

УДК

БАР'ЄРИ ДЛЯ РОЗВИТКУ ТУРИЗМУ В ПОЛЬСЬКО-СЛОВАЦЬКОМУ ПРИКОРДОННОМУ РЕГІОНІ У ПІДКАРПАТСЬКОМУ ВОЄВОДСТВІ

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В останнє десятиліття у багатьох країнах туризм перетворився в одну з найважливіших та прибуткових галузей національної економіки. Такі тенденції спостерігаються в Польщі та Словаччині. В статті аналізуються природні та культурні туристичні ресурси польсько-словацького прикордонного регіону. Цей регіон розташований в Карпатах, має багато спільних рис: подібна мова, природне середовище, ландшафти, історія та культура, а також соціально-економічні проблеми, вирішення яких можливе завдяки розвитку туризму.

У статті описано бар'єри на шляху розвитку туризму в цьому регіоні, а саме: нерозвинена інфраструктура, недостатня промоційна політика туризму, погане інформаційне забезпечення. За допомогою методу SWOT-аналізу змальовані перспективи та перешкоди на шляху розвитку туризму в польсько-словацькому прикордонному регіоні, а також сильні та слабкі сторони цього сектору економіки. Подальший розвиток туристичної галузі Карпатського регіону можливий лише за активної участі та співпраці між місцевою владою, туристичними організаціями та місцевими громадами.

Ключові слова: польсько-словацький прикордонний регіон, бар'єри на шляху розвитку туризму, туристична інфраструктура.

In the last decade, income structure of many countries has changed significantly, especially of those rich in tourism resources. Tourism became one of the most important sectors of national economy in many countries, not only in the richest ones, but also in developing countries such as Poland or Slovakia.

Areas with great natural and cultural values are abundant in these countries; they are the basis and form conditions for tourism development. An excellent example of such area with a Europe-wide unique natural and cultural heritage of high attractiveness for tourists is the Polish-Slovak borderland, extending at Polish side in the Subcarpathian Voivodeship (województwo podkarpackie) and at Slovak side in the Presov Region (Presovsky Kraj).

Low industrialization rate and high percentage of agricultural land are characteristic of transboundary regions, especially in post communist countries. This situation causes high unemployment rates, grey zone development and other negative demographic trends, such as emigration of young people to cities or abroad in search of work.

Borderlands, both Polish and Slovak, belong to the poorest and economically least developed parts of both countries, therefore tourism development, if appropriately supported by local governments, can bring measurable benefits to local communities.

The areas on both sides of the border lie within the Carpathian Mountains. They have many similarities in language, natural environment, landscapes, history and culture, as well as in socio-economic problems, which can form a good basis for multidirectional cooperation.

The subject of Polish-Slovak borderlands was being brought up already in the 70s of the 20th century; however it revived only after 1989. Most importantly, it revived in the 90s of the last century, after Republic of Poland and Slovak Republic signed the agreement on transboundary cooperation in Warsaw (1994).

In the same time, three euroregions have been established in the transboundary area (the Carpathian euroregion in 1993, the Tatras euroregion in 1994, the Beskydy Mountains euroregion in 2000), which form official structures of transboundary cooperation.

The next step was the elaboration of several programme documents, where strategic directions of socio-economic development of the region have been determined, for example the Development strategy for Polish-Slovak transboundary region for years 2000-2006, or the Operation Programme for Transboundary Cooperation between Republic of Poland and Slovak Republic 2007-2013.

Regardless of many visible positive aspects of the Polish-Slovak transboundary cooperation in the field of tourism, between local and national authorities as well as within the tourism sector, such actions encounter many obstacles and problems.

Development barriers of the Polish-Slovak transboundary region in the field of tourism.

Development barriers – not only in the domain of tourism – appear in every area. However, the political system change in 1989 in countries of Central Europe enabled the establishment of transboundary cooperation and its formalisation.

