

Is Poland an attractive country for young foreign tourists?



Introduction

According to Central Statistical Office data, almost 7.5 million foreign tourists visited our country in 2019. The following years, 2020-2021, were the time of the pandemic, the ensuing global lockdowns, and numerous restrictions, which caused the collapse of international tourism. According to Central Statistical Office data, the number of foreign tourists visiting our country fell during this period to about 2.5 million. The difficult time of the pandemic is over now. The re-opening of borders and the lifting of numerous restrictions give a chance for foreign tourists to return to Poland and for our country's tourist economy to boom again.

Purpose of the research

- ➔ Is Poland still an attractive country for young foreigners?
- ➔ Which factors increase Poland's tourist attractiveness and which discourage visitors from coming to our country?

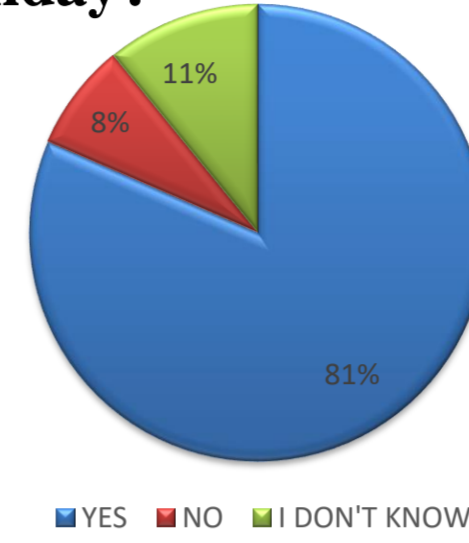
Hypothesis

Despite the temporary collapse of foreign tourism caused by the pandemic, Poland's tourist attractiveness is high and it is worth getting to know its beauty.

Research group

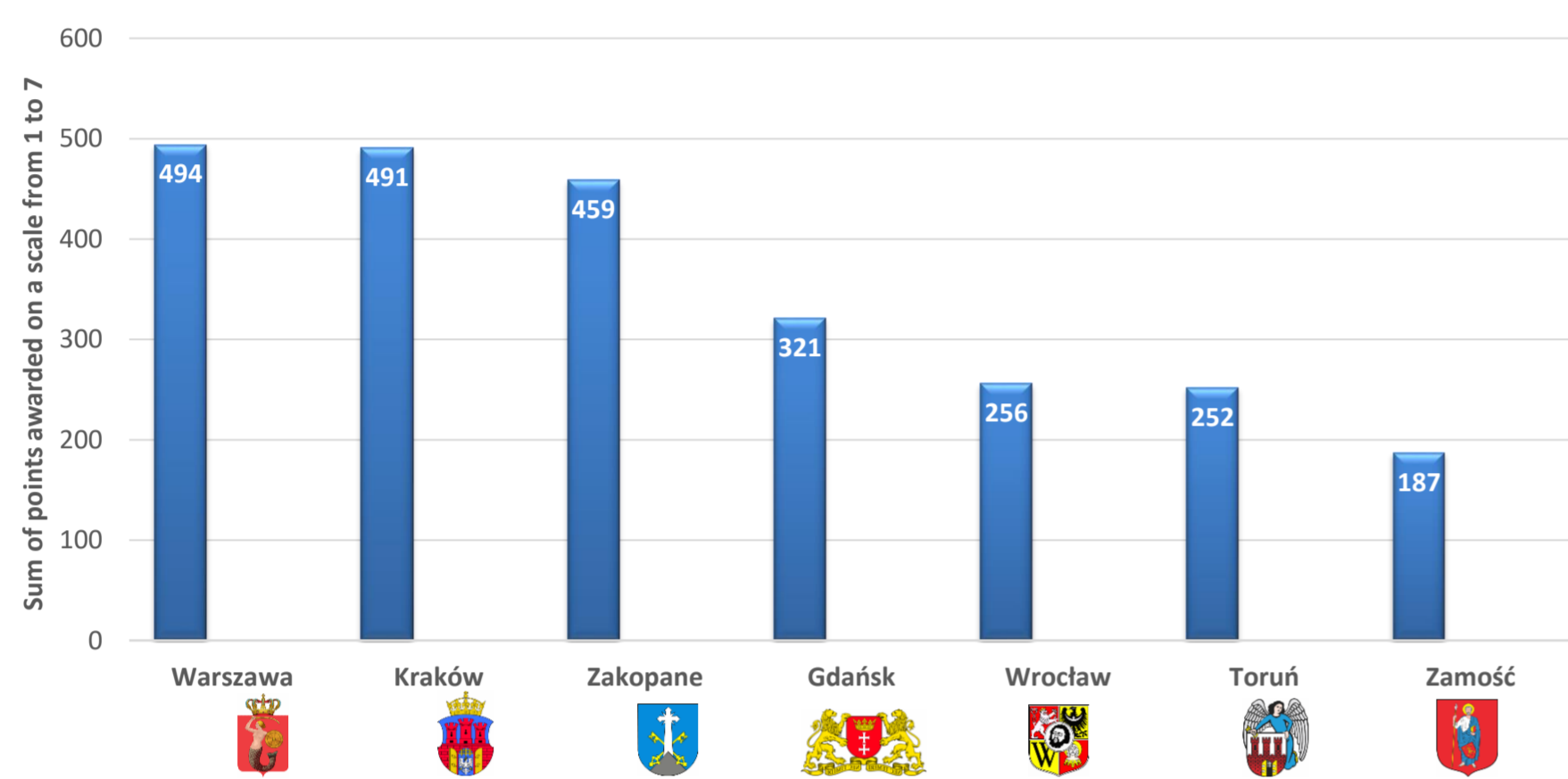
92 eighth and seventh grade students of our school gave their opinions in the prepared survey.

