

## Determinants of Ukrainian Tourists Arrivals to Poland

**Key words:** touristic attractiveness, determinants of tourist trips, Ukrainian inbound tourism to Poland, survey methodology, tourist attractiveness of Poland

### Abstract

The article presents the determinants of Ukrainian citizens' tourist trips to Poland. It is a research work. The considerations have been based mainly on the results of the research conducted by the author among Ukrainian tourists in Krakow in 2013, along with her professional experience.<sup>1</sup>

The issues of Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Poland are taken up relatively rarely in the national literature. Therefore, the key objective of developing the research was to fill the gap. In the first part of the article, the tourist attractiveness of the country as a determinant of tourist trips is highlighted. Then, the author discusses Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Poland in 2001–2012. The works of Ukrainian researchers dealing with foreign trips made by people of this country to Poland are cited.

The core of the discussion and the characteristic of the methodology used in the author's own research, and the socio–demographic structure of the surveyed sample are presented along with the discussion of the determinants of the respondents' travel to Poland. As a result of the research material analysis the author identified that there is a statistical relationship between the perception of the attractiveness of Poland and the tourists' level of education.

### Introduction

The original source of the concept of tourism in the modern understanding of the word is often considered to be the mode of traveling known as *the grand tour* undertaken by young Englishmen in the seventeenth-eighteenth century. To a large extent, these travels were of educational nature [Kurek 2007, pp. 11 – 12]. From the point of view of legitimacy it can be assumed that, at this time, the main objective was to explore the European countries and the cultural heritage of the continent. Consequently, the destination of tourism of this type became urban centers. This tradition, having been started centuries ago, still persists. Studies show that today more than 20% of tourists visiting cities in Europe point to culture as a key determinant of their trip. In addition, the participants admit that they willingly take part in cultural circumstances during their stay at the tourist destination [Atejlevic, Page 2009, p. 13].

In modern literature, the nature of cultural travel is most accurately reflected by the definitions of such conceptual category as cultural tourism. It is understood as the sum of all group or individual trips made by tourists, where either seeing objects, events and other aspects connected with high or popular culture, or increasing the tourists' knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> The author is a certified tourist guide accredited by the Marshal of the Malopolska Province. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Economy of 17 January 2006 concerning tourist guides and tour leaders, there was an obligation to have this relevant certification of the city guide should one wish to perform the tasks of a tourist guide in cities such as Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot (together), Katowice and Upper Silesian Industrial District (GOP) (together), Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Szczecin, Toruń, Warszawa and Wrocław. However, during the development of the study results, the mentioned legal rights expired in 2014, when the deregulation of certain professions, among others the city guide, came into force. As a result of the implementation of the amended Act on Tourist Services dated 29 August 1997, the obligation of theoretical and practical training and the obligation to pass the state city guide exam were removed, thus deregulating the profession.

of organized human world is an essential part of the journey, or is a conclusive argument for the individual's decision to make the trip or take part in it [Mikos v. Rohrscheidt 2008, p. 31].

The last decade of the 20th century saw rapid development of inbound tourism in Poland. It was not so much an expression of the country's attractiveness as a result of political changes (open borders) and sentimental motivations of tourists. It can be assumed that this trend persists [Żabińska 2002, p. 325]. To a large extent, an increase in arrivals of foreign tourists to Poland was noted after the country's access to the EU. The aforementioned background triggered a number of changes which bore a positive influence on the development of foreign tourist arrivals. Due to the fact that Poland signed the Schengen Treaty, free movement of persons within the so-called Schengen Area was introduced, while significant obstacles emerged to non-EU citizens arriving to the Schengen Area.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the citizens of Poland's eastern neighbors – Ukrainians, Russians and Belarusians.<sup>3</sup> Presently, they must have a valid visa to enter the territories of the signatory countries of this agreement. Undoubtedly, these institutional impediments inhibit tourist attendance in Poland, mainly from the East.

From the point of view of inbound tourism, arrivals of tourists from neighboring countries, including Ukraine, are of particular importance. The literature studies conducted have shown that the issues of Ukrainian tourist trips to Poland have not yet been explored enough by researchers, hence this attempt to identify the detailed specifics. The main source dealing with the aims of foreign tourist arrivals to Poland are reports prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Sport and Tourism by the Institute of Tourism in Warsaw. This scientific descriptions discuss Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Poland, but only in the general sense.

The author decided to investigate the determinants of arrivals of Ukrainian tourists to Poland. The implementation of the research goals required carrying out a survey among Ukrainian tourists visiting Poland. The author explored the cause of the visits by Ukrainian citizens to Poland and the key reasons for development of discussed inbound tourism. The analysis allowed for the verification of the presumed hypotheses. The first research hypothesis was: *Ukrainian tourists prefer to travel to Poland due to cultural proximity*. The second one was: *Ukrainian tourists prefer to travel to Poland due to geographical proximity*. The author found that obtaining information about the determinants of arrivals of Ukrainian tourists to Poland is an important research problem.

## The essence of the tourist attractiveness of the country

The determinants of tourist mobility are closely linked to the attractiveness of the destination [Gołembski 1999; Panasiuk 2007; Kurek 2007]. Since the beginning of the development of tourism it has been the countries considered to be attractive to tourists or to have a unique cultural heritage that have been chosen by visitors. The literature emphasizes that the attractiveness of the destination is a complex category, thus not an easy one to define.

For the purpose of present analysis the author selected definitions of the discussed category of concepts and tried to analyze them. The researchers identify the attractiveness as a set of factors affecting the development of tourism at a particular site [Jaremen, Rapacz 2011; p. 136] or with the existence of certain characteristics that attract tourists to certain

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<sup>2</sup> The Treaty in question was signed by Poland on 21 December 2007. With the Schengen Treaty in force, Poland introduced unified regulations concerning entering and short term stay of persons on its territory, which are required from all the signatories of the mentioned Treaty. Within the European Union, and within the Schengen Area there is a specific type of non-visa movement of persons.

