

“Spa and Wellness Tourism as a Spatially Determined Product of Health Resorts in Poland”

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Abstract

This article describes spa and wellness tourism as an example of a tourist product in the spatial formulation of health resorts in Poland. Health resorts are described as a specific local product that could be the object of territorial marketing. The factor conception of a general tourist product that was developed by V. T. C. Middleton, which refers to building the tourist product of a health resort, is thoroughly analysed. The difference between the tourist product of a health resort and a health resort tourist product is highlighted, as well as the multifunctional character of health resorts. There is no agreement on the definition of a spa in specialist literature. There is a difference between the notion of spa in Europe and in the U.S. This difference was observed by analysing the definitions of a spa as set forth by the European Spas Association (ESPA) and the International Spa Association (ISPA).

Key words: *spa and wellness tourism, health resort, tourist product of area, territorial marketing*

Paper Type: *Scientific paper*

Introduction

If health resorts (in the next section of this paper, the notion of a health resort will refer to a town) in Poland want to compete in the globalised market for health resort tourism services or, at the very least, integrate with The Uniform European Union Market, they should make preparations to provide spa and wellness tourism, an integrated tourist product of health resorts, that will address the needs and expectations of patients and tourists.

Spatial Location of Health Resorts in Poland and their Historical Determinants on the Background of European Health Resorts

There is not developed a common terminology and classification of European health resorts in European countries therefore people use the various meanings to determine the term “health resort (spa resort)” (Table 1). Polish spa resorts function in the classical sense and provide healing treatments based on natural remedies, which can be also found in the former Eastern European countries as well as in Germany, Switzerland, Austria and part of France. Spa resorts in Poland and Europe have undergone different historical path, however, their common feature is that it has always been a place of treatment based on natural resources or therapeutic climate. Nevertheless more and more traditional concept of spa resort gives way in the spa resorts in Europe (including Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary), the concept of spa resort in, which programs relate to the physical and psychological regeneration (wellness) are used.

Table 1. Number of health resorts in European countries

	Country	Number of health resorts
1.	Russia	3055
2.	Germany	350
3.	Italy	300
4.	Spain	128
5.	France	107
6.	Poland	45
7.	Portugal	44
8.	Hungary	32
9.	Czech Republic	30
10.	Slovakia	21
11.	Switzerland	21
12.	Luxembourg	19
13.	Holand	18
14.	Greece	16
15.	Slovenia	15
16.	Belgium	12
17.	Great Britain	12
18.	Austria	11

Source: European Spas Association

- Hence, European spa resorts can be divided into three groups:
- the first group consists of spa resorts, which are dominated by the classic model of healing treatment based on natural resources. They occur most frequently in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and partly in France,
 - the second group consists of "spa" type spa resorts that are specific to countries such as Italy, Hungary, partly Czech Republic, Hungary, Greece, Slovenia, Belgium, United Kingdom,
 - the third group consists of the places, which lost their spa resort character and were transformed into "wellness" centers, which are present in the most European countries, while in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Poland, wellness products are still a small percentage of the services offered in spa resorts, but their scope and the number continue to grow.

Generally speaking, in Europe there are today health resorts, both in the classical sense, which are experiencing a deep crisis today and modern sense linked to health tourism based on wellness products, which currently has a dynamic development.

The most stringent law in meeting the specific requirements of the place with the status of the spa resort have Swiss, Germans and Austrians. In estimation of spa resorts they are taken into account not only therapeutic natural resources, but also:

- climate,
- clean air,
- the environment,

- state of infrastructure in health resorts,
- standard of accommodation,
- ecological conditions,
- communication capabilities.

The main group of discussed places are Polish statutory spa resorts. The statutory spa resort is an area, which has been given the status of the spa resort in the manner specified in the Act of 28 July 2005 on healing treatments and spa resorts in Poland.

Thus, to obtain the status of the spa resort in Poland it is necessary to:

- 1) have natural healing resources with confirmed healing properties under the terms of the Act;
- 2) have climate with confirmed therapeutic properties under the terms of the Act;
- 3) have spa treatment facilities prepared to carry out healing services;
- 4) fulfill the environmental protection requirements specified in the regulations;
- 5) have the technical infrastructure for water and sewage, energy, mass transport, and waste management.

According to the Ministry of Health in 2012, there are forty five statutory health resorts in Poland. They are located in the thirteen voivodeships among the sixteen singled out as major Polish territorial subdivisions (Figure 1). There are two voivodeships with the biggest amount of spa resorts: Lower Silesia (11) and Lesser Poland (9).

