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THE IMPACT OF SELECTED FILM PRODUCTIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILM TOURISM AND THE TOURISM ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE REGION

Nikodem Podgórski

Department of Physical Education and Social Sciences, Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport, Górskiego 1, 80–336 Gdańsk, Poland, ORCID: 0000-0003-0271-1554

e-mail: nikodem_podgorski@onet.pl

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Abstract

This paper examines how a Polish television drama series *Father Matthew* is used for promoting the town of Sandomierz and its vicinity. It aims to identify the tourism values presented in the film production and to describe promotional activities related to film tourism based on the results of surveys. The empirical part presents the results of surveys conducted in 2022 investigating the respondents' interest in film and its effect on travelling for tourism. It was established which cultural and natural values were used to promote the town by exhibiting them in the TV drama series. Reference was made to the quantity and nature of information directly regarding the plot of *Father Matthew* published by national and regional media in Poland. It was demonstrated that the indicated film production is the main form of the town's promotion – used for building a complete tourism product. It enhances the town's attractiveness and recognisability and increases the use of its tourism facilities – thus stimulating the development of film tourism.

Key words

film production, film tourism, tourism attractiveness, Sandomierz, surveys.

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1. Introduction

Film tourism is a variation of cultural tourism (e.g., Jędrusik et al., 2010) and – in a broader sense – a part of cognitive tourism (cf. Mika, 2008; Stasiak, 2009; Szpara, Musz, 2016). According to A. Stasiak (2009, 2021), *film tourism* (or *film-induced tourism*) is the practice of tourists travelling to destinations associated with film celebrities (actors and directors) and their works, providing an opportunity for reflecting on and personally experiencing films. The cultural

values of interest to film tourists (apart from architecture) also include destinations and memorials associated with famous film productions (Mika, 2008; Stasiak, 2009, as cited in Bernat, 2016; Tucki, 2016), and even film museums (14 in Poland – Stasiak, 2021). Furthermore, M. Stefanik & M. Kamel (2011) and K. Szpara & R. Musz (2016, p. 33) claim that film tourism is equivalent to *set-jetting*, that is “visiting locations seen on screen, seeking to experience their atmosphere, climate, and sightseeing places featured in films or film series etc.” Thus, film tourism

incorporates biographical tourism (e.g., contact with film celebrities, participation in film festivals and events) and film fiction tourism (e.g., staying in places related to film production) (Stasiak, 2009; Bernat, 2016). S. Roesch (2009) & S. Bernat (2016) refer to places visited by film tourists as *on-locations* (when they exist in the real space and were used as film locations) or *off-locations* (when they are a space created for film production, e.g., film sets in studios).

The impact of film productions on tourism development in Poland has been analysed in various aspects. Among other things, the conditions for the development of film tourism were presented (Zmyślony, 2001; Buczkowska, 2007; Stasiak, 2009; Szpara, Musz, 2016) along with various contexts for creating new products for film tourism (Stefanik, Kamel, 2011), identification of places (locations) used in film productions (e.g., Stasiak, 2009; Stefanik, Kamel, 2011; Bernat, 2016; Szpara, Musz, 2016; Tucki, 2016), motivation for selecting the destinations for film tourism (Stasiak, 2009; Konieczna, 2014), and uses of landscape attractions for film production and developing film tourism (Stefanik, Kamel, 2011; Bernat, 2016; Podgórski, Lipowska, 2018). Most of the issues mentioned above were raised in studies collectively, but most often with a clear focus on a selected problem. Chances for developing new tourism products in Poland due to film art were discussed, among other authors, by P. Zmyślony (2001), who illustrated the variety of motives for travelling to film-related destinations and described its effect on shaping new tourism products. A. Stasiak (2009) thoroughly analysed the conditions for developing literary and film-induced tourism in the world and Europe, especially in the United Kingdom. He described the potential of film (and literary) tourism in Poland and identified the main destinations and places, facilities and events related to film tourism. By contrast, M. Stefanik and M. Kamel (2011) presented a mechanism for creating a brand film tourism product (*On the Film Trail in Poland*) using mixed marketing tools for promoting film tourism through 23 film production locations. Promotion of selected cities and towns was also analysed by K. Szpara and R. Musz (2016), who, using the example of Sandomierz, demonstrated that a film series contributes to improving the living standard of residents and boosts tourist traffic (cf. Urbaniak, 2010). Also, A. Stasiak (2009) noted an increased influx of tourists to places associated with film productions, for instance, to the village of Jeruzal (*The Ranch* TV series directed by W. Adamczyk) and to towns in the region of Podlasie, such as Tykocin, Supraśl, and Sokółka, where a TV comedy series (*God's Little Garden* directed by J. Bromski) was shot.

This paper tackles the impact of promotional activities on the development of film tourism. This impact was considered within a selected scope, and the space was limited to a single town – Sandomierz, and the associated region – the district of Sandomierz, whereas promotional activities were analysed in the context of using the TV drama series *Father Matthew* for the purpose mentioned above.

This study aims to identify the tourism values of Sandomierz and its vicinity presented in film productions and to describe the impact of promotional activities on interest in film tourism based on the results of surveys. In pursuance of the objective described above, three research tasks were completed:

- establishment (based on empirical research) of tourists' interest in Polish film products and film tourism;
- identification of cultural and natural tourism values exhibited in the TV drama series *Father Matthew*;
- determination of the impact of *Father Matthew* on the development of tourism in Sandomierz and its area.

2. Data and methods

The inquiry and the literature study were conducted in 2020–2021. The inquiry also involved online resources directly related to selected aspects of film tourism. The study of reference literature was extended by promoting cities and towns using feature films and TV film series. It was necessary, as the analysed method of promotion employs subconscious influence on the audience to win them over for a particular brand – a tourist product, that is, a city or town. Using commercial means, images of objects and situations presenting consumer behaviours are placed in a film product. This is an important promotion element referred to as *product placement* (Czarnecki, 2003).