<sup>3</sup> These national groups are indicated, since in the last decade of the twentieth century they generated a considerable amount of tourist arrivals to Poland.

areas thanks to the features of the natural landscape, climate, historical monuments or interesting spatial development objects [Tomczyk 2005, p. 22]. The tourist attractiveness of an area, town, site or route is determined by three factors: the rank of tourist assets, the level of transport accessibility and the state of touristic development [Wyrzykowski 2010].

More specifically, the cited definitions can assume that it shall be a set of all factors that determine the development of tourism in the scale of a country, region or city. Attractiveness for tourists also acts as a gauge of tourism supply. In this context, it means the sum of subjective and objective evaluations of individual elements of tourism supply, coming within the limits of specified prices and incomes [Wodejko 1998, p. 37]. Thus, the presented approach will be a result of supply elements of the destination.

## Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Poland in 2001 – 2010

Poland is a place of destination for visitors from Ukraine. A considerable growth in the number of Ukrainian tourists in Polish cities is noticeable around the New Year and the early in May. The frequency of Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Krakow in the specified periods can be explained by longer holiday breaks in that country.<sup>4</sup> Especially at this times of the year in the streets such cities as Krakow, Zakopane or Warsaw, one can hear Russian and Ukrainian languages.<sup>5</sup> It should be emphasized that among the population of Ukraine, there is great interest in tourist trips to Poland.<sup>6</sup> The increase in prosperity of the citizens of Ukraine, as it is the case with the Russians [Banaszkiewicz 2012], made tourist trips to countries such as Poland cease to be perceived in terms of luxury. Thus, foreign trips made by Ukrainians are becoming increasingly common and popular.

Currently, the general trend indicates a systematic increase in the participation of Ukrainian citizens in outbound tourism [Муковський 2008, p. 16]. Against the background of these considerations, it should also be noted that in the international arena, Poland is seen as an attractive tourist destination and it attracts more and more foreign visitor arrivals [Бойко, 2009]. This is evidenced by data showing tourist traffic concentrated in the country.<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that in the period 2002 – 2010 an advantage of inbound tourism compared to outbound tourism was noted [Кожухівська 2012, p. 46].

Ukrainian researchers devote much attention to the outbound tourism to Poland, along with issues of activation of tourist traffic between the two countries [Завітневич 2002; Бейдик, Карягін 2007; Гутник 2010; Куреда, Самойленко 2010; Біланюк 2012]. The geographical proximity of Poland and Ukraine creates conditions for cooperation on economic and cultural levels for both countries, and arouses the interest of Poles and Ukrainians in making tourist trips to the neighboring country [Бейдик, Кузьменко 2011].

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<sup>4</sup> Ukrainians celebrate Christmas according to the Julian calendar (on January 6), therefore the Christmas break in Ukraine begins at the end of December and lasts almost until the end of the first week of January. The second holiday break falls on the beginning of May. During this time such bank holidays, as May 1 (Labor Day) and May 9 (Victory Day) are celebrated. The longer holiday breaks encourage residents of Ukraine to make tourist trips in Europe, including to Poland.

<sup>5</sup> The official language of Ukraine is Ukrainian. Russian, however, is the language spoken in the southern and eastern parts of the country. Residents of Krakow, when they hear the Russian language in the streets, may perceive the encountered visitors as Russian, which is not entirely true. As a result of the several years of observation, the author has managed to formulate interesting cognitive characteristics of cultural identity of the tourists from Ukraine. Foremost, among the vast part of the Russian – speaking citizens of the country, it is believed that the use of the Russian language does not mean that they belong to the Russian people.

<sup>6</sup> This reflection is the result of several years of observations by the author as a city guide around Krakow, and above all, of working with tourists from Ukraine.

<sup>7</sup> Data showing the volume of inbound and outbound tourism in Ukraine are developed by the state statistical service – Держстат України.

For example, analyzing the figures for 2009 one can identify the key trends of the Ukrainian tourist destination choices.<sup>8</sup> During the studied period, the most popular countries among Ukrainian tourists included Russia, Poland, Moldova, Belarus, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Germany, the USA and Uzbekistan.<sup>9</sup> Generally, it can be assumed that for 80% of the tourists the destination country was Russia, Poland, Moldova or Hungary [Cipręhko 2010, p. 72]. The cited data bode well for inbound foreign tourism in Poland. Moreover, they can be used in proving the thesis that Ukrainians are interested in Poland as a potential tourist destination.<sup>10</sup>

Based on Ukrainian literature it can be concluded that Poland occupies a special position as a destination country for Ukrainian tourists. Authors are unanimous about the fact that this trend is likely to continue in the coming years. Currently, Poland is among the most visited countries by the residents of Ukraine. The research conducted by the Institute of Tourism in Warsaw shows that in the first decade of the twenty-first century the number of Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Poland steadily decreased (Table 1). A visible collapse was observed in 2003, when only 2,480,000 citizens of Ukraine visited Poland in contrast to 2001, when the number of arrivals was estimated at 3,080,000.<sup>11</sup> In 2012, 1,930,000 residents of Ukraine visited Poland.

**Table 1. Ukrainian tourist arrivals to Poland in 2001 – 2010 (in thousands)**

Specification	Year											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
number of tourists	3,080	2,930	2,480	2,340	2,535	2,500	2,120	1,550	1,295	1,350	1580	1930

Source: Own work based on data of the Institute of Tourism: *Przyjazdy turystów do Polski według krajów*, Instytut Turystyki, [www.intur.com.pl/przyjazd.htm](http://www.intur.com.pl/przyjazd.htm), [przyjazd.htm](http://www.intur.com.pl/przyjazd.htm), access: 1.04.2014.

