

Widawski, K. and Wyrzykowski, J. (eds.): **The Geography of Tourism of Central and Eastern European Countries**. Second edition. Cham, Springer, 2017. 551 p.

Stephen WILLIAMS underlined the importance of the geography of tourism in 1998 with the following initial sentences in his book "Tourism Geography": "Thirty years ago, the inclusion of a book on tourism within a series of introductory texts covering differing aspects of human geography would have been an unlikely event. Today, the exclusion of tourism from the geography curriculum seems equally improbable." (WILLIAMS, S. 1998. p. 1). WILLIAMS (1998) also emphasised that tourism is an essentially geographical phenomenon since it deals with subjects like the spatial distribution of tourism, tourism impacts, tourism planning and spatial modelling of tourism development. Hence, since the dawn of the 2000s we can state that the role of geography in tourism studies is widely accepted and inevitable.

Academic works on tourism geography date back to 1976, when Harry ROBINSON published his book "A geography of tourism". Considering the geography of tourism as general topic, the most essential piece of literature coming to my mind is the book of C. Michael

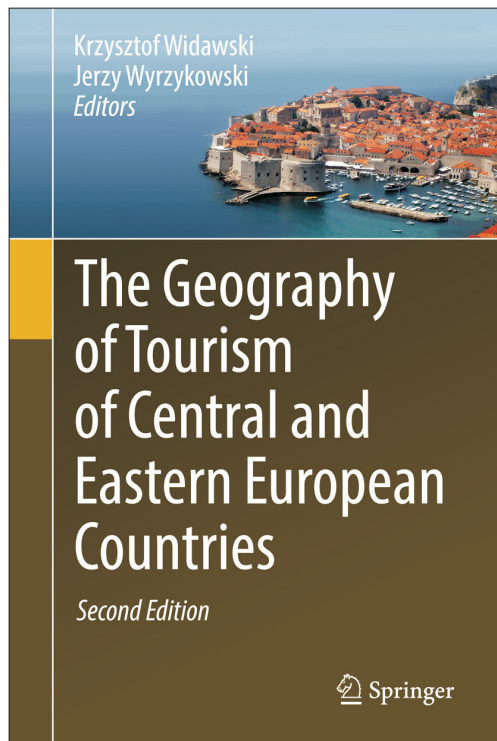
HALL and Stephen J. PAGE entitled "The Geography of Tourism and Recreation: Environment, Place and Space" (the first edition was published in 1999 and the fourth in 2014). In my view the second most important volume is "Tourism Geography" by Stephen WILLIAMS in 1998, which I already referred to in the last section. Concerning the discussion of the theoretical background of the geography of tourism we can also refer to recently published volumes such as the book of Velvet NELSON (2017) ("An Introduction to the Geography of Tourism") or the revised edition of Stephen WILLIAMS's seminal work ("Tourism Geography: A New Synthesis") (WILLIAMS, S. 2009).

There is also another sort of books highly relevant here, dealing with the geography of tourism from the regional perspective. I find important to highlight the works of LEW, C.M., HALL, C.M. and TIMOTHY, D. (2008) "World Geography of Travel and Tourism: A Regional Approach" and LEW, A.A., HALL, C.M. and TIMOTHY, D.J. (2011) "World Regional Geography: Human Mobilities, Tourism Destinations, Sustainable Environments". In general, these books deal with the regional perspectives of tourism geography on the global scale.

As far as I could revise international literature I was unable to find relevant volumes from prominent publishers which exclusively deal with the tourism geography of Central and Eastern Europe. So, from this perspective, I believe that the presently reviewed volume is a niche publication.

