

Chapter 8

Geography of Tourism of Poland

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Abstract Polish school of geography of tourism has started in 1930s and continues its development constantly although with a break for Second World War. Among the most important scientific centers, there are Jagiellonian University Kraków or universities in Warsaw, Wrocław, or Łódź. Its former and contemporary achievements placed the geography of tourism among the most important scientific disciplines within geography. One of the most important research fields is the assessment of the conditions contributing to the tourism development in Poland on different fields. This chapter presents the diversity of Polish landscape and the natural conditions for the recreation on one side and the natural values that draw attention of sightseeing tourists. Therefore, the most important protected areas like national parks are characterized. Cultural and historical values constitute an important issue favorable for tourism development in Poland. Its potential presented here derives from two main sources: UNESCO heritage site mostly of the cultural character and the historic monuments of Poland. These two lists embrace the most important collection of cultural values worldwide known such as Wieliczka Saltworks, the Wawel Museum of Art, or Auschwitz–Birkenau Museum which is confirmed also by the number of visitors. The key factor for the tourism development in Poland is the infrastructure, mainly accommodation facilities. Its short history of development shown in the chapter leads to the presentation of its contemporary state through its quantity and structure. Detailed description of the tourism movement in the twenty-first century reflects all the elements which characterize its structure and complexity. The chapter summarizes the presentation of the main types of tourism in Poland together with its description presenting the potential to be developed.

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8.1 The Output of Polish Geography of Tourism

The beginning of Polish scientific research on geography of tourism is dated from the 1930s and connected with the scientific activity of the Department of Tourism at the Jagiellonian University under the supervision of Stanislaw Leszczycki. The output of Polish geography of tourism was presented, among others, at the scientific conference of the Institute of Geography and Spatial Management of the Jagiellonian University in 2006 and in a special edition of *Tourism* prepared for Geographical Congress in Tunis (2008). Some of the most important achievements of Polish geographers of tourism over the period of 70 years will be presented in this paper.

Research activity before the Second World War

The Department of Tourism of the Jagiellonian University, whose activity dates from 1936 to 1939, gave theoretical bases for geography of tourism as a new scientific subdiscipline within the scope of geography.

As scientific research roles, Leszczycki (1932) classified “scientific definition of tourist value of a landscape and analysis of possibilities of tourist traffic to preserve fundamental original features of the landscape and to determine reasonable usage of this traffic at the same time.”

These tasks have remained actual until now. The staff of the department took up regional researches on tourism. The study of spa tourism issues in Podhale—the Tatras—has been regarded as a model up to this day.

For the first time, the method of spot soil bonitation was applied to classify natural and tourist development values. It is claimed that the Department of Tourism laid the foundations for the later development of the geography of tourism in Poland.

Research activity in the field of geography of tourism between 1945–1990

During the postwar period, the research in the field of geography of tourism developed, first of all, in academic geographical centers in Warsaw, Krakow, Poznan, Wroclaw, and Lodz.

In Warsaw center, in 1960s, one of the best works concerning the tourist regionalization of Poland emerged, prepared by Mileska (1963).

The evaluation of the tourist attractiveness of different types of natural landscape in Poland was a starting point. The degree of features diversity and the size of water and forest area were estimated. To emphasize the unique natural value, additional points were introduced for the eminent curiosity of nature, seaside beaches, and special climatic value. On the basis of the score, six classes describing the tourist attractiveness of the landscape types were set apart. The analysis of tourist development and traffic location let to distinguishing of 21 tourist and leisure regions and 12 potential regions. The density of investment was used as a criterion for division into tourist and leisure regions in the areas with attractive landscape types premises; understood as the number of lodgings, bigger than the average density in a given type and the existence of other tourist and leisure facilities, and as a test how the

region functions—the density of touristic traffic, bigger than the average in the given landscape unit and participation of tourists from the entire Poland, not only from the nearest towns, in the use of lodgings. Mileska was also the editor and coauthor of two volumes of *Słownik geografii turystycznej Polski* (Dictionary of Tourism Geography of Poland 1956, 1959).

Plan kierunkowy zagospodarowania turystycznego Polski (Directional Plan of Tourism Development in Poland, 1971) is associated with Wrocław geographical center and with specialists in the fields of tourism from the entire country as well, known as the Institute of Tourism Planning (Zakład Zagospodarowania Turystycznego) GKKFiT in Wrocław. This research design work supervised by O. Rogalewski defined target possibilities of the usage of geographical environment in Poland for tourism purposes, for rest (holiday), and for sightseeing tourism, among others. On the basis of these studies, the development of national and regional tourism was planned.

With regard to the needs of rest (holiday) tourism, the directional plan defines areas particularly favorable for resting. Areas of the highest rest value, where the whole spatial economy should be subordinated to tourism, have been placed in the first category. The total area is 17,900 km², what makes 5.4% of the total area of the country. On the area of the second category, where rest value is not as good as in the first category area, tourism should be on a par with other economic functions, as is important to provide rest (holiday) for the entire society. The total area is 38,700 km², what makes 9.2% of the total area of the country. Areas of definitely poorer value, where tourism will be developed if possible and will be determined by the development of other economic functions, belong to the third category. One-time tourist capacity of all rest (holiday) areas has been estimated at about 4.0–6.6 million people in summer and 0.9–1.2 million people in winter. The tourist capacity is understood as a maximum number of people, who can be at a given area at the same time, when it is adapted, properly meeting their needs and not bringing negative consequences to tourist value of the natural environment.

The fundamental goal of the directional plan of sightseeing tourism was to determine the most valuable sightseeing tourism features in Poland. The areas and places of three categories have been indicated. The first category includes areas and places, which every citizen of our country should get to know during their school and academic education and which will also be the goal for the foreign tourists. There are 8 places, called the large travel centers and 14 areas. To the second category belong the areas and places, which a domestic tourist should visit at the second stage; on the other hand, a foreign tourist is advised to visit those places only if he/she is really interested in Poland. There are 57 places, called travel centers and 27 areas. The areas and places of 3rd category are for tourists with special interests in travel tourism.

In the Poznań center in the 1970s, there were developed studies on the evaluation of the geographical environment usability for tourism (Bartkowski 1974) and also the tourist absorptive power of the areas (Marsz 1972). Bartkowski proposed the method for determining microregions for the evaluation purposes, on the basis of the analysis of the relief and land cover, whereas in usability evaluation, he

preferred the spot soil bonitation method. The tourist absorptive power of the area (Marsz used the term “the natural leisure capacity”) indicates the natural environment resistance to degradation connected with the tourist traffic. It is determined by the maximum number of people (participants of tourist traffic), who can stay on the given area without causing vandalizing and degradation of environment. While it is being determined, the character of plant cover must be taken into consideration and, as a result, its resistance to crushing and tramping, and gradient and mechanical features of the ground. The resistance to trampling of individual plant species is determined during land research.

The Krakow geographical center presented, at the same time, a proposal of so-called the model method of environment evaluation (the habilitation thesis by Warszyńska 1974). The method consists of quantitative data processing, concerning individual features of environment, adequately selected form of the mathematical function. The function has been defined by a formula $y = x^z$, where numerical value “y” stands for the attractiveness factor of a definite criterion. It has been assumed that the attractiveness factor may run from 0 to 1. Then, numerical value “x” must be included in the same numerical set, while the exponent “z” must be any positive number. The big achievement of the Krakow center was publishing the first Polish academic textbook in field of tourism geography which is one of the first in Europe (Warszyńska and Jackowski 1978).

In 1974, the Krakow center organized an international symposium of the Working Group of Tourism Geography of the International Geographical Union devoted to the problems of terminology in tourism geography.

In the second half of the 1980s, the geographical center in Wrocław did research on the evaluation of Polish landscape, for tourism purposes, by stressing a physiognomical aspect (Wyrzykowski et al. 1991). The landscape values are recognized in Polish literature on tourism as particularly important tourist values. In the leisure tourism, and also in specialist tourism, the landscape values are indispensable.

In the study of a landscape, the relief, the land cover, and the level of anthropogenic changes were analyzed. The complex landscape typology is derived from three partial typologies taking into account the above features. To estimate the landscape values connected with the relief, they took account of the relative height, the inner diversity of the relief, the contrast of relief forms, and the degree of autonomy of a relief type in relation to the environment. The assessment of the landscape values connected with the land cover involved the following: the dominant cover type, the inner diversity of land cover, the contrast and dominants of the land cover, and the degree of autonomy of a cover type in relation to environment. To estimate the degree of anthropogenic changes, the following variables were used: the degree of the saturation of natural, historic, industrial, and urban elements. Altogether 12.500 basic fields were measured with an area of 25 km².

On the basis of the studies for the *Plan kierunkowy zagospodarowania turystycznego Polski* (Directional plan for tourism development of Poland 1971) and the landscape assessment in Poland in 1985, a new academic textbook was edited, entitled *Geografia turystyki Polski* (Geography of tourism in Poland, Lijewski et al. 1985). Since 1990, every second year, the Department of Regional

Geography and Tourism at the University of Wrocław has been organizing international scientific conferences devoted to the conditions of foreign tourism development in central and western Europe and edits scientific papers' books (Zeszyty Naukowe) in both Polish and English. It contributes to the exchange of scientific experience among the countries with different social political and economical systems.

The center in Łódź was concentrated on tourism and leisure in suburban areas of big towns and cities. In 1983, they organized an international symposium of Tourism Geography Commission MUG devoted to these issues. Since 1985, they have published a scientific journal of tourism geography titled *Tourism*. Since 1983, every year, there have been organized "Field workshops of tourism geography." These meetings lead to the discussion about notions and terminology related to the geography of tourism, the presentation of the research results of doctor's theses, and other researches unpublished so far.

The great achievement in the field of theoretical basis development of Polish tourism geography was seven habilitation theses. The first one, written by Rogalewski (1972), was devoted to the basis of special economy in tourism. The thesis by Warszńska (1974) covered new methodological approach to the research on geographical environment for tourism (the model method). Jackowski (1981) presented a functional typology of tourist places referring to mathematical methods (factor analysis). The territorial leisure system as a theoretical–methodological model was investigated by Krzymowska–Kostrowicka (1980). Wyrzykowski (1986) started his investigation of geographical conditions of holiday tourism development in Poland, while Wojciechowski (1986) started his research on the perception of landscape values. Kurek's thesis (2007) concerned the influence of tourism on social–economical changes in the rural region of the Polish Carpathians.

Research activity in the field of geography of tourism after 1990

Among the most important achievements of Polish tourism geography, there are the publishing of new academic textbooks, preparing eleven habilitation theses and organizing cyclic scientific conferences.

Among the most important academic textbooks, which were first published after 1990, there are *Geografia turystyczna świata. Część 1. Kraje europejskie* (Tourism geography of the world. Volume I. European Countries, 1994), *Geografia turystyczna świata. Część 2. Kraje pozaeuropejskie* (Geography of the world. Volume II. Non-European Countries, 1995), published by the Geographical Centre in Kraków edited by Warszńska, *Geoekologia turystyki i wypoczynku* (Geo-ecology of tourism and leisure 1997, 1999) by Krzymowska–Kostrowicka, and *Geografia turystyki* (Geography of Tourism 2000) by Kowalczyk (Warsaw authors), and a new textbook of Kraków geographers (edited by Kurek) titled *Turystyka* (Tourism 2007) and another one written by Wrocław authors (edited by Wyrzykowski and Marak) titled *Turystyka w ujęciu interdyscyplinarnym* (Tourism from the interdisciplinary perspective 2010).

Geografia turystyczna świata discusses natural and historic basis of the development of tourism, tourist regions, and tourist traffic in different countries. In

Geoekologia turystyki i wypoczynku, the author considers tourism in models and types of man's behavior in environment aspect. Kowalczyk in *Geografia turystyki* presents the newest processes and phenomena connected with tourism. In the book edited by Kurek, tourism is discussed as a scientific research object, the quantity and location of foreign tourist traffic, services and tourist development, kinds and forms of tourism, economical aspects of tourism, and land area changes under the influence of tourism. The book *Turystyka w ujęciu interdyscyplinarnym* presents biophysiological, sociological, and psychological aspects of tourism, its economical and spatial side, as well as its legal aspects. New research trends in the 1990s focused on the devotional tourism and were conducted in the geographic Krakow center under Jackowski supervision. They were first geographical researches of pilgrimage movement on an international scale. Among numerous publications, we should mention the *Zarys geografii pielgrzymek* (Outline of geography of pilgrimages by Jackowski 1991). In 1995, a new original journal "Peregrinus Cracoviensis" appeared, which presented researches on religious cult centers and the devotional tourism on a domestic and international scale.

