

## **THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN HOTEL INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE NUMBER OF HOTEL GUESTS AND THE ASPECT OF PHYSICAL RECREATION IN THE LOCAL SOCIETY**

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**Abstract:** In the first part of the article the author describes the importance of physical activity, leisure, physical recreation and rest in human life. Subsequently, the author draws attention to the importance of modern hotel bases with wide recreational infrastructure in increasing the number of hotel guests and the aspect of physical recreation in the local society. The research presented in this article refers to the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012 in which there was a rapid development in hotel infrastructure and recreation in Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship and which had a significant impact on tourism development, recreation and physical activity of visitors and residents of the analyzed region.

**Key words:** Poland, Warmian-Masurian region, the influence of modern hotel, aspect of physical recreation in the local society

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Human life is filled with various forms of physical activity. J. Drabik (1996) believes that „physical activity is an essential and integral component of a healthy lifestyle. Without it, any health strategy, its maintenance, boosting and, in the case of children, correct development is impossible. Lack of any physical activity is a serious cardiovascular risk factor”<sup>1</sup>. Physical activity may take a variety of ways, from activities that we do every day to various types of physical exercises. J. Drabik draws attention to the fact that physical activity: “may be spontaneous, such as walking, or properly organized and planned in terms of the level of physical exertion needed”<sup>2</sup>.

### **OBJECTIVES. METHODOLOGY. DISCUSSION**

Physical activity helps to maintain and boost health and therefore occupies an important place in people's life. It mainly affects health and well-being. According to I. Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska: “Physical activity is essential to humans at every stage of life and for every age group. The importance of exercise changes and evolves with age, but

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<sup>1</sup>. J. Drabik, Aktywność fizyczna w treningu zdrowotnym osób dorosłych, cz. II, AWF Gdańsk 1996, p. 215

<sup>2</sup>. Ibidem, p. 215

always remains one of the main factors determining health”<sup>3</sup>. The author notices that "human health is shaped at all stages of his life". To sum up, the active ways of spending free time are essential components of well-being and a healthy lifestyle. The thesis has its reflection in the words of J. Barankiewicz who understands physical activity: “as different types of activities and exercises performed either for pleasure, recreation and health or to improve exercise capacity, acquire new skills and physical abilities, prevent modern-age diseases (improvement of the circulatory, respiratory system functions and mental stress prevention) or to increasing its positive effects on physical and mental work capacity”<sup>4</sup>.

Physical culture is a term that mainly refers to physical activity which, according to M. Demel, is: “the expression of a particular attitude towards one's own body, conscious and active concern related to one's self-development, physical fitness, health and the ability to organize and spend time in a way that is beneficial to physical and mental health”<sup>5</sup>. According to the Act of 18 January 1996, the main objective of the physical education is to care about the proper psychological and physical development and health of all citizens and it can be achieved by physical education, sport, physical recreation and motor rehabilitation. According to the Act of Law, physical culture is: „knowledge, values, habits, actions which ensure mental, physical and educational development, improve physical function and maintain and restore health”<sup>6</sup>.

Physical recreation has the biggest influence on physical activity which is the most popular way of spending free time. According to T. Wolański: “any non-strenuous exercises related to sports and camping in which one engages during his or her leisure time for relaxing, entertainment, self-development, without striving for excellence, but aiming at the feeling of calmness, joy and pleasure”<sup>7</sup>. However, A. Dąbrowski defines physical recreation, “as all socially acceptable forms of physical activity, performed in free time either voluntarily, selflessly or for pleasure which aim is to restore and strengthen one's stamina and which at the same time focus on self-realization, have an entertaining character and are performed individually, in groups or which are regarded as a social or global phenomenon”<sup>8</sup>.

Similarly to A. Dąbrowski, M. Kwilecka states that physical recreation is: “the phenomenon of taking different physical activity classes or engaging in sports and tourism out of one's own choice and for purely entertaining”<sup>9</sup>.