The following stage of research established the titles of films made in Sandomierz. The research materials comprised publications (e.g., Szymański, 2010; Bernat, 2016), film recordings (DVD) and websites providing access to such resources (e.g., Ojciec Mateusz vod.tvp.pl, 2021). The most famous film productions are *The Ashes* (directed by A. Wajda – 1965), *Where the Water Is Pure, and the Grass Is Green* (directed by B. Poręba – 1977), *Zygfryd* (directed by A. Domalik – 1986), *A Grain of Truth* (directed by Borys Lankosz – 2014) and a TV drama series *Father Matthew* (directed by M. Dejczner, A. Kostenko, M. Dutkiewicz, W. Nowak, F. Zylber, A. Żmijewski, J. Miszczak – since 2008) (Filmy kręcone..., 2022).

Another film product illustrating the tourism value of Sandomierz and its area is also episode 33 of the *Fall in Love with Poland* series on TVP channel entitled *Sandomierz* (directed by J. Sołtysiak – 2017). However, as the film is short (23 minutes excluding commercials) and is a pure narrative on the tourism values (Zakochaj się..., 2017), this production was not included in further studies. Other short films, para-documentaries and documentaries were similarly eliminated. Out of all film productions showing attractive buildings and views of Sandomierz and its area, only *Father Matthew* was chosen for further analysis as the above-indicated feature films do not satisfy the *product placement* criterion. The main idea was that the fundamental reason for shooting the TV series *Father Matthew* in Sandomierz was the intentional promotion of the town and its area. This was achieved by exhibiting the cultural and natural tourism values multiple times, primarily including components of the urban landscape and, to a lesser extent, selected material and spiritual aspects of cultural heritage. An important justification for choosing *Father Matthew* is that this TV drama series has been broadcast for many years (since 2008). It is a Polish version of the Italian detective series *Don Matteo* broadcast in Italy by ATM Group. The series shows the adventures of a priest who is sent to work in a small parish in Sandomierz. As a priest, together with a friendly policeman, he solves mysteries and gives help to his parishioners (Ojciec Mateusz, 2021).

The stage of preparations for analysing the film material was a field reconnaissance in September 2021 in Sandomierz and its area (e.g., in Naęczów). It involved exploration and inventory of objects and landscape values deemed particularly attractive by tourists and extensive photographic recording. Its main aim was to identify the locations (parts of open space), buildings and monuments, streets and elements of the so-called small architecture etc., used in *Father Matthew* for promotion multiple times.

The empirical research used a diagnostic poll method. The main research technique was a survey which allowed presenting opinions on the studied subject. The questionnaire was available online (<https://forms.gle/gJzincZct1JNjLHn6>), making it accessible (from 1 February to 10 March 2022) to everyone interested in the TV series and/or film tourism. The research tool consists of three parts. The introduction states the research subject, information about the researcher and the research institution, purpose of the research and instructions for completing the questionnaire. The demographics contain questions about the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, such as sex, age, education, employment status and domicile (voivodeship and size of locality).

The body of the questionnaire included 22 questions in a logical arrangement. The questions were grouped into three thematic clusters in line with the principle of proceeding from general to specific. The first cluster (comprising six questions) referred to the respondents' interest in Polish film products. The second one (eight questions) asked about selected aspects of film tourism. In contrast, the third cluster (eight questions) directly referred to the relationship between the film production *Father Matthew* and film tourism in Sandomierz. All questions were closed questions (single or multiple choice), and six of them provided a possibility for respondents to formulate their own answers. The following cases were observed: 1 – respondent's answer alternative to proposed variants, 2 – respondent's answer supplementing the selected answer variant. Eight questions were designed using the five-stage scale developed by R. Likert (1932), allowing respondents to choose an answer most closely reflecting their own impressions.

Following statistical processing (using Statistica software), the results were presented and discussed in the following parts of this article and used in formulating the conclusions.

3. Results and discussion

The surveys were conducted among respondents declaring different degrees of interest in film tourism. By assuming a confidence level of 95% and an estimated error of 10%, it was established that the research group should consist of at least 95 people. Ultimately, questionnaires completed by 131 respondents – predominantly women (72.5%) – were taken into account. Most participants (70.2%) were aged 21–30. Other age groups were less numerous represented: under 18 years old – 2.3%, 18–20 years old – 9.2%, 31–40 years old – 7.6%, 41–50 years old – 4.6% and above 50 years old – 6.1%. The respondents were Poles living in 15 out of 16 voivodeships. The most numerous were respondents from the Kuyavian-Pomeranian voivodeship (36.6%). Also, inhabitants of the Masovian (11.5%), Silesian (9.9%), Pomeranian (9.2%) and Greater Poland (8.4%) voivodeships had a considerable share. Most respondents live in cities with a population of 200,000 to 500,000 (32.1%) and more than 500,000 people (25.2%). A big percentage – 18.3% – are respondents living in the countryside and small towns (with less than 10,000 inhabitants). The share of respondents from towns and cities with a population of 10,000–50,000, 50,000–100,000 and 100,000–200,000 was 7.6%, 5.3% and 11.5%, respectively. Education was

not found to be a characteristic clearly differentiating respondents, as they were predominantly people with secondary education (50.4%) and tertiary education (45.8%), while the percentage of respondents with primary and vocational education was insignificant (3.9% in total). As regards employment status, no significant differences between the respondents were observed either. As many as 61.8% of respondents were pupils or students, and 35.9% were workers. In addition, there was a small percentage of pensioners and retired workers (1.5%) and the unemployed (0.8%).

The response profile implies that a statistical respondent – a film tourist – is: a woman aged 21–30, living in a big city (above 200,000 inhabitants), with secondary or tertiary education, having a status of a pupil or student.