In the center in Lodz, there an attempt was made to define the tourist space as the main subject of the research of the geography of tourism (Liszewski 1995).

Liszewski distinguished five types of tourist space—exploration, penetration, assimilation, colonization, and tourist urbanization using functional criteria (man's tourist activity).

The habilitation theses concentrated on the diagnostic research of Polish spas using multidimensional comparative analysis (Groch 1991), stimuli and barriers of tourist function development in Polish zone located on the Baltic Coast (Szwichtenberg 1991), the model of tourist traffic research (Matczak 1992), the research on multisensory landscape perception (Kowalczyk 1994), rural leisure area (Drzewiecki 1992), social-geographical tendencies for tourist development in the former USSR (Pirożnik 1992), the methodological problems concerning the assessment of natural environment for leisure purposes (Sołowiej 1993), geographical-social problems of second houses (Kowalczyk 1994), the urbanization of rural tourist areas in Poland (Dziegieć 1995), landscape studies (Pietrzak 1998), and problems connected with the development of sustainable tourism in Polish lake district (Iwicki 1998). In recent years, habilitation theses on geography of tourism have been written by Potocki (2009), Włodarczyk (2009), Wojciechowska (2009), Widawski (2011), Durydiwka (2012), Kulczyk (2013), Lamparska (2013), and Mika (2014). Potocki presented the role of tourism in shaping the trans-border mountain region of the Sudetes; Włodarczyk developed the concept of tourist space presented earlier by Liszewski; Wojciechowska defined the conditions of the development of agriculture in Poland; Widawski concentrated on using of cultural heritage of rural areas for tourist purposes on the example of Spain and Poland; Durydiwka set the development elements and differentiated the tourist function in Polish rural areas; Kulczyk described corelations of landscape and tourism; and Lamparska set the terms of postindustrial tourism development in Silesia Metropolis, whereas Mika pointed to premises and determinants of maintaining the local tourism development.

Table 8.1 The subject matter of doctoral theses in scope of tourism geography (*Source* Liszewski 2007)

The subject matter	Number of thesis
Theses focused on methodology (adaptation of methods to the researches on geography of tourism)	2
Theses focused on natural resources evaluation for tourism's needs	6
Theses focused on cultural values evaluation for tourism's needs	5
Theses focused on tourist development	10
Theses focused on tourist leisure space	11
Theses focused on identification and tourist function measurement	8
Theses constituting complex regional studies	5
Other thesis	7

The subject matter of doctoral theses in scope of tourism geography was presented by Liszewski (2007). According to him, there were 54 doctoral theses, 20 of them were written before 1990 and 34 after 1990 (Table 8.1).

8.2 Assessment of Conditions Contributing to the Tourism Development in Poland

8.2.1 *Natural Preconditions for Tourism Development*

Depending on the motivations for tourist travel, there is a range of tourist attractions within regions that serve as a “pull” factor according to Gray theory (1970). Polish scientists from within the field of geography of tourism distinguish tourist resources and tourist attractions. The former exist within the geographical space but can be transformed into attractions only after they have been both noticed and appreciated by tourists (Kowalczyk 2001). Depending on their origin, tourist attractions can be then classified as natural and man-made ones. Another classification concerns their designation that covers as follows: rest, sightseeing, and active (qualified) tourism.

Therefore, the distinction should be made between recreation areas offering the concentration of tourist natural attractions for both rest and recreation and the ones drawing the attention of sightseeing tourists.

Recreation areas in Poland have been indicated by Mileska (1963) in *Plan kierunkowy zagospodarowania turystycznego Polski* and later by Wyrzykowski (1986). The number of important recreation areas by the latter was indicated at 117 which cover circa 41 thousand km² which is around 13% of the total country area. Their distribution follows zones of natural landscapes spreading within Poland along parallels. Almost the whole coast of Baltic Sea constitutes narrow lowland zone, south of which is the zone of postglacial lakes (Fig. 8.1). The seashore is very attractive since there are mostly sandy beaches sometimes accompanied by dunes

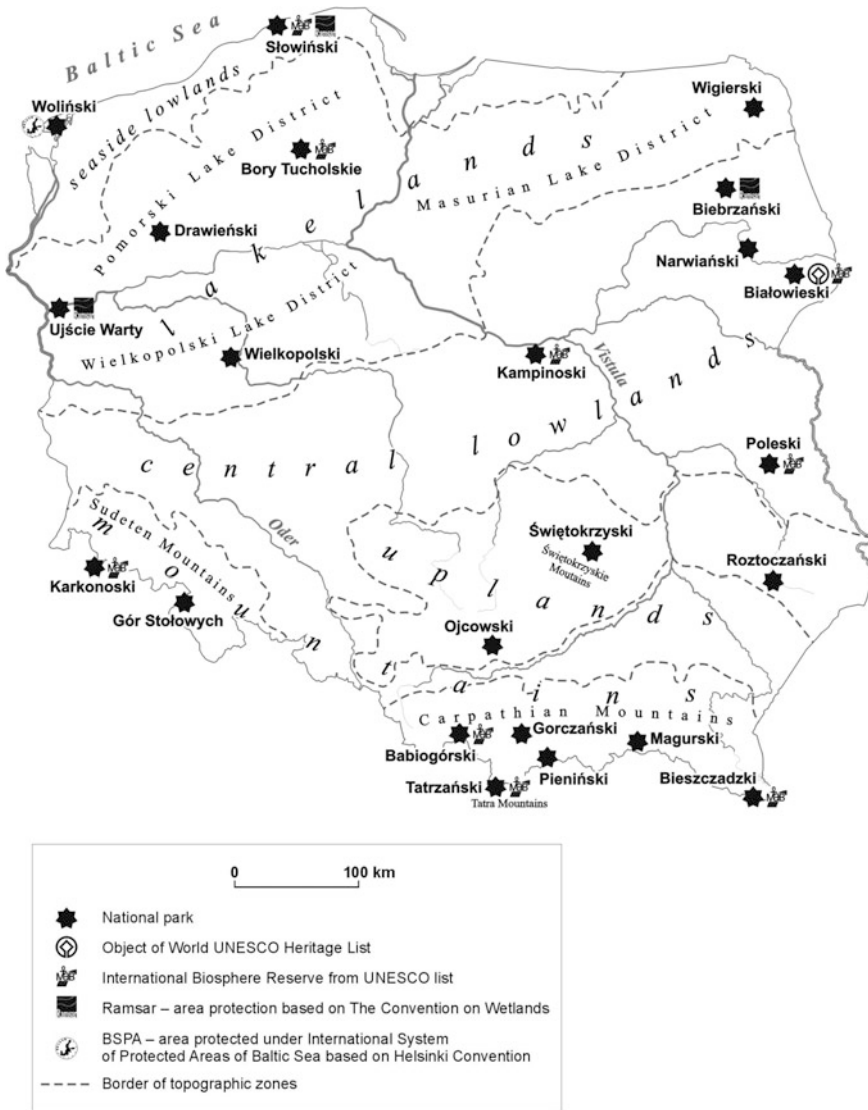


Fig. 8.1 Natural tourist attractions of Poland

sometimes by cliffs (Photograph 8.1). However, the season for swimming, both in the sea and in lakes, is short, including two summer months in average. The Pomorski (Lake District) on the northwestern part of the country is distinguished by the largest number of lakes, whereas the largest lakes can be found in the Masurian Lake District in the northeastern Poland. Both regions are attractive for tourists, not only because of the lakes, but also natural hilly landscapes, lakes, and forests.

Therefore, there is a quite dense network of recreation areas. The Wielkopolski Lake District area has been converted to a rural landscape to a high degree. Except from four cases, recreation areas concentrate in its western part close to the German border, where more woods exist. Altogether areas with lakeland type of landscape constitute more than a half of all recreation areas mentioned by Wyrzykowski (1986). Not many possibilities for recreation and qualified tourism exist in the central Poland, characterized by flat farming lands.

Nevertheless, there are some along the river valleys or within some forest lands. In the southeast Poland, the hilly zone spreads with recreation areas in the only mountain range of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains, whereas others follow the rivers, among them Vistula, or exist in more wild parts of hills or forests (Photograph 8.2). Except from the narrow valleys zone at the foot of the mountains called the Carpathian Depression, the last zone of natural landscape covers the mountain ranges of Sudeten in the West South and Carpathians in the East South of Poland. Here, almost the whole area is covered with recreation areas corresponding to the main ranges (Photograph 8.3). These are again the lands not much transformed by human economy and farming, enclosing large areas of sparsely populated forests. These mountain landscape recreation areas constitute the second largest group among all, that is one-fourth of all indicated by Wyrzykowski (1986).

In Poland, the peak season in case of both seaside and lake areas falls in the summer, whereas in the mountainous areas, the tourist traffic is present almost the whole year round.

The most precious parts of natural landscape are protected under the system of land protection (Ustawa o ochronie przyrody 2004). Among ten different forms of protection of nature, the most basic four include national parks, reserves, landscape parks, and areas of protected landscape. While the national parks and reserves are main destinations for sightseeing tourists, the latter two forms of protection areas are open to recreational tourists (Table 8.2).

Table 8.2 Forms of nature protection in Poland—state for 2014 (Source author's elaboration based on GUS, Ochrona środowiska 2015)

Form of protection	Number	Area covered (in thousands of hectares)	Percent share in total area of the country
National parks	23	314.7	1.0
Nature reserves	1481	165.7	0.5
Landscape parks	122	2525.0	8.1
Areas of protected landscape	385	7010.1	22.4
Areas Natura 2000	145 areas of special birds' protection 846 areas of special habitat protection	8417.3	27.0

National parks are the most important ones with an area at least of one thousand hectares, where the whole nature system and landscape are protected. They also constitute important destinations for sightseeing tourism since, essentially, only that type of tourism is allowed along the indicated tourist paths. There are 23 national parks in Poland, nine of which have also the status of UNESCO biosphere reserves, whereas seven belong to the RAMSAR Convention, protecting swampy areas important for birds' populations (Table 8.3). Their total area is of ca. 315,000 ha, which cover approximately 1% of the country's territory. Nine of them are placed in the mountain zone, five in lake districts, and five in lowland areas, whereas two are located both in the highlands zone and on the Baltic Coast (Fig. 8.1). The smallest one covers 2145 ha (Ojcowski NP near Krakow), and the largest one spreads over the area of 59,223 ha (Biebrzański NP in the northeastern part of Poland). Almost all of them do have a forest cover, from 26 to 96% of their area. The exceptions are "Ujście Warty" (Warta River Estuary) NP and Narwiański NP, both protecting large river valleys with canals and oxbow lakes, where forests constitute only 1–3% of their territory (http://mos.gov.pl/artykul/2236_parki_narodowe/311_parki_narodowe.html).

Nine from 23 Polish national parks are protected under international Man and Biosphere Program (MAB) as belonging to the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves which cover internationally designated protected areas that are meant to demonstrate a balanced relationship between man and nature, whereas three are under Ramsar Convention of Wetlands. Białowiecki National Park is of special character, since it has been also included on both World UNESCO Heritage List and European Heritage List (Table 8.3).

However, the most often visited are Tatrzański, Woliński, and Karkonoski national parks, attracting altogether around 50% of over 10 million visitors to national parks in the country (Table 8.3) (Ministerstwo Gospodarki i Pracy... 2005).

Nature reserves cover small areas, where either the whole natural environment within is protected or one of its elements. Therefore, there are many kinds, such as reserves of fauna, flora, forest, landscape, water, and inanimate nature. They are highly protected as sightseeing tourists are allowed, if at all, only along indicated paths. There are actually 1549 of those forms with total area of more than 166 thousand hectares (Centralny rejestr...<https://danepubliczne.gov.pl/dataset/http-crfop-gdos-gov-pl-crfop>).

