

SEASONALITY OF SEASIDE TOWNS ON THE EXAMPLE OF SPATIAL PLANNING SOLUTIONS IN POLAND

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ABSTRACT

Motives: The present research was undertaken to address the general scarcity of studies addressing tourism seasonality.

Aim: The main aim of the study was to identify differences in the spatial development of seaside towns during and outside the summer season based on the example of the Polish towns of Puck and Władysławowo. Specific objectives included analyses and evaluations of tourist services offered in the examined towns, permanent development solutions, tourism seasonality, the applied and applicable spatial policy tools, and the local residents' opinions on tourist traffic, seasonal development of seaside resorts, and the appeal of spatial development projects in these towns.

Results: The results of the study contribute to a better understanding of tourism seasonality in seaside towns from multiple perspectives.

Keywords: tourism development, tourism, spatial planning, seaside resorts, spatial conflict, seasonality, spatial policy

INTRODUCTION

Tourism belongs to strategic services in seaside towns. The phenomenon of people's willingness to change place for some time, especially those looking for places with natural values, such as access to the sea, translates into economic development of these towns.

Seaside towns have an important role in the development of tourism in Poland. The Baltic coast is one of the most attractive tourist regions in the country. At the same time, it is an area distinguished by the highest intensity of land use for tourism purposes and the largest concentration of tourists

per area unit (Durydiwka & Duda-Gromada, 2014). In the vast majority, the economy of seaside towns and villages is based on the tourism industry (Nowicka, 2019). Most residents' professional activity is related to the handling of tourist traffic and activities for its benefit (Parzych, 2017).

Permanently growing tourist traffic in seaside towns, such as Puck or Władysławowo, translates into shaping their space. The number of tourists definitely affects the formation of the accommodation, gastronomic and associated base. The natural attraction of the sea appeals to tourists especially in the summer, from June to September of each year. Local

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entrepreneurs try to meet the tourists' needs during holidays, which affects the special shaping of the space of seaside towns. In the case of gastronomy and associated facilities, one encounters seasonal tourism development in such places. The main objective of this study is to identify the seasonal spatial development of coastal towns in Poland. The seasonal spatial development has an uncontrollable character. It is not profitable for entrepreneurs to maintain the premises in permanent development throughout the year. They provide their services in the summer in temporary facilities, mostly to maximize profits. Yet, one of the main problems of temporary buildings is freedom in organizing them. Entrepreneurs try to build their facilities at the lowest cost in order to achieve the greatest profits from their operation.

The problem of temporary development is associated with a lack of strict legal regulations in terms of its location, guidelines for construction materials or specific parameters. For this reason, owners of temporary facilities have a wide range of possibilities for their construction. In the case of seasonal spatial development in Puck and Władysławowo, planning documents such as *Studium Uwarunkowań i Kierunków Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* [Eng. the Study of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development] (SUiKZP) and *Miejscowe Plany Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* [Eng. Local Spatial Development Plans] (MPZP) have been insufficiently used. These documents define how the spatial development policy should be shaped in the area to which they apply. In the face of legal inaccuracies, the space of seaside towns is chaotic and unsightly. Temporary tourism development negatively affects the quality of urban space. Therefore, a hypothesis is put forward that the local entrepreneurs' desire to maximize their profits translates into the creation of seasonal tourist buildings, which reduces the esthetics of space. Because seasonal facilities are only used periodically, outside the summer period they are mostly closed and unused, which further contributes to reducing the esthetics of urban spaces.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Seasonality is one of the main characteristics of the tourism industry (Radlińska, 2017; Chung, 2009; Dudziak & Borzyszkowski, 2016; Borzyszkowski, 2014). Despite the fact that seasonality is one of the most prominent features of tourism, paradoxically, it is also one of the least understood (Corluka, 2019; Martín Martín et al., 2020). The problem of seasonality in tourism is addressed from various theoretical viewpoints (Borzyszkowski, 2014). However, the subject literature identifies a lack of its unambiguous definition. As a definition of the phenomenon of seasonality, BarOn (1973) indicates the incomplete and unsustainable use of funds in the economy, which consequently contributes to its imbalance. Butler (1994) talks about seasonality in tourism as a phenomenon of time imbalance. Hylleberg (1992) argues that seasonality is a systematic, although not necessarily regular, movement caused by such factors as changes in weather, calendar, dates or decisions (Borzyszkowski, 2014). Bigović (2011) generally indicates that seasonality means a special annual regularity. Radlińska (2017) defines seasonality as a method of measuring changes in the dynamics of phenomena, a regularly recurring relationship between observations separated by a constant number of periods. Martín Martín and others (2020) indicate tourism seasonality, as one of the major challenges in the tourism business. Tourism seasonality generates alternation of overcrowded periods with others periods. Fluctuations in visitors and revenues are almost universally viewed as a problem by the tourism industry (Corluka, 2019). The increase in the number of residents, temporary residents, tourists and day trippers makes marine destinations an interesting case study of overcrowding (Gon et al., 2019). The phenomenon of seasonality can also be presented as an uneven distribution of use over time, resulting in inefficient use of resources, loss of potential profits, and a social or ecological burden (Manning & Powers, 1984; Martín Martín et al., 2020). In the literature on the subject, there is a significant gap in form of a lack of a clearly accepted definition of seasonality

in relation to tourism. Tourism seasonality is a wide-ranging issue, being a multi-faceted thematic area (Koenig-Lewis & Bischoff, 2005).

The seasonality of the tourist traffic in Poland mainly results from the climate and the weather during the year. In addition, it is also conditioned by economic, legal, ecological and socio-demographic factors (Kozłowski & Michalska, 2016). Taking into consideration the share of tourists and used accommodation in northern Poland (on the Baltic Sea coast), there is a very clear increase in tourist traffic in July and August compared to individual months throughout the whole year. As a result, in the summer (June–August), there is a much larger number of tourists compared to the winter (December–February) (Kozłowski & Michalska, 2016; Dudziak & Borzyszkowski, 2016).

The negative effects of seasonality can be divided into three groups: investment, employment and the environment (Butler, 1994; Chung, 2009). The phenomenon of seasonality causes difficulties in planning and managing the development of tourism (Dudziak & Borzyszkowski, 2016). Among other things, there is a difficulty in attracting new investors who might be discouraged by having to obtain a return on investment and to plan new investments in a relatively short time (Kozłowski & Michalska, 2016; Borzyszkowski, 2014). Seasonality as a feature of the tourism sector has a significant impact on the economic situation of the local market. Under-utilization of resources outside the increased tourist period is a particularly negative effect of seasonality. This phenomenon concerns not using material, financial and human resources (Radlińska, 2017; Kozłowski & Michalska, 2016; Dudziak & Borzyszkowski, 2016). People employed during the season whose qualifications and skills are not used out of season lose motivation to work, which affects the behavior of local labor markets. During the year, there are periods of increased demand for employees and periods of higher unemployment (Radlińska, 2017). Anthropopressure is another negative effect of seasonality. Excessive development and tourist traffic in towns, accompanied by too strong adaptation of the space to meet tourists' needs, has contributed to a strong degradation of the town

landscape and environment (Kistowski et al., 2010; Chung, 2009; Durydiwka & Duda-Gromada, 2014).

