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TOURIST FUNCTION LEVEL IN THE COUNTIES OF THE WEST POMERANIAN VOIVODESHIP

Abstract: The aim of the study is to assess the diversity of the tourism function in the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. The level of the tourism function was determined by constructing a synthetic index based on four diagnostic features (the Baretje-Defert index, the accommodation density index, the Schneider index, and the Baretje index). The numerical data comes from the Local Data Bank of the Central Statistical Office (GUS) from 2024. The hypothesis that the tourism function develops unevenly across the voivodeship was confirmed, despite numerous tourist attractions throughout the area. The counties were divided into four classes with varying levels of tourism development. Class I includes counties with a high level of tourism development, associated with a coastal location. In the area of class II, the average level of tourism development results from the presence of both natural and anthropogenic assets. The low level of the tourism function in class III is associated with the untapped potential of tourist attractions. Class IV includes counties with a very low level of development of the tourist function, where other economic functions dominate.

Key words: West Pomeranian Voivodeship, tourism, tourist function.

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Introduction

Tourism is playing an increasingly important role, becoming a key factor in economic growth and a key element of the economic transformation processes taking place in regions with a tourist function. For this reason, more and more regions are taking steps to develop tourism and related sectors. Due to its interdisciplinary nature, tourism engages many other sectors and industries of the economy, supporting their development. Its impact on stimulating demand in regions with lower levels of economic development also plays a significant role, helping to reduce the disparities between the poorest and most affluent areas. Therefore, modern tourism is a profitable business, associated with significant development¹.

The development of tourism significantly contributes to the socio-economic progress of regions and the entire country. Tourism fosters the creation of new jobs, improves the quality of life of residents, and increases the attractiveness and competitiveness of regions. It is present in many economic sectors, such as services, trade, and consumption, and therefore constitutes an important factor in regional development. The impact of tourism on a region is broad and complex, making it not always easy to accurately assess².

The development of tourism at the regional level can significantly contribute to overall economic growth. However, this requires the implementation of coherent development strategies aimed at protecting resources and ensuring harmonious cooperation and complementarity between regions. Tourism promotes economic activation, reduces population outflow, stimulates infrastructure development, and supports other initiatives that improve the quality of life of residents and increase the country's prosperity. It can also constitute a key competitive advantage for a region, offering opportunities for economic development based on specific territorial resources. At the same time, tourism influences the use of these resources and the shaping of regional economic systems³.

Tourism is one of the most profitable sectors of the economy. This is particularly noticeable in coastal areas, which boast diverse natural and landscape values. These factors determine the development of tourism in this area. Access to

¹ T. Mańkowski, *Rola turystyki i rekreacji w rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczym*, (in:) *Ekonomika turystyki i rekreacji*, A. Panasiuk red. nauk., PWN, Warsaw, 2011, s. 99-102; B. Cymańska-Garbowska, B. Steblik-Włazłak, *Turystyka*. Tom 1. Podstawy turystyki, WSiP, Warsaw 2013, s. 10.

² A. Cudowska-Sojko, *Rola turystyki w rozwoju regionu: aspekt teoretyczny*, *Ekonomiczne Problemy Usług*, 2011, No. 79, s. 23-33.

³ M. Gucik, M. Marcis, *Turystyka jako czynnik rozwoju regionalnego. Studium przypadku Słowacji Wschodniej*, *Studia Ekonomiczne i Regionalne*, 2017, No. 10(4), s. 86-95.

the Baltic Sea makes the West Pomeranian Voivodeship very attractive to tourists. The number and diversity of anthropogenic attractions is also significant, undoubtedly attracting tourists and influencing the region's economic development. The West Pomeranian Voivodeship has one of the highest tourist numbers compared to other voivodeships in the country. These factors determine the level of tourism revenue.