The Institute of Tourism in Warsaw estimated that in 2012 Poland was visited by 14,840,000 tourists.<sup>12</sup> Due to the organization of EURO 2012 football tournament an increase in tourist arrivals from countries outside the Schengen area was noted.<sup>13</sup> Achieving this result was possible thanks to the facilitation in border traffic – especially with Ukraine [*Milion nowych...* electronic document]. It is concluded that taking this type of action activates the tourist traffic between neighboring countries.

The Polish Tourist Organization has identified a group of countries in the category of income from tourism on the basis of International Tourism Utilities Index (WUTZ).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> In 2009, 913,640 individuals left Ukraine for tourist reasons, while the total number of trips made by citizens of this country amounted to 15 333 949; <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>, [accessed February 2012].

<sup>9</sup> In the work of Polish researchers it is reported that Ukrainian tourists tend to visit Russia (33%) and Poland (25%) most often [“Marketingowa strategia...” – electronic document].

<sup>10</sup> See e.g.: *Analiza wyników badań wizerunku Polski i postrzegania polskiej marki na świecie. Założenia i rekomendacje do pozycjonowania Polski jako kraju docelowego podróży turystycznych na lata 2009 – 2015*. The cited expert opinion was prepared by the Polish Brand Institute on behalf of the Polish Tourist Organization.

<sup>11</sup> The phenomenon observed can be explained by the introduction of entry visas for citizens of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine by Poland, on 1 July 2003. It should also be noted that in 2010 there was a slight increase in traffic compared with 2009, as then 55,000 additional arrivals were registered. However, in the last two years covered by the study there was an increase in the number of arrivals by citizens of Ukraine to Poland.

<sup>12</sup> In total, Poland was visited by 67,390,000 individuals.

<sup>13</sup> In total, 4.22 million non-Schengen tourists, including 1.93 million citizens of Ukraine, 1.62 million Belarusians and 670,000 Russians.

<sup>14</sup> When constructing this index, the reference point was the position of the emission market in a given reception market. In this way, the importance of the selected tourist markets for Poland was established. In addition, the intrinsic position of the tourist market determined the position of the country in world tourism. The WUTZ methodology was discussed in the document „Marketingowa strategia Polski w sektorze turystyki na lata 2012 – 2020”. The document was last updated in 2008.

Based on the methodology, index rankings were created for markets that matter most<sup>15</sup> that are of secondary importance, and of the least importance. Ukraine was qualified to belong in the group of markets with secondary importance.<sup>16</sup> In this list, Ukraine was placed fourteenth. This result does not mean that the Ukrainian inbound tourism is not an attractive segment of the Polish tourism market. In comparison with other national groups, tourists from Ukraine ranked relatively high; Russia, being a non-Schengen Zone country, was at the twelfth position. It should be stressed that Russia is three times larger in terms of population than Ukraine, and therefore the market of potential tourists interested in traveling abroad is much larger compared to the Ukrainian market.<sup>17</sup>

## The methodology of own research

In order to obtain information from primary sources, survey was the method of choice. The mentioned method is to measure the attitudes and views in large populations [Frankfort – Nachmias, Nachmias 2001; Francuz, Mackiewicz, 2007; Babbie 2008; Schuman, 2013]. The research tool was a questionnaire developed in Ukrainian and Russian language versions. The study was conducted in Krakow on a sample of 994 respondents, however, further analysis included was 939 cases. The principle non – random selection was applied using a discretionary test sample<sup>18</sup> [Babbie 2008; Giddens 2012]. Most elements of this sample are selected on the basis of the belief that they are representative for the researcher interested in a given population [Churchill 2002; Słaby 2011].

During the survey individuals were tested based on the author's own knowledge. Her interest in the issues of inbound tourism from Ukraine to Poland were influenced by her several years' experience of work as a city guide in Krakow. The present considerations show the research problem from both a theoretical and practical points of view, and they include the author's own insights gained working as a tourist guide.

The proper survey began in May 2013, and finished by the end of July in the same year. The launch of the research was set intentionally in May, when in Krakow, as well as other European destinations, most of the tourist traffic is observed. The general trend shows that within the specified period, the city is visited by more Ukrainian tourists than in other months.

The vast majority of participants of the sample studied were picked from organized Ukrainian tour groups.<sup>19</sup> In this way, individuals who represented the studied geographic market were selected. Moreover, the adoption of such a method of selection of respondents was ensured by collecting questionnaires from people who actually arrived as tourists and had

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<sup>15</sup>The group includes countries such as Germany, China, USA, Norway, France, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

<sup>16</sup> Apart from the Ukraine, the following countries were qualified to the group, e.g. Italy, the Netherlands, Canada, Belgium, Australia, Denmark, Sweden, Brazil, Lithuania, Austria, Switzerland, Russia, Spain, Belarus, Korea, Czech Republic, Finland, Latvia, Israel, Estonia and Hungary.

<sup>17</sup> The number of Russian citizens is almost 143 million [as of 01/01/2012; data from the website of the Federal Statistical Service of Russia, access <http://www.gks.ru/>], while Ukraine's - 45.5 million [as at 01/12/2012; data published by the National Statistical Service of Ukraine, [www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2012/fin/ds/kn/kn\\_r/kn1212\\_r.html](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2012/fin/ds/kn/kn_r/kn1212_r.html)].

<sup>18</sup>The author realized that conducting the survey in such a manner that may cause doubt as to the representativeness of the sample. However, upon deciding to apply this type of solution she modeled it on studies on the types of sampling. In available literature, the researchers emphasize that the use non-random selection can be justified in a situation where it is not possible to provide all elements of a population [Frankfurt – Nachmias, Nachmias 2001; Churchill 2002; Babbie, 2008]. Before the beginning of the study, it was concluded that it will be carried out precisely in such circumstances.

