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Social, environmental and economic benefits of spa resorts and thermal centres on tourists and their local communities: a case study of Poland

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Location of statutory spa resorts using geothermal water and thermal centres in Poland



Sanatorium in Łądek-Zdrój



Graduation tower in Ciechocinek



Pump room in Kudowa-Zdrój



Bath house (Kuahausu) in Krynica-Zdrój



Methodology

- Research carried out over 10 years (2003-2013) on samples of tourists and local communities staying at Polish spa resorts:
- 2003— sample of 1 988,
- 2005 – sample of 3 461,
- 2013 – sample of 2 050.

Social benefits of spa resorts and thermal centres in Poland

- The socialisation process in Polish spa resorts in the form of organised cultural life including concerts in spa parks, artistic performances, dancing, meal sharing, tourist trips, organised strolls, etc.,
- Women and men often arrive in a spa resort alone, looking for a life partner, which is the hidden purpose of their visit,
- Spa resorts and thermal centres let attain a balance between body, spirit and mind for the longevity,
- Over half (55%) of guests of thermal facilities in Poland are from generation X (born in 1965-1975), while in Europe from baby boomers (1946-1964),
- Thermal centres are mainly used by couples and families with children, which is also observed in Europe,
- Groups of friends are a growing segment of recipients of wellness services.

Environmental benefits of spa resorts and thermal centres in Poland

- The services for which Europe pays and for which wellness tourists travel far are those based on natural and local values and resources as well as the traditions of the location and entities (authenticity)

Economic benefits of spa resorts and thermal centres in Poland

- Poland is one of the largest wellness tourism markets in CEE, as evidenced by the Global Wellness Economy Monitor (2018) data, according to which in 2015-2017 there were about 2 million wellness trips to Poland, which means an increase of 14,7%
- According to the leading growth markets for wellness tourism trips, Poland ranks 19th (Global Wellness Economy Monitor, 2018). This is an increase from 23rd place since 2007,
- In 2018, the Polish thermal tourism/mineral spring market was valued at 674.5 million USD (203 facilities including geothermal facilities), which gives Poland the 10th place in the global ranking of top twenty thermal/mineral springs markets,
- Wellness services are available in most cases for the medium-prosperous market in Poland (50%) as it is in Europe (60%) and for the so-called exclusive/luxury guests (45%),

Economic benefits of spa resorts and thermal centres in Poland

- Expenses in the case of tourists using Polish wellness facilities are at the level of 150 EUR/person, and as regards the inhabitants of a given town at the level of EUR 80/person,
- Research carried out over 10 years (2003-2013) in spa resorts indicated that thermal pools constitute the most desirable tourist attraction.



Thank you very much for your
attention😊