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## A voice in the discussion: Sports tourism

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## A VOICE IN THE DISCUSSION: SPORTS TOURISM

In my opinion, sports tourism can be treated as a separate type, like culinary, film or other forms of cultural tourism as broadly understood. It has already been described by different authors attempting to define and study it. It encompasses all forms of active and passive engagement in sports activities performed away from the place of residence and work (STANDEVEN & DE KNOP 1999). Participating in sports tourism passively or actively depends on the main motivations to choose this type of travel. Depending on whether they are sport or tourism focused (GAMMON & ROBINSON 2004), they divide participants into those who undertake sports tourism with the stress placed on either sport or tourism. In the first case, the participants are more strongly motivated by sport and in the other by tourism. A similar interpretation can be found in the definitions by Polish authors (HADZIK 2008, 2010, KAZIMIERCZAK & MALCHROWICZ-MOŚKO 2015). The division into these two types depending on tourist behaviour is best illustrated in the figure below:

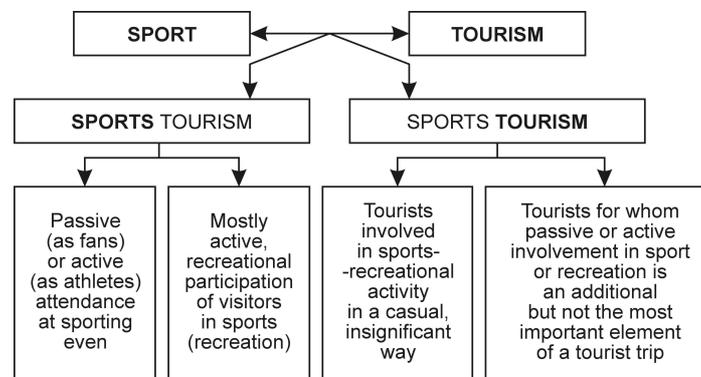


Fig. 1. Sports tourism definition after A. HADZIK (2014)

Moreover, there are the following forms of sports tourism: active sports tourism, sporting event tourism and nostalgia sports tourism (ROSS 2001, HADZIK 2014, pp. 24-30).

Passive sports tourism by supporting one's favourite team does not require special predispositions, except belonging to a community of fans or a personal interest in sports. On the other hand, undertaking active sports tourism requires good health, stamina and the skills characteristic of a given sport.

The basic measure is the number of people participating in sports **tourism** (focusing on tourism) events, and in the case of **sports** tourism (focusing on sports) – the number of fans who have arrived from other destinations to watch the event. The next measure should be the economic effects measured by the tourists' daily spending, the profit made by the organizers and those investing in sports facilities, as well as cities and regions.

Sporting events require modern sports, recreation and tourism infrastructure; investing in stadiums or sports halls increases the attractiveness of cities, an example of which were the facilities built for EURO 2012, or the modern Tauron Arena in Krakow, attracting world sporting events and hosting concerts of world-famous performers. In 2015, the Arena was visited by 500 000 people. The National Stadium in Warsaw is open to organized groups of tourists, and the unsurpassable ideal is the FC Barcelona Experience, which attracts 1.7 million visitors annually (more than the Gaudi Museum). Sports and tourism may be perceived as the competitiveness determinants in cities and regions, and the modern infrastructure created alongside large national and international sporting events help tourism develop. Apart from sports facilities, other types of infrastructure are essential: transport (access roads, parking lots), hotels, gastronomy, and service offices. Modern infrastructure and sporting events held in a given city may be, and often are, the main motivation to visit it.

Sports tourism may become the driving force behind social and economic development. Sporting events and active sports tourism may diversify the tourism product and increase its innovativeness, and as a result – the tourists' satisfaction, the profits from economic activity and the share in the market. They may also create a new image and increase the attractiveness of the tourist offer. Considering the above, I forecast further, dynamic growth in sports tourism.

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### SPORTS TOURISM: A VOICE IN THE DISCUSSION

The term 'sports tourism' can be applied to the form of tourism distinguished on the basis on the travel motivation criterion. Thus, it regards the behaviour of consumers who consider sport to be a motivation to go on a tourist trip. This approach does not differentiate between sports tourism which involves sport, and sports tourism which involves participating in sporting events (an approach presented by Middleton). Cultural tourism can be approached in a similar way; it can be undertaken by both those who attend cultural events and those who take advantage of cultural goods in any other way.

When adopting the motivation criterion, we should stress that it is not a strict criterion and the basic assumption is that the tourist goes on a tourist trip for more than one reason. During sports tourism, he or she may also take recreation, sightseeing and other motivations into account.

Considering various sport-related motivations allows us to classify sports tourism more narrowly (travelling in order to take part in sporting events) and more widely (travelling in order to do sport). The fact that it is necessary to provide infrastructure for tourists undertaking sports tourism and that they need to show predispositions and skills resulting from the purpose of travel.

The future of sports tourism is connected with prospective tourist behaviours, as it is the tourists with their preferences who will shape tourism demand and, in agreement with the marketing principle, tourism supply. At present, it is possible to observe a trend towards 'healthy and active living' and a fashion for physical activity, especially among the better-off part of society, the inhabitants of cities and so-called 'rich suburbs'. It can be assumed that it will be reflected in a growing interest in sports tourism.

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### SPORTS TOURISM: ACTIVE AND PASSIVE PARTICIPATION IN SPORTING EVENTS (AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL)

Sports tourism is a relatively new concept in academic papers devoted to tourism (COOPER et al. 2005, GOŁEMBSKI, ed. 2002, KUREK, ed. 2007), though the phenomenon itself is not new at all. In Europe, the tradition of active or passive attendance at sporting events, away from the permanent place of residence, goes back nearly 3000 years in time (let us take travel to take an passive or active part in the ancient Olympic Games in the 7<sup>th</sup> c. BC). 'Sports tourism' then has existed for a long time, but until recently it has not been either clearly distinguished or given a name. Since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. it has become increasingly discernible (on a global scale) from other forms of tourism as a result of the growing mobility of contemporary society, the growing number of attractive sporting events as well as their energetic promotion (GAMMON & ROBINSON 2003, LOMINE & EDUMUNDS 2007, RITCHIE & ADAIR, ed. 2004). Considering the special character of the increasingly popular sports tourism, we can divide it into two groups (passive and active):