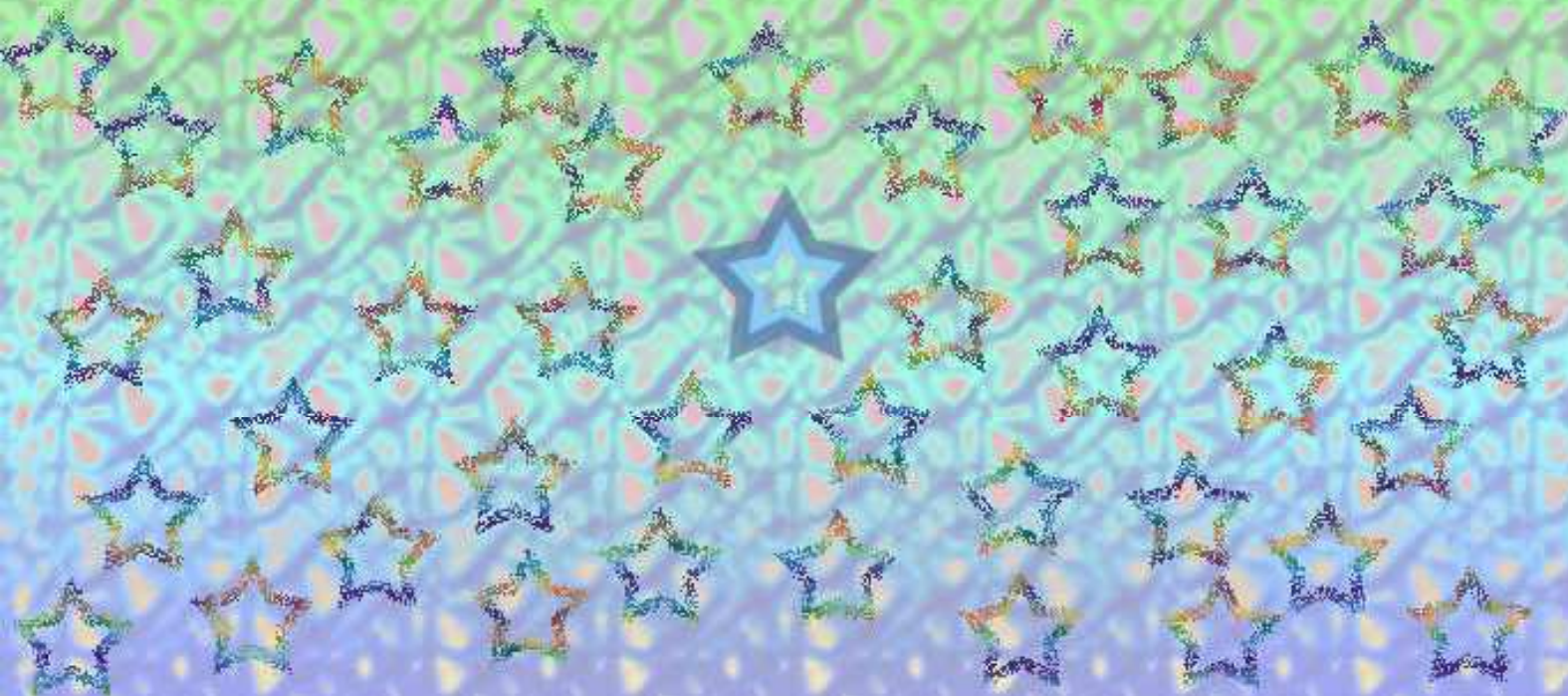


“Otherness” ***in various social contexts***



Edited by:
Marlena Mirosława Kowalczyk
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„Otherness”
in various social contexts

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**Forms of tourist activity of the 60+ age group
in small towns of the Pomerania and Warmia-
Masuria provinces**

Introduction

There are numerous reasons why people of the post-working age constitute a unique social group. Moving gradually towards the margin of an active social life is one of them. As people age, so their professional, social and psychophysical activity fades. Genetic factors contribute to the aging of human organism. Catabolic processes in the organism of an elderly person progress faster than the metabolic processes. As a result, the intellectual and psychophysical processes of the organism become enfeebled. It is thus important to participate in such activities which will stimulate the organism to action.

A considerable leisure time budget provides favourable conditions for the activity of elderly people. In Poland women over 60 and men over 65 retire and, providing they do not resume their professional activity, have a substantial amount of leisure time at their disposal.

The scope of the leisure time concept is ambiguous. It is usually understood as the amount of time aside from work (school) reduced by the time allowed for any professional-related activities, such as commuting or activities which provide additional income. The leisure time budget does not also include the time set aside for any household activities. Leisure time is therefore understood as the time at people's disposal aside from any time of work. It

can be allowed for rest, entertainment, personal development, social activity, etc.

As Wyrzykowski³⁶² puts it, „the knowledge of how various groups of population utilize their leisure time budget is necessary for the needs of the economic practice related to managing this time (...). Such knowledge is crucial for a better comprehension of the realized value system, lifestyle, buying behaviour, consumption model and productive capabilities of the population, its life force regeneration level.”

Tourism is one of the human activities which developed considerably in the 20th century. As Liszewski³⁶³ observes, „the civilisation changes of the modern world, particularly the increase in leisure time and affluence, mainly of the northern hemisphere inhabitants, the development of the individual and mass communication, but also high level of education and social consciousness (...)” all contributed to the development of tourism.

According to Mazur (1997), the influence which tourism exerts on a human being is multi-faceted and can be examined on three planes:

- physical,
- psychological,
- social.

All age groups experience the positive effects of participating in various types of tourist activity and people over 60 years of age are no exception.

³⁶² J. Wyrzykowski, *Czas wolny mieszkańców Wrocławia i jego wykorzystanie*, „Turyzm”15/1, p. 209.

³⁶³ S. Liszewski, *Miasto jako obszar podaży i popytu turystycznego. Studium z geografii turystyki*, „Turyzm”17/1-2, Łódź 2007, p. 77-92, p. 2.

Tourism is a form of activity of great importance in maintaining physical fitness, meeting motor demands and caring for the health of people of the post-working age.

As Napierała³⁶⁴ points out, physicians familiarized with geriatric issues perceive tourism as a significant factor of the rehabilitation and therapy of the elderly.

According to Szwarc, Wolańska and Łobożewicz³⁶⁵, tourism is an important element of the premature aging prevention as well as the rehabilitation of elderly people. Active tourism protects against quick aging processes, decrepitude and physical impairment.

It is also of great importance in maintaining people's intellectual capacity and good mental health. It contributes substantially to mind activation through learning, gathering information on visited places, meeting other people, etc.

Social outcomes of tourism are especially significant in the case of the elderly group. Travelling enables people to change their daily social environment, but also facilitates making new acquaintances and functioning in a group, which may help relieve the sense of infirmity and solitude. Apart from being a source of aesthetic, cultural and social feelings, tourism frequently becomes a way of fulfilling one's passions and interests.

