 about 44% accommodation capacities were in towns and towns and cities provided for more than 52% of all lodging nights (Šauer and Vystoupil 2005).

The main tendency of tourism development in the Czech Republic after the year 1989 has been the growth of foreign visits in the cities, chiefly from Western European countries and the USA. The main role on this phenomenon is that of the Czech capital, Prague (in 2014, about 66% of all foreigners coming to the Czech Republic stayed in Prague and foreigners made about 87% of all tourists visiting the capital).⁵

The second significance level is realised by tourist visits to the most important fair city in the Czech Republic—Brno and the Czech spa resorts Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně.

The third significance level is more balanced and more variable in the geographical sense. This level includes other important spa resorts—Luhačovice and

⁵Apart from Prague, such high numbers of foreign visitors are reached only by spa resorts such as Mariánské Lázně (about 74%), Karlovy Vary (over 78%) and Cheb (65%).

Teplice, the most important mountain resorts with town statute—Harrachov and Rokytnice nad Jizerou, important historic cities—České Budějovice and Tábor, the most popular summer water resort—Doksy and also the rest of current regional capitals—Ostrava, Plzeň, Liberec, Ústí nad Labem, Hradec Králové, Pardubice, Zlín and Olomouc.

5.5.2 *Rural Tourism*

If we try to search for the roots of rural tourism in the Czech Republic, we should go back to the 1960s when it became very popular to spend free time at various types of second homes (huts, cottages). Rural tourism as such and as an alternative to mass tourism started to spread only after 1990. Rural tourism is a suitable alternative to destinations that are sought after for their beaches and lots of sunshine. Rural areas offer privacy, relaxation, secluded places, flexible services and good relationship among people. Among other attractions are natural environment, cultural heritage, architecture, various festivals, folklore and traditional gastronomy.

Rural area takes up $\frac{3}{4}$ of the whole area of the Czech Republic⁶, which means that there is a relatively big potential for the development of this form of tourism. However, this potential is only relative as it is the practical utility of the area that matters.

Localisation preconditions (or the potential of rural tourism) are formed by natural preconditions and cultural-historical preconditions. Natural preconditions usually prevail.

Typically, weak point of rural tourism in the Czech Republic is insufficient infrastructure (realisation preconditions). Czech rural areas offer only about 48 thousand beds in collective accommodation facilities, which is only about 10% of the overall capacity of the Czech Republic. Another typical phenomenon for Czech rural area is a high number of second homes. As much as 70% per cent of all objects of individual recreation are located in rural areas, nearly two-thirds of them are in areas with very good preconditions for tourism.

If we consider both the localisation and the realisation preconditions, it is possible to define areas that are predestined to develop rural tourism (many of them have already become active rural tourism areas). They are as follows: South Bohemia (ecotourism, agro-tourism, hippo-tourism, cultural-historical sights), Central Bohemia (background for Prague), Vysočina (ecotourism, agro-tourism, compact rural area) and South Moravia (unique phenomenon in the Czech Republic—wine tourism).

⁶Rural area with very favourable preconditions makes 35% of the area of the Czech Republic, average preconditions make 29% and about 10% area of the Czech Republic is rural area with minimal preconditions for rural tourism.

5.5.3 Trade Fair and Congress Tourism

Twelve cities/towns in the Czech Republic can be regarded as potential centres of trade fair tourism. They fulfil the minimal criteria for size of the covered exhibition area, number of events throughout the year and length of tradition. Based on the above stated criteria, the only place of international significance is the fairgrounds in Brno. The capital of Prague falls into the category of cities with national importance for trade fair tourism. Among the cities/towns of regional importance of trade fair tourism are České Budějovice, Litoměřice, Olomouc, Lysá nad Labem and Ostrava. Liberec, Louny, Pardubice, Jablonec nad Nisou and Hradec Králové are of local importance.

There are over 800 places in the Czech Republic that are suitable for holding conferences. Their significance differs greatly in the capacity, in the facilities provided, in available infrastructure and in supplementary services. It is typical for the conference (and trade fair) tourism that apart from its scientific information function, it also performs an economic function as it significantly influences regional economy. Another characteristic feature of conference (and trade fair) tourism is its concentration into large cities—*centres* which *provide* suitable *facilities* (conference halls, hotels, fairgrounds and exhibition ground) necessary for organising conferences/trade fairs, and at the same time have the essential *infrastructure* (accessibility).

