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ANALYSIS OF TOURISM DEMAND BASED ON THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN TRAVEL AGENCIES

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Summary

The aim of the article is to determine the size of tourism demand demonstrated by clients of travel agencies: Rainbow Tours, Itaka and Tui. The research shows that the respondents often choose domestic tours. These are most often weekend trips where tourists prefer hiking and cycling. Almost 50% of the respondents go on domestic tours once a year. Pomerania (the seaside region) is the most popular destination with the respondents. Almost half of them decide to go on a tour to relax. One in five respondents travels on business and one in four visits their family or friends. Tourists who spend PLN 136-180 during a trip constitute the biggest group. The main reason to travel is to relax with the family members or just the closest person (a spouse). More than a half of the respondents organise their trip on their own. They most often travel by car, which is connected with the opportunity to go sightseeing on their own after they reach the destination. Most of the respondents book accommodation in hotels, motels or guesthouses. One in four respondents stays on an agritourism farm.

Key words: tourist services market, tourism demand, travel agencies, tourists, domestic tours.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a series of activities performed by people travelling and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or other purposes with the exception of travelling in order to find employment and earn money (WTO). Thus, it is related to active relaxation away from the place of permanent residence.

Tourist services market plays an important role in tourism. It is a system of links between autonomous, independent entities taking part in the process of tourist services' (offers') sale-purchase transactions (Altkorn 2002). It is also understood as a continuous process of information flow between buyers and sellers and the whole set of purchase-sale transactions of tourist offers and conditions in which they take place in time and space (Ambler, 1999).

According to K. Naumowicz, "tourism market means all the exchange relations between persons and institutions selling tourist products and services representing supply and persons and institutions buying products and services meeting tourist needs representing demand" (Naumowicz, 2003).

The buyers of tourist products who want to buy for a certain price create demand. Many authors quote a concise and adequate definition of tourism demand. According to A. Nowakowska, "tourism demand is the whole set of activities aimed at meeting tourists' needs" (Nowakowska, 2002).

The article analyses the size of tourism demand based on the research conducted on the clients of travel agencies.

AIM, RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND POPULATION CHARACTERISTIC

The article aims to determine the size of tourism demand demonstrated by the clients of travel agencies: Rainbow Tours, Itaka and Tui in Bialystok. The research method used to conduct the analysis was a survey containing 15 questions. The main aim of the research was to find an answer to the question whether and to what extent the respondents are interested in domestic tourism. The survey was conducted in June 2013 among 90 people (22 of them stated they did not travel and so they did not take part in the survey). The method of measurement was a questionnaire randomly addressed to a representative group of travel agencies' clients in the age of 25-40. 31 of them were women and 37 were men. Most of the respondents were single persons (41), the rest of them were married. 47 respondents were university graduates (including 27 persons without a degree diploma), 21 respondents finished secondary education. The key questions the research wanted to find answers to were as follows:

- Do travel agencies' clients buy tourist travel services?
- What were the destinations of the respondents' trips?
- What was the aim of travelling?
- What were the average costs the travellers incurred?

FEATURES AND MEASURING INSTRUMENTS OF TOURISM DEMAND

The general level of tourism demand for all goods and services is determined mainly by the level of income, the ratio of a given product or service to the price of other goods and services, i.e. a real price of a given product or service and by consumers' liking and preferences. Some research into tourism demand makes it possible to distinguish its main characteristics (Wodejko, 1997):

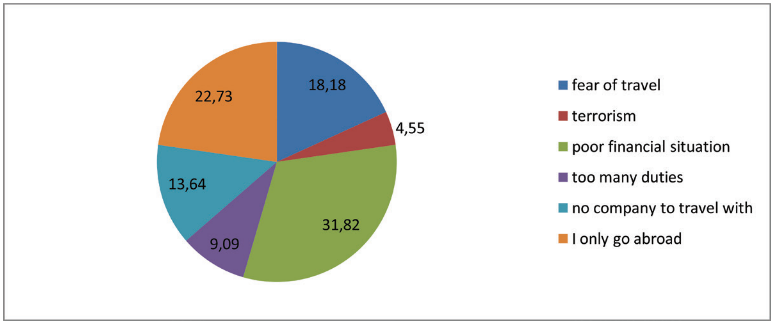
- It is heterogeneous, non-uniform, which results from the character of a tourism product and the fact that both measurable and immeasurable factors have impact on the size of demand for it;
- In an individual's budget, it is part of expenditure based on liking (induced consumption);
- It is income-elastic, although one can observe streams of little income elasticity in the market;
- It is mobile, which means that it moves to the travel destination;
- It is substitutive and its internal substitutivity is relatively big (provided that tourism demand is developed and differentiated);
- It is restitutive in character – the induced need to travel is so strong that the change of clients' economic conditions makes them give up tourism only as a last resort;
- It is a typical example of collective demand, which results from the complementary character of the components of tourism products;
- It is price-flexible, although there are cases and streams of movement when this flexibility is low or positive;
- It is seasonal with all the economic consequences of that;
- It can be inflation driven, including inflation-pull demand and supply, and resulting from the increased money supply;
- It is a resultant of demand for all components of supply (components of a tourism product);
- To a great extent, it depends on the state's general policy – both economic and social one (the state's policy decides about the stability of income and the existence of social tourism).

