

Marek Nocon^{1a}, Krzysztof Sondel^{2b}, Bartłomiej Mróz^{2c}, Lucyna Jurzak^{2d}

¹ The University College of Tourism and Ecology, Faculty of Social Science, Sucha Beskidzka, Poland

² The University College of Tourism and Ecology, Faculty of Tourism and Leisure, Sucha Beskidzka, Poland

ORCID: ^a <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4133-7286> ^b <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6585-5021>,

^c <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2082-3584>, ^d <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8974-5513>

Corresponding author: Bartłomiej Mróz, email: bartlomiejmroz@wste.edu.pl

Occupancy of tourist accommodation establishments in Poland – comparison of 2019, the period of COVID- 19 pandemic and the subsequent months of 2020

Abstract: The paper aims to present changes in terms of the use of tourist accommodation establishments in Poland in 2020 as compared to the year preceding the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. The authors focus primarily on the desk research method, analysing in detail the news releases presented by Statistics Poland (Central Statistical Office) in relation to the subject of the article. The authors obtained answers to the posed research questions. The main conclusion of the article is that the use of tourist accommodation facilities in Poland decreased drastically after the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, which was most noticeable in voivodeships featuring high density of accommodation facilities.

Keywords: Tourist accommodation establishment, nights spent in tourist accommodation establishments, coronavirus COVID-19, pandemic, Poland

1. Introduction

Drastic changes that occurred in the use of bedspaces at tourist accommodation establishments were the result of dissemination of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, first recorded cases of which were found in December 2019, in the area of Wuhan city, province Hubei, China. Over the subsequent few months, coronavirus spread rapidly to other countries and reached the scale of a global pandemic (Ciotti et al., 2021).

Growing number of infections resulted in numerous restrictions in terms of free movement, which in turn forced nearly the entirety of tourist and hotel industry into lockdown. High dynamics of global increase in coronavirus infections was predominantly attributed to flights and sea voyages, and mega ship cruises in particular (Chinazzi et al., 2020). On the global scale, the decrease in the number of tourist arrivals, even at the early stage of the pandemic (between January and May 2020), amounted to 56% compared to 2019 (Policy Brief: COVID-

19 and Transforming Tourism AUGUST 2020, 2020). The subsequent months of 2020 brought restrictions in free movement interspersed with temporary loosening thereof. Realistically speaking, the pandemic exerted adverse influence on nearly all elements of the economy, and despite all the efforts made since June 2020 to reignite the tourist industry, it was one of the sectors that incurred the greatest losses. One should note that only approx. 8% of recommendations proposed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) were implemented (Collins-Kreiner and Ram, 2020). It is estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic had adverse impact on the entire tourist industry (Roman et al. 2020; Yuni, 2020; Uğur and Akbıyık, 2020; Yang et al., 2020; Škare et al., 2021), including the aspects pertaining to sleeping accommodations discussed in this paper.

Data presented in the following article concern the tourist stays. According to the

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) guidelines for statistical analysis, tourist is a visitor whose trip includes at least one overnight stay. Tourism is a collection of travels made for specific purposes (International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008, 2010). The decrease in tourist stays directly influence the state of Tourism Economy (TE), the most important elements of which include hospitality industry, gastronomy, tourism agencies (tour operators and tourist agents), and activity of entities providing tourist attractions and tourist information. TE accounts for 10% of Gross World Product (Panasiuk, 2020). The authors focus on the analysis of the pandemic impact on the occupancy of tourist accommodation facilities, including the hospitality sector.

The influence of pandemic was observed especially in the most popular tourist destinations where the absence of tourists proved to be most apparent. On April 20th, 2020, almost half of the European tourist destinations became partially or entirely inaccessible after closing the country borders. Drastic declines were noted as early as the end of the first quarter of 2020. An example of this kind of destinations is the city of Kraków, where, according to the research performed in mid-March 2020, 78% of entrepreneurs representing the tourism indus-

try indicated a decline in recorded sales on the level of practically 100% (Walas and Kruczek, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic paired with the deterioration of tourists' financial status, true to the prognoses from 2020 (Korinth, 2020), influenced the decisions of the Poles concerning their prospective tourist trips, and interfered with the plans of foreigners wishing to stay in Poland.