³⁶⁴ M. P. Napierała, *Turystyka w „jesieni życia”*, [in:] *Zeszyty Naukowe WPSTiH w Bydgoszczy, nr 2, Partnerstwo Nauki i praktyki w turystyce. Fakty, intencje, potrzeby rozwoju*, Bydgoszcz 2002, p. 183-195.

³⁶⁵ H. Szwarc, T. Wolińska, T. Łobożewicz, *Rekreacja i turystyka ludzi w starszym wieku*, Warszawa 1988, p. 154.

Object, subject, goal and methods of research

The role of tourism in the activation of the 60+ group became an inspiration to take up the issue of the elderly tourist behaviour.

The object of research were the respondents' opinions on the perception of visited places as well as the analysis of their tourist behaviour. People over 60 years of age were specified as the research subject. The principle goal of the research was to obtain information:

- *on the tourist behaviour of people over 60* in towns under research and
- *on the perception of tourist attractiveness of towns included in the research.*

The research in question is fragmentary and ought to be perceived as an introduction to a more detailed analysis of the issue. It constitutes a fragment of the research conducted during the author's doctoral dissertation on the influence exerted on the socioeconomic life of small towns by the tourist function of medieval castles.

The method of a diagnostic survey, which included the technique of a questionnaire, was used in the research. The analyzed age group consisted of people over 61 years of age. The area of research included 6 small towns of the Pomerania Province and the Warmia-Masuria Province: Bytów, Gniew (the Pomerania Province), Lidzbark Warmiński, Nidzica, Ryn

and Reszel (the Warmia-Masuria Province). According to the author, small towns are settlements with a population up to 20 000³⁶⁶.

The research was conducted among the participants of the tourist movement during the summer season of 2008: on July 20-26, August 8-13 and 19-25, between 10 am and 5 pm. The research was carried out in places which enjoyed the greatest popularity among tourists and visitors, i.e. castle hilltop areas, mainly in courtyards, at gateways, at the foot of the castles, but also in the Old Town. The survey was conducted among individual tourists. Where organized groups of tourist were available, only one member of the group was surveyed.

In total, 39 survey questionnaires were collected from all the towns included in the research. The sample of respondents was accessible (random). It needs to be noted that the number of answers in particular towns is not provided due to a small number of samples.

In the course of the research several foreign tourists were surveyed. They were mostly able to communicate in Polish themselves or with the assistance of their Polish companions.

Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample group

Most of the tourists and visitors were surveyed in Lidzbark Warmiński (10). Not many less in Gniew (8), Bytów and Reszel (7 respondents each). The remaining two towns were: Ryn (4) and Nidzica (3). The distribution of respondents according to gender is shown in Table 1. There were twice as many men as women in the sample group.

³⁶⁶ A town is understood as “an urbanized area characterized by a space organization and function typical of a town, with officially granted town privileges and demarcated borderp. All people inhabiting such settlement are town dwellers” (Liszewski, 2007, 79).

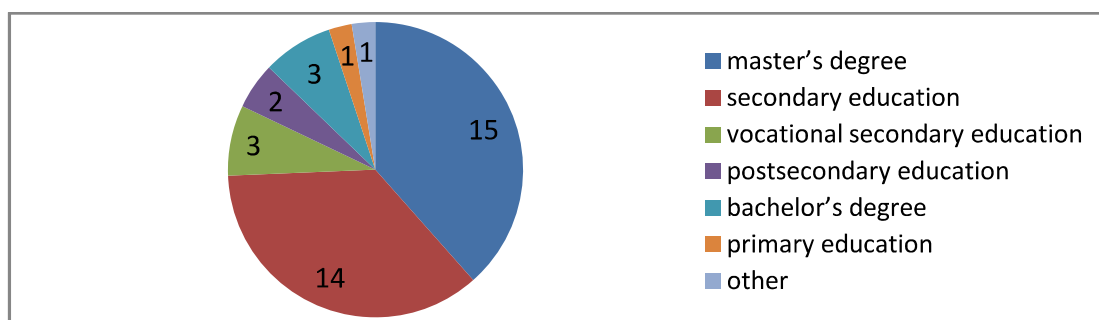
Table 1. Number of surveyed tourists in towns.

Town	Number		Total
	Women	Men	
Bytów	0	7	7
Gniew	4	4	8
Nidzica	1	2	3
Lidzbark Warmiński	5	5	10
Reszel	2	5	7
Ryn	1	3	4
Total	13	26	39

Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Figure 1 represents the distribution of respondents by education. People who held master's degree and those who had had secondary education constituted the largest group of the respondents (15 and 14 respectively). The remaining people, who declared to had completed basic education, vocational secondary education, postsecondary education or to hold a bachelor's or other degree, constituted a small proportion of the respondents (10 people in total, which amounted to a little over a quarter of all respondents). Such data may suggest that travelling, which frequently demands a considerable intellectual involvement at all its stages (preparation, realization, recollection) is a domain of educated people.

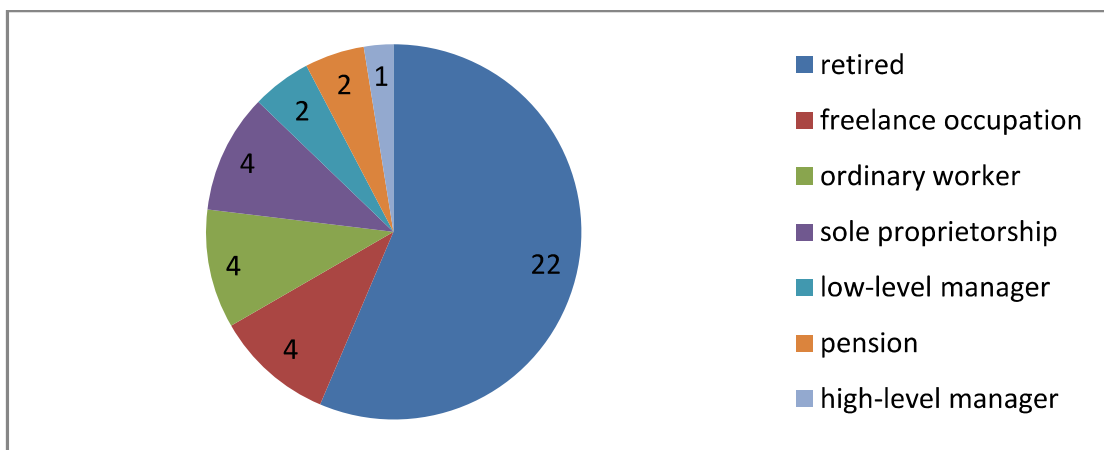
Fig. 1. Respondents' education, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

The professional structure of the respondent group is shown in Figure 2. By virtue of their age (61 and older), most of the respondents were already retired (22 people, which amounted to over 50% of the surveyed group). The group of the professionally active consisted mostly of people who performed freelance occupations, ordinary workers and sole proprietors (4 people each). Three people held managerial positions. Two respondents declared pension as their main source of income. Sole proprietors, low-level managers, high-level managers and freelance workers, 11 people in total, constituted a little over 28% of the surveyed group. It can be assumed in all probability that their material status was at least satisfactory. Satisfactory material status, large leisure time budget and good health enable people over 60 years of age to participate in active tourism but also determine the type of their activities to a considerable extent.