Seasonality is a key problem in the development of the tourist function and the use of the existing base (Szarek-Iwaniuk, 2018). Many services provided to tourists, such as catering or accommodation, are extremely seasonal and function only in the summer (Hakuć-Błażowska et al., 2012; Belej, 2021). The issue of the impermanence of buildings in towns affected by the phenomenon of seasonality in tourist resorts (in particular seaside towns) is not sufficiently recognized yet. Therefore, there is a research gap and an urgent need to systematize knowledge about the seasonality and impermanence of spatial development of seaside towns in this context. An attempt to fill part of this research gap is the subject of this study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is based on both qualitative and quantitative methods (Apanowicz, 2002). The first method involves a field query. The conducted field study constitutes the basic source of information. During the field research (2021), during the summer season and out of it, information on tourism-related facilities in the studied area was collected. The second method concerns analysis of the data collected in a survey and in an individualized in-depth interview. The survey was conducted among tourists and persons not being residents of Puck and Władysławowo, while the interview was conducted with a representative of the business sphere operating in the analyzed area. The third method is based on the *desk research* (Czarniawska, 2014) analysis of both statistics and materials and documents obtained at the Puck Town Hall and the Władysławowo Town Hall. Also the *case study* method of two selected seaside towns in Poland, Puck and Władysławowo, was applied in the research in order to identify the problematic situation related to seasonal tourism development and to indicate potential, universal solutions.

The data sources used in the study comprise literature on tourism, tourism traffic, the impact of tourism on the functioning and shaping of towns, changes in seaside towns, the impact of tourism on the coastal

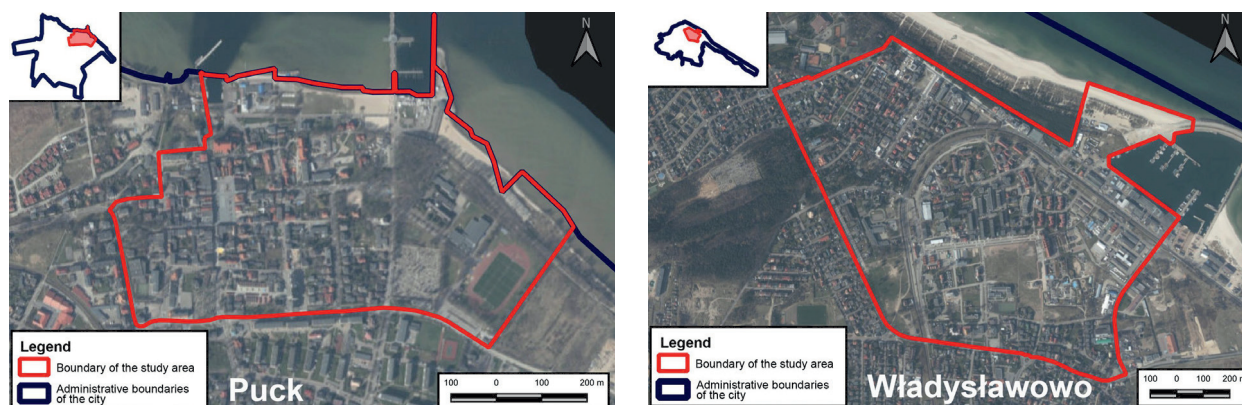


Fig. 1. Study areas in Puck and Władysławowo

Source: own study based on data from the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography and the Geoportal (2021).

landscape and the natural environment, and literature on spatial planning. The qualitative analysis also covered documents such as the study of conditions and directions of spatial development, local spatial development plans, urban development strategies and ecophysiological studies. Statistical data on tourism and towns were extracted from the Local Data Bank collected by Statistics Poland (BDL GUS, 2021). Cartographic studies were made with a use of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools based on the resources of the Geoportal, i.e. the basic infrastructure of spatial information used in Poland (Dawidowicz & Sońta, 2014).

The study area in the paper involves fragment of towns of Puck and Władysławowo (Fig. 1). The study area in Puck is located in the northeastern part of the town. The study area in Władysławowo is the northern part of the town. The selection of the study areas in both towns is based on the predominance of tourist functions.

CASE STUDY OF SEASIDE TOWNS: PUCK AND WŁADYSŁAWOWO

Characteristics of towns

The towns of Puck and Władysławowo are administratively located in the northern part of the Pomeranian Voivodeship, in the Puck county (Soldatke et al., 2022). The town municipality of Puck

borders on the rural commune of Puck except for its northern part, where the town meets Puck Bay. On the other hand, Władysławowo is located in the town-rural commune of Władysławowo. From the north, Władysławowo borders on the Baltic Sea, from the west with the village of Chałupy on the Hel Peninsula and with Puck Bay. Puck, which is the seat of the county authorities, is a town with an area of 4.79 km², while Władysławowo takes up an area of 13.66 km². The location of the towns is shown in Figure 2.

Based on J. Kondracki's physical and geographical regionalization (2000), Puck and Władysławowo are located in the macro-region of the Gdańsk Coast. Puck is entirely located in the mesoregion of the Kashubian Coast, while Władysławowo includes the mesoregions of the Kashubian Coast and the Hel Peninsula. The Kashubian Coast is characterized by the area's division into a number of upland clusters, which are separated by deeply indented valleys or primordial valleys (Resolution No. XIX/120/2016, 2016). The Hel Peninsula is a sandbar made of a series of wooded dunes created by the sea current and wind (Kwiatkowska & Marks, 2016).

Both towns are distinguished by outstanding natural values. Within the administrative boundaries of the town of Puck there are forms of nature protection, such as: Nadmorski Park Krajobrazowy [Coastal Landscape Park], Nature 2000 areas "Zatoka Pucka i Półwysep Helski" ["Puck Bay and Hel Peninsula"]

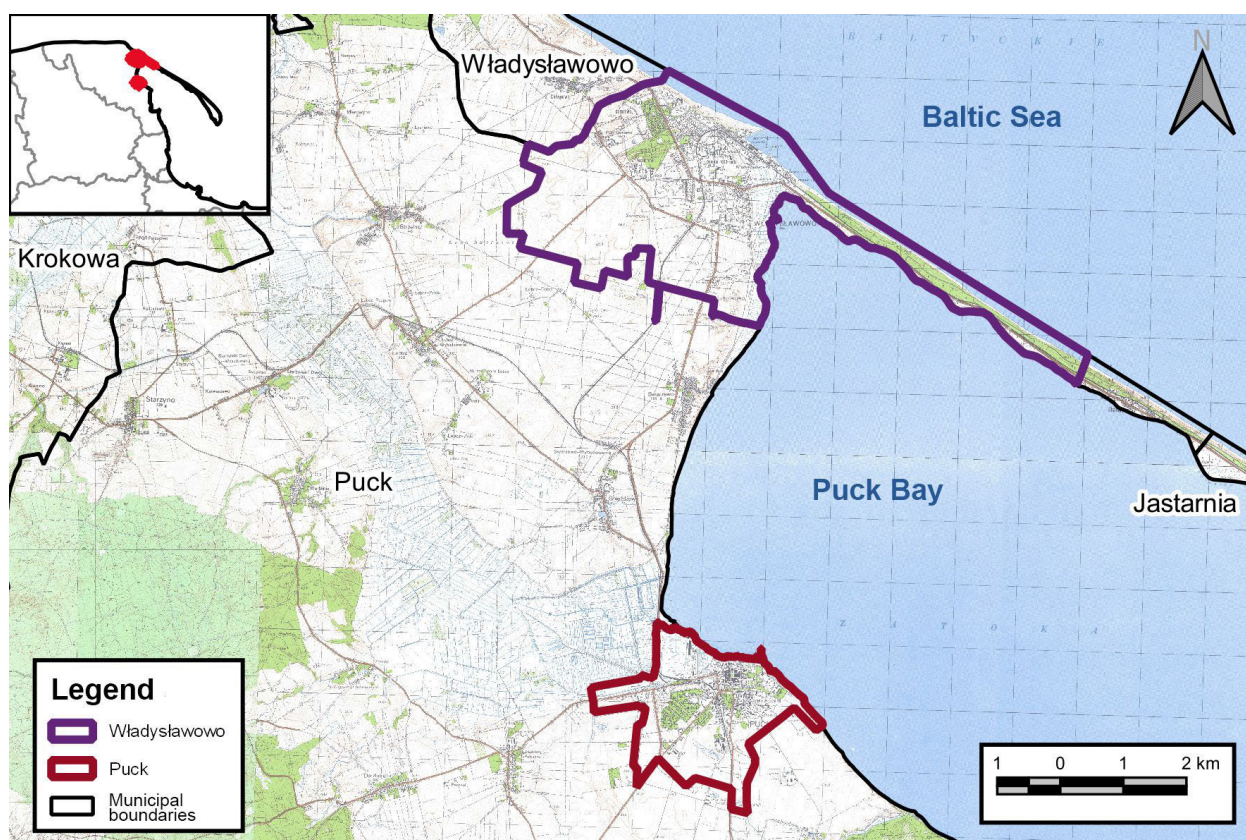


Fig. 2. Administrative location of Puck and Władysławowo
Source: own study based on data from the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography and the Geoportal (2021).