3.1. Respondents' interest in Polish film products

The survey questionnaire contained 22 questions. The first set of questions referred to respondents' attitudes towards Polish film productions – both feature films and TV series. As many as 53.4% of respondents replied that they were interested in Polish feature films and TV series. Only 25.2% of respondents were "rather not" or "definitely not" interested in such productions, while according to 21.4%, it was "difficult to say". 53.4% of the respondents confirmed they watched Polish films and another 23.7% – TV series in reply to the next question. Others chose the neutral response – "difficult to say". The frequency of film attendance was high – 46.6%, but it was highly variable at the same time. Among the survey participants, 23.7% watch Polish films "often" or "very often", and 22.9% – "rarely", 51.9% – "difficult to say", and only 1.5% declared they "never" watch them. The most popular genres are comedies (44.3%), detective films (22.9%) and dramas (12.2%). Other film genres (action films, costume films, fantasy films, adventure films, war films, dramas, and psychological dramas) are less frequent choices of the respondents – 20.6%. In the respondents' opinion – Polish TV series are less popular than feature films – 86.3%. Only 22.1% of the respondents declared they watched them "often" or "very often", 29.1% – "difficult to say", as many as 35.1% of respondents – "rarely", and 13.7% "never" watch them. The most popular Polish TV series genres are detective series (37.9%), drama series (26.6%), comedy series (19.4%) and war series (7.3%). Other genres of TV series, such as action, costume, fantasy, adventure, and psychological drama series, account for 8.8% in total.

3.2. Respondents' opinions on selected aspects of film tourism

The first question in the second section of the survey questionnaire verified whether the respondents participated in tours. The percentage of respondents practising tourism was very high because only 3.8% declared no tourist activity. About 17.6% of the survey participants replied they "rarely" go on such tours, 41.2% did it "often" or "very often" and 37.4% – "difficult to say". Another important question was: "Do you practise film tourism, that is, travel to destinations associated with film production?" (Fig. 1). As many as 60.3% of the respondents declared they did not visit such places. Film tourists can be deemed 39.7% of respondents, but their activity differs as 3.1% "often" or 26.7% "rarely" visit such places and 9.9% – "difficult to say".

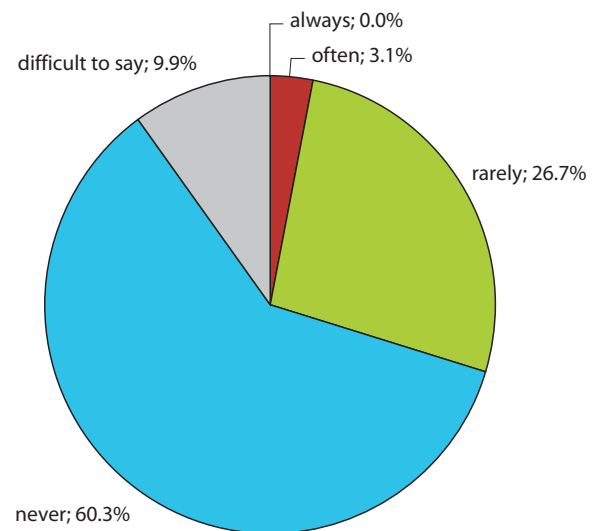


Fig. 1. Responses to the question: *Do you practise film tourism, that is, travel to destinations associated with film production?*

Source: own elaboration based on the results of the questionnaire survey.

Information indicating that a feature film or TV series was shot in a specific place or premises mattered to 88.5% of respondents, whereas 37.5% found it "highly" or "very highly" significant. By contrast, such information significantly contributes to making the decision to watch a film production, as confirmed by 80% of the respondents.

Another set of results was obtained from questions about the impact of film tourism on promoting a city or town. As many as 93.9% of the respondents believed film tourism had a positive impact on the promotion of cities and towns, and 6.1% could see no impact at all. Locations most often mentioned by respondents (that became more popular after making an appearance in a TV series) were Sandomierz

(*Father Matthew*) – 116 mentions, *Jeruzal (The Ranch)* – 75 and *Wrocław (First Love)* – 43 mentions. The respondents declared that film tourism: increases the recognisability of a location (100 answers), boosts its tourism attractiveness (91), increases the number of visitors (85), contributes to the development of tourism infrastructure (45) and has an impact on the length of tourist stays (10). Evaluating the significance of a TV series, the respondents answered that it was “highly” significant to the development of tourism in a specific location (64.1%), and less often found it “very highly” significant (9.2%) or of “little” significance (25.2%), “irrelevant” (1.5%).

3.3. The relationship between the film production *Father Matthew* and film tourism in Sandomierz

In the respondents’ group, 20.6% did not watch the TV series *Father Matthew*, and others – 79.4% – saw the whole film production or selected episodes only. Asked about sightseeing in Sandomierz, 34.4% of the respondents gave a positive answer, which was the condition for moving on to the next group of questions. As expected, the respondents visited Sandomierz (they indicated three reasons) mainly because they were encouraged by their family (37.8%), found some tourist information on the Internet (33.3%) or in guidebooks (20.0%) as well as were inspired by the TV series (22.2%). The tourists normally stayed in Sandomierz for one day (42.2%) or for a few hours (31.1%), and some of them spent two or three days (22.2%). A tourist stay in Sandomierz longer than three days was exceptional (about 4.5%) (Fig. 2).

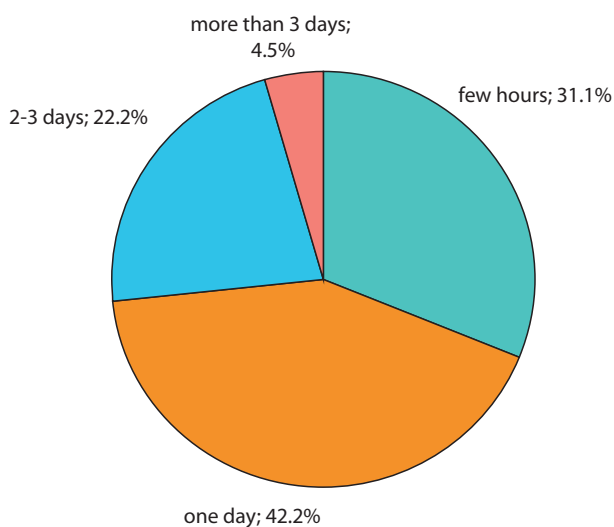


Fig. 2. Responses to the question: *How long did you stay in Sandomierz?*

Source: own elaboration based on the results of the questionnaire survey.

