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Sports tourism: Active and passive participation in sporting events (amateur and professional)

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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 7th 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 20th 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):

1. Travelling for the purpose of passive attendance at sporting events:
 - Hard mass sports tourism (organized groups of fans) or soft mass sports tourism (individual), travelling in order to be a spectator in a football match or other sporting event (including a whole series of competitions: Olympic Games, world championships). It is not a new phenomenon; such journeys were already made in ancient Greece (LIPONSKI 2012).
 - Nostalgia sports tourism – cognitive travel in order to visit places related to great sporting events and sports stars. Tourists are interested in both historical buildings (antique stadiums in Olympia, Delphi, Athens, Ephesus) and modern monumental sports facilities, particularly the seats of famous football clubs (the stadiums of Manchester United, FC Barcelona, Real Madrid). They readily visit sites which are the icons of important sporting events (the Olympic Complex in Beijing, the new Olympic facilities in London, the National Stadium in Warsaw, Wimbledon tennis courts in London). Some of them are extremely popular and visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists annually.
2. Travelling for the purpose of active participation in sporting events:
 - Active sports tourism concerns those who travel in order to take part in a given sport actively. This group of tourists includes both professional athletes for whom it is the way to earn their living¹, and amateurs, craving sporting experiences but treating physical effort in terms of recreation and fun as well and as a method to satisfy their vanity and snobbism. These are often ready to pay a lot of money for a competition entry fee and the opportunity to take part in a prestigious competition, play a tennis or golf match on a famous tennis court or golf course, have the honour of taking part in famous sailing competitions, learn a given sport from the champions and participate on paid courses – in this case, it is an element of educational and specialised tourism (GAMMON & ROBINSON 2003, LOMINE & EDUMUNDS 2007, RITCHIE & ADAIR, ed. 2004, THEOBALD 2005, UNWTO 2003).
 - Adventure sports tourism involves travelling in rough areas, off the beaten track; it is based on the tradition of expeditions to the unknown and the desire to make exciting geographical discoveries, full of hardships and unexpected situations. Nowadays, it is related to disciplines such as high mountain climbing, hiking, or lone sailing. In this case, competing means conquering a difficult summit by climbing a new route or in extreme conditions, or breaking time records in sailing a difficult route. It often overlaps with doom tourism, which is not a new form of tourism; the disciplines mentioned above have been long present in the European culture. It should be pointed out that many activities as a part of adventure sports tourism are traditionally ascribed to specialised tourism (LIPONSKI 2001, 2012).

Answers to other questions asked in the survey conducted by 'Turyzm' editors:

1. Sports tourism (in all its varieties) has existed for several thousand years, but it has been developing particularly dynamically since the end of the 20th c. Its organizers believe that it has a promising future ahead, and even today it generates considerable income and has a positive influence on an economy; it also brings significant non-economic benefits, which we could see in Poland during EURO 2012 (RITCHIE & ADAIR, ed. 2004, UNWTO 2003).
2. Sports tourism (in all its varieties) fits the range of currently accepted definitions of tourism, mostly formulated by UNWTO, on the condition of travelling from one's permanent place of living and spending at least one night away from home during the journey (COOPER *et al.* 2005, GOLEMBSKI, ed. 2002, KUREK, ed. 2007, UNWTO 2012). The definition of 'sport' encompasses only its active forms and some forms of specialised tourism (those where we deal with elements of sports competition) (Lipoński 2001, UNWTO 2003).
3. In order to undertake passive sports tourism (hard, soft or nostalgic), a person does not need any predispositions or special skills, except a fascination with sport, an interest in sporting events and curiosity about the world. These tourists use the infrastructure prepared for ordinary visitors (accommodation and gastronomic facilities, transport, complementary infrastructure).
4. In order to undertake sports tourism actively, a person needs exactly those predispositions, qualifications and specialist equipment which are necessary in a given sport. There will be different requirements for water sports (sailing, kayaking or windsurfing), winter sports (snowboard, skiing, skating), to climb high mountains or play golf. Obviously, a part of the basic tourism infrastructure (accommodation, gastronomy, transport, elements of complementary infrastructure) remains unchanged, as it is needed by tourists regardless of the sports and the kind of participation.
5. Traditionally, the seasonality of many sports has been related to specific topographic and climatic conditions. At present, new technologies allow us to engage in many sports' disciplines, which used to depend on

¹ It seems that during trips to sports competitions or training sessions, professional athletes should be classified as 'tourists' (by analogy to business tourism and business trips – according to the criteria established by UN WTO).

the season and region, all year round (LIPÓŃSKI 2012). Naturally, the romantic atmosphere of natural conditions is irreplaceable.

6. It seems that to make planning research on sports tourism easier, as well as to establish clear categories and parameters, we should distinguish the following segments: a) passive and active sports tourism; b) travel whose main purpose is to undertake sports and not other reasons and motivations; c) the division into professionals and amateurs (GAMMON & ROBINSON 2003, LOMINE & EDUMUNDS 2007, RITCHIE & ADAIR, ed. 2004, UNWTO 2003).

It must be stressed that sports tourism (like other forms) rarely occurs in a 'pure' form. It can be assumed that during a trip its participants will be also taking part in cognitive (cultural, sightseeing, educational), business or recreational tourism. Therefore, attempts to define, study and measure the scale of involvement using statistical methods may turn out to be quite complicated because it is sometimes difficult to identify the main purpose of travel (KORSTANJE 2007, RITCHIE & ADAIR, ed. 2004, THEOBALD 2005).

To conclude, here is a general remark concerning the potential danger of trying at any cost to precisely define and categorise concepts which by their nature lie on the borderline of various phenomena. This is often impossible and as regards sports tourism, it may lead to the excessively expanding (or narrowing) of this term, distorting this concept and diverting from the popular meaning applied intuitively in everyday language by the whole of society.

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SPORTS TOURISM: AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE THE CONCEPT

The attempt to define the concept of 'sports tourism' requires reference to the meaning of the basic terms, 'tourism' and 'sports'. Tourism is a subset of journeys and is defined as "all activities performed by persons who travel and stay for recreational, business or other reasons, for not longer than one year without breaks, away from their everyday environment, except trips where the main aim is earning activity, paid at a given destination" (UNWTO 1991, after KUREK & MIKA 2007, p. 12). Thus, the basic criteria for identifying tourism trips include the following: a temporary change of the place of stay, a change of the surroundings (a trip away from the everyday environment) and the motivation to travel (presented in detail in *International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics* 2008). Sport, on the other hand, signifies "all forms of physical activity, which by occasional or organized participation have an influence on building up or improving one's physical and mental condition, the development of social relations and achieving sports results at all levels" (Sports Act of 25 June 2010).

In the context of the above definitions, in the classification of tourism types based on the travel aim criterion, we may distinguish sports tourism, understood as a kind of tourism where the main aim is physical activity, participation in sporting events or visiting sports facilities (GIBSON 1998, ROSS 2001, MOKRAS-GRABOWSKA 2015). Diversifying the aims of travel and the degree of physical activity undertaken by tourists (Table 1) is the reason