

INTRODUCTION

In the process of socio-economic and cultural development, the economic base and regional and local systems of the country undergo reconstruction. In the industrial phase, industry itself was treated as the primary factor of economic growth, while in the post-industrial phase this function is overtaken by services sectors. Content presented in the present volume devoted to selected issues of transport and tourist services all relates to the above-mentioned topic. These sectors influence the formation and evolution of economy to a varying degree. Development of transport allows for spatial integration of economic activity by binding spatial-production networks enabling the movement of finished products, raw materials, materials, and energy between the place they are found in and market areas. The development of infrastructure associated with them is also an important factor in the location of economic activity and an increase in the availability of spatial systems. Development of tourist services on the other hand is connected mainly with financial resources of people, their preferences and desire to spend their spare time outside of their place of permanent residence. This is emphasised by various authors presenting results of different stages of their own research.

In an introductory article, basing on literature available, W. Sadkowski reviews selected issues concerning the features of services and their classification. He presents basic definitions of service enterprises, its management and rules of service activities. Additionally, he also points to the functions of services sector and the influence of quality of services provided on the financial results of business entities.

T. Bocheński's article on the possible use of rail and intermodal transport in economic development opens the first set of topics. The author brings attention to the location of national industrial zones in relation to the location of intermodal terminals (containers) and suggests opportunities for increasing the use of rail and intermodal transport in their development. Transport development barriers were identified, along with their impact on the increase of external costs of transport and its negative influence on the environment.

The article by K. Świerczewska-Pietras continues deliberations on this topic. Revitalisation plan for the E40 waterway and construction of a new Wisła-Brześć channel was discussed against the possibilities of developing inland waterway transport in Poland and Europe. The importance of the implementation of the programme was emphasized, as it will enable the shipping connection between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. The author also notes that the reactivated waterway, compared to other modes of transport, will reduce transport costs and significantly reduce degradation of the environment.

The second set of articles studies the topic of tourism activities. A. Rządzik and M. Żemła, presenting hotel industry activities, stress the vital role of marketing. Its main purpose is to indicate the specific advantages and to create an attractive brand for

a given complex. Against this background, an attempt was made at assessing recognition of independent hotels. Research results indicate a relatively low level of knowledge of respondents in terms of this group of hotels.

The issue was also studied by M. Żmuda-Pałka, M. Siwek and A. Kolańska. The authors have adopted an initial assumption that the global trend towards improving the quality of life will influence the need to promote a healthy lifestyle and other changes in current travel habits. For this purpose, an analysis of Spa & Wellness services in selected Krakow hotels was made. It was emphasised that as a result of increasing certain marketing activities, the interest in vacations combined with wellness treatments raises. This is particularly true of beauty treatments.

J.A. Wendt and T. Wiskulski discussed developing maritime tourism. They point out that currently it is the fastest growing branch of tourism that brings significant budget revenue for cities and ports. This is indicated by studies on the changes in cruise ships volume and the number of tourists coming to Gdynia in the period 1997–2016. The authors drew attention to the fact that the number of cruise ships declined while the number of tourists did not fluctuate much. This is connected with the presence of bigger and bigger vessels. The lack of substantial investment in port infrastructure for tourism purposes, which is a significant barrier in its development, was also indicated in the paper.

M. Szajt ventured to determine to what extent does the volume of tourist services and internal and external demand influence the development of regional structures. As a result of the study, it was found that said influence in regional systems is varied and is manifested through both an increase and decline in tourism. The paper highlights significant differences in seasonality between tourists-residents and non-residents, as well as varied frequency of visits in different regions. It was found that tourists from abroad are mostly interested in visiting large cities which is partly the result of their extended tourist season.

B. Wójtowicz adopts that tourism activity is treated as an important factor of economic growth, especially in terms of local systems, but its excess can bring about negative effects. She justifies this by presenting the results of studies in Jordan which illustrate the increase in negative impact of international tourism on the deteriorating condition of architectural monuments of the Nabatean and local community of Petra, in particular the Bedouin tribes.

K. Ziółkowska-Weiss examines links between the increase in migration and tourist activity. She indicates that the influence of political and legal factors of the United States plays a significant role in limiting the size of migration, especially from countries with a visa requirement, including Poland. Against this background she presents tourist movement of Chicago Polonia, based on the results of a study carried out as a diagnostic survey on a sample of 1014 people.

We realise that the issues presented in many cases require further in-depth study to which we encourage both the authors and our readers. New findings and results will be presented in subsequent volumes of the journal.

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