Not surprisingly, the capital city of Prague has the best potential for organising conferences thanks to the capacity and facilities it can offer. Prague is at the same time the only city in the Czech Republic which has an *international significance*—given the number of international congresses, conferences and other meetings held. It has got approximately tenth position among all popular centres of congress tourism worldwide.

Cities such as Brno, Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně, Olomouc, Ostrava, Plzeň, Hradec Králové and Špindlerův Mlýn are of *national importance*. The capacities of their facilities are over one thousand attendees; “home” meetings (of national importance) are held there regularly and international conferences are organised on an irregular basis. At the *regional level*, there are cities/towns which have facilities with the capacity of 200–999 attendees and host meetings of regional significance. There are over 60 cities and towns in this category, e.g. Český Krumlov, Liberec, Jihlava, Karviná, Zlín, Litomyšl, Františkovy Lázně, Opava or Tábor.

5.5.4 Spa Tourism and Wellness

Spa tourism is one of the oldest and most important form and type of tourism in the Czech Republic (Migala and Szczyrba 2006). Nowadays, there are 36 spa locations (spas) in the Czech Republic (Table 5.11) and in 2014, there were 82 spa medical facilities operating there. More than a half of all Czech spas can be found in the

Table 5.11 Spa resorts and their significance for spa tourism (2007)

Status	Location
International I.	Karlovy Vary
International II.	Mariánské Lázně, Františkovy Lázně, Luhačovice, Poděbrady, Teplice, Jáchymov
National	Jeseník, Třeboň, Janské Lázně, Karviná-Darkov, Bechyně, Lázně Libverda, Karlova Studánka, Lipová Lázně
Regional	Hodonín, Lednice, Lázně Bohdaneč, Klimkovice, Velichovky, Velké Losiny, Teplice nad Bečvou, Lázně Bělohrad, Konstantinovy Lázně, Lázně Kynžvart
Local	Dubí, Mšené-Lázně, Vráž, Kostelec u Zlína, Bludov, Klášterec nad Ohří, Slatnice, Ostrožská Nová Ves, Osečná, Lázně Toušeň, Skalka

Karlovy Vary Region (more than 40% of that number in Karlovy Vary itself). The total number of beds available in Czech spas in 2014 was 48.2 thousand, which is nearly a tenth of all beds found in Czech collective accommodation facilities. Karlovy Vary Region is a dominant location even in this aspect, of all the beds in Czech spas nearly a half is situated there. This area is very often referred to as “the West Bohemian Triangle” formed by three prominent spa resorts—Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně. The biggest spa resort in Moravia is Luhačovice. The total number of both adult patients and children that stayed in medical institutions operated in Czech spa resorts in 2014 was 348.4 thousand, 131 thousand of whom were from abroad (data from the Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic). The total number of visitors in all collective accommodation facilities located in Czech spas was 742.3 thousand, 47% were foreigners.

Spa tourism and wellness are both quite specific forms of tourism using similar infrastructure and generating a positive economic and multiplier effect (Kunc 2006). Under the term “wellness”, we usually understand a hard to define complex of activities somewhere between spa activities and fitness. Wellness is usually provided in wellness centres, in hotels (hotel wellness) and in spa resorts (spa wellness). The whole idea of wellness is quite new to the Czech Republic; it became a part of strategies made by accommodation facilities, spa resorts and fitness centres as late as in 1990s. Since then it has become more and more popular and nowadays it is seen as a dynamic business with very good perspectives.

5.5.5 Winter Recreation and Tourism

The potential for cross-country skiing development depends on sufficient length of period with unbroken snow cover and some favourable climatic conditions (low average temperature in the winter months, high number of freezing days—days with minimal temperature below zero). Virtually all places suitable for these activities are in the mountains such as Beskydy, Nízký and Hrubý Jeseník, Rychlebské hory, Králický Sněžník, Orlické hory, Broumov Corner, Krkonoše and a part of its

foothills, Jizerské hory, massif of Ještěd and Lužické hory, Krušné hory, Smrčiny, Slavkovský les, Český les, Šumava, Blanský les, Novohradské hory, Českomoravská vrchovina and some other minor parts.

