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Maria Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS IN THE LUBELSKIE VOIVODESHIP

Abstract: Rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship are highly attractive in terms of their natural and cultural environment. Despite this, this potential is not fully exploited. The aim of this article is to determine the development level of tourism in the Lubelskie Voivodeship. To illustrate the problem the author has used the following indicators: Baretej-Defert, Schneider, Defart, and the potential use of accommodation facilities.

Key words: Accommodation facilities, Lubelskie Voivodeship, rural areas, the role of tourism.

Introduction

Recently, rural tourism has become an increasingly important branch of the economy. It is estimated that one out of four Europeans spend their holidays in rural areas each year. The trend for holidaymaking in the countryside has also reached Poland. The Lubelskie Voivodeship is typically a rural region, which is proved by the highest percentage of farmlands in the total area (63.1% in 2009). In 2012 there were 3319 villages in the region, whose population was 53.6% of the total population in the voivodeship [*BDL GUS* 2012]. With a growing interest in holidaymaking in the countryside, rural agriculture can constitute an alternative source of income for people in places where the income from agriculture is very low.

The potential for the development of tourism in the Lubelskie Voivodeship stem from both the natural environment and multicultural heritage; its close proximity to the border is also an important asset. The aim of the article is to present the current situation of rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship with respect to the prospects for tourism development. Particular attention has been paid to accommodation facilities and tourism traffic intensity in rural areas.

1. Tourist attractions in rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship

According to Gaworecki's [2007] definition, tourist attractions are the basic tourist goods that generate tourist demand. They determine the spatial direction of tourist traffic, its size, and seasonal changeability. Tourist attractions are the main attractors that bring tourists in to a given place; therefore, they can be considered as one of the determinants of regional development.

In the SWOT analysis for tourism development in rural areas (Tab. 1) conducted by Matlegiewicz [2009], it is tourist attractions in a given place that play an important role. Natural values are significant among them. The Lubelskie Voivodeship is considered to be a relatively attractive tourist destination [Tucki 2006, 2009]. A tourism audit ordered by the Marshal's Office of the Lubelskie Voivodeship [*Audyt...* 2008] emphasises a large diversity of natural environment and valuable natural resources of the voivodeship (incl. Poleski and Roztoczański National Parks, 17 Landscape Parks, natural reserves, and other protected areas). Nevertheless, the tourism potential is spatially differentiated to a large extent. The most valuable tourist areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship are the Łęczyńsko-Włodawskie Lake District, Roztocze, and the "tourist triangle" Kazimierz Dolny – Nałęczów – Puławy, according to the literature.

Table 1

SWOT analysis for the development of tourism in rural areas

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location in an attractive region for tourism, • Interesting cultural sites, • Clean environment, • Accommodation facilities that meet European standards, • Well developed infrastructure facilitating tourist development, • Support from local authorities to develop businesses, • Trainings facilitating professional development organised by local authorities, • Financial aid from the EU for the development of tourist-related businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of experience in running tourism businesses, • Lack of financial resources for adapting accommodation facilities for tourism purposes, • Weak infrastructure for sewage treatment and waste utilisation, • Low level of services marketing, • Low level of local authorities' engagement in obtaining EU support for tourism-related activities, • Low participation in tourism associations.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of a Polish tourism product, • Additional income from agriculture, • Better situation in the local labour market, • Lower unemployment in rural areas, • Development of social, economic and technical infrastructure, • Opportunities to obtain higher support from EU funds, • Preserving folk traditions and regional customs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration of rural population, • Rural population aging, • Low level of education, • Poor level of foreign language proficiency, • Farmers' reluctance to take a risk to change their business activities, • Insufficient financial support for the development of tourism from local authorities.

Source: [Matlegiewicz 2009].

On the other hand, in the context of anthropogenic value, it is multiculturalism resulting from the ages of clashes between cultures and religions that should be considered a unique feature of the Lubelskie Voivodeship [Audyt ... 2008]. This is an area where eastern and western civilisations intertwine. Another attribute of the Lubelskie region is its folk culture and art. There is also a significant number of sanctuaries (incl. Kodeń, Pratulin, Kostomłoty, Jabłeczna), museums (incl. Kozłówka, Muzeum Wsi Lubelskiej, Muzeum Lubelskie, Wola Okrzejska), and commemoration sites (Majdanek, Sobibór, Bełżec, battlefields of 1939) [Tucki 2008].

