

# INTERNAL CONDITIONS OF MOUNTAIN RURAL AREAS IN POLAND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TOURISM

D. Chudy-Hyski, M. Żemła

**Received: November 30, 2011**

## Abstract

CHUDY-HYSKI, D., ŻEMŁA, M.: *Internal conditions of mountain rural areas in Poland development through tourism*. Acta univ. agric. et silvic. Mendel. Brun., 2012, LX, No. 2, pp. 493–498

Mountain areas in Poland constitute a special territory with respect to physico-geographical, economic and social aspects. There are specific environmental, economic and cultural conditions, which on one hand restrain and on the other provide chances of these areas development. Environmental conditions involve higher economic costs mainly in agriculture but also in other fields, such as construction or transportation. Other characteristics of these areas include landscape values which just through development of tourism can at least partially recompense the local communities the limited opportunities of gaining incomes. Thus increasing the competitiveness of the tourism product of mountain areas in line with principles of sustainable development remains among the basic topics concerned by local, regional and national authorities, when dealing with socio-economic development of those areas.

In order that an individual commune may use tourism as a driving force for local socio-economic development, in the first place there must be conditions favourable for practising various forms of tourism (bases for starting and then intensifying the tourist movement are necessary prerequisites), secondly opportunities must be opened up for creating various enterprises connected with tourism and providing services for tourists, and capable of meeting increased needs of local communities. Conditions (factors) determining mountain communes predisposition for undertaking and realisation of development through tourism may be either of external or internal character.

A detailed analysis was conducted in the paper only on the internal conditions. These conditions were analysed considering their diversified character, which was presented as identification of partial conditions, i.e. infrastructural, economic, environmental (natural and anthropogenic) and social conditions characterised by individual diagnostic features.

mountain areas, regional development, tourism development, Polish mountains, internal development conditions

The paper undertakes the topic of development of rural mountain areas. Those areas play an important economic, social and environmental role in the development of the whole country. This is the reason why those areas are the subject of interest of economic policy, especially the regional one, in the European Union countries. Mountain areas are treated as areas characterized by unfavorable conditions for economic activities and demanding support. Those areas are characterized by low level

of competitiveness. Enhancing the competitiveness of mountain areas might be possible due to tourism development as mountain areas are rich with attractive natural and cultural objects. Apart of them, possibility of tourism development are also determined by other elements of socio-economic and natural environment.

The aim of the paper is identification and classification of internal conditions of development of tourism function in mountain areas. It is assumed

that the general category groups all those conditions which might be characterized and estimated using diagnostic features.

## METHODS AND RESOURCES

The paper is based on extended literature review. The main method used is literature analysis and deductive reasoning leading to creation of detailed classification of internal conditions of mountain rural areas development through tourism. Such a classification is necessary for statistical description of development possibilities of researched areas as it gives the proper way of aggregating statistical data regarding particular diagnostic features. The topic of the paper makes that the search for inspiration for conducted classification should include both tourism literature (especially destination development and management) and regional development literature. Both of them include important hints regarding the features which might be treated as internal conditions of development of rural mountain areas through tourism and their nature.

### Conditions of regional development

In the last decade concepts of regions and regional development have been re-worked as part of the narratives of a globalizing economy, rooted in the regulatory policies and practices of neo-liberalism (HUDSON, 2007). Local and regional development was broadening beyond a narrow focus on economic factors to encompass the ecological and social ones (PIKE, RODRIGUEZ-POSE, TOMANEY, 2011). There are many divisions of factors of regional and local development, carried out under a variety of criteria (PIKE, RODRIGUEZ-POSE, TOMANEY, 2007). As an example of a comprehensive approach can serve the classification, taking into account aspects of the socio-economic activity enabling separation of such groups of factors as economic factors, social factors, technical factors, and technological, ecological, political and constitutional factors (KOT, 2001; POTOCZEK, 2003).

