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*THE INFLUENCE OF THE EUROPEAN FUNDS ON THE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT IN THE COASTAL RESORT. THE EXAMPLE OF THE ŁEBA RESORT*

*В статті проаналізований вплив європейських фондів на розвиток туризму і туристичної інфраструктури морських курортів. В аналізі досліджуваної проблеми використаний метод «case study». Прикладом для дослідження був вибраний один з найпопулярніших польських морських курортів – Леба. Охарактеризований вплив інвестицій з європейських фондів на розвиток інфраструктури Леби з детальним врахуванням інвестицій пов'язаних з туристичним розвитком курорту.*

*В статье проанализировано влияние европейских фондов на развитие туризма и туристической инфраструктуры морских курортов. В анализе исследованной проблемы использован метод «case study». Примером для исследования был выбран один из самых популярных морских курортов – Лэба. Охарактеризовано влияние инвестиций с европейских фондов на развитие инфраструктуры Лэбы с детальным учётом инвестиций связанных с туристическим развитием курорта.*

*In this article was made an analysis of the influence of the European Funds for the tourist development in the coastal resort. As an example was used Leba town-one of the most visited and popular polish coastal resort in the middle part of Pomeranian region. In this work was made an characteristic of the using subsidies and its role for the development of infrastructure of Leba taking into consideration investments directly and indirectly connected with the tourism.*

Today tourism is one the most important determinants of the socio-economical development of the country. Tourism has ability of creation new jobs, improvement of quality of live for local communities and increasing of regions competitiveness. Tourism plays especially important role for localities without the others alternatives of development. The coastal areas belong to these regions where the tourism plays very important role. Tourism contributes to economic development, to creating of the local labor market being very important source of income for localities and its inhabitants. Tourism incomes often becomes the main determinant for the infrastructure investments which contributes for improvement of quality of inhabitants life and at the same time for improvement of tourist living conditions. In this way tourist's investments

create convenient base for tourism development and for new different investments connected with the demand of accommodation, gastronomic and others tourist surveys.

Moreover the dynamic tourism development and the growth of tourist's surveys demand improve the economic conditions not only for tourist's localities but indirectly for budget of all country. Simultaneously local tourism give possibility for redistribution of incomes between the poor and rich regions. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization sector of services and especially services of tourism organization belongs to the most quickly developing sectors of economy in the world. The dynamic growth of tourism services results in growth of capital expenditures for development of tourism services and accompanying infrastructure.

In the last years possibilities of realization of tourism infrastructure and others investments appeared in the middle east European countries with its accession to the European Union on the basis of the financial instruments of European Union policy [1,2,5,6]. Before the accession to the European Union financial funds in the form of a refundable financial subsidies were transferred for future members from resources of pre-accession funds such as PHARE and SAPARD. With accession to the European Union we have much more possibilities of applying for funds for realization of different investments.

In the present work was taken an issue of the influence of the European funds on the development of investments especially on tourist investments and on accompanying infrastructure. The analysis of the present issue was made on the example of the polish Baltic coastal resort. As an example was used the town Łeba, one of the most popular, and most visited tourist coastal resort in the middle part of the Pobreże Koszaliński region.

Łeba is situated in the region of Pobreże Koszalińskie and is inhabited by about 4000 inhabitants. Its socio-economical development mainly bases on increments from the tourism services. Due to its tourist attractions and the attractions of its neighborhoods Łeba is a tourist's destination for touring, holiday and spa tourism and for different forms of qualified tourism based on its location. Moreover Łeba have conditions and resources for spa tourism. In spite of Łeba formally isn't the health resort the spa tourism in Łeba has been developing for a lot of years.