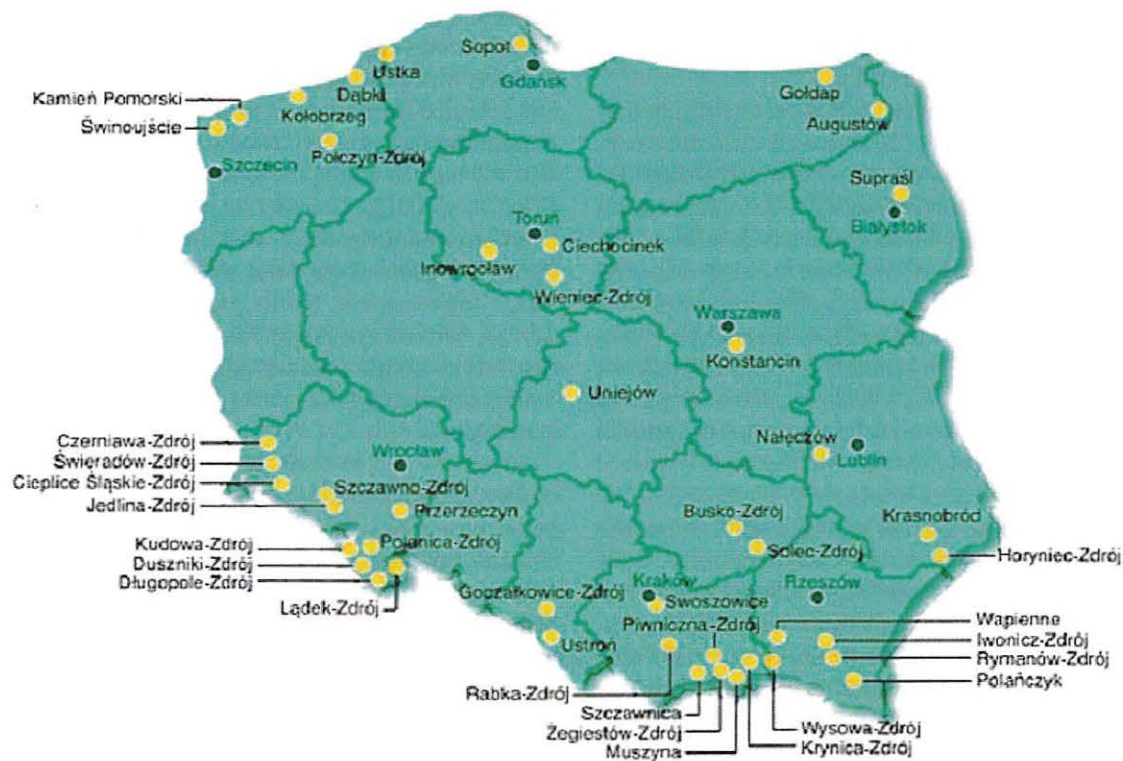


Figure 1. Map of the statutory health resorts in Poland

Source: own compilation

The statutory spa resorts are situated in all geographic regions of the country, but their location is quite unevenly spread across the country. It is because of the fact that natural resources such as healing waters or therapeutic gas will favor the southern areas and peloids (healing mud) mostly the northeast of Poland as a result of the geological structure. Most of the statutory spa resorts are situated in small towns. Exceptions are three spa resorts which are located within the large urban agglomerations such as: Konstancie-Jeziorna (Warsow), Sopot (Gdansk, Gdynia) and Swoszowice (Krakau).

The Essence of the Spatial Tourist Product

In object literature, the notion of a "tourist product" is interpreted in various ways. It results from the fact that a tourist product can also be a place, a particular service or a package of these services and material products (Holloway, Robinson 1997). It can also be perceived from the point of view of the businessman (producer) or his recipient (tourist). Considering these assumptions, the distinction between a tourist product *sensu stricto* (narrow formulation) and *sensu largo* (wide formulation) can be accepted (Medlik 1995). According to the first definition, the tourist product is defined from the individual manufacturer's point of view. They either format their own tourist product as something that tourists buy separately (e.g., transportation or accommodation) or in the form of a set (package of services) (Medlik 1995; Middleton 1996). This approach results from the above definition, that tourist products produced by different subjects that are connected by tourism have the character of simple products, whether they exist as individual goods and services or as multiple (composed of parts) products offered in the form of packages.