Fig. 2. Professional structure of the respondent group, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Respondents' provincial background is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondents' provincial background.

place of settlement	number of answers
Mazovia Province	10
Łódź Province	7
Pomerania Province	3
Wielkopolska Province	3
Lower Silesia Province	2
Małopolska Province	2
Silesia Province	2
Podlasie Province	2
Warmia-Masuria Province	2
Opole Province	1
Świętokrzyskie Province	1
West Pomerania Province	1
Podkarpacie Province	0
Lublin Province	0
Kujawy-Pomerania Province	0
Lubuskie Province	0
Foreign countries	3
total	39

Source: own calculation based on survey research.

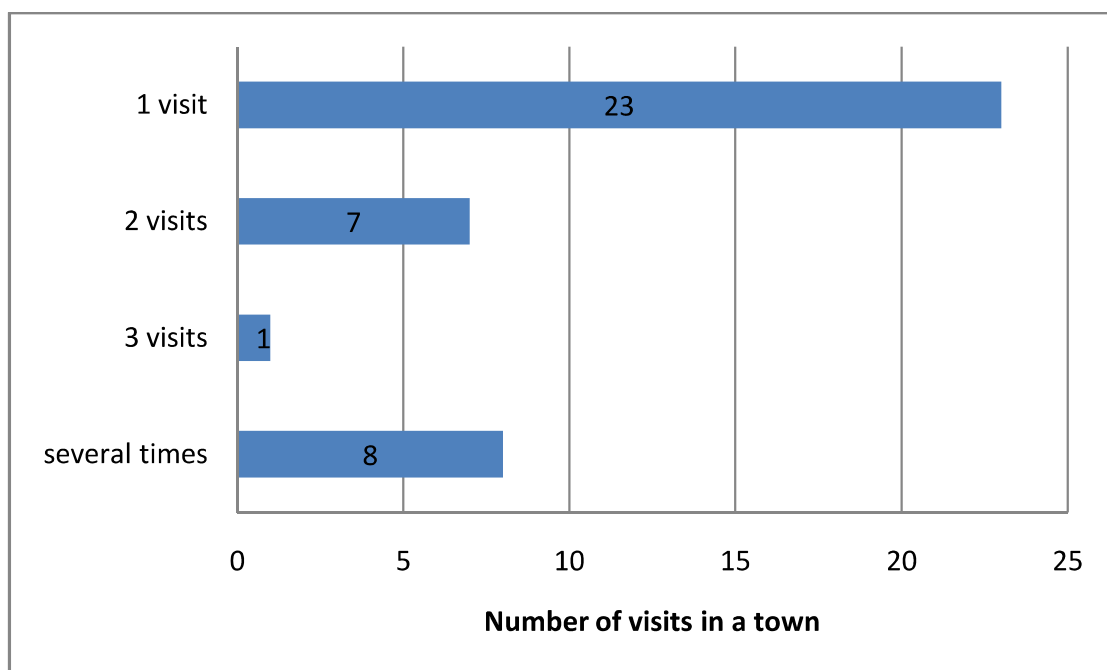
The majority of respondents came from the Mazovia Province (10 people) and the Łódź Province (7). Three people lived in the Pomerania Province, in the Wielkopolska Province and abroad (Germany). The remaining distribution of answers was as follows: the Lower Silesia Province (2), the Małopolska Province (2), the Podlasie Province (2), the Silesia Province (2), the Warmia-Masuria Province (2), the Opole Province, the Świętokrzyskie Province and the West Pomerania Province (1 person each). The distribution of respondents with respect to the place of settlement indicates certain regularities. First of all, the largest group of the visitors to the Pomeranian,

Warmian and Mazurian towns under research consists of the inhabitants of central Poland (the Mazovia and Łódź provinces) who enjoy spending the summer season at the Baltic Sea or in Masuria. In all probability the group also includes the inhabitants of the Silesia, Lower Silesia and Wielkopolska provinces. Secondly, it was presumably due to the short distance that people who lived in the Pomerania and Warmia-Masuria provinces decided to visit the towns included in the research.

Tourist behaviour and the perception of visited places

For the decided majority of respondents (23) it was the first visit to places under research. In 8 cases the number of visits exceeded 3 and 7 people visited the towns twice (Figure 3).

Fig. 3. The number of respondents' visits to towns included in the research.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Asked about *the way of organizing their trip to town* (Table 3), respondents usually declared travelling with family and/or friends (30 people). Five of the surveyed people decided to travel individually and three (the foreign tourists) travelled through the agency of a tourist office. One person declared travelling on business. The definite majority of travelling with family and/or friends may indicate a substantial need for keeping close with family and friends while travelling (emotional needs, being in family/friends' care, transport, lower travel expenses).

Table 3. Characteristics of the trip to town.

Characteristics of trip/town	Total
individual	5
family/friends	30
tourist office	3
on business	1
total	39

Source: own calculation based on survey research.

The main means of respondents' transport was a car (34 people). Only 5 people travelled by coach. Motorized tourism is one of the forms of travelling to enjoy considerable popularity at present. It needs to be noted that respondents travelled with family/friends mostly as passengers.

Table 4. Means of respondents' transport,
absolute figures.