The tourism potential of rural communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship has been illustrated by the tourism attractiveness indicators of natural and cultural value elaborated by Tucki [2008]. In case of natural components, the author considered the hypsometry of the area, forestation, the share of usable waters for recreation purposes, and valuable natural areas. Individual components were attributed with significant indexes. Then the communes were divided into four categories according to their tourism attractiveness. The areas with the highest natural attractiveness were located in Roztocze, Biłgorajska Plateau, The Vistula Gorge in Małopolska, and the Łęczyńsko-Włodawski Lake District. In case of cultural components, Tucki [2009] determined the saturation level of the cultural landscape with the following diagnostic features: architectural monuments, museums, archaeological sites, and pilgrimage destinations. Then the communes were divided according to a four-level scale. The highly attractive communes in terms of cultural value are highly scattered (Fig. 1). As many as 12% of rural communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship were not given any points, which proves the low level of cultural value in these locations.

An appropriately managed tourism policy and the promotion of tourism products give the potential for the development of tourism in rural areas (Tab. 1). Unfortunately, the Lubelskie Voivodeship does not have a tourism strategy. Indirect activities related to this sector of the regional economy can be found in “The Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship for 2006–2020” and other documents, incl. the Tourism Marketing Plan for the Lubelskie Voivodeship for 2007–2013 and numerous local government documents. Tourism is considered to be a stimulator of economic and social development, particularly in rural areas. In the Strategy of the Lubelskie Voivodeship for 2006–2020 the priority *increase of the competitiveness of the regional economy and its ability to create jobs* suggest a comprehensive support for the development of forestry and tourism sectors (incl. the development of infrastructure and tourism products, the development of an integrated system of tourism marketing), whereas, in the priority *“the improvement of the attractiveness and territorial cohesion in the Lubelskie Voivodeship”*, there is a proposal to facilitate the natural and cultural diversity of the Lubelskie region and to improve the quality of life as well as the multifunctional development of rural areas (incl. the diversification of farms into non-agricultural activities, the development of agro-tourism).

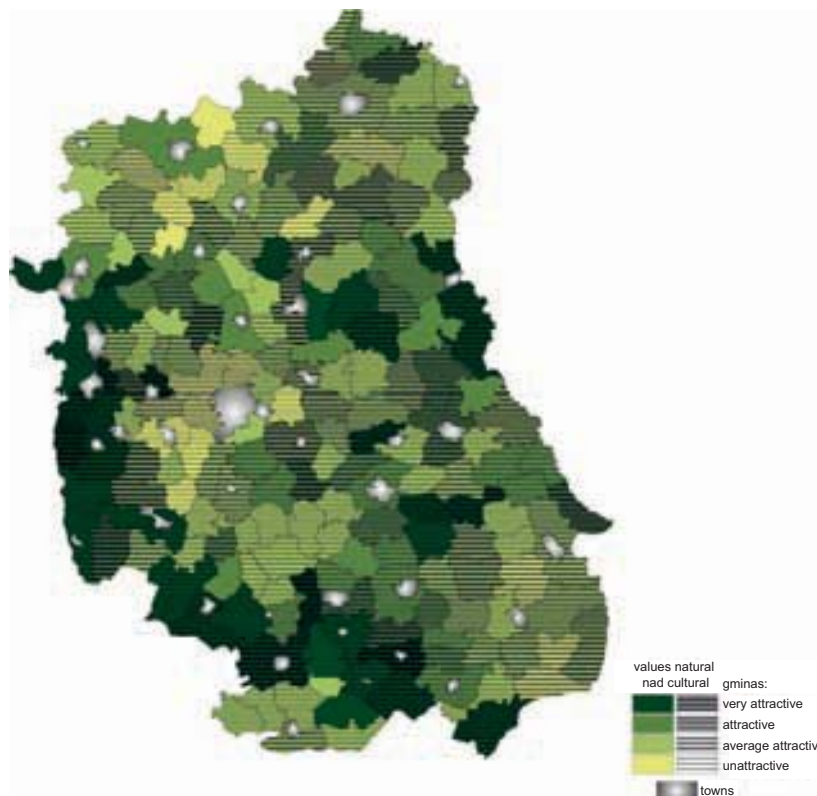


Figure 1. Tourism attractiveness of rural communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship in terms of natural and cultural value

Source: Own elaboration, based on tourism attractiveness indexes [Tucki 2008].