Moreover, it should be remembered that tourists are not only interested in services but first of all in tourist attractions (e.g., of a town or a region), which compose the widely understood tourist product. This idea is underlined by V. T. C. Middleton in his factor conception of general tourist products. A "tourist product" is more widely defined as a formulation focusing on the customer's point of view and on the benefits offered by the product to its recipients, which reflects the model of the complex tourist product (total tourism product) set forth by V. T. C. Middleton. The solution proposed by V. T. C. Middleton, who distinguished two levels of tourist product, seems to be correct: a total (general) tourist product refers to a combination of all elements consumed by the tourist from the moment a decision to travel is made until the time of return to his place of residence (Witt, Moutinho 1995). It is an idea, an expectation or a mental construct existing in the tourist's mind (it can be identified with the tourist's total experience); the specific tourist products (the product of particular producers) that create the component elements of a total tourist product are individual goods and services, mainly having a commercial character, such as accommodation, food and beverage, transportation and attractions. The model consists of five main components of a general tourist product: tourist attractions of destination, infrastructure and services of destination, communication accessibility of destination, image and perception of destination and price for consumer (Middleton 1996).

All of the above-mentioned components depend on expectations that appeared in the tourist's mind during travel planning. They make up the base for creating the product. For every tourist, the product itself is the whole of his impressions, survivals and experiences existing in the tourist's place of residence, during travel and at the destination because looking from this perspective, he can estimate whether his needs that gave rise to the impulse to undertake travel were satisfied (Dziedzic, 1998). The presented concepts of S. Medlik and V. T. C. Middleton illustrate both the differences and the interdependence between both kinds of tourist products. The two concepts also avoid the ambiguity about this topic that occurs in object literature. They underline the superiority of a total tourist product over products offered by particular producers, which reflects the sequential behaviours of the consumers of tourist goods and services. When a tourist first decides what he wants to experience during his travel, this determines the character of the total tourist product. Later, he compiles indispensable goods and services (Dziedzic 1998). It should be noted that the general tourist product defined in this way is based on expectations connected with the stay at the destination of the travel experience, where the basic part of tourist consumption occurs.

To summarise, it should be noted that the holistic formulation of a tourist product that was proposed by V. T. C. Middleton, states that the essence of an area tourist product (community tourist product) does not conflict with the principles of marketing in tourism. The tourist product of an area (region, town, national park, etc.) is a special, spatially determined kind of tourist product, which means that such a product can be produced and consumed only in a given space. It is a multiple set of elements distinguished with regard to one's concrete location in space, which is characterised by tourist attractions and services delivered by tourist and paratourist infrastructure, by hospitality and local society favour and even by images of events that will happen during the tourist's stay (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk 2010). Considering the characteristic components of an "area tourist product" that underline its essence, the following categories of products should be distinguished: thing, service, object, event, tourist package and route (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk 2010). Of the mentioned categories, the first two are simple products and the remaining categories are multiple products, which unite simple products into an integrated whole.

Moreover, we can distinguish several characteristic features of an area tourist product, which will permit us to understand better its essence and its multidimensional character. Those characteristic features include the following: the spatial determination, the complexity, the multiproductiveness the complementariness, the effect of synergy, a strong dependence on difficult-to-predict psychosocial factors, a lack of one price and a uniform standard and the possibility of arranging in time the consumption of a product (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk 2010). The spatial character of an area tourist product is one of its basic features. Therefore, the following hierarchic levels of an area tourist product can be distinguished, assuming as a criterion the range of occurrence: local—the range contains the terrain of a town, a commune or a national park; regional—

the range contains the terrain of geographical or ethnographical lands or provinces; national—the area covered by the nation's borders; subcontinental—the range contains several neighbouring countries, e.g., Scandinavian countries; continental—the area of occurrence is created by the majority of the countries of a given continent (Kaczmarek, Stasiak, Włodarczyk 2010).

Marketing Orientation of the Area Tourist Product

In Western literature and more and more often in Polish literature, the whole tourist resort is treated as a special tourist product. From the moment tourists began to travel with a definite aim, the destination of their stay became the most important product that consumers buy (Witt, Moutinho 1995). In accordance with the marketing approach in tourism, the definite place that is the object of the tourist's interest as well as the motive for his travel is treated as the area tourist product, which is the object of purchase—a sales transaction in tourism (Kornak, Rapacz 2001). The use of tourist marketing conceptions to promote and sell the idea of "places" (the area) is the new challenge for marketing theoreticians. At the same time, it forces one to look at territorial units with a somewhat different point of view. In light of the thesis presented above, a trial involving describing a health resort as a specific product that is the object of marketing is undertaken. A marketing approach that treats a definite area or town as a product is particularly essential for properly defining and forming the area tourist product in the spatial formulation.