and “Zatoka Pucka” [“Puck Bay”], protected landscape area “Doliny Rzeki Płutnicy” [“Valleys of the Płutnica River”] and eight outstanding natural features of historic importance. In Władysławowo, there are the following forms of nature protection: nature reserve “Słone Łąki” [“Salty Meadows”], Nadmorski Park Krajobrazowy [Coastal Landscape Park], Nature 2000 areas “Zatoka Pucka i Helska” [“Puck and Hel Bay”], “Kaszubskie Klify” [“Kashubian Cliffs”], “Zatoka Pucka” [“Puck Bay”] and two outstanding natural features of historic importance (Centralny Rejestr Form Ochrony Przyrody, 2021). In addition, within the borders of Władysławowo, there are deposits of raw materials: rock salt and potassium salt (Central Geological Database, 2021).

According to data from 2020, Puck is inhabited by nearly 11,200 people, and Władysławowo by nearly 10,000 people. These towns are comparable in terms

of their population. Between 2010 and 2020, both towns experienced a decline in the population. It is particularly visible in Władysławowo in 2014–2016, due to the transformation of Władysławowo from a town municipality to a town-rural commune in 2015 (Szmytkie, 2016). In Puck, the migration balance shows a constant downward trend, while this situation does not apply to Władysławowo. Puck and Władysławowo both note a decrease in the share of the pre-working and working-age population. The growing value of the demographic dependency ratio and the decreasing natural growth testify to an ageing population, which affects social and economic processes (Kuklińska, 2014). The population dynamics and migration cause significant changes in the level of population, spatial distribution and in various population structures (Zdrojewski & Guzińska, 2011).

Puck and Władysławowo are under the influence of the dynamically developing Gdańsk–Gdynia–Sopot Metropolitan Area (OMG-G-S). In its functioning, the Metropolitan Area, among others, concentrates production activities directly and indirectly related to the sea, maritime transport and specialized services related to tourism and fisheries, as well as other supra-regional services in the core of the area – Tricity and the adjacent towns (Resolution No. XIX/120/2016, 2016).

Outline of the functioning of tourism

Tourism

The nature of the tourism sector in the analyzed towns can be illustrated by a number of key statistics. These include: annual revenues from the market fee at permanent and seasonal markets or the number of tourists using accommodation facilities.

In the case of analysis of annual revenues from the market fee between 2000 and 2020, there was no constant upward trend in Władysławowo (Fig. 3). The increase in revenues is visible in the years 2000–2013 and 2017–2020. The highest result, i.e. nearly PLN 650,000, was recorded in 2013. The sharp

drop in revenues in 2015 results from administrative changes in the municipality.

In contrast to Władysławowo, Puck has been experiencing a steady downward trend in annual revenues from the market fee since 2005 (Fig. 4). According to BDL GUS data (2021), revenues in 2020 were nearly twenty times lower than in 2005. Until 2005, Puck recorded greater revenues from market fees than Władysławowo, and since 2010, receipts from the market fee are much higher in Władysławowo (Fig. 3).

Further statistics concern the analysis of the number of tourists using accommodation facilities. The data used in the study are only available until 2014. For Władysławowo, there is a steady upward trend between 2000 and 2014. In 2014, the number of tourists using accommodation facilities during the year was more than twice as large as in 2000 (Fig. 5).

However, fluctuations occur in the case of the number of people using accommodation facilities in Puck (Fig. 6). One can distinguish the period between 2010 and 2013, when the number of tourists exceeded 5,000 people. The lowest values (less than 2,000 people) were recorded between 2006 and 2008.

The presented statistics indicate that the tourist traffic in Puck is becoming weaker year to year. However, this claim is contradicted by information

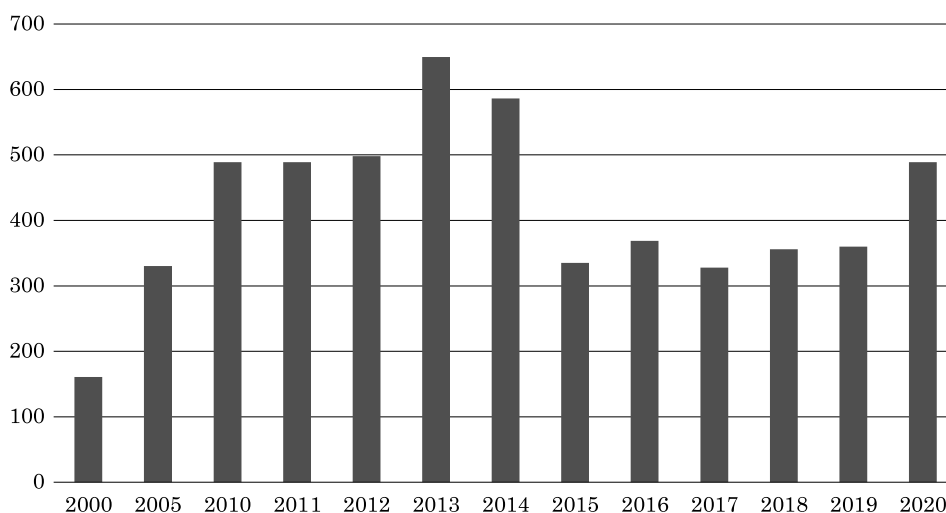


Fig. 3. Total annual revenues from the market fee at permanent and seasonal markets in Władysławowo for selected years (in thousand PLN)

Source: own study based on data from BDL GUS (2021).

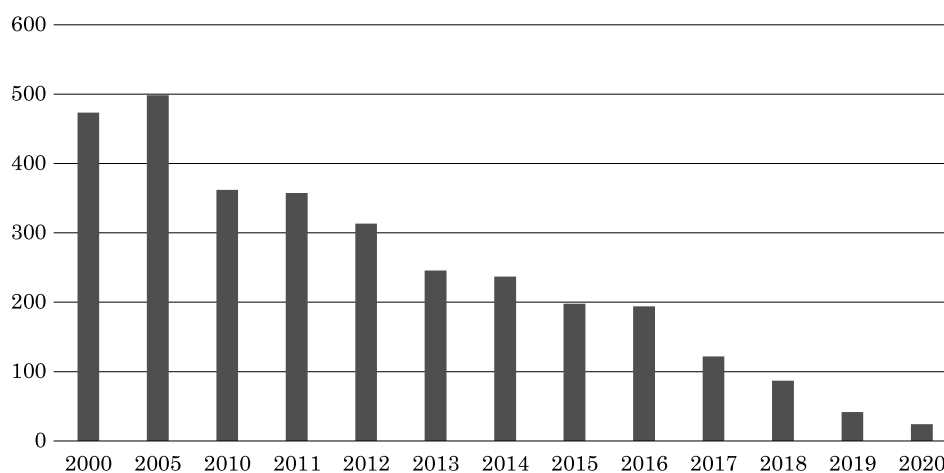


Fig. 4. Total annual revenues from the market fee at permanent and seasonal markets in Puck for selected years (in thousand PLN)

Source: own study based on data from BDL GUS (2021).

