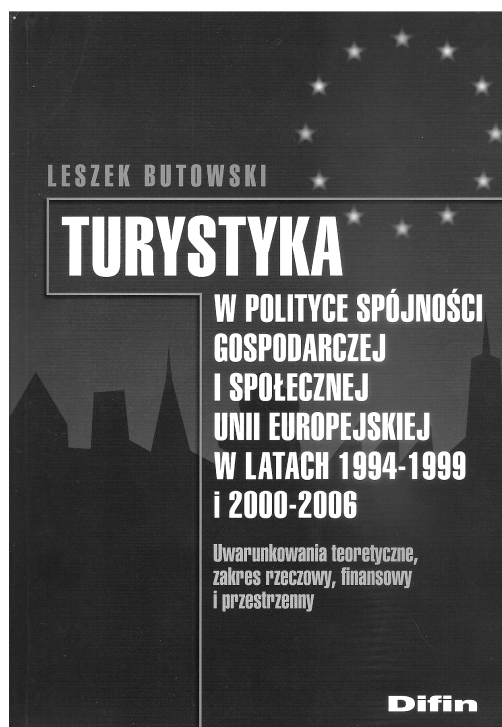


# REVIEWS

Tourism 2014, 24/2



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*TURYSTYKA W POLITYCE SPÓJNOŚCI GOSPODARCZEJ I SPOŁECZNEJ UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ W LATACH 1994–1999 I 2000–2006. UWARUNKOWANIA TEORETYCZNE, ZAKRES RZECZOWY, FINANSOWY I PRZESTRZENNY*

[*TOURISM IN THE EU POLICY OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INTEGRITY IN 1994-1999 AND 2000-2006. THEORETICAL CONDITIONS, FACTUAL, FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL SPECTRUM*]

Difin SA, Warszawa 2009  
pp. 232

The author approaches the significant issue of the role tourism plays in European Union's policy of economic and social integration as implemented in 1994-9 and in 2000-6. Generally speaking, the policy is based on a variety of aid activities whose aim is to decrease the differences between individual regions by stimulating development and restructuring economies. Aid is provided for peripheral and less developed regions in order to improve their position and socio-economic integration as a part of the EU. The policy of integration approached in this way is a function of regional and structural policies and it is important to understand the place of tourism in this both from theoretical and practical perspectives.

The theoretical objective is to demonstrate the influence of tourism on economic development, contributing to the aims of the economic and social integration policy promoted by the EU. The author presents a wide review of Polish and foreign literature, focusing on tourism as a field of research, presenting existing theories of regional development in terms of their usefulness in an analysis of the influence of tourism on regional and local development, as well as

a macroeconomic analysis of the significance of tourism in EU economies based on the share of tourism in GNP, exports, employment, investment and the assessment of tourism reception potential. On the other hand, the practical objective is to present the real implementation of the integration policy in the tourism sector. In this respect, the analysis is based on EU and Polish legal regulations, policy papers and regular reports while the author has also used information from European, Polish and regional databases. All in all, several hundred documents were analysed defining the possibilities and extent of implementing the European policy of integration in the context of material and financial support for tourism.

The structure corresponds to the research issues it presents: an introduction, four chapters (including two theoretical and two empirical) and conclusions. In the Introduction, the author formulates the research issue and working hypotheses, as well as the objectives, research procedures and methods, and sources of information. Chapter I presents tourism as both a research discipline and a regional development factor in the light of selected theories (endogenous

development, networks, the economic base, polarization, sustainable development), followed by discussion of the origins and legal framework for tourism as an EU objective. Chapter II considers the achievements of the EU policy of economic and social integration implemented in 1994-9 and 2000-6. The author presents the theoretical foundations, origins and evolution, framework and legislative instruments, aims and rules, budget and financial tools of EU integration policy in these periods. The next two chapters (III and IV) are of an empirical nature, presenting the results of the author's research using primary and secondary sources, showing the actual involvement of the European policy of integration using tourism. Chapter III presents the status and significance of tourism in the integration programs implemented in 25 individual member states. Chapter IV contains a compilation of the results of comparative analyses conducted at a national level in both periods of budget planning, the relations between tourism areas and the regions where European integration policy is implemented, as well as a typology of tourism projects (based on the following criteria: 1. project objective, 2. geographical-functional criteria of the project area and its effects, 3. formal). The analyses are available on a CD attachment containing a brief description of selected projects (14) with photographic documentation. In the Conclusions, the author discusses possible answers to the questions posed, the research hypotheses and the major conclusions from the research.

The research has brought interesting results; however, they show that it is not always possible to provide full and positive answers. Similarly, the answers did not guarantee a full and positive verification of all hypotheses. The literature on the subject, and the theories of regional development discussed, point to tourism as an important development factor in regions with suitable development potential. The significance of tourism as a development factor depends on local conditions in the area of tourism reception and its vicinity. It is justifiable then to support tourism as a part of the European integration policy. In fact, tourism is an economic sector that receives support as a part of this policy, but to a varying extent in specific periods and member states. A spatial

correlation has been found between the areas where integration policy has been introduced and tourism regions, and that supporting tourism development leads to their economic and social restructuring. However, it is not possible to define with full certainty the factors which make tourism an important element of integration policy. The author established a limited relation between the extent of support offered as a part of this policy and tourism attractiveness, in addition to similar environmental and socio-economic factors, temporary and local factors are also of some importance here. It is not always the case that given tourism potential is followed by sufficient EU financial support for tourism. The level of such support in the periods and countries studied has also changed considerably pointing to the fact that decisions concerning the allocation and amount of finance are often specific and occasional, and probably politically-dependent. Spatial analyses show that tourism is not always supported in the most backward areas, and that the finance allocated to the development of tourism compared to that for developing basic infrastructure is small, and this reduces the effectiveness of tourism as a development and restructuring tool.

This book is one of the first such publications in Poland, and a wide-ranging attempt to present and assess the role of tourism in EU integration policy. It has considerable cognitive value but we must not ignore its academic and didactic value either, due to its clear way of presenting research issues, hypotheses and research objectives, as well as its logical and well-documented conclusions. The book is an original work which greatly contributes to our knowledge of the role and significance of tourism for the policy of integration promoted by the European Union. This will most certainly make it popular among those interested in these issues, such as students, academics and those who work in political, economic, social, local government and other institutions.

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