There is also another division which specifies:

- physical recreation which includes all forms of physical behavior that is gymnastics, rhythmic exercises, physical activities, games and active tourism;
- creative recreation that involves the creative side of a personality and which is the part of emotional cleansing channel and therefore its mostly common forms are: arts, music, theatre, photography;
- cultural and entertaining recreation which includes recreational forms of culture and takes the form of reading, brain teasers, social games, science, hobby and interests clubs, sightseeing and environmental tourism;
- recreation as a social activity that is a series of voluntary actions undertaken in free time for the benefit of other people, including animation and organization, social, foundational, charitable, religious activities <sup>10</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> I. Kielbasiewicz-Drozdowska, W. Siwiński (red.), *Teoria i metodyka rekreacji (zagadnienia podstawowe)*, AWF Poznań 2001, p. 53

<sup>4</sup> J. Barankiewicz, *Leksykon wychowania fizycznego i sportu szkolnego*, Warszawa 1998, p. 11

<sup>5</sup> M. Demel, A. Skład, *Teoria wychowania fizycznego* PWN, Warszawa 1974, p.13-14

<sup>6</sup> Ustawa z dnia 18 stycznia 1996 o kulturze fizycznej

<sup>7</sup> T. Wolańska, (red.), *Rekreacja fizyczna*, Centralny Ośrodek Metodyki Upowszechniania Kultury, Warszawa 1971, p. 9-11

<sup>8</sup> A. Dąbrowski, *Zarys teorii rekreacji ruchowej*, WSE, Warszawa 2006, p. 5-15

<sup>9</sup> M. Kwilecka (red.), *Bezpośrednie funkcje rekreacji*, WSE, Warszawa 2006, p. 7-13

<sup>10</sup>. S. Toczek-Werner (red.), *Podstawy rekreacji i turystyki*, AWF, Wrocław 2005, p. 8-22

To sum up, the main aim of the physical recreation is to fulfil the health needs. What is more, it is also important to maintain daily energy balance. Physical recreation also aims at improving and maintaining the efficiency, productivity, good mental and physical condition and therefore gives pleasure and satisfaction with physical effort. It should be noticed that the meaning of sport and recreation is mainly a human activity. Therefore, recreation can be regarded a way of achieving well-being while the sport is a form of competition and does not always have much in common with well-being and relaxation. Due to this fact, one cannot equate recreation with sport. However, the concepts which are always associated with the concept of recreation are tourism and leisure.

Tourism is a specific form of a physical recreation. According to Nowa Encyklopedia Współczesna (1997), "tourism is a form of active recreation outside one's place of residence connected with the cognitive aims and elements of sport. Tourism is generally perceived as travelling or hiking performed in one's free time, either for pleasure, entertainment, better health outcomes and new experiences"<sup>11</sup>.

These varied definitions emphasize the importance of tourism in defining leisure and recreation and discovering natural and cultural environment. L. Turos states that tourism is „organized or spontaneous travelling which aim is to satisfy the cognitive interests and gain new experiences - aesthetic, recreational, intellectual”<sup>12</sup>. However, J. D. Dumazedier defines tourism as „leisure time with all activities which a person does for its own pleasure for rest, entertainment, broadening one's horizons or other forms of education (selfless) or for a willing participation in social life, after fulfilling one's professional, family or social obligations”<sup>13</sup>.

A. Kaminski distinguishes three functions of leisure time: leisure, entertainment and interests development. The functions of children and adults leisure time are very similar and aim at leisure, entertainment and development of an individual's personality.<sup>14</sup> However, Z. Dąbrowski distinguishes four functions of leisure time that is recreation, interests development and searches of one's own place in a society<sup>15</sup>.

In leisure time one fulfils the following set of individual needs:

- the need for renewal (regeneration) of physical and mental strength;
- the need for participation in entertainment;
- the need for participation in culture;
- the need for obtaining and exchanging information;
- the need for reflection and contemplation<sup>16</sup>.

