

## INTRODUCTION

In the development of science, it is important to learn about the processes of changes taking place in the geographical space, by taking up new research issues and continuously improving analytical methods. They allow for more and more precise learning of the mechanisms of ongoing changes in natural, social, economic, and cultural processes. They are of great importance for determining development trends in a specific time perspective. The results achieved create opportunities to use them in the decision-making process at various levels of central, regional and local government authorities, as well as in the work of decision-makers from various economic sectors. This idea is referred to in the works presented in this issue, which deal with the important issue of the application of selected research methods and tourism development as an important sector of the economy, exerting a significant impact on the development of countries, regions and local systems.

The introductory article reviews the methods of researching tourist attractions and assessing their quality, among others the systematics and typology of tourist attractions, quality of tourist products, level of satisfaction of visitors of tourist attractions, as well as management of attractions (G. Czapiewska). Indicators of the development of the tourist function were discussed and used: Baretje-Defert index, density of accommodation base, Schneider and Defert index, to determine the level of development of the tourist function of Polish voivodeships (P. Pilichowska, A. Głądała). A review of the issues and research methods of tourist traffic in Polish national parks was carried out. Attention was drawn to the large methodological diversity of the measurement of tourist traffic, which is the basis for conducting qualitative research (B. Zawilińska). A new issue of the functioning of virtual groups operating within social networks was addressed (A. I. Szymańska). The concept of a cross-border tourist complex was discussed, which was used to analyse the developing region of Bukovina-Bessarabia, along the Ukraine's border with Romania and Moldova (Z. Buchko). The research method of case study was presented and used to analyse the tourist product Wooden Architecture Route in Poland (M. Zdon-Korzeniowska). The possibility of using the critical incident technique to assess the antecedence and effects of consumer experiences in amusement parks was presented on the example of the Energylandia Park in Zator, Poland (M. Klimaszyk, M. Olszewski). An attempt was made to evaluate the scoring methods of geosites valorisation. To reduce subjectivity in evaluations, a new method of expert triangulation was proposed (A. Chrobak).

Analysing the main factors of tourism development, the importance of transport accessibility was emphasized. This issue was analysed based on the example of Polish voivodeships. The hypothesis that the voivodeships characterized by the highest degree of intensity of tourist traffic are also characterized by the most extensive transport infrastructure has not been confirmed (P. Pilichowska, A. Głądała). It was pointed out that random events are of great importance in the development of tourism. Thanks to

the analysis of the semantic field, an attempt was made to indicate ways to counteract the effects of the economic crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (I. Manczak, I. Gruszka). To assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the European tourism industry, five variable values were used to determine the changes in terms of: accommodation provided in facilities, international tourist traffic, financial revenues from tourism, employment in tourism and net occupancy of accommodation. Then, using the Perkal index, the position of countries in the rank structure was determined in this respect (B. Korinth, J.A. Wendt).

Methods of analysing the impact of tourism on the development of spatial systems were also presented. The impact of UNESCO World Heritage Sites on the development of tourist traffic of individual countries was determined. Using the methods of correlation of the values of the examined characteristics, it was found that their number has a direct impact on the tourist competitiveness of individual countries (V. Ivanunik, H. Krul, S. Bryk). A new research issue concerning industrial heritage as an important tourist resource was taken up and identified based on the example of the historical post-industrial potential located in the valley of the Kamienna River, Poland (A. Kulawiak) and the unique anthropogenic values of the Kłodzko region, Poland (D. Sikorski) were pointed out. Tourism, in addition to many positive changes that are taking place in the social and economic sphere, also brings negative effects, e.g. in the form of excessive commercialisation and degradation of attractive and unique spaces, which was partially identified based on the example of the opinion of the inhabitants of the town of Hel, Poland (A. Kulawiak, K. Smętkiewicz). Taking up the issue of assessing the development of ski resorts, a number of groups of towns were distinguished, differing in the degree of equipment in terms of infrastructure and the size of tourist traffic (K. Krzesiwo).

Against the background of the review of the issue of social exclusions, an attempt was made to outline this issue in terms of the possibility of using tourist services by selected social groups (D.J. Olszewski-Strzyżowski). In view of the progressing process of aging of societies, it has been assumed that tourism is one of the ways of activating people of senior age. The presented research results may prove useful for tourism and hotel industry, which should appreciate the potential of senior tourism, especially in the context of the functioning of tourist centres outside the main holiday season (A. Kolasińska, J. Sporek).

In the provision of travel services, the quality of interaction between employees and customers is important. It has a significant impact on building a competitive advantage on the market (P. Łuka, M. Bednarska). In view of the growing interest in motor tourism, an attempt was made to clarify this concept and to determine the motives for the increase in interest in this form of travel (S. Dorocki).

The presented works raise important research issues, placing the main emphasis on the new, often original methodological and methodical approach, their problem identification and analysis of the function of tourist services in economic activation, especially of local systems. In view of the significant role of this sector in socio-economic and cultural development, we encourage you to discuss and develop the research issues undertaken by the authors and share the results of your research in our journal.

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