<sup>19</sup>Ukrainian citizens studying in the city, working there, or staying for commercial or private purposes in Krakow were eliminated from participation.

contact with the historical sites in Krakow,<sup>20</sup> and had the intention to participate in the tour program of a cognitive character.<sup>21</sup>

It should also be emphasized that the empirical material gathered showed large geographical variation of the participants' origin. After analyzing the research material the author found that the sample represented individuals from more than 90 cities of Ukraine.<sup>22</sup> The respondents also included individual tourists. However, a common feature of all members of the study group was that they came from Ukraine to Krakow mainly for tourist purposes.

In the justification of such selection of the sample it is worth noting that for the people of Ukraine, a trip to Poland is contingent upon the possession of a visa to enter the Schengen area. The most common way to obtain it still includes the use of the services of travel agents. It can, therefore, be presumed that the vast majority of Ukrainian citizens visiting Poland for tourism are eligible as participants of organized tour groups. In the light of the current circumstances it is considered that the arrival of tour groups to Krakow is more likely than in the case of individual visitors.

The author distributed a questionnaire herself<sup>23</sup> and used the help of city guides working with visitors from the Ukraine. All individuals participating in the study were of legal age. The survey forms were handed only to such participants.<sup>24</sup> Questionnaires were handed to respondents after the completion of exploring the city.<sup>25</sup> Thus, it was assumed that the foreign visitors had already had a chance to get to know the tourist offer of the city, as well as explore the sights. In addition, they were able to verify their expectations towards the planned stay in Krakow. The survey forms were offered primarily to those interested in participating in the survey. The principle of voluntary participation was observed. It should also be noted that respondents acquainted themselves with the research tool on their own, and answered the questions in the same manner. For the compilation of the raw data the statistical package STATISTICA was used.

## Socio – demographic structure of the studied sample

The survey conducted for the purpose of this study used a geographical criterion. It was defined as the country of residence of the tourists visiting the destination site of Krakow. In this way, one of the foreign tourism market segments was identified. It was represented by Ukrainian tourists staying in the city in the period May – July 2013. The socio – demographic structure of the sample was identified mainly based on data contained in the questionnaire sheet.<sup>26</sup> Among the respondents, citizens of Ukraine who qualified as tourists as well as day

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<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of the work, contact with Krakow was understood very broadly. It was defined as staying in the city in order to know its history and architecture along with participating in leisure activities.

<sup>21</sup> In the context of the present considerations, the tour program should be understood as a city tour, during which the key tourist attractions in the city are presented to participants. In the case of Krakow this had to include the Wawel Hill and the Old Town.

<sup>22</sup> The several years of the author's experience shows that organized groups of tourists from the Ukraine are significantly varied in terms of place of residence. That observation was confirmed after the development of the research material. Usually, an organized group counted about 30 – 40 people, while its participants represented different regions and provinces of Ukraine.

<sup>23</sup> Based on the research assumptions it can be concluded that, to a large extent, the survey carried out had the nature of participant observation

<sup>24</sup> The surveys of tourist activity of Polish citizens carried out by the Polish Institute of Tourism in Warsaw at the request of the Ministry of Economy include the residents aged 15 and more. All analyzed reports are available at the institution's website.

<sup>25</sup> In the event of time constraints, the questionnaires were handed out to tour pilots. In this case, the respondents filled them after departure from Krakow.

<sup>26</sup> The analysis of the structure allowed the author to specify patterns in the analyzed population [Słaby 2011].

visitors.<sup>27</sup> A common feature of all respondents was that they had the opportunity to see the key tourist sights of Krakow and explore the city with a city guide.<sup>28</sup>

The source material showed that the study participants represented almost all regions of Ukraine.<sup>29</sup> In addition, it was found that the sample was also made up of residents of all regions of the country. It is worth mentioning that the study was conducted among representatives of 95 localizations in Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> A wide geographical cross – section of the sample made it possible to generally infer about the market behaviors of Ukrainian tourists representing the sample.<sup>31</sup>

The key urban centers of Ukraine generating the most visits to Krakow were identified. It turned out that these were cities such as Kyiv, Odessa, Lviv and Kharkiv. Thus, the regularity observed in modern research of the tourist traffic was confirmed. The practice of urban tourism is most attractive to residents of the bigger urban centers. In light of the presented results, it was also showed that an especially large number of tourists came to Krakow from Kyiv. As a result, every fourth respondent would come from the Ukrainian capital. It should be emphasized that the vast majority of visitors represented cities that are capitals of Ukrainian provinces.

After a thorough examination of the source data it was decided that the Pareto rule was likely to work. Arrivals of the representatives of 20% of the cities generated 80% of the tourist traffic from Ukraine to Krakow. The occurrence of this regularity proves that tourism related phenomena can also be analyzed using the Pareto rule.

The characteristics of the respondents was based on objective variables such as gender, place of residence, level of education, occupational status and economic status.<sup>32</sup> It should be emphasized that the unique distinguishing feature of the sample was its feminization (Figure 1). Accordingly, women accounted for almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of all respondents. Such a large population of female respondents resulted mainly from the specificity of organized groups. It was noted that during the implementation of the study women prevailed in these. Moreover, the findings also revealed that women showed a greater interest in participating in the survey.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> In this paper, day visitors are understood as persons who spend one day in Krakow without accommodation. In contrast, visitors staying in the city overnight belong to the group of tourists.

<sup>28</sup> Such assumptions were adopted deliberately. Thus, it was concluded that the respondents selected in such a way would be capable of adequately responding to the questions posed by the questionnaire.