This paper aims to present changes in the use of bedspaces in tourist accommodation establishments in Poland, in 2020, in relation to the year preceding the pandemic of coronavirus COVID-19. Sleeping accommodations constitutes one of the key elements of tourist development. Its density paired with the number of bedspaces offered determine the reception capacity of a given area – town, city or region (Świstak and Świątkowska, 2018). The analysis of the abovementioned data is of importance from the standpoint of tourism development, as it affects tourist capacity of individual areas (Sala, 2015). The study may also prove useful from the perspective of establishments providing accommodation services, whose mode of operation pertaining to the stay of tourists in any given accommodation facility (Gawor-ecki, 2007) was subject to change during the pandemic.

2. Area description, methods and study material

The following article sets out to present statistical data analysis concerning the use of tourist accommodation establishments in Poland in 2020. The subject of this study is the analysis of data pertaining to a specified group of tourist accommodation establishments, i.e. excluding facilities that offer fewer than 10 accommodation places (Table 1).

The collected data focus on a wide variety of facilities, which offers an opportunity to compare hotel objects – hotels, motels, boarding houses, camping, excursion hotels, youth hostels, shelters and tent camp sites (Ustawa z dnia 29 sierpnia 1997 r. o usługach hotelarskich oraz usługach pilotów wycieczek i przewodników turystycznych, 1997) – with other facilities providing tourists with accommodation services.

Conclusions to the analysis of statistical data are presented in the article. The authors focused particularly on comparing changes in the use of tourist accommodation base in individual quarters of 2020 with the data from 2019. The data indicating which voivodeship recorded the greatest decrease in relation to the situation before the pandemic outbreak are also of great importance.

During development of this article, the authors focused on the analysis of existing data, i.e. employed the desk research method, and formulated a hypothesis that the use of tourist accommodation base in Poland decreased drastically after the outbreak of the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, which was expected to be most apparent in voivodeships characterized by high density of accommodation facilities.

Table 1. Typology of facilities under study as provided by Statistics Poland (based on Kraśniewska, et al. 2020)

Hotel facilities	Other facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hotels, • motels, • boarding houses, • other hotel facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excursion hostels, • shelters, • youth hostels, • school youth hostels, • holiday centres, • holiday youth centres, • training-recreational centres, • creative arts centres, • holiday dwellings, • camping, • tent camp sites, • hostels, • health resorts, • rooms for guest, • agrotourism lodgings, • other unclassified.

The following research questions were posed:

1. How did the level of tourist accommodation occupancy change in comparison to the period before the pandemic?
2. In what type of facilities was the decrease in provided overnight stays highest?
3. Which voivodeships indicated, from the economic point of view, the most notable decrease in the number of provided overnight stays?

3. Results and Discussion

Tourism is an important element of Polish Gross Domestic Product (GDP). On the basis of data from 2018–2019, a total increase in expenditure in the tourism economy was recorded at the level of 13.8%. As a result, the share of the tourism economy in GDP was 6.3% (Podstawowe dane statystyczne – turystyka w roku 2019 i ich zmiana w porównaniu do roku poprzedniego, 2019). Subsequent restrictions introduced with regards to the spread of COVID-19 since the end of the first quarter of 2020 led to the closure of facilities providing tourist accommodation services. One should note that the tourist accommodation sector is one of five main supply branches of the tourism market, which includes, inter alia, hotels, motels, boarding houses, rural lodgings, camping sites and others (Lewandowska et al., 2007). Complete lockdown of the tourism accommodation services sector in particular peri-

The analysis involves source materials comprising News Releases of Statistics Poland: Occupancy of tourist accommodation establishments in 2019, published on April 6th, 2020, and Occupancy of tourist accommodation establishments in 2020, published on April 6th, 2021. The data presented in the aforementioned materials enabled a detailed analysis of changes that occurred with regards to the use of accommodation facilities in Poland, both in terms of the typology of objects as well as their distribution and density in the country.

ods of 2020 drastically influenced the tourism economy, which in turn had adverse impact on Gross Domestic Product. According to the data made available by Statistics Poland, Polish real GDP decreased by 2.8% (Produkt krajowy brutto w 2020 roku – szacunek wstępny, 2021). The chart below shows the general change in the use of available sleeping accommodations in 2020 compared to 2019.

In 2020 the number of tourists who stayed at accommodation establishments decreased by 49.9% (17.8 million) compared to 2019, amounting to a total of 17.9 million tourists (Fig. 1).