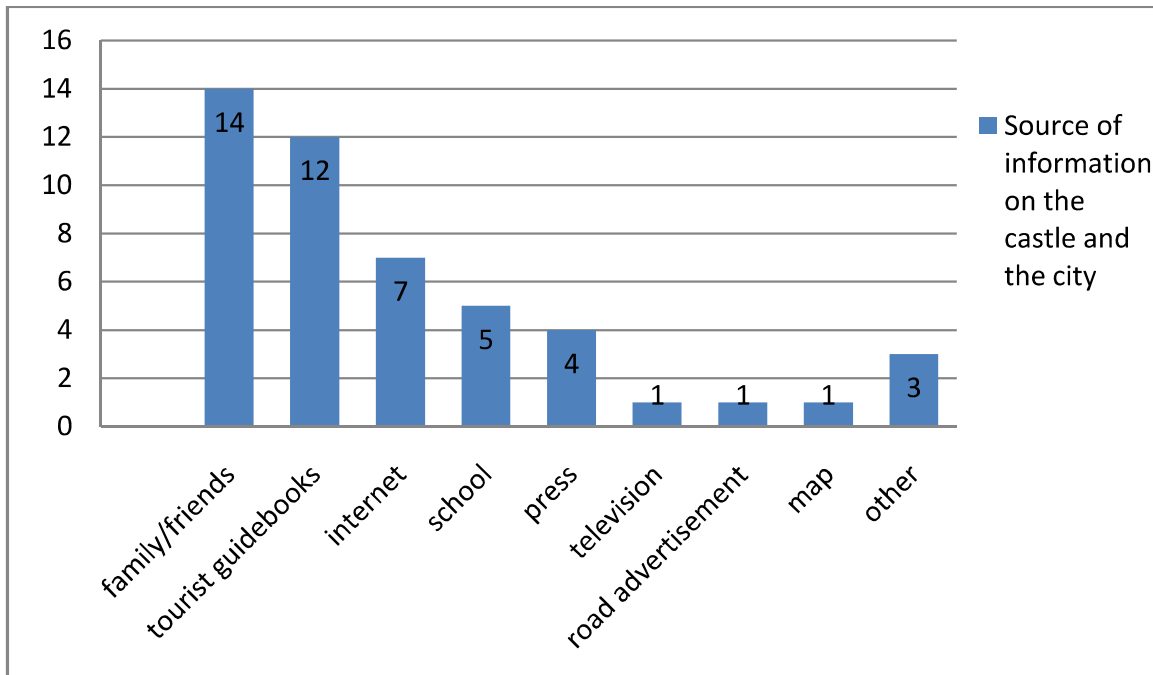
means of transport	total
car	34
coach	5
total	39

Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Asked about *the source of information on castles and towns* (Figure 4) which were included in the research, respondents usually indicated family and friends (14 people) as well as tourist guidebooks (12). Other answers included: the Internet (7 respondents), school knowledge (5) and the press (4). The remaining sources of information (television, road advertisement, map) were of marginal importance in the surveyed group.

A large number of respondents who obtained information from family and/or friends may indicate a significant information dependence and an inability to search for information by elderly tourists. On the other hand, it also emphasizes the characteristic features of trips, which were mainly organized and carried out by respondents' relatives/friends. A large percentage of people who used tourist guidebooks (12 respondents) indicates a predominance of traditional sources of information over the modern ones (the Internet – 7 people) in the age group under research.

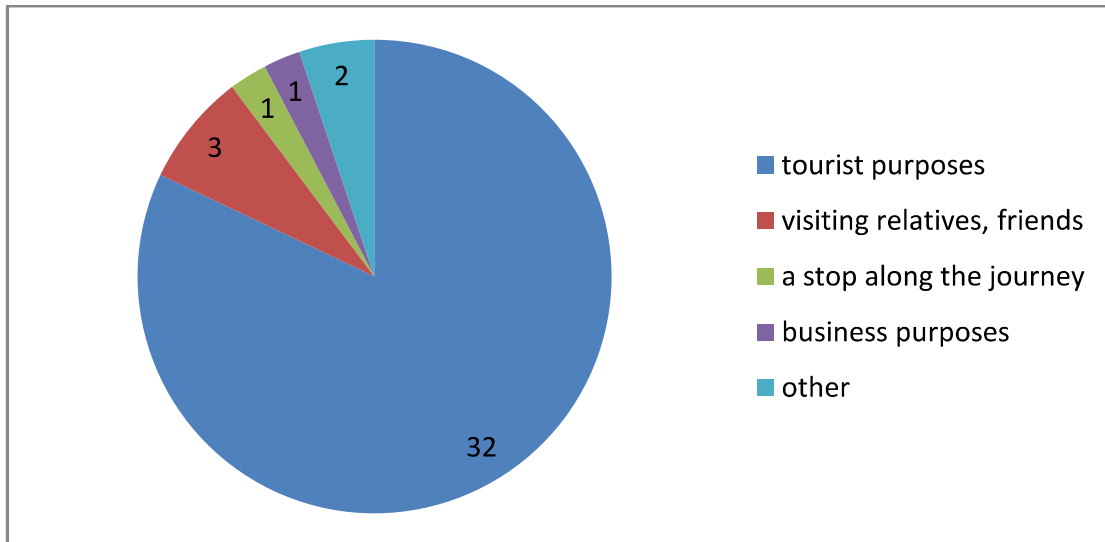
Fig. 4. Sources of information on visited castles and towns



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Most of respondents (32) specified tourist purposes as the main purpose of their visit to towns under research (Figure 6). Other answers included: visiting relatives and friends (3 respondents), a trip on business and a stop along the journey (1 person each). Two respondents provided different purposes. Visiting towns for tourist purposes strongly determines how people spend their leisure time there but it also influences to some extent the structure of purchased goods and services, as well as other tourist behaviour.

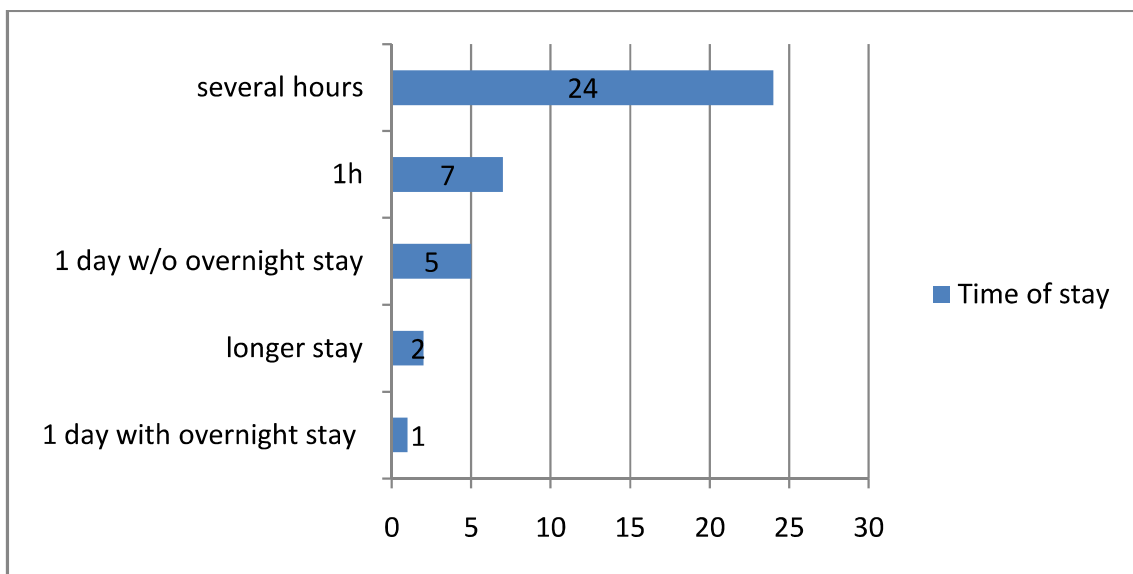
Fig. 6. Purpose of respondents' visits to towns under research, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Respondents usually spent several hours in towns included in the research (24 answers). Seven people specified a very short stay, which lasted about an hour (Figure 6). Five people decided to stay longer than few hours without staying overnight. One person took night's accommodation and two respondents spent more than one night in the area of research. The predominance of short stays in towns indicates their episodic character. They were not treated as destinations but rather as stops along the journey. Those towns could thus be called to lie „on the tourist migration routes.”