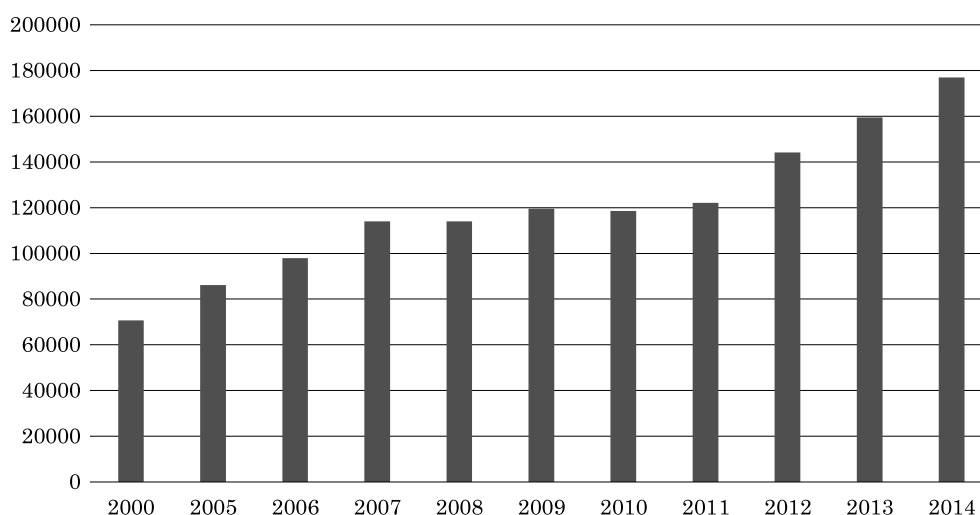


Fig. 5. Tourists using accommodation facilities in Władysławowo throughout the year for selected years

Source: own study based on data from BDL GUS (2021).

obtained from the Puck Town Hall regarding the number of tourists visiting the tourist information center. An upward trend is noticeable for the years 2016–2018 and 2020–2021. The highest values were recorded in 2021. The reason for the decrease in the number of tourists in 2020 compared to 2019 lies in the COVID-19 epidemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2

virus. Due to the spread of the pandemic, tourism is one of the industries that was the most paralyzed and affected by the implemented restrictions. Despite the less severe restrictions in force in the summer, tourists, for the sake of their own health, changed their tourist plans or abandoned trips completely (Zawadka et al., 2021).

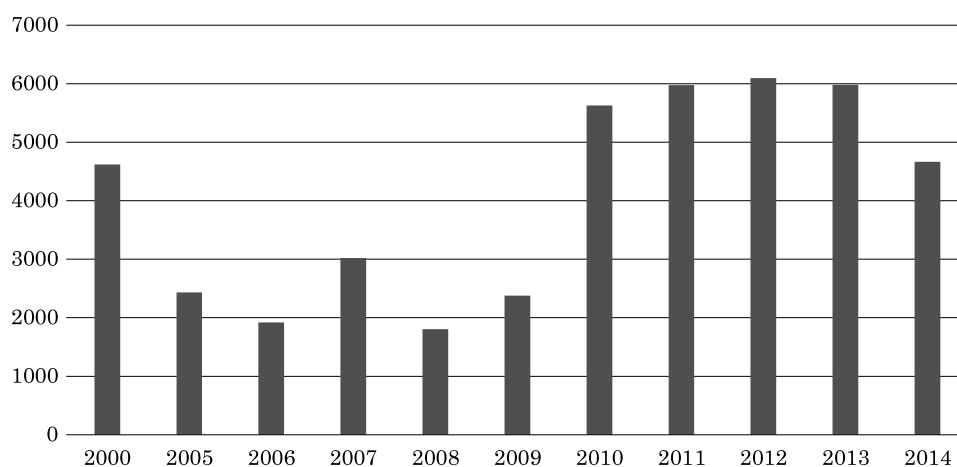


Fig. 6. Tourists using accommodation facilities in Puck throughout the year for selected years
Source: own study based on data from BDL GUS (2021).

In order to determine the degree of development of the tourist function in Puck and Władysławowo, the Schneider index was applied:

$$T_s = 100 T/L \quad (1)$$

where

T – number of tourists (persons)

L – number of local population (persons)

This index was calculated for 2021. According to the data of the Puck Town Hall, there were 5,493 tourists visiting the tourist information center in Puck, while the town had 11,139 inhabitants then, which gives an index of 49.31. In Władysławowo, based on the data of Statistics Poland (GUS), the number of tourists using accommodation facilities amounted to 176,924, and the town was inhabited at that time by 9,830 residents, which gives an index of 1799.84. For comparison, based on the data of Statistics Poland regarding tourists using accommodation facilities, in 2021, this index amounted to 959.84 for the Puck county, 84.06 for the Pomeranian Voivodeship, and 46.72 for the country. Władysławowo recorded a higher index than the town of Puck, the Puck county, the Pomeranian Voivodeship and the overall index for the country. In turn, Puck obtained a lower index than the Puck county, but a higher one than the values calculated for the Pomeranian Voivodeship and the country.

To compare the results, the tourist traffic density rate was also used:

$$G_t = T/S \quad (2)$$

where

T – number of tourists (persons)

S – town area (km²)

Puck takes up an area of 4.79 km², so the tourist traffic density rate is 1146.76 persons/km². Władysławowo takes up an area of 13.66 km², hence the tourist traffic density rate is 12951.98 persons/km². For comparison, based on the data of Statistics Poland regarding tourists using accommodation facilities, such rates in 2021 amounted to 1446.75 persons/km² for the Puck county, 107.65 persons/km² for the Pomeranian Voivodeship, and 57.18 persons/km² for the country. Władysławowo achieved a higher result compared to the result for the Puck county, the Pomeranian voivodeship and Poland. The town of Puck has a minimal difference in this rate compared to the Puck county, but a higher value than the Pomeranian Voivodeship and the country.

Tourism offer

The accommodation base plays an important role in shaping tourism development. It comprises camp sites, holiday villages, private accommodation,

guesthouses, holiday resorts, training and recreation centers and hotels (Łojek, 2003). The number of group accommodation facilities registered by Statistics Poland in Puck was 10 in 2020, including 4 year-round facilities. The total number of beds was 725, including 315 year-round beds. The largest total number of accommodation facilities for selected years was registered in 2000. The most year-round facilities were recorded in 2012 and 2014. According to data from Statistics Poland, in 2020 there were half as many beds in total as in 2000.

The number of group accommodation facilities in Puck registered by Statistics Poland is imprecise. Taking into account private accommodation and other facilities, the number of beds is much higher. This is evidenced by data obtained from the Puck Town Hall. According to the register of hotel services (as of July 9, 2021), the number of seasonal beds was 1,074, and year-round ones 543, which gives a total of 1,617 places in 121 accommodation establishments during the summer season. Based on data from the Puck Town Hall, the total number of accommodation places is over twice as large as that of Statistics Poland.

According to BDL GUS data (2021), the number of group accommodation facilities in Władysławowo amounted to 152 in 2020, including 24 year-round facilities. There were 6,400 beds in total, including 1,741 year-round beds. The largest total number of accommodation places and year-round accommodation places for selected years was registered in 2014. In 2018 and 2020, similar values of the number of accommodation places were recorded.

The number of group accommodation facilities recorded by BDL GUS (2021) also does not reflect the actual state. According to the register of accommodation facilities, obtained from the Władysławowo Town Hall in 2021, 1,819 establishments providing accommodation-related services were registered, including 125 establishments providing year-round services. In total, there are 31,124 beds in the town during the summer season (including 3,787 year-round places). Analyzing data from the Władysławowo Town Hall, the total number of places is nearly five times higher in comparison to BDL GUS data (2021).

Based on data from the Puck Town Hall, the number of places per one km² in Puck in 2021 was 113.36 people/km² outside the summer season, and 337.58 people/km² in the summer season. One can note that there are almost three times more beds in the summer season than throughout the year. Based on the data of the Władysławowo Town Hall, in Władysławowo in 2021, the rate for the summer season was 2278.47, while off-season it was 277.96 people/km². This rate is over eight times higher when comparing accommodation in the summer to the off-season.