The programme of the tourist stays in Sandomierz (they pointed to three elements) primarily involved seeing the most attractive sights and buildings in the town (71.1%), sometimes with a particular focus on those associated with *Father Matthew* (33.3%). However, it should be emphasised that every tenth tourist only wanted to see places and objects associated with the TV series. Thus, it can be assumed that 11.5% of the respondents were film tourists in this case. Sightseeing in Sandomierz made a very positive impression on tourists, so as many as 76.6% would recommend visiting this town to their friends or family.

The respondents asked about the impact of the TV series *Father Matthew* on the tourism attractiveness of Sandomierz, answered that it was “highly” or “very highly” significant (77.4%), or possibly – of “little” significance (16.4%), “irrelevant” (3.1%), “none” (3.1%) (Fig. 3).

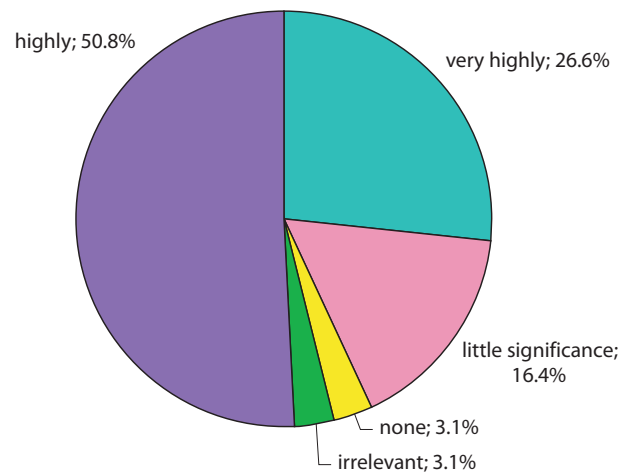


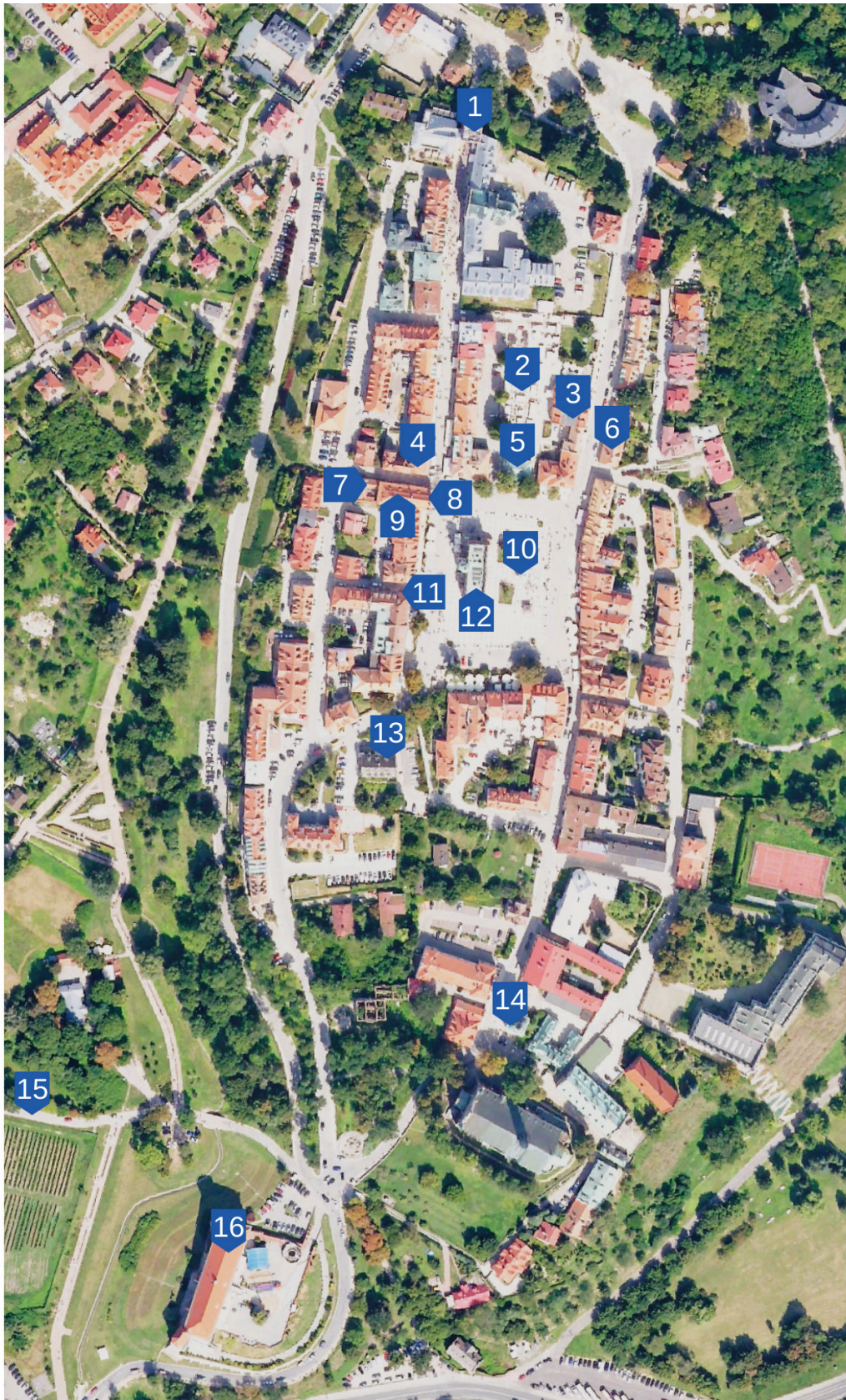
Fig. 3. Responses to the question: *How important is the TV series Father Matthew to the tourism attractiveness of Sandomierz?*

Source: own elaboration based on the results of the questionnaire survey.