In order to properly address the statistical data in question, it is necessary to distinguish between two types of examined indicators, both of which are of great importance from the economic point of view. The data presented in Figure 2 refer to the number of tourists

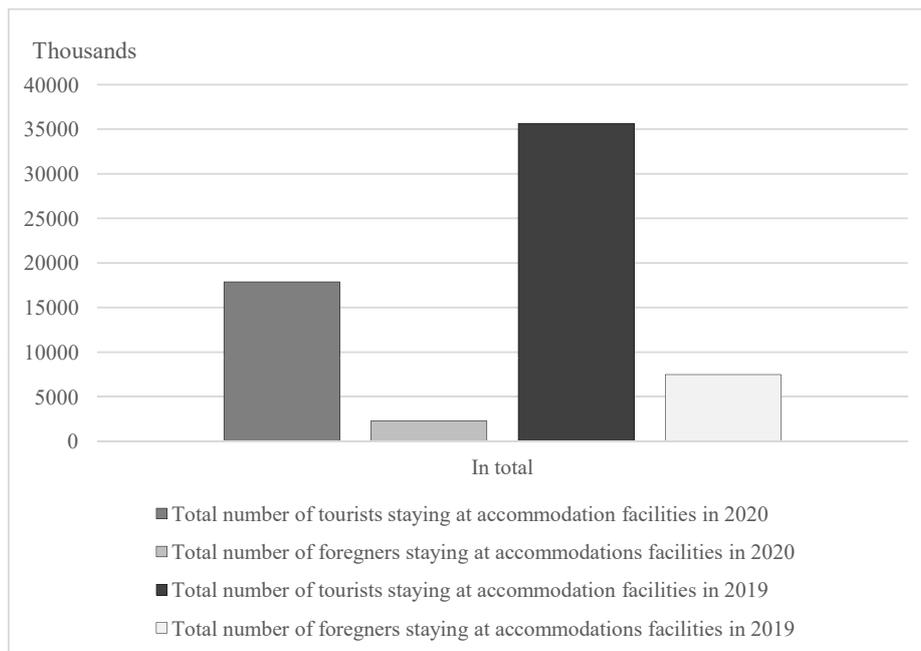


Figure 1. Tourists using accommodation establishments in 2019 and 2020 (Authors own elaboration based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

that stayed at accommodation establishments, while Figure 3 indicates the number of overnight stays provided to the above-mentioned tourists. The authors insist on distinguishing between these two indicators – the second one has a direct impact on the final financial result of the company providing the services.

Let us consider a simple example to illustrate this issue. If ten tourists stay at a facility that provides ten beds, and each of those indi-

viduals spends there three nights in a month, the total number of overnights will be 30. However, the exact same number of overnight stays would be had, if three tourists stayed at said facility for 10 nights. Depending on the type of facility, either scenario may prove more favourable than the other, and it is determined by the RevPAR index specified for a given accommodation object.

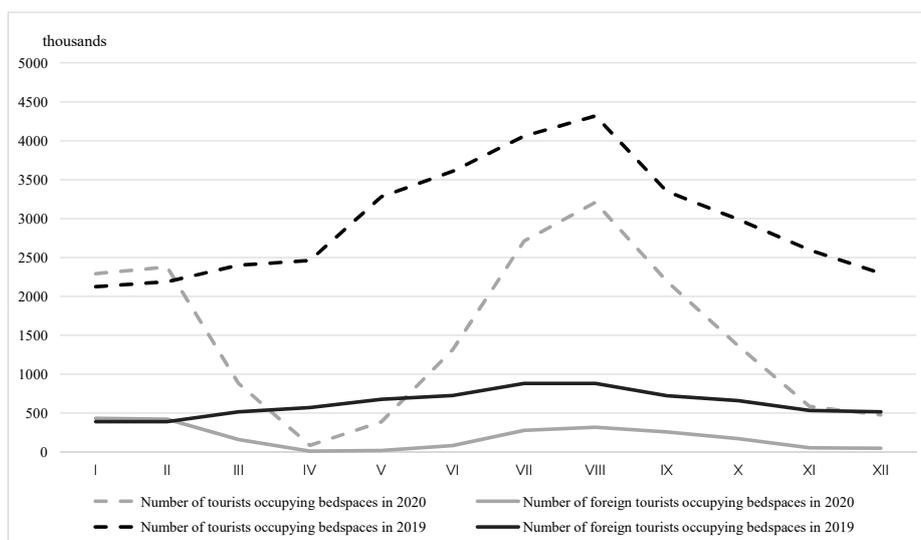


Figure 2. Tourists using accommodation establishments by month in 2019 and 2020 (Authors own elaboration based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

Beginning of the year in Poland is a period when total number of tourists using accommodation services is typically low compared to the summer time. January and February 2020 were in line with the upward trend observed in previous years in terms of tourist trips and expenses allocated to this purpose. The trend was observed in Poland during the past several years. A drastic decrease in the number of tourists at accommodation establishments was noted in mid-March 2020, which coincides with the first confirmed COVID-19 cases in Poland.