Spatial planning

The analysis of the spatial development of Puck and Władysławowo was divided into three groups in terms of the distribution of the accommodation, gastronomy and associated bases. The associated base includes grocery stores, souvenir shops, museums, amusement parks and theme parks. The division also includes the time of operation of the facilities. All-year-round facilities, summer facilities and off-season facilities were distinguished.

In the analyzed area in Puck, there are 11 year-round accommodation facilities (Fig. 7). They are located in the northern and central part of the area. In total, these facilities have 423 beds. The number of year-round catering facilities is 17. They are located in the northern part (close to the waters of Puck Bay) and the western part of the area. The Old Town Market Square constitutes the western part. In the case of the associated base, there are 9 grocery stores, a souvenir shop and a museum within the analyzed area. They are located next to catering facilities.

Seasonal services complement the year-round services during increased tourist traffic. Within the analyzed area, there are 17 additional accommodation facilities operating during the season. The seasonal accommodation facilities have a total of 227 beds. The particular intensity of seasonal catering facilities and the associated base is visible at Żeglarzy Str., in the northern part of the area (in season it is the most popular tourist destination). Seasonal accommodation

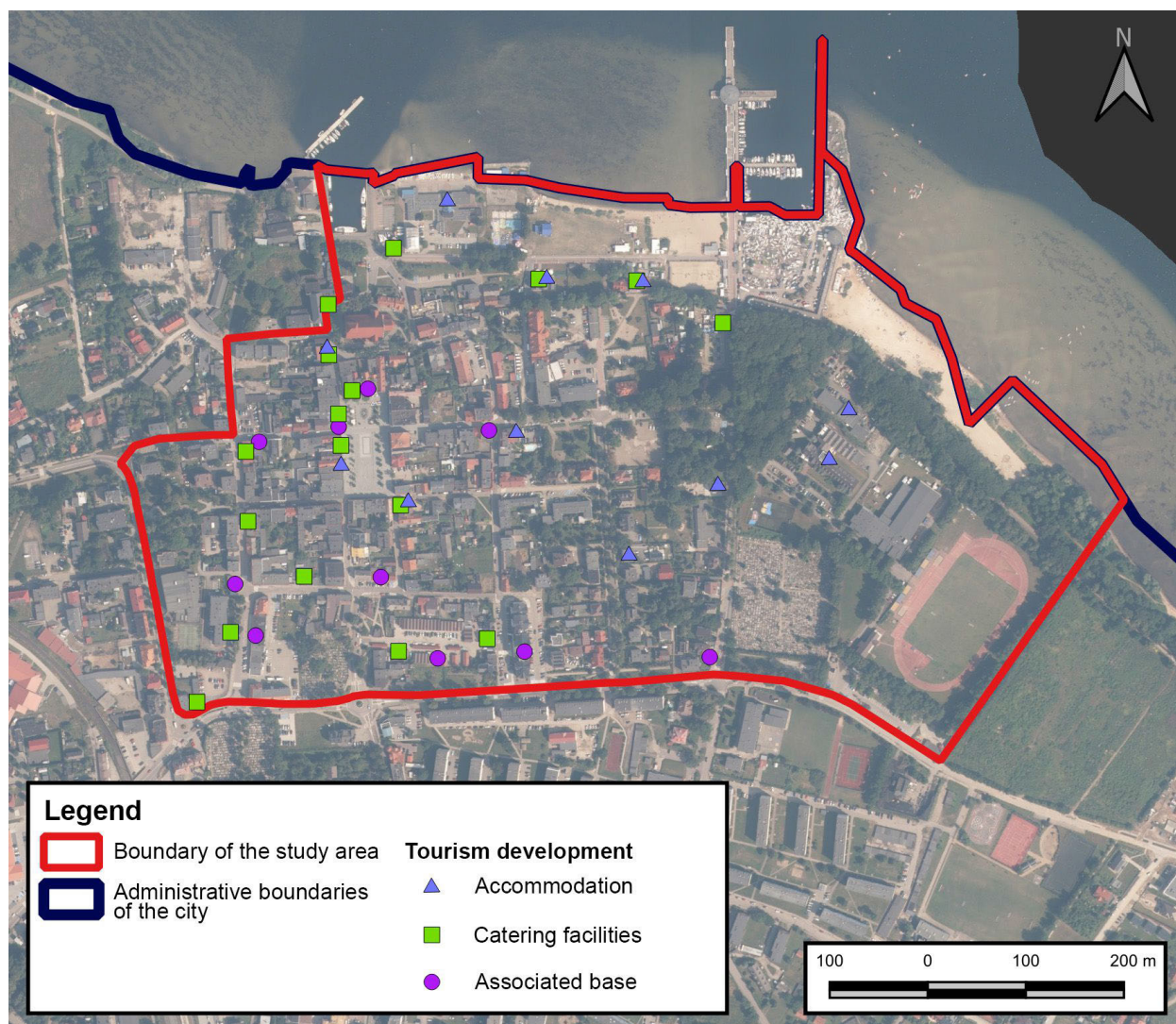


Fig. 7. Spatial identification year-round tourist base within the analyzed area in Puck
Source: own study based on various materials (2021).

facilities, despite the fact that they only operate for a certain time during the year, are located in permanent buildings. Based on the conducted field query and own observation, seasonal facilities can be classified on the basis of the material from which they are constructed (wood, metal, plastic and others) (Fig. 8A).

Another method of classifying seasonal facilities is the nature of their functioning outside the summer season (Fig. 8B). Therefore, two groups were distinguished. The first group includes facilities

that are dismantled after the season, and the space of their functioning is empty off season. The second group consists of temporary buildings, impermanently connected with the ground, which, outside the period of their operation, are closed, secured, but remain in the same place all year round.

In the case of Władysławowo, there are 50 accommodation facilities operating year-round within the analyzed area (Fig. 9). They have a total of 1,324 beds. Their dense concentration is noticeable in the north-western part of the studied area, which

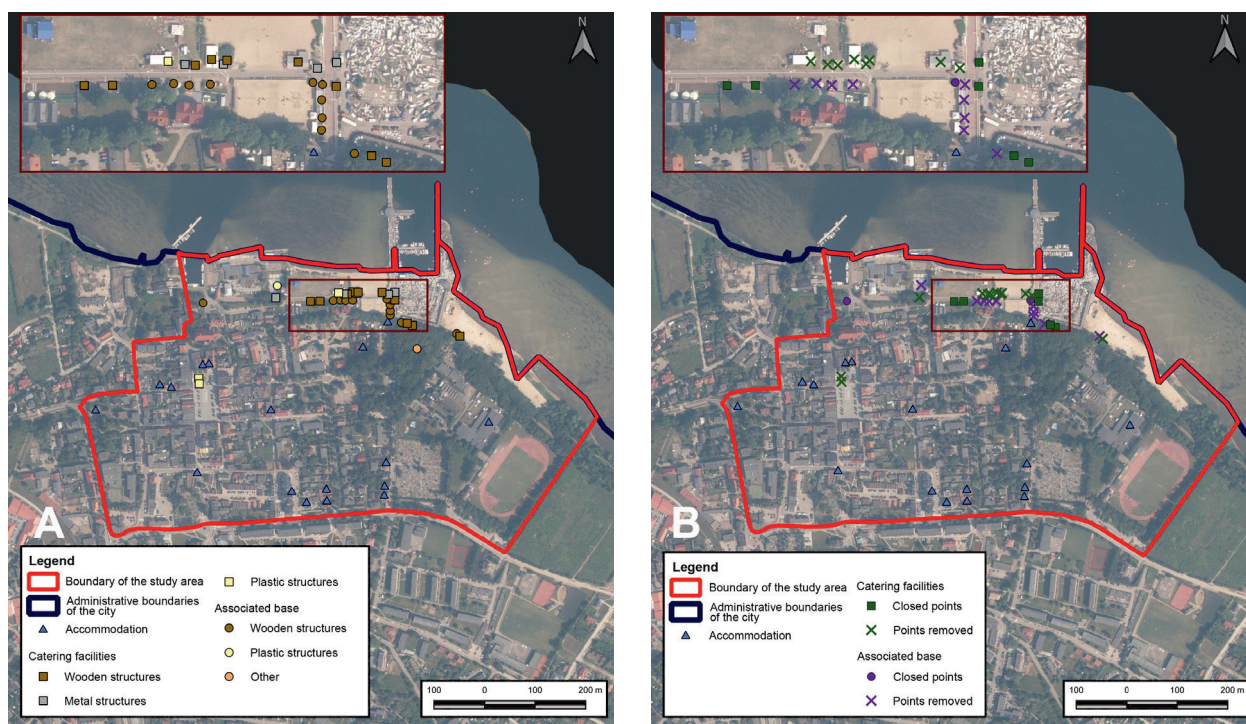


Fig. 8. Spatial identification seasonal tourist base (A) and the impermanence of tourist buildings (B) in the analyzed area in Puck
Source: own study based on various materials (2021).