In the framework of the project “The development and implementation of a system of promoting the Lubelskie Voivodeship”, co-financed by the Regional Operational Programme of the Lubelskie Voivodeship for 2007–2013 a promotion campaign, “Lubelskie – smakuj życie” (“Lubelskie – taste life”) is conducted. This marketing slogan is used primarily for the promotion of the natural potential of rural areas. According to the audit conducted by the Polish Agency of Tourism Development in 2012, the Lublin Voivodeship primarily completed the project that concerned the development of social infrastructure and the modelling of public space (Actions 311, 312, 313.322.323 and 413). They do influence the attractiveness of rural areas, but they are not directly intended for the creation of tourism products. The institutions that facilitate the development of tourism in the region are the local action groups, whose number is at 26 in the Lubelskie Voivodeship. Their actions are supported by the Lublin Regional Tourist Organisation and local tourist organisations (incl. LOT Kraina Lessowych Wąwozów, Powiśle, Zamość i Roztocze, Lubelska Lokalna Organizacja

Turystyczna, Organizacja Turystyczna „Szlak Jagielloński”), organisations that deal with agrotourism (incl. Lubelskie Stowarzyszenie Agroturystyczne, Nadbużańskie, Pojezierza Łęczyńsko-Włodawskiego, Roztoczańskie, Stowarzyszenie Kwaterodawców Miasta i Gminy Zwierzyniec, Podlaskie Stowarzyszenie Agroturystyczne, Krasnobrodzkie, Stowarzyszenie Agroturystyczne Ziemia Lubartowska, Stowarzyszenie Gospodarstw Agroturystycznych Gminy Adamów, Powiatowe Centrum - Stowarzyszenie Agroturystyki in Hrubieszów, Stowarzyszenie Agroturystyczne Ziemia Janowska, Lubelski Związek Stowarzyszeń Agroturystycznych, Stowarzyszenie Kwaterodawców Gminy Nielisz) [*Ekspertyza...* 2012].

There are also examples of communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship that have used the available funds for the development of tourism. One of them is one of the most active communes – Urszulin. In order to improve its tourism attractiveness, local authorities implemented a project “Urszulin – afterhours, Polesie–promotion of a local brand as a part of a regional brand” in the framework of the Regional Operational Programme of the Lubelskie Voivodeship for 2007–2013. The aim of the project was to develop an image of a tourist-friendly commune in order to attract people from surrounding cities for weekend outings [*Koncepcja ...* 2009]. In the framework of the project, tasks related to tourism infrastructure management were completed: lake sites management and the development of tourism facilities such as viewing towers, car parks, walking alleys, shelters, marked tourist routes. The town centres of Urszulin and Wereszyn were also developed and cleaned.

2. Tourism development

Regardless of the unique tourism values of the natural and cultural environment in the Lubelskie Voivodeship, tourism in rural areas is not a significant branch of economic development. One of its weaknesses is tourism development. Tourism development is understood as a set of tourism facilities which satisfy the basic tourism needs [Warszyńska, Jackowski 1978] as well as different types of institutions and their services [Kowalczyk, Derek 2010]. Tourism infrastructure, *i.e.*, material base for tourism is constituted by the objects and facilities which are indispensable for tourism management. They provide transportation to the tourist destinations and provide tourists with the necessary conditions for their maintenance. Within the tourism infrastructure one may enumerate: communication facilities, accommodation facilities, food services, and accompanying facilities [Panasiuk 2006].

Good quality infrastructure facilities are one of the basic conditions of tourism attractiveness of regions. The Lubelskie Voivodeship enjoys its favourable geographic location at the junction of main transportation routes between eastern and western Europe. In spite of this, it is perceived as a peripheral region of low investment attractiveness. This is caused by poor transportation accessibility, to a large extent, which increases the costs of economic activities and lowers the chances for utilising the

tourism potential of the region. The conditions of the roads and the level of internal transportation are unsatisfactory and constitute a main barrier to future development.

The number of accommodation facilities in the Lubelskie communes has lowered recently. Since 1995 the number of accommodation facilities has decreased by 66 (31.1%). The significant decrease in the number of tourism accommodation facilities results from structural changes. Those facilities which belonged to the state and were not private properties were closed down. The largest recorded decrease was for seasonal sites such as camping sites, holiday resorts, and holiday facilities for children. On the other hand, the number of higher quality facilities increased (hotels, motels, B&Bs) (Fig. 2).