Gradually developing epidemiological crisis forced the government to introduce restrictions on domestic and international movement, as well as on the use of accommodation infrastructure for purposes other than business travels. The figure clearly indicates the exact moment when national lockdown came into force, which can be surmised from the sudden drop in the number of overnight stays at accommodation facilities. The period of strong restrictions lasted until June. During this time, due to favourable weather conditions and relative improvement of situation, decisions were

made to ease the restrictions. As presented in Figure 2, June and August mark the months of high summer season. The number of tourists started decreasing as expected at the beginning of the school year, in September, and continued to gradually decrease until December.

In 2020 this decline was neither linear nor gradual. The surge in Covid-19 infections confirmed at the end of October paired with the subsequent reinstatement of restrictions in the tourism industry caused a drastic drop in the number of tourists in the country to the value below 533 thousand. The total number of tourists in 2020, compared to 2019, decreased by 49.9% and amounted to 17.9 million, which includes 2.3 million of foreign tourists. Thus, foreign tourists accounted for 13% of the total number of occupants of tourist accommodation facilities in 2020. Further analysis of the data presented in Figure 2 shows that in 2019 that group accounted for 21% of the total number. Such a drop in the number of foreign tourists was not only a result of the domestic policy, but also a consequence of limitations arising from the international law pertaining to border crossing.

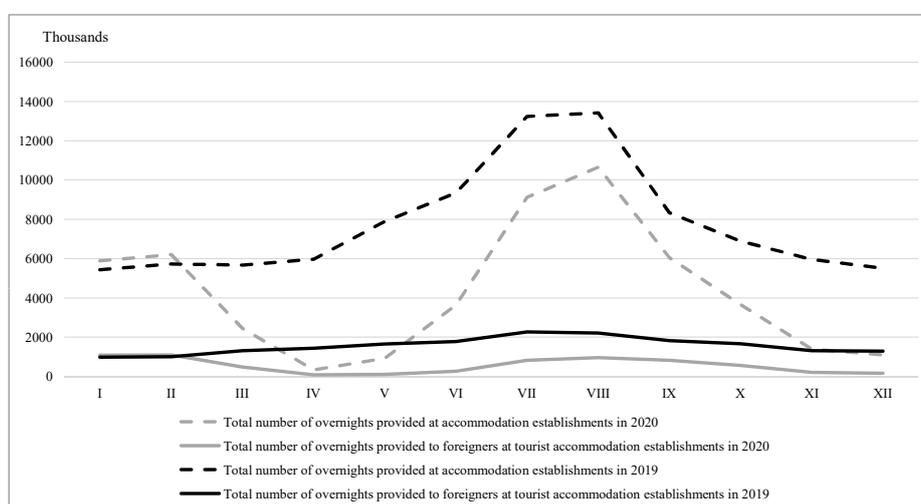


Figure 3. Nights spent (overnight stays) at tourist accommodation establishments by months in 2019 and 2020 (Authors' own elaboration based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

The total number of overnights provided at tourist accommodation establishments in 2020 amounted to 51.4 million, which represents a 45% decrease compared to 2019. And thus, this confirms that the change in the number of tourists closely corresponds to the change in

the number of nights spent at accommodation facilities. In this respect, the difference between these two values amounts to 4%.

One should note that the total number of provided overnight stays includes 6.6 million of foreign tourists, which also represents a 64.4%

decrease in comparison with the previous year. The altered structure of provided overnights is a consequence of the same factors that affected the change in the total number of tourists.

