

THE ŁÓDŹ ATLAS

Sheet XL.: Tourism in Łódź

Andrzej Matczak

The purpose of this Sheet XL is to show the scale and structure of the incoming tourism in Łódź in the period 1979–2000.

Source materials

The source materials used to prepare this Sheet XL are publicly available consolidated records developed by the Office of Statistics in Łódź based on the statistical current tourism KT–1 reporting forms, as well as the data collected in the period 1990 to 2000 in the course of search queries performed by researchers and graduates from the Institute of Urban Geography and Tourist Studies, University of Łódź, at all tourist accommodation facilities in Łódź.

The source materials from the Office of Statistics in Łódź and the materials published by the National Office of Statistics (GUS) constitute the basis for the calculations and preparations of the graphs and maps 1 and 3 (partially), 4, 8, 9 and 11. In terms of their completeness and reliability the statistical source materials used for the purpose of this study do not deviate from the general standards of collecting, aggregating, and publishing tourist information by the National Office of Statistics. Therefore, the use of the above referenced materials maintained by the Office of Statistics in Łódź is fully reasonable and reliable.

In the period 1990 – 2000, the Institute of Urban Geography and Tourist Studies, University of Łódź, conducted a large-scale research on the location and size of accommodation facilities in Łódź and their occupancy ratios to define the segments of the local tourist market and profiles of the guests at Łódź’s hotels and other accommodation facilities. In 1991, a search query was carried out in the field by geography faculty students (M a t c z a k, 1993 , 1994). As a result, 1 608 records of addresses (names of places of permanent residence), gender, and dates of birth of domestic visitors were collected together with identical particulars of 458 foreign tourists (these data were extracted from the registers for 1990 from all accommodation facilities in Łódź by systematically sampling every 50th guest). For the period from June of 1992 to 1993, identical data were gathered at the accommodation facilities of the Przedsiębiorstwo Turystyczne ‘Łódź’ (B i e n i e k 1994), of 40 925 domestic tourists and 23 062 (1992) foreigners (in both cases the data were extracted from the registers). For the Orbis ‘Grand’ Hotel, collected were identical details of 2 457 domestic tourists and 3 749 foreigners for 1995 (D e l ą g 1996). In 1998, a survey was carried out at all tourist accommodation facilities in Łódź, in effect of which from the accommodation registers extracted were the personal data (address, age, and gender) of 9 179 domestic tourists visiting in a period of one month (B i e r n a c k a 1999). The change trends concerning the locations, size, and structure of the accommodation facilities in Łódź and their occupancy ratios in the years 1979–1997 may be found in Matczak’s study (1998). Parallel to the above referenced studies of market segments and simplified tourist profiles, conducted was a questionnaire survey in which respondents provided the reasons for visiting Łódź and their social characteristics (education and profession). This foregoing research works provide sufficient and reliable information to present the averaged picture of the market segments and socio-demographic profile of tourists visiting accommodation facilities in Łódź in the period 1990–2000. It needs to be remembered that maps 1–3, and graphs 5–7 and 12 show such averaged picture for the entire decade of the 1990s, which eliminates the characteristics of any specific accommodation facilities in Łódź, as well as certain changes in the market segments (where the region of Warsaw is gradually gaining priority at the expense of Łódź).

Results

In the period 1979–2000, the incoming tourism registered at tourist accommodation facilities in Łódź (map 4) dropped by 47 800 (from 245 800 tourists in 1979 to 198 000 in 2000). A larger decrease was recorded with respect to domestic tourists (from 195 600 to 158 600) than foreign tourists (from 50 200 to 39 300). The prevailing share in providing accommodation services to incoming tourists was and still is held by hotel facilities. Notwithstanding that in 2000 (153 800) their business dropped by 45 300 tourists in 1979 (199 100 tourists), their share in the tourist services market only dropped from 80% to 77% . Slightly over 1/5 of the hotel guests were foreign tourists. In 2000, (24 500) the number of tourists staying in hostels and youth hostels was down on 1979 (27 700). However, the decrease was insignificant and caused by reduced incoming foreign tourism (from 5000 to 1500). Campsites, bivouacs, and chalets were evidently in lower demand. In 1979 they provided services to 17 800 tourists, which number dropped to 5400 in 2000. In particular, they lost domestic tourists (12 400), less so foreign tourists (900). The only tourist accommodation facilities that observed a business increase from 1300 in 1979 to 14 300 in 2000 were those classified as ‘other tourist facilities, conference and recreation centres’. These facilities were mainly visited by domestic tourists (the proportion of foreign tourists approximated 12.5%–13.3%). Lower prices evidently attracted customers, which is indicative of the existing demand in Łódź for that particular kind of tourist accommodation combining decent standards and relatively low prices.

