

Fewer Domestic Tourists Visit the Lubelskie Voivodship

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Abstract

Mapping out a strategy for the development of tourism requires systematic observance of the changes over longer and shorter periods of time. An analysis of the gathered data on domestic tourists visiting the Lubelskie Voivodship in the years 2001–2010 concerned: the number of tourists, the purposes of the visits, the accommodation, and the seasonal choice of the visits. The analysis that was made shows an unfavorable view of domestic tourism in the Lubelskie Voivodship in terms of the number of tourists, the accommodation and the purposes of the visits. The only favorable premise is the increasing percentage of tourists visiting the region in the winter. The ongoing discussion on the proper strategy for the Lubelskie Voivodship for the following years thus should be adjusted to reflect its assets for tourism.

Introduction

Every country spares no efforts to attract tourists for it is one of the ways to cause economic growth yet the decision of a tourist to visit a given country or region to the largest degree depends on the attractiveness of the offer presented. Most often it is determined by two premises; namely the attractiveness of the place and a competitive price. Unfortunately, the tourist offer of the Lubelskie Voivodship, when compared to other regions of the country, is relatively poor, the evidence of which may be the ever decreasing number of foreign tourists visiting the region.

The papers that have been presented so far do not provide us with favorable information about the number of domestic tourists visiting the Lubelskie Voivodship, and rank the region among the less attractive regions for visitors from other regions of Poland (Bergier and Stelmach 2007; Bergier 2007; Bergier J. and Bergier B. 2010). It is worth noticing, as stated by Prof. Grzegorz Gorzelak (one of the best Polish experts in regional development), that the Lubelskie Voivodship does not meet the conditions.

It is essential to continuously observe the visits of domestic tourists to the Lubelskie Voivodship. Particularly important is long-term analysis, in this case the years 2001–2010, for which the papers of the following authors were utilized: Bergier J., Bergier B. (2010), and Byszewska-Dawidek, Radkowska (2011). In order to demonstrate the change in the tendencies of visits to the Lubelskie Voivodship by domestic tourists, the authors made an analysis of: the number of visitors, purposes of staying, utilization of the accommodation facilities, and the seasonal choice of the visits.

1. Findings

1.1. The number of visits by domestic tourists

The number of domestic tourists visiting the Lubelskie Voivodship in the first year of this century amounted to 2,3 million¹ and considerably increased in the two subsequent years to the value

* Voivodeship—Polish administration region on the NUTS 2 level. Poland is divided into 16 voievdeships.

1. [In the journal (in both Polish and English texts) European practice of number notation is followed that is, 36 333,33 (European style) = 36 333.33 (Canadian style) = 36,333.33 (US and British style). Furthermore in the International System of Units (SI units), fixed spaces rather than commas are used to mark off groups of three digits, both to the left and to the right of the decimal point.]

of 3 million (tab. 1). The next years are a period of a decrease in the number of tourists, which fluctuated between 2,1 and 1,5 million visitors. Unfortunately, the last two years showed a further decrease in the number of people visiting the region—in 2010 the Lubelskie Voivodship was visited by the lowest number of tourists in the decade (i.e., 1,3 million). From 2001 to 2010 the number of the tourists decreased by 1 million and, as in 2001, Lubelskie Voivodship ranked as one of the least popular holiday destinations. The sharpest drop was observed in the case of long stays that is, from 0,8 million in 2001 (10th place in the country) to only 0,3 million (14th place in the country) in 2010, which constitutes the lowest value over the last decade. The number of visitors from outside the region amounted to only 0,2 million (14th place in the country), which also is the worst result in the last decade.

Tab. 1. Long and short visits to the Lubelskie Voivodship in the years 2001–2008 in millions

Type of stay	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Long	0,8 X	0,8 XII	0,8 XI	0,6 XI	0,8 IX	0,6 XII	0,5 XIII	0,8 X	0,7 IX	0,3 XIV
Including the outside of the province	0,5 IX	0,6 IX	0,5 XI	0,3 VII	0,5 IX	0,3 XIV	0,3 XIV	0,4 X	0,4 XI	0,2 XIV
Short	1,5 XIII	2,4 VI	2,4 VI	1,4 IX	0,8 X	1,5 VII	1,0 X	1,3 VIII	1,0 IX	1,0 IX
Including the outside of the province	0,5 XV	0,5 XIV	0,5 XII	0,6 XIII	0,3 XIII	0,4 XI	0,4 XI	0,4 XI	0,5 IX	0,6 X
Total	2,3 XIII	3,2 VIII	3,2 VII	2,0 X	1,6 X	2,1 IX	1,5 XII	2,1 X	1,7 X	1,3 XIII

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

In the case of short-stay tourists their number amounted to 1,5 million in 2001, and 1,0 million in 2010, which ranks Lubelskie Voivodship ninth in the country. A little more favorable are the indexes of short-stay tourists from outside the region, because since 2004 their number has increased to attain a high of 0,6 million in 2010. The number of short-stay tourists improved the ranking of the voivodship from 15th place in 2001 to 10th place in 2010. In 2001 the tourists from outside the region were mainly inhabitants of the Mazowieckie Voivodship and the Śląskie Voivodship. In 2010 the structure of visits confirmed the dominance of visitors from the Mazowieckie Voivodship and an increase in the number of tourists from the Łódzkie Voivodship. The short-stay tourists are mainly inhabitants of the Mazowieckie Voivodship.