There is a very fine line between the definition of leisure and the definition of recreation. In terms of a definition, leisure time is a broader concept than recreation, because it constitutes a social good accomplished individually and socially mainly to regain one's physical and mental strength, and develop individual interests. Recreation, on the other hand, fulfils leisure time and functions as a mean of its proper organization. It is recreation that should make an individual feel relaxed, improve his efficiency, physical condition, maintain health and ability to work. Therefore, recreation is associated with the lifelong development and improvement of one's personality.

In conclusion, it is believed that tourist needs are on the upper levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and are an integral part of a human life. Tourist needs are personal

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<sup>11</sup> Nowa Encyklopedia Powszechna, Warszawa 1997

<sup>12</sup> L. Turos, Turystyka i edukacja. Oficyna YPSYLON, Warszawa 1996, p. 7-22

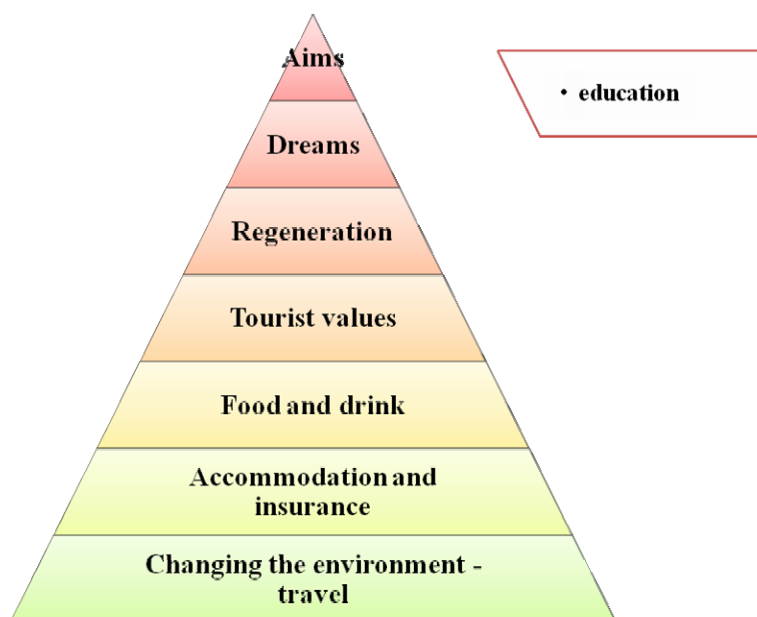
<sup>13</sup> R. Muszkieta (red), Społeczne i ekonomiczne aspekty turystyki i rekreacji, WWSTiZ, Poznań 2009, p. 37

<sup>14</sup> A. Kamiński, Funkcje pedagogiki społecznej, PWN, Warszawa 1982, p. 11-31

<sup>15</sup> Z. Dąbrowski, Czas wolny dzieci i młodzieży, PZWS, Warszawa 1978, p. 22-41

<sup>16</sup> A. Krupa, J. Biliński (red.), Turystyka w badaniach naukowych, WSiTiZ, Warszawa 2006, p.397-428

needs related to leisure time, recreation and the desire to see and experience something new and attractive. The tourist needs presented on the example of Maslow's hierarchy of needs will take the following form (Figure 1) <sup>17</sup>.



**Figure 1.** Pyramid of tourist needs  
(Source: Lazarek, 2002, pp. 27)

The first floor of the pyramid of tourist needs, as illustrated by figure 1, contains the need to change the environment (passage), accommodation, as well as insurance and food and drink. On successive floors of the pyramid are the tourist attractions - natural and these created by human. On the next levels - the need for regeneration and enrichment forces, experiences and dreams.