Although though there are differentiated conditions for tourism function and development in the Polish-Slovak transboundary region, similar barriers and threats for recreation and tourism can be observed in entire area. The following can be named:

- limited infrastructure;
- poor and low standard tourism infrastructure, or its deficiency;
- not sufficient promotion of local, regional and cross-border tourism models;
- scant exposure and promotion of cultural values or thematic tourist routes;
- not sufficient financial involvement of local authorities.

One of the most important barriers for tourism development is the limited infrastructure. Regarding the dynamic development of tourism services, transportation infrastructure is of particular significance for borderlands development. And it is a remarkable challenge in mountainous areas.

One of the most important limitations for tourism development is low accessibility of described area and low quality of roads, both Polish and Slovak. The situation looks similar on both sides of the border, but assuming that Polish areas are better accessible for an average tourist, the quality of Slovak roads is much higher, even if these roads are narrow and poorly marked. Beyond main transportation routes that are kept in a not bad shape the condition of other roads poses a serious problem, not only for the region, but for both countries.

Another problem for Slovakia and Poland is the absence of two-lane roads and motorways in the described area, which not only reduces the capacity of main transportation routes, but also lowers the safety level of travelling and discourages foreign tourists from visiting.

The poor technical condition of roads and railways is an important barrier for tourism development, the more so as usually decisions in these matters can be taken exclusively by national authorities [5,s.48-49].

After joining the European Union by Republic of Poland and Slovak Republic on the 1st Mai 2004, and after signing the Schengen Agreement by both of these countries (December,

21st, 2007), which deals with abolition of passport controls at internal EU borders – that is also at the Polish-Slovak border – the problem of limited border crossing numbers disappeared. The numbers had been not sufficient before the EU accession. Today, the border can be crossed at any location, which is convenient for tourists who sometimes enter territories of the EU neighbours unwillingly.

Another trouble in these areas, especially important for tourism development, is the insufficient tourism infrastructure. Its condition is not very good, although it has been improving in the last years, expanding on new accommodation and catering facilities. It is noticeable, that tourism infrastructure develops faster on the Polish side. The Slovak region requires investments in nearly every mentioned area.

The borderland powiats (administrative regions): Lesko, Sanok, Krosno, Jasło and Bieszczady (bordering with Ukraine) are relatively rich in infrastructure against the Subcarpathian Voivodeship. They have 43,3% of all its accommodation facilities and 48,3% of reception capacity [3, s.6].

However, elements of accompanying infrastructure are still insufficient. This infrastructure is of complementary character, but sometimes it can also significantly affect area's attractiveness and drawing power for tourists. The author means here such establishments as swimming pools, sports grounds, golf-courses, tennis courts etc.

The under-investment of tourist infrastructure in the Polish-Slovak transboundary area affects also the quality of services, including:

- low standard of most of accommodation facilities;
- insufficient catering base;
- insufficient technical and social infrastructure;
- insufficient number of tourist equipment rent shops (such as bike and kayak rent).

A decided improvement is visible in creating new and maintaining already existing tourist trails (walking, bicycle and equestrian trails) and education trails (mostly in the Bieszczadzki and Magurski national parks). Some of these trails are transboundary, for example the bicycle trail Komańcza - Medzilaborce or the Carpathian Cycling Highway (Cyklomagistrala) connecting Dukla with Presov and further with Hungary; or other thematic tourist trails located on both sides of the border, such as the “Following the Good Soldier Svejek” Trail or the Carpathian Temples Trail.

Very often, barriers are formed by institutional restrictions. The poor and slow information flow between departments, their limited competences or low activity in establishing of cooperation, all this causes many interesting ideas and initiatives stay in briefcases of executives and never see the light of day.

Despite the fact that Poland and Slovakia have been allowed to use structural funds of the EU for a few years now, there are still financial restraints in activities of many administrative units. An example is the activity of thriving information points that meet the requirements perfectly but cannot be financed because of lacking funds. Maybe the problem is a poor ability to raise funds from additional sources.