In order to assess the preconditions for downhill skiing in the Czech Republic, all skiing resorts were divided into categories. This method helped to analyse the whole situation because, apart from favourable physical-geographical preconditions, the development of skiing resorts is also strongly influenced by the level of their infrastructure—length and layout of skiing slopes, quality transport systems with sufficient capacity (ski lifts, cable cars). According to these criteria, it is possible to divide the Czech skiing resort into three categories that differ from each other in quality—resorts with local importance, resorts with regional importance and resorts with national importance (Seidenglandz 2005). The biggest concentration of resorts with regional or national importance is typical for the highest of Czech mountain areas—Krkonose, Jizerské hory, Hrubý Jeseník, Beskydy, Šumava, Krušné hory and Orlické hory. From the overall accommodation capacity in the Czech Republic, about 16% is located in centres of winter recreation and tourism.

5.5.6 Summer Water Recreation

Water recreation and water tourism are typical forms of tourism. Logically, they are tied with water elements and rivers, which contribute to line distribution of tourism. The extent of its utilisation in an area is also subject to climatic factors. Due to this fact, water recreation and water tourism are dramatically concentrated in the summer season. The Czech Republic is a landlocked country and therefore misses a whole spectrum of hydrologic features. Most of all the lack of access to sea means that the most important component of natural preconditions is just not available. Even lakes—as another type of natural water feature—are not very plentiful in the Czech Republic and usually have quite different functions (natural attractions). However, there are man-made water reservoirs that are of a great importance for tourism, especially the domestic one.

In this paper, we shall mainly pay attention to water recreation and leave water tourism somewhat on the side. We shall only state that among boatmen the most popular rivers are as follows: Berounka, Otava, Lužnice, Sázava, Vltava, Ohře, Orlice and Moravy.

There are 280 bodies of water in the Czech Republic that are suitable for recreational activities. Due to generally low quality of tourist infrastructure, most of them (64%) are only of local importance. There are usually no accommodation facilities in the near surrounding and that is why they are primarily used for one-day visits.

About one-third of all bodies of water are of regional importance. Services and sport facilities tend to be limited, but there are some accommodation facilities nearby. Only 15 bodies of water in the Czech Republic have got above the average

concentration of accommodation and sport-recreational infrastructure and they are of supra-regional importance.

In order to analyse water recreation thoroughly, it is always helpful to look analyse the resorts that lie at individual bodies of water. The first step is to analyse accommodation facilities in the resorts. From this point of view, the most significant resorts of water recreation in the Czech Republic are as follows: Doksy (Máchovo jezero), Seč (Seč), Lipno nad Labem (Lipno), Horní Planá (Lipno), Chlum u Třeboně (Staňkovský rybník), Vranov nad Dyjí (Vranovská přehrada), Černá v Pošumaví (Lipno), Frymburk (Lipno), Pastviny (Pastviny) and Slapy (Slapy). From the overall capacity of beds in accommodation facilities in the Czech Republic, about 10% are located in resorts of summer water recreation; resorts of supra-regional importance have nearly two-thirds of this capacity.

Spatial differentiation of bodies of water is quite distinct. The biggest concentration is in the South Bohemia Region, the South Moravia Region and the Vysočina Region, whereas there are relatively few of them in the North Moravia Region (Olomouc Region, Moravia-Silesia Region, Zlín Region).

5.5.7 *Wine Tourism*

Wine tourism is a relatively new activity in the Czech Republic. It has got a significant regional aspect and is closely connected with gastronomy, culinary specialities and traditional handicrafts. Wine tourism is very specific and on a mass scale cannot exist isolated from other forms of tourism, especially in such a small area. Therefore, the wine culture is closely connected with various other forms of active tourism—walking, cycling, water recreation and sightseeing (natural, cultural and historical sights available in rural areas). Due to these facts, wine tourism is highly seasonal culminating in the summer months. All subjects participating in wine tourism offer try to prolong the season in the spring and in the autumn. Wine tourism exists mainly in the South Moravia Region, where wine growing goes hand in hand with specific rural culture, gastronomy, architecture and folklore. Czech vineyards are concentrated in two areas—Morava Region and Bohemia Region. According to the fixed criteria, there are 378 wine municipalities (Kunc and Vystoupil 2005).