The respondents decided that the TV series had a “high” or “very high” (47.3%) or possibly a “low” impact (43.4%) on the everyday life of the inhabitants of Sandomierz. Only a small group of respondents (9.3%) claimed that *Father Matthew* has no impact on everyday life in Sandomierz.

3.4. Tourism values used in the TV drama series *Father Matthew*

Sandomierz is a town with a rich cultural heritage comprising, among others, more than 120 objects of architecture representing all styles and historical periods (Strategia..., 2015). The Old Town is a historic urban, architectural and landscape complex formed in the 13th–19th century. The most valuable sites



Notations: 1 – Opatowska Gate, 2 – Little Market Square, 3 – Cafe Mała, 4 – Police Station – City Hall, 5 – Cafe Kordegarda, 6 – Teacher’s House, 7 – Underground Tourist Route, 8 – Post office or bank – Oleśnicki Manor, 9 – “Father Matthew Wax Museum in Sandomierz”, 10 – Main Market Square, 11 – Primary school – Knight’s Armoury, 12 – Town Hall, 13 – Court – City Hall, 14 – Bell Tower, 15 – Sandomierska Street, 16 – Royal Castle.

Fig. 4. Tourist attractions in Sandomierz associated with the TV drama series *Father Matthew*
Source: own elaboration based on Nowa mapa starego miasta (2022) and Mapy.e-turysta (2022).

include Virgin Mary bell tower from the 14th century and the 18th century, a wing of the 14th-century royal castle, Opatowska Gate – a late 14th-century Gothic city gate, a Gothic town hall – from the mid-14th century with an octagonal tower, the Old Town Market with Renaissance tenement houses, Collegium Gostomianum – a Jesuit college, and other objects. Many streets of the Old Town were used in the TV series as locations for action scenes, for example, pursuits (characteristic of classical detective series) or for low dynamic scenes (Fig. 4).

Film tourists sightseeing in Sandomierz can relive emotions experienced while watching the series. In the real world (historic town), tourists (using their own imagination) enter the world of fiction (cf. Włodarczyk, 2011). In these places, they can experience a special and unique atmosphere (Fig. 5). For film tourists, the so-called spirit of place (*genius loci*) is an obvious component of the tourism space.

Reinforcing or consciously triggering experience associated with the film is an excellent marketing trick aiming directly at film tourists. One of such attractions is a wax museum (occupying an area of 300 m²) in a tenement house in the market square. However, according to A. Stasiak (2021), due to the lack of a scientific foundation, The Father Matthew wax museum in Sandomierz does not fulfil all the criteria for being recognised as a museum. It is a para-museum with interiors arranged using original elements of the film set, wax figures representing main characters and numerous stage props and memorabilia (e.g., plaques with actors' palm prints) (Cudze chwalimy..., 2021).

The warm, almost nostalgic climate in Sandomierz is created due to numerous initiatives of its inhabitants as well as local products and souvenirs

(such as calendars and mugs depicting Father Matthew). A tourist trail following the footsteps of the TV series' characters was delineated, and every June, *Father Matthew's* fandom rally was held here. A priest riding a bike has become a real symbol of Sandomierz. The popularity of the TV series is effectively exploited for marketing – one of the accommodation establishments is called "Father Matthew's Manor house" despite not being related in any way to this film production (Jedyny taki..., 2020).

The TV series beautifully presents selected natural values, including the escarpment on the Vistula in Sandomierz and the loess gorges of Nałęczów. The TV series *Father Matthew* also promotes many places in the area (district of Sandomierz) and other parts of the Świętokrzyskie voivodeship. For example, the scenes when a police inspector stays with his family were shot in Opatów (near Sandomierz). Other episodes were filmed in Kielce, Chęciny, Wąchock, and Jędrzejów (Sandomierz, 2022). Quite a number of scenes (four series) were placed in Bałtów, Krzyżtopór, Busko-Zdrój and Opatów, Ćmielów and Sielpia (Ojciec Mateusz, 2021).

3.5. Promotion of Sandomierz through product placement in *Father Matthew*

Sandomierz, as a tourism product, was generally placed in the TV series in the form of locations and scenes entwined in the plot and was rarely portrayed as a tourist destination (cf. episode 4, series 2). The time of presentation of the values of Sandomierz was usually not longer than a few seconds, which is characteristic of *product placement*. The indicated forms of product placement allowed, among other things:

- reaching a wide audience (Fig. 6);



Gothic town hall from the mid-14th century (left)

Characters from the series in front of the Cultural Centre of the Region of Sandomierz (right)

Fig. 5. Locations of the TV drama series *Father Matthew*

Source: A – author's photography, B – reproduction of a photo from the "Father Matthew Wax Museum in Sandomierz".

- repeating the message (episodes rebroadcast by other TV channels);
- promoting the town outside the TV series, for example, when advertising the TV series on TV and in press;
- instilling the product into the audience's consciousness without losing the "focus on the film";
- presenting a tourism product as exceptionally attractive (unique);
- creating positive associations;
- cutting down on the costs of promotion compared to its classic forms (e.g., targeted advertising);
- and reliably showing selected services and products.