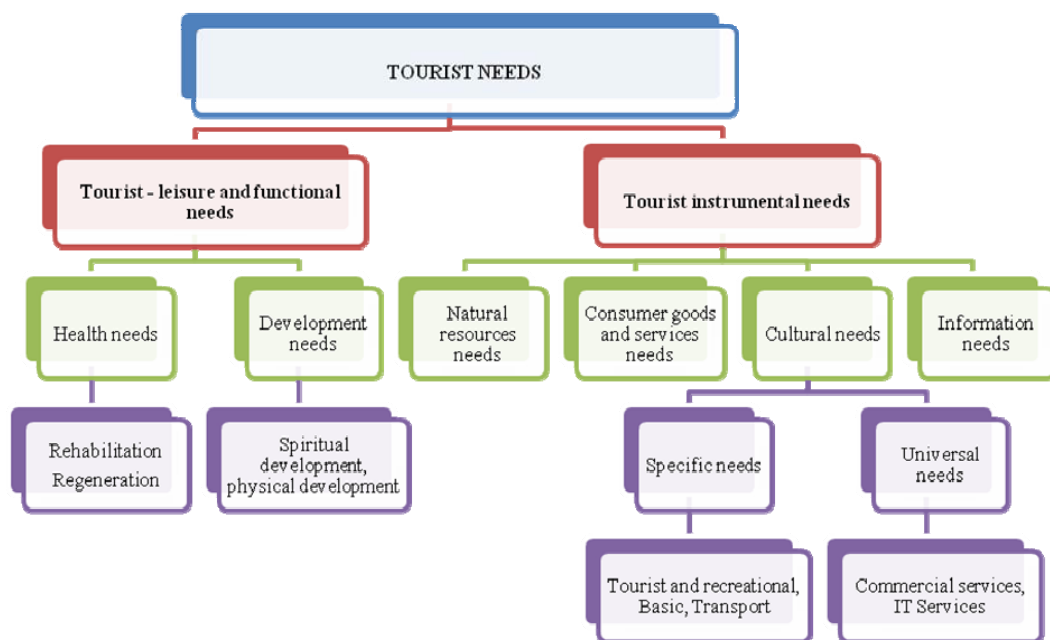
The following figure 2 illustrates a general breakdown of tourist needs.

It should be noticed that the recreational needs are not of economists' interest. They are the needs related to the renewal of vitality, capabilities and health. The group of these factors is attributed to physiological needs and security which constitute the needs of lower level. Recreational needs can be fulfilled while travelling or at one's place of residence, throughout sport activities and passive or active recreation. It is closely connected with meeting the tourist needs, because in some types of tourism (leisure, SPA) satisfying recreational needs is the main aim of tourism. Meeting tourist needs equalize with fulfilling recreational needs.

Therefore, it should be noticed that Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship has unique tourist and sightseeing qualities and due to this fact, one should build modern hotels equipped with recreational infrastructure to give hotel guests an opportunity to relax and spend time in an active way. Such an approach to the subject mainly aims at enhancing region's tourist and economic attractiveness which positively influences one's leisure time, entertainment and self-development. Therefore, it is necessary to implement projects connected with the construction, expansion and renovation of hiking trails, especially cycling, horse riding paths along with a small infrastructure.

<sup>17</sup> A. Afonin, *Ekonomika turystyki, Zagadnienia współczesne*, wyd. DrukTur, Warszawa 2012., p. 10 - 12

It is important to organize hiking trails in order to improve travellers' safety as well as the construction of tourist infrastructure which aims at the development of both tourism in the areas of basins and tourist facilities. The investments in the field of recreational infrastructure mainly apply to the existing one. It may be possible as the Voivodeship Board developed in 2005 "the strategy for socio-economic development of Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship in year 2020".



**Figure 2.** Diagram of a general breakdown of tourist needs  
(Source: Łazarek, 2002, pp. 27)

Due to the increase in importance of tourist and recreational facilities which stimulate the influx of tourists and which have a significant impact on the socio-economic development of Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship, it is necessary to construct, reconstruct, renovate and equip tourists facilities with a recreational base. The development strategy of Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship in the tourist segment, is mainly based on the higher standards of construction, reconstruction or expansion of hotel's infrastructure in order to enhance its attractiveness.