1.2 Purposes of visits

1.2.1 Purposes of long visits

The dominant purpose of long visits to the Lubelskie Voivodship, which mainly concerns inhabitants of the region, is to visit family and friends. Its index amounted to 59% in 2010 and belonged to one of the higher indexes over the analyzed period of time. The rate of tourism as the purpose of the visit amounted to 28% in 2010 and was lower than the index in 2001 (32%). The remaining purposes did not change and amounted to several percent each (tab. 2).

Tab. 2. The purpose of long visits (percentage)

The purpose of visits	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Tourism and leisure	32	42	39	22	20	27	34	16	51	28
Visits to family and friends	53	45	37	66	46	60	51	51	47	59
Business	8	5	14	4	6	2	9	26	1	7
Other	7	8	10	8	28	11	6	7	1	6

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

1.2.2 Purposes of short visits

The dominant purpose of short visits is, like in the case of long visits, to visit family and friends, though the index in 2010 (i.e., 56%), was lower than 10 years earlier (i.e., 66%). It should be underscored that the structure of visits for tourism slightly increased and amounted to 20% in 2001, while it amounted to the record-breaking 40% in 2009. What also should be observed is an increase in business trips from 1% to 7% in 2010, and even a dozen percent in the subsequent years (tab. 3).

Tab. 3. The purpose of short visits (percentage)

The purpose of visits	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Tourism and leisure	20	22	21	12	14	9	22	26	40	23
Visits to family and friends	66	63	69	74	72	81	66	53	44	56
Business	1	6		12	11	2	3	17	8	7
Other	13	9	10	2	3	8	9	4	8	14

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

1.3 Utilization of the accommodation facilities.

There is no doubt that one of the indications of tourism development in a given area is the utilization of the accommodation offer, an important sector of the local economy.

1.3.1 Accommodation for long visits

The utilization of collective accommodation facilities in the analyzed period of time is rather stable; it changed from 18% in 2001 to 16% in 2010. What should be underscored is the considerable change of the index in the structure of the place of accommodation attaining high values in 2006 and 2008, 29% and 39% respectively. The highest percentage and generally stable is the share of those visiting family and friends in the structure of accommodation, which at the beginning of the analyzed decade amounted to 61%, and 63% in 2010. What is surprising is an increase in nights spent in holiday cottages, which rose from a trace value (1%) in 2001, to the highest value (13%) in 2010. Probably this was caused by the still growing number of such facilities and the cheap or “hospitable” accommodation offer from friends (tab. 4).

Tab. 4. The utilization of accommodation facilities in long visits (percentage)

Type of accommodation	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Collective accommodation	18	24	21	19	11	29	15	39	11	16
Individual accommodation	20	4	9	4	7		15	5	15	8
Family and friends.	61	60	61	72	51	65	52	54	54	63
Holiday cottage	1	5	7		8	4	9	2	8	13
Other		7	2	5	23	2	9		11	

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

1.3.2 Accommodation for short visits

In the case of short visits, as in the case of long visits, the accommodation at family and friends homes is dominant, though their percentage in the structure of accommodation is slightly decreasing that is, from 70% in 2001 to 63% in 2010. Making use of collective accommodation facilities is stable. Its index changed from 22% in 2001 to 24% in 2010. What should be underscored is the temporary decrease in this index in the years 2006–2009 (i.e., 11–13%). Accommodation in holiday cottages, as in the case of long visits, increased from 4% in 2001 to 9% in 2010, and was very high in 2008 and 2009, amounting to 19% and 16% respectively (tab. 5).

Tab. 5. The utilization of accommodation facilities in short visits (percentage)

Type of accommodation	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Collective accommodation	22	11	9	21	27	13	13	11	13	24
Individual accommodation	4		1	1	2	2	1	4	12	
Family and friends.	70	83	87	73	71	80	77	64	53	63
Holiday cottage	4	5	3	5			7	19	16	9
Other		1				5	2	2	6	4

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

1.4 Seasonal choice of visits

The most favorable situation in tourism here is the relatively stable seasonal choice of the visits. The climate in Poland makes people choose vacation in the summer.

