

THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES ON THE EXAMPLE OF SELECTED TOURISM COMMUNITIES IN MALOPOLSKA REGION, POLAND

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Abstract

Strategic planning of socio-economic development is one of the most important function and task of local, regional and national authorities. Tourism development should be included in this process of strategic planning and in case of places where tourism plays an important role this role should also be mirrored in official strategic documents and also should be carefully included in strategic planning by public authorities at all levels. The aim of the paper is presentation of the way in which tourism is included in strategic documents of four selected four communities from Malopolska voivodeship (region) in the southern part of Poland. Communities were selected purposely and selected communities might be described as typically tourism areas. Their development strategies (Zakopane and Szczawnica) tourism was perceived as a major factor of socio-economic development, and in two cases (Krynica-Zdrój and Uście Gorlickie) the role of tourism was not pointed in all main statements. The main research approach used in the paper was reviewing official documents of selected communities available on-line or in community offices.

Key words: *development strategy, local development, Malopolska region.*

Introduction

Local development is a long-term process which leads to the improvement of the economic capacity of a local area. According to Wojtasiewicz (1996), the concept of local development should be associated with the expected positive transformations of quantitative, qualitative and structural properties of the particular system where the system specifies socio-territorial composition with a set of economic, spatial and cultural characteristics using own hierarchy of values. Many scientists like Soboń and Rogozińska-Mitrut (2003) argue that local development means the development of local structures as well as the local development of the society. Community is the basic unit of local government, the third level of administrative division. Local economic development is carried out by the local authorities through a set of instruments which determine development policy.

Strategic planning is significant for local development to achieve higher standard of living and to cope with possible arising challenges. As communities enter the 21st century local strategies increasingly focus on self-development strategies that emphasize self-sufficiency, local capacity and resources, and sustainability. In order to identify these strategies and develop local plans communities often use a variety of strategic planning techniques and methodologies. Initially employed by the private business sector as a tool for establishing market position, the strategic planning process understandably required major adjustments before it could be adopted by the public sector

(Blair 2004). Development planning is supposed to represent the basic platform that determines how societies, places and spaces should change and what they could be like in the future (Deželan., Maksuti, Uršič 2014).

Managing the development of counties, districts and provinces is the responsibility of local authorities. Each community, county, or region is a complicated and complex system of interdependent activities. On the one hand, every territorial unit is autonomous, and thus often not harmonized or even contradictory. On the other hand, it should interact with each other. Finding the right strategy requires cooperation and agreements with different units of local government and with various partners. The right strategy can bring significant effects which are not achieved by the spontaneous actions.

The basic act regulating the issues of development policy in Poland is the Act of the 6th of December 2006 on the Principles of Development Policy. This act is the first Polish legal regulation comprehensively covering issues of policy development entities to conduct the policy and procedures for cooperation between them. It provides the legal framework for the system of development policy:

- key areas, goals and ways of development policy;
- entities conducting development policy, including entities required to keep policy development;
- the mode of cooperation between the entities engaged in development policies and mechanisms of coordination of development policy;

- basic definitions of development policy;
- basic documents in the field of development policy.

Article 2 of the Act on the Principles of Development Policy defines development policy as “a set of undertaken and implemented interrelated activities which should ensure sustainable and balanced development of the country, socio-economic, regional and Spatial improvement of the competitiveness of the economy and creation of new jobs at the national, the regional or the local level”. According to the Article 3 of the Act, development policy is fulfilled through:

- 1) Council of Ministers;
- 2) The government of province;
- 3) The government of a county and a community.

That means that the Polish system is built on the principle of division of powers and responsibilities between three levels of government. Each of these levels is responsible for leading the development of the area at a different scale and has its own competence in relation to the individual fields. There is no hierarchical subordination.

The process of managing a community is focused on creating prospects for its development. Each community sets up local development documents in order to coordinate activities, to evaluate potential opportunities and threats in the environment, to indicate strengths and weaknesses of the local governments, and to solve key development problems.

According to Dziurbejko (2006), the concept of local development strategy has many important functions:

- it enables effective management of the local human resources and capital;
- it indicates the weaknesses of the community and identifies local development threats;
- it provides a stable development independent from changing political options of local authorities;
- it is a source of information about the socio-economic processes in the area;
- it increases the chances of community to obtain additional funding support from external sources.