The West Pomeranian Voivodeship is distinguished by its significant tourism potential. Wide beaches, numerous lakes, forests, and protected areas constitute natural assets that can be defined as primary tourism supply. These resources exist independently of human activity and form the basis for tourism development in the region. However, tourism development in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship is not solely based on natural resources. Actions undertaken by local authorities and businesses, such as expanding accommodation, recreational and transport infrastructure, and promoting the region, also play a significant role. These activities create secondary tourism supply, which increases the region's attractiveness and encourages tourists to stay longer and more frequently. Proper use of natural assets and the development of tourism infrastructure support the region's economic growth, enhance its recognition, and increase its importance on the Polish tourist map⁴.

The aim of the research undertaken for the purposes of this article is to assess the diversity of the tourism function in the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. The aim stems from the research problem, which covers the diversification of the tourism function, which, according to the established hypothesis, develops unevenly in the voivodeship, despite numerous tourist, natural, and non-natural conditions throughout the entire area.

The article consists of several parts. The first section discusses the importance of the tourism function in regional and local development. Next, it addresses the tourism assets of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, which are the basis for the development of the tourism function. The next section describes the research process, along with an explanation of the methods and data sources. The analytical section contains the results of the conducted analyses and their interpretation. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are formulated.

⁴ M. Greta, T. Kostrzewa-Zielińska, *Turystyka elementem aktywizacji gospodarczej regionów peryferyjnych. Funkcjonowanie Euroregionu Beskidy*, Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego Ekonomiczne Problemy Usług, 2011, No. 79, s. 35-49; *Plan Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego Województwa Zachodniopomorskiego*, Tom I, *Uwarunkowania kształtowania polityki przestrzennej województwa*, Załącznik nr 1 do Uchwały Nr XVII/214/20 Sejmiku Województwa Zachodniopomorskiego z dnia 24 czerwca 2020 r., s. 44-77.

The tourist function in regional and local development

The importance of tourism in local regional development has evolved with the development of research on its impact on tourist destinations. In many cases, increased awareness among tourism managers of the benefits of tourism development has led to initiatives aimed at increasing tourism in a given area. Tourism is increasingly being seen as an important factor in the development of not only attractive tourist regions but also as a way to revitalize areas where tourism previously played a less significant role⁵.

The relationship between a region and its economy is mutual, as both significantly influence each other. A region creates specific conditions for economic development, such as the level of development, the structure of the economy, the availability of labor resources, and the degree of technological advancement. These factors determine which types of economic activities can develop in a given region and which of them are most important. At the same time, a developing economy impacts the region itself and its inhabitants. Increased economic activity contributes to improved quality of life, increased attractiveness of the area, and increased regional awareness. Residents begin to identify more with their local area, appreciating its distinctiveness and local resources, which is also crucial for the development of tourism. Tourism is a key component of the regional economy, especially in regions with favorable natural conditions⁶.

The tourism economy is developing most strongly in regions where tourism plays a dominant role and is the main factor shaping the economic activity of the area. It is the needs and demand expressed by tourists that determine the development directions of other sectors of the economy. In addition to the direct growth of tourism-related industries, such as accommodation and tourism management, various services are also developing rapidly. Regions where tourism plays a polarizing role concentrate numerous tourist destinations and are usually characterized by high attractiveness resulting from environmental resources or other attractions. These areas are widely recognized as typical tourist regions. In regions where tourism is a stimulant, it serves as an additional factor supporting socio-economic development, but is not its main driver. The development of the tourism economy runs parallel to the development of other economic sectors. In regions where tourism is neutral, however, the importance of tourism for socio-economic development is low. It serves only a supplementary function and has no significant impact on the dynamics of the region's development. This situation

⁵ M. Hendel, *Przydatność wskaźników funkcji turystycznej w ocenie rozwoju turystycznego obszaru na przykładzie gminy Ustroń*, Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Śląskiej Organizacja i Zarządzanie, 2016, No. 87 (1947), s. 157-170.

⁶ M. Greta, T. Kostrzewa-Zielińska, op. cit., s. 35-49.

most often occurs in areas not perceived as attractive from a tourism perspective⁷. Table 1 presents endogenous factors determining the development of tourism in the regions.