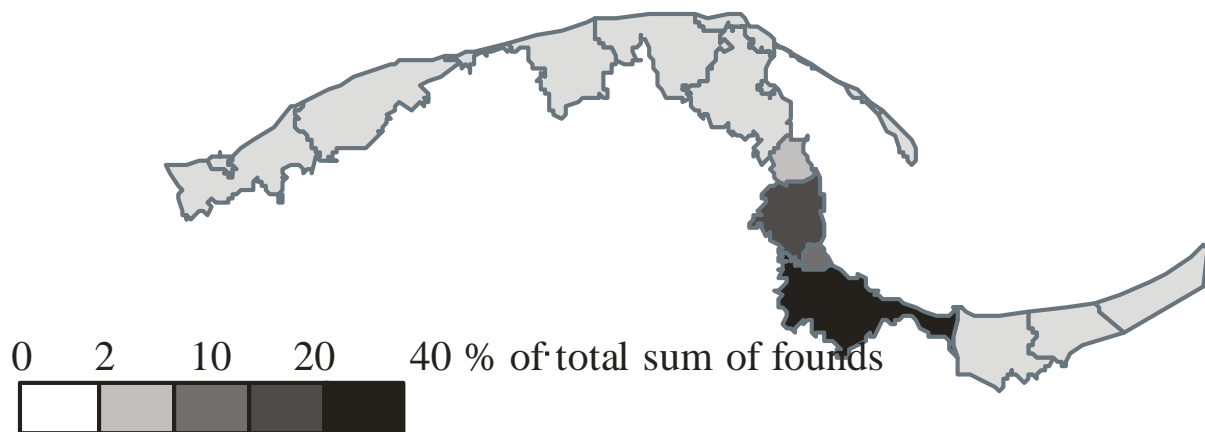
The number of accommodation objects and beds confirms the role what plays the tourist services in the socio-economical development of Łeba resort. Today in Łeba there are about 19 000 accommodation places and the number of beds in Łeba belongs to the most developed tourist destinations in the polish Baltic coast. There are a lot of signs of dynamic development of different infrastructure investments. These investments relate to the development of technical infrastructure of resort. Between the most important investments realized in the last years in Łeba the investments for improving of transport ability and for improving the tourist stays conditions and inhabitants living conditions plays the most important role.

The analysis of the expenses of investments in individual polish Baltic coastal communes of Pomerania Region confirms the leading position of Łeba between the coastal communes with the highest level of European funds absorption

The main programs of European subsidies used for additional subsidies to realize of the tourist's investments projects and improving the tourist attractiveness were as Program of Tourism Common Issue, Program of Infrastructure and Environment, Program of EWT INTERREGIWC – heritage and landscape., Regional Programs of Operating for Pomerania Region, priorities 1,6,8.

In the years 2007-2013 the coastal communes of the Pomerania region secured financing from the European funds in the total sum 5 164 356 638 zloty. The subsidies were disposed between beneficiaries from the 132 communes of Pomerania region.. The sum of the subsidies was very differentiated both the subjects of realized priorities and spatial disproportions of the disbursement of European funds .

The highest sum of the subsidies in the Pomerania region obtained the city commune Gdańsk. Generally from the total sum of the subsidies for Pomerania region communes about 60% was accumulated by beneficiaries from the city commune Gdańsk, Moreover 90% of all subsidies were transferred to communes of Gdańsk and neighboring communes.



Source: own study basing of the data of The Ministry of Regional Development

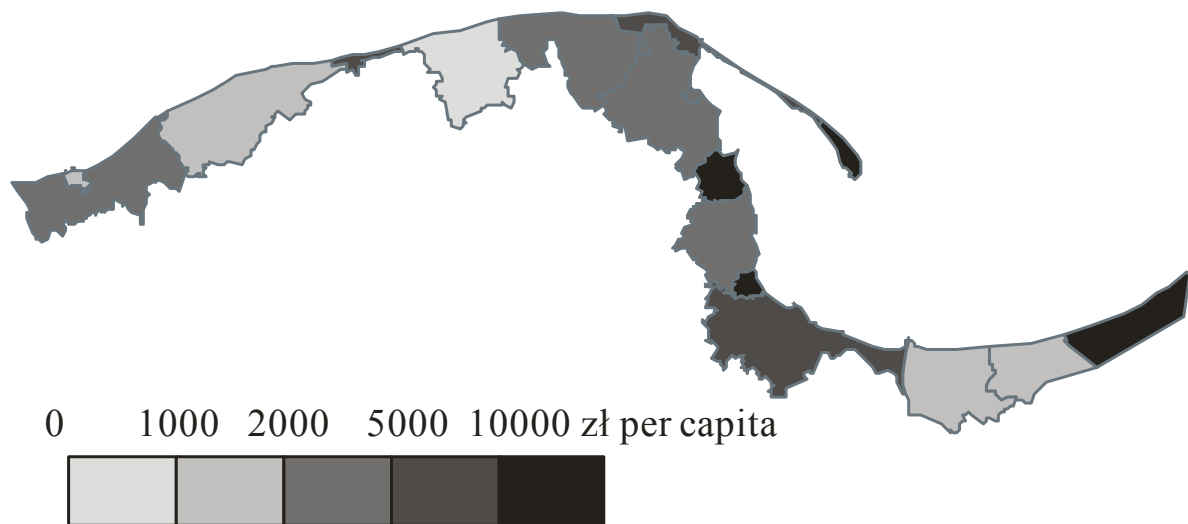
Fig. 1. Spatial distribution of the European subsidies in the Pomeranian coastal communes

Moreover the city communes of Gdańsk, Sopot and Gdynia and its neighboring were embraced of the European funds subsidies. The quotes of subsidies were strongly differentiated.