Table 2. Number of tourists using accommodation and provided overnights against the occupancy rate of bedspaces at accommodation establishments by facility types in 2019 (based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

FACILITY TYPE	Tourists using accommodation		Provided overnight stays		Occupancy rate of bedspaces (in %)
	in total	foreign tourists included	in total	foreign tourists included	
In thousands					
In total	35 668.1	7 470.5	93 342.7	18 683.6	40.6
<i>Hotel facilities</i>	27 222.9	6 582.5	53 717.1	15 089.7	41.7
Hotels	23 511.6	6 014.1	44 848.2	13 203.2	44.1
Other hotel facilities	2 845.0	477.6	6 800.5	1 690.1	33.5
Boarding houses	641.0	59.0	1 711.3	156.6	30.9
Motels	225.3	31.9	357.2	39.7	25.4
<i>Other facilities</i>	8 445.2	888.1	39 625.6	3 593.9	39.1
Holiday centres	1 898.2	105.5	10 336.2	601.5	41.1
Training-recreational centres	1 095.5	36.7	3 847.1	164.5	32.5
Rooms for guest	1 012.6	103.1	3 537.3	390.8	26.8
Other unclassified	935.9	107.7	3 020.9	644.5	30.0
Health resorts	874.3	49.1	11 102.4	425.1	79.6
Hostels	804.7	266.5	1 795.4	675.4	46.9
Holiday dwellings	388.3	19.9	1 488.1	75.3	30.3
Camping sites	313.0	115.0	955.1	305.0	27.3
School youth hostels	310.8	34.8	851.5	136.8	19.3
Shelters	193.6	5.4	296.3	7.4	29.4
Agrotourism lodgings	156.6	8.7	571.0	48.3	15.7
Holiday youth centres	140.0	0.8	879.9	8.6	49.3
Tent camp site	102.7	14.0	325.5	37.8	17.3
Excursion hostels	95.6	5.2	283.5	20.4	29.1
Youth hostels	81.1	13.5	194.2	45.1	31.0
Creative arts centres	42.3	2.1	141.3	7.6	26.8

In 2019, in Poland there were 825.5 thousand bed places available in total, 70% of which were vacant throughout the entire year. Following the methodology adopted by Statistics Poland, the density of accommodation facilities in Poland is expressed as the number of bedspaces per 1 km². In 2019 said indicator amounted to 2.6.

Generally, across all of the tourist accommodation establishments in the country, 93 342 700 overnight stays were provided in the discussed period of time, and the occupancy rate of bedspaces was 40.6% (Table 2). Objects classified as hotel facilities were most frequently chosen by tourists, and their ser-

vices were used by a total of 27 222.9 thousand people, of which 24.18% were foreign tourists. The occupancy rate of bedspaces at other objects were indicated at the level of 39.1%, which amounts to a total of 39 625.6 thousand of provided overnights. Said number includes 9.07% of overnights stays provided to foreign tourists. It is apparent that foreign tourists are inclined to stay at hotel facilities – in 2019, in total, foreign tourists were provided 15 089.7 thousand overnight stays in this group of facilities. Said number constitutes 80.76% of total number of overnight stays provided to foreign tourists in that year.

Table 3. Number of tourists using accommodation and provided overnight stays with an occupancy rate of bed places at accommodation establishments by facility types in 2020 (based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

FACILITY TYPE	Tourists using accommodation		Provided overnight stays		Occupancy rate of bedspaces (in %)
	in total	foreign tourists included	in total	foreign tourists included	
	in thousands				
In total	17 879.0	2 263.8	51 377.2	6 623.0	26.8
<i>Hotel facilities</i>	13 128.2	1 945.5	28 295.3	4 982.4	25.5
Hotels	11 131.4	1 744.0	22 973.4	4 113.1	26.0
Other hotel facilities	1 513.8	165.4	4 093.8	781.5	24.6
Boarding houses	376.4	25.2	1 045.5	70.7	22.3
Motels	106.6	10.9	182.5	17.0	16.1
<i>Other facilities</i>	4 750.8	318.2	23 081.9	1 640.5	28.7
Holiday centres	1 241.9	45.0	6 650.4	255.4	31.9
Guest rooms	628.6	34.6	2 345.9	167.5	21.8
Training and recreational centres	544.4	11.9	2 155.5	81.5	24.0
Health resorts	466	24.9	5 306.8	186.5	54.5
Other unclassified	394.1	37.1	1 621.0	326.6	20.1
Hostels	350.0	86.8	987.4	328.7	30.7
Holiday dwellings	310.6	6.4	1 303.4	43.7	28.9
Camping sites	216.8	38.3	692.0	119.6	24.5
Shelters	123.3	2.0	205.3	2.9	23.4
School youth hostels	113.3	12.3	392.2	51.6	12.0
Tent camp sites	104.8	8.5	283.1	23.6	17.1
Agrotourism lodgings	99.9	3.7	400.0	26.8	14.2
Holiday youth centres	63.4	0.1	434.0	2.3	32.5
Excursion hostels	42.4	1.9	143.7	5.8	20.1
Youth hostels	30.8	3.9	84.1	15.6	16.8
Creative arts centres	20.4	0.7	77.0	2.3	17.3