Table 1. Endogenous factors determining the development of tourism in the regions

Categories	Factors	Characteristic
Traditional elements of tourist attractiveness	Tourist attractions	Historical and contemporary anthropogenic values Natural values
	Tourist base	Accommodation Restaurants Accompanying facilities
Elements of territorial marketing	Promotion and tourist information	Implemented by public authorities with the participation of the private sector
	Creation and commercialization of a tourist product	Implemented by public and private entities
Selected elements of technical infrastructure	Transport infrastructure	Providing external and internal communication accessibility
	Environmental infrastructure	Providing environmental protection
Socio-economic, cultural, political and ecological conditions	The attitude of the local community towards tourists	Kindness and hospitality Language skills Entrepreneurship
	Actions of public authorities	Economic Policy Investment Incentives Safety Environmental Protection and Historical Heritage

Source: L. Butowski, *Turystyka jako czynnik rozwoju w świetle wybranych teorii rozwoju regionalnego*, Turyzm, 2010, No. 20(1), s. 5-11.

At the local level, tourism influences the development of entrepreneurship, increases the level of education of residents, creates new jobs, promotes the region and increases the commune's income per capita⁸.

⁷ A. Grabowska, *Lokalna gospodarka turystyczna a rozwój regionów*, Studia Ekonomiczne Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach, 2013, No. 147, s. 68-80.

⁸ S. Graja-Zwolińska, A. Sychała, op. cit., s. 236-247.

However, it is possible to distinguish several important positive aspects of its development⁹:

- tourists visiting a given region generate demand for specific goods and services and spend money, which increases the revenues of local businesses. Some of this revenue also flows into local government budgets in the form of taxes,
- the increased influx of tourists leads to the creation of new jobs and the development of the local labor market,
- the development of tourism attracts investments, often also from other regions or abroad,
- tourism influences the development of infrastructure, such as roads, transport and service facilities, as well as improving the quality of services available to residents and tourists.

Revenues generated by tourism in municipalities with a well-developed tourism function constitute a significant source of budget revenue. They enable local authorities to implement additional investments related to the development and modernization of municipal infrastructure, such as schools, kindergartens, municipal roads, and water and sewage networks, and also contribute to the increased accessibility and improved quality of public services. A significant benefit of the development of global tourism, both economically and socially, is its impact on job creation and the reduction of unemployment¹⁰.

The tourism function is linked to other socio-economic functions, such as trade, transportation, culture etc. These functions are interdependent. Therefore, under favorable conditions, a feedback loop is created that stimulates not only tourism development but also local development in general¹¹. The development of the tourism function encompasses all socio-economic activities related to serving tourists and meeting their needs. In many locations, tourism has come to be considered a primary economic function, leading to changes in its structure to best adapt to the needs of visitors¹².

⁹ A. Cudowska-Sojko, op. cit., s. 23-33.

¹⁰ T. Mańkowski, op. cit., s. 99-102.

¹¹ P. Gryszel, *Funkcja turystyczna jako inteligentna specjalizacja w kształtowaniu konkurencyjności regionów*, Ekonomiczne Problemy Turystyki, 2016, No. 1(33), s. 69-80.

¹² M. Hendel, op. cit., s. 157-170.

The presence of tourists in a given area proves not only its attractiveness, but also the existence of a developed tourist function¹³. The pace of development of the tourist function is influenced by, among others:

- landscape diversity and environmental attractiveness,
- involvement of local authorities and non-governmental organizations in promotional activities,
- local traditions and cultural heritage,
- level of transport accessibility,
- the degree of development of industry and buildings,
- effectiveness of tourism promotion and marketing,
- extensive infrastructure and services related to tourism¹⁴.

From the perspective of the local and regional tourism economy, local governments are crucial. Through their tasks, they enable its efficient functioning at both the local (municipality, district) and regional (voivodeship) levels. The activities of local government units include, among others, organizing and maintaining tourist information (including marking attractions and tourist trails, as well as collaborating with the tourism industry and organizations), maintaining local infrastructure and public transport, ensuring order and safety, and access to basic utilities such as water, energy, and heating¹⁵.