Wojciechowski (2003) adds that development strategy of the community is a very important management tool for at least two reasons. Firstly, thanks to the strategy there is a real chance of structural transformations in the community. Secondly, by developing strategy there is a possibility to dispose the budget effectively and it would be a prerequisite for applying for funds from different sources.

Community development strategy is an optional document which evaluates economic development objectives of the commune as well as identifies problems and solutions at the local scale.

Tourism destinations, as other localities, often are the subjects of strategic planning. This includes general strategic planning as well as strategic planning of tourism development. Those two should be well adjusted or even unified. Tourism development to bring expected outputs for local society need to be planned and governed. It is not enough to have a tourist

potential due to natural values and rich cultural heritage. In order to receive the level of tourist flow which contributes to local development it is necessary to plan actions which can help develop tourism. Tourism policy has become a tool for strategic management enforcement with the main output in the form of strategies, which preceded the formulation of mission, objectives, analysis of an internal and external environment, defining the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. All the components of strategic management can be found in various documents of national or regional institutions which have an impact on tourism management (Malachovsky 2012).

As local strategic documents are the main documents of a community, it is possible assume that tourism should be included in the local strategic plans to some extent. It has been advocated (Ruhanen 2004) that tourism planning is vital to offset some of the negative impacts that tourism can have on the destination community. While several different approaches have been advocated over the years, tourism planning based on the philosophies of sustainability has emerged as one of the most comprehensive and accepted approaches. However, the sustainable approach to tourism planning hinges on two key caveats: firstly, an enhanced level of multiple stakeholder participation in the tourism planning process is required; and secondly, a need for a strategic orientation towards tourism planning (Simpson, 2001). While Ritchie and Crouch (2000) claim that more destinations are adopting strategic perspectives towards tourism development, Simpson (2001) finds that although the concepts of stakeholder participation and strategic orientation are widely endorsed as valuable contributors to sustainable development, there have been no previous attempts to gauge the extent to which such considerations play their part in real world tourism planning processes.

The main goal of the analysis is to investigate strategic documents of the most visited communities in the Malopolskie voivodship, to understand if tourism is put in local strategies, and if yes, then to what extent.

Research design

Malopolskie voivodship is divided into 22 counties, namely 19 land counties and 3 city counties. The city counties are Kraków, Tarnów, and Nowy Sącz. The land counties are bocheński, brzeski, chrzanowski, dąbrowski, gorlicki, krakowski, limanowski, miechowski, myślenicki, nowosądecki, nowotarski, olkuski, oświęcimski, proszowicki, suski, tarnowski, tatrzański, wadowicki i wielicki. It is decided not to analyze the city counties because they have special status attracting the main tourist flow and having separate elaborated promotion tourism strategies.

Out of 19 counties, the four ones are chosen in which tourism plays the biggest role. Again, out of four counties, the one community with the highest Charvat index (Szromek 2012) is researched. The main research question is whether tourism has been crucial to local development of the most visited communes. Secondary qualitative data analysis with purposive sampling of non-traditional sources is selected as the methods for the analysis. Qualitative data means data that approximates or characterizes but does not measure the attributes, characteristics, properties of a thing or phenomenon. That means that it

includes different kinds of information which can be captured that are not numerical in nature. It is used when one does not know what to expect and how to define the issue.

Qualitative secondary data sources can be divided into two groups: traditional sources and non-traditional sources. Traditional sources include qualitative data sets found in data repositories such as sets of interviews, transcripts, etc. Non-traditional sources include other sources of data not originally intended for research purposes such as documents, public speeches, reports.

Purpose sampling is usually used in studies of particular types of publications/documents or in particular cases when subjects are selected because of some characteristics; as a rule these publications were important or the time period plays a key role in history.

By selecting a sample Charvat index is used in order to define the scale of development of tourism function in counties of Malopolskie voivodship. Charvat index is an indicator of the intensity of tourist traffic which specifies the number of overnight stays per 100 permanent residents.

