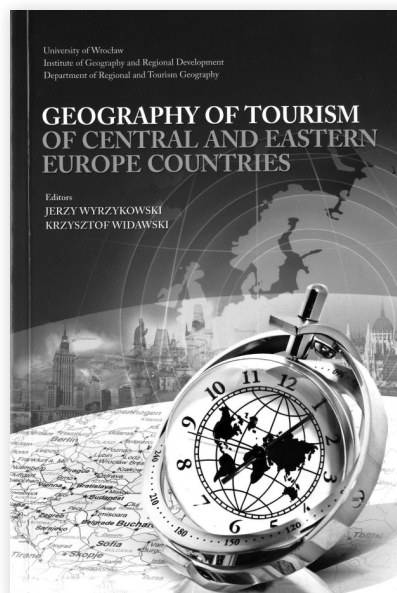


book review

Geography of tourism of Central and East European countries

Institute of Geography and Regional Development, Department of Regional and Tourism Geography of Wrocław University (Poland) published above mentioned comprehensive proceedings edited by Jerzy Wyrzykowski and Krzysztof Widawski. On some 519 23x16 sized pages it deals with issues in eleven countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

After a short introduction and conclusions, the first chapter of the proceedings presents the results of international scientific researches on the topic The Conditions of Foreign Tourism Development in Central and Eastern Europe organized by the Institute of Geography and Regional Development. It is about the continuing activity of a group of tourism specialists who used to meet regularly for every two years starting from 1990 in order to exchange research experience on the geographical aspects of foreign tourism in the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The results have been presented in eleven national reports aiming to prepare the map of international tourism attractions in this area, which was completed and published in 1998 in Vienna. The initiative to publish more comprehensive proceedings came from several scientists from the Masaryk University in Brno that suggested methodical structure of the chapter on presenting the tourism geography issues in respective countries. All of them, belonging to the same socio-economic systems of the post-war tourism development, showed similar characteristics regarding the fact that international tourism, as a reflection and expression of the broader context, had a lot of common determinants. Therefore, in the second chapter there is a list of characteristics of the tourism economy in twenty socialist countries, while, as noted, special attention was given to eleven of them. It is primarily about their place in the international market, tourism resources, carrying capacities, infrastructure, typology of tourist movements, organizational structure of tourism etc. The factors concerning tourism traffic such as natural, cultural and other preconditions for tourism and their geographical location are described for each country as well. Popular destinations are highlighted with their historical development and the expected trends. All elements are considered from



the standpoint of tourism geography as established discipline in the study of the primary phenomenon of tourism.

The authors of the book, 29 of them, are mostly associates of an informal group of experts that research various aspects of tourism geography in this part of Europe. Since the authors are mainly geographers their papers are accompanied by rich graphic illustrations and they represent a valuable documentary material for further research. Also, there are many figures related to the role of these countries in international tourism traffic, foreign income and others that allow mutual comparison.

Even a cursory overview of proceedings suggests the reader to understand the huge tourism potential of these countries as a pledge of future development, which implies an awareness of the need for protection. Authors have announced the possible inclusion of previously omitted countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania, as well as the further researches on the concept of regional tourism geography.

Finally, the bibliography and sources which spread on twenty pages, as well as a list of graphics and illustrations, testify to the seriousness of this years-going research project.

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Jerzy Wyrzykowski and Krzysztof Widawski, editors
University of Wrocław, Wrocław, 2012, pp. 519

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