According to the data on availability of accommodation in Poland published by Statistics Poland, at the end of July 2020 facilities in Poland offered 775.3 thousand bedspaces to tourists. This represents a decrease by 6.1% (50.2 thousand beds) compared to the previous year. The accommodations density indicator decreased by 0.1 point and thus amounted to 2.5. The highest number of bedspaces was offered at hotels (276.4 thousand) and holiday resorts (122.3 thousand).

In the scale of the entire country, occupancy rate of bedspaces was 26.8%, indicating a 13.8% decrease compared to 2019. As in the previous year, the most frequently selected accommodation establishments among tourists were hotels, offering a total of 276.4 thousand

bedspaces used by 11.1 million tourists (Table 3). In this case the decrease in the number of tourists occupying this type of accommodation establishments is very jarring. In 2019 this number was 23.5 million, which translates into a 47.23% drop in the number of tourists staying at hotels. 4.8 million tourists occupied bedspaces at establishments defined as "other facilities", and in this particular group, tourists were mostly inclined to occupy holiday centres. These establishments accommodated a total of 1.2 million tourists and provided 6 650.40 thousand overnights. Other objects deemed relatively popular among tourists were guest rooms (628.6 thousand tourists staying overnight) and training-recreational centres (544.4 thousand tourists staying overnight).

As far as preferences of foreign tourists are concerned, there was no distinct change – in 2020, same as in 2019, they chose hotels. In total, foreign tourists were provided with 6 623.00 thousand of overnight stays at hotels across Poland, which comprises 62.10% of total number of provided overnights in the country.

In 2020 tourist lodging establishments accommodated 49.9% (17.8 million) fewer tourists than in 2019, which gives 17.9 million tourists. The total number of provided overnights in 2020 was 51 377.20, which means that the occupancy rate of bedspaces was 26.8% (the difference compared to 2019 being 13.8%).

Table 4. Number of overnight stays provided to tourists with the occupancy rate of bedspaces by voivodeships in 2019 and 2020 (based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2019 roku, 2020; Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

VOIVODESHIPS	Overnight stays provided in 2019		Occupancy rate of bedspaces in 2019 (in %)	Overnight stays provided in 2020		Occupancy rate of bedspaces in 2020 (in %)
	in total	foreign tourists included		in total	foreign tourists included	
	in thousands			in thousands		
POLAND	93 342.7	18 683.6	40.6	51 377.2	6 623.00	26.8
Zachodniopomorskie	16 084.7	4 039.7	51.5	9 947.1	2 035.60	37.8
Pomorskie	10 333.3	1 659.8	43.1	6 701.0	552.4	31.7
Kujawsko-pomorskie	4 570.1	306	45.7	2 371.7	106.5	29.9
Warmińsko-mazurskie	3 379.5	395.4	31.8	2 372.7	120.0	27.5
Dolnośląskie	9 617.9	1 640.5	39.4	5 515.5	603.8	26.3
Małopolskie	14 855.5	4 105.1	43.0	6 841.8	928.4	25.7
Podkarpackie	3 602.1	279.1	34.8	2 113.6	97.4	25.4
Śląskie	6 520.3	966.1	38.0	3 342.0	360.0	23.3
Opolskie	938.2	128.5	32.5	467.3	55.2	22.2
Podlaskie	1 315.5	207.1	30.6	830.0	62.8	22.1
Łódzkie	2 726.7	508.0	35.1	1 351.9	251.7	21.9
Świętokrzyskie	1 940.1	121.2	33.7	1 041.5	47.0	21.9
Mazowieckie	9 709.9	3 133.0	44.0	4 057.9	872.4	21.3
Lubelskie	2 381.0	220.6	31.8	1 397.2	65.1	21.1
Lubuskie	1 480.0	322.6	29.7	934.1	157.0	21.1
Wielkopolskie	3 887.8	651.2	31.0	2 091.8	307.8	20.4

The discrepancy in the occupancy rate of bedspaces between 2019 and 2020 across all the voivodeships in Poland is presented in the Table 4 and visualized on the map below (Fig. 4). Mazowieckie, Małopolskie, Kujawsko-pomorskie, Śląskie and Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeships were most severely affected by the crisis – the change in the occupancy rate of bedspaces as compared with 2019 was, respectively, 22.7%, 17.3%, 15.8%, 14.7% and 13.7%.