First of all, the number of overnight stays of tourists in every county is identified. The Charvat index for 19 counties is counted up (Appendix 1). From 19 counties, 4 counties with the highest Charvat index are chosen. In order to calculate the Charvat index, the statistical information from the statistical office in Krakow about the number of overnights stays of domestic and foreign tourists (in total) in the year 2013 in every county and the number of population for 2013 in every county are used.

Four counties with the highest Charvat index are following: Tatrzański (3.181,41), Nowosądecki (753,12), Nowotarski (393,31), and Gorlicki (188,04).

Further, Charvat index for all the communities, namely urban, urban-rural and rural in these four counties is analysed (Appendix 2). The method of the calculation is the same. The statistical information from the statistical office in Krakow about the number of overnights stays of domestic and foreign tourists (in total) in the year 2013 in every community and the number of population for 2013 in every community are used. One community from each county with the highest Charvat index is selected for further research.

Four communities for the analysis are following: the urban community Zakopane (5.005,33) from Tatrzański county, the urban-rural community Krynica-Zdrój (6.158,24) from Nowosądecki county, the urban-rural community Szczawnica (4.151,83) from Nowotarski county, and the rural community Uście Gorlickie (2.657,25) from Gorlicki county.

Finally, the official web-sides of four selected communities were analyzed and the municipal offices of these communities were contacted via e-mail to receive reliable information about the availability of current local strategic documents. Following strategic documents are researched below:

- Zakopane: Development strategy of the town Zakopane for the years 2010-2020 (project) (Zakopane 2009).
- *Krynica-Zdrój*: Development strategy of the town and the community Krynica-Zdrój 2013-2020 (Krynica-Zdrój 2013).

- *Szczawnica*: Strategy of Social-Economic Development of the town and the community Szczawnica for the years 2015 – 2020 (project) (Szczawnica 2014).
- *Uście Gorlickie*: Development strategy of the community Uście Gorlickie (Uście Gorlickie 1998).

Development strategies of Zakopane and Szczawnica have not yet been adopted by the city council. They are in the process of the adoption; however, these are final versions after the public consultation which are officially put on the website of the county. They are also considered as basic community documents which formulate vision of local development of the communes within a specified time horizon. Concerning Uście Gorlickie, it is analyzed "Development strategy of the community Uście Gorlickie from 1998. The community is focused on renewal plans of different villages by 2018 which are important for local development; however, development strategy of the community has not yet modified since that time. Proceeding from it, it is analyzed this document. These documents are granted for valid for the analysis.

All the strategic documents consider local authorities as the main driving force; however, it is necessary to understand that these documents or projects were adopted after the consultation with different groups of the local community such as entrepreneurs, representatives of social organizations as well as youth and seniors. That means that they present the vision of local society. To sum up, the research is focused on the analysis of four strategic local documents. A strategic local document is used as unit of analysis.

In this context, the hypothesis of the study sounds as follows:

"Tourism has been crucial to local economic development of the most visited communities in the Malopolskie voivodship, so the local governments has contributed to the tourism development putting tourism in the main components of strategic planning documents as well as developing sectoral documents".

Reviewing the strategic documents and trying to answer the main research question - if tourism is considered as an important component for local economic development - it is necessary to devise some complementary questions:

- Is tourism stated in the vision of the strategic documents?
- Is tourism stated in the mission of the strategic documents?
- Is tourism development indicated as one of strategic goals?
- Is tourism mentioned when analyzing strengths in SWOT analysis?
- Is tourism mentioned when analyzing weaknesses in SWOT analysis?
- Is tourism mentioned when analyzing opportunities in the SWOT analysis?
- Is tourism mentioned when analyzing threats in the SWOT analysis?
- Is there interconnection of tourism with other areas of development?
- Are there sectoral documents like "Promotion strategy" connected with tourism in the communities?