Among other divisions of determinants of regional and local development, found in the literature, there is a one dividing factors into three groups: endogenous, exogenous and endogenous defining the ability to respond to changes in macro-environment (STRAHL, 2006; POTOCZEK, 2003; PIKE, RODRIGUEZ-POSE, TOMANEY, 2011). Endogenous factors constitute the strength of a region. They mirror its specificity and provide interregional competitiveness. This group of factors is associated with various types of resources available in a given area and with status of the various spheres of socio-economic life and space. Among the others, demographic resources, referred to such circumstances as: the population structure by age and education, professional competences, or community integration constitute the characteristics

of the region. Another group of endogenous factors of development is connected with the field of regional ecosystem, described in particular by the natural environment, defined both by its resources and the level of pollution, devastation. The growth potential is largely determined by conditions describing the level and the state of infrastructural development of an area, including institutions and technical infrastructure of local and regional scope, development potential, commitment to investment in techno-economic infrastructure facilities, state of local government finances. Development factors in the field of regional economy include: economic base, entrepreneurship, the ability to innovate, scale and structure of local and regional markets, competitiveness of a region, external benefits associated with the activities of local and regional authorities. Factors characterizing the area of a region are connected with: transport accessibility, physiographic conditions, composition and spatial order, etc (CHUDY-HYSKI, 2009). All of the above examples of factors may determine internal possibilities of development of a region, but the effectiveness of their use is conditioned by their adequacy in relation to the adopted strategy of development of an area.

Exogenous factors are associated with changes in macro-environment of the region, which may impact in stimulating or inhibiting way the particular spheres of regional development. These factors arise from the processes of globalization, European integration, the state of the economy, system transformations, the political situation, national socio-economic and regional policy, competitiveness of neighboring regions etc. Exogenous factors in the positive dimension constitute stimulus, contributing to the development and innovative transformation of endogenous resources (PIKE, RODRIGUEZ-POSE, TOMANEY, 2011).

Factors determining region's ability to respond to changes in macro-environment are the third group of factors of local and regional development in presented approach. Generally, it can be pointed out, that they result from the flexibility of the structure of region's economy, internal capital capabilities, attractiveness and openness of regional policy, competences and qualifications of authorities at different levels of local government, local community activity and regional infrastructure and intellectual resources etc (CHUDY-HYSKI, 2009). It can be therefore indicated that this group of conditions is essentially internal.

### Internal and external conditions of development of mountain areas through tourism

Mountain rural areas should base their development strategies on the concept of multifunctional development. The answer to the question if it is or it will be possible in a mountain community to use tourism as a factor diversifying

local economy and contributing to the socio-economic development, depends on multiple endogenous and exogenous conditions that are differentiated regarding their economic, social and environmental nature. Generally it can be assumed that the determinants of endogenous development through tourism consist of all the features of development potential that either are influenced by given community, or directly characterize it. By contrast, exogenous factors must be understood as those, which are characterized by factors external to the area of a community (eg EU or national programs to help set up tourism activities, supporting the development of infrastructure, the overall socio-economic situation of the country, legal considerations, etc.) and interact on the regional and national level. They are common to many spatial units (CHUDY-HYSKI, 2009). Individual opportunities for development of the area depends largely on factors that are local in nature, since external factors affecting the majority of spatial units, interact in an almost same way and constitute for all units the same basis for their development, not differentiating the development.

Considering the above statements, only the internal factors of development were taken for further classification. They have different intensity and differentiate the individual predisposition of development in particular spatial units. It was assumed that those conditions can be identified with the use of statistical data relating to various spheres of socio-economic life. The spatial extent described by the collected data was assumed to be a criterion for the distinction between internal and external conditions. The internal conditions were those that are characterized by diagnostic features of the local range, which means that these data relate to the area of a community.

Internal conditions of tourism development of an area can be regarded in the context of their importance for tourists (tourist attractiveness), and in the context of their importance for those conducting business activities directed to catering tourist needs (investment attractiveness). Tourism literature offers a wide range of approaches that have been used to determine the magnitude of the appeal of a given destination. The nature of destination attractiveness studies may be supply or demand oriented, and/or supply and demand based (FORMICA, 2000). Supply studies investigate existing resources (i.e., museums, state parks, lakes, ski resorts) to measure the attraction magnitude of the area. These studies are objective in nature and make use of secondary data which specify the characteristics of the variable or single unit of investigation (SMITH, 1987; SPOTTS, 1997). There are two typologies of demand studies. The first is represented by the investigation of the actual visitation patterns; it is objective and uses secondary data. The second measures the perceived attraction generated by a single resource or by a region or destination. The studies related to the second typology investigate perceptions, are

more subjective in nature and use primary data (FORMICA, 2000).