A more significant drop than was the case with the number of customers of the accommodation facilities in Łódź was observed in the occupancy levels which fell from 720 800 to 434 500. The loss was posted by all the above-listed accommodation facilities. However, it was the most severe in hotels – down from 537 600 to 289 700 bed-nights. Consequently, the average length of tourists’ stay in Łódź was seriously reduced (Graph 9). In 1979 the average length of a tourist’s stay in the city was three days. Longer visits, even up to four days, were observed in domestic rather than foreign tourists (approx. three days). The situation aggravated in 2000, when the average length of stay dropped to two days, adversely affecting the actual revenues per available rooms (Graph 8). In 1979, the average occupancy rate reached 60%, and for hotels even 80%, while in 2000 it decreased to 39% (36% for hotels). The occupancy rate in 2000 was between 28.2% and 46.2% (Graph 11B). The lowest values were recorded in the summer season (in August 28%) and highest in the spring and autumn seasons (with the peak in September – 46.2%).

Accommodation facilities occupancy in Łódź was nearly even throughout the year (Graph 11A). The values of the seasonal occupancy indicator calculated for the period 1995 – 2000 was characterised by low variability, ± 30%. The seasonal occupancy indicator showed positive values in late spring and early autumn (peak), when Łódź was the venue of a large number of events, while negative values were observed in the summer and winter seasons.

The spatial distribution of tourism in Łódź was rather irregular (concentration index η=0,979). The privileged area was the city centre (map 3) which attracted 55% of the overall number of accommodation facilities business. Less in demand were the remote northern and southern suburbs of Łódź with leisure areas, as well as the gradually rising transition zone between the inner city and the rural-urban fringe. In their majority, foreign tourists were inclined to use the accommodation facilities located in the city centre (70%), while domestic tourists (48%) equally used both the facilities in the city centre and those located in the suburbs and in the transition zone.

Łódź was visited by tourists from nearly all countries of the world (identified were visitors from 69 countries, and further 2 400 tourists came from unidentified countries). Out of the overall number of foreign visitors (map 1), 88% were citizens of the European countries, mostly from the neighbouring countries (57.9%) and developed West European countries. The proportion of tourists coming from other continents was rather low (6%). A significant proportion of foreign tourists visited from the US and Canada (almost 3%) and Asia (2.5%), of which mainly Israel (1.3), but also Japan, Turkey, and other Middle East countries. Tourists arriving from other continents all together accounted for negligible 0.5%.

Domestic tourists (map 2) who partook of the hospitality of the local accommodation facilities in Łódź came from all Polish regions (województwo), mostly from those with large capital cities (nearly 2/3), and from the Łódzkie Region. The majority of tourists came from the region of Warsaw (24.3%), Łódź (14.1%), and Poznań (8.2%), and jointly accounted for nearly a half of the incoming domestic tourism (46.6%). A smaller proportion of domestic tourists came from the region of Gdańsk (8.3%), Szczecin (5.7%), Wrocław (5.8%), Kraków (6.3%) and the cities of Górny Śląsk (Upper Silesia) (6.7%), whose overall proportion accounted for 32.8%. Other Polish regions, especially easternmost, had hardly provided 1/5 of the overall number of visitors and users of the local accommodation facilities in Łódź.