Tourism demand measuring instruments are as follows (Kramer, 2001) (Łazarek, 2001):

- the number of visitors, net rate of tourist activeness;
- gross rate of tourist activeness;
- the number of people checked-in and registered in the accommodation database;
- tourists' expenditures in places of their temporary stay;
- average daily spending.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Most respondents regularly go on domestic tours. However, 22 persons stated that they did not travel and their visit to a travel agency was connected with the purchase of a flight ticket or a coach ticket for a close person or to get information about tour prices. Figure 1 presents the reasons why the respondents gave up going on domestic tours.

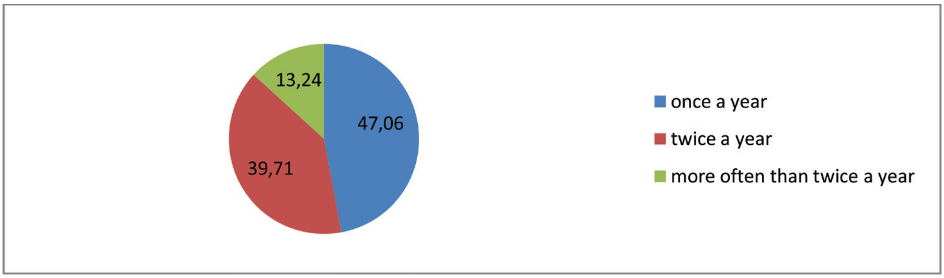


N=22
Source: author's own research

Figure 1. Reasons why the respondents gave up domestic travelling (%)

Most respondents do not go on domestic tours because of poor financial situation. Some respondents do not plan to go on domestic tours because they only travel abroad. The group of respondents who give up travelling because of a fear of travel is only a little smaller. Fewest respondents mentioned terrorism as a reason for refraining from travelling.

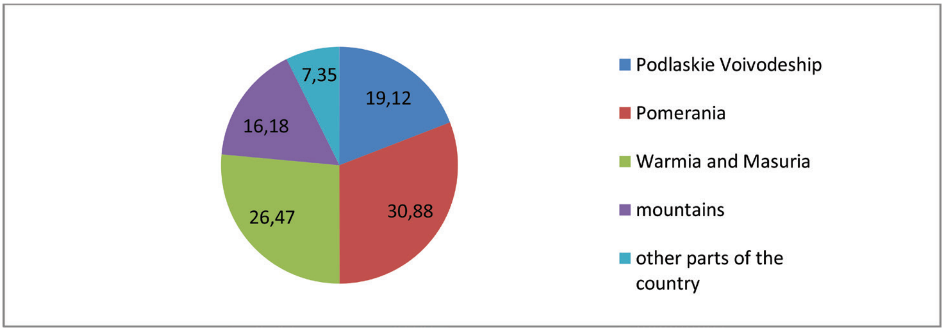
The research also searched for an answer to the question about frequency of domestic travel. Detailed data on this issue are presented in Figure 2.



N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 2. Frequency of the respondents' domestic trips (%)

Almost half of the respondents go on domestic tours once a year. Nearly 40% travel twice a year and the rest of them more than twice a year. Tour destinations are presented in Figure 3.