Recently, some enlivenment in tourism promotion was initiated by the Subcarpathian Regional Tourism Organisation (Podkarpacka Regionalna Organizacja Turystyczna PROT) along with cooperating Centre for Transboundary Tourism Support. The latter collaborates also with local entrepreneurs from tourism sector and with partners from neighbouring countries, although these activities require intensification, especially on Slovak side. There should be an increase of funds for new publications, maps and catalogues promoting the splendid areas of Polish-Slovak borderlands. They enjoy great popularity among numerous visitors of tourism fairs, in which both sides take part.

Further cooperation between self-government entities and tourism sector is needed too, to promote a common tourist product – that is tourism in the Carpathians.

Apart from above mentioned issues limiting tourism development in the Polish-Slovak borderland zones, there are also important social and psychological barriers resulting from cultural and historical conditions.

Communities living in these regions have kept their prejudices and stereotypes not only about their neighbours, but also about various tourist groups. They must be overcome within the bilateral transboundary cooperation. This task should belong to duties of self-government administration, which should shape society's awareness regarding real benefits from tourism and ways of achieving them.

Prospects for tourism development in the Polish-Slovak transboundary region in the Subcarpathian Voivodeship (SWOT analysis).

Tourism potential of the Polish-Slovak transboundary region is not being exploited to the extent enabled by tourism resources of this area; therefore tourism development is not satisfactory. Proper actions need to be intensified in order to develop this branch of local economy, because its importance as income source for local residents is growing.

In the section about prospects for tourism development in the described area, the author recapitulates – in form of SWOT analysis – his reflections on tourism in the Polish-Slovak transboundary region.

Table

Prospects for tourism development in the Polish-Slovak transboundary region – a SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unique in Europe and varied in types values of natural environment and culture, which are the basis for different tourism forms' development - values that enable tourism development throughout the year - many areas with various forms of well organised nature protection - well developed Polish-Slovak cooperation of institutions - traditional activeness and initiative of people living in mountainous areas - rich and diverse culture and traditions, showing expressively in many folklore events and an attractive offer of artistic handcrafts - traditional contacts between borderland gminas (communes) and transboundary cooperation of cities - no environmentally harmful plants - low level of degradation and pollution of the natural environment - beneficial geopolitical and transit location 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not sufficient tourism development in the area, the relatively low standard of tourism facilities, slow development of information infrastructure - no comprehensive planning of tourist resorts – there are few accompanying infrastructure facilities - no educated and professional staff for the tourism sector, especially regarding foreign languages skills - high unemployment rates, emigration of young and educated people to cities or abroad - low accessibility – poor condition of road networks and lacking motorways; not sufficient funds for a radical improvement of roads' condition - no common tourism information centres, poorly developed promotion and marketing - low supply and low standard of tourist services in a broad sense - underinvestment of technical infrastructure of tourists facilities (sewerage system, gas pipes etc.)
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility of direct transboundary cooperation - Expansion, improvement and enhancement of tourist infrastructure - Creating rich and diverse offer for tourists, also for foreign tourists - The need for new events like festivals, concerts, exhibitions, folklore events - Revitalization of cultural heritage and an improving accessibility to environmental resources form the basis for brand tourist product creation - Creation and infrastructural development of transboundary networks and thematic tourist routes - Implementation of strategic investments (building and modernisation of roads, ring-roads and railways) - Using structural funding from the EU for agriculture and environmental protection, as well as for initiative development in rural areas - Common promotion activities – the brand of clean and wild areas - Trend towards active recreation and healthy lifestyle - Growing environmental awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A conflict between tourism development and nature protection requirements - Insufficient and underdeveloped road network - Railway network is not adapted to current needs (there are no regular connections between Poland and Slovakia) - High expectations of customers regarding quality - Not organised tourists' flow - Destruction of landscape and environmental values resulting from the unplanned tourism development and urbanisation [9,s.41-42] - Growing interest for traveling abroad among inhabitants of Poland and of the Subcarpathian Voivodeship - No improvement of tourism services' quality - Abandoning actions aimed at attracting foreign tourists - No monitoring for tourist activities in the region - Introducing the Euro in Slovakia on the 1st of January 2009
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The aim of all actions should be the constant and sustainable development of the transboundary region achieved through tourism. This area has suitable natural and cultural conditions, as well as aspirations of local communities, which should contribute to an acceleration of the socio-economic development in terms of the progressing European integration process. In this way, this region will become competitive and will gain the advantage over other territories of both countries and their direct neighbours: Hungary and Ukraine. The fact, that Poland and Slovakia – as well as Ukraine – are neighbours can be considered an advantage today, because it enables transboundary tourism development in this region.