The viewership of the TV series varied in time. It was the highest at the beginning (winter 2008/2009) and at its peak reached 6.65 million viewers (Fig. 6). Such a high viewership rate was not achieved in subsequent seasons. Nevertheless, the TV series enjoyed huge popularity, which the "Telecamera 2011" award can testify for the best weekly TV series granted with reference to year 2010. Despite the gradual decline in viewership, in autumn 2011, the TV series had 5.2 million viewers on average and in autumn 2012 – more than 5 million. This excellent result is supported by the ranking of the TVP1 channel where *Father Matthew* was broadcast. According to the Report of the National Broadcasting Council (PI: KRRiT), in the fourth quarter of 2012, the audience (AMR¹) consisted of more than 890,000 viewers, which placed it second in the ranking of national TV stations (Kontrola działalności..., 2013). At that time, the series broadcast was at the centre of the audience's interest, and the number of viewers was six times higher than the average minute rating (AMR) according to the ranking.

Another good measure of the popularity of *Father Matthew* is the total number of mentions of the TV series published in all media. According to the "Media in TV Series. Media Report" prepared by PRESS-SERVICE Media Monitoring (2015, 2016), in the first quarter of 2014, this value is 502 pieces of information, which placed it fourth in the ranking. From spring 2015, the downward trend in viewership was constant, irrespective of temporary increases. In spring 2020, the TV series had only 1.85 million viewers. However, it should be underlined that in 2020 the TV series won a prestigious award, "Gold Telecamera 2020".

The benchmarking map best reflects the advisability of promoting Sandomierz through city placement, and it illustrates the media position of the town. The benchmarking map takes into account three essential promotion factors: advertising value equivalent (EVA), that is, the money value of the publication; audience reach, that is, the reach of information expressed as a potential number of contacts with readers and unique users; and the amount of information in the media. According to PRESS-SERVICE Media Monitoring, in 2012, Sandomierz ranked best (in Poland) in terms of the number of mentions and potential audience reach. The town was mentioned nearly 900 times, and the publication reach was close to 550 million people, with the advertising value equivalent of ca. PLN 11 million. The comparative analysis of benchmarking maps shows that using the TV series for town promotion gave a beneficial result also in the following years. For example, in Jan.–June 2013, the town was mentioned in as many as 592 publications concerning the TV series *Father Matthew* (as reflected by the sphere's diameter – Fig. 7).

The town was often mentioned in the analysed cities and towns in the press (137 mentions) and on the Internet (429). It was rarely mentioned on TV and the radio (26). The information reached more than 160 million recipients, with the advertising value equivalent worth about PLN 40 million. This is an excellent result considering viewership that at that time (spring 2013) amounted to 4.67 million viewers (Fig. 6). Regional media (the press and radio) took more interest in Sandomierz than national media did. According to the cyclic reports of PRESS-SERVICE Media Monitoring (2015), publications in regional sources corresponded to 55% of all mentions concerning the town. Results in subsequent years were less optimistic. In Jan.–June 2015, only 240 mentions of Sandomierz in association with *Father Matthew* were published. A definite majority of this information (ca. 57.5%) had a national reach. In turn, in July–Dec. 2016, the number of mentions was similar and amounted to 242 (151 in press, 82 on the Internet, and 9 on TV and the radio), but publications with a national reach were still dominant – 53.7%. In practice, this apparently unimpressive result means reaching more than 100 million recipients and an advertising value equivalent of ca. PLN 5.5–6.0 million. It is also worth emphasising that Drohiczyń promoted at the same time in the TV series *Father Matthew* had poor media coverage. This town was mentioned four times only in the national press and once on the Internet. This is certainly due to the fact that Sandomierz is primarily associated with the TV

¹ AMR – Average Minute Rating – the average number of audiences watching programmes broadcast by a TV station at a specific time.