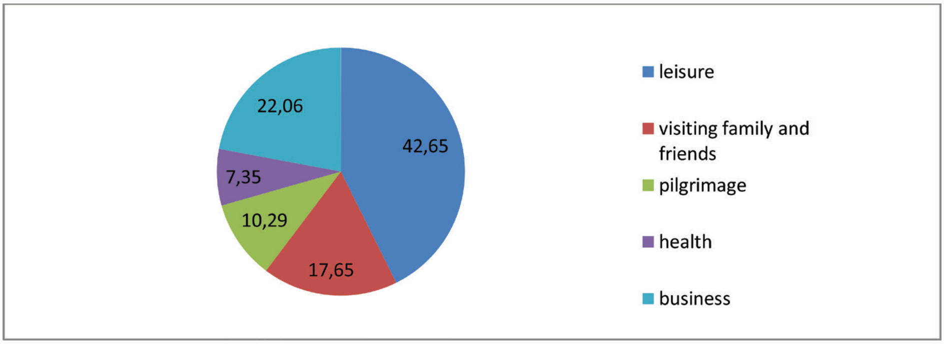


N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 3. Respondents' domestic trips destinations (%)

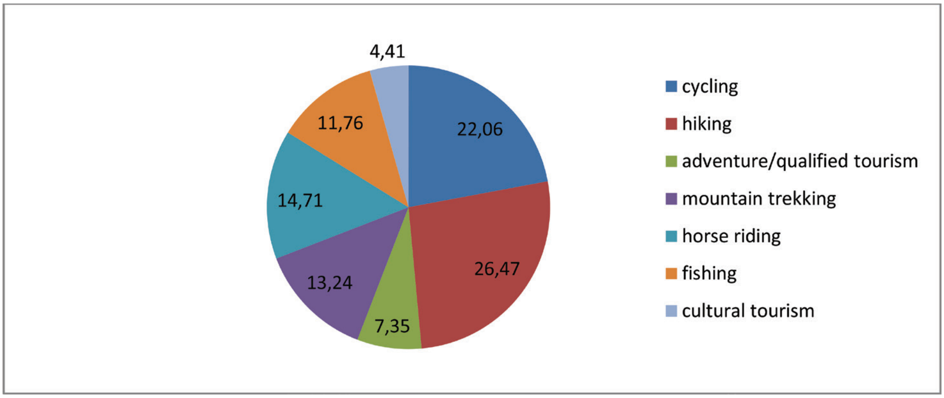
Pomerania is the most popular region with the respondents; one in three persons choose to go to the Baltic Sea. Some respondents choose to go to Warmia and Masuria. The rest of them are willing to relax in Podlaskie Voivodeship or in the Polish mountains.

Another question the research answered was about the reason why the respondents travelled (Figure 4).



N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 4. Respondents' aims of domestic tourism (%)

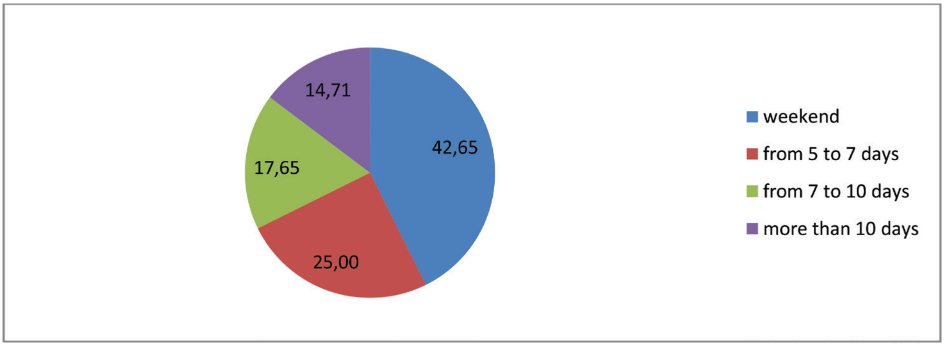


N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 5. Most frequently chosen forms of active tourism (%)

Nearly half of the respondents stated their aim of travelling was leisure. Almost one in five travelled on business and one in four wanted to visit their family or friends. The smallest group of respondents travelled for health related reasons.

Figure 5 presents the most frequently chosen forms of active tourism.