The reviewed book primarily originates from the initiative of the Department of Regional Geography and Tourism at Wrocław University. From 1990 to 2010 this institute regularly organised scientific meetings for experts and professionals of tourism, in their words, "in order to exchange research experience in the scope of the development on international tourism in Central and Eastern Europe" (p. vii). This initiative led by Jerzy WYRZYKOWSKI resulted in 11 scientific publications in the book series "Conditions for the foreign tourism development in Central and Eastern Europe" (p. vii) (the title was written incorrectly in the reviewed volume, using 'the' before the word 'Central'). Issues of the series were released between 1992 and 2010, and finally, in 2012, the Department of Regional Geography and Tourism published a volume entitled "Geography of Tourism of Central and Eastern European Countries". (The title of this volume was also mistyped in the reviewed book, as "Europe" instead of "European", p. vii.)

The original 2012 volume was followed by an updated edition in 2017, now including a chapter about Belarus as well. The second edition is the object of



my current book review. As the editors underline, the major scope of the volume has been limited to the post-socialist countries of the region. They justify this focus by that tourism industry in this region has experienced similar environment, development and progress in the past 60–70 years. According to the short description of the book at [springer.com](http://springer.com) the volume “presents a comprehensive overview of the tourism market development in Central and Eastern European countries” (<http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783319422039>).

The volume is divided into two introductory chapters (“Introduction”; “The Output of International Scientific Conferences Entitled ‘The Conditions of Foreign Tourism Development in Central and Eastern Europe’ Organised by the Department of Regional Geography and Tourism at the University of Wrocław”), 13 chapters and an Erratum to the geography of tourism in Slovakia.

“Introduction” is followed by “The Output of International Scientific Conferences Entitled ‘The Conditions of Foreign Tourism Development in Central and Eastern Europe’ Organised by the Department of Regional Geography and Tourism at the University of Wrocław” from page ix to page xv. This chapter provides a detailed description of the above mentioned international conferences, their scientific organisers, locations as well as the participants and their affiliation. The primary aim of this chapter is to present the goals and objectives of the volumes which were published upon the scientific conferences. While reading this chapter, my major concern was the use of English, since I strongly think that no language revision was provided for this part of the book. The text is informative and its meaning is clear, but it obviously was not reviewed by a professional or native speaker.

Chapter 1 was written by two Polish authors from the University of Business in Wrocław, Janusz MARAK and Jerzy WYRZYKOWSKI. They discuss “The Position of Countries of Central and Eastern Europe on the International Tourism Market”. This chapter gives an overall analysis of 20 former socialist countries between 2005 and 2013/2014. After the introduction, the first subchapter deals with “Tourist potential”. Although one might think the demand side will be analysed here only, we receive information on the supply side as well. Since it deals with tourism in a complex approach maybe a title like “Overall tourism potential” would fit better here. The next subchapter describes “The Current Extent of International Tourism”. My main concerns here are that the authors refer twice to Wikipedia as data source (I would strongly advise not to refer to Wikipedia in a scientific publication), and that the data could have been more recent, since we usually find 2014 data in a 2017 publication. In the following parts of the chapter, too, there is almost no data from after 2013. The chapter

finishes by analysing the “Current Role of Central and Eastern European Countries as the Source of International Tourist Traffic” and the “Balance of Receipts and Expenditure in International Tourism in Central and Eastern Europe”.

Chapter 2 by Ivan PIROZHNIK (a Belarusian scientist from the Belarusian State University in Minsk) deals with the “Geography of Tourism of the Republic of Belarus”. The introduction gives a thorough and precise literature overview of the studies on history of tourism in Belarus. Thereafter, subchapters have the following sequence: “Natural Resource Potential and Trends in Tourism Development”; “Cultural and Historical Potential”; “Touristic Infrastructure and Level of Regional Development”; “Tourist Flows and Types of Tourism”; “Dynamics of Visitors and Organized International Tourist Flows”; “Tourist Flows in Accommodation Facilities and the Regional Intensity of the Tourist Development”; “The Main Forms and Types of Tourism; Tourist Regions of Belarus”.

The following chapters about the analysed countries basically follow the same sequence. However, the titles and topics of the subchapters are not the same for every country, which I find a bit confusing.