Six main statements are created. Hypothesis is valid for every community if there are positive answers to all the statements. The statement with subpoints can be considered as positive when all the subpoints are mentioned in the strategic documents. The statements are following:

1. Tourism is included in the vision of the strategic development plan;
2. Tourism is included in the mission of the strategic development plan;
3. Tourism is mentioned as one of the objects among the strategic goals.
4. Tourism is mentioned in the SWOT analysis:
 - Issue connected with tourism is mentioned as strong side in the SWOT analysis;
 - Issue connected with tourism is mentioned as weak side in the SWOT analysis;
 - Issue connected with tourism is mentioned as opportunity in the SWOT analysis;
 - Issue connected with tourism is mentioned as threat in the SWOT analysis;
5. There is interconnection of tourism with other areas of development.
6. There are sectoral documents like "Promotion strategy" connected with tourism in the commune.

Results

Development strategies of four chosen communities were studied in search for the answers for questions presented in a previous section. Results of this search are presented below question after question.

1. Is tourism putted in the vision of the strategic documents?

In 3 of the 4 communes, tourism is underlined as an important component in the vision of the documents.

- Zakopane is considered as Tatra centre of international tourism, culture and sports recognizing natural and cultural heritage which is friendly both for permanent residents and for tourists.
- Krynica-Zdrój: the vision of the document underlines that Krynica-Zdrój is an attractive place to live due diversified tourism-based and specialized economic services based on clean environment and unique climate of leisure activities.
- Szczawnica: the vision highlights two aspects associated with more dynamic Spa product development - its innovation - both in terms of products and process as well as the creation of tourist potential based on old cultural heritage of the local community as well as natural heritage.
- Uście Gorlickie: there is no vision.

2. Is tourism putted in the mission of the strategic documents?

In 2 missions one can see three interconnections: economic development through tourism based on culture and nature. Krynica-Zdrój gives general information about mission. Uście Gorlickie underlines the economic factor without mentioning tourism as an important component of the local development.

- Zakopane: the mission of the commune is to make the commune competitive changing its economic base while maintaining cultural, tourist and residential character.
- Krynica- Zdrój: no information (coordination and action support of the local community in order to achieve the vision of Krynica – Zdrój).
- Szczawnica: the mission is connected with the creation of conditions for tourism and health resort development in a way respecting the requirements of environmental protection and cultural heritage, and through it increasing life quality of residents of Szczawnica.
- Uście Gorlickie: the mission is the creation of the basis for development of local community with increasing material and cultural level of residents, namely the using natural and climatic resources, quality of natural water sources and building infrastructure for residents, clients, tourists, and patients.

3. Is tourism development indicated as one of strategic goals?

In all Development strategies, there are strategic goals connected with tourism.

- Zakopane: Policy directions connected with tourism are described in detail in the strategic area "Economy". This area comprises a number of detailed goals based on development of tourist products, tourist facilities, tourist service, and tourist promotion.
- Krynica-Zdrój: tourism is mentioned in one of four strategic goals "Strengthening the economic potential of Krynica-Zdrój" where the development of other forms of tourism, such as business tourism and winter sport tourism is emphasised.
- Szczawnica: Strategic, intermediate, and detailed operational goals are depicted in the area "Economy and tourism". Sustainable tourism development is constantly underlined. Moreover, the creation of communication platform for cooperation between the main players who are responsible for the implementation of the strategy is pointed out. Finally, innovation of tourist offer including the creation of business tourist product and infrastructure modernization are specified.
- Uście Gorlickie: development of three tourist centers Wysowa Zdroj, Klimkówka, and Gładyszów, development of mountain tourism, horse riding, cycling, winter sports, and agritourism.

4. Is tourism mentioned as a strength in the SWOT analysis? All the communes underline tourism as a strength of the community.

- Zakopane: an undisputed tourist centre with the strong image position in the market and with high tourist flow because of exceptional natural beauty and landscapes conducive to tourism and sporting activities offering accommodation gastronomic base with high capacity.
- Krynica-Zdrój: a successful tourist destination having good infrastructure with developed tourist infrastructure offering variety of tourist products with closeness to nature.

- Szczawnica: a place with huge Spa and tourist potential, including outstanding natural values and cultural traditions with extended accommodation and catering base offering hospitality.
- Uście Gorlickie: a place with developed Spa base with resources of mineral waters and qualified natural environment; extensive accommodation and catering facilities; availability of different hiking, horse riding, cycling, and skiing trails.