The presented barriers and prospects of tourism development show clearly that, despite of numerous problems, tourism potential in this area is enormous. Therefore, further actions are needed in order to activate the region economically through tourism. Further development of this sector of economy will be possible only with participation and cooperation of local authorities, tourist organizations and companies, as well as local communities, which have a growing awareness of chances resulting from tourism.

It is also important to try to eliminate negative effects of seasonality in tourism. The positive image of Bieszczady and Beskid Niski mountains, present in the consciousness of visiting tourists, as well as the growing tourism infrastructure open up new perspectives.

Beside most popular tourism forms practiced in this area such as active tourism, sightseeing or recreation, new trends of world tourism market should be followed and niche or specialized tourism forms should be supported, for example: health tourism, culinary or business tourism, which could become brand tourism products.

In the Subcarpathian Voivodeship, it is also necessary to refer to the idea of *tourism diffuse* [3,s.17]. It assumes deconcentration and diffusion of tourists flow from tourism centres to places off the beaten track, through creation of an attractive complementary tourism offer (festivals, concerts, picnics, folklore parties).

It is also vital, that elaborated programmes of transboundary cooperation formulate tourism development according to the idea of *community-base tourism*. It suggests enlivenment of local communities' initiative by offering accommodation, catering or tour-guiding services for tourists (for example in agritourism farms), and deriving financial benefits from those activities.

It is worthwhile to create a common, unified tourism product called "Carpathian tourism" [4,s.166] that will be associated by an average tourist not with a particular country, but with the transboundary region of the Carpathians. However, such actions and initiatives must be undertaken and implemented together by Poles and Slovaks. It is important for inhabitants of both countries to be not left out of the mainstream of processes integrating modern Europe.

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BARRIERS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE POLISH-SLOVAK TRANSBOUNDARY REGION IN THE SUBCARPATHIAN VOIVODESHIP**Bartosz Piziak***Jagiellonian University**ul. Gronostajowa 7, 30-387 Kraków, Poland, tel. (+48) 12 664 52 95*

In the last decade tourism became one of the most important sectors of national economy in many countries, not only in the richest ones, but also in developing countries such as Poland or Slovakia. Areas with great natural and cultural values are abundant in these countries; they are the basis and form conditions for tourism development. An excellent example of such area with a Europe-wide unique natural and cultural heritage of high attractiveness for tourists is the Polish-Slovak borderland, extending at Polish side in the Subcarpathian Voivodeship (Województwo Podkarpackie) and at Slovak side in the Presov Region (Presovsky Kraj).

The paper presents barriers and threats for tourism development in the Polish-Slovak transboundary region. Instead of borderlands, both Polish and Slovak, belong to the poorest and economically least developed parts of both countries, tourism development, if appropriately supported by local governments, can bring measurable benefits to local communities. The author tries to answer what the local authorities in cooperation with tourist organizations, companies and local communities should do to eliminate those problems, because tourism potential in this area is enormous.

Key words: tourism development, transboundary region, the Subcarpathian Voivodeship

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