### **Identification of internal conditions of development of mountain areas through tourism**

This paper follows up the supply oriented attitude to measurement of a tourist destination attractiveness. The supply approaches to tourism attractiveness investigate and measure tourism resources and their spatial distribution. Generally, attractiveness measures based on supply indicators are quantitative in nature. The supply perspective determines the overall attractiveness of the area by performing an accurate inventory of existing tourism resources. For example, in analyzing tourism resources using a regional perspective, (SMITH, 1987) considered accommodations, recreation establishments, and cultural and natural attractions. Usually, tourism attractiveness is regarded as a mixture of economic, social and environmental features of the destination area (KOZAK, BALOGLU, 2010; LAWS, 1995) classifies element which contributes to destination attractiveness under two main headings: primary features (e.g. climate, ecology, culture, architecture) and secondary features (e.g. hotels, catering, transport, entertainment). Primary purpose of tourists is to enjoy primary features rather than the others, secondary features are necessary to reinforce the attractiveness of the destination. Those features describe tourism goods, state of natural environment, protection of natural environment and destination accessibility (GOŁEMBSKI, 1999, p. 47). Tourism attractiveness is though determined by the significance of tourism goods (primary features), transportation accessibility and service capability of tourism infrastructure (secondary features) (LIJEWSKI, MIKUŁOWSKI, WYRZYKOWSKI, 2002, p. 16). Tourism goods are the specific features and elements of the natural environment and the manifestations of human activity which are subject to tourists' interest (MILL, MORRISON, 1992). Communication accessibility provides an easy access to a destination for tourists from their place of residence. This applies also to the possibility of travel by public transport and a network of communication links, tourism trails and lifts that allow to move within a tourist region (LIJEWSKI, MIKUŁOWSKI, WYRZYKOWSKI, 2002, p. 17). Service capability of tourism infrastructure is determined by the material base of tourism, which is a set of objects and devices equipping a particular area, to meet the needs of tourism. This includes mainly: accommodation base, transportation base, gastronomy base and additional elements such as swimming pools, car rentals, ski lifts etc.

The tourist development consists of tourism facilities (tourism base) and para-tourism facilities. The tourism facilities are those, which primary function is to support tourism, and para-tourism

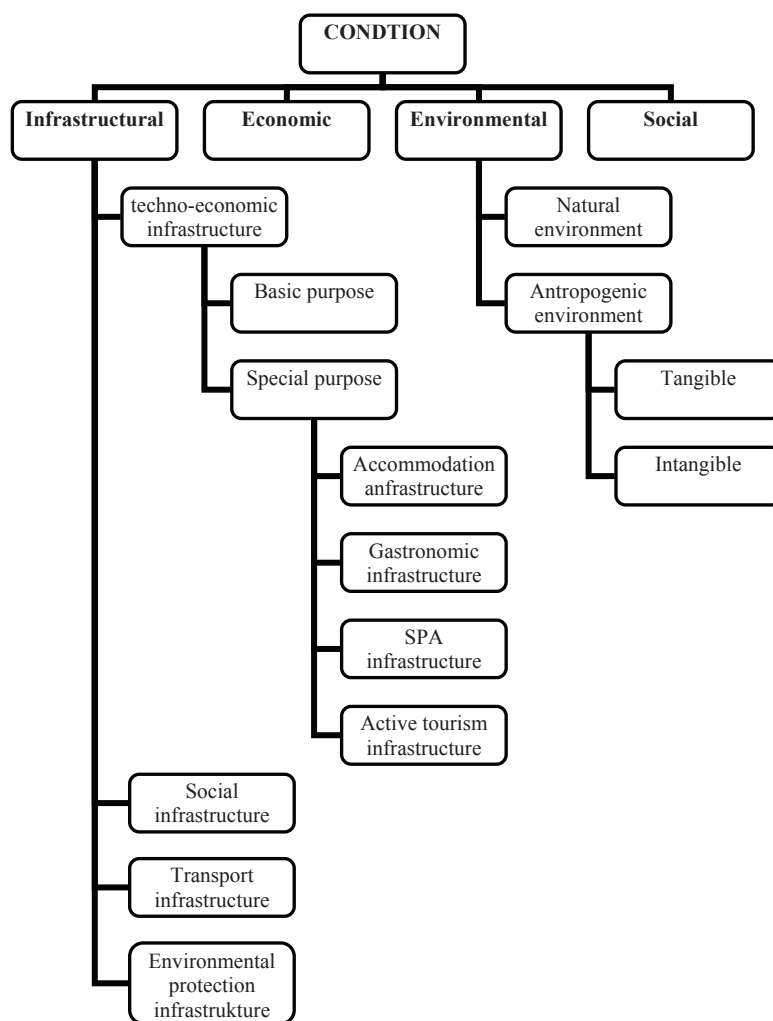
ones - those that are designed to meet socio-economic needs of local people, but tourists also use them as one of many user groups.