The development of a modern recreational base and improvement of the existing one are the main factors in promoting physical activity not only among children but also adults and their families. What is more, hotel's infrastructure should be always adjusted for disabled people. Development of a hotel base and its recreational infrastructure can significantly affect the promotion of active recreation in the region of Warmia and Masuria and can cause the increase in tourist traffic.

In order to analyze and evaluate the influence of a hotel base and its recreational infrastructure on tourism and physical recreation, the author selected, from the overall number of hotel facilities, the hotels which have recreational infrastructure. The results are presented in table 1.

Table 1 shows the dynamic development of recreational infrastructure. The analytical data given in Table 20 reflect, in a direct way, the process of change in an

attempt to raise the standards of hotel accommodation for recreational infrastructure. As of 01.01.1999, the number of hotels offering additional services for hotel guests was 15 (total 57 hotels). Then, on 31.12.2012, the number of hotels with recreational infrastructure reached 42 (total 95 hotels), which shows that investors have started to equip a large part of their facilities with recreational infrastructure, which not only affects the attractiveness, but also a wide range of additional services, which guests can use during their stay.

**Table 1.** The development of recreational infrastructure in one to five stars hotels in Warmia and Masuria in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012

(Data source: own study based on data from Central Statistical Office and the Department for Tourism in Olsztyn)

No.	Years	Total number of hotels	Hotels with recreational infrastructure
1.	1999	57	15
2.	2000	69	19
3.	2001	71	19
4.	2002	65	19
5.	2003	63	21
6.	2004	64	23
7.	2005	69	25
8.	2006	72	28
9.	2007	77	31
10.	2008	84	35
11.	2009	89	38
12.	2010	93	40
13.	2011	94	42
14.	2012	95	42

The next step of the study was to determine the number of visitors who, during the sample period of time, stayed in the hotels (from one to five stars) in Warmia and Masuria. It is presented in detail in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Number of guests accommodated in one to five stars hotels in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012

(Data source: own study based on data from Central Statistical Office and Department for Tourism in Olsztyn)

No.	Years	Total number of guests I-XII [in thousands]
1.	1999	433,912
2.	2000	495,596
3.	2001	443,582
4.	2002	462,621
5.	2003	456,054
6.	2004	480,587
7.	2005	493,898
8.	2006	514,683
9.	2007	551,845
10.	2008	562,254
11.	2009	568,686
12.	2010	588,015
13.	2011	589,302
14.	2012	654,220

The data contained in table 2 shows an increase in the number of visitors using accommodation in each year in the discussed hotel base. As of 01.01.1999, in the analyzed area, the number of guests using the hotel facilities in the category of one to five stars hotels was 433 thousand and 912. In subsequent years, the number was steadily rising and on 31.12.2012 it was as much as 654,220 people who benefited from the analyzed hotel base.

One of the reasons for the growth of tourism in the studied region was the expansion of the hotel base in the analyzed period of time. An increasing number of hotels with a growing base of accommodation facilities allowed to take more tourists which is presented in table 3.