Fig. 6. Time of respondents' stay in towns under research, absolute figures.

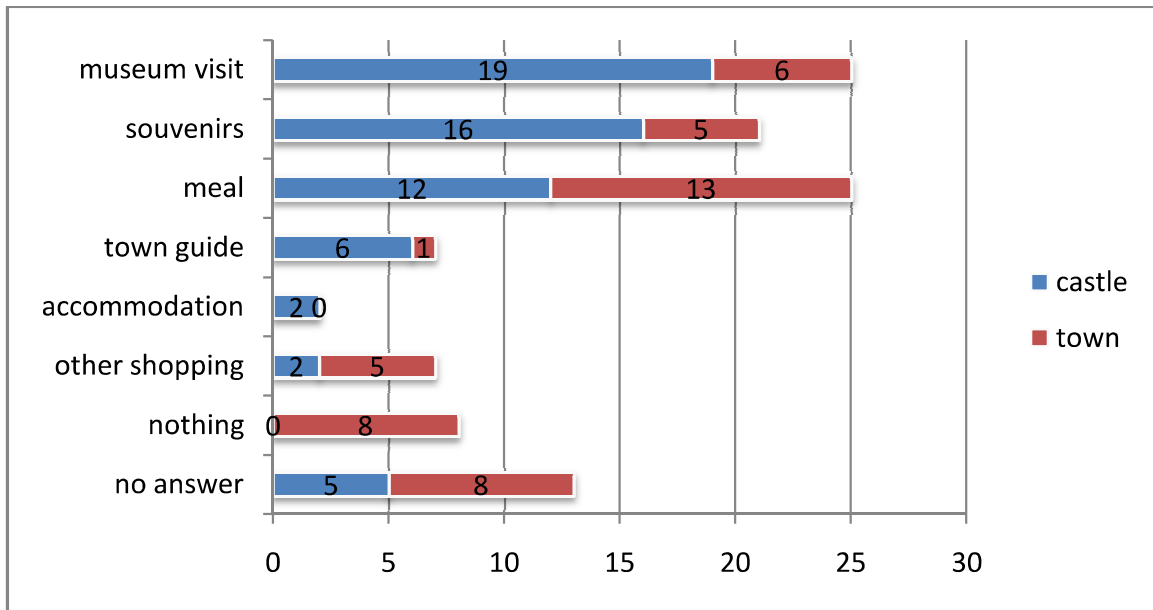


Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Short stays of tourists and visitors are unprofitable from the standpoint of the town dwellers who provide services for the tourist movement. The shorter people stay in a particular place, the less money they usually spend there. Apart from the amount of money spent, the time of tourist stays influences also the structure of purchased goods and services (Figure 7).

The services which respondents purchased most often included: meal (13 people), a museum visit (6), buying souvenirs (5) and other shopping (also 5 people). One person used services of a town guide. Eight people did not buy anything. The same number of respondents refrained from answering this question.

Fig. 7. Services purchased in castles and towns, absolute figures.

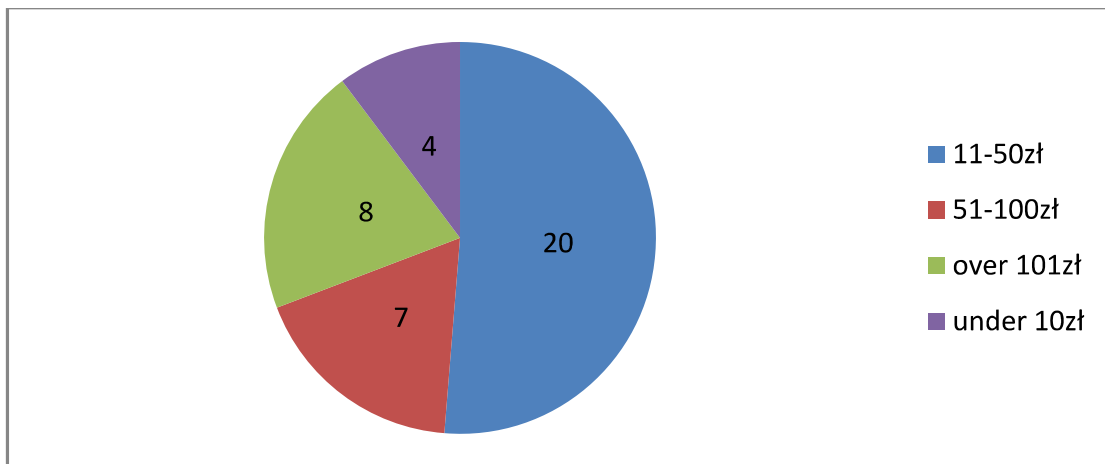


Source: own calculation based on survey research.

The most popular goods bought in castles located in the research area (Figure 7) were: museum tickets (19 people), souvenirs (16) and meals (12 people). Six of the respondents used services of a guide and two people took night's accommodation in the castle. Two respondents indicated other purchase and five people refrained from providing an answer. The predominance of purchase made in castles over those made in towns is evident (38 in towns vs. 57 in castles). The overall number of transactions and the structure of purchase indicate that it is mainly in castles that tourists fulfil their material needs by purchasing goods and services.

Figure 8 shows the amounts of respondents' expenses. The majority of the surveyed (20 people) indicated their expenses to range between 11-50zł [Polish złoty]. The remaining respondents' answers were: 51-100zł (8 people), over 101zł (7 people) and under 10zł (4).