West Pomeranian Voivodeship – natural and anthropogenic values

The West Pomeranian Voivodeship is located in northwestern Poland and is the fifth largest voivodeship, covering over 7% of the country's area and accounting for nearly 4.5% of the country's population. The region's northern and western borders, nearly 200 km each, are also the state border. The maritime border, which also serves as the southwestern coast of the Baltic Sea, provides a unique, key development stimulus for the entire Pomerania region¹⁶. The West Pomeranian Voivodeship consists of three cities with county rights (Szczecin, Koszalin

¹³ S. Graja-Zwolińska, A. Spychała, *Funkcja turystyczna jako element konkurencyjności gmin. Studium przypadku obszarów chronionych*, Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, 2011, No. 157, s. 236-247.

¹⁴ H. Hrehorowicz-Gaber, *Podstawy turystyki i wypoczynku w kontekście wybranych uwarunkowań społeczno-gospodarczych Polski*, Politechnika Krakowska, Kraków 2022, s. 71-88.

¹⁵ A. Panasiuk, *Turystyka i rekreacja w gospodarce narodowej i regionalnej*, (in:) *Ekonomika turystyki i rekreacji*, A. Panasiuk red. nauk., PWN, Warsaw, 2011, s. 75-77.

¹⁶ *Strategia Rozwoju Województwa Zachodniopomorskiego do roku 2030*, Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Zachodniopomorskiego, Szczecin 2019, s. 10.

and Świnoujście) and eighteen counties (Białogard, Choszczno, Drawsko, Goleniów, Gryfice, Gryfino, Kamień, Kołobrzeg, Koszalin, Łobez, Myślibórz, Police, Pyrzyce, Sławno, Stargard, Świdwin, Szczecinek, Wałcz)¹⁷.

Most researchers believe that the development of tourism is strongly linked to the presence of natural values, such as landscapes, vegetation and animals, which are often protected or can be protected¹⁸. The natural and landscape values of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship are linked to its geographic location, biological and hydrological resources, and topography. Characteristic features of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship include numerous lakes, proximity to the Baltic Sea, and a coastal zone. This location influences the climate, resulting in a clash of maritime and continental climates. The biodiversity of the region's fauna is shaped by its specific physiographic conditions. Of significant importance are the extensive Baltic coastline, the presence of spit lakes, coastal rivers, the Oder estuary, and the marshy nature of its lower reaches, which creates numerous, diverse habitats¹⁹.

Valuable natural areas covered by legal protection in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship include²⁰:

- Wolin National Park (8,199.4 ha within the voivodeship boundaries),
- Drawieński National Park (5395.4 ha within the voivodeship boundaries),
- Szczecin Landscape Park Beech Forest (9096.0 ha),
- Lower Odra Valley Landscape Park (6009.0 ha),
- Cedynia Landscape Park (30850.0 ha),
- Warta River Mouth Landscape Park (1798.5 ha within the voivodeship borders),
- Barlinek Landscape Park (11,694.3 ha within the voivodeship borders),
- Ińsko Landscape Park (7763.0 ha),
- Drawsko Landscape Park (42,291.8 ha),
- Nature reserves – 125 areas with a total area of 14,754.0 ha (0.6% of the voivodeship area).

Anthropogenic values related to the history and culture of the region are another important factor in the development of tourism²¹. The cultural landscape of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship is a tangible testament to the region's rich

¹⁷ *Rocznik Statystyczny Województwa Zachodniopomorskiego*, Urząd Statystyczny w Szczecinie, Szczecin 2019, s. 75-80.

¹⁸ S. Graja-Zwolińska, A. Sychała, op. cit., s. 236-247.

¹⁹ *Plan Zagospodarowania ...*, op. cit., s. 44-77.

²⁰ *Rocznik Statystyczny ...*, op. cit., s. 19.