Landscape parks cover areas of different size. In this case, however, the range of protection is much smaller than in two above-mentioned forms. Their aim is not only to protect but also to popularize. Therefore, they are open for tourists for sightseeing, qualified, or even mass tourism. There are over 120 landscape parks in Poland of total area 26,000 km², which constitutes circa 8% of the country territory (Lijewski et al. 2008). The largest of them covers more than 84,000 ha (Park Krajobrazowy Dolina Baryczy north from Wrocław).

Areas of protected landscape are open for tourist use of different sorts, and the level of protection is the smallest here. Their purpose is rather to create the continual spatial system with other forms of protection. They are also the least

Table 8.3 National parks in Poland—basic characteristics and visitor statistics (*Source* author elaboration based on Ministry for Environment data, http://www.parkinarodowe.edu.pl/parki_narodowe_w_liczbach/turystyka_w_parkach_narodowych_w_2008_r.htm and Poskrobek 2005, p. 42)

National Park	Establishment	Area in km ²	Forms of international protection	Nr of visitors in 2003 in thousands	Nr of visitors in 2008 in thousands
Babia Góra	1954	33.91	M&B Babia Góra	70	52
Białowieża	1932 1979 1998	105.17	M&B Białowieża Object of World UNESCO Heritage List Object of European Heritage	203	82
Biebrza	1993 1995	592.23	Ramsar	33	32
Bieszczady	1973 1993	292.01	M&B East Carpathians	62	273
Bory Tucholskie	1996 2010	47.98	M&B	20	60
Drawno	1990	113.42		12	23
Gorce	1981	70.31		45	60
Stołowe Mountains	1993	63.40		309	354
Kampinos	1959 2000	385.49	M&B Kampinos Forest	400	1000
Karkonosze	1959 1992	55.81	M&B Karkonosze	1500	2000
Magura	1995	194.39		55	50
Narew	1996	73.50		6	9
Ojców	1956	21.46		400	400
Pieniny	1932	23.46		743	756
Polesie	1990 2002	97.62	M&B West Polesie	13	15
Roztocze	1974	84.83		95	120
Słowiński	1967 1977 1995	215.74 +111.71 water areas	M&B Słowiński Ramsar	170	275
Świętokrzyski	1950	76.26		188	210
Tatra	1954 1992	211.64	M&B Tatrzański	2758	2079
Ujście Warty	2001 1984	80.38	Ramsar	18	20
Wielkopolska	1957	75.84		1200	1200

(continued)

Table 8.3 (continued)

National Park	Establishment	Area in km ²	Forms of international protection	Nr of visitors in 2003 in thousands	Nr of visitors in 2008 in thousands
Wigry	1989	149.86		100	120
Wolin	1960	109.37	BSPA	1700	1500
Together				10,100	10,690

M&B—International Biosphere Reserve from UNESCO list

Ramsar—area protection based on The Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971)—intergovernmental treaty that embodies the commitments of its member countries to maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and to plan the “wise use” or sustainable use of all the wetlands in their territories

BSPA—area protected under International System of Protected Areas of Baltic Sea based on Helsinki Convention

marketed so tourists are not always conscious of their existence, although their purpose is to create the conditions for mass leisure and recreation based on the developed tourist infrastructure. There are 449 such areas in Poland, and they cover circa 71,400 km², which constitutes around 22.8% of the countries territory (Lijewski et al. 2008). They are distributed rather evenly throughout the country (Photograph 8.4).

Additionally, **Natura 2000** is one of the rather new forms of protected areas which have been introduced by law in 2004 (Ustawa o ochronie przyrody). The special attention here is given to wild birds. However, these areas are less significant for tourists as they can cover or contain above-mentioned traditional forms of protected areas (<http://natura2000.gdos.gov.pl/natura2000/>).

Important winter tourism areas Conditioned suited for skiing constitute only 3% of all winter recreation areas in Poland (Wyrzykowski 1986), and they are based mostly on the highest mountain ranges in the southern Poland.

Photograph. 8.1 Polish Baltic Sea coastline, Mrzezyno (Source Z. Helis)



Photograph.

8.2 Świętokrzyski National Park (Source J. Łach)



Photograph. 8.3 Dunajec river tour, view at the Trzy Korony mountain (Source J. Łach)



Photograph. 8.4 Arboretum in Wojsławice (Niemcza) (Source J. Łach)



8.2.2 *Cultural and Historical Conditions Favorable for Tourism Development*

Cultural and historical features conducive for tourism are called man-made attractions which are products of history and culture. They include numerous historic buildings, among them are palaces, castles, churches, houses, as well as museums. Old industrial buildings have become another category of attractions of that kind quite recently. Folk traditions belong here as well as archeological sites or historic spots. Cultural, sports, and religious events form yet another group within these attractions. All of them most often become the destination for sightseeing tourists or so-called cultural tourists.

However, since it would be difficult to analyze separately every one of those subcategories and also because they usually do not appear without connection with one another, we will take a different view. According to *Plan kierunkowy...* (1971), sightseeing destinations have been divided into the following categories: large hubs, centers, complexes, and isolated establishments.

There are eight **large sightseeing hubs** in Poland, which are as follows: Warsaw, Krakow, Gdansk-Sopot-Gdynia conurbation, Wroclaw, Poznan, Szczecin, Lublin, and Torun (Fig. 8.2, Photograph 8.5). They constitute the largest urban centers of the country both rich in historical monuments and in cultural events (Photograph 8.6). They are the main destinations for incoming tourists, and each requires to be visited during at least from 3 to 5 days (Wyrzykowski and Marak 2010).

The category of **sightseeing centers** comprises cities and towns having large number of precious historical buildings and architectural complexes. They can acquire the interests of incoming tourists, and each requires one–two-day visit. According to *Plan* (1971), fifty-seven of such centers have been recognized in Poland, including such cities as Swidnica, Klodzko, or Jelenia Gora in Lower Silesia or Kazimierz Dolny and Sandomierz in the upper Vistula river valley (Photographs 8.7, 8.8). According to Lijewski et al. (2008), there are circa 150 complexes and individual buildings in Poland which are of either international or high national significance for tourists.

The last category of sightseeing localities includes either **monument complexes or isolated buildings**. They are usually smaller towns, counting most often less than one thousand inhabitants. This category, however, is the most differentiated one. According to the *Plan* (1971), there have been around 510 such localities indicated in Poland. According to Lijewski et al. (2008), there are 350 complexes and individual historical buildings which do have secondary meaning for sightseeing tourists in Poland.

Although the above-mentioned approach seems reasonable, there are also international or national ways of special distinction and protection of cultural and historical attractions for tourism. One of them is UNESCO World Heritage List. There have been 13 entries from Poland, twelve of which are of cultural character (Table 8.4 <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/pl>). They include complexes of old cities of the above-mentioned large sightseeing hubs, such as Warsaw, Krakow,



Fig. 8.2 Cultural tourist attractions of Poland

Torun. There are also old renaissance city of Zamosc (Photograph 8.9) — the sightseeing center in east Poland. The isolated establishments of the highest rank like the castle of Teutonic Knights in Malbork, Centennial Hall in Wroclaw or Pilgrimage center in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska close to Krakow have also been included in the List (Photograph 8.10). The concentration camps in Auschwitz and Birkenau (Oświęcim-Brzezinka) have also been enlisted as well as the old salt mine of Wieliczka and Bochnia. Two groups of specific churches either wattle-and-daub construction as two Peace Churches in Lower Silesia or wooden ones as six

Table 8.4 UNESCO World Heritage List Sites in Poland (*Source* self-elaboration based on: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/pl>)

Name	Elements (if there is more than one monuments)	Date of inscription
Auschwitz–Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940–1945)	Auschwitz I Camp Auschwitz II–Birkenau Camp	1979
Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork		1997
Centennial Hall in Wrocław		2006
Churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica	The Church of Piece in Jawor The Church of Piece in Świdnica	2001
Historic Centre of Kraków		1978
Historic Centre of Warsaw		1980
Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: the Mannerist Architectural and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park		1999
Medieval Town of Toruń		1997
Muskauer Park/Park Mużakowski ^a		2004
Old City of Zamość		1992
Royal Salt Mines of Wieliczka and Bochnia	Wieliczka Salt Mine Bochnia Salt Mine	1978
Wooden <i>Tserkvas</i> of the Carpathian Region in Poland and Ukraine ^a	Tserkva of St. Michael the Archangel in Brunary Wyzne Tserkva of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Chotyniec Tserkva of St. Paraskevia in Kwiaton Virgin Mary’s Care Tserkva in Owczary St. James the Less Tserkva in Powroźnik Tserkva of St. Paraskevia in Radruz St. Michael the Archangel Tserkva in Smolnik St. Michael the Archangel Tserkva in Turzańsk	2013
Wooden Churches of Southern Małopolska	St Michael the Archangel’s Church in Binarowa All Saints’ Church in Blizne St Michael the Archangel’s Church in Debno Podhalanskie The Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Haczow St Leonard’s Church in Lipnica Murowana the Church of St Philip and St James the Apostles	2003

^aTransboundary property

Photograph. 8.5 Wrocław
Marketplace (Source
M. Stepowicz)



Photograph. 8.6 Wawel
Cathedral, Krakow (Source
J. Łach)



churches in Carpathian Mountains in southeastern Poland have also been enrolled. The most recently added was the borderland group of wooden churches in both Poland and Ukraine. The Polish group includes eight temples (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/pl>) (Table 8.4).

Another important distinction was introduced by the Polish law in 1994 (Ustawa o ochronie zabytków... 2003). The **Historic monuments** are appointed by the president of Poland as the ones with the highest significance for the Polish culture. Until now, 60 monuments have been rewarded with that status (<http://www.nid.pl/idm,81,lista-objektow-uznanych-przez-prezydenta-rp-za-pomniki-historii.html>). Among them, the largest cities are Krakow, Gdansk, Lublin, Poznan, Torun, Warsaw, and

Photograph. 8.7 Kazimierz Dolny (Source M. Stepowicz)



Photograph. 8.8 Kłodzko, the gothic St. John's Bridge (Source M. Stepowicz)



Photograph. 8.9 Zamość City Hall (Source M. Stepowicz)



Photograph.

8.10 Centennial Hall in
Wrocław (*Source*
M. Stepowicz)



Wrocław as well as such sightseeing centers as Zamosc, Kazimierz Dolny, or Frombork (Photograph 8.11, 8.12). However, some isolated monuments also of industrial heritage have been included such as Elbląg Canal, prehistoric mine in Krzemionki Opatowskie, or salt mine in Wieliczka (Photograph 8.13). This list aims at encompassing main cultural–historical attractions of Poland; however, it is still not accomplished and has not been yet well marketed neither in abroad, nor in the country (Table 8.5).