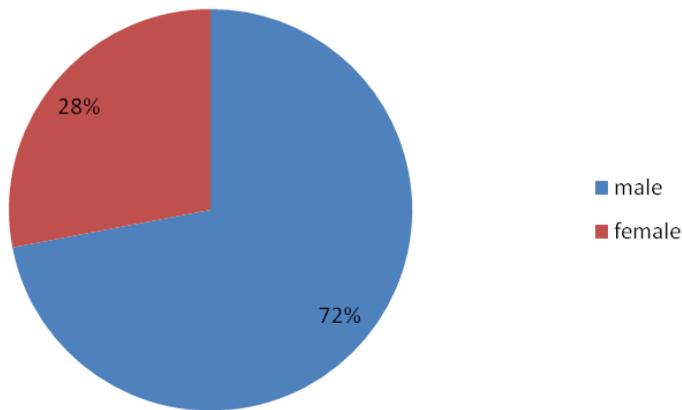
<sup>29</sup>The country is divided into 24 provinces. At the time of conducting the survey, within the administrative division also two separate cities – Kyiv and Sevastopol were functioning. In addition, the administrative part of Ukraine was the Crimea, with its capital in Simferopol.

<sup>30</sup> Among the indicated localizations, cities were predominant.

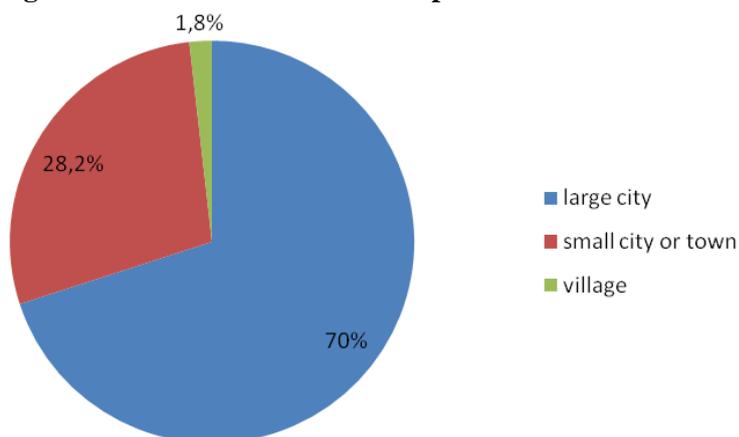
<sup>31</sup>Further in the study, generalized findings are listed that apply primarily to the tourists representing the population studied. Their use for inference about the general population of Ukrainian tourists visiting the city should be approached with caution. This procedure justifies the selection of the sample.

<sup>32</sup> Demographic characteristics in the social sciences are the basis of the so-called social class isolation [Kedelski, Paradysz 2006, p. 11].

<sup>33</sup> Since the author mainly used self-distributed survey forms, it was observed that women more willingly engaged in participation in the study. It results from the observations made, that organized groups are usually largely dominated by women.

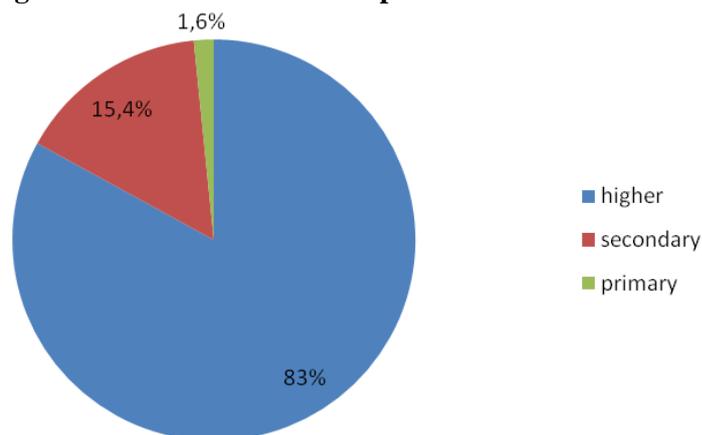
**Figure 1. Gender of respondents**

Source: Own, based on own research.

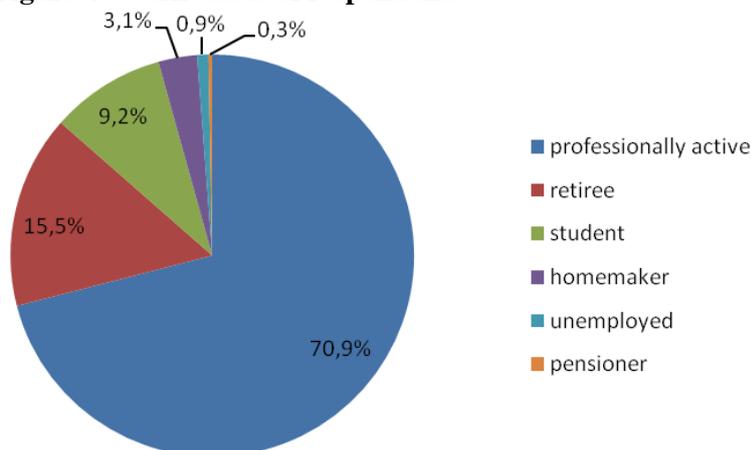
**Figure 2. Habitual residence of respondents**

Source: Own, based on own research.

Among the respondents people from the big cities prevailed (Figure 2). Based on the collected data, the author estimated that 70% of them lived in larger town units. The researched group was formed mainly by individuals with higher and secondary levels of education – 83% and 15,4%, respectively, while only 1,6% had primary education (Figure 3). It should be recognized that the Ukrainian tourists were characterized by a high level of education.