The highest occupancy rate of bedspaces in 2020 was recorded in the following voivodeships:

– Zachodniopomorskie, where occupancy rate of bedspaces was at 37.8%, i.e. 9.9 mil-

lion of overnights, which includes 2035.60 thousand foreign tourists.

- Pomorskie, where occupancy rate of bedspaces was at 31.7%, i.e. 6.7 million of overnights, which includes 552.4 thousand foreign tourists.
- Kujawsko-pomorskie, where occupancy rate of bedspaces was at 29.9%, i.e. 2.3 million of overnights, which includes 106.5 thousand foreign tourists.
- Warmińsko-mazurskie, where occupancy rate of bedspaces was at 27.5%, i.e. 2.3 million of overnights, which includes 120 thousand foreign tourists.

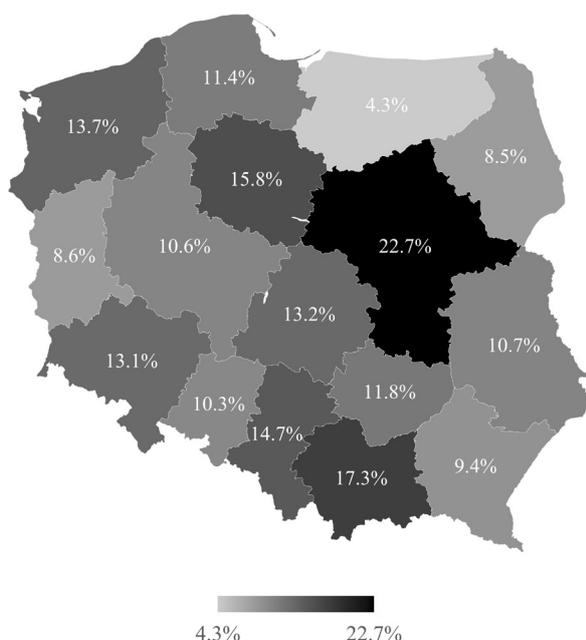


Figure 4. Decline in occupancy rate [%] of bedspaces in individual voivodeships between 2019 and 2020 (Authors' own elaboration based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2019 roku, 2020; Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

In order to fully understand the extent of changes, however, the above-mentioned results must be supplemented with values pertaining to the indicator of density of tourist accommodation establishments. Of all Voivodeships in Poland, the highest values of said indicator, ranging from 4.6 to 6.3 bedspaces per 1 km², were noted in Zachodniopomorskie, Pomorskie and Małopolskie voivodeships. Although the occupancy rate of bed spaces in Małopolskie voivodeship in 2020 was admittedly lower (25.7%) than in Warmińsko-mazurskie voivodeship, one should bear in mind that the difference in total number of overnight stays provided to tourists between 2019 and 2020 (Fig. 5) was over 8 million stays, whereas in the case of Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodeship it was approximately 1 million overnights.

It should also be noted that availability of accommodation establishments in the area

4. Conclusions

Occupancy rate of bedspaces in Poland in the year of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic outbreak diminished in comparison with the

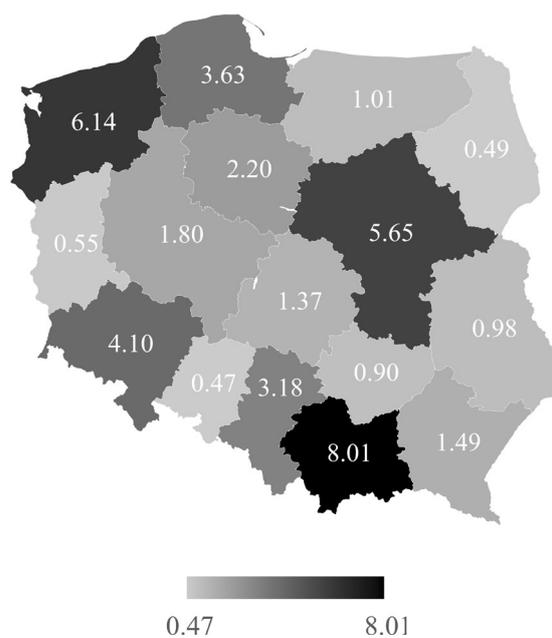


Figure 5. Difference in the number of provided overnights between 2019 and 2020 (expressed in millions) (Authors' own elaboration based on the data obtained from Statistic Poland: Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2019 roku, 2020; Wykorzystanie turystycznych obiektów noclegowych w 2020 roku, 2021)