²¹ I. Potocka, *Walory turystyczne*, (in:) *Uwarunkowania i plany rozwoju turystyki*, A. Zajądacz, Z. Młynarczyk eds., Tom III, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań 2009, s. 12.

history, a result of the clash of Western European, Polish, and Scandinavian influences. Of all registered Romanesque monuments in the country, 12% are located in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. West Pomerania has the largest number of historic buildings with wooden frame structures (257 of 990 buildings in Poland, representing 26%) and brick and stone structures (21.2%). Religious architecture is one of the oldest and most valuable elements of the cultural landscape of West Pomerania. The most valuable urban churches include medieval ones, such as the Romanesque-Gothic cathedral in Kamień Pomorski, the Gothic collegiate churches in Myślibórz and Kołobrzeg, and parish churches in cities such as Szczecin. The castles of princes, knights, and monks are among the oldest and most valuable monuments in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. Only a few have survived to the present day, most having been rebuilt or merely in ruins. The best-preserved castle is the Pomeranian Dukes' Castle in Darłowo, with its preserved defensive walls, tower, and residential wing. The former St. John's Castle in Swobnica, with its Baroque interior, remains important for Western Pomerania. It was expanded in the 17th century by the Margraves of Brandenburg. Historical analysis indicates that most of the voivodeship's towns date back to the Middle Ages (the process of granting town rights mainly dates back to the second half of the 13th century and the 14th century). It is noteworthy that in 26 towns of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship defensive walls (stone, brick or mixed) have been preserved – either on their entire perimeter or in fragments. The group of towns with the best preserved medieval defensive walls includes: Moryń, Maszewo, Mieszkowice, Trzeńsko-Zdrój, Pyrzyce, Stargard. In the second half of the 19th century, a network of seaside resorts was established in Pomerania (including Ustronie Morskie, Rewal, Dziwnów, Mielno, Darłówek), three of which – Międzyzdroje, Świnoujście and Mielno – developed into towns. Spa architecture also appeared in Kołobrzeg. Guesthouses, spa houses and bathing houses were also built in Połczyn-Zdrój or Trzeńsko-Zdrój. These towns, with springs of mineral bathing and drinking water, and therapeutic muds, were given the name of health resorts²².

Material and methods

The multidimensional analysis method was used, enabling the comparison of the studied units using a single indicator. The level of the tourist function of the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship was determined by constructing a synthetic index based on four diagnostic features.

²² *Plan Zagospodarowania ...*, op. cit., s. 95-114.

Table 2. Indicators of the tourist function in the counties of the West Poland Voivodeship in 2024

Specification	Baretje-Defert index	Accommodation density index	Schneider index	Baretje index
Białogard County	1.00	51.83	41.96	21.83
Choszczno County	0.91	30.27	4.90	1.63
Drawsko Pom. County	5.18	155.82	126.89	38.19
Goleniów County	0.76	38.27	35.85	18.01
Gryfice County	41.06	2256.12	641.03	352.19
Gryfino County	1.05	42.86	44.51	18.22
Kamień Pom. County	40.92	1776.88	995.01	432.09
Kołobrzeg County	55.56	5830.08	1555.69	1632.40
Koszalin County	31.17	1217.23	443.10	173.04
Myślibórz County	1.12	58.63	34.15	17.84
Police County	0.61	79.97	33.68	44.04
Pyrzyce County	0.24	11.85	11.80	5.85
Sławno County	34.94	1755.03	418.23	210.10
Stargard County	1.13	87.85	38.49	30.03
Szczecinek County	1.29	52.43	40.66	16.58
Świdwin County	1.63	63.86	23.68	9.26
Wałcz County	2.46	85.72	53.73	18.75
Łobez County	0.84	25.92	26.86	8.32
Koszalin City County	1.41	1396.23	45.94	456.19
Szczecin City County	2.28	2931.89	124.34	1597.41
Świnoujście City County	28.30	5400.50	1149.79	2193.76
Min.	0.24	11.85	4.90	1.63
Max.	55.56	5830.08	1555.69	2193.76
Mean	12.09	1111.87	280.49	347.42

Source: Calculated based on: Central Statistical Office Local Data Bank, <https://bdl.stat.gov.pl/bdl/start> (4.12.2025).