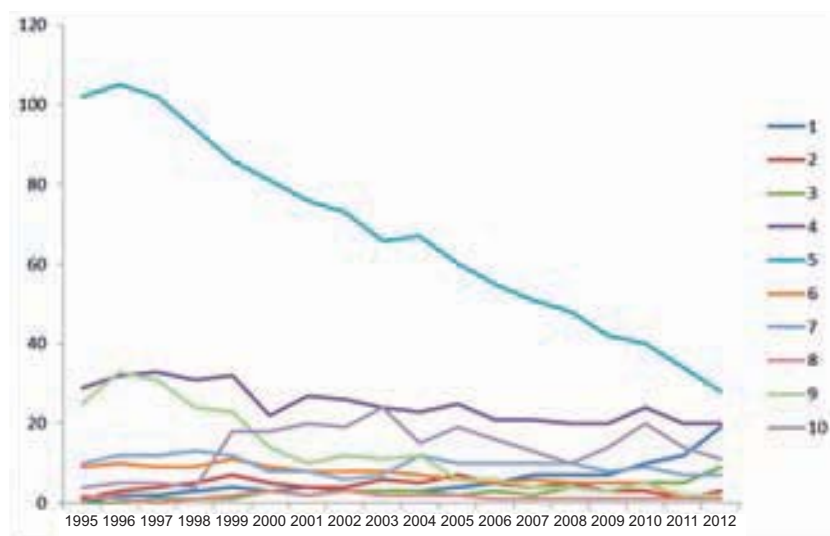


Figure 2. Accommodation facilities in rural areas in the Lublin Voivodeship (1995–2012).

1 – hotels, 2 – motels, 3 – B&Bs, 4- youth hostels, 5 – holiday resorts, 6 – holiday facilities for children, 7- bungalows, 8 – camping sites, 9 – tent sites, 10 – other unclassified sites

Source: Own elaboration, on the basis of BDL GUS (Figs. 2-8).

Presently (2012), there are 144 accommodation facilities in the rural areas of the Lubelskie Voivodeship, including 69 facilities adapted for year-round usage. The facilities include 6 877 beds, 38% are adapted for year-round usage. In the structure of accommodation facilities, seasonal facilities predominantly include holiday resorts, school youth hostels, and other hotel facilities (Tab. 2). In the rural areas of Lubelskie there are only 19 hotels of average or low ratings (1, 2, 3 stars).

Table 2

Accommodation facilities in the rural areas of the Lubelskie Voivodeship (2012)

	Total		All year (%)	
	sites	beds	sites	beds
hotels	19	964	100.0	98.3
motels	3	62	100.0	100.0
B&B	9	406	100.0	100.0
other hotel facilities	11	374	100.0	100.0
school youth hostels	20	612	5.0	5.7
holiday resorts	28	2180	3.6	4.1
holiday resorts for school children	1	130	0.0	0.0
recreational and training centres	6	398	50.0	35.9
hostels	1	16	100.0	100.0
bungalow sites	7	561	0.0	0.0
camp sites for caravans	1	90	0.0	0.0
camp sites for tents	2	61	0.0	0.0
other unclassified sites	11	579	72.7	55.1

Source: Own elaboration, on the basis of BDL GUS.

One of the measures used in tourism development evaluation is the index of tourism accommodation density [Szromek 2012]. The index determines the density of accommodation facilities in a given area. Generally, the highest density of accommodation facilities is recorded in the communes of the Łęczyńsko-Włodawskie Lake District (more than 2 sites per 1 km²). The highest value was obtained in the Włodawa Commune (8.5) and Firlej (4.1). Another area with densely located accommodation facilities is located in the southern part of the voivodeship, in Roztocze. Nevertheless, rural areas in the Lubelskie region are characterised by an uneven distribution of accommodation facilities. As many as 137 administrative units do not have of these facilities.