is directly due to the proximity of the sea. There are 19 year-round catering facilities. They are located in the northwestern part. The associated base consists of 14 facilities that function off season (13 shops and 1 museum). The buildings of the associated base are located in the central and western part of the area.

During the summer season, there are additional 290 accommodation facilities, which provide 7,419 accommodation places to cater for the increased tourist traffic. There are nearly 6 times more temporary accommodation facilities than year-round facilities, and over 5 times more seasonal accommodation places than year-round beds. These are visible differences between the summer season and the off-season. The highest density of seasonal accommodation facilities is in the north-western part of the area. The seasonal catering base and the associated base are located in the western and northern part of the area due to the tourist popularity of the place. In the summer, there are 127 seasonal catering facilities, and 160 facilities of the associated base (Fig. 10A).

By contrast, there are only 19 seasonal catering facilities in Puck and 14 facilities of the associated base.

It is worth noting that in the case of Puck, there is a clear division of the location of a specific tourist base. The accommodation base is located in buildings, while the seasonal catering and associated base in temporary structures. In Władysławowo, the situation is more complex. Facilities providing seasonal catering or associated services are also located in buildings.

Due to the dense concentration of seasonal facilities within the analyzed area of Władysławowo, their off-season condition is shown on the map using the surface method (Fig. 10B). Seasonal facilities located in buildings account for 8% of all seasonal facilities in the area. Their largest concentration occurs in the north-western part of the area. Temporary seasonal facilities have been divided into two groups. The first one are temporary facilities that have been cleared and are absent outside the holiday season. During the tourist peak, such facilities account for



Fig. 9. Spatial identification year-round tourist base within the analyzed area in Władysławowo
Source: own study based on various materials (2021).

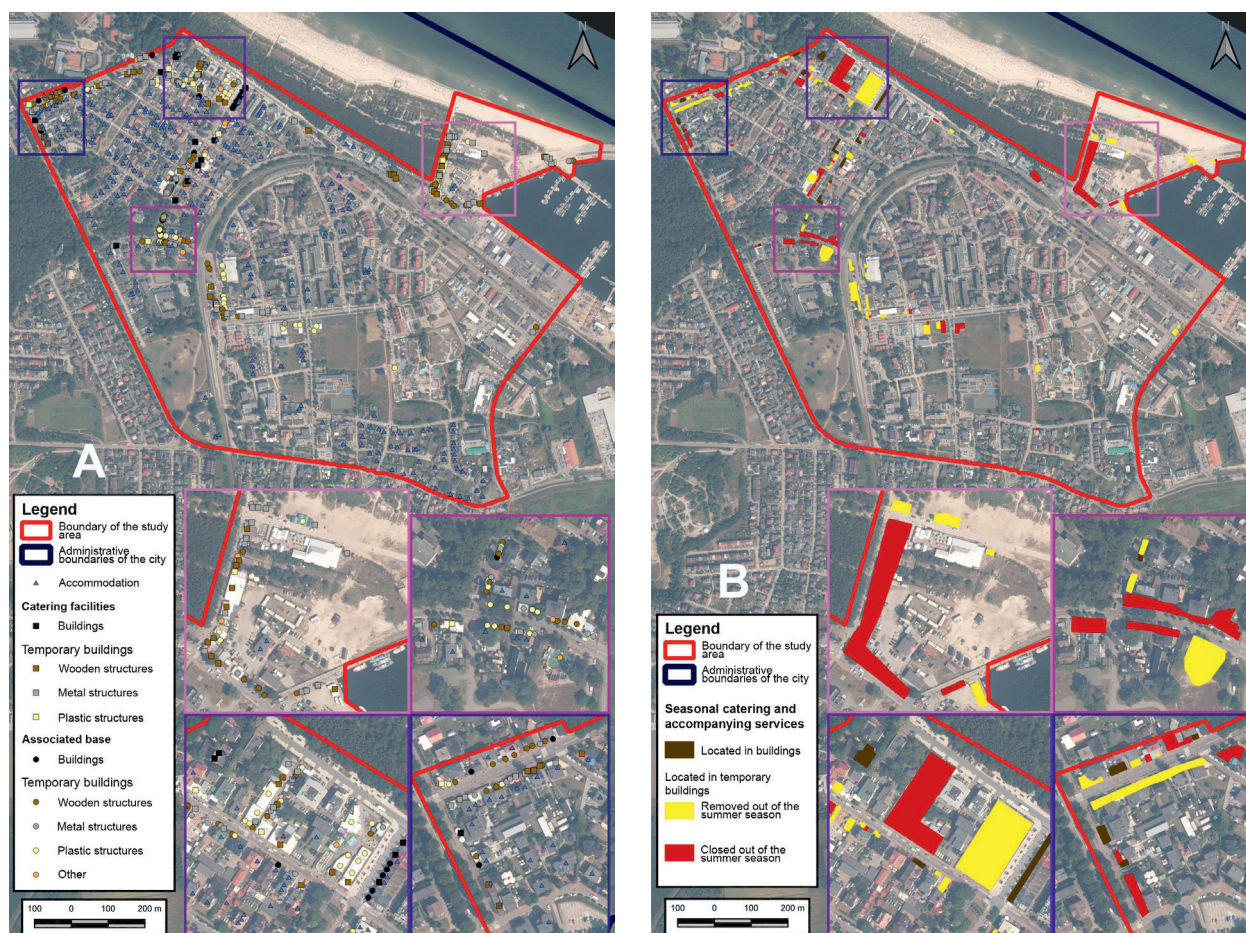


Fig. 10. Spatial identification seasonal tourist base (A) and the impermanence of tourist buildings the analyzed area in Władysławowo (B)

Source: own study based on various materials (2021).

a total of 44% of seasonal facilities. They are most prevalent in the northern, western and central parts of the area. The second group of temporary facilities are those that are closed off season. They include the largest group of seasonal tourist facilities – 48%. Their largest concentration occurs in the north-western, north-eastern and central parts of the area.

The volume of tourist traffic in the summer season in Puck and Władysławowo is very high, which often results in uncontrolled and massive expansion of the tourist base. The influx of tourists is associated with ensuring appropriate conditions to meet their basic needs: accommodation, catering and other associated services (Parzych, 2017). Catering facilities in seaside

towns include bars, fish and chips shops, pizzerias, ice cream parlors, fast food bars, cafes, pastry shops, cocktail bars (Fig. 12A). The associated base mainly consists of facilities which also provide services in the form of small trade – e.g. sale of souvenirs, clothing, books (Fig. 11A). All these shops are highly seasonal (Łojek, 2003). The uncoordinated nature of the development, especially the appearance and esthetics of seasonal facilities, built on the basis of a notification of a temporary facility for 120 days (in accordance with national legislation), have become a major problem in the light of spatial governance standards. The low quality of temporary structures, each of which is trying to stand out with its appearance



Fig. 11. Spatial development during the tourist season (A) and outside the tourist season (B) in the analyzed area in Puck
Source: own materials (2021).