Regarding investment attractiveness, from the point of view of rural tourism it is characterized by: service infrastructure, technical infrastructure, society structure and state of community's finances (GOLEMBSKI, 1999, p. 49).

To make use of tourism as a driving force for local socio-economic development of a community two important conditions have to be fulfilled. First, favorable conditions for practicing various forms of tourism have to exist e.g. there have to be the basis for the emergence and increasing the intensity of tourist movement. Secondly, there have to be the basis for the emergence of various forms of economic activity in tourism, tourist-related services and in satisfying increased needs of residents. Therefore, the determinants of tourist attractiveness and investment activities should be considered together. In this way we can talk about conditions for development of a area through tourism.

All the internal factors (conditions) might be the subject of substantive analysis in terms of their impact on the development of an area. It is then assumed that these conditions can be estimated (identified) using the statistical data that characterize selected aspects of social and economic life of the area. For purposes of this analysis a set of diagnostic variables should be drawn up. Internal conditions of mountain rural areas in Poland development through tourism consists of the main groups of conditions (fig. 1): infrastructural, economic, social and environmental. Further, these conditions consist of sub-conditions, or specific diagnostic features.

Two of the identified groups of conditions of development are presented in detailed way in fig. 1. It was noted that the infrastructural conditions consists of four groups of sub-conditions: techno-economic infrastructure, social infrastructure, transport infrastructure and environmental protection infrastructure. Among the determinants of technical and economic



1: Internal conditions for mountain rural areas development through tourism  
Source: (CHUDY-HYSKI, 2009).



infrastructure, two groups were distinguished, namely the determinants of technical and economic infrastructure of basic and special purpose. The latter group was divided into four components: the accommodation infrastructure, restaurants and catering infrastructure, spa infrastructure and active tourism infrastructure (ski lifts, swimming pools, golf courses etc.). In addition to infrastructural conditions, another group of conditions of development divided into sub-groups in Fig. 1 is the group called environmental conditions. Here environmental conditions are understood widely as a place of human life. That is why conditions of the natural environment and conditions of the anthropogenic environment were specified, indicating that the latter are related to both tangible and intangible anthropogenic environment.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The paper concerns the important issue of rural development in the mountain areas. These areas are treated as areas with unfavorable conditions for economic activities and requiring specific economic policy. Local policy in mountain rural areas has to take into account important limitations resulting from physical and geographical features of the area, but should also draw on the positive conditions of development. It seems that the mountain areas provide, thanks to its specific features, particular opportunities for tourism development. However, the possibility of using tourism as a driving force of the local economy should not be taken for granted

and occurring in each mountain community. Before a community begins to shape its local economic policy and to plan to make use of tourism in it, the authorities should get to know the specific conditions of development of the community.