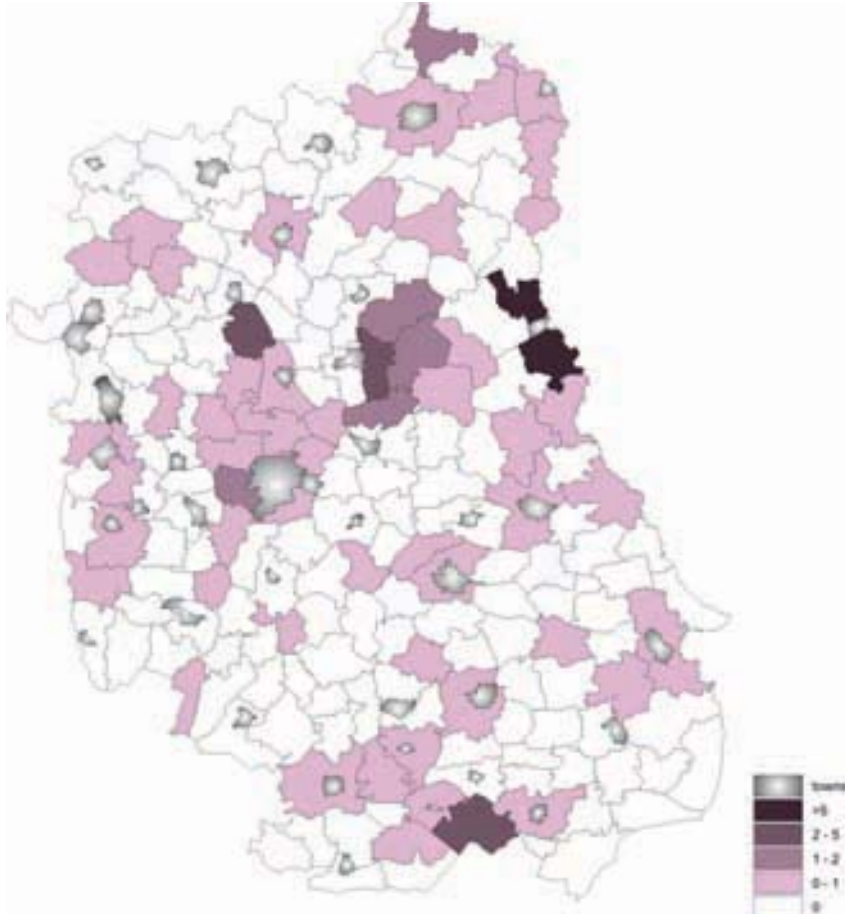


Figure 3. Index of tourist accommodation density in rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (2012)

3. The tourism role of communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship

A statistical measure of tourism development that gives information about the role of tourism is the Baretje-Defert's index. It gives the number of beds available for tourists per 100 inhabitants in a given area [Szromek 2012]. It is commonly accepted that an index value above 100 means a high development of tourism [Kowalczyk 2002], whereas, a value above 10 illustrates a relatively well developed area of tourism [Warszyńska, Jackowski 1978]. According to the quoted values, only two rural communes, Włodawa and Sosnowica, have well developed areas of tourism [Warszyńska 1985]. This role of tourism can be equally important as other ones (Tab. 3). A relatively high development of tourism was recorded in the following communes: Uścimów, Firlej, Dębowa Kłoda and Susiec; here tourism plays an additional

role (Tab. 3). All the above-mentioned communes are located in the most attractive areas, *i.e.*, the Łęczyńsko-Włodawski Lake District and Roztocze. In many of the communes the Baretje-Defert's index was very low—values below 1 (Fig. 4). This means that in most of the communes the process of tourism development has not started yet.