**Figure 3. Education level of respondents**

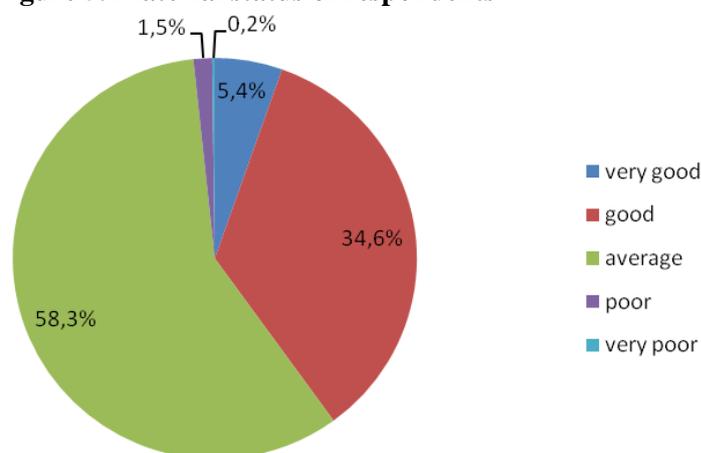
Source: Own, based on own research.

**Figure 4. Work status of respondents**

Source: Own, based on own research.

Analyzing the professional status of the respondents it was noted that more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of them were professionally active (Figure 4). Without a doubt, participation of these people in tourism was made possible by their fixed remuneration received under a regular job or self-employment. It is worth noting, that the respondents included a significant number of old age pensioners. Those tourists accounted for almost one sixth of the sample. It can be concluded that today in Ukrainian outbound tourism also seniors are actively involved. This particular trend is taking place throughout the world of tourism. Retirees are increasingly willing to opt for tourist trips. The participants surveyed sample also include students<sup>34</sup> (9,2%), homemakers (3,1%), unemployed (0,9%) and pensioners (0,3%).

Most of the surveyed population felt that her financial status was average: almost three fifths of the respondents (Figure 5). There was a relatively large number of individuals declaring good financial situation (34,6%). Then, it turned out that very few estimated their financial status as very good. They represented only for 5,4% of the population specified. In the group of Ukrainian tourists there were also individuals who stated that their material status was poor (1,5%) or very poor (0,2%).

**Figure 5. Material status of respondents**

Source: Own, based on own research.

<sup>34</sup> For the purposes of this study, only university-level students were included in this group. The questionnaires were not distributed among high school students.

On the basis of the data collected one could identify the socio – demographic profile of the Ukrainian tourists staying in Krakow during the peak tourist season. It was found that during the survey period Krakow was visited mostly by women living in large urban centers of Ukraine. The surveyed women declared a high level of education. In addition, they were economically active, while their financial status was defined as average. Therefore, it can be concluded that the tourists surveyed represented mainly the Ukrainian middle class.<sup>35</sup>

The analysis of empirical material indicated dominant urban centers of Ukraine generating the most visits to Poland. Also, the predominant social group the tourists interested in this kind of traveling was identified. In addition, the profile of the citizen of Ukraine participating in the European tourist traffic was created.

In most cases, the author was familiar with the programs of the tourist trips the respondents were participating in, therefore being able to conclude about other the destinations in Europe<sup>36</sup> which they had visited before coming to Poland or they were going to only visit after leaving the country.<sup>37</sup> A characteristic feature of the behavior of the respondents was that they came not only to Poland, but also had the opportunity to visit other European destinations. However, this characteristic cannot be applied to the entire sample, largely because it was made up of individuals visiting Poland only.

The results of the study have enabled the author to verify the thesis, raised since several years, in connection with her profession as a Krakow city guide. First of all, it was assumed that Ukrainian tourists coming to the city were residents of large urban centers in their country, and that they represented a great diversity in terms of place of residence. This thesis has been verified after analyzing the survey results.

## Perception of Poland's attractiveness according to Ukrainian tourists

In the course of the study, the respondents were asked whether, in their opinion, Poland is an attractive travel destination (Figure 6).<sup>38</sup> After analyzing the source material, it turned out that the Ukrainian tourists took diverse positions regarding the question they were answering.

First of all, half of the respondents spoke positively, and thus declared an „Agree” answer. More than one third of the respondents assessed Poland's attractiveness very highly. A few individuals chose to answer „Agree strongly”. It is worth noting that among the representatives of the population surveyed there were few people who saw Poland as a country that is unattractive to tourists.<sup>39</sup> Generalizing the positions presented by the respondents it should be considered that the vast majority of the population perceived Poland as an attractive country to organize tourist trips to.

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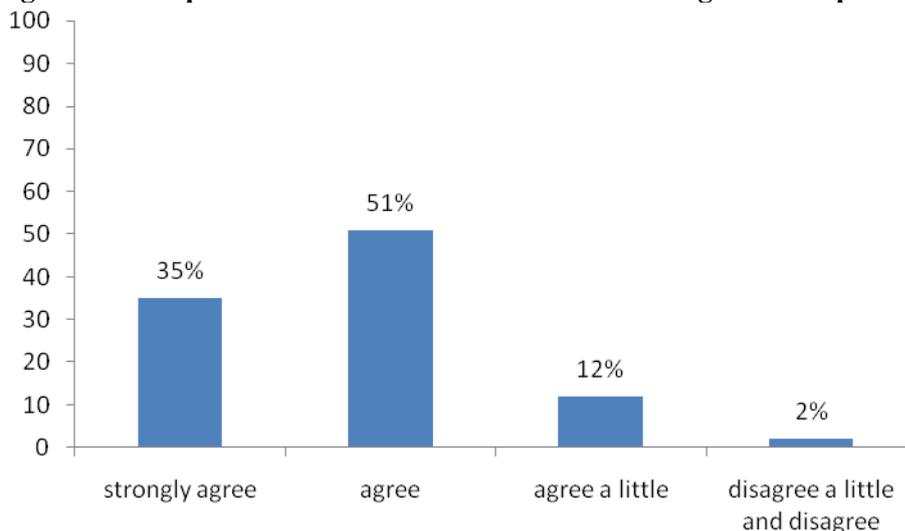
<sup>35</sup> In this context, a more accurate term would be „social category” rather than „the middle class” [Domański 2012].