Fig. 8. Amount of respondents' daily expenses, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

The average amounts of expenses were estimated as follows: 5zł for the under 10zł range; 19,5zł for the 11-50zł range; 74,5zł for the 51-100zł range; 150zł for the over 101zł range. The overall average expense was calculated according to the following formula:

$$W = n_1 \cdot \acute{s}r_1 + n_2 \cdot \acute{s}r_2 + n_3 \cdot \acute{s}r_3 + n_4 \cdot \acute{s}r_4 / n$$

Where:

W – amount of respondents' expenses

n_1 - number of answers indicating the under 10zł range

$\acute{s}r_1$ - average amount of expenses in the under 10zł range

n_2 - number of answers indicating the 11-50zł range

$\acute{s}r_2$ - average amount of expenses in the 11-50zł range

n_3 - number of answers indicating the 51-100zł range

$\acute{s}r_3$ - average amount of expenses in the 51-100zł range

n_4 - number of answers indicating the over 101zł range

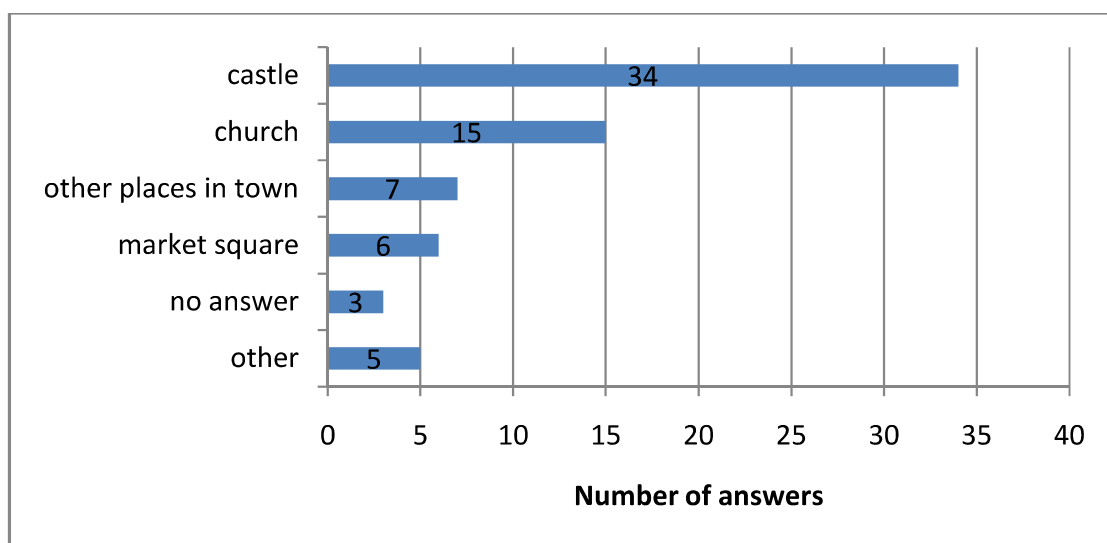
$\acute{s}r_4$ - average amount of expenses in the over 101zł range

n - sample size

The average amount of tourist expenses in towns under research was 52,7zł.

Figure 9 represents respondents' answers to the following question: *which places have you visited in the town?* The most often visited places were castles (34 answers). The remaining answers included: church (15 people), other places in town (12), market square (6). Three people did not provide any answer. Castles could then be regarded as the most attractive tourist spots in towns included in the research. Such conclusion can be drawn after the analysis of Figure 9.

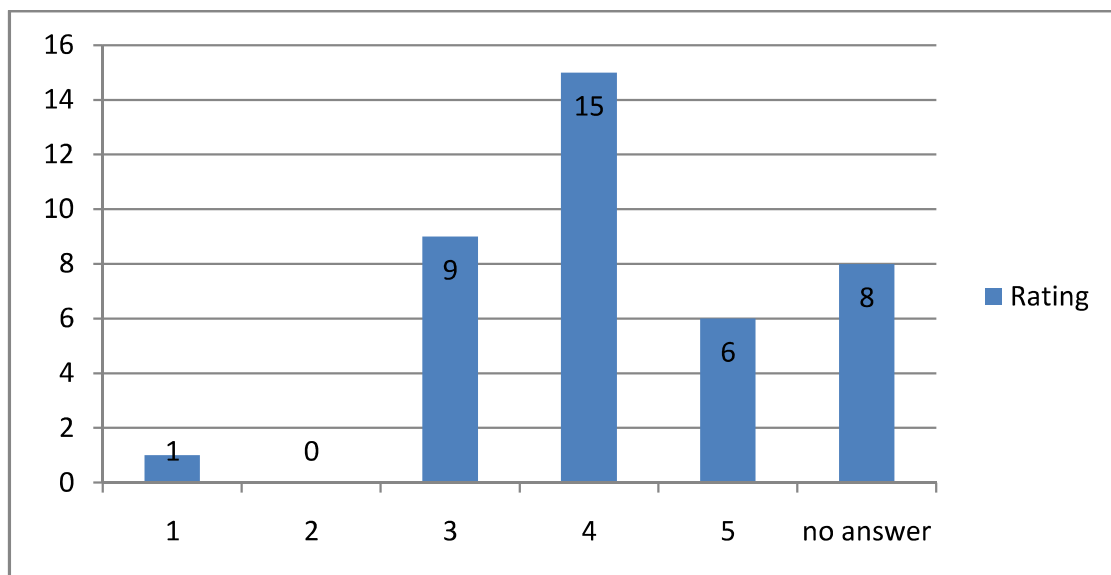
Fig. 9. Places of respondents' visit in towns under research, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Asked to *rate the tourist attractiveness of visited towns*, respondents rated them good („4”– 14 people) or very good („5”– 11 people) most frequently. Eight people gave the attractiveness of visited town a middle mark („3”) and one person rated below that („2”). Five people refrained from answering this question. No respondent decided to rate any town the lowest („1”). The answers may indicate a considerable degree of satisfaction which people derived from their trips and visited places.

Fig. 10. Respondents’ rating of the tourist attractiveness of visited towns, absolute figures.

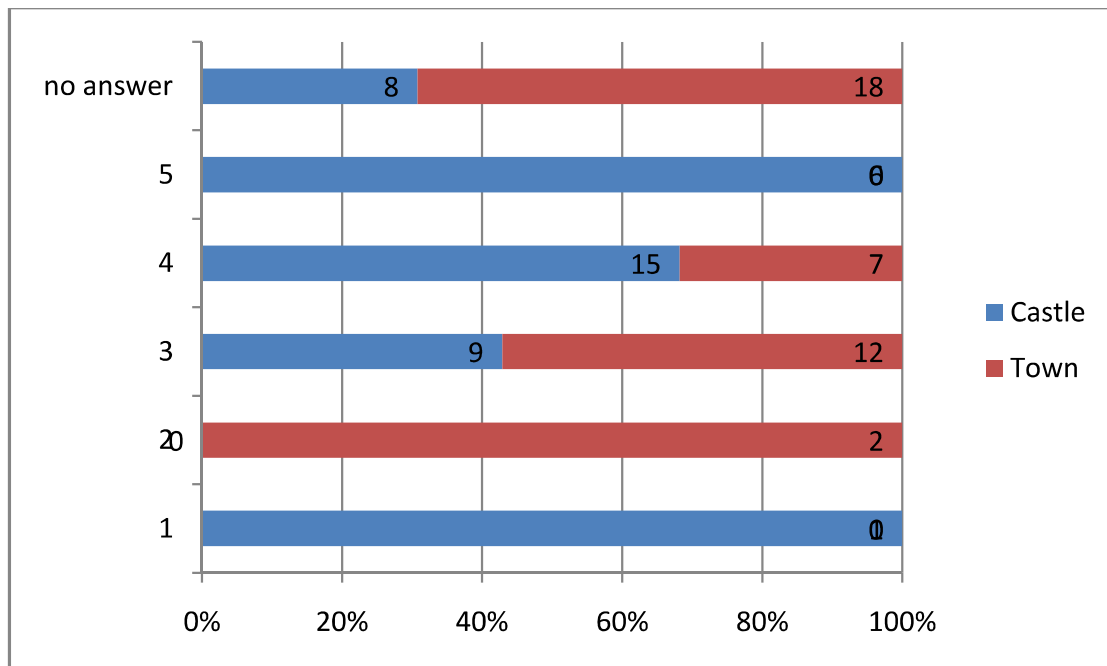


Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Tourist development of towns (Figure 11) was rated slightly lower. While twelve respondents gave it a middle mark („3”) and seven people a good mark („4”), two people thought it was below average („2”). No respondent gave any town the lowest but also the highest mark. Not less than 18 respondents refrained from providing an answer, which was a result of not using a catering or accommodation services.