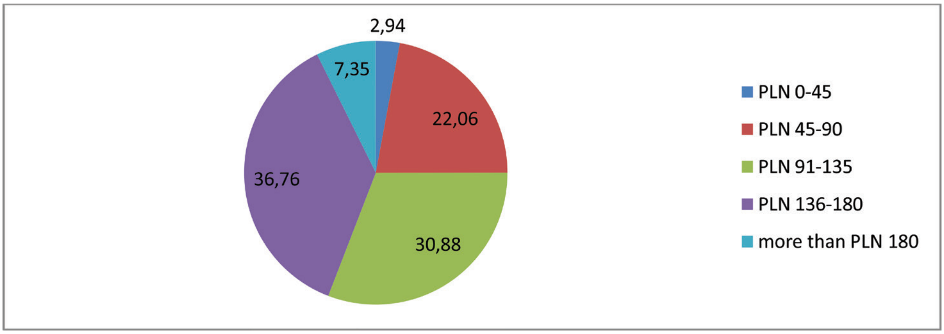


N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 6. Average length of respondents' stay (%)

The respondents most frequently choose hiking and cycling. The smallest group of respondents prefer adventure/qualified tourism. The smallest of the respondents also prefer cultural tourism (Compare: Uglis, 2010). It should be noted that it applies to every form of tourism, which are included cultural elements (Compare: Gaworecki, 2003). In turn, S. Medlik defines cultural tourism as a form of traveling p motivation, cultural, such as excursions to places of artistic and historical visits to museums and galleries (Mikos von Rohrscheidt, 2008), travel, whose purpose is to participate in artistic performances and other cultural events (Medlik, 1995).

The data on the length of the respondents' stay away from home are pre-



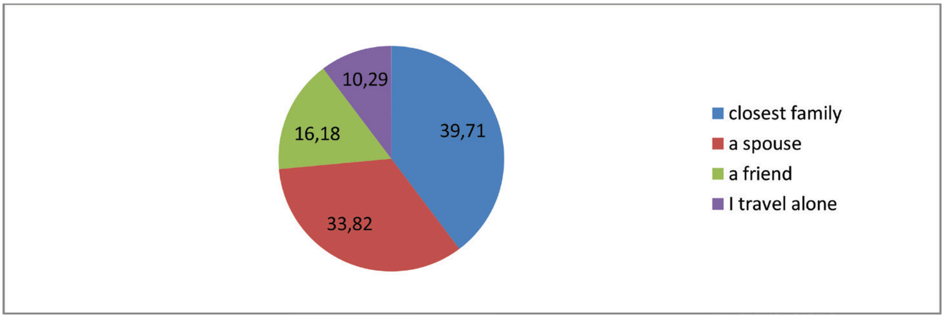
sented in Figure 6.

N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 7. Share of the respondents' daily spending (%)

A big group of the respondents most often travelled only for the weekend. One in four travelled for a period up to a week. The rest of them were willing to enjoy more leisure time.

The respondents' expenditure is another essential issue. Detailed data on that are presented in Figure 7.

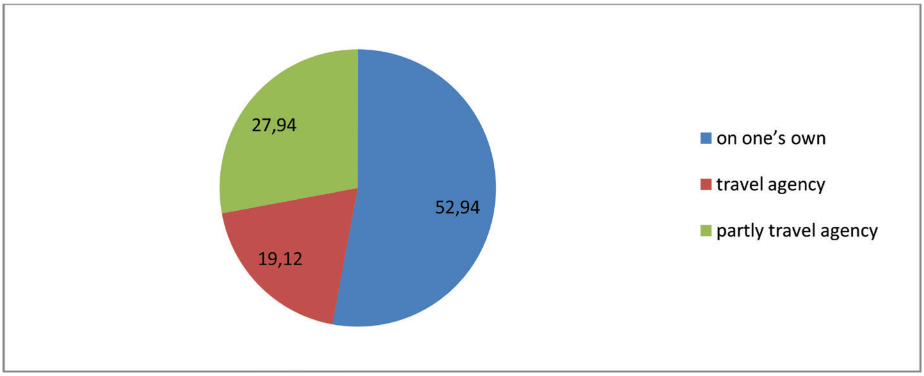


N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 8. Accompanying persons during tourist trips (%)

The tourists who spent between PLN 136 and PLN 180 constitute the biggest group. It is worth mentioning that only 3% of the respondents spent up to PLN 45 per day.

Figure 8 presents the research findings regarding accompanying persons the respondents most often travel with.