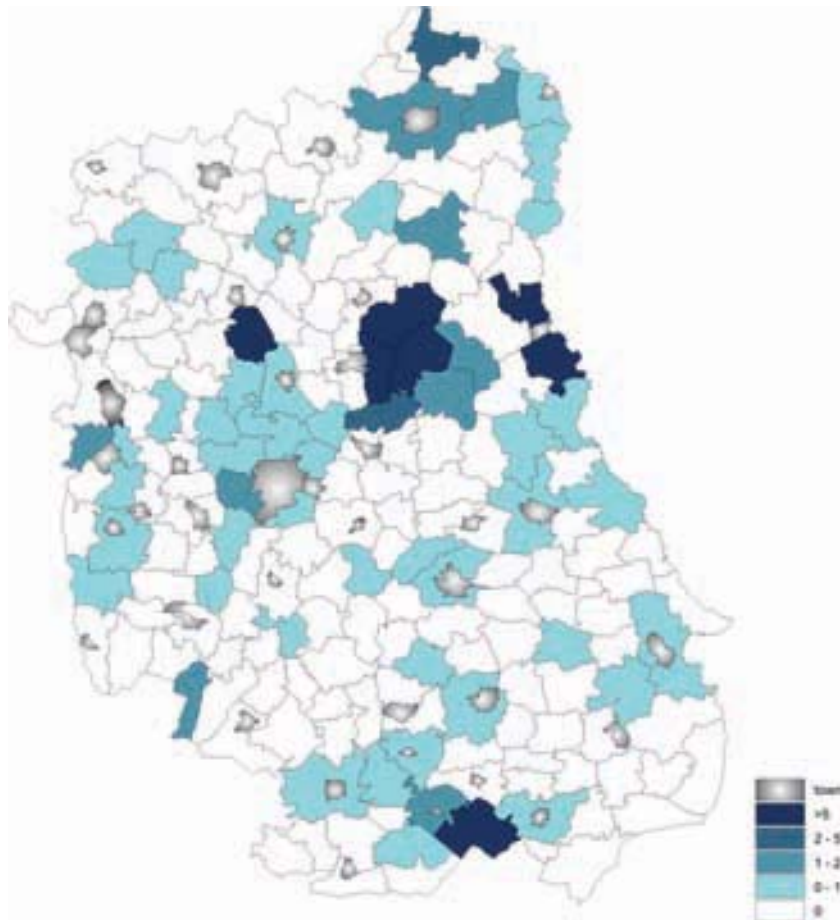


Figure 4. Baretje-Defert's index in rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (2012)

The symptom of tourist function development is the intensity of tourist activities. In the period 1995–2012 an increase of about 45% was recorded in the number of tourists who used accommodation facilities (from 18 900 in 1995 to 158 800 in 2012) (Fig. 5). At the same time the number of nights spent in accommodation facilities fell by 44%. This reflects the increasingly shorter stays in the country. In 1995 the average stay was 5.2 days, whereas, in 2012 it was just less than 2 days. In recent years, the length of stay in different accommodation facilities has been shortened. To some extent,

this phenomenon is the result of the financial crisis, which has resulted in a decrease of long-term stays in favour of short-term stays. Among tourists, there has been an increase of weekend journeys, so-called „without lodging” or „for a grill”. Changes in customs policy and restrictions imposed on border trade have also caused a decline in the number of foreign tourists, mainly from Ukraine, who come to Poland on business and for shopping. Additionally, the number of transit passages through the voivodship has declined as well.

Table 3

The use of Baretje-Defert's index to determine the role of tourism

Function	Index values	Number of rural communes
Basic or one of the Basic functions	>50	0
Equally important or supplementary	25-50	2
Additional	6.25-25	4
At initial stage of development	0.78-6.25	19
Development not yet started	<0.78	171

Source: [Warszyńska 1985 in Tucki 2008].

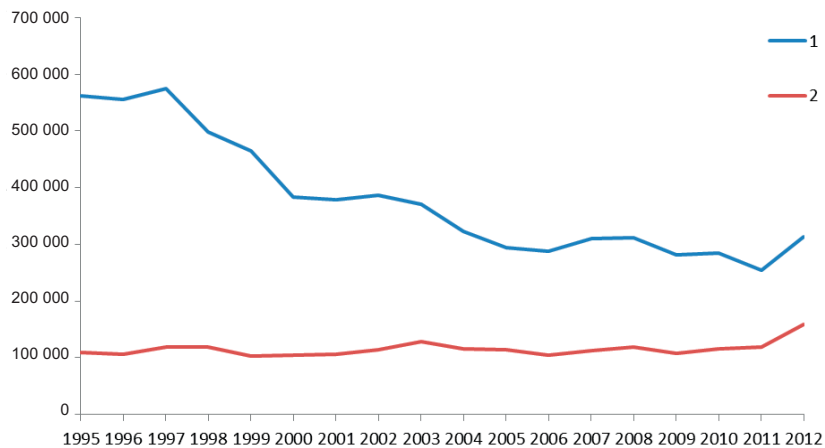


Figure 5. The number of nights spent in accommodation facilities (1) and the number of tourists (2) in rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (1995-2012)

In order to measure the role of tourism, information on the number of tourists who stay and use accommodation facilities in a given area at a given time are used. The basic measures used in the characteristics of tourist traffic are the following [Szromek 2012]:

- Schneider's index – index of tourist traffic intensity that is expressed in the number of tourists using accommodation facilities per 100 permanent residents (Fig. 6). The highest values of the Schneider's index were recorded in the following communes: Zalesie, Włodawa, Biała Podlaska, Susiec, where a significant value of tourist traffic was observed (a value above 100).
- Defert's index – to determine the crowdedness of a given area. It gives information on the number of tourists per 1 km² in an area (Fig. 7). The highest values of the Defert's index were recorded in the Konopnica and Zalesie Communes (index values above 100).
- utilisation index of accommodation facilities, expressed in the number of occupied nights per one bed (Fig. 8). The highest values, above 100, were recorded in the Zalesie, Tomaszów Lubelski, and Biała Podlaska Communes.