This is a notion that came into being as a consequence of the development of location marketing, which is defined in English literature as "marketing places" and is called territorial marketing in Polish (Domański 1997) and refers to tourism destination marketing. According to A. Szromnik, "place" can be understood in different ways, but it is always a definite area with well-known social, demographic, legal, political, technical, communication and economic parameters, regardless of its size, form of property, main function, accessibility, or level of urbanisation. Place—in the marketing sense when defined as a product—is a municipal commune including the main market square of a city, the central business district, the main trade district, the dwelling district and the different territories defined as part of the city, as well as any countryside communes, distinguished natural and functional areas. A place can also be a group of municipal and country communes that are part of a province, a whole province, a group of provinces, a region, a geographical land or even a whole country (Domański 1997).

From the territorial marketing concept point of view, which concerns management area, a town as tourist product *per definitione* should be perceived from two levels: the town as a whole is meant to provide 1) specific multiple "megaproducts" (the general tourist product) and 2) sets of products making up the material goods and services offered by a given area (the particular producer's product). In the widest formulation of territorial marketing (of a town, of a commune, of a region), the coordinated works of the local, regional or nationwide subjects aim to create the processes of exchange and influence through recognition, formation and satisfaction of the needs and expectation of

the citizens (Domański 1997). We can distinguish three strategic aims of territorial marketing. The first concerns developing and strengthening services that are delivered by public institutions. The second strategic aim involves forming a positive image of a region, a city or a different unit. The final aim involves increasing the attractiveness of and the growth of competition for settlement units (Florek 2006).

This marketing should be based on a definite network of connections and proper relations as well as on comprehensive dialogue between local, regional and central authorities supporting the development of the local tourist economy (tourist infrastructure enriching health resorts' offerings) and tourist and health resort enterprises. Nonprofit organisations in tourism, citizens of the area and external subjects (e.g., neighbouring communes that have attractive tourist goods or research institutions) should also be included. It can be ascertained that the axis of territorial marketing should be relation marketing (Kornak, Rapacz 2001). Therefore, relation marketing means building mutually profitable, long-term relations between parties, which reduce the costs of making transaction and save time. In relation marketing, the mutual exchange of value of material and immaterial character is significant.

The Tourist Product of a Health Resort and the Health Resort's Tourist Product

In the last few years, the people who manage health resorts have become more and more willing to format and promote products that have become tourist attractions for a given place. This is why the notions "tourist product of a health resort" and "health resort tourist product" are used. These two notions seem to be similar, so they are often used interchangeably and treated as having the same meaning. As a result of the definitions given above, the tourist product of a health resort is a multiple-area tourist product. This means that for such a product, one should look at the whole product and consider not only the objective aspect but also the variety of subjects responsible for its formation. The tourist product of a health resort consists of elements that from one side are delivered by the destination and from the other side by subjects who have an influence on the formation, development and management of the health resort as a whole as well as on the particular material and immaterial products situated there.

The elements of the tourist product of a health resort are dependent on activities undertaken by the public, private and non-profit sectors. Among the groups responsible for shaping the tourist products of a health resort, the local society as well as the tourists or the patients should be mentioned. Their opinions, experiences and behaviours create a complementary element to the tourist product of a health resort. Therefore, the general tourist product of a health resort consists on one hand of groups whose activities have a fundamental impact on product management and on the other hand of the health resort itself, which has added value (the symbol, image, idea, etc.). Combined, these groups are able to offer tourist attractions and infrastructure that meet the different needs and expectations of tourists and patients (Figure 2). It should be highlighted that

the previously mentioned elements of the tourist product of a health resort do not make up a simple combination of the four components, but are instead the result of synergy existing between them. S. Smith claims that the tourist product is something more than the sum of its parts (Smith 1994).