<sup>36</sup> Usually, these included cities such as Prague, Rome, Amsterdam, Berlin, Dresden and Vienna.

<sup>37</sup> The author, working as a city guide, takes measures to obtain information about the program of her listeners' stay, at the same time aiming to remain as discrete as possible. It mainly comes to establishing the specificity of the trip, whether the visitors had arrived only to Krakow or intended to visit other destinations in Europe. The knowledge acquired is helpful in determining the substantive framework for its transmission of the history of Krakow, and also to refer to the history of Europe.

<sup>38</sup> The tourists' opinions regarding the attractiveness of the country are mainly dependent on their general knowledge and knowledge of geography. As a consequence, this type of expression is traditionally marked with subjectivity. Nevertheless, it illustrates the point of view of a particular person or a research sample.

<sup>39</sup>Declarations of “Disagree” accounted for only 0.1% of the respondents' answers, therefore it was decided to include them into the same category as the “Disagree strongly” declarations, out of which none were recorded.

**Figure 6. Perception of Poland's attractiveness according to the respondents**

Source: Own, based on own research.

The author decided to explore the touristic attractiveness of Poland in the perception of respondents according to their socio-demographic characteristics. The analysis of contingency table<sup>40</sup> presents the existence of a statistical relationship between perception of Poland's attractiveness and the education level of tourists was established ( $\chi^2 = 6.769621$ ). There was no relationship regarding the other features describing the sample group.

The perception of Poland's tourist attractiveness had a significantly different distribution in the two groups with different levels of education (Table 2).<sup>41</sup> It was found that most of the tourists with secondary and higher education chose the answer „Agree”.<sup>42</sup> In the first group, this type of respondents constituted a little more than 3/5 of the population, while in the second one – about a half. The presented figures show that among the respondents there were also relatively large numbers of individuals strongly positive about the question.

**Table 2. The perception of Poland's attractiveness as a tourist destination according to the educational background of Ukrainian tourists (in %)**

Perception of Poland's attractiveness as a tourist destination	Education	
	secondary	higher
Agree	62,7	50,7
Strongly agree	29,1	36,7
Agree a little	8,2	12,6
$\chi^2 = 6,769621$		

Source: Own, based on own research.

<sup>40</sup> Contingency tables are considered as an example of a clustering analysis [Łapczyński 2008].

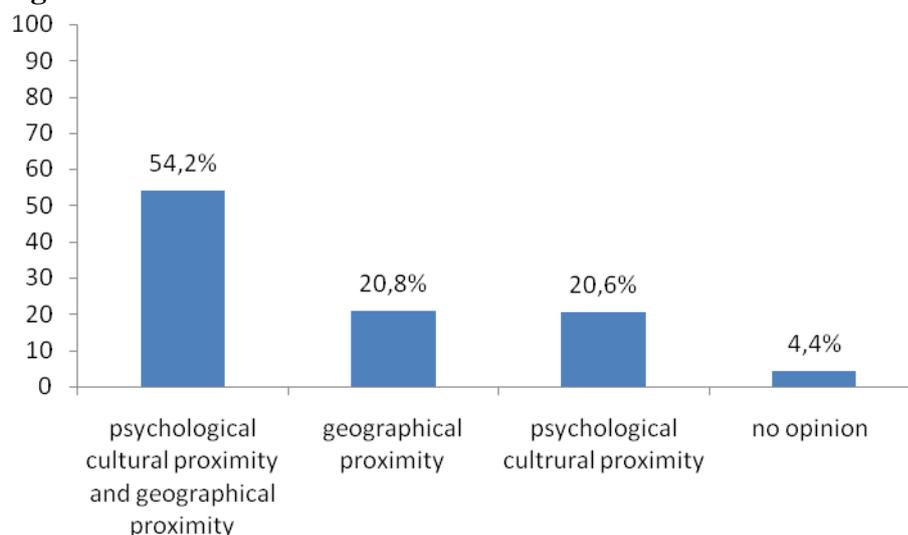
<sup>41</sup> A comparative analysis was made possible mainly on the basis of the statements from the respondents with secondary or higher education only. Other individuals were poorly represented, which is why it was decided to exclude them from the analysis.

<sup>42</sup> When testing the relationship the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test was employed. On analysis, only those values of chi-square were considered that allowed the author to reject the hypothesis of the independence of the studied traits at the level of significance  $\alpha = 0,05$ .

## Determinants of tourist trips according to the respondents

For the purposes of the study it was decided to identify the determinants of trips by Ukrainian tourists to Poland.<sup>43</sup> The questionnaire offered the following reasons to travel: cultural proximity and geographical proximity. These determinants were also considered together, hence the resulting three options to choose from, along with „No opinion” (Figure 7).<sup>44</sup>

**Figure 7. Determinants of Arrivals of Ukrainian Tourists to Poland**



Source: Own, based on own research.

The concept of cultural proximity is the subject of research, among others, in cultural anthropology [Burszta, 1998; Kempny, Nowicka, 2003; Nanda 2011]. The research assumptions treated cultural proximity as a result of cultural contact [Palczyński 2004]. The author decided to recognize the impact of cultural ties between the Ukrainian tourists and Poland on their holiday trips to this country.

In the course of gathering research material it was noted that the concept of cultural proximity raised doubts among the respondents. It consisted in the fact that tourists had to make sure what this category meant. For the purpose of the survey the geographical proximity was defined as a consequence of the fact that Poland and Ukraine share a common border.

On the basis of the collected data, the key determinant of the respondents' travel to Poland was set. It turned out that this was the psychological cultural proximity and geographic proximity (54,2%). According to the Ukrainian citizens, each of these determinants, when treated separately, had almost as important position contributing to their interest in traveling to Poland, but only when they were combined together they would reflect the complete picture of the analyzed phenomenon. It is worth mentioning that a few individuals had no opinion about the determinants of their trip to Poland. They represented only 4,4% of the population studied.