Four indicators included in the measurement of the tourist function were selected²³:

Baretje-Defert index:

$$W_{BD} = \text{number of beds/county population} \cdot 100$$

²³ A.R. Szromek, *Pomiar funkcji turystycznej obszarów za pomocą wskaźników funkcji turystycznej na przykładzie obszarów państw europejskich*, Studia Ekonomiczne Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach, 2013, No. 132, s. 91-103.

Accommodation density index:

$$W_G = \text{numbers of beds/county area} \cdot 100$$

Schneider index:

$$W_S = \text{number of tourists/county population} \cdot 100$$

Baretje index:

$$W_B = \text{numbers of tourists/county area}$$

The synthetic index was calculated using the non-reference method as the average value of the standardized diagnostic features. Individual indicators of the tourist function were treated as stimulants, i.e., features positively correlated with the tourist function. Therefore, the standardization of diagnostic features was performed based on the formula:

$$n_{ij} = x_{ij}/\max_{ij}$$

The patternless synthetic index method involves averaging the normalized values of diagnostic indicators²⁴.

Then, based on the synthetic measure (S), its mean value (S_M) and standard deviation (S_S), the units of the analyzed community were divided into four classes with different levels of the studied phenomenon:

- class I: $S \geq S_M + 0,6 \cdot S_S$ high level,
- class II: $S_M + 0,6 \cdot S_S > S \geq S_M$ medium level,
- class III: $S_M > S \geq S_M - 0,6 \cdot S_S$ low level,
- class IV: $S < S_M - 0,6 \cdot S_S$ very low level.

Data for the analysis comes from the Local Data Bank of the Central Statistical Office from 2024 (Central Statistical Office Local Data Bank, <https://bdl.stat.gov.pl/bdl/start>, 4.12.2025). The data is presented in Table 2.

Results

Table 3 presents the standardized values of tourism function indicators in the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship in 2024. Based on these values, synthetic indicators of the level of tourism function development were determined for individual counties. The mean value of the synthetic indicator and its standard deviation were used to divide the counties into four groups with varying levels of tourism function development. The results for each class are presented in Table 4 and Figure 1.

²⁴ J. Parysek, L. Wojtasiewicz, *Metody analizy regionalnej i metody planowania regionalnego*, Studia PAN i KPZK, tom LXIX, 1979, s. 26.

Class I includes counties with a high level of tourism development. Class I comprises four counties: Kołobrzeg, Świnoujście, Kamień, and Gryfice. They are located in the coastal belt. The high level of tourism development in Class I counties results from the high (highest) level of diagnostic features. Class I areas have a well-developed accommodation infrastructure, as evidenced by high values for accommodation capacity (41.46 beds per 100 inhabitants) and accommodation density (3,815.90 beds per 100 km²). Class I counties experience intensive tourism (1,035.38 tourists per 100 inhabitants) and significant tourist density (1,152.61 tourists per 1 km²). The high level of tourism development in Class I counties is due to the presence and relatively intensive use of tourist assets. Natural assets are key, especially the coastline with its sandy beaches. Numerous nature conservation areas exist here. The microclimate and the abundance of therapeutic mud and brine are the foundation of the spa's activities. Good transport accessibility is ensured by the road and rail networks, as well as the presence of ports. Class I expressways run through the area.

Class II comprises the Szczecin City County and the Koszalin and Sławno Counties, which are located in the coastal and border areas. The average level of tourism in Class II results from the average values of diagnostic features, which are similar to the overall level of the studied region. Accommodation in Class II is quite well developed. Accommodation capacity amounts to 22.80 beds per 100 inhabitants, and the density of accommodation is 1,968.05 beds per 100 km². The availability of accommodation translates into tourist traffic, which in Class II areas averages 328.56 tourists per 100 inhabitants and 660.18 tourists per km² annually. Class II areas contain numerous tourist assets, both natural and anthropogenic. Natural assets primarily encompass coastal areas with large coastal lakes, such as Jamno, Bukowo, Kopań, and Wicko. The anthropogenic values stem from the area's rich history, as well as the attractions offered by the region's largest city, Szczecin. Class II areas are quite well connected to the rest of the country, including via the S6 and S11 expressways and rail connections.