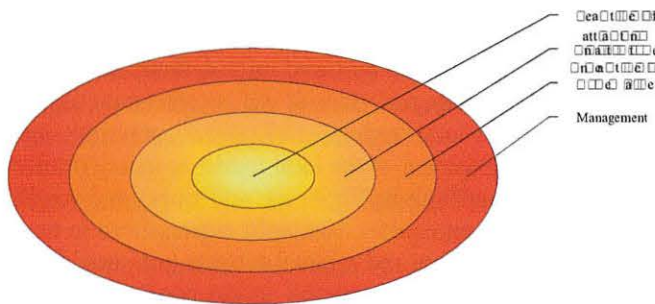


Figure 2. Structure of the tourist product of a health resort

Source: own compilation

Within the health resort, there exists specified tourist attractions and tourist infrastructure characteristic of the health resort that distinguishes it from other health resort areas. Therefore, within the tourist product of a health resort, the health resort tourist product can be distinguished. A health resort tourist product is also a spatial product, created on the basis of local attrac-

tions that exist only in a specific place. This view emphasises the health resort character of the tourist product and its close relationship with the health resort, not only with regard to the product location. The health resort tourist product consists of attractions that testify to the identity of the area, based on original and unique health resort values, health resort infrastructure and services underlining the local character of the product for particular health resort cosmetics, treatments, dishes, interior decoration, architecture or music. These features are meant to underscore the product's relationship with the health resort where it is offered as well as with the resources and conditions existing there.

Despite the health resort tourist product's local character, it does not function separately from the region in which it is situated. This is why it seems reasonable that the health resort tourist product references its structure to the regional identity. The previously mentioned considerations concerning the health resort tourist product show that it is a narrower notion than the tourist product of a health resort, which includes all tourist attractions located within the territory, even those not characteristic of a particular health resort and not connected with its cultural or historical relations. Not every tourist product of a health resort can be called a health resort tourist product, but every health resort tourist product can be considered part of a tourist product of a health resort (Figure 3).

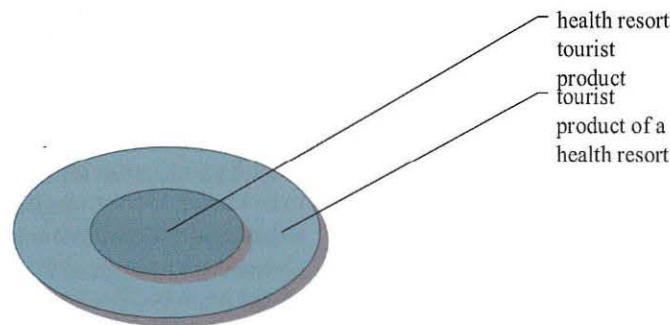


Figure 3. The tourist product of a health resort and the health resort tourist product

Source: own compilation

The Essence of the Concepts of Spa and Wellness

The concept of a spa is inseparably connected with the concept of wellness, both of which are often mistakenly misidentified, used interchangeably as synonyms or used collectively under the term "spa." Correctly understood, wellness means considerably more than simply healing or relaxing treatments—it is a philosophy of life, which aims to achieve a positive mood by creating harmony between the body, the mind and the spirit. Wellness has been practiced by humankind for a very long time, under a variety of names. Reflections on harmonious living can be found in ancient writings, where some of the most well-known philosophers dealt with this issue. They integrated wellness with the concept of *homeostasis*, meaning the ability to maintain a state of equilibrium with the environment.

The contemporary understanding of wellness came into being in 1959, when an American doctor, H. Dunn, created the definition of wellness used today. According to Dunn, wellness

is a lifestyle that promotes a positive mood and brings harmony to body, spirit and mind; these three elements define man in a holistic way. Wellness consists of all that surrounds man: what he does and what he consumes to feel well. Correctly understood, wellness affects the senses of taste, touch, smell, sight and hearing. Therefore, it is important to consider what we eat, how we sleep and rest, our environment, where we live, our physical condition and how we react to stress. If one of the elements is neglected, equilibrium will not be achieved. This approach to life will assure positive mood every day. Wellness consists of activities, behaviours and attitudes that improve the quality of life and contribute to longevity.