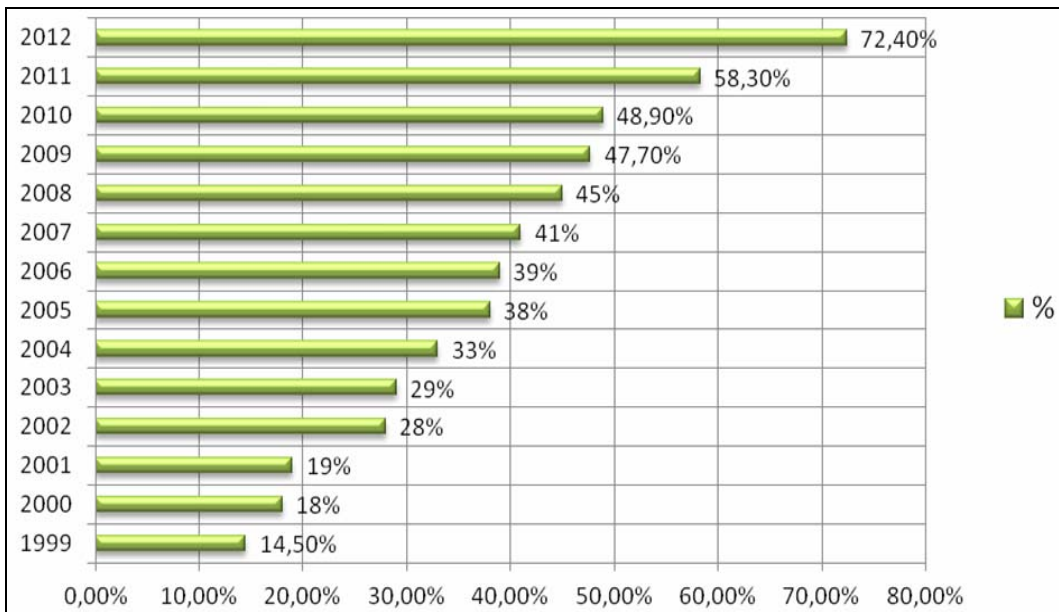
**Table 3.** The influence of the expansion of one to five stars hotels on tourist movement in Warmia and Masuria in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012  
(Data source: own study based on data from Central Statistical Office and Department for Tourism in Olsztyn)

No.	Years	Total number of hotels	Total number of guests I-XII [in thousands]
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14.	2012	95	654,220

**Table 4.** The hotel base and its recreational infrastructure, recreation and physical activity of guests in Warmia and Masuria in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012  
(Data source: own study based on data obtained from the managers and the directors of the analyzed hotel base)

No.	Years	Hotels with infrastructure recreational	Guests using recreation infrastructure (number of guests / %)
1.	1999	15	14,5 %
2.	2000	19	18 %
3.	2001	19	19 %
4.	2002	19	28 %
5.	2003	21	29 %
6.	2004	23	33 %
7.	2005	25	38 %
8.	2006	28	39 %
9.	2007	31	41 %
10.	2008	35	45 %
11.	2009	38	47,7 %
12.	2010	40	48,9 %
13.	2011	42	58,3 %
14.	2012	42	72,4 %

Table 3 shows the dynamic development of hotel infrastructure in the category of one to five stars hotels. The changes in the hotel base in Warmia and Masuria between 01.01.1999 and 31.12.2012, contributed significantly to the increased tourist movement. The number of guests accommodated in the analyzed hotel base (57 hotels), as of 01.01.1999, amounted to 433 thousand and 912 people. The increase in the number of hotels led to a systematic increase in the numbers of rooms and beds, which ultimately contributed to the fact that on 31.12.2012 the number of guests using the analyzed hotel base (95 hotels) reached 654,220 people. Over the course of 13 years one can notice an effective increase in tourist traffic, which increased up to 220,308 visitors in the discussed region. The next step of the study was to examine whether the guests who stay in hotels with recreational infrastructure are interested in physical recreation. The answer to this question is given below, in table 4 and figure 3.