1.4.1 Seasonal choice of long visits

The dominant season for long visits to the Lubelskie Voivodship, as throughout Poland, is the summer. This has been stable over the years (i.e., from 61% in 2001 to 60% in 2010—see tab. 6). The second in the ranking is the winter, the percentage of which rose from 16% in 2001 to 21% in 2010. It can be ascertained that its tendency has certain dynamics, which was initiated in 2004, yet it temporarily collapsed in 2009. The phenomenon may be an effect of the still growing number of citizens feeling the need for more frequent vacations—not only during the summer, and also the more attractive winter offer, which was pointed out earlier (Bergier J. and Bergier B. 2010). The percentage of the stays in the spring is fairly stable (i.e., from 13% in 2001 to 16% in 2010) with the exception of the drop to 8% in 2009. Fewest tourists visit the Lubelskie Voivodship in the fall. Its index amounted to 10% in 2001 and considerably changed during the ten years (i.e., from 5% to 25%) attaining its bare minimum in 2010 (i.e., 3%). There is no doubt that the observance of the tendencies in the seasonal choice of vacation is essential to map out the regional tourist offer. The presented indexes of the seasonal choice of vacation may be a premise to promote tourism during the least favorite seasons (i.e., spring and fall).

Tab. 6. Seasonal choice of long visits

Season	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Spring	13	11	14	20	18	16	22	13	8	16
Summer	61	64	63	35	37	44	48	54	67	60
Fali	10	12	11	15	25	20	9	5	11	3
Winter	16	13	12	30	20	20	21	28	14	21

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

1.4.2 Seasonal choice of short visits

The dominant season for short visits, as with long visits, is the summer and its index reached its apogee in 2001, amounting to 66%. In the subsequent years its level was stable (i.e., about 40%), with the exception of 2009, when it amounted to 29% (tab. 7). Another popular season is the

Tab. 7. Season choice of short visits

Season	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Spring	20	24	19	27	18	30	7	26	34	21
Summer	66	37	31	26	39	40	48	42	29	42
Fali	1	20	34	24	16	11	26	20	19	14
Winter	13	19	16	23	27	19	19	12	18	23

Source: Own elaboration on the data of the Institute of Tourism

winter, the index of which amounted to 23% in 2010 and increased by 10% when compared to 2001. The rate of the visits in the spring is fairly stable at the level of approx. 20%, after an increase in 2006 and 2009. The least favorite season for the visitors to the Lubelskie Voivodship remains the fall, which in the last years has amounted to 20% after a drop to 14% in 2010.

2 Summary

The analysis of several basic figures concerning tourists visiting the Lubelskie Voivodship in the years 2001–2010 outlines the real tendencies in the scope of domestic tourism. Unfortunately, the view is not favorable for the region. The authors pointed out the drop in the number of tourists in the analyzed decade, from 2,3 million to 1,3 million (i.e., by 1 million). It was found that the rate of the utilization of accommodation for long visits was stable, and for short visits—decreasing. What should be underscored is the dominant percentage of the accommodation at the homes of family and friends, which shows that the visitors to the Lubelskie Voivodship are mainly the families of the inhabitants of the region. This was confirmed by the dominant purposes of the visits, both long and short. An unfavorable phenomenon is the increasing percentage of long visits to families and friends and the decreasing percentage of visiting the region for tourism, which is evidence of decreasing lower attractiveness of the region. A positive premise is an increase in tourism as the purpose of short visits. As far as the season of the visit is concerned the choice of the summer is stable. What should be highlighted is a consistent increase in the number of tourists paying long and short visits to the Lubelskie Voivodship in the winter. The phenomenon may be an effect of an upswing in the infrastructure for skiing. The presented data do not provide a desirably positive view of tourism here however, as providing a chance for the economic growth of the region. It seems that the peripheral location of the Lubelskie Voivodship prevents the authorities from promoting it as an attractive holiday destination. It can be ascertained that the Lubelskie Voivodship is a less and less attractive region not only for foreign tourists (Bergier J. and Bergier M. 2012), but also, which is more alarming, for domestic visitors. Thereby it seems that we should agree with the opinion of prof. Gorzelak, an expert in regional development, that feature of the Lubelskie Voivodship for strategic development, could be its tourist attractions.

No doubt, other resources for promoting the Lubelskie Voivodship should be looked for (e.g., “A Night of Culture”), which triggered several hundreds of cultural events; filming of TV serials in the Lubelskie Voivodship; and finally the folk-like EURO 2012 anthem entitled “Koko Euro Spoko.”

Conclusions

1. The number of tourists visiting the Lubelskie Voivodship decreased in the last decade by 1 million people, which ranks the region 14th in the country.
2. There is a decrease in the structure of tourists from outside the Lubelskie Voivodship, especially in the case of long visits. The tourists from outside the region are mainly the inhabitants of the Mazowieckie Voivodship.
3. The main purpose of the stays is to visit family and friends. In the case of long visits the index amounted to 59% in 2010 and belonged to higher indexes over the years. In the case of short visits the index of this purpose amounted to 56%.
4. The structure of the utilization of accommodation facilities is stable. In 2010 the rate of accommodation at the homes of family and friends, both in the case of long and short visits, amounted to 63%. The utilization of collective accommodation facilities is also stable and amounts to a dozen percent.
5. The seasonal choice of stays, as in the case of other regions of Poland, is still the summer and it is fairly stable. In the summer of 2010, 60% of the total number of tourists made long visits and 23%—short visits. In the winter of 2010, 21% of the total number of tourists made long visits and 23%—short visits.

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