5. Is tourism mentioned as a weakness in the SWOT analysis?

All the communes identify poor communication infrastructure as one of the most important weaknesses of the community.

- Zakopane: poor communication accessibility as well as relatively high costs of technical infrastructure which can influence tourism.
- Krynica-Zdrój: less developed areas like transport and natural values (similar to competitors); a small percentage of foreign tourists and low turnout at events.
- Szczawnica: weak infrastructure, lack of proven internal collaboration tools of the Spa tourism sector, lack of developed compromise solutions allowing sustainable development of tourist and Spa products while maintaining unique natural values and landscaped areas, poorly diversified catering base and weak developed sports-recreational infrastructure, absence of solutions in the field of Spa tourism product promotion, insufficient educational and cultural offer both for residents and tourists outside the main tourist season.
- Uście Gorlickie: infrastructure communication, absence of local capital for tourism development, absence of agricultural traditions.

6. Is tourism mentioned as an opportunity in the SWOT analysis?

Cross-border cooperation is one of the most significant opportunities for all the communities. Tourism as opportunity is mentioned in all strategic documents in the SWOT analysis.

- Zakopane: cooperation with a neighboring country opening the border crossings tourism in the Tatras as well as partnership with neighbouring counties (Polish and Slovak) for the joint implementation of a tourist, cultural and social actions.
- Krynica-Zdrój: neighbourhood with Slovakia as an opportunity to develop local tourist product and a possibility to use EU financial funds devoted to the cross-border cooperation, and change of forces in the global economy which forecast rapid development of tourism.
- Szczawnica: creation and promotion of new, unique tourist attractions; development of MICE tourism, and development of tourism sector for disabled people.
- Uście Gorlickie: the use of the environmental potential to develop Spa tourism with intense promotion of services; attraction of investors to develop infrastructure, cross-border cooperation, increase of tourists thanks to development of all tourist forms.

7. Is tourism mentioned as a threat in the SWOT analysis? Strengths of competitors are perceived as the most serious threats in all the communities.

- Zakopane: risk of appearance of competitors which can offer more attractive other resorts and tourist destinations in Poland and abroad to a greater extent.
- Krynica-Zdrój: risk of appearance of competitors with the dominant position.
- Szczawnica: decline in demand of Spa services, competitiveness of neighboring counties and weak growth of business tourist services sector.
- Uście Gorlickie: customers loss because of similar tourist offers of neighboring communes, absence of understanding from the side of residents to implement strategy development.

8. Is there interconnection of tourism with other areas of development?

In all the communities there is visible interconnection with other areas; however, Uście Gorlickie does not mention clear links.

- Zakopane: interaction of tourism with economy, communication infrastructure, culture, demography, education, enterprises and investor sector, and health protection.
- Krynica-Zdrój: interaction of tourism with economy, environment, local entrepreneurs, infrastructure communication, EU and Polish environmental policy, EU and Polish energy policy, information technology development; demography, and health.
- Szczawnica: interaction of tourism with economy, ecology, communication infrastructure, culture, and environment.
- Uście Gorlickie: interaction with communication infrastructure.

9. Are there sectoral documents like "Promotion strategy" connected with tourism in the commune?

Two communities have "Promotion strategies" in addition to the "Development Strategies". Two communes have an additional part in the "Development Strategies" devoted to the promotion of the community.

- Zakopane: "Promotion Strategy for the years 2012-2020" of the brand Zakopane.
- Krynica-Zdrój: Promotion Strategy of the community Krynica-Zdrój.
- Szczawnica: no additional "Promotion Strategy"; however, Strategy of social-economic development of the town and the community Szczawnica for the years 2015 – 2020 involves the area "Culture, Art and Promotion".
- Uście Gorlickie: no additional "Promotion Strategy"; however, "Promotion of the community" is involved in the development strategy of the community.

Conclusions

There were analyzed strategic development plans of four chosen communes. As a rule, all the communes have similar

strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. There is a visible interconnection between economic development, natural environment and tourism. Being as the main force of economic development and based on natural values and cultural heritage, tourism is mentioned in almost all documents in the vision and in the mission of "Development strategies". All the communities point strategic goals connected with tourism development.