The chapter is written from a professional point of view and in a very detailed, accurate and comprehensive way. It is also illustrated with numerous photos and figures, which are excellent in both quality and content. My only concern with the text is related to language quality at some points and that the latest statistical data are from 2014.

Chapter 3 from Robert WILUŚ (University of Łódź) discusses the “Geography of Tourism in Bulgaria”. This chapter is also carefully written, detailed, and very precise, and is illustrated with photos and precisely edited figures. The latest data are from 2015, which is excellent, since usually we can find 2-year-old data in general and national tourism statistics. Language quality, from my point of view, is very good.

In Chapter 4, Armina KAPUSTA and Robert WILUŚ (University of Łódź) investigate the “Geography of Tourism in Croatia”. This chapter is well focused and elaborated and provides at many points the most recent data possible (2015), although a lot of 2014 data can also be found in the second part. Language quality from my point of view is excellent.

Chapter 5 was written by Jiří VYSTOUPIL and Martin ŠAUER (Masaryk University, Brno) about the “Geography of Tourism in the Czech Republic”. The outstanding and acknowledged authors provide a much detailed, punctual and relevant analysis and describe the tourism geography of the Czech Republic in its complexity. Their chapter employs high quality photos as well as detailed figures and maps. Language quality is excellent. My only concern is that some of the data are from 2013, so they are not up-to-date.

Katalin FORMÁDI, Péter MAYER and Erzsébet PÉNZEZ (University of Pannonia, Veszprém, Hungary) investigate the “Geography of Tourism in Hungary” in Chapter 6. Their paper provides a thorough description of the topic, but I have some concerns about the content. The use of geographical names is improper at some points (for example, the authors use “Little Plain” for Kisalföld and “Northern Mountains” for the North Hungarian Mountains) (pp. 193). I also wonder why such terms like “Hungarian Mountain Range” and “Limestone Mountains” (pp. 193) are in capitals when not used as proper nouns. In my view the overall language quality of the text is not sufficient enough. Some subchapters lack any reference to academic works, they only employ tables and photos. As my greatest concern, the chapter predominantly uses data from 2010, whereas some of the data are from as early as 2007 and 2008, without any reference to more up-to-date statistics. (Examples for that are Table 6.1, 6.2 as well as Figure 6.3, 6.4 and 6.6; for the last one, there is no data source added, either). For statistical data, only the last subchapters have been revised for the second edition, employing 2016 data in the sections “Seasonality” and “Main Forms and Types of Tourism”. Some figures have a poor quality, whereas some sentences refer to data from 2010 and then to a figure presenting the case of 2016 (p. 214).

In Chapter 7, Algirdas STANAITIS and Saulius STANAITIS (Vilnius Pedagogical University) analyse “Lithuanian Tourism Geography”. This is a relatively well written chapter giving a comprehensive overview of the tourism geography of the country, although I also found some critical areas. Basically all the figures of the chapter are supplied without sources. Tables are often not provided with the year of the data. The chapter deals with 2014 data which again could have been 2015. Subchapters from 7.5.2 to 7.5.11 (characterisation of the most important tourism products of the country) have no sources or references. And finally, subchapter 7.5.2 is entitled ‘Rural (Ecological) Tourism – A Promising Branch of Trade’. (I do not understand the subtitle, why ‘trade’ is used here.)

Chapter 8 investigates the “Geography of Tourism of Poland”. The authors, Magdalena DUDA-SEIFERT, Krzysztof WIDAWSKI and Jerzy WYRZYKOWSKI (University of Wrocław and the University of Business in Wrocław) give an in-depth introduction to the history of tourism geography as discipline in Poland. They highlight some information by putting them in italics or bold. It is a pity that this editing technique was used only occasionally in other parts of the book. The text is very detailed and covers all the important aspects of the geography of tourism in Poland. As minor weaknesses, Figure 8.1 and 8.2 lack reference to data source, and some tables (Table 8.3 and 8.7) rely on data from 2008 and 2009. I find

interesting that Polish academic literature on tourism uses the phrase “qualified tourism” for touristic activities that “require[s] having proper equipment and skills. It is an important and very accessible form of active leisure” (*klaszturystyczny.pl*). I have found this phrase only in Polish language literature.