Fig. 12. Spatial development during the tourist season (A) and outside the tourist season (B) in the analyzed area in Władysławowo
Source: own materials (2021).

against the background of other structure, trying to attract customers' attention, becomes a reason for discussion on the assessment of lowering the quality of relaxation and the esthetics of the town. The problem of the low standard of construction of the facilities is directly related to the nature of the facility. Its temporary nature does not encourage investors to incur significant construction costs, and the relatively low investment outlay allows for greater profits or reduces the risk of losses (Cern & Bojar-Fijałkowski, 2014).

Outside the tourist season, the temporary facilities have been cleaned up and there is no trace of them after summer (Fig. 11B). In the second option, a less

attractive one in terms of esthetics, spatial order and functionality – temporary objects are closed, fenced-off with some ugly wall, boarded up with repulsive planks or boards, obscured by some metal elements, etc. Such facilities look abandoned in space, and several such places on one street looks like area an abandoned and forgotten by the population (Fig. 12B).

The problem of landscape esthetics in seaside towns is not only related to the gastronomy and associated base located in temporary buildings. The accommodation base plays an important role in shaping the space. The desire to host as many visitors as possible, first of all, is associated with a change in the cubature and physiognomy of existing residential

buildings, which are adapted to accommodate tourists (Durydiwka & Duda-Gromada, 2014). Secondly, the newly constructed buildings are highly diverse, often chaotically located, without connection to the existing infrastructural elements. The new buildings are not related to tradition and the region. This results in increasing spatial chaos and the blurring of cultural identity, history and tradition (Kwiatkowska & Marks, 2016). Thirdly, the investment area has significantly exceeded the permissible capacity, which additionally results in the fact that tourism development elements are increasingly located on dunes and overflow plains (Kistowski & Korwel-Lejkowska, 2005). One forgets about shaping the new development in line with the existing one in order to integrate it into the existing landscape, as well as about the existing threat resulting from the violation of areas that are valuable for nature and sensitive to anthropopressure.

Spatial policy tools

Studium Uwarunkowań i Kierunków Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego (SUiKZP) [Eng.: the Study of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development] and Miejscowe Plany Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego (MPZP) [Eng.: Local Spatial Development Plans] are the basic tools for shaping spatial policy for the analyzed towns. In this research, the provisions in the documents that concern the issue of seasonal development have been analyzed. For this purpose, the official local government websites of both towns were used – Public Information Bulletins (Bulletin of Public Information of Puck, 2021; Bulletin of Public Information of Władysławowo, 2021).

The currently binding SUiKZP for Puck was adopted by Resolution No. III/8/2018 of the Puck Town Council of 5 December 2018. According to the content of the document, the location in the coastal zone of Puck Bay determines the key nature of tourism for the town's economy. According to the planning document, 187 business entities operating in the field of accommodation and gastronomy were registered in the town. However, the document emphasizes that the data does not reflect the real number of entities.

A significant deficit in the places of accommodation of tourists in facilities providing accommodation services constitutes a problem in Puck. The lack of accommodation has a negative impact on activities aimed at improving the condition of technical infrastructure (conducted in the Port of Puck) and the image of the town (renovation of the Old Town), which do not bring the desired effect. Too small number of tourists, including foreign tourists, and a narrow offer of services related to beach tourism and sports and recreational facilities also constitutes a threat to the town's development. The operational objectives include those related to tourism and spatial development, such as sustainable shaping of spatial order, implementation of ordering solutions in spatial development, i.e. esthetic and functional public space, or the development of modern facilities for the tourism sector, among others. The areas of tourism services include the area of the town located in the coastal zone, thus predisposed to serve as the main tourist base of the town. All investment activities should strive to develop attractive space and scenic tourist-recreational complexes appealing to tourists. It is emphasized that special attention should be paid to the esthetics of facades and roofs of buildings, the composition of landscaped greenery and the applied forms of landscape architecture.

The currently binding SUiKZP for Władysławowo was adopted by Resolution No. XLII/302/02 of the Town Council in Władysławowo of 30 January 2002. As of April 25, 2022, work on a new document is underway. Władysławowo is a town without a clearly shaped functional and spatial structure. The reason for the chaotic development of buildings lies in the intensive increase in the number of inhabitants of the town. The document assumes the continuation of the development of the existing town structure while striving to shape new urban and architectural values and to improve the functioning of the town as a whole. Among others, the document adopted the following strategic objectives: spatial development of the town with particular emphasis on the conservation of nature and landscape, protection of the cultural landscape, functional-spatial and esthetic ordering

of the development or creation of favorable conditions for the development of broadly understood services related to tourism and recreation. The town area has been defined as an area of special tourist activity.

Within the analyzed area for Puck, there are six MPZP documents in force. Such document is an act of local law, understood as a generally applicable source of local law. Among others, the provisions contained in them allow for the location of seasonal facilities (up to 180 days) with the area in a horizontal plan not exceeding 50m² and a height of not more than 4 m. MPZP allows the location of seasonal facilities only in the service strip. Another document specifies, for example, that due to the principles of protection and shaping the spatial order, the total area of seasonal facilities in the horizontal plan may reach a maximum of 150 m². This provision applies in the northern part of the area. The document also includes provisions, e.g. on the exclusion of the location of temporary service and commercial facilities or construction facilities in public spaces.

In the case of Władysławowo and the analyzed area, three MPZP documents are currently binding. Among others, the provisions indicate that temporary, seasonal service and commercial facilities may be erected for a period of up to 120 days and located at a distance of not less than 2 m from the border of the building plot and the road plot. The resolution identifies areas in which the location of temporary facilities is allowed and areas in which their location is prohibited. The ban includes, for example, temporary use, development and landscaping in a manner inconsistent with the plan.

Perception of the tourist offer and the state of spatial development

The key element of the study was to check the public opinion about the tourist offer and the state of spatial development and the attractiveness of the towns of Puck and Władysławowo. With that in view, an online survey was conducted. The survey was implemented with the Google Forms tool and the distribution of the questionnaire form on local social networks of

both towns. The form consisted of ten questions. Two questions included the metrics (gender, age), four questions were single-choice ones, and the remaining four questions concerned the assessment of individual elements on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 meant the lowest value and 5 the highest one. The survey involved 137 respondents, of whom 116 (85%) were women and 21 (15%) were men. The highest number of responses was given by persons between 30 and 45 years of age (51%), and the lowest number by those above 60 years of age (1%). In turn, 39% of respondents were between 18 and 29 years of age, and 9% were between 45 and 60 years of age.

Based on the collected opinions, it should be noted that the respondents did not rate the attractiveness of the gastronomic base and tourist services in Puck highly (Fig. 14), because the number of seasonal facilities in the town is small. This means the respondents do not often use such services. However, the respondents positively assessed Puck's esthetics (Fig. 13). In the case of Władysławowo, the gastronomic base and associated services were highly rated in terms of attractiveness (Fig. 13). A large concentration of seasonally operating facilities in the town translates into a high intensity of their use. Respondents critically assessed the esthetics of the analyzed area in Władysławowo (Fig. 14).