Important historical buildings and archeological sites are protected as monuments enlisted in the official **Register of Monuments** (Photograph 8.14). In September 2010, there were more than 64 thousand of such monuments and sites in Poland (<http://www.nid.pl/idm,1164,zestawienia.html>); however, their state is in majority very bad, since one-fourth of that group requires complete renovation. Due to postwar nationalization, almost all residences lack their original functions so the necessity to undertake renovation works relates to almost every second castle and palace which are at the same time the most interesting tourist attractions (Krajowy raport o stanie zabytków 2004). Although the process of reprivatization has been taken place since 1989 and already 30% of architectural monuments are in private hands, it does not always mean they have been restored or taken a good care of. The good examples, however, can also be found as in case of group of residences in Jeleniogorska Valley which are undergoing restoration and fulfill tourist functions as hotels and exhibition centers (Duda-Seifert 2008; <http://dolinapalacow.pl>). The complex has already been enlisted as cultural park and the foundation attempt at being included on UNESCO Cultural Heritage List. From among all registered architectural monuments, second largest group is formed by churches and religious unions (24% of monuments). Since Poland used to be a Catholic country, even through the communist times the churches and monasteries have been protected and used for religious purposes. To the most important monuments of that kind belong, e.g., to gothic churches in Lower Silesia and Malopolska regions as well in

Table 8.5 Historic monuments of Poland (*Source* elaboration based on: <http://www.nid.pl/idm,81,lista-objektow-uznanych-przez-prezydenta-rp-za-pomniki-historii.html>)

No.	Place	Monument
1	Biskupin	Archeological site
2	Bochnia	Salt mine
3	Bohoniki and Kruszyńniany	Mosques and mizars
4	Chełmno	Old City
5	Częstochowa	Paulite Fathers' monastery at <i>Jasna Góra</i>
6	Duszniki Zdrój	Paper mill
7	Frombork	Cathedral complex
8	Gdańsk	Old City within seventeenth century walls
9	Gdańsk	Westerplatte Battlefield
10	Gdynia	Historic urban composition of midtown
11	Gniezno	St Mary Assumption' and St Adalbert Cathedral
12	Gostyń-Głogówko	Oratorians of St. Philip Neri Confederation' monastery
13	Góra Św. Anny	Composed cultural–natural landscape
14	Grunwald	Battlefield
15	Kalwaria Zembrzydzowska	Landscape complex of mannerist pilgrimage park
16	Kamień Pomorski	Cathedral complex
17	Kanał Augustowski	Water Canal
18	Kanał Elbląski	Water Canal
19	Katowice	Edifice of Silesian Parliament and voivodeship Government
20	Katowice	Workers housing estate Nikiszowiec
21	Kazimierz Dolny	Town
22	Kołbacz	Architectural structure of former Cistercian Monastery
23	Kotlina Jeleniogórska	Palaces and landscape parks of Jeleniogórska Valley
24	Kozłówka	Residential complex of palace and park
25	Kórnik	Residential complex of castle and park together with a church—necropolis of owners
26	Kraków (Cracow)	Old City
27	Krzemionki Opatowskie	Neolithic mine of flint stone
28	Krzyszów	Old Cistercian monastery
29	Łąd	Old Cistercian monastery
30	Legnickie Pole	Old Benedictines' monastery
31	Leżajsk	Bernardines' monastery
32	Lubiń	Benedictines' monastery
33	Lublin	Architectural–urban complex

(continued)

Table 8.5 (continued)

No.	Place	Monument
34	Łańcut	Castle and park complex
35	Łęknica	Landscape Muskauer Park
36	Łódź	Multicultural landscape of industrial city
37	Łowicz	Cathedral basilica (former collegiate church of the Primate) of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
38	Malbork	The Castle of Teutonic Knights
39	Nysa	Parish Church of St. James Older Apostle and St. Agnes Virgin and Martyr
40	Ostrów Lednicki	Archeological site
41	Paczków	Old City together with medieval fortification system
42	Pelplin	Former Cistercian and Cathedral complex
43	Poznań	Old City
44	Raławice	Battlefield
45	Srebrna Góra	Fortress from eighteenth century
46	Stargard Szczeciński	Complex of Church of St. Mary Queen of the World together with medieval city walls
47	Strzegom	Church of St. Peter and St. Paul the Disciples
48	Sulejów	Cistercian Monastery
49	Tarnowskie Góry	Old mine of silver ore
50	Toruń	Old and New City
51	Trzebnica	Former Cistercian Monastery
52	Warszawa (Warsaw)	Old City together with Kings' Route and Wilanów Palace
53	Warszawa	Complex of Filters' Station of William Lidley
54	Warszawa	Complex of historic cemeteries of different religions in Powązki
55	Wieliczka	Salt mine
56	Wrocław	Old City
57	Wrocław	Centennial Hall
58	Zamość	Old City within nineteenth century walls
59	Żagań	Former Augustinians Monastery
60	Żyrardów	Workers housing estate from nineteenth century

Pomorskie Lake Region in the north and baroque churches and monasteries of Lower Silesia, built and embellished by Austrian artists.

Cultural Parks constitute a new form of protection of monuments that has been introduced quite recently (Ustawa o ochronie zabytków... 2003). This is an area called into existence with the purpose of protecting the cultural landscape together with buildings specific for local building art and cultural traditions. However, there are only 21 of them, and they are not yet well promoted among tourists. Among them, there are cities, archeological sites, fortresses, landscape road, calvary, and cemetery (<http://www.nid.pl/idm,219,idn,458,lista-parkow-kulturowych-stan-na-31-grudnia-2010-r.html>) (Photographs 8.12, 8.10, 8.14, and 8.13).

Photograph. 8.11 Frombork Cathedral (Source J. Łach)



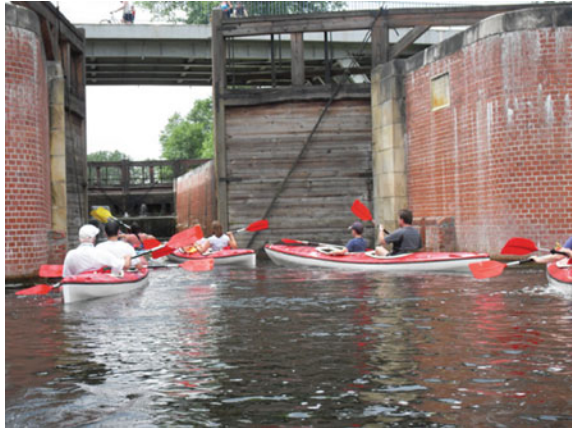
Photograph. 8.12 Old City in Lublin (Source Z. Helis)



In the nineties of twentieth century, there have been a lot of changes in Polish **museums**, due to the transformations of political and economic system. Therefore, at the beginning of the new millennium, there are two opposing trends—the number of museums has grown to 916 in 2007 (<http://www.kongreskultury.pl/title,pid,140.html>), but the number of visitors has fallen down in 2004 to 75% of average visitors number from 1990 (Stasiak 2007). In 2004, there were over 17 million visitors to all Polish museums (Stasiak 2007). Still, there have been few new and modern museums built and open after 2000, e.g., The Warsaw Rising Museum in 2004 and Copernicus Centre of Science in Warsaw in 2010. The former one was visited in 2009 by circa 500,000 visitors, whereas the latter in its first year of activity received over 1 million of admissions. Therefore, these kinds of cultural attractions belong to the most often visited if we compare those numbers to the admissions in cultural attractions in 2003 (Table 8.6).

The number of visitors in attractions can legitimize their importance on the tourist market. Nevertheless, in Poland, no regular research is made on that subject; therefore, the only accessible comparative data can be taken from selected studies.

Photograph. 8.13 Kayaking on Czarna Hańcza and Augustowski Canal (Source M.Duda-Seifert)



Photograph. 8.14 Nidzica Castle (Source J. Łach)



The examples of attendance are shown in Table 8.6. Therefore, it confirms in general the above-mentioned list of largest attractions according to the specialists.

Next to the above-mentioned tourist attractions, Poland also has historic traditions that built now historic and folk values that have been revived in recent years due to growing interest in encompassing events, regional cuisines, folk art, etc. The division in five large historical regions in Poland has been maintained from the Middle Ages, such as Wielkopolska (Greater Poland), Malopolska (Lesser Poland), Pomorze (Pomerania), Slask (Silesia), and Mazowsze (Mazovia) (Fig. 8.2). Nowadays, there are also five basic ethnic regions as well based on the same structure, covering smaller distinguished ones such as Kurpie (within Mazovia region), Kashubia in Pomerania, Polish Mountains (Highlanders), and also Sieradzka, Leczynska, and Wielunska lands in the central Poland. Additionally,

Table 8.6 Number of visitors in most often visited cultural attractions in Poland in 2003 (*Source* Byszewska-Dawidek and Kulesza 2004)

Attraction	City	Number of visitors in 2003
Wawel Museum of Arts together with two departments	Krakow and Pieskowa Skała and Stryszow	896,296
Wieliczka Saltworks Museum	Wieliczka	719,507
Auschwitz–Birkenau Museum	Oświęcim—Brzezinka	474,380
Castle in Malbork Museum (together with department in Kwidzyn)	Malbork and Kwidzyn	461,885
Kings' Castle in Warsaw	Warsaw	414,763
Natural Museum of Pieniny National Park	Kroscienko over Dunajec	409,170
Castle-Museum in Lancut	Lancut	367,730
Warsaw National Museum together with 4 regional departments	Warsaw, Arkadia, Nieborow, Wilanow, Otwock	337,238
Oceanographic Museum together with Sea Aquarium	Gdynia	314,561
National Museum in Krakow (together with 10 departments)	Krakow, Zakopane	305,624

there are as well small groups of foreign ethnic minorities who settled down in Poland either before ages or more recently after the Second World War, such as Ukrainian and Lemko people in the south, Slovaks on the southern border, and Belarusians, Lithuanians, and Tatars in the northwest Poland (Fig. 8.2).

8.3 Basic and Secondary Infrastructure of Tourism

Accommodation facilities

The development of the accommodation in Poland before WWII followed the development of tourism after the regain of the independence. Tourism movement accumulated in touring center such as Warszawa, Krakow, Poznan, Wilno, or Lwow as well as at the seaside and in the mountains. The above-mentioned were the most often visited and protected by the most important associations promoting tourism development: Polskie Towarzystwo Krajoznawcze (Polish Country Lovers Society) and Polskie Towarzystwo Tatrzańskie (Polish Tatra Society). Until 1939, 145 accommodation units offering ca. 4500 beds were built in Polish mountains. During WWII, the situation of the accommodation units changed dramatically. Its present state stems both from the war damage and from political changes that resulted in the border alterations. Poland lost its east part and regains lands on the west that before the war belonged to Germany, e.g., Dolny Slask and Pomorze Zachodnie with well-preserved tourist infrastructure unlike in central and eastern Poland destroyed during the war.

After the war, the remaining infrastructure had to be secured and restored, and only after that, an intensive rebuilt of the tourist infrastructure of the country took place. Among the most important factors influencing the development of the accommodation after WWII were the trade unions. In 1949, as the outcome of the political system change, Fundusz Wczasow Pracowniczych was founded, which was a type of a trade union institution responsible for the development of social tourism. In 1950, FWP was in charge of ca. 38.200 beds which was almost 84% of the whole Polish potential at that time (Lijewski et al. 2002). During the sixties of the last century, tourism developed intensively according to the central governmental plan. These were the places of employment and the already mentioned trade unions that were generally made to set this central plan to life. The statistical data concerning this period indicate over 250,000 beds in total of which 143,000 beds belonged to recreation and rest foundation. During the next ten years, the rate of development was not that high any more, although at the beginning of the eighties, there was a record number of over 900,000 beds in Poland. It is worth remembering that it was the time of a profound crisis which resulted in gradual wear of the accommodation. In 1985, the total number of beds fell by almost 70,000, and in 1990, (the pivotal year for the central and eastern Europe) it amounted to 740,000.

The development of the accommodation after the war had also its spatial characteristic. During this period, the investments in the accommodation were concentrated mainly in the regions of WWII military operations which ranged over the field of prewar Poland. The so-called regained lands which were not so severely damaged had better preserved tourist infrastructure. It concerned mainly Lower Silesia—where there were lots of accommodation units well preserved during the war, especially at the Sudety region. As a result of such a good opinion, tourist infrastructure pauperized during the following years. The crisis in the eighties preceded political and economical changes including tourism. The fall of accommodation was stopped no sooner than in the mid-nineties.

The last twenty years also bore the stamp of change in the accommodation. At the beginning of economic transformation stemming from the free market introduction, a further fall of accommodation was observed during 1991–1994 from 7792 to 7514 units. The year 1995 is the pivotal one, and during the following five years, the number of units gradually increased, and in 1999, it amounted to 8301 which is the highest number during the whole free market period. Twenty-first century was characterized by a subsequent steep decrease with its minimum of 6694 units in 2006. The number of accommodation units increased during the following years, and in 2010, there were 7206 units in Poland. In the next years, the constant increase can be observed. One of the main causes is a large number of the investments in the infrastructure for Euro 2012—an important sports event hosted by Poland and Ukraine. For December of 2014, statistics show an important number of 9885 units. Such progress is caused mainly by an increase of the number of hotels, which also meant higher quality of accommodation in Poland. The number of hotel units increased gradually with the exception of 1994 and 1999. In 1991, there were only 515 hotel units (6.6% of the total offer). In 2010, the number of hotels—the most numerous group among other accommodation units—increased

to 1796 which is 25% of the total number of accommodation units. Year 2014 has strengthened the positions of the hotels on the market with a total number of 2250 units of this kind.