A relatively low rating of tourist development of visited towns shows a deficiency of quantitative and qualitative tourist development of towns under research. Additionally, it may suggest tourists' high expectations towards tourist development of visited places.

Fig. 11. Respondents' rating of tourist development of towns and castles.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Castles outdistanced towns in the tourist development rating. They were given a good mark („4”) by fifteen respondents and a middle mark („3”) by nine of them. Six people rated tourist development of visited castles as very good („5”) and no-one gave it a „2” mark. One person, however, gave it the lowest mark („1”). It needs to be pointed out that castles stand out as places of the highest tourist development in areas included in the research. Not only do they offer the highest quality of service but also present the widest array of services in their offering.

The respondents were asked to suggest *changes that would improve the tourist attractiveness of towns and castles* (Figures 12 and 13). The distribution of answers was similar for both castles and towns, which is to say, no answer was predominant. The tourists/visitors provided the following answers on what changes they thought were necessary in towns: improvement in cleanliness (8 people), revitalization or renovation of the historic urban tissue (6), improvement in quality of urban and approach roads (4), improvement in quality of the tourist movement service (4), improvement in catering service standards (3), improvement in quality and quantity of accommodation (2), and improvement of tourist infrastructure and development in general (2 people). Single answers suggested to increase the number of tourist attractions or parking space, as well as that no changes were necessary. Four respondents refrained from answering and six people provided answers which were classified as „other.” Total number of answers amounted to 41 (it exceeded the number of respondents as it was possible to suggest more than one change).

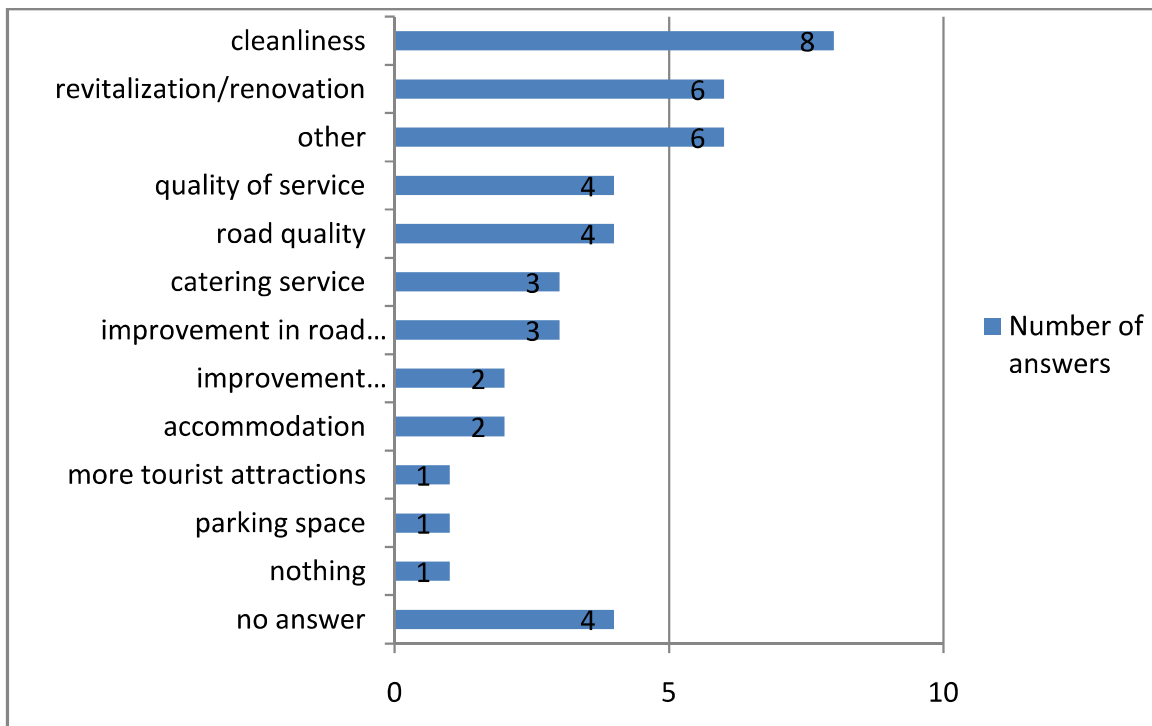
The analysis of respondents' answers allowed to divide them into several categories:

- Improvement in town's aesthetic value (renovations, improvement in cleanliness),
- Improvement in service and tourist development,
- Improvement in quality of roads and increase in parking space.

Asked to suggest *changes and improvements necessary in visited castles*, the respondents answered as follows: revitalization or renovation of castles (7 people), improvement in service quality (5), improvement in catering service standards (5), increase in parking space (4), improvement in cleanliness (3),

improvement in road signs clarity (3), improvement in museum exhibition (2), more information on visited castles (2). The remaining answers (more events held at the castle, improvement of promotion and publicity, improvement in infrastructure) were not provided more than once.