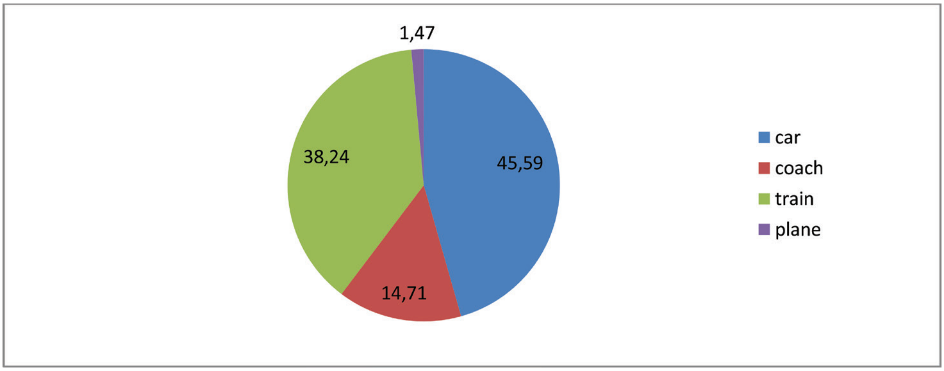


N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 9. Form of travel organisation (%)

The main reason for travelling is to relax with the family or the closest person (a spouse). One in ten tourists travelled alone.

Another question the research answered regarded the form of travel organisation (Figure 9).



N=68
Source: author's own research

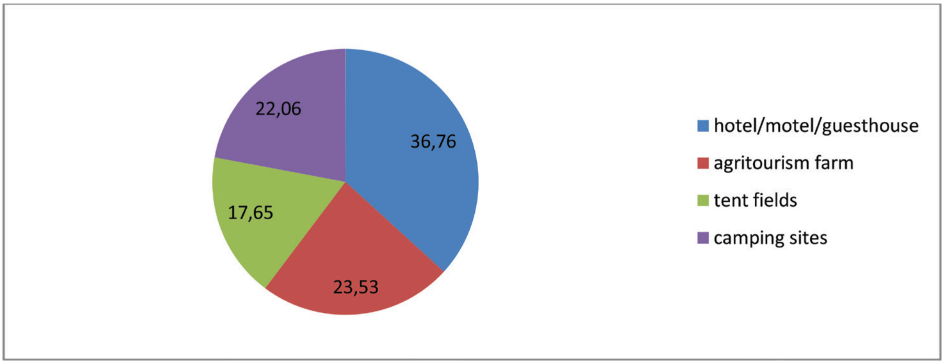
Figure 10. Means of transport used during tourist travel (%)

More than half of the respondents organised their trips on their own. One in four tourists bought a tour from a travel agency and one in five made a partial use of travel agency's offer.

Figure 10 presents the research findings regarding the means of transport used for tourist travelling.

The respondents most often used their own cars, which is connected with the possibility to go sightseeing after reaching the destination and travel organisation on one's own. One in three tourists chose travelling by train. The smallest group were those who chose travelling by air.

The last issue is the accommodation base. The findings are presented in Figure11.



N=68
Source: author's own research

Figure 11. Use of accommodation facilities while travelling (%)

Most respondents booked a room in a hotel, a motel or a guesthouse. One in four persons stayed on an agritourism farm. It must be pointed out that it is now the cheapest accommodation in rural areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the conducted research and the author's own observation, a few conclusions have been formulated:

1. The clients of travel agencies: Rainbow Tours, Itaka and Tui choose domestic tours very often. These are most often weekend stays and the travellers prefer hiking and cycling during them.
2. Almost half of the respondents went on domestic tours only once a year. Nearly 40% of the respondents travelled twice a year and the rest of them more than twice a year.

3. Pomerania was the most popular destination with the respondents because every third person travelled to the Baltic Sea. Some respondents chose Warmia and Masuria.
4. Almost half of the respondents stated that their reason for travelling had been leisure. One in five travelled on business and one in four to visit their family or friends.
5. Tourists who spent PLN 136-180 constituted the biggest group.
6. The main aim of travelling is to spend time with the family or the closest person (a spouse). One in ten tourists travelled alone.
7. More than a half of the respondents organised their travel on their own. One in four tourists bought a trip from a travel agency and one in five used its offer only partly.
8. The respondents most often used their own cars to travel, which was connected with a possibility to go sightseeing after reaching the destination and organising their trips on their own. Only one third of the tourists chose to travel by train. The fewest number of the respondents travelled by air.
9. The biggest group of respondents booked accommodation in hotels, motels and guesthouses. One in four respondents stayed on an agritourism farm.

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