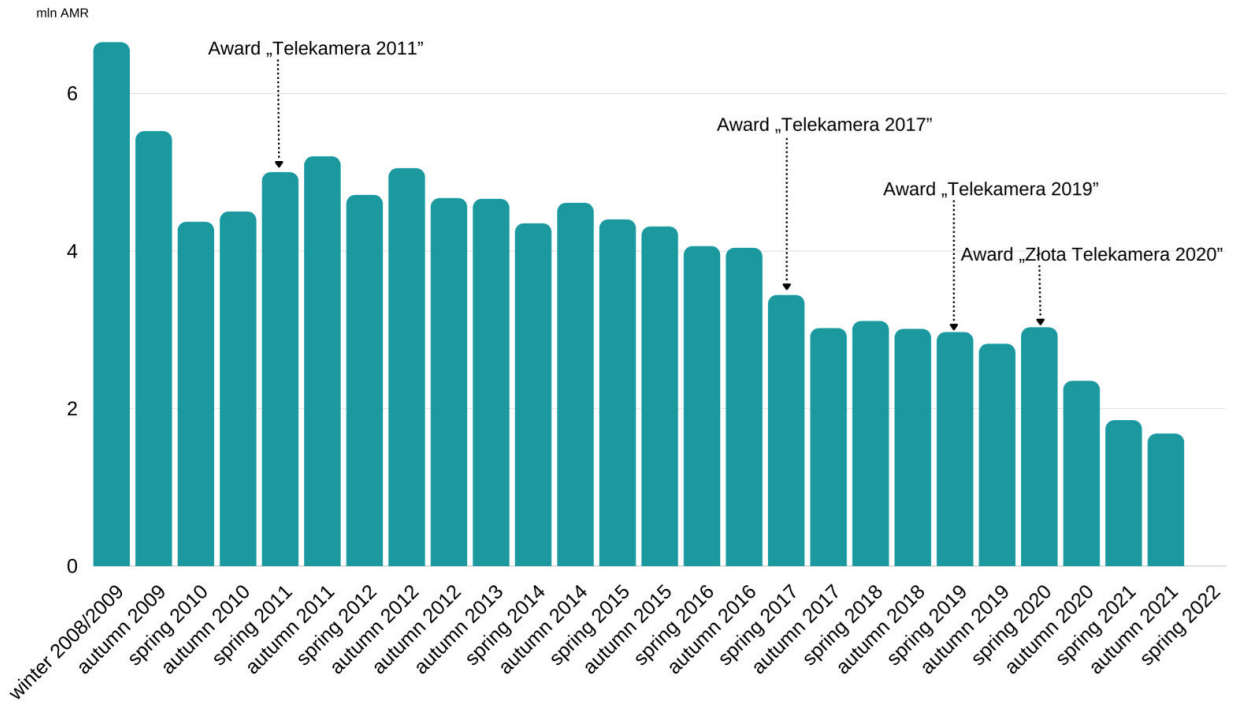
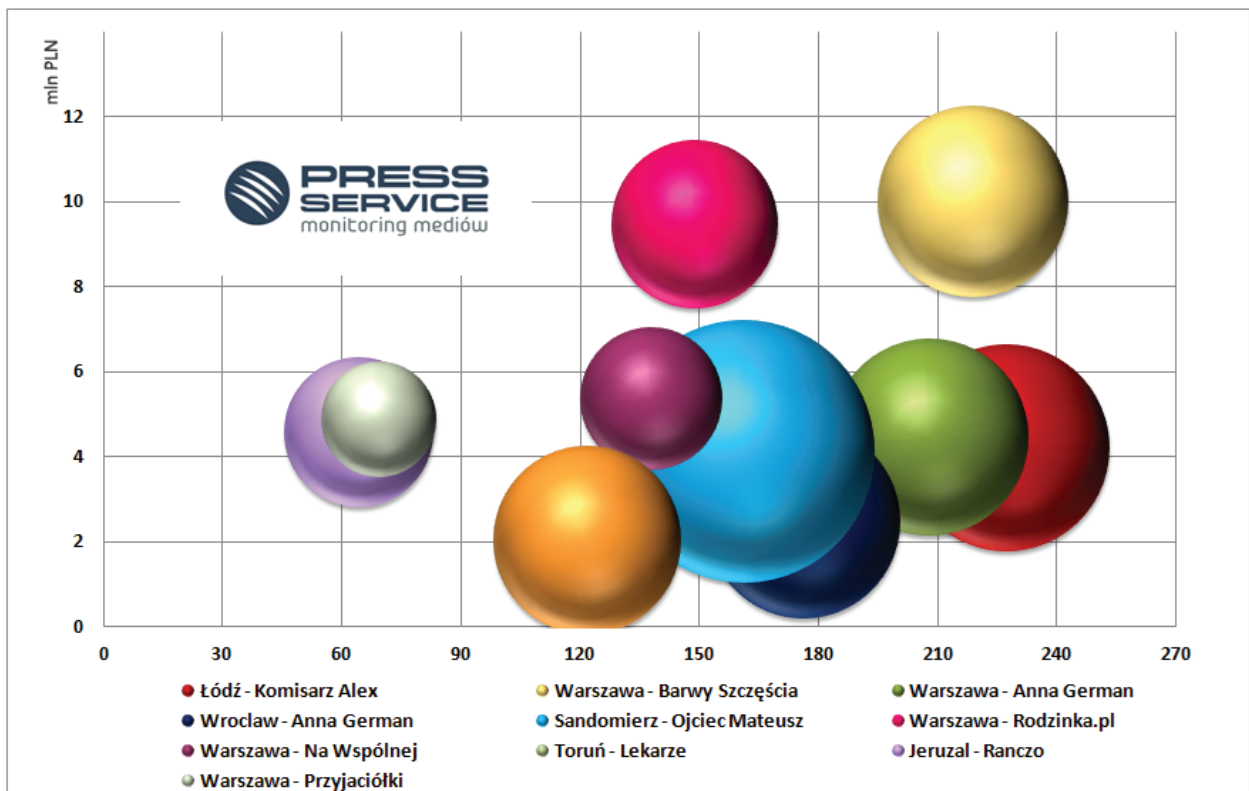


Fig. 6. Average Minute Rating of the TV series *Father Matthew* in 2008–2021

Source: own elaboration based on *Ojciec Mateusz...*(2021).



Notations: vertical axis – the money value of the publication (in millions of PLN); horizontal axis – audience reach, that is the reach of information expressed as a potential number of contacts with readers and unique users; diameter of the sphere – the amount of information in the media; the largest diameter of the sphere (light blue colour) – Sandomierz – *Father Matthew*.

Fig. 7. Benchmarking map – TOP 10 TV series locations in terms of audience reach in Jan.–June 2013

Source: PRESS-SERVICE Media Monitoring (2015).

series, and it upstaged other cultural and natural values of the region.

At present, the TV series *Father Matthew* plays a definitely smaller role in promoting Sandomierz and its area, though it is still significant. The TV series is not one of the Top 10 Polish TV series and is no longer included in the analyses of PRESS-SERVICE Media Monitoring (2022). However, it enjoys great popularity. It is sufficient to mention that with a rating of 6.25, it ranks forty-second among the most popular Polish TV detective series (Najlepsze seriale..., 2022). However, the number of ratings (40 022 – March 25, 2022) shows that it ranks fifth among all the rated film productions in this category.

The town authorities of Sandomierz always supported the production of the TV series in various forms – mainly by offering organisational and logistics support. For instance, the Town was involved in making the film set for one of the sections and paid for the helicopter flight from which special bird's eye view images of the Old Town were taken for the film (*Dobrze jest mieć...*, 2013). The town authorities appreciate the social impact of the TV series. "The Strategy of the Development of the Town of Sandomierz for 2015–2025", with reference to promotional activities, reads:

The TV series "Father Matthew" – which is shot on location in Sandomierz – has been invariably an excellent promotion for the town. The beautiful landscapes of Sandomierz exhibited in the TV series constantly enrapture the audience. During the shooting, the actors of the TV series "Father Matthew" participated in a tournament of a new board game "The Mystery Riddles of Sandomierz (Strategia, 2015, p. 32).