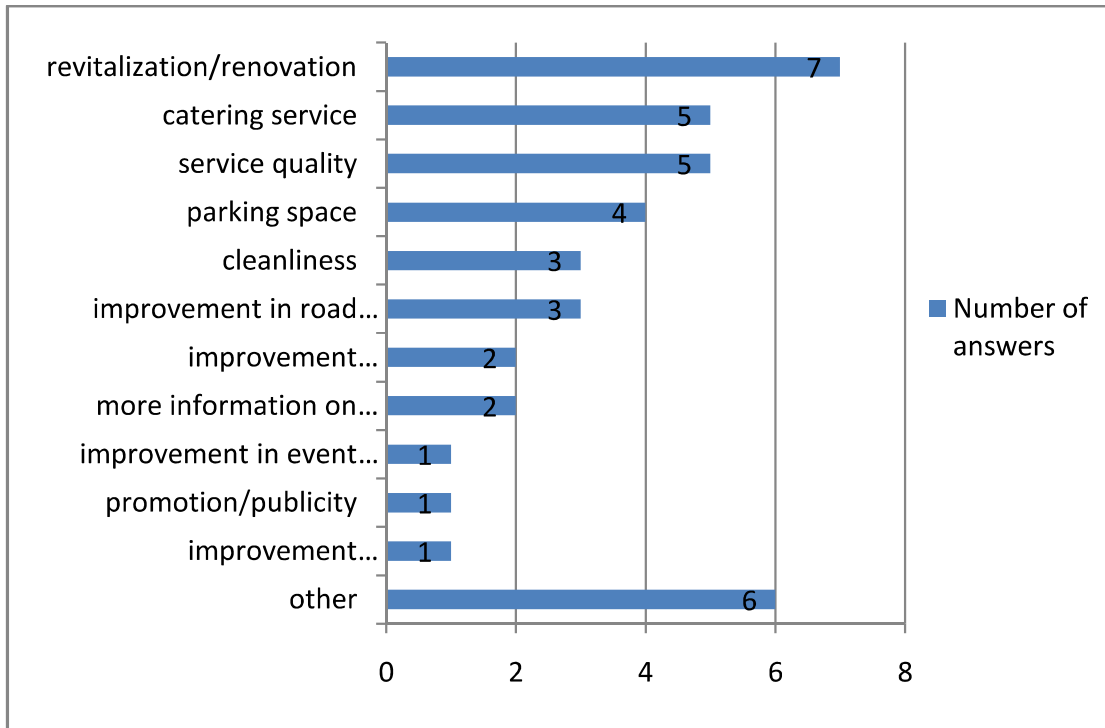
Fig. 12 Respondents' opinions on what changes were necessary in order to improve tourist attractiveness of visited towns, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Six respondents provided answers classified as „other.” Total number of answers amounted to 40 (it exceeded the number of respondents as it was possible to suggest more than one change).

Fig. 13. Respondents' opinions on what changes were necessary in order to improve tourist attractiveness of visited castles, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

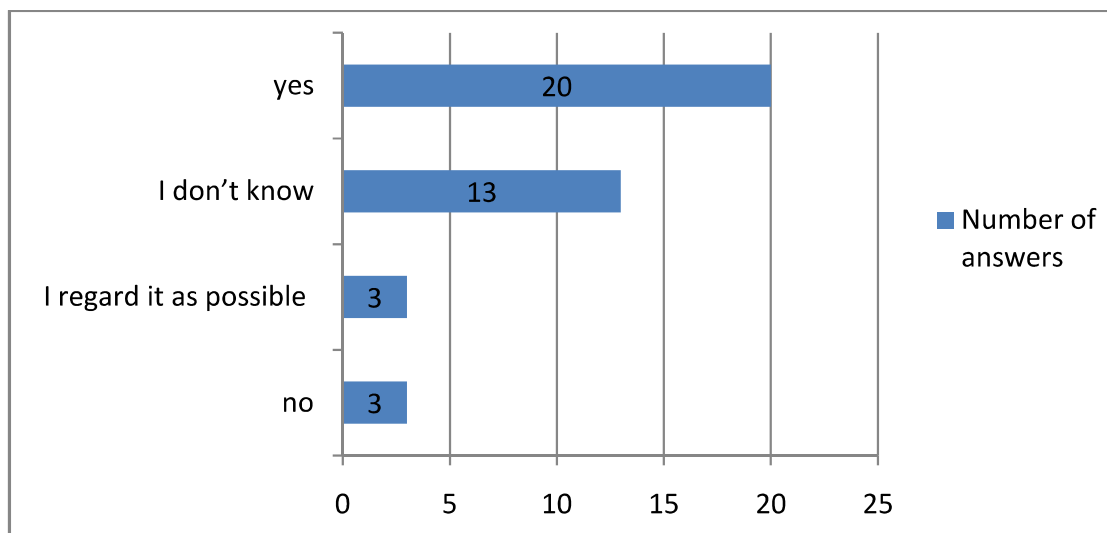
Similarly to suggestions as how to improve the tourist attractiveness of towns, the answers regarding castles can also be divided into several categories:

- Improvement in castle's aesthetic value, general condition and cleanliness,
- Improvement in service quality and tourist infrastructure,
- Insufficient promotion, publicity, event offering and museum exhibition,
- Insufficient road signs clarity and parking space.

The groups of answers concerning both castles and towns indicate respondents' dissatisfaction with the condition and aesthetic value of visited places, insufficient quality and quantity of tourist development elements (accommodation and catering, quality of service), unsatisfactory quality and clarity of signs on approach roads, as well as insufficient parking space.

The surveyed tourists were also asked *whether they considered revisiting the town*. More than half of them (20 people) gave an affirmative answer. Three people regarded revisiting the town as possible, 13 of them were indecisive while only 3 respondents were negative about the possibility. The answers may indicate a considerable degree of respondents' satisfaction derived from travelling as well as willingness to keep up their tourist activity in the future.

Fig. 14. Respondents' opinions on revisiting the town included in the research, absolute figures.



Source: own calculation based on survey research.

Conclusions

The analysis of respondents' all answers allowed to determine a *profile of a typical tourist/visitor in the sample group of the elderly people* (over 60 years of age).

A typical tourist/visitor is a person:

Who lives in the Mazowia Province and travels by car with family and/or friends for tourist purposes; who obtained information on the visited place from family and/or friends, and whose stay there was not longer than several hours; whose expenses amounted to about 52zł and included purchasing a museum ticket, a meal and services of a guide in castle, as well as paying for a meal in town.

A typical tourist/visitor:

Visited a castle and a church, gave the visited town a good („4”) mark, rated the tourist development of the town as average („3”) and of the castle as good („4”); is dissatisfied with both the general condition and aesthetic value of the visited place, as well as the insufficient quality and quantity of tourist development elements; intends to revisit the place in the future.

The results portray a tourist over 60 years of age as a conscious traveller of considerable requirements and expectations regarding the tourist development and attractiveness of visited towns. At the same time, it is a person who is generally satisfied with the trip and who enjoys travelling with family and friends.

The results of the research may contribute to more detailed analyses of the issues raised in this paper, which are crucial for complete understanding of the tourist behaviour of the post-working age tourists.

This is why the educational aim of school and the new curricula for individual subjects, including the education for family life, is the care to develop pro-social awareness and attitudes of students as potential future parents. One should share and make available in a professional way for adolescents in the process of education and upbringing the knowledge that will help them live, also in the marital and family community, solve difficult problems related to adolescence and eliminate sources of family conflicts, will strengthen emotional bonds in the family and marriage, which will eliminate threats and crisis situations of the family environment.

"Otherness" *in various social contexts*

This book is an interdisciplinary discourse on otherness as a multidimensional problem. It covers the issue of otherness in different social, educational, economical and political relations. It is a collection of articles written by authors from many prestigious research and scientific centres. It was reviewed by Sławomir Cudak (prof.).

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