Dr. H. Dunn's concept of a healthy lifestyle falls under the umbrella of wellness but does not need to be pursued on the grounds of a health resort utilising resources of the natural environment or utilising treatments based on natural healing sources. This distinguishes wellness from the notion of a spa

in the European Spas Association (ESPA) understanding. The European Spas Association gives the precise definition of the word spa as a mineral spring or a place or resort where such a spring was found (Smith, Jenner, 2000). Spas are now of a highly complex and diverse nature. This diverse nature starts with the name and its likely meanings. Bath, bano, bad, therme/terme, grotto, spa, kúpele, fürdő- all mean a thermal water-based spa, in various languages (Smith, Puczkó 2009). It is generally accepted that the concept of spa has its origins in Europe. Traces of the early determination of spa dates back to the fourteenth century when it was discovered the mineral springs near Liège in Belgium, a city known as the Spa (Croutier 1992). Some subscribe to the origin of the name of the Walloon word *espa* (fountain), or Latin *spargere* (sprinkle), while others believe that the word spa is an acronym of Latin phrase *solus per aqua, sanus per aquam* (healthy through water), or *sanitas per aqua* (health through water). It is important to point out that the word spa in the European Spas Association statistics is used for both a town where a natural mineral spring exists and for an enterprise or group of enterprises that offer treatments based on that source for a period and that receives payment from health insurance fees.

Others, especially in the U.S., take a rather less rigid view of what constitutes a spa. According to the International Spa Association (ISPA), no natural mineral spring is necessary. The International Spa Association defines a spa simply as a place where active and sustained use of natural therapeutic agents and health-giving elements are applied within a hospitable environment over a given period. The International Spa Association promotes and defines the spa experience as "your time to relax, reflect, revitalise and rejoice" (Smith, Jenner 2000). As mentioned above, the term wellness has a considerably wider definition than the spa concept. The word spa, when understood as a town or an enterprise or at least as a service, is only one of the many available psychophysical regeneration forms described by wellness philosophy. In other word, one of the ways in which one can embrace the wellness philosophy is to travel to a health resort and/or take advantage of the services offered by a spa enterprise.

The Definition of the Terms Spa and Wellness in the Polish Spa and Wellness Service Market

The Polish definition of the word spa fully embraces the understanding of the term in both the European and the American sense. Thus, a spa is understood as a health resort with natural healing resources with a spa enterprise located within its borders, or simply, in the American meaning, as a place that does not need resources from the natural environment (e.g., day spas). In the last two decades, the wellness philosophy as a lifestyle gained popularity in the United States, and it has since reached the Far East and the European countries. It appeared in Poland in the 1990s in the form of spa services offered in spa enterprises. The spa trend is one of the most dynamically developing phenomena in the world and in Poland. It is no longer limited to health resorts and treatments with water. The famous phrase *solus per aqua* (health thanks

to water) is no longer sufficient to define the richness of the present spa idea, which is subject to constant changes in order to keep up with the competition. The concept's development is influenced by new trends in many fields: health, cosmetics, fitness, cuisine and architecture. In the European market, the word spa appeals to individual forms of activity and to tradition. Meanwhile, in Poland, the term is used not only by the enterprises that *a priori* are based on the spa idea but also by fitness clubs, cosmetic studios or the biological renovation centres that offer several simple cosmetic treatments or utilise devices having spa in their name.

Moreover, in many hotels, the term spa is used to supplement a basic product, which can be something like a conference or a training service. The lack of a legal definition of the term spa in Polish law results in the misuse of the term. The Health Ministry decree from February 17, 2004, contains only detailed sanitary requirements that cosmetic, barber, tattoo and biological renovation centres should adhere to. According to this decree, the cosmetic institutions can render a range of services addressing regeneration, nursing and beautifying the body. However, the biological renovation centres render a range of services addressing the regeneration of the body through physical exercise, irradiation, sunbathing, massage, dry or moist hot air treatments as well as relaxation treatments. What's more, Polish spa hotels are not members of the world or European spa associations; at the same time, Poland lacks its own national spa associations, which would set precise criteria and standards for spa hotel functioning and would introduce a system of spa hotel certification.

In some countries, suitable legal regulations have been created and new laws attempting to regulate the rapidly developing spa industry are still being passed. These countries include Germany, Austria, Greece and Italy. In other countries, for example in Lithuania, such regulations are just being created (Kłossowska 2009). Moreover, spa associations that provide some standards for the functioning of spa hotels exist in almost every European country (e.g., the National Association of Lithuanian Spas, British International Spa Association [BISA]) and at the international level (e.g., the International Spa Association, the European Spas Association). However, certain spa hotels that belong to large or luxurious spa hotel networks are categorised. *Relais & Chateaux*, a French hotel network, is an example of a hotel that possesses the financial resources necessary to conduct an audit enabling the institution of a recognisable standard for spa services.