As far as spatial concentration is concerned, Czech wine tourism flourishes mainly in the South Moravia Region in a triangle defined by three towns: Novosedly (Břeclav district)—Hodonín—Blučina (outside Brno). This region includes almost entire Mikulov sub-region, southern and central parts of Velké Pavlovice sub-region and western part of Slovácko sub-region. Other important areas are located near Znojmo (Znojmo sub-region), between Kyjov and Boršice (Uherské Hradiště Region) and near Strážnice (Slovácko sub-region).

The Bohemia Region is quite different spatially; there are no clusters of villages, but rather individual municipalities with some importance for wine tourism. However, in no aspect can it be compared with the Moravian Region. Well-known Bohemian wine places are Mělník and Velké Žernoseky.

5.5.8 Golf

Golf has been played in the Czech Republic since the beginning of the twentieth century, but new golf courses were built as late as at the end of the century. This sport is also becoming more and more popular among tourists. A new term has therefore appeared—golf tourism. It generates and offers tourism products that specialise on this activity.

There are 70 golf courses in the Czech Republic nowadays. The most renowned are as follows: Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně, Konopiště, Karlštejn, Slavkov etc. The oldest Czech golf course was built in 1904 and can be found in Karlovy Vary.

5.5.9 Second Homes

The Czech Republic belongs among countries where recreation in “second homes” plays an important role in domestic tourism both with its structure, volume and capacity. The share of all forms of recreational second housing on short-term tourism is estimated around 20% (Bičík et. al. 2001; Vágner 2001). As much as 70% of all registered beds in tourism in the Czech Republic are found in private objects (Fialová 2001). For example, in 2001, as much as 11.3% of all Czech households owned an object for recreation (total of 443 thousand objects). This number is one of the highest in Europe (Vágner 2004). Quantity may be very high but quality of such objects tends to be lower than average. Intensive second housing also has its impact on the landscape as it can be widespread and rather concentrated (Vágner and Fialová et al. 2004).

Second housing has got its specific features, both functional and spatial. In most regions of the Czech Republic, cottages prevail, especially in suburban recreation areas (near big towns) (Gardavský 1971; Gardavský and Ryšlavý 1978; Fialová 2001), in areas with water recreational function, i.e. along the most important “recreation” rivers (Berounka, Sázava, Vltava, Svratka) and also in some Moravian mountain areas (Beskydy) (Havrlant 1977; Havrlant 2003). For certain parts of the Czech Republic, especially for most mountain areas (Krkonoše, Jizerské hory, Šumava, Orlické hory, Vysočina, Jeseníky), holiday houses are more typical.

Considering the development of second housing in the Czech Republic, we can define certain phases. The overall development can be characterised with a classical logistic function (slow start in the 1950s,⁷ rapid increase in mid-1960s right up to the mid-1980s, slowing down in late 1980s and saturation in the 1990s lasting until today). See the Table 5.12.

The intensity and spatial organisation of second homes is decisively influenced by the distribution of settlements and the influence of town socio-economic structure. The biggest concentration of second homes is located in suburban areas of big towns and towns as such. The intensity of recreation in second homes may

⁷Second housing is mainly an after-war phenomenon; however, its early beginnings are even older.