Summarizing all the six statements one can see that the hypothesis "Tourism is perceived as a crucial factor of local economic development in the most touristic communities in the Malopolskie voivodship, so the local governments have contributed to the tourism development putting tourism in the main components of strategic planning documents as well as developing sectoral documents" is completely valid for Zakopane and

Szczawnica. It is also practically valid for Krynica-Zdrój if not taking into account the mission of the community which only states about coordination and action support of the local community in order to achieve the vision of Krynica – Zdrój. The hypothesis for Uście Gorlickie is partially valid. The main reason is the absence of actual development strategy. Uście Gorlickie is focused on renewal plans of certain villages not modifying the main "Development strategy".

One can argue that local authorities of three communities attach great importance to tourism development in the community which is based on natural values and cultural heritage and is used as the main driving force for local economy. They understand the significance of tourism aiming at the development of suitable tourist products and developing additional strategic promotional documents.

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Appendix 1

Counties	Overnight stays	Population	Charvat index
Bocheński	86494	104765	82,56
Krakowski	117702	266649	44,14
Miechowski	245	49966	0,49
Myślenicki	41428	123991	33,41
Proszowicki	18318	43864	41,76
Wielicki	99277	118553	83,74
Gorlicki	205350	109201	188,05
Limanowski	70445	128545	54,80
Nowosądecki	1589417	211045	753,12
Nowotarski	745804	189623	393,31
Tatrzański	2158491	67847	3.181,41
Chrzanowski	4871	127301	3,83
Olkuski	29496	114073	25,86
Oświęcimski	84437	155040	54,46
Suski	105205	84111	125,08
Wadowicki	140635	158983	88,45
Brzeski	45380	92781	48,91
Dąbrowski	4380	59513	7,36
Tarnowski	39881	199675	19,97

Appendix 2

County	Overnight stays	Population	Charvat index
TATRZAŃSKI	2158491	67847	3.181,41
<i>Urban communities:</i>			
Zakopane	1387529	27721	5.005,33
<i>Rural communities:</i>			
Biały Dunajec	36212	7096	510,32
Bukowina Tatrzańska	413736	13070	3.165,53
Kościelisko	171101	8621	1.984,70
Poronin	149913	11339	2.463,24

NOWOSĄDECKI	1589417	211045	752,99
<i>Urban communities:</i>			
Grybów	9216	6086	151,42
<i>Urban-rural communities:</i>			
Krynica-Zdrój	1046347	16991	6.158,24
Muszyzna	273219	11730	2.329,23
Piwniczna-Zdrój	161046	10683	1.507,50
Stary Sącz	3973	23390	16,99
<i>Rural communities:</i>			
Gródek nad Dunajcem	39707	9205	431,36
Grybów	3089	24402	12,66
Korzenna	-	14128	-
Łabowa	4715	5763	81,82
Łącko	415	16051	2,59
Łososina Dolna	8569	10662	80,37
Nawojowa	2469	8372	29,49
Rytno	36652	3842	953,98
NOWOTARSKI	745804	189623	393,31
<i>Urban communities:</i>			
Nowy Targ	50715	33672	150,61
<i>Urban-rural communities:</i>			
Rabka-Zdrój	168368	17468	963,87
Szczawnica	310225	7472	4151,83
<i>Rural communities:</i>			
Czarny Dunajec	10516	22065	47,66
Czorsztyn	44623	7525	593,00
Jabłonka	10552	18021	58,55
Krościenko nad Dunajcem	19840	6722	295,15
Łąpsze Niżne	72650	9182	791,22
Nowy Targ	14906	23458	63,54
Ochotnica Dolna	11386	8396	135,61
Raba Wyżna	3359	14517	23,14
Spytkowice	17491	4372	400,07
Szaflary	11173	10809	103,37
GORLICKI	205350	109201	188,05
<i>Urban communities:</i>			
Gorlice	9088	28415	31,98
<i>Urban-rural communities:</i>			
Biecz	13987	17012	821,80
Bobowa	1197	9563	12,52
<i>Rural communities:</i>			
Gorlice	1399	17155	8,16
Sękowa	1351	4960	27,24
Uście Gorlickie	178328	6711	2657,25