Despite the general use of the term "wellness" in Poland, only a few centres implement all of the aspects of the wellness lifestyle and philosophy. Wellness is often identified, or treated equal to, the concept of a spa. Meanwhile, treatments that can be experienced in a spa centre are only one of the elements ensuring achievement of a "state of bliss" for the human body. Spa treatments are therefore ideal supplements to other activities (such as meditation, healthy sleeping and a balanced diet), which aim to secure man's "well-being". The terms "well-being" and "bliss" are often used interchangeably in Poland. The two terms perfectly reflect the idea/definition of wellness. In 1946, the World Health Organisation (WHO) adopted a new defini-

tion of health. Health is defined not only as the lack of disease or disability but also as full physical, mental and social well-being. If health is something more than the lack of disease, then you can be more or less healthy even when not ill. To be healthy, you should not only strive to avoid sickness, but also take care of your physical fitness, achieve a positive mood and maintain good relations with people.

In this way, we come to wellness (Figure 4). Wellness is a phenomenon of modern civilisation that endeavours to remain youthful as long as possible by being healthy and in good psychophysical shape. The challenges that contemporary man faces—hurry and stress, life under pressure and the trial of reconciling private life with intensive work—force him to search for solutions that let him achieve psychical and physical equilibrium, ensuring wholesome well-being. Achieving and maintaining a high social position requires large investments in one's education, professional career and health. Wellness is popular in both developed and developing countries, including Poland. Seeking wellness has measurable advantages in terms of economical growth because it extends the citizens' productive period and improves their quality of life.

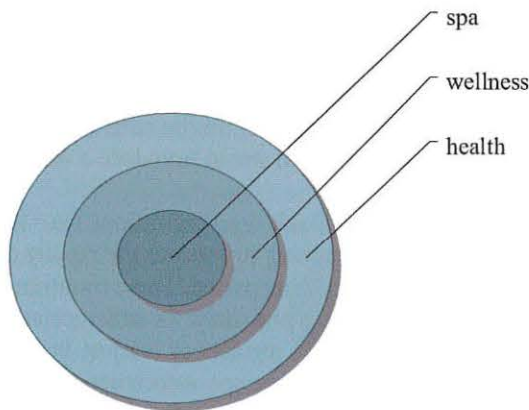


Figure 4. Relations between health, wellness and spa
Source: own compilation

The Place of the Spa and Wellness Tourism in Health Resort Tourism

The identification of structural elements of a tourist product of a health resort is based on functions that are realised on the terrain of the health resort. The development basis of health resorts in Poland should be their multifunctional character and their ability to provide attractive, innovative and competitive products that encompass preventive healing services and active rest services. Currently, the connection of two functions—healing and tourism, which are complementary—is becoming indispensable. From one perspective, healing treatments are inseparable from tourist attractions delivered by health resorts: changing one's environment, participating in sports, taking tourist trips and attending cultural events to a large degree are important to the success of a treatment. From the other perspective, tourists who spend their time visiting health resorts willingly use traditional and modern healing treatments.

Beyond the group of people whose state of health requires *sensu stricto* healing treatment connected with healing tourism, there is an increasing demand from modern civilisation for rest that improves one's psychophysical shape and prevents diseases. This kind of activity is called health tourism, and the necessary conditions can be conveniently found on health resort terrain. At present, health resorts fulfil an important role as centres providing not only healing treatments but also as centres that improve the general health of human beings. According to changes that occurred in worldwide tourism during the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the definition of health tourism is understood to be a change of residence with the aim of improving physical and psychical health. Medical operations and treatment in clinics are also included (Łęcka 2003). In the opinion of another author, health tourism concerns gratification of one's medical, rest and prophylaxis needs (Gaworecki 2007). Health tourism does not involve sick people, but rather those in whom it is difficult to establish a perceptible border between the state of health and disease. They are not ill men in the classic notion of this word but are those who require an improvement of conditions as a result of the negative conditions created by modern civilisation.

While agreeing with the presented definitions and motives for health tourism, we can distinguish within the field of health tourism different kinds of tourism that accomplish the tourist function of health resorts. From the notion of medical tourism, as opposed to healing tourism, we can understand that travel is undertaken to take advantage of professional medical care (Kurek 2008). In this context, we can conclude that the curative methods used in medical tourism are more invasive than those used in healing tourism.

More and more people who are not yet sick feel the need for a preventive temporary change of place and style of life. Health prophylaxis is a domain that was recognised by the civilised world as the future of medical care. This results from the threats of diseases of civilisation that have become more prominent during the twenty-first century. Presently, the changes in consumers' needs are visible and novel. The preventive approach to health results from the desire for an attractive appearance and a lengthened life. More and more Poles are working to achieve harmony between body, soul and mind; are concerned about their appearance; and are working to improve the aesthetics of their body and achieve a positive psychophysical mood.