Class III consists of three counties: Koszalin City County, Wałcz County, and Drawsko County. These areas represent a low level of tourism, which results from low diagnostic indicators. In Class III areas, accommodation facilities are underdeveloped, as evidenced by low values for accommodation capacity (3.02 beds per 100 inhabitants) and accommodation density (545.92 beds per 100 km²). Therefore, tourist traffic in Class III counties is also low (75.52 tourists per 100 inhabitants, 171.04 tourists per km²). The low level of tourism is related to the underutilization of the potential resulting from the tourism assets of Class III areas. These areas possess tourism assets, but they are not the main driving force. There are numerous lakes (Drawskie and Wałeckie Lake Districts) and nature conservation areas (including the Drawsko Landscape Park), as well as

anthropogenic historical and contemporary assets, available not only in Koszalin, the region's second-largest urban center. Transportation accessibility in Class III counties is quite limited, especially in Drawsko and Wałeckie counties, where there are no expressways and few connections and train stations.

Table 3. Normalized values of tourist function indicators and the synthetic indicator in the counties of the West Poland Voivodeship in 2024

Specification	Baretje-Defert index	Accommodation density index	Schneider index	Baretje index	Synthetic index
Białogard County	0,018	0,009	0,027	0,010	0,0135
Choszczno County	0,016	0,005	0,003	0,001	0,0063
Drawsko Pom. County	0,093	0,020	0,081	0,017	0,0528
Goleniów County	0,013	0,006	0,023	0,008	0,0125
Gryfice County	0,739	0,387	0,555	0,160	0,4603
Gryfino County	0,019	0,007	0,029	0,008	0,0158
Kamień Pom. County	0,736	0,305	0,640	0,197	0,4695
Kołobrzeg County	1,000	1,000	1,000	0,744	0,9360
Koszalin County	0,561	0,209	0,285	0,079	0,2835
Myślibórz County	0,020	0,010	0,022	0,008	0,0151
Police County	0,010	0,014	0,022	0,020	0,0165
Pyrzyce County	0,004	0,002	0,008	0,003	0,0043
Sławno County	0,628	0,301	0,269	0,096	0,3235
Stargard County	0,020	0,015	0,025	0,014	0,0185
Szczecinek County	0,023	0,009	0,026	0,008	0,0165
Świdwin County	0,029	0,011	0,015	0,004	0,0148
Wałcz County	0,044	0,015	0,035	0,009	0,0258
Łobez County	0,015	0,004	0,017	0,004	0,0101
Koszalin City County	0,025	0,239	0,030	0,208	0,1255
Szczecin City County	0,041	0,502	0,080	0,728	0,3378
Świnoujście City County	0,509	0,926	0,739	1,000	0,7935

Source: Calculated based on data from Table 1.

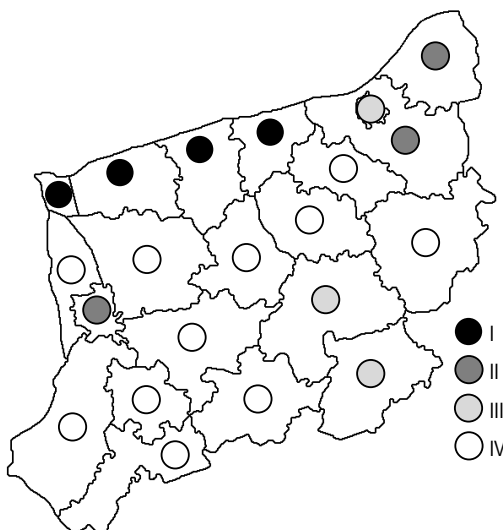


Figure 1. The level of the tourist function of the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship

Source: Own study.

Table 4. Average values of diagnostic indicators in classes with different levels of development of the tourist function in the West Poland Voivodeship in 2024

Specification	Baretje-Defert index	Accommodation density index	Schneider index	Baretje index
Class I (high level)	41,46	3815,90	1035,38	1152,61
Class II (medium level)	22,80	1968,05	328,56	660,18
Class III (low level)	3,02	545,92	75,52	171,04
Class IV (very low level)	0,96	49,93	30,59	17,42

Source: Calculated based on data from Table 1 and 2.