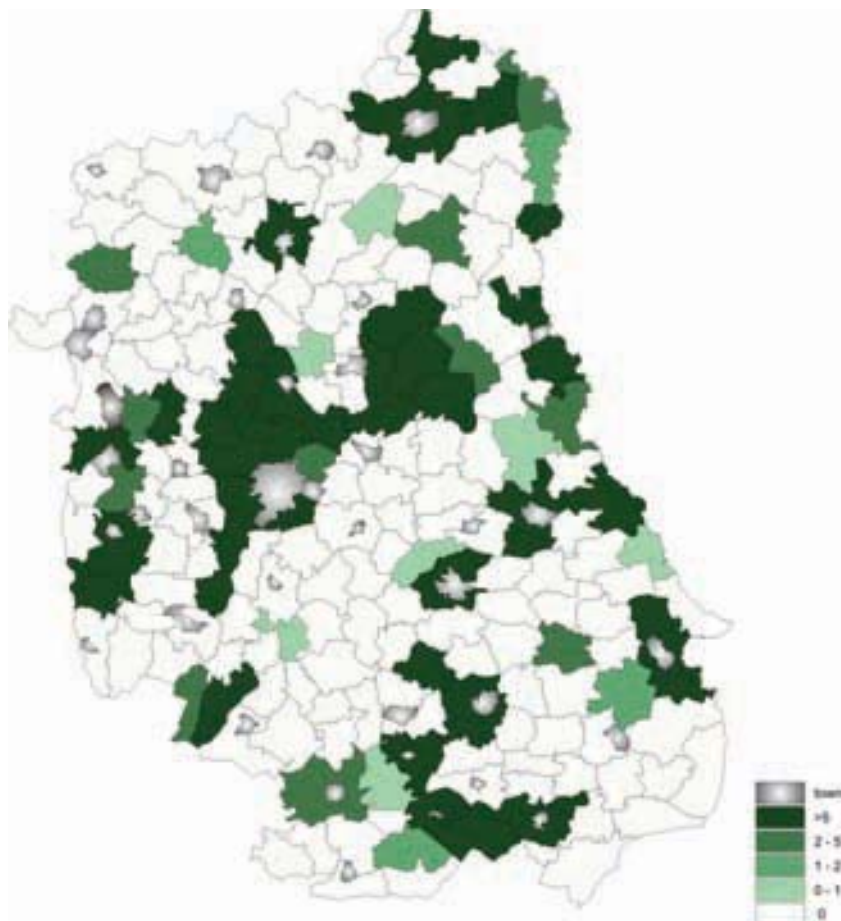


Figure 6. Schneider's index in rural communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (2012)

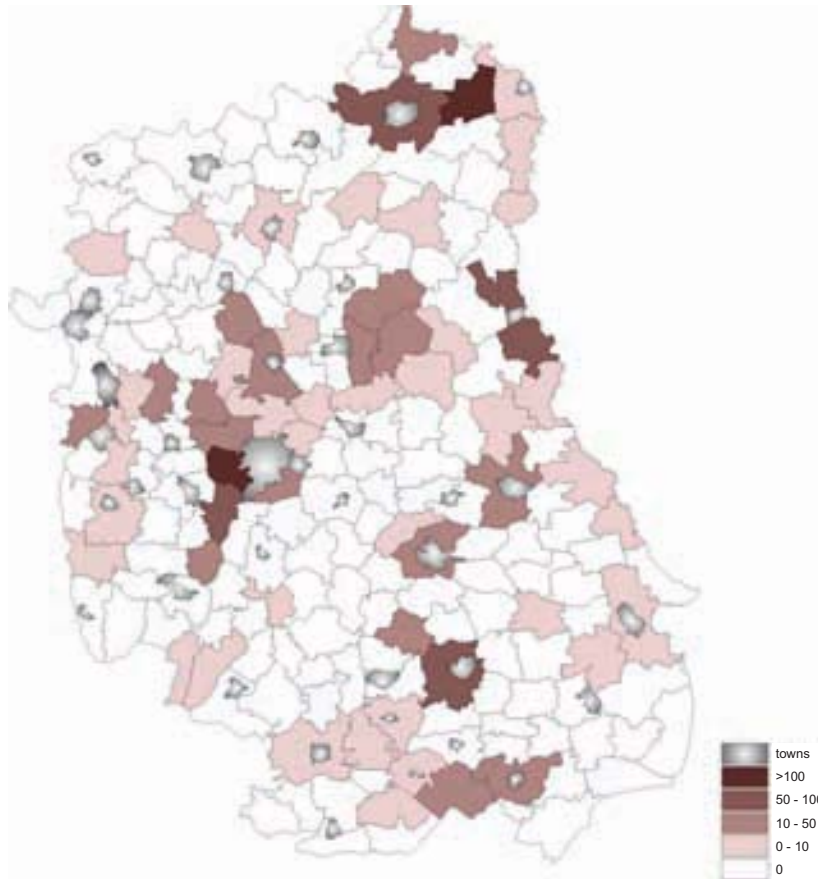


Figure 7. Defart's index in rural communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (2012)