It seems the quote of subsidies is not the most objective indicator of the European funds absorption. It is results from the significant differentiation of spatial dimension of the individual communes and it is effect of its differentiated demographic potential. For the more precise analysis of the absorption of the

European funds in individual communes in the present work was made an analysis of the distribution the subsidies from European funds per capita.

However Łeba doesn't belong to the communes with the highest indicators of the funds from the European subsidies but is one of the communes with highest indicators of absorption of European funds per capita. The spatial distribution of the European subsidies in the individual communes per capita shows the communes with the highest amounts of the indicator per capita between the coastal Pomeranian communes were Krynica Morska (18 580 zloty), Hel (18 203 zloty), Sopot (13 703 zloty), Kosakowo (11 188 zloty), Łeba (8 610 zloty) i Gdańsk (6739 zloty „fig..2)

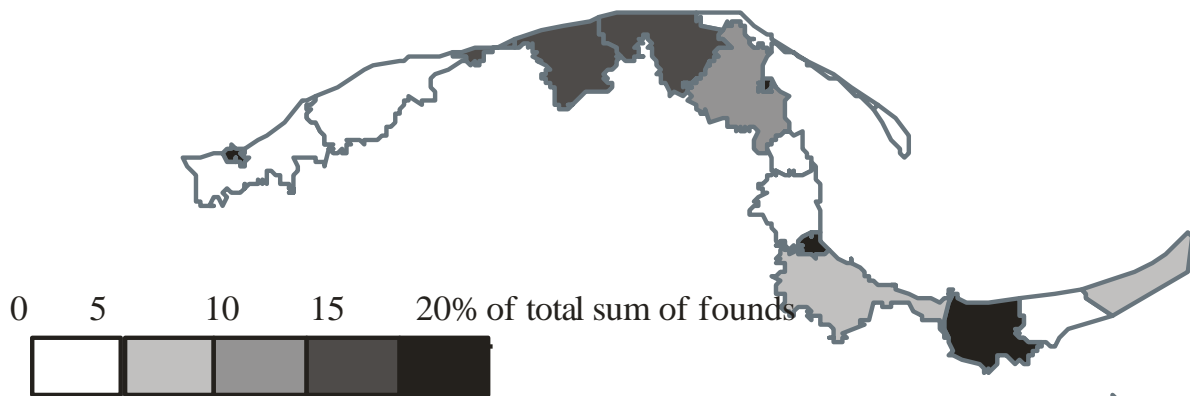


*Source: own study basing of the data of The Ministry of Regional Development*

*Fig. 2. The subsidies from European funds in the polish Baltic communes per Capita*

Moreover Łeba is between the Pomeranian coastal communes of Pomerania region with the highest percentage share of tourist investments subsidies in the total quote of the European subsidies. Between the Pomerania coastal communes (fig.3).

The highest percentage share of the subsidies from the European funds in relation to total sum of European funds in the Pomerania coastal communes was observed in the individual communes: in the city commune Puck (about 35% of the total sum of subsidies dedicated on the tourist investments), in the communes Sztutowo (22,2%), Sopot (20,5%), in the city commune Ustka (20,8%) and in the communes Łeba (18,5%), Krokowa (17,1) and Choczewo (16,1%). The indicators of using of the European funds, especially the subsidies dedicated on the development of the tourist investments and on improvement of the tourist attractiveness of Łeba shows Łeba is in the leader of the using of the European subsidies between all coastal communes of the Pomerania region. The first investment chronologically financed from the European funds in Łeba was the construction of the yachting port. This investment was realized and made accessible in June of 1998 year.



Source: own study basing of the data of The Ministry of Regional Development

Fig. 3. The percentage share of subsidies for tourist development in relation to total sum of European funds in Pomerania coastal communes

This project was realized thanks to the obtaining the subsidies from the pre-accession European funds within the making up differences of the economy and infrastructure development in the European countries.

The subsidies were obtained from the program PHARE 1994, within the cross border cooperation between Poland and Danmark. The total sum of the subsidies used for realization of this project has amounted to 2 mln ECU. Thanks to disposition of funds was possible to build a modern marina for 120 boats and others yachts. The received funds let to realization of the modern complex with the total sanitary facilities, hotel, restaurant, petrol station for boats and yachts and technical resources of the postal and telecommunication services.