The classification of the existing conditions of development in a community presented in this paper allows to systematize existing conditions. Assessment of each of the extracted groups of internal conditions is connected with two steps. The first step is selection of features – the diagnostic variables, and the second step is collection of statistical material and its assessment. Analysis and evaluation of data on the determinants of development through tourism might be carried out using taxonomic methods, including synthetic variables that allow the assessment of the phenomenon on the basis of many different diagnostic features.

Methodology for evaluating the development opportunities of a mountain community through tourism on the basis of the proposed structure of the internal conditions is the subject of a separate analysis. Presented paper is devoted only to analysis and discussion of the literature and construction of classification, which is the base for future taxonomic analysis. The importance of presented classification is connected with the fact, that, nevertheless it was constructed with the purpose of further analysis of Polish mountain areas, it is universal and can be used successfully in majority of mountain regions in Europe.

## SUMMARY

The paper deals with the urgent problem of development of areas characterized by unfavoured conditions of economic activity. The subject of analysis are mountain rural areas and the main question is what are the conditions which determine opportunities to support their development by developing tourism offer. Those conditions are pointed and classified on the basis of findings in regional and local development literature and tourism development literature. Four main groups of conditions are identified, described and divided into sub-groups: infrastructural, economic, social and environmental conditions. Presented classification is a base and starting point to a taxonomic analysis of statistical data for a purpose of estimation of possibilities to develop mountain rural areas through tourism conducted for Polish and/or other European areas.

## REFERENCES

- CHUDY-HYSKI, D., 2009: *Uwarunkowania turystycznego kierunku rozwoju górskich obszarów wiejskich Polski. Infrastruktura i Ekologia Terenów Wiejskich*, Nr 2009/1.
- FORMICA, S., 2000: *Destination attractiveness as a function of supply and demand interaction*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg.
- GOŁEMBSKI, G., 1999: *Regionalne aspekty rozwoju turystyki*. Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa – Poznań.
- HUDSON, R., 2007: *Region and place: rethinking regional development in the context of global environmental change*. *Progress in human geography*, 31(6): 827-836.
- KOT, J., 2001: *Rozwój lokalny – jego istota, cele i czynniki*. In: MARKOWSKI, T. (ed.) *Ekonomiczne i środowiskowe aspekty zarządzania rozwojem miast i regionów*. D. Stawasz, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź.

- KOZAK, M., BALOGLU, S., 2011: *Managing and marketing tourist destinations. Strategies to gain a competitive edge*. Routledge, New York.
- LAWS, E., 1995: *Tourist destination management: issues, analysis, and policies*. Routledge, Abingdon.
- LIJEWSKI, T., MIKUŁOWSKI, B., WYRZYKOWSKI, J., 2002: *Geografia turystyki Polski*. Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warszawa.
- MILL, R.C, MORRISON, A. M., 1992: *The tourism system*. Kendall Hunt Publishing, London.
- PIKE, A., RODRIGUEZ-POSE, A., TOMANEY, J., 2007: *What kind of local and regional development and for whom?* *Regional Studies*, 41: 1253–1269.
- PIKE, A., RODRIGUEZ-POSE, A., TOMANEY, J., 2011: *Handbook of local and regional development*. Routledge, Abingdon.
- POTOCZEK, A., 2003: *Polityka regionalna i gospodarka przestrzenna*. Agencja Towarzystwo Naukowe Organizacji i Kierowania i Centrum Kształcenia i Doskonalenia Kujawscy, Toruń.
- SMITH, L. J. S., 1987: *Regional Analysis of Tourism Resources*. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 14(2): 254–273.
- SPOTTS, D.M., 1997: *Regional analysis of tourism resources for marketing purposes*. *Journal of Travel Research*, 35(3): 3–15.
- STRAHL, D. (ed.), 2006: *Metody oceny rozwoju regionalnego*. Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej im. Oskara Langego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław.

#### Address

Ing. Michał Żemła, Ph.D., Department of tourism, Katowice, School of Economics, Faculty of Tourism and Health Promotion, Harcerzy Września 3, 40-653 Katowice, Poland, e-mail: michaelzemla@gazeta.pl