Accommodation quantity and structure

In the year 2014—as it was already mentioned—there was the total number of 9885 accommodation units which makes 694,023 beds and is a 13.7% increase compared to the year 2010. It is worth stressing here the high position of hotels: the hotels' increase as compared to 2010 equals 25% which is more than guest houses (15%) and motels, where a decrease has been noticed (−10.5%). Hotels lead also in the category of “number of beds.” In 2014, hotels offered 227,532 beds, which made nearly 33% of all accessible beds and is a 29% increase as compared to the year 2010. However, the tourist houses (*domy wycieczkowe*) are accommodation units indicating one of the highest drops as far as the number of units as well as beds are concerned. Forty-seven units offered slightly over 3400 beds, which is a drop by 18% as compared to the year 2010.

Seasonality

Seasonality concerns also Polish accommodation base and can be considered a problem especially in some regions. The 2014 statistical data referring to all-year units and season units show an important share of the all-year units among the total number of beds. Among 9885 accommodation units in Poland, 6770 are accessible during the whole year (which equals to 68% of all accommodation units). Out of 694,023 beds, 478,979 (almost 70%) are accessible all year long. The highest number of all-year beds is the hotels' offer: 99% of beds are offered to tourists along the whole year. Hotels' share in the all-year units is also the highest and amounts to 42% of their general number. Among the remaining accommodation units, those used only during a particular season are resorts (*osrodki wczasowe*), chalet complexes (*zespoly domkow turystycznych*), or campsites (*osrodki kolonijne*). All the above-mentioned units are open usually in the summer. Holiday resorts constitute only 37% of 1199 all-year units offering 34% of all beds referring to all units belonging to that particular category. It is similar in case of chalet complexes—only 15% are whole-year units offering only 11% of the general number of beds. Only every five campsite is available all year long, and their capacity amounts to 11% of general number of long-term accommodation units. An extreme example is camping sites offering 21,373 beds—all connected only with summer season.

Taking into consideration regional division, it becomes clear that the highest number of accommodation units is in Pomeranian voivodeship—in 2014, there were 1450 objects. There are two more voivodeship where there are over 1000 accommodation units in West Pomeranian—1322 and Lesser Poland with 1418 units both seen as tourist regions. Behind those, three there is Lower Silesia voivodeship with 903 units. The remaining regions offer much fewer units. Taking into consideration the number of beds—the first place undoubtedly belongs to West Pomeranian voivodeship—with 121,617 beds. The following places are occupied by Pomeranian voivodeship with almost 25,000 beds fewer and Lesser Poland with over 87,000 beds. The situation is slightly different if the number of whole-year

Table 8.7 Accommodation resources in the year 2009—general data according to voivodeship (Source GUS; elaborated: Instytut Turystyki)

Voivodeship	Number of units	Number of all-year units	Number of hotel rooms	Number of beds	Number of all-year beds
Poland	6992	4989	109,534	606,501	393,920
Lower Silesia	723	665	11,544	51,135	46,118
Kuyavian-Pomeranian	296	192	4238	26,023	16,415
Lubusz	285	171	3132	18,909	11,306
Lubuskie	306	191	4185	23,328	11,787
Łódź	241	201	5251	18,094	13,975
Lesser Poland	894	803	14,554	68,813	60,363
Masovian	376	341	15,480	40,740	36,950
Opole	110	86	1161	7830	5164
Podkarpackie	369	284	3639	22,238	17,401
Podlasie	168	115	1937	11,424	6754
Pomeranian	832	402	9097	81,444	33,610
Silesian	473	425	9809	39,266	35,401
Swietokrzyskie	143	120	2790	10,937	8665
Warmian-Masurian	390	215	5850	38,366	19,508
Great Poland	547	399	9445	38,448	26,510
West Pomerania	839	379	7422	109,506	43,993

beds is considered: The best results are achieved by Lesser Poland voivodeship (ca. 60,000 beds), and Lower Silesia is second best with 46,000 beds and the leader of season beds. West Pomeranian voivodeship is on the third place with almost 44,000 beds (Table 8.7).

Among all accommodation units offered by the Polish market, the situation of hotels should be analyzed as their role in creating of the tourist movement in Poland is very important (Table 8.8).

During the last ten years, the average usage ranges from 36% (in 2002–2003) to 47.1% (in 2007). It is difficult to point at one tendency then. The beginning of the new century starts with a decrease which is overcome five years later, and after that, a further increase can be observed with a peak in 2007. In the subsequent years, there is a drop comparable with the beginning of the century. There is also a clear

Table 8.8 Hotels according to category: the rate of beds usage (%) (Source GUS)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2014
Total	40.6	38.5	36.0	36.0	39.8	43.1	44.9	47.1	46.0	41.2	37.0
*****	58.9	55.9	51.3	49.5	50.6	52.1	63.9	63.7	60.3	55.4	54.3
****	52.0	48.9	44.8	43.3	48.0	52.4	53.7	56.0	52.0	45.8	42.2
***	42.5	40.0	37.9	38.7	41.3	44.0	44.6	46.2	44.9	39.7	34.2
**	36.9	34.7	34.3	32.8	36.3	39.3	41.1	43.7	43.2	38.4	31.3
*	29.9	29.4	29.1	31.1	37.1	39.1	41.7	43.9	44.6	41.0	36.6

* stars stand for the hotel category from 1 to 5 stars

link between the hotel category and the rate of beds usage. The higher the category, the higher the usage. The five-star hotels almost during all that time managed to achieve over 50% of usage with the maximum in 2006 with 63.9%. However, in 2009, it was only 55.4% and even less in 2014 just 54.3%. The situation of four-star hotels is not that prosperous as their usage in 2014 was not higher than 43% which is less than the average of the five years exceeding 50%. Units with three stars in 2014 were used in almost 34% two-star hotels—slightly over 31% and one-star hotels with their percentage of usage being almost the same as the average for all hotels' average.

Analyzing the distribution of hotels in the main Polish towns, it is mainly similar to the development of their tourist functions. The highest number of hotels can be found in the most important touring center of Poland, i.e., Krakow. Among 130 hotels (data from 2014), seven are classified with the highest category. However, the three-star hotels are most numerous: In 2014, there were 69 of them. The historical capital of Poland has also the highest number of the highest category hotels—10 units which constitutes 28% of all five-star hotels in Poland. The second place belongs to Warsaw with 70 hotels which constitute half of the potential of Krakow. The most numerous group are units categorized as three-star hotels—28. The third place belongs to Poznan with 55 units but just three of them are the highest category hotel. Almost 50% of cities' potential are three stars' hotels. Other cities with important potential are Wroclaw with 48 units (including six five-star hotels) and Gdansk with 38 units (including four hotels of the highest category) (Table 8.9).

Table 8.9 Beds in hotels according to category in voivodeship towns in 2014 (Source GUS, Turystyka w 2014 r.)

	Hotels in total	*****	****	***	**	*
Wroclaw	8045	1166	2673	2613	820	773
Bydgoszcz	2240	41	753	599	847	–
Lublin	1801	31	279	1223	174	94
Zielona Gora	756	–	245	173	111	227
Lodz	4965	–	1816	1629	1219	301
Krakow	18,993	2015	5598	6964	3415	942
Warsaw	21,378	4186	5311	6626	3207	1996
Opole	662	–	–	593	42	27
Rzeszow	2125	142	758	756	229	91
Bialystok	1643	–	557	444	580	62
Gdansk	5469	708	1483	2562	587	–
Katowice	3141	192	1701	132	636	252
Kielce	2087	–	760	405	765	157
Olsztyn	1247	–	101	716	366	–
Poznan	6731	480	2396	2601	952	36
Szczecin	3105	–	1080	674	428	923
Torun	2229	–	964	519	580	166

* stars stand for the hotel category from 1 to 5 stars

The situation looks different if the capacity of accommodation in Polish cities is concerned. Warsaw with its 21,378 beds keeps the first position. An important share of beds in the capital accommodation is in five-star hotels (19.5%). What is more, all beds in this category of the hotels of Warsaw amount to as much as 47% of all accommodation in five stars' hotels in whole Poland. The second place is occupied by Krakow with 18,993 of beds. The following places tally with the number of units. So, Wrocław comes the third with over 8000 beds in hotels and then Poznan offering over 6700 beds in hotels. Gdansk is the fifth with 5400 beds in hotels leaving behind Lodz offering nearly 5000 of beds.

8.4 Tourist Movement in Poland

Arrivals of foreign tourists during the last decade show ups and downs. In 2001, there were 15 million of visitors, and after that, a two-year drop occurred with 13.7 million of visitors in 2003. In the following three years, the number of tourists increased up to the maximum (15.7 million of tourists) of the decade in 2006. The next three years characterizes a significant decrease to 11.9 million of tourists which is the lowest point of the decade. The year 2010 brought another increase (by 600,000 of tourists) despite the world crisis. The year 2014 presented a significant increase up to 16 million of tourists visiting the country.

Incoming tourists according to groups of countries

The tourists visiting Poland are usually from one of the four main groups representing the most important directions of migration. The countries from behind our east border: Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine constitute the first group. The fifteen countries from the old European Union (excluding Germany as it is considered the third group) are the second group and the fourth group are the USA and other important overseas countries.

The most important trend observed in the last decade is substantial drop of the number of tourists from the eastern border and rise of German tourists. In 2001, tourists from Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus constituted 41% of tourists and from Germany—29%. The next year the number of both groups of tourists decreased, but the relation remained the same. In the following years, a reverse tendency is seen: The number of German tourists increases, but the number of tourists from the east decreases. There were 5.2 million Germans and 4.7 million Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. This trend is becoming clearer and clearer and was especially well seen in 2009 when almost 39% of tourists (4.6 million) were Germans and 21% (2.5 million) were our eastern neighbors. In the year 2014, the trend has been maintained. Poland hosted about 5.7 million of tourist form Germany—36% of total number of tourists while just 18% of them were the inhabitants of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

The share of the remaining three groups ranges from 30% in 2001 to 42% in 2008 and 2010, and the trend continues in 2014. The *others* are the most important group, although their number changes depending on the year from 2.2 million in 2009 to 2.6 million in 2006–2008. The number of tourists from the old European Union excluding Germany ranges from 1.6 million in 2002 to 2.5 million in 2007 and more than 3.2 million in 2014.

The least numerous group during the last decade were overseas tourists. There were from 0.3 million of people in 2001–2003 to 0.6 million in 2006–2007. The decade finishes with 0.5 million of tourists.

Trends

Income from the foreign tourists' arrivals: Income from the foreign tourists' arrivals in 2001–2006 was relatively stable reaching the level of 2.7 billion dollars in 2003 up to \$3.4 billion in 2006. Then, a significant increase could be noticed of ca. 5 billion dollars from 4.8 billion dollars in 2007 to 5.5 billion dollars in 2008. In the first half of the decade, more than half of the foreign arrivals were connected with the tourist arrivals. The second half of the decade is linked with the prevalence of one-day visits except for 2009. The second decade of the century observes the systematic increase of the income. Year 2014 was closed in the amount of 6.5 milliard dollars.

The foreigners and accommodation: The number of tourists using group accommodation increases steadily throughout the whole decade with a fall in 2008–2009 and increase again in 2010. The peak value was reached in 2014 (5.4 million) and the lowest in 2002 (3.1 million). In the structure of the accommodation use, the leading position belongs to hotels, i.e., from 75 to 82% of the total accommodation base used by the foreign tourists.

Poles in the accommodation: The number of Poles using group accommodation units during the last decade constantly increases value with the exception of the year 2009 when the value from the previous year was reached again. In absolute numbers, it is an increase from 11.1 million in 2001 to 16.3 million in 2010. The usage of hotels increases proportionally although the share in the accommodation is significantly lower, if compared to foreign tourists which oscillate from 33% in 2001 to 51% at the end of the described period.