Chapter 9 was written by Alexandru ILIEȘ, Dorina Camelia ILIEȘ, Corina TĂȚAR and Marin ILIEȘ (University of Oradea, Romania) about the “Geography of Tourism in Romania”. Their paper gives a complex and detailed description about the country. Yet, unfortunately, most of the data are from 2014 or even 2012, which suggests that the chapter had not been revised properly for the 2017 edition. It is a pity that there is no reference to the cultural heritage and the touristic aspects of the minorities in Romania. Sometimes we can read about “ethnographic events” (p. 352), but without any further specific information. Some figures (maps) are stretched horizontally in the text (e.g. Fig. 9.18 and 9.19). Terminology is unclear at some points, presumably for the lack of proofreading. I also miss some academic authors from the Hungarian minority in Romania, who deal with the country’s tourism geography (e.g. István DOMBAY, Alpár HORVÁTH, Zsolt MAGYARI-SÁSKA).

Chapter 10 was written by Victoria POGODINA and Anna MATVEEVSKAYA (University of Economics and Management, St. Petersburg), who deal with the “Geography of Tourism of the European Part of Russia”. My opinion about this chapter is basically the same as about the earlier ones. The description, analysis and content are excellent, since the authors as local scientists have a very solid knowledge about the regional tourism geography of Russia. Still, the authors use some phrases (e.g. “entry and exit tourist flows” (p. 380) and “popular types of tourism” (p. 387)) which are not used in English language academic literature on tourism. Both the text and figures are based on data up to 2010, sometimes 2011, which is not up-to-date.

Peter ČUKA (Pedagogical University in Cracow, Poland) is the author of Chapter 11 on the “Geography of Tourism of Slovakia”. To this chapter an erratum was added at the end of the book, which clarifies some personal data of the author including his affiliation. In my view, the title of the subchapter “Cultural and Historical Preconditions for Tourism” does not exactly match the content, several important aspects and areas are missing (including historical background, the role of the Hungarian minority, the importance of towns beyond Bratislava and Košice). I have to emphasise, however, that these topics are discussed to some extent in other parts of the chapter. Some information is written in bold which technique is generally not used in the book, and some data are a bit outdated (for instance, the analysis at the beginning of the chapter is based on statistics from 2009).

Chapter 12 was written by Dejan CIGALE and Anton GOSAR (University of Ljubljana and University of Primorska). This chapter about the “Geography of Tourism of Slovenia” has excellent language, and the description and analysis of the tourism geography of Slovenia are outstanding. Yet, some legends are hard to figure out, and some figures are employed without reference to data source. The title at Table 12.4 consists data up to 2008 but the table uses data until 2014. Unfortunately, Tables 12.2, 12.3 and 12.7 present 2008 data only. In general, the latest data used was from 2014, maybe it could have been 2015.

Chapter 13 was written by Viktoriya KIPTENKO, Olga LYUBITSEVA, Marta MALSKA, Mykhajlo RUTYNSKIY, Yuriy ZAN’KO and Jurij ZINKO (Ivan Franko National University of L’viv, Ukraine) about the “Geography of Tourism of Ukraine”. Semantics and grammar as well as the use of academic terminology are excellent, even if some minor mistakes can be found at Fig. 13.1 and Table 13.1 to Table 13.7 (no information about source). The most up-to-date data in the text are from 2014. Unfortunately, there is no information about the national minorities in Ukraine and their impact on tourism.

My overall impression about the book is that it definitely fills a void in the regional tourism geography literature due to its focus on Central and Eastern European countries. Such a comprehensive work, however, should pay more attention to adopting the same structure in every chapter, meeting high standards of academic language, and employing the most recent data possible.

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