Tourists and users of the local accommodation facilities in Łódź were mostly young (Graph 12), well-educated (Graph 5), frequently in executive positions (Graph 6), on travel orders or business trips (Graph 7). Most of them were men (75.4%) aged 26 to 45 (48.4%). The proportion of women was low (24.6%), and they were mainly aged 21 to 40 (13.8%) or 41 to 50 (5.3%). There were no records of children under six, while old age pensioners only accounted for 2.2%. Nearly a half of the visitors (47%) boasted a higher education background, and 37% at least secondary or post-secondary education. Over a half (52%) of the occupants of the local accommodation facilities were white-collar workers, and 37% were executive staff. The main reasons for their visits to Łódź were service visits, training and learning purposes (37%), or business, fairs, and shopping (30%). Other reasons, such as tourist purposes, entertainment, or sports were not that important (only 13%).

Conclusion

In terms of its scale, the incoming tourism in Łódź, a large urban centre in the middle of Poland, was modest at the end of the 1990s. In the 1990s, the tourist accommodation occupancy ratios substantially decreased on the 1970s and 80s (they showed an evident tendency to fix at low levels). The local accommodation facilities basically provided services to ‘business tourists’. Their catchment zone was territorially broad, however, the key customers came from the adjacent regions and countries. Primarily, incoming tourists were still provided most services by the accommodation facilities (hotels) located in the city centre, with a very low share of suburban areas, however, observed is a new tendency of accommodation services being provided small facilities located between the central zone and the suburbs.

Literature

B i e n i e k J., 1994, *Funkcja turystyczna łódzkich hoteli na przykładzie hoteli Przedsiębiorstwa Turystycznego „Łódź”*, praca magisterska wykonana pod kierunkiem S. L i s z e w s k i e g o, mps. Katedra Geografii Miast i Turyzmu UŁ, Łódź.

B i e r n a c k a M., 1999, *Tendencje lokalizacji i procesy przemian funkcji obiektów hotelowych w przestrzeni miejskiej Łodzi w XX wieku*, praca magisterska wykonana pod kierunkiem S. Liszewskiego, mps. Katedra Geografii Miast i Turyzmu UŁ, Łódź.

D e l ą g M., 1996, *Funkcja turystyczna łódzkiego oddziału PBP „Orbis” sp. z o.o. i hotelu Grand Orbis s.a. w Łodzi*, praca magisterska wykonana pod kierunkiem J. Jakóbczyk-Gryszkiewicz, mps. Katedra Geografii Miast i Turyzmu UŁ, Łódź.

M a t c z a k A., 1993, *Turystyczna baza noclegowa Łodzi i jej wykorzystanie w latach 1979–1990*, Kronika m. Łodzi, z. 2, s. 51–67.

M a t c z a k A., 1994, *Turystyka i wypoczynek jako czynnik integracji i rozwoju regionu łódzkiego*, [w.] *Studiaum wiedzy o regionie łódzkim. Wybrane problemy*, red. A. M a t c z a k, Łódź, s. 161–188.

M a t c z a k A., 1998, *Turystyczna baza noclegowa Łodzi i jej wykorzystanie w latach 1979–1997*, Turyzm, t. 8, z. 2, s. 27–56.

XL

Index of graphs and maps

- Foreign tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in 2000
 - from non-European countries of the world
 - from European countries
- Domestic tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in 2000.
- Distribution within the administrative area of Łódź of tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities (estimate for 2000)
- Number of tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź:
 - 1979–2000.
 - Total
 - Foreigners
- Educational background of tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in the 1990s (n = 1 140)
- Occupational structure of tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in the 1990s (n = 578)
- Reasons for travelling to Łódź tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in the 1990s (n = 1 139)
- Occupancy structure at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in period 1979–2000.
- Average occupancy length at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in period 1979–2000.
- Occupancy level at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in period 1979–2000

11A. Seasonal occupancy ratio at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in period 1995–2000

11B. Seasonal distribution of the average occupancy (Wm) at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in 2000

12. Gender and age structure of tourists registered at all types of accommodation facilities in Łódź in the 1990s.