The majority of products proposed in the health resorts of Western Europe are based on wellness programs that promote a philosophy or style of life that permits man to reach psychophysical equilibrium. One form of wellness tourism is spa tourism, that in European meaning is combined with cosmetics and treatments based on the natural healing waters existing in a great number of Polish health resorts. It is said that spa tourism in health resorts will be the rest of the future.

As the result of earlier reflections, we can conclude that considering two complementary functions of health resorts—healing and tourism—leads to two kinds of tourism: healing tourism and health tourism. These two forms of tourism, together with other kinds of tourism (medical tourism, rest tourism, spa and

wellness tourism) can be practiced on health resort properties and their combination leads to the idea of health resort tourism) (Figure 5). The future of many health resorts lies in moving beyond the traditional medical profile. It will be necessary to implement varied, unconventional and innovative solutions

combining modern medical treatment with health prophylaxis and rest tourist, especially active rest. Spa and wellness tourism is an example of an innovative product available at health resorts and is a source of competitive advantage for Polish health resorts.

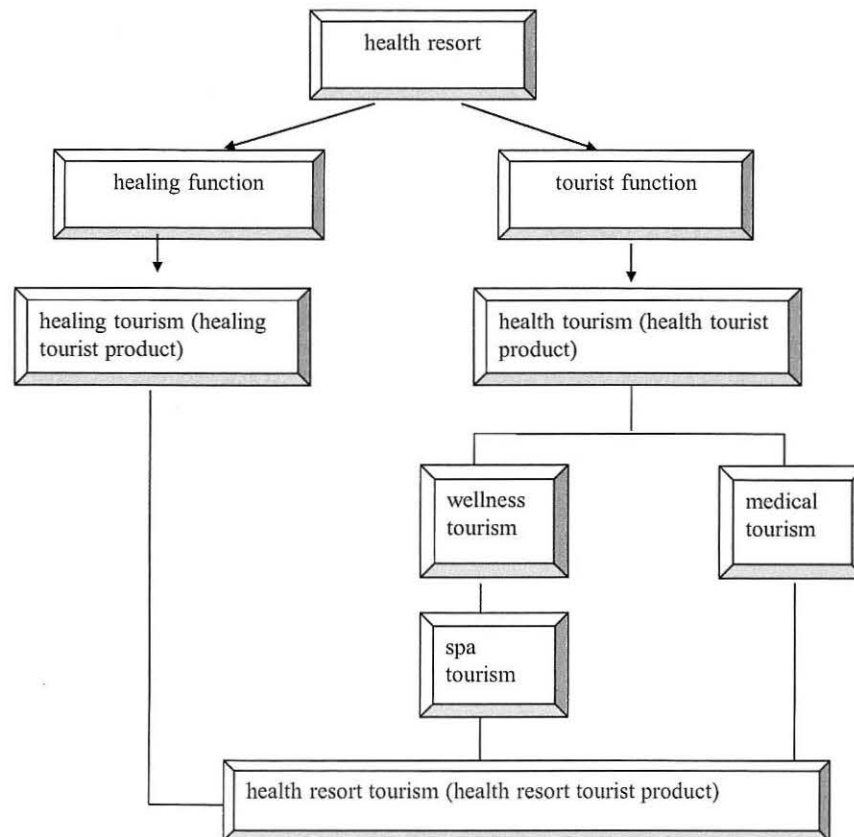


Figure 5. Diagram of a health resort's functions

Source: own compilation

Conclusion

To sum up it should be noted that health resort can be perceived as the tourist product of a health resort or/and the health resort's tourist product, which is determined by the kind of tourism (health tourism: spa and wellness tourism, medical tourism; healing tourism) dominating within the area. As far as health tourism refers to the tourist product of a health resort inasmuch healing tourism is connected with the health resort's tourist product.

The tourist product of a health resort or the health resort's tourist product is a complex product of the area composed of

various elements, which ultimately should form a coherent whole, attractive for tourists, patients and inhabitants.

Health resorts in which the health resort activity is a blend of tourism and medical services have one of the largest developmental potentials in Poland, which can grow out of the rich historical spa tradition. However, being competitive in the health resort tourism service market will depend on the necessary players taking responsibility for forming tourist products of health resorts and health resort's tourist products.

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