3.6. Tourist traffic in Sandomierz and its area

It is estimated that in the first tourist season following the launch of the TV series *Father Matthew*, 30% more tourists visited Sandomierz (*Dobrze jest mieć...*, 2013). Tourist traffic, particularly the influx

of film tourists, took the form of both individual and family tourism. Very often, thematic tours were organised (Urbaniak, 2010). Also, K. Szpara and R. Musz (2016) demonstrated an increase in the significance of tourist traffic in the district of Sandomierz in 2008–2014 and explained it with a raised interest in the region triggered by the launch of *Father Matthew*. Long-term analysis, that is, for 2006–2020, fully supports this thesis (Table 1).

The number of accommodated tourists per 1,000 inhabitants increased from 250.6 in 2008 to 541.6 in 2014, and this trend was maintained until 2019 – 717.7 tourists/1,000 inhabitants. The observed decline in 2020 resulted from tourist traffic restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the analysed period (2006–2020), the number of nights spent per 1000 inhabitants increased from 364.6 in 2008 to 1,123.9 in 2019. This means that the number of tourists staying in the district of Sandomierz increased, and at the same time, their tourist stay was longer. A response to tourists' growing expectations and needs is the constant increase in available tourist accommodation per one thousand inhabitants. In 2008, this rate was 3.4, while in 2009 – already 6.99. After subsequent increases, it reached 12.5 in 2019. Thus, during *Father Matthew's* broadcast period, the rate increased by 368%.

The attitude of the town authorities of Sandomierz to the development of tourism is illustrated by the "Strategy of the Economic Development of the Town of Sandomierz" (Strategia..., 2006) – operating objective 1 – Sandomierz as a leading tourist centre in Poland. According to this provision, measures should be undertaken to increase the significance of the tourism sector as one of the main pillars of the town's economic growth. In turn, in the currently implemented Strategy of the Development of the Town of Sandomierz for 2015–2025 (2015), an element of the Town's mission is [...] propagating the tourism values and the beauty of the town – the pearl in the crown of royal cities (Strategia..., 2006, p. 23).

Tab. 1. Tourist accommodation establishments and their use in the district of Sandomierz

Years														
2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Available accommodation per 100 inhabitants														
3.41	4.83	3.40	6.99	8.25	8.27	9.07	7.94	9.46	10.90	12.59	11.43	12.24	12.53	11.85
Nights spent per 1000 inhabitants														
313.4	408.7	364.6	558.2	615.24	659.1	820.2	758.3	816.5	948.7	1 030.3	1 023.6	1 078.0	1 123.9	723.1
Accommodated tourists per 1000 inhabitants														
219.2	282.0	250.6	412.5	435.5	457.2	631.7	483.5	541.6	590.8	627.6	649.9	696.0	714.7	440.7
Percentage of accommodation used (%)														
.	.	.	.	26.3	24.2	27.3	27.5	23.3	26.1	27.2	29.5	29.6	29.2	22.1

Source: own elaboration based on the Bank Danych Lokalnych GUS.

As regards the improvement in the tourism offer (according to the second strategic objective), subsequent editions of film festivals are planned: *the ExtraOrdinary Film Festival* (Pl. Festiwal Filmów NieZwykłych) or, alternatively, *the Festival of Detective Films* (Pl. Festiwal Filmów Detektywistycznych) that have had a long tradition in Sandomierz. The *ExtraOrdinary Film Festival* was organised in Sandomierz for the first time in 2009, and *the Festival of Detective Films* – in 2015. Therefore, film tourism will still have favourable conditions for development within the tourism space of Sandomierz.

4. Conclusions

This paper presented selected aspects of using a film production for promoting the town of Sandomierz and its area. The most valuable tourist values exhibited in the TV series *Father Matthew* were identified. It was demonstrated that deliberate and multiple employment of the cultural and natural resources of the analysed area contributed to creating numerous attractive films shooting locations but also gave rise to a complete, recognisable tourism product – the “Town of Sandomierz”. It is promoted in two ways. This is done both through advertising (i.e., publication of information directly referring to the plot of the TV series *Father Matthew* and the fact that it is shot in Sandomierz in national and regional media) and through *product placement* (i.e., exhibiting the images of the most important cultural and natural values of Sandomierz and its area in the TV series multiple times). As a result of these activities, the film production *Father Matthew*, successfully broadcast since 2008, has become the main form of promoting the town and a significant factor increasing the town’s attractiveness (78.5% of respondents’ answers). The range and size of the impact made Sandomierz one of the major destinations for film tourism in Poland, and to a certain extent, it is even equated with this variety of tourism. The results of surveys corroborate this conclusion (self-designed and previously published – e.g., Szpara, Musz, 2016) and by the interpretation of the provisions of the “Strategy of the Development of the Town of Sandomierz for 2015–2025” (Strategia..., 2015) – a document setting the direction for further development of Sandomierz. It was demonstrated that in 2006–2020 the tourist traffic in the district of Sandomierz significantly increased. It is manifested in the number of accommodated tourists per 1,000 inhabitants, which after 12 years of broadcasting the TV series was 2.8 times higher than before the first episodes of *Father Matthew*. Currently, this number decreased due to restrictions

imposed in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic. The accommodation base expanded (grew by 3.6 times in the comparable period); the scope of tourist services increased (e.g., a thematic museum was established), and targeted events (festivals) associated with film tourism were held. A specific climate of the town – *genius loci* – was created, for instance, due to placing elements referring to the plot and characters of the TV series in the spatial structure of the historic town. A substantial majority of respondents (90.8%) claimed that the impact of the TV series can also be observed in everyday life of the inhabitants of Sandomierz and is positively evaluated by them. Empirical research also corroborated that film tourism increases the recognisability of a location, boosts its tourism attractiveness, increases the number of visitors, contributes to the development of tourism infrastructure and has an impact on the length of tourist stays.

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