Class IV includes counties with a very low level of tourism development. It includes 11 counties located in the central and southern belt of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. Other economic functions dominate in these areas – agriculture and forestry, as well as industry (Police County). Accommodation facilities are essentially undeveloped, which results in very low diagnostic indicators (0.96 beds per 100 inhabitants and 49.93 beds per 100 km²). Only locally scattered agritourism farms associated with agricultural activities, and there is tourist traffic (30.59 tourists per 100 inhabitants, 17.42 tourists per km²), are present in Class IV areas. However, they are not widely used for tourism development. Accessibility to these areas is related to the presence of national roads and railways. There is an airport in Goleniów, but with a rather limited number of connections.

Conclusions

In accordance with the main aim, this article assessed the diversity of tourism in the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. Based on the Baretje-Defert index, the accommodation density index, the Schneider index, and the Baretje index, synthetic measures of individual spatial units were determined, allowing for the ranking of counties and their division into four classes – gradually ranging from class I to IV (from high to very low levels of tourism development). The analyses conducted demonstrate the diversity of tourism in the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, including the importance of the diversity of tourism assets resulting from geographical location for the development of accommodation and tourism. The hypothesis that the tourism function develops unevenly across the voivodeship, despite numerous tourist assets throughout the area, was confirmed.

Based on the results, significant differences can be observed between the counties of the West Pomeranian Voivodeship. Class I counties have direct access to the Baltic Sea, other natural assets, and well-developed tourist and communication infrastructure. Effective utilization of tourist assets leads to increased tourism demand in these counties. Class II differs significantly from the higher classes. Tourist assets are utilized to a lesser extent, and the tourist infrastructure is less developed than in Class I counties. However, Classes III and IV show significant differences compared to the other classes. These counties possess tourist assets, but they are not utilized for tourism purposes. Other economic functions dominate here. Tourist infrastructure is significantly less developed than in Class I and II areas. These counties possess untapped tourist potential, which could contribute to the future development of these areas.

The results of the conducted research can be useful for tourists, entrepreneurs, and local governments. Tourists have a variety of choices between the most frequently visited and less popular destinations and tourist attractions. For entrepreneurs, such information can prove crucial in location and investment decisions – not only in relation to tourism but also in related industries. Local governments can use tourism-related data and analyses to build development strategies that leverage the potential of a given area.

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POZIOM FUNKCJI TURYSTYCZNEJ W POWIATACH WOJEWÓDZTWA ZACHODNIOPOMORSKIEGO

Zarys treści: Celem badań jest ocena zróżnicowania funkcji turystycznej w powiatach województwa zachodniopomorskiego. Poziom funkcji turystycznej powiatów województwa zachodniopomorskiego wyznaczono konstruując wskaźnik syntetyczny na podstawie czterech cech diagnostycznych (wskaźniki Baretje'a-Deferta, gęstości bazy noclegowej, Schneidera i Baretje,a). Dane liczbowe pochodzą z Banku Danych Lokalnych GUS z 2024 roku. Potwierdzono hipotezę, zgodnie z którą funkcja turystyczna rozwija się nierównomiernie w województwie, pomimo licznych walorów turystycznych na całym obszarze. Powiaty podzielono na cztery klasy o różnym poziomie rozwoju funkcji turystycznej. Klasa I obejmuje powiaty o wysokim poziomie rozwoju funkcji turystycznej, związany z nadmorskim położeniem. Na obszarze klasy II średni poziom rozwoju funkcji turystycznej wynika z występowania zarówno naturalnych, jak i antropogenicznych walorów. Niski poziom funkcji turystycznej w klasie III jest związany z niewykorzystanym potencjałem walorów turystycznych. Klasa IV obejmuje powiaty o bardzo niskim poziomie rozwoju funkcji turystycznej, gdzie dominują inne funkcje gospodarcze.

Słowa kluczowe: województwo zachodniopomorskie, turystyka, funkcja turystyczna.