The study was extended to learn the opinion of business people. An individualized in-depth interview was conducted with one of their representatives based on a previously developed ten-question interview scenario. The Sales Manager of one of the leading clothing brands in Poland was selected for this role. For example, in the case of Władysławowo, seasonal facilities start functioning in the first or second week of June, and their work ends in the first half of September. The peak season lasts from July 15 to August 15. In Władysławowo, all points of sale are tents, i.e. temporary buildings. After the summer season ends, some of the tents remain with the equipment for the winter period, while some are dismantled by an external company. The equipment is transported to the company's warehouse located in a nearby town. In Władysławowo, out of three tents only one remains

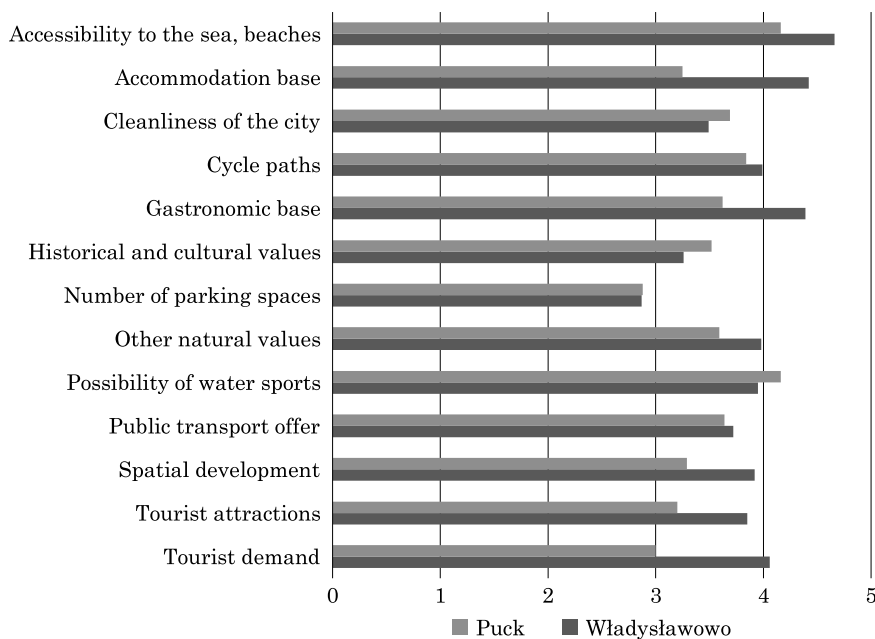


Fig. 13. Ranking of assessments of factors affecting the attractiveness of towns
Source: research results based on an online survey (2022).

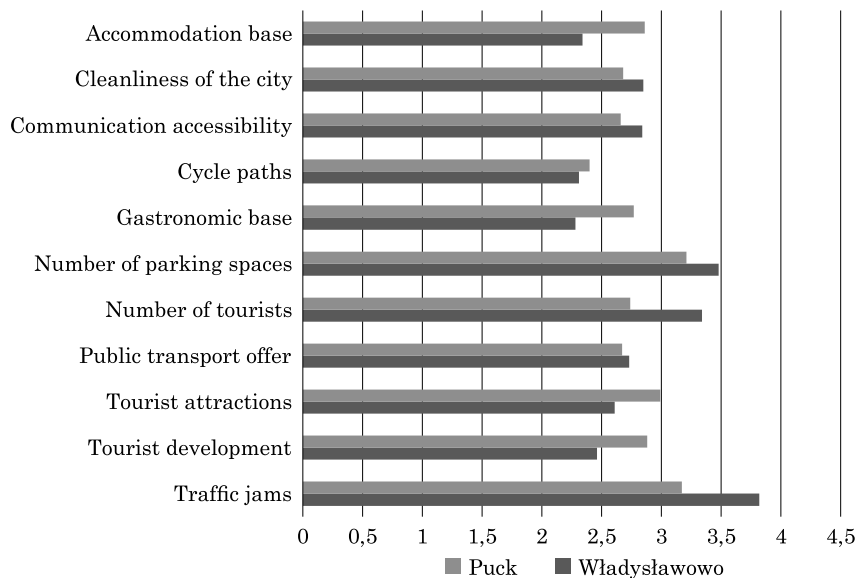


Fig. 14. Ranking of assessments of factors affecting the negative perception of towns
Source: research results based on an online survey (2022).

for the winter period. When asked why tents dominate as commercial points and not permanent buildings, the respondent referred to the specifics of seaside towns in the country. It is dominated by low, dispersed development typical of fishing settlements, which

forces investment in tents, due to the lack of appropriate infrastructure, of which Władysławowo is an ideal example. Plots on which temporary facilities are located are both leased from private individuals and from the town. The interviewee emphasized that

seasonal facilities are a special attraction for tourists as well as a shelter from unfavorable (local) weather conditions. This is especially true on rainy days, which are numerous on the Baltic Sea.

Possibilities of increasing the level of esthetization of seaside towns: a landscape resolution

Tourism is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, causing various consequences of a natural, economic, social, cultural and spatial nature. The factor of spatial changes is primarily the tourism development process, whose purpose is to adapt space for service and meeting the tourists' needs (Durydiwka & Duda-Gromada, 2014).

The landscape resolution as well as the MPZP document have a character of an act of local law. In accordance with the provisions of the spatial planning and development act (Spatial planning and development act, 2003), the provisions of the landscape resolution regulate the rules and conditions for the location of small architecture elements, advertising boards and advertising devices and fences, their dimensions, quality standards and the types of building materials from which they can be made. The resolution may prohibit the placement of fences and advertising boards and advertising devices, excluding signboards. In the case of signboards, the landscape resolution defines the rules and conditions of their location and dimensions. It also determines the number of signboards that may be placed on the property by the entity operating on its premises.

The landscape resolution specifies the conditions and deadline for adapting the existing small architecture elements, fences and advertising boards and devices to the prohibitions, rules and conditions specified therein. The deadline may not be shorter than 12 months from the date of coming of the resolution into force (Bąkowski, 2017).

Adopting solutions by towns in the form of landscape resolutions would especially help to reduce or solve the ubiquitous problem of littering space with advertisements. This particularly applies to facil-

ities providing accommodation and catering services, which try to distinguish themselves from the competition in order to attract the attention of potential customers. Temporary commercial facilities also follow the same strategy of local marketing. In addition, unified or visually similar elements of small architecture or fences will gain a positive tone in shaping esthetic space of towns.

Based on the conducted research and its conclusions, it should be pointed out that such a solution would be strategic and at the same time obligatory to ensure esthetic urban space for the towns under analysis – Puck and Władysławowo.

SUMMARY

Seasonal tourism development negatively affects the landscape of seaside towns. There are notable differences in space during the summer and off-season. The intensity of temporary development during the season is due to the increased tourist traffic in the summer months and the necessity to meet the tourists' needs. Based on the conducted research, the hypothesis that the local entrepreneurs' desire to maximize profits translates into constructing seasonal tourism development thus reducing the level of esthetization of space is confirmed.

Tourism brings many benefits to Puck and Władysławowo, including income for the town from tax revenues or jobs for the local community. Temporary development is a less favorable issue for the image of the town. Under the influence of seasonal buildings, individual streets change their character. Numerous facilities with different structures and types of construction are located on them. Adjacent facilities often contrast with each other, each having with a different specificity. Temporary facilities are built for a specific period of time. The off-season tourist base can be divided into two categories. The first one includes facilities that have been dismantled and will be rebuilt in the following year. The second group includes facilities that have stopped operation and are closed off season. They look particularly unsightly; consequently, the streets on which they stand look

abandoned, neglected and forgotten. At the beginning of the tourist season, their functioning is restored.

The effects of changes in the spatial structure of towns are felt. Every investor tries to visually highlight their facility, trying to attract as many customers as possible. It happens that the individual character of the temporary facility is often unrelated to the local culture and destroys the identity of the town.

One of the possibilities to stop the spread of uncontrolled temporary development is to use planning documents, such as SUiKZP and MPZP. The documents offer great opportunities that are insufficiently used by municipalities. Indicating where the temporary buildings can be located would affect the esthetization and ordering of the space. Their provisions may include a number of parameters and guidelines for seasonal development, thus influencing its shaping. A landscape resolution, as an act of local law just as MPZP, also has an impact on the shaping of the space, emphasizing its aesthetics through guidelines on elements of small architecture, advertising boards or fences. It is assumed that the simultaneous implementation of solutions from the three above-mentioned documents highlighting the nature of planning policy could definitely contribute to solving the problem situation faced by the surveyed towns.

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