Table 5.12 Construction of new objects of individual recreation until 2000

Year of construction	Number of objects	Annual increase (%)
do 1930	3000	100
1931–1945	5000	333
1946–1955	5000	500
1956–1965	40,000	4000
1966–1971	103,000	17,160
1971–1980	124,000	12,400
1981–1990	117,000	11,700
1991–2000	36,000	3600
<i>Total</i>	<i>433,000</i>	

Source own analyses based on Census in 1970 and 1991, Czech Statistical Office 1975, 1993

differ substantially in particular regions. There are differences between Czech and Moravian towns, between stabilised towns with prominent central function (services, administration) on the one hand and towns with strong industrial growth in the 1970s and 1980s and with young demographic structure of their inhabitants on the other hand. As a result of their historical background, these two different types of towns also differ in social, educational and demographic structure and also in urban development and the character in general. Among other important localisation factors of second homes, distribution is the character of natural area and its distance from the town (Vystoupil 1981, 1988). Most intensive utilisation is recorded near water reservoirs and rivers and near woodlands. More distant objects of recreation are concentrated in mountain areas and the foothills.

5.6 Tourism Regionalisation in the Czech Republic (Spatial Organisation)

The objective of tourism regionalisation is to systematically and transparently illustrate the prerequisites of tourism development. These prerequisites are namely the supply-side factors for recreation in the form of localisation characteristics (natural and cultural-historical resources) and realisation characteristics (general and tourism infrastructure).

It is obvious that tourism and its development are influenced by numerous factors, which are spread all around the country, and in order to arrange them, it is necessary to define relatively homogenous regions. It is not simple at all to identify such regions, and it is evident that generalisation is more or less necessary in that point. The extent of generalisation depends on the purpose of the regionalisation.

Therefore, three major approaches to defining tourist regions can be distinguished as follows:

1. The oldest one, **geographical approach**, defines tourist regions in accordance with important geographical (geomorphological) units, e.g. mountains—mountain areas, sea, coast, cities, spas.
2. The second approach—**land use planning approach**—is based on the delimitation of land that is determined by the differentiation of the functional land use and the spatial arrangement. In fact, the features (together with normative approach) define region opportunities for tourism development that more precisely result from the land use limits, limits of land loading, classification of land importance, etc. The practical example of tourist regionalisation as a tool of land use planning that supports the tourism development is Tourism regionalisation in the Czech Socialist Republic from 1981 or Tourism regionalisation in the Slovak Republic from 2005 (Vystoupil et al. 2006).
3. The third, youngest and nowadays often used approach is known as **marketing approach**. The essential idea of this approach lies, on one hand, in the pragmatic need of the most efficient promotion of the tourism supply at national or regional level, and on the other hand, in the need of creating competitive tourist products by local and regional stakeholders within the tourist regions.

For specific examples of tourism regionalisation in the Czech Republic, see the Fig. 5.7.

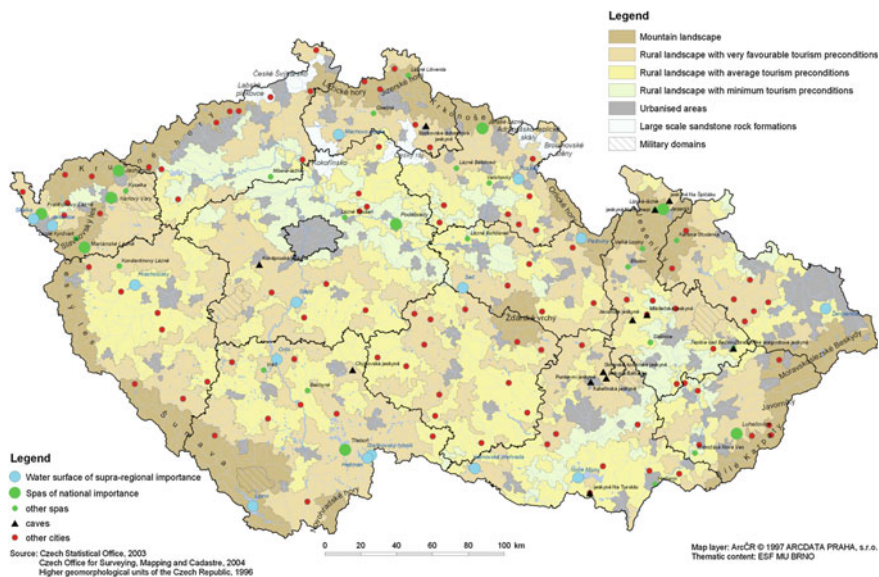


Fig. 5.7 Tourism regionalisation (Source Vystoupil et al. 2006)

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