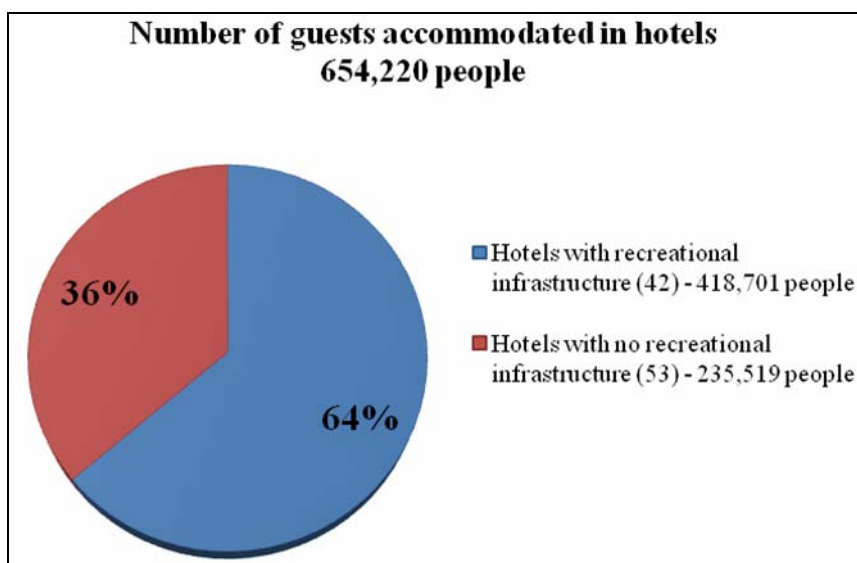


**Figure 3.** The influence of the hotel base and its recreational infrastructure on physical activity and recreation of hotel guests in Warmia and Mazury in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012 (Source: own study based on data obtained from the managers and the directors of the analyzed hotel base)

Table 4 and figure 3 illustrate the analysis of the recreational infrastructure of the discussed hotel base and its influence on the guests' physical activity. The data base obtained from the managers and the directors of the hotel base are presented in figure 3 and in table 4. In comparison to 1999, there is a significant shortage of offers and amenities available for hotel guests. However, the hotels with recreational infrastructure have been expanded over last 13 years and the investors started to take into consideration guests' needs and the increase in physical activity. As of 01.01.1999, there were only 14,5% of guests accommodated in hotels with recreational infrastructure (15 hotels). However, as of 31.12.2012, there were 42 hotels with such infrastructure and this fact influenced the number of guests who had access to infrastructure (72.4%).

In conclusion, the expansion of hotels with recreational infrastructure significantly increased the attractiveness of a hotel. What is more, a hotel with a wide range of services is more often visited by tourists. The above conclusion is supported by the research results presented in figure 4.





**Figure 4.** Number of guests accommodated in the hotels with recreational infrastructure and in the hotels with no recreational infrastructure in 2012

(Source: own study based on data obtained from Central Statistical Office and Department for Tourism in Olsztyn and also on \ data obtained from the managers and the directors of the analyzed hotel base)

Figure 4 which is the analysis of the data obtained from the Central Statistical Office in Olsztyn and the managers and the directors of the analyzed hotel base shows that 64% of all hotel guests chose hotels with recreational infrastructure while 36% of them chose hotels with no recreational infrastructure.

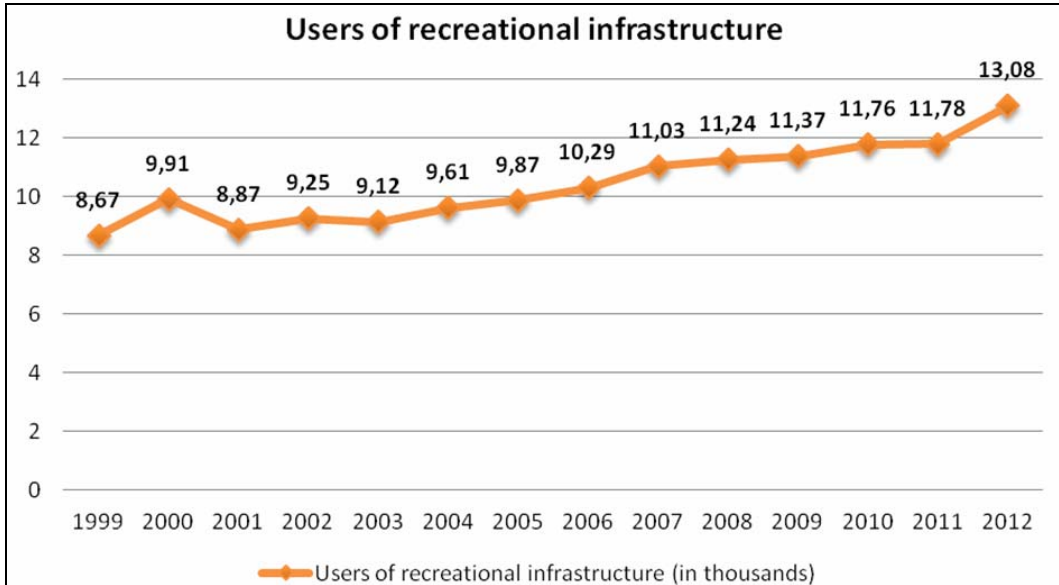
The research shows that in 2012 the overall number of guests accommodated in the analyzed 95 hotels was 654,220 (Table 3) where 418,701 guests were accommodated in the hotels with recreational infrastructure and only 235,519 in the hotels with no recreational infrastructure (53). The results show that hotel guests more often choose hotels with recreational infrastructure and a wide range of additional services as they prefer to spend their time in an active way.