Conclusions

The aim of this article was to present the tourism attractiveness of rural areas in the Lublin Voivodeship and to determine the level of tourism development in rural communes. Despite the high level of natural and cultural attractiveness of the Lublin Voivodeship, its tourist potential is not fully exploited. The low level of tourism infrastructure, particularly accommodation, can be observed in the area. The infrastructure in certain locations, especially those most attractive for tourists (communes in the Łęczyńsko-Włodawskie Lake District and Roztocze) is relatively well developed. Yet, tourism development in most rural areas in the Lubelskie Voivodeship is at a very low level, or the role of tourism is not developed at all. In as many as 138 rural communes (70% of the total number) the most important element of tourism infrastructure, *i.e.*, accommodation facilities, is not present at all. Such places are located mainly in the north-west part of the voivodeship and south-east of Lublin.

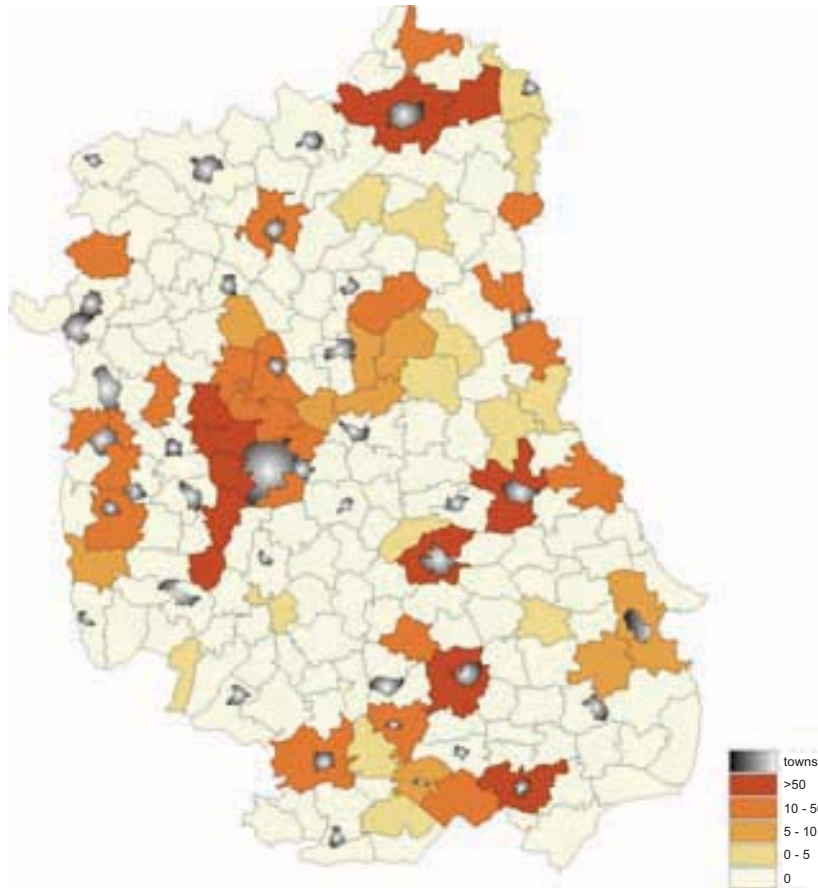


Figure 8. Utilisation index of accommodation facilities in rural communes in the Lubelskie Voivodeship (2012)

The basic elements that were used to determine tourism development, on the basis of group accommodation facilities, were Baretej-Defert's, Schneider's, and Defart's indexes, and the utilisation of accommodation facilities index. On the basis of their analysis, it was concluded that there is tourism development in only a few communes: Włodawa, Sosnowica, Uścimów, Firlej, Dębowa Kłoda, Susiec, Zalesie, and Biała Podlaska. They are places located in the most attractive regions in the Lublin Voivodeship in terms of their natural value. In the vast majority of the communes, the development of tourism has not started yet. However, in a few communes the initiatives of local governments and communities for tourism development can be observed. These are the activities that promote local tourism brands, the infrastructure of tourist attractions, and cooperation with local tourist organisations in order to develop a comprehensive tourist attraction in rural areas.

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