The very important investment for improvement of the tourist attractiveness of Łeba was the construction of the new, modern Tourist Services Centre. The investment was realized thanks to using of the funds from the program Phare 2003, Euroregion Bałtyk. The new tourist centre was opened in the year 2006. The Seat of the Tourist Centre plays the role of the seat of some local yachting and boating clubs, besides it is the place of the training for sailors, and hangar for conservation and renovation of the yachts and boats.

The very important factor of the tourist attractiveness of the tourist locality is its transport ability.

First of all Łeba is available for tourists by road. Therefore one of the most important investments realized thanks to the using of the subsidies from European funds was a construction of the ring-road in the east part of the town. This investment significantly improved the transport ability of Łeba especially for tourists coming from the Warsaw, from Cracov and others big polish cities. The investment was finished in the year of 2006. The realization of this investment with the 2 km of the length contributed for improving of the ability for the yacht port and significantly facilitated the traffic arteries of the town. This project was realized thanks to the subsidies from the European Fund of the Regional Development. The total quote of the subsidies for this project has amounted to 12,5 mln zloty.

The municipal authorities of Łeba realized important investments using subsidies from the European funds connected with the realization of the European union budget on the years 2007-2013. Łeba stands out in the others coastal Pomerania communes by indicator of the number of the economic entities in relation to the total number of inhabitants. From the number about 1000 economic entities registered in the commune office most of them there are the tourist entities. The commune has been cooperating with the businessmen and taking up the investments directed to improvement of the tourist attractiveness and the tourist development especially its technical infrastructure.

The municipal authorities aim to Łeba obtainment the Heath resort mission what would contributed to growth of popularity and inflow of capital and new investments. The obtaining the health resort permission will be able to development of traditional heath tourism and spa and wellness tourism. It would be able to growth of tourism in Łeba not only in the holiday season but additionally growth of number of tourist's arrivals after the holiday season. The obtaining of health resort permission would be able to extend and diversify an offer during all year would be able to give the inflow of new tourist investments.

The municipal authorities of Łeba has been supporting of local investors in the area of education using the European funds. The municipal authorities of Łeba for many years has been organizing trainings from the subsidies of European Social Fund for inhabitants and investors. Trainings are dedicated to give education for obtain the European funds for tourism development.

Generally in the years 2007-2013 the quote of investments connected with improvement of the tourist attractiveness of town and its tourist development. Has amounted to 8 249 254 zloty. From this sum 7 348 972 zloty constituted qualified expenses. The quote of subsidies for realizing investments has amounted .to 5976 760 zloty. The most important investments realized in his time was Integrated System of Tourist Information. The construction of the Centre sod Kaszubian Circuit with the promotional activities were co financed by quote 859 250 zloty The Project Revitalization of the historic town centre of Łeba was co financed by quote of 5 117 709 zloty within reconstruction of the area of Kościuszki Street in the first stage. Within the project of revitalization of historic town centre of Łeba project was realized construction of the sea promenade and renewal of the historic characteristic fishing houses elevations. That project was realized from the European Funds within the Regional Operating Programs, priority number 8- Basing local infrastructure. In the future will be installed of new stylish lighthouses, desks, and design of new green spacer with the ornamental trees and plants. Besides it will be installed monitoring. Finally within the project of revitalization will be reconstructed all historic centre of Łeba.

In June of 2009 year Management Board of Pomerania Region classified for subsidy the Project of Integrated System of Tourist Information. The planning system will include within its range of 12 localities of Pomerania Region with Łeba. Within the investment was made an construction of The Centre of the Kaszubian Circuit Centre. The purpose of that project was

organization of the integrated system of accumulating, processing and making information available, organization of the chain of centers and tourist information boards and making of the integrated system of marking of tourist attractions and tourist areas.

Besides aforementioned examples of using European Funds in Łeba were realized projects connected with the improvement of transport ability of the port and construction of skating ring and project of retraining of fisherman from Łeba town. Above mentioned investments can contribute to growth of tourist attractiveness of Łeba and for improvement of its tourist infrastructure.

The above mentioned examples of using of European Funds for realization of the investments directly and indirectly connected with the tourist development and improvement of the infrastructure and image of locality for growth of its tourist attractiveness show the role of the European subsidies in the tourist development of tourist resort. The subsidies from European Funds constitute an important instrument to making a necessary decision for development of tourist function in tourist destinations.. It is very important determinant for realization of infrastructural investments, investments for improvement of image and quality of tourist services, development of personnel for services of organization of tourism and others tourist services. Besides it investments realized thanks to the European Funds can determine the role of the stimulator for local government in initiating the new investments and for individual investors. They can play the significant role of stimulator to make new hotels, and others types of accommodation places, gastronomic, recreational and others services accompanying to tourism.

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