It can be noticed that in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012, the investors began to equip hotels with recreational infrastructure. It was mainly connected with the fact that physical recreation was becoming more and more popular. Except for domestic hotel guests and foreign hotel guests who use hotel recreational infrastructure, there are also residents of Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship (especially children and youth) who now have an access to sports and recreational facilities.

Due to the low level and lack of recreational infrastructure in primary and secondary schools in the analyzed region, the extended hotel base and its infrastructure give a society an access to modern, functional and safe infrastructure which assure perfect conditions for sports and recreation. In many cities, municipalities and rural areas, hotel infrastructure gives its residents an opportunity to fulfil the needs of physical activity and recreation as they can use freely available exercise equipment and therefore, improve their quality of life. What is more, hotel infrastructure promotes healthy lifestyle, especially among young people.

The hotel's recreational infrastructure promotes physical recreation and is an important incentive to organize sports classes and events. Hotel with recreational infrastructure cooperate with sport, physical culture and recreation organizations and

associations and schools aimed at promoting the proper attitudes, including healthy lifestyle and group cooperation. Due to the specific needs, the number of hotels of higher standard with recreational base increased from 15 to 42 hotels in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012. The author analyzed the data obtained from the managers and directors of the hotel base and presents the number of residents who have access to recreational infrastructure in Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012.



**Figure 5.** Number of residents using recreational infrastructure in

Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship in the period from 01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012

(Source: own study based on data obtained from the managers and the directors of the analyzed hotel base)

Figure 5 shows a successive increase in the number of residents using the analyzed hotel's recreational infrastructure Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship between 01.01.1999 and 31.12.2012. The chart presents how the use of hotel infrastructure increased from 8.67 thousand on 01.01.1999 to 13.08 thousand on 31.12.2012. One of the important factors, except for low-level and an often lack in recreation infrastructure in the studied region, resulting in an increase in the number of inhabitants of the region using the hotel's leisure facilities, is the increased number of qualified personnel who supervise the recreation of guests staying at the hotel building, which is a substantive stimulus, creating a safe and hygienic conditions during the classes. Employing an environmental trainer responsible for animating and organizing games and activities for recreational facilities provides their users with an attractive pastime.

## CONCLUSIONS

The work and supervision of activity organizers increase the safety of people using the facilities and gives their classes an educational character which affects the popularization of healthy and safe leisure activities for children, youth and adults. The increased number of skilled recreation instructors - physical, riding instructors, etc. resulted from them having access to a broad and diverse range of education, where every individuals' ambition is to achieve his or her goals in isolation from the economic and social trends.

A consequence of these actions is the creation of profiles related to the dissemination of tourism and recreation in schools and universities, which will make recreation instructors an added value to the management of recreational infrastructure in the region of Warmia and Masuria. Attracting the staff with high education in Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship requires keeping the economy on a path of high growth, strengthening the regions and businesses competitiveness, creating new jobs and raising the level of economic, social and spatial cohesion.

In conclusion, Warmia and Masuria are considered as an attractive tourist region. However, maintaining that advantage requires continuous effort and searching for new forms of physical activity in the region.

It requires an unconventional and complex approach, as well as raising the attractiveness of particular places by expanding recreational infrastructure, which as shown in figure 5 (01.01.1999 to 31.12.2012) affects the growth of tourism and recreational activity of local residents of the analyzed region.

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