

Abstract:

The doctoral thesis is devoted to analyzing the perception of attractiveness of Poland as a tourism space from the perspective of Czech citizens in a broader context of mutual Czech -Polish relations in tourism.

The thesis is primarily based on theoretical concepts of geography of tourism and at the same time it also follows other geographical and scientific disciplines. The methodological framework of the thesis benefits from the openness and multi-disciplinary nature of tourism. Part of the thesis was created using traditional methods and techniques applied in geography, among others: questionnaire research among students, structured interviews with employees of travel agencies, semi-structured interviews with representatives of the Polish governmental institutions, and analyses of the Internet and printed sources. Additionally, there were utilized methods and techniques used more frequently in other disciplines, including: Delphi method, SWOT analysis, mystery shopping, analysis of travelogues, Internet sources of information about Poland, and content of textbooks.

The empirical part of the thesis serves to realize four main aims. The most important aim of thesis can be considered the identification and evaluation of opinions of selected groups of Czechs on the attractiveness of Poland as a tourism space in respect to the role that prejudice and positive expectations play in their creation. The readily available sources of information about Poland that may affect the perception of its attractiveness were also mapped. The study analyzes the state of support of the development of tourism by the Polish governmental institutions and proposes possible modifications of marketing strategy. Another important objective of the thesis was to characterize the offer of available trips to Poland on the Czech market. The last part of the thesis presents forecast of development of the Czech tourism oriented at Poland, which was created in collaboration with experts from both countries.

The result of the thesis is a finding that the Czech-Polish relations in tourism are strongly influenced by the persistence of negative stereotypes and lack of information concerning Poland as a tourist destination. Marketing support for the development of tourism by the Polish government is very limited and inconsistent. Poland is also a marginal issue for local media and even there it is often presented in negative contexts. Hope raises the fact that trips to Poland are a traditional element of the offer of Czech travel agencies. Analysis of the results of all phases of the research leads to the conclusion that solution to the current situation and the way to intensify the mutual Czech-Polish relations in tourism may be the implementation of strategy, which is characterized by a combination of three "I`s": Internet - Individualization - Information. The final part of the thesis includes suggestions for future research.