The Poles' home travels: In the first decade of twenty-first century, a clear downward tendency is seen especially if data concerning the number of short-term trips of the Poles are concerned. The number of 36 million was reached only at the beginning of the twenty-first century. However, during the following five years, the number of trips dropped seriously down to the level of 19.1 million. In 2008, an increase by 1.5 million of trips was noted, and during the next year, a record drop was noted again reaching the level of 17.5 million of trips. An important change started in the next decade. A dynamic increase finished with the number of 38.4 million of trips in the year 2014 shows the tendency of coming back to the numbers from the beginning of the century (Table 8.10).

Table 8.10 Visitors in collective accommodation facilities in Poland 2004–2014 (*Source* own elaboration based on: www.intur.com.pl)

Year	Number of visitors		Number of overnight stays	
	Total	Foreigners	Total	Foreigners
2004	15,745,691	3,934,064	46,657,127	9,312,939
2005	16,597,202	4,310,401	48,618,414	10,542,368
2006	17,512,115	4,313,578	51,234,965	10,555,119
2007	18,947,160	4,387,404	54,953,722	10,918,100
2008	19,556,102	4,046,312	56,645,518	10,173,237
2009	19,353,712	3,861,942	55,020,067	9,609,447
2014	25,083,978	5,470,335	66,579,589	12,992,241

8.4.1 Arrivals to Poland

In the end of the decade in 2010, over 58 million of people arrived to Poland and almost 12.5 million of them were tourists. The most numerous group were citizens of the European Union countries (over 80% of all arrivals and 68% of all tourists). Within that group, the most numerous are tourists from the old EU (6,875,000 which makes 55% of the total number). The most numerous group among foreigners were Germans (4.5 millions) which constituted one-third of all tourists. Among the remaining fifteen other distinguishing countries are Great Britain (almost half a million of tourists) and Holland and Austria (both over 300,000 tourists). And as far as new members of the European Union are concerned, this is Lithuania at the top position although in numbers these are only 620,000 of people. Surprisingly, low position is that of another neighboring country—Czech with 175,000 of tourists which is only 2% of the total number of people order in 2010.

Among countries outside of the Schengen zone, the most important is Ukraine with 1,350,000 of tourists per year which means that every fourth inhabitant of Ukraine crossing the border arrives to Poland for tourist purposes. From the overseas and other countries, the most important for the Polish market are the USA citizens (240,000 of tourists) accounting for nearly 20% of the whole tourist movement from both directions.

The year 2014 shows some other trends. The number of tourist is around 16 million. The biggest group is Germans with 5.7 million of visitors. Another country from old EU that plays an important role on the Polish tourist market is Great Britain that doubled the number of tourists reaching 1.1 million. In the same time, the tourist movement from Austria is 60% bigger and reaches almost half of million. The decrease of number of tourists from Holland is accompanied by the increase of the number of tourists from France. Around 0.5 million of French visited Poland in 2014. Among new members of EU, the leading position with the same number like in 2010 belongs to Lithuania. Second place was occupied by Hungary with 0.3 million of tourists. Non-Schengen area leaders are Ukraine and

Russia with almost the same score around one million of tourists. The most important source of overseas tourist is still USA with 645,000 of them.

Purposes of arrivals

The most important purpose of arrivals in the second half of the first decade of the twenty-first century is business trips. Usually, these are visits to represent companies (28%) or private businesses (27%). In 2010, one-fourth of all arrivals was of this type. Tourist aims come as second (23% of arrivals) and next family or friends' visits (18%), transit (10%), shopping (10%), and also other aims (14%). Among the surveyed groups of tourists (the leading one, which is German's and the other countries from the old EU, new members of the EU, neighbors outside of the Schengen zone, overseas countries, and the rest of the world), only the Germans visit Poland for the tourist purposes (34%) more often than business (19%). As for the rest, the ratio is diverted, i.e., the neighbours outside of the Schengen zone arrive for business purposes four times more (29%) than for tourist purposes (7%). However, the most important goal of those trips is shopping (30%). Similar ratios concern the EU new countries as here the prevailing goal of visits is transit (29%). As far as the old EU countries are concerned, the number is nearly the same with a slight tendency for the business, while shopping and transit remain at the statistic error level.

In the year 2014, situation has changed. The main reason for traveling to Poland was visiting friends and relatives—it was in numbers more than 6 million of tourists (38.8%). The second reason that attracted 4.4 million of foreign tourists is holiday, leisure, and recreation. On the third place is the business purpose that brought to Poland around 3 million of tourists which is almost 19% of the total number of foreign tourist.

Accommodation usage

During 2010, there were 4,103,900 foreigners using accommodation, which was an increase comparing to the previous crisis year by 6.3%. Almost 10 million accommodation places were provided, which was an increase by ca. 4% in comparison with 2009. The most important group were Germans (27% of all using accommodation and 38% of accommodation provided). In both cases, this situation is almost the same as in the previous year. The remaining 34% of users and 30% of accommodation provided was for tourists from other countries of the EU mainly Great Britain, Italy, and France.

As far as new members of EU are concerned, those values are much lower. The number of users amounted to 10% and accommodation provided to 8%. Statistically, these are the Lithuanians and the Czechs to use the Polish accommodation offer most often (99,600 and 79,100 tourists respectively). Outside of the Schengen zone, these are the Russians to use the accommodation most often (213,300 of people), tourists from the USA (164,500), Ukraine (131,600), and Norway (101,900).

In the year 2014, around 5.5 million of foreign tourists used the accommodation units in Poland and almost 13 million of accommodation was provided which again means an increase around 30% facing the last year of the previous decade.

Place of accommodation

The most popular type of accommodation used by foreigners visiting Poland in 2010 are hotels and motels (41% of the total number of visitors). Only 31% of visitors from the neighboring countries outside of the Schengen zone stay at the hotels, and 35% of them stay with family and friends. Hotels are the basic accommodation unit for the Europeans outside of the EU (61%). On average, 27% of all visitors stay with family and friends—this is the second most popular type of accommodation. Usually, these are the tourists from the main overseas countries such as USA, Canada, or Australia that use this offer. Ten percent of tourists chose guest houses, 7% private rooms, and 11% other accommodation types. Camping sites are least popular as only 2% of people go for this offer. In 2014, hotels and similar establishments such as motels or boarding houses were temporal home for almost 90% of total number of foreign tourists. Hotels are most popular among tourists from old EU countries. Around 75% of Germans prefer this kind of accommodation unit. In case of UK, the share is even higher—almost 90% of their tourists like to stay at hotel. Overseas countries maintain the tendency from first decade. Tourists from USA or Japan in more than 90% are clients of hotels.

Length of stay and number of visits per year

The average length of stay in Poland during the last decade is ca. four days. In 2010, the most popular stay was of one to three nights (chosen by 61% of visitors). Slightly below 30% stayed in Poland for four to seven nights, from eight to 28 days below 10%, and only one percent of tourists stayed for over four weeks (it concerns tourists from the main overseas countries such as USA or Canada who stay in Poland on average for almost 13 days).

During the last years, almost 30% of tourists visit Poland once per year. In 2010, it was exactly 30%. There is a clear tendency seen recently that number of tourist visits per year increases. At the second place (18%) are people who visit Poland twice a year. And 17% of tourists visit Poland from 5 to 10 times per year. The same value refers to eleven and more visits per year.

Sex and age

Men visit Poland more often than women, e.g., in 2010, there were 62% of them. The balanced proportion concerns only the Germans (52% are men and 48% are women). The biggest disproportion refers to the new members of EU (76% are men).

The age-group who visits our country most often are people between 35 and 44 years (38% of the total number of visitors). One-fourth of all guests are between 45 and 54 years. Those two groups constitute in total 63% of the tourist movement. Low ratio of young people is also striking as only 4% of tourists are younger than 24 years. And similarly low ratio concerns older people—only 3% of all tourists are 65 and more.

8.4.2 The Expenses of Foreign Tourists in Poland Per Person in Dollars

During the last decade, there is an increase of the level of expenses from 137 dollars at the beginning of the decade to 409 dollars in 2009 and 410 dollars in 2014. The last two years of the first decade mark a substantial increase over 400 dollars, while two years earlier, this sum achieved 170 dollars. The highest expenses are spent by tourists from the overseas countries such as the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia, or the South Korea. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the average sum spent in Poland was 350 dollars and increased three times to 1075 dollars. The French and Italians spent over 600 (627) dollars and the Britons (605 dollars). Those countries were leaders also at the beginning of this century. The German tourists spend just as much as the average, i.e., 403 dollars. Recently, the expenses of tourists–neighbors increase three times as far as Belarus and Ukraine are concerned, and expenses of the Russians increase twice exceeding the sum of 260 dollars.

Tourists' expenses per day per person also increased substantially. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, it increased three times. In the year 2000, the expenses were 25 dollars, and in 2009, it amounted to 74 dollars. Taking expenses into consideration, the first place belongs to two neighboring countries, i.e., Belarus (111 dollars) and Ukraine (104 dollars). At the following places, there are old EU countries: France (95 dollars), Austria (90 dollars), Italy (88 dollars), and UK (85 dollars). The inhabitants of the main overseas countries spend slightly over 80 dollars.

Expenses of one-day tourists look different although recently here as well the rising tendency is obvious. In 2000, the mean expenses amounted to 44 dollars, and ten years later, it was 103 dollars although this is not as high as in the record year 2008 which was 135 dollars. This time again the highest sums were spent by our neighbors, i.e., Ukrainians (136 dollars) and Belarusians (198 dollars). Within ten years, the expenses of visitors coming from the east increased five times, while the Russia which was the leader at the beginning of the decade and at the end of the decade had expenses 10% lower.

Income in foreign currency from tourism and same-day visitors

During the last decade, the incomes show a dropping tendency, i.e., from 6.1 billion dollars to 4.1 billion dollars in 2004 which was a crisis year in Poland. The following years bring an increase up to 11.4 billion dollars in 2008. The ratio of tourism income to one-day visitors' income also changed. In 2000–2003, the bigger share in income had tourism reaching the maximum in 2003 when the tourists' expenses were almost twice as high as of the same-day visitors. In 2004, both groups supported the budget of the same sum of money, i.e., 2.9 billion dollars. During the subsequent years, the share of same-day visitors increased as compared to tourists. In 2008, 5.9 billion dollars came from the first group and 5.5 billion dollars from the second one. The situation changes starting from the new decade.

The income increases constantly till more than 12.2 milliard dollars in 2014. The share between tourism and one-day visitors' income is rather balanced: 53% from tourism to 47% obtained from same-day visitors.

Tourist movement of poles

The end of the last decade shows a drop of the number of the national travels of Poles from 35 million in year 2008 to 30.8 million a year later. The drop refers both to the long and short trips. In the year 2009, 57% of trips are the departures up to for 4 days and 43% are longer trips. The main purpose of long trips in more than 50% is tourism and rest, and the 30% of the trips are to visit relatives and friends. The opposite trend is in case of short trips—around half of them are the family or friends' visits and 30% belongs to the tourism and rest departures. The third place in both cases is the business trips—around 10%.

The way of organizing the trip had not changed since years no matter whether it lasts up to four days or above five days. More than 80% are the departures organized independently. The most common accommodation is at the relative's place, more often the town and then countryside—in case of short trips around 50% and for the longer trips—slightly below 40% of the cases. Next place belongs to the hotels and guest houses—around 10%.

The situation changes in next years—year 2014 is closed with the number of 38.4 million of travels, but still the trend with the short-term travels is maintained. Almost 61% are the trips up to 4 days. For the long-term trips, the most important purpose is holidays, leisure, and recreation—57% facing 33% of trips to friends and relatives and still the opposite trend for short-term travels in present.

National long and short tourist trips seasonality

In the last decade, the most popular season for the long trip departure was the summer season. The leading months are, what is not a surprise, the holiday time. The most popular is July followed by August. Other months are considerably less popular for the tourist travels. A slight increase can be observed in December—Christmas time—and May—a month which begins with the accumulation of the free days dedicated to the worker's day and national Constitution day. The short trips are similarly distributed with a slight variation for March or April—the months of the short Easter holidays.