A statistically significant correlation was also found between the determinants of arrivals and the perception of Poland's attractiveness.<sup>45</sup> ( $\chi^2 = 44,68013$ ). In the group

<sup>43</sup>These were approached as factors of a general nature, without delving into the area of personal motivation of the tourists.

<sup>44</sup> Although the question discussed had a closed character, the collected questionnaires also included ones which suggested other determinants of traveling. Since there were only a few such responses, they have not been analyzed.

<sup>45</sup> The comparison of the tourists' opinions was possible primarily on the basis of the positive responses.

declaring the „Agree” answer, nearly three fifths of the population indicated geographical proximity (Table 3). In turn, tourists with stronger opinions on the tourist attractiveness of Poland favored cultural proximity and geographical proximity, respectively (two fifths of all respondents).

A third of the surveyed individuals, who chose the answer „Agree a little” had no opinion about the determinants of travel by the citizens of Ukraine to Poland.

**Table 3. The perception of Poland’s attractiveness as a tourist destination according to the determinants of arrivals to Poland (in %)**

Perception of Poland’s attractiveness as a tourist destination	Determinants of arrivals to Poland			
	No opinion	Geographical proximity	Psychological cultural proximity and geographical proximity	Psychological cultural proximity
Agree	53,8	58,2	51,3	55,3
Strongly agree	15,4	22,5	39,5	37,8
Agree a little	30,8	19,3	9,2	6,9
$\chi^2 = 44,68013$				

Source: Own, based on own research.

The first research hypothesis was: Ukrainian tourists prefer to travel to Poland due to cultural proximity. The second one was: Ukrainian tourists prefer to travel to Poland due to geographical proximity. It was found that the main determinant for these tourists to visit Poland was mental cultural proximity and geographical proximity. Thus, the assumptions set before the start of the survey have been confirmed. Consequently, the author concluded that the hypotheses were verified positively.

The position presented by the respondents shows that the residents of neighboring countries do have a significant mutual interest in making trips across the border. It is worth noting that from the point of view of operators representing Polish tourism, the outcomes of the survey have a high educational value. If, according to Ukrainian tourists, Poland is an attractive target country, these visitors will continue arriving for the widely understood purposes of tourism.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that the issue of Ukrainian tourism to Poland is an important area of research from the point of view of the local tourism sector. The group of economic entities interested in exploring this segment of the market includes tour operators, hotels, airlines, tourist guides and tour leaders. The listed service providers have direct contact with tourists and, therefore, if they aim to keep or get to know the Ukrainian customers, they must have the knowledge about their market behavior. The legitimacy of the undertake research topic can be argued by theses of developmental character<sup>46</sup> as well as strategic.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> This thesis concerns the increase in the number of arrivals in the most important segments of the tourist market.

<sup>47</sup>From the point of view of these considerations, the second claim can be defined from the point of view of the Polish policy towards its the eastern neighbors, including Ukraine.

The analysis of the research material showed that in the opinion of the surveyed tourists, Poland is an attractive destination for travel. In the future the visitors can once again return as tourists or will also act as ambassadors of Poland thus confirming its tourist attractiveness. On the basis of the considerations, the following conclusions were arrived at: first of all, the perception of the tourist attractiveness of the country was affected by the educational level of the tourists. The author recognized the relationship between the determinants of travel a tourist destination and the perception of its attractiveness.

The collected material allowed us to identify a key determinant of the Ukrainian tourists' trip-making to Poland. It turned out to be the mental cultural proximity and geographic proximity of this country. In the light of the considerations, the Ukrainian tourists' travelling to Poland is of cultural character. Citizens of Ukraine decide to visit Poland, because they feel both cultural closeness and geographical proximity with this country. Thus, a key determinant of their visit is not only geographical closeness, understood in terms of the Polish – Ukrainian neighborhood, but also the motives justifying the belonging of the Ukrainian nation in the European cultural circle.

The results of conducted research allow to formulate recommendations addressed to the entities acting for the development of tourism in Poland and representing the local tourist industry. Their main goal could be an activating Ukrainian inbound tourism to Poland.

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## Determinanty wyjazdów turystycznych obywateli Ukrainy do Polski

**Słowa kluczowe:** atrakcyjność turystyczna, determinanty wyjazdów turystycznych, ukraińska turystyka przyjazdowa do Polski, metodyka badań sondażowych, atrakcyjność turystyczna Polski

### **Streszczenie**

W artykule przedstawiono determinanty wyjazdów turystycznych obywateli Ukrainy do Polski. Ma on charakter badawczy. Rozważania oparto głównie na wynikach badań własnych przeprowadzonych w Krakowie w 2013 r. w środowisku turystów ukraińskich oraz doświadczeniu zawodowym autorki. Problematyka ukraińskiej turystyki przyjazdowej do Polski jest stosunkowo rzadko podejmowana w krajowej literaturze przedmiotu. W związku z tym za kluczowy cel opracowania uznano wypełnienie luki badawczej. W pierwszej części artykułu zwrócono uwagę na atrakcyjność turystyczną kraju jako determinantę wyjazdów o charakterze turystycznym. Kolejno omówiono przyjazdy obywateli Ukrainy do Polski w latach 2001 – 2012. Przywołano prace ukraińskich badaczy traktujące o wyjazdach zagranicznych mieszkańców tego kraju do Polski. Główny trzon opracowania stanowi charakterystyka metodyki badań własnych, struktury demograficzno – społecznej przebadanej próby oraz omówienie determinantów podróży respondentów do Polski. W wyniku analizy materiału badawczego ustalono istnienie statystycznej zależności pomiędzy postrzeganiem atrakcyjności Polski a wykształceniem turystów.