of the Zachodniopomorskie and Pomorskie voivodeships fluctuates on a season-to-season basis, whereas in the case of the Małopolskie voivodeship, lodging facilities are mostly available throughout the year.

The smallest drop in the number of tourists was noted in the Opolskie and Podlaskie voivodeships. Considering the difference in occupancy rate of bedspaces between 2019 and 2020, the decrease was at 10.3% and 8.5%, respectively. However, the density of tourist accommodation establishments in this part of Poland is the lowest and ranges between 0.7 and 1.5 of a bedspace per 1 km². Thus, at least from the economic point of view, the voivodeships in question were not as adversely affected as the rest of the voivodeships, even if the difference in the occupancy rate may seem relatively high.

preceding period of time by 13.8%, and eventually amounted to 25.8% of the potential tourist accommodation base in Poland. Such a signif-

ificant decrease generated considerable losses within the sector of accommodation services, which had a direct influence on Gross Domestic Product.

The highest drop in the indicator of bedspaces occupancy rate was recorded in relation to health resorts and amounted to 25.1, arriving at 54.5% in 2020. This decrease was certainly significant from the point of view of those objects, yet it was hotels that suffered the most in terms of changes in the total number of provided overnight stays. The indicator of bedspaces occupancy rate decreased in this case by 16.2%. Nevertheless, one should note that said facilities offer the largest number of bedspaces in Poland. The real decrease in the number of provided overnight stays amounted to 25.42 million, which translates into gigantic losses.

Voivodeship affected the most by the decrease in the number of tourists include the Zachodniopomorskie, Małopolskie, Mazowieckie and Pomorskie voivodeships. These regions are believed to be the most popular tourist destinations in Poland, and as such they recorded the highest results in the sales of overnights. However, they also incurred the greatest loss compared to the previous year.

It is also very important to consider the situation of hoteliers. Problems related to the crisis in the industry and difficult situation on the market result from the legal solutions proposed by government. The first legal acts which directly influenced rental of bedspaces were Regulation of the Minister of Health of 13 March 2020 on the announcement of an epidemic threat in the territory of the Republic of Poland, the status of the epidemic threat in connection with SARS-CoV-2 virus infections (Rozporządzenie Ministra Zdrowia z dnia 13 marca 2020 r. W sprawie ogłoszenia na obszarze Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej stanu zagrożenia epidemicznego, 2020; Rozporządzenie Ministra Zdrowia z dnia 14 marca

2020 r. zmieniające rozporządzenie w sprawie ogłoszenia na obszarze Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej stanu zagrożenia epidemicznego, 2020), and Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 31 March 2020 on the implementation of specified restrictions, orders and prohibitions in relation with the State of Epidemic (Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 31 marca 2020 r. w sprawie ustanowienia określonych ograniczeń, nakazów i zakazów w związku z wystąpieniem stanu epidemii, 2020). The above-mentioned acts, especially the imposed restrictions on free movement and provision of accommodation services, constituted the direct legal cause of the decrease in the occupancy of tourist accommodation facilities in Poland.

Another set of legal acts that is worth mentioning is the so-called *Anti-crisis shield*, which comprised over 30 legal acts aimed at, *inter alia*, supporting the economy and entrepreneurs. The results of research performed by the Institute of Tourism show that entrepreneurs were appreciative of solutions that involve deferring the payment of Social Security contributions for a period of 3 months, 3-month idle time pay and loans for micro-entrepreneurs from the Labour Fund. As the key problems connected with applying for financial support entrepreneurs pointed to unclearness of regulations and inadequacy of available (Walas, 2020) These legislation issues paired with obstructions in acquiring the support also adversely affected the functioning of the hospitality industry,

Summarizing the data presented in the article and the analysis thereof, the authors confirmed the research hypothesis: The occupancy of tourist accommodation facilities in Poland decreased drastically after the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic outbreak, which was most noticeable in the voivodeships characterized by high density of accommodation facilities.

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