In the period 1997–2000, tourist activity of Poles remained on a relatively high level—more than 60% of Poland inhabitants over 15 years old have participated in the tourist trips in or outside the country. Since 2001, this index has been decreasing. In the year 2014, the number of traveling Poles reached 17.2 million what gives 46% of the country population.

The most common reason for resigning from the tourist trip in the last decade was the financial conditions. Financial problems were an important reason to stay at home for more than 40% of the respondents. A record year in the last decade was the year 2001—54% of the respondents stayed at home. Other reasons for resigning pointed in the survey were reluctance to traveling or the family duties. In both cases, such an excuse was chosen by around 10% of the respondents.

8.4.3 Spatial Distribution of the Tourist Movement in Poland

In the 2009, four voivodeships out of sixteen were visited by more than million of foreign tourists. The most popular voivodeship—Masovian—was visited by 2.1 million tourists and the second was Lesser Poland (1.5 million of tourists) and then West Pomerania with 1.4 million of tourists and Lower Silesia (1.2 million of tourists). During the last decade, these were the most often visited regions of Poland with an exception of the West Pomerania region which was behind Greater Poland voivodeship for the major part of the decade. This agrees with the distribution of the most important holiday regions in Poland, i.e., one seaside and two mountains, and with the most important sightseeing as well as administrative centers. The Masovian voivodeship reached its position mostly because of high position of the capital. In Lesser Poland and Lower Silesia voivodeship big sightseeing centers are important administrative centers too, i.e., Krakow and Wroclaw.

Traditionally, the least often visited regions are Swietokrzyskie, Kuyavian-Pomeranian, and Opole as the size of the tourist movement there depends on the decade and does not exceed 400,000 of people.

In case of long trips, Polish tourist movement in the year 2009 concentrated in the sea voivodeships reaching 2 million of trips each: West Pomerania voivodeship—1.9 million and Pomerania 2.1 million. It is caused by the summer rest season. Other regions are less popular: Lesser Poland, Masovian, and Lower Silesia face the 1.2 million, 1.1 million, and 1 million trips, respectively. The less popular regions are Opole, Lodz, and Swietokrzyskie voivodeships—each 0.3 million of trips, while Lubusz and Podlasie regions, 0.4 million of trips. In the year 2014, the most popular regions for the long-term trips were the sea voivodeships: Pomerania with 2.6 million of trips and West Pomerania with 2.4. The less visited regions were Opolskie and Lubusz with a number below 0.3 million of trips.

Different spatial distribution is the characteristic for the short trips. The regions with bigger urban centers and with the tourist potential within the reach of the weekend tourism are more popular. The first place belongs to the Masovian voivodeship with 2.4 million of trips. Next are two regions: Greater Poland and Lower Silesia with 1.8 million of trips each. The third place belongs to the sea voivodeships: West Pomerania and Pomerania—1.6 million of trips each. There is no change on the fourth place—short and long trips belong to Lesser Poland with the number 1.2 million. The weakest position is held once again by the regions: Opole and Podlasie with 0.4 million and Lubusz with 0.5 million of trips.

In 2014, the tendency was the same with a change in numbers. Masovian region has reached a number of 3.2 million of trips, and the second place belonged to Lesser Poland with 2.7 million and surprisingly to West Pomerania with 2.2 million.

To sum up, the most popular regions—concerning the number of trips—are the coast voivodeships: Pomeranian with 4.5 million in 2014 and West Pomeranian with 4.6 million of trips which shares the place with Masovian and Lesser Poland

voivodeship. The next place belongs to Lower Silesia with 2.7 million. More than 2 million of trips is registered in Lubusz, Lesser Poland and Greater Poland regions, and Warmian-Masurian voivodeship. The least popular are Lubusz and Swietokrzyskie with 0.9 million and Opole with only 0.5 million of trips.

8.5 Main Forms and Types of Tourism

Main types of tourism having the best opportunities for growth in Poland have been defined according to planning documents of national rank as five brands (Strategia rozwoju krajowego produktu... 1997; Ministerstwo Gospodarki i Pracy... 2005; Kierunki rozwoju turystyki... 2008):

- business tourism (MICE),
- urban and cultural tourism (including stay in cities, sightseeing round trips, cultural events, visiting museums and monuments, pilgrimages),
- rural tourism (encompassing agrotourism, folk festivals and events, folk art, ecotourism, visiting national parks, and reserves),
- recreation, active tourism, and qualified tourism based on natural environment resources (including stays in seaside resorts, in lake districts, in the mountains, spa, and health tourism),
- cross-border and transit tourism (including one-day visitors, shopping tourism), the former within 50 km zone along the borders.

These forms will be analyzed in the following subsections.

Urban and cultural tourism

Urban and cultural tourism includes stays in cities, sightseeing round trips, cultural events, visiting museums, and monuments and pilgrimages.

Cities used to be important destinations in Poland for both national and incoming tourists. After 1989, their role as developing modern centers of economic, social, and administrative functions has been constantly growing. Since 2004, the changes in the air travel market including the politics of joining the European Common Airspace and entrance of low-cost carriers have resulted in the sudden and dynamic increase in traffic into the largest Polish cities. Following sudden influx of foreigners, the foreign capital has appeared on a large scale being invested in the development of large international hotels in the largest cities as well. At the same time, the development of entertainment and shopping centers has attracted also growing numbers of domestic tourists.

In 2003, about 33.3% of whole tourist traffic (ca 4.9 million people) visited and used the accommodation services in the 17 largest Polish cities, while one-fourth of that traffic was attracted by the six largest ones (six first in the Table 8.11). In the whole Poland, the participation of foreign tourists made up 22.8% of all tourists, while in the described six cities, it was almost twice as much (40%) (Klementowski and Werner 2005).

Table 8.11 Tourist traffic in the largest urban destinations in Poland (*Source* Bartoszewicz and Skalska 2011)

City	Number of foreign and domestic tourists spending the night in officially registered accommodation in thousands in 2009	Number of domestic tourists spending the night in officially registered accommodation in thousands in 2009	Number of foreign tourists spending the night in officially registered accommodation in thousands in 2009	Number of foreign tourists spending the night in officially registered accommodation in thousands in 2010 ^b	Number of visits of foreigners in millions in 2010 ^a
Warsaw	2,110,795	1,358,251	752,544	833.3	1.7
Krakow	1,340,420	651,549	688,871	770.2	1.6
Gdansk, Gdynia, Sopot	720,384	521,805	198,579	141.8	0.5
Wroclaw	620,892	620,710	182,257	226.0	0.7
Poznan	496,286	342,802	153,484	163.3	0.6
Szczecin	354,234	214,306	139,928	126.5	0.5
Lublin	191,800	187,124	41,724	49.5	0.5

^aBased on poll research conducted on borders by Instytut Turystyki together with accommodation data gathered from GUS (Main Polish Statistics Department)

^bNumbers of foreign tourists are different because of undervalued number of tourists spending the night in officially registered accommodation

Polish tourists preferred urban destinations during short trips in 2010 (lasting 2–4 days), while, at the same time, the cities were chosen only as the third important destination after seaside and mountain areas in case of long-lasting holiday trips taking more than 5 days. So, in 2010, one-third of the former type and one-fifth of the latter group of domestic tourists went to the urban destinations (Krajowe i zagraniczne wyjazdy... 2011).

In the 2010, the most often visited administration units by foreigners included Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, Poznan, Gdansk, and Szczecin that means the large sightseeing centers. The volume of traffic counted in officially registered lodgings within these cities in 2009 and 2010 is presented in the Table 8.11 (Bartoszewicz and Skalska 2011).

Other important urban destinations include Lodz, Katowice, Swinoujscie, Torun, Czestochowa, Bialystok, Rzeszow, Jelenia Gora, Olsztyn, Bielsko-Biala, Zabrze, Bydgoszcz, Gliwice, and Legnica.

Rural tourism and agrotourism

Rural tourism, according to majority of authors, means tourist phenomena taking place on rural areas which encompasses agrotourism as well. However, some authors stress the need to make the definition more precise, e.g., Lane (1994) following proposals of OECD defines additional features such as adjustment toward the rural environment (small-scale enterprises, closeness to nature and local

traditions), small-scale buildings and settlements, and sustainable use of resources. Agrotourism is understood in a much narrower sense as it requires lodging and activities within the working agricultural farm (Drzewiecki 2001). Although in Poland it is much more differentiated accommodation being offered under this name, the demand is growing constantly for the real agrotourist offer including local food and recreation possibilities. In the country, the dynamic growth of that sector has taken place since the 1990s of the twentieth century. The Polish Federation of Rural Tourism “Hospitable Farms” has been a nonprofit organization in existence since 1996. It has as its members over 600 farms which have been standardized, with three stars representing the highest standard (<http://www.agroturystyka.pl>). The federation concentrates its efforts especially on the implementation of the system for categorizing the agrotourist accommodation resources along with training, promotion, and distribution development. There are 67 regional associations integrated within its structures (http://www.agroturystyka.pl/stowarzyszenia_id_647.html).

According to the Institute of Tourism, there were around 7,000 agrotourist farms on rural areas in Poland in 2007, which disposed of circa 71,000 beds. The largest development has already taken place in the most attractive natural areas of northern east and southern east parts of the country. In both Carpathian Mountains and Mazurian Lake regions, there are around 40% of all lodgings of that kind. However, agrotourist farms exist within the whole country, including not only typical tourist regions (Agroturystyka i rolnictwo...).

There has also been an ECEAT¹ association with its Polish branch since 1993 which has initiated the idea of ecotourism development of agro-ecotourist farms. Their number grew to around 100 in 2003 (Hasinski et al. 2008).

Business tourism

Poland is an interesting market for business tourism due to both its central location in Europe and growing accessibility of its regional airports. Political and economic changes that started in 1989 have resulted in constant growth of also business tourist numbers to the country, accelerated by its accession to the European Union in 2004. The business motivation was found to be the most important of all since it has brought one-fourth of all incoming tourists in 2007. For Polish tourists, business motivation is only on the third reason after both rest and visiting friends and relatives. It is of the same rank in both domestic and international tourism; however, the exact share is different (7% for domestic longer than 5-day-lasting trips, 15% for short-lasting domestic, and 17% for international in 2009) (www.intur.pl). Therefore, Polish and foreign tourists form together more than six million business trips annually which seems quite an important part of tourist demand in Poland (Duda-Seifert 2010). A network of organizations supporting the development of business tourism in Poland has been developed quite recently. The most important are the “Association Conferences and Congresses—Poland” created in 1998 and

¹ECEAT—European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism <http://www.eceat.org/>, Polish branch website is <http://www.eceat.pl/>.

Convention Bureau of Poland appointed in 2003 within the structures of Polish Tourist Organization which has divisions in main cities such as Warsaw, Krakow, Gdansk, Wroclaw, Poznan, Szczecin, Bydgoszcz, and Katowice (<http://www.poland-convention.pl/en>).

Business tourism covers different phenomena, included in the term of MICE tourism which encompasses meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (Davidson and Cope 2003, pp. 3–4).

The number of congresses and conferences organized let international organizations to locate Poland among first 30 countries of the world.² The country is numbered among so-called emerging markets, which means a new attractive destination for international business meetings market. Between 2000 and 2009, the number of international organizations locating their meetings in Poland has been changing in a different way according to two main sources of information; however, both associations (ICCA and UIA)³ indicate it at a level of circa 100 meetings per year in that period (Raport. Przemysł spotkań... 2010). This market was highly seasonal with peak in three autumn months of September, October, and November (together 35% of all meetings in 2009). Over one million, three hundred thousand participants took part in those meetings, almost half of them taking part in trade fairs and exhibitions, one-third in congresses and conferences.⁴ However, even though the numbers are very high, the share of Polish participants was overwhelming that is taking 95% of all.

Business tourism in Poland concentrates in six largest cities which are Warsaw, Krakow, Lodz, Wroclaw, and Gdansk, still 50% of tourists of that kind come to the capital. According to international organizations reports, main cities attracting international business meetings were Warsaw with 49th position taken with 32 meetings in 2009 according to ICCA report and Cracow, Poznan, and Gdansk (53th, 183rd, and 231st positions accordingly).⁵ However, according to the Polish Convention Bureau, the largest numbers of business meetings took place in the following cities: Warsaw, Wroclaw, Poznan, Gdansk, Katowice, Szczecin, and Torun.⁶

²26th rank in 2005 according to Union of International Associations and 20th according to International Congress and Convention Association; (Turystyka biznesowa w Polsce 2008); in 2009 with 103 meetings held compared to 458 in Germany and 595 in the USA (Raport. Przemysł spotkań... 2010).

³According to ICCA, it has grown from 67 to 103 per year, but acc. To UIA, it has fallen down from 156 to 113.

⁴46% of participants took part in trade fairs and exhibitions and 35% in congresses and conferences, whereas 10% arrived for corporate events and 9% for incentive events (Raport. Przemysł spotkań... 2010).

⁵As compared to 160 meetings organized in Vienna and 135 in Barcelona (Raport. Przemysł spotkań... 2010).

⁶The numbers of business meeting taking place in following cities according to the Polish Convention Bureau: 1,268 in Warsaw, 933 in Wroclaw, 750 in Poznan, 621 in Gdansk, 202 in Katowice, 133 in Szczecin, and 93 in Torun (Raport. Przemysł spotkań... 2010).

Active and qualified tourism

Winter recreation and tourism. In Poland, winter tourism is not so common as the summer one. According to the data, only 17% of Polish citizens took long-term holiday in winter in 2010, whereas it rose to 22% in case of short-term holidays counting from 2 to 4 days (Krajowe i zagraniczne wyjazdy... 2011, p. 2). Winter tourism depends on the snow cover. In Poland, time of snow cover appearance counts from 40 to 50 days in average in the west part of the country up to more than 100 in northeastern part and even 150 to 200 in the mountains (Wyrzykowski 1986, p. 106). However, skiing requires infrastructure as well; therefore, the largest numbers of winter tourists tend to concentrate in well-organized ski resorts. In the Polish Carpathian Mountains in 2000, there were 90 resorts with 406 ski lifts; one-fourth of slopes with lifts had artificial snow, whereas more than a half had lighting (Kurek 2004, p. 78–79). The largest numbers of resorts were found in three mountain ranges which were Żywiecki Beskid (e.g., Korbiewo, Zawoja), Śląski Beskid (e.g., Wisła, Szczyrk), and Bieszczady (e.g., Ustrzyki Dolne), whereas the most popular belonged the ones in the Tatra Mountains and Podtatrze (e.g., Zakopane, Białka Tatrzańska, and Bukowina). The last-mentioned region had also the longest joint length of ski lifts of all the mountains in the southeastern part of Poland and the largest share in their total capacity in the Carpathian Mountains (one-third of it). Other ski resort concentration is found in the Sudety Mountains in the southwestern Poland. Altogether, there were 25 ski resorts with 136 ski lifts in 2006. Here, Karpacz and Szklarska Poreba at the foot of Karkonosze Mountains (the highest range within the area) constitute the most important resorts as well as Zieleniec and Czarna Góra in the Klodzko Valley. Many smaller resorts are to be found in smaller ranges within the Sudety Mountains as well. In 2006, there were also 5 resorts with 8 ski lifts in Świętokrzyskie Mountains in central Poland and 13 ski resorts with 24 ski lifts altogether in east, central, and northern Poland (Lijewski et al. 2008, p. 222). The infrastructure has been constantly developing in recent years since there were new ski resorts opened after 1990 such as Palenica in Szczawnica in Pieniny (1991), Jaworzyna in Krynica in Sadecki Beskid (1997), Szymbarkowa in Zakopane (1994–2000), or Białka Tatrzańska and Jurgów close to Zakopane (2001 and 2007 accordingly).

Summer water recreation and tourism. Summer season is the most popular time to take long-term holidays among Polish citizens, since 57% of them do it in the period from June till August. Short-term vacation in summer is preferred by only 33% of all (Krajowe i zagraniczne wyjazdy... 2011, p. 3). The swimming season lasts from 46 to 73 days on the Baltic seaside while it is from 67 to 102 on the lakes within the inner parts of the land (Wyrzykowski 1986, p. 107). The seaside attracts Polish tourists from the whole country in that period since 37% of Polish people taking long-term holidays prefer sea as the main destination and one-third from over 13 million long-term tourists have spent it in two seaside voivodeships in 2010 (Krajowe i zagraniczne wyjazdy... 2011, p. 6).

Poland possesses a well-developed network of inland waterways which have become a reason for water recreation development in the country. The largest Polish tourist organization that is Polish Tourist–Sightseeing Organization has even

recently introduced program “Polish Waterways” aimed at building integrated system of tourist product of water tourism in Poland including kayaking, yachting, motor boating, water sports, and recreation (http://www.ktz.pttk.pl/old/rtw_i_inne_inicjatywy_pttk.html).

The total length of 159 more important rivers is circa 19 thousand km, the ones in the south are more rapid, whereas the ones in the northern Poland flow through the most natural landscapes in the country as it has already been mentioned in the earlier chapter. Ninety-eight kayak trails have been indicated including ten of the international importance (Lijewski, Mikułowski, Wyrzykowski 2008, p. 161). In the mountains, they were Poprad and Dunajec flowing through Sadecki Beskid in Karpaty Mountains. Among the others lying in the North, the most popular belong to Krutynia in Great Lakes Region and Czarna Hancza together with Kanał Augustowski in the Northern—east part of Poland. Others include Pasleka flowing to Wislany Bay, and Brodnickie Lakes both in Masurski Region. Furthermore, there are Radunia, flowing to the Baltic Sea, Brda, and Wda—tributaries of Wisła River and Drawa—tributary of Notec—then flowing to Odra River in the Northern—West Poland. There are, however, much more kayak trails, and although it is a rather niche tourism, it seems to be quite popular. However, one of important barriers for its further growth is lack of infrastructure since Czarna Hancza is the only kayak trail in Poland that offers so-called riverside hotels all along the way build yet in the seventies of the twentieth century. There are only five such lodgings in Mazury Lakes Region and three along Brda trail in Pomorze (Stan bazy... 2007). According to some evaluations, there are more than 2 million people practicing kayaking in Poland (Czerny 2007).

There are 30 yacht trails in Poland, including five of international importance (Lijewskiet al. 2008 p. 161–162). The most important area covers Great Lakes Region within the Mazury Lakes Region and there are two main trails—of 110 and 20 km long. It is evaluated that yachting is practiced by circa 2 million people in Poland, both within associations and individually (http://www.ktz.pttk.pl/old/rtw_i_inne_inicjatywy_pttk.html). Another one is Augustowski Canal in northerneast Poland 70 km long. And two last are Iława Lakes and Elbląg—Ostroda Canal in western part of Mazury Lakes Region (46 and 77 km accordingly). There are altogether more than 9 thousand lakes concentrated mostly in northern parts of Poland in the zone of postglacial landscape where there are 81% of all Polish lakes surface. Majority, however, constitute long narrow and small lakes. The largest ones of more than 5 thousand hectare area are five: two in Great Lakes Region in Mazury Lakes Region (Sniardwy and Mamry) and two in seaside zone (Lebsko and Dabie). Different forms of water recreation are practiced there. For tourist wandering reasons, however, the most important is continuity of waterways, mentioned above.

Spa and health tourism

In Poland, conditions for the settlement to gain the status of the spa have been described by the law (Ustawa o lecznictwie uzdrowiskowym... 2005). The area is required to possess either natural spa deposits or climate with the official medical confirmation, fulfill specifications toward the environment protection, and have

adequate technical infrastructure. There are 45 settlements with a spa status in Poland (Kraś 2011, p. 153). They are located in majority in mountain areas of south Poland. Almost half of them lies in two voivodeships which are Lower Silesia and Lesser Poland (11 and 9 accordingly). The third area is that of northern Poland (seaside and Kuyavian-Pomeranian voivodeship). The oldest spas have a long tradition going back to the Middle Ages; however, the largest development took place in the nineteenth century, and majority of establishments originate from that time. Most of spas fulfill at the same the role of tourist resorts. All seaside spas become the summer tourist mass resorts, whereas Krynica or Szczawnica in Karpaty Mountains or Duszniki in Sudety Mountains are being turned into skiing resorts in winter. In 2001 in Karpaty Mountains, spa health tourists constituted only 40% of all visitors to the area (Kraś 2011, p. 155). After 1989, health tourism has divided, and now, there are non-commercial clients, sent by the National Health Fund which covers their basic expenses of stay in the spa and commercial customers paying on their own. The structure is, however, 80% of the former versus 20% of the latter. Moreover, some of spa enterprises have been privatized and their owners now invest in new facilities and improvements. Therefore, in Poland, the ownership structure is different than in other European countries, which means that only 4% of spas are private, while 30% are state-owned and circa 40% belong to both the employing establishments and labor unions.

The number of health tourists in Polish spas in 2004 was 399,800, out of which 64,598 came from abroad (16%) mainly from Germany (Kraś 2011, p. 156). In 2009, it was already 632,951 which means the trend is positive.

8.6 Tourist Regions of Poland

The most comprehensive assessment of Poland's geographical environment suitability for tourism has been included in "Directional Plan of Tourist Development in Poland" (1971). It points to, among others, more important holiday areas and more significant sightseeing areas and sites in Poland.

The best documented attempt to work out tourist regionalization of Poland has been prepared by Mileska (1963). Criteria of such regionalization have been described in the subchapter concerning the academic output of the Polish geography of tourism.

Currently, it seems that the proposal of distinguishing regions and tourist districts included in "Geography of Tourism in Poland" (Lijewski et al. 2008) has been most popular. Using mostly the criteria for distinguishing tourist regions put forward by Mileska, the authors introduced a two-layer tourist regionalization. They called larger areas of similar geographical environment regions and within their limits they isolated smaller units called tourist districts. The latter ones do not take the whole surface of larger regions, but they solely encompass areas of significant concentration of tourist movement. 7 large tourist regions have been distinguished: the Baltic Coast, 3 Lake Districts (Pomeranian, Masurian, and Greater Poland Lake

Table 8.12 Regions and tourist districts of Poland (*Source* Lijewski et al. 2008)

Tourist region	Tourist district
The Baltic Coast	The Szczecin Coast The Słowińskie Coast The Gdańsk Coast
The Pomeranian Lake District	The Drawsko Lake District The Kashubian Lake District The Tuchola Forest
The Masurian Lake District	The Brodnica Lake District The Iława Lake District The Olsztyn Lake District The Mrągowo Lake District The Great Lakes District The Elk Lake District The Suwałki Lake District
The Greater Poland Lake District	The Lubuskie Lake District The Międzychód-Sieraków Lake District The Leszno Lake District Poznan and surroundings The Gniezno Lake District The Włocławek-Gostynin Lake District
The Lesser Poland Upland	The Kraków-Częstochowa Upland The Świętokrzyskie Mountains The Staropolskie Basin
The Sudetes	The Izerskie Mountains The Karkonosze Mountains with the Jelenia Góra Basin The Kamienne and Wałbrzych Mountains The Sowie Mountains The Klodzko Basin The Opawa Mountains
The Carpathians	The Silesian Beskid The Beskid Żywiecki, Little and Makowski The Podhale, Orawa, Spisz, and the Pieniny Mountains The Tatra Mountains The Gorce and the Beskid Wyspowy The Beskid Sądecki The Low Beskid The Bieszczady Mountains The Carpathian Foothills
Others	Warsaw and surroundings Łódź and surroundings Upper Silesian Agglomeration surroundings Wrocław and surroundings Lublin and surroundings The Łęczna-Włodawa Lake District The Roztocze

Districts), Upland (Lesser Poland Upland), and 2 mountainous ones (the Sudetes and the Carpathians). Within these, 44 smaller tourist districts have been distinguished. Moreover, a few further districts of smaller size or lesser concentration of

tourist movement have been distinguished beyond the limits of tourist regions (Table 8.12).

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