Would you encourage a friend from abroad to come to Poland for a holiday?



We started our survey with a very general question whether it is worth coming to Poland for a holiday rest. The vast majority of young Poles confirmed that our homeland is a place they would gladly invite friends from abroad to. They appreciate its beauty and would like to boast about it.

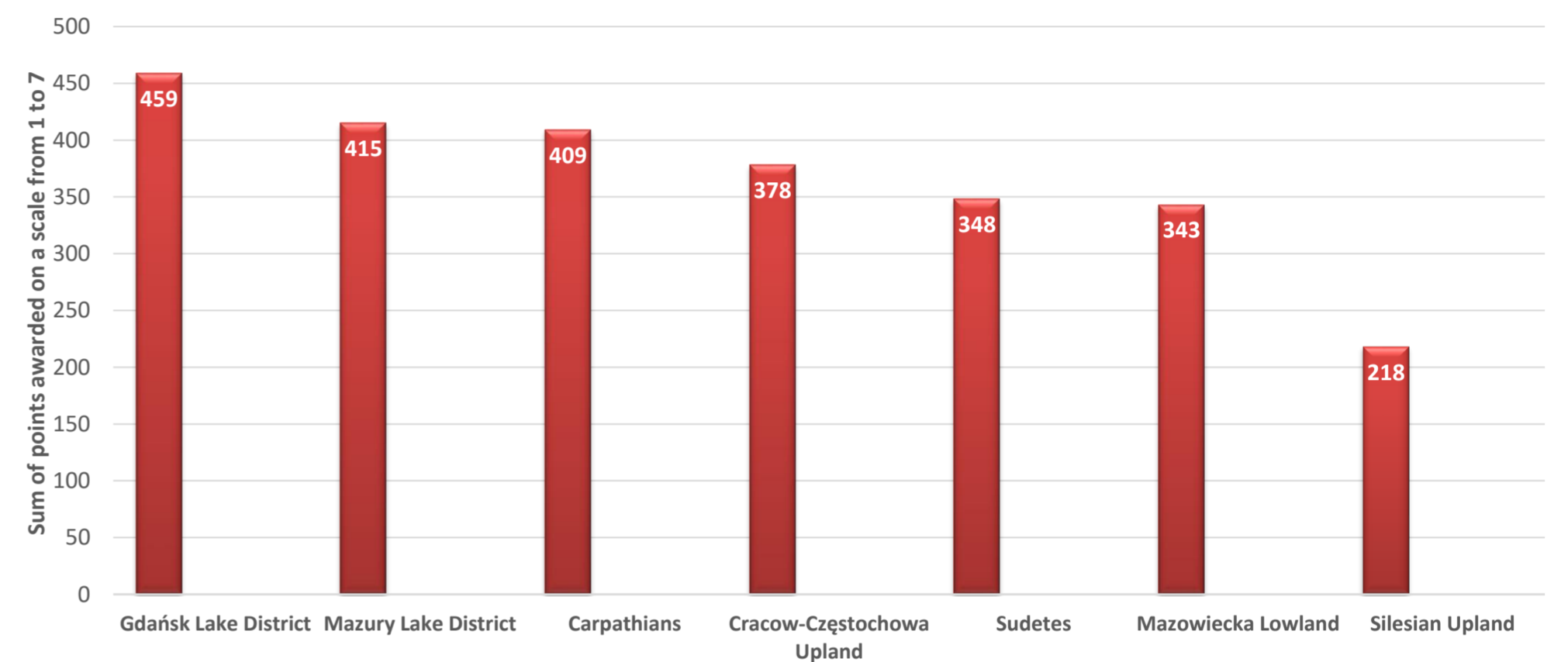
Which Polish cities should every tourist visit?



The respondents to our survey were given the task of creating a list of Polish cities that they would recommend to their foreign friends as necessary destinations to visit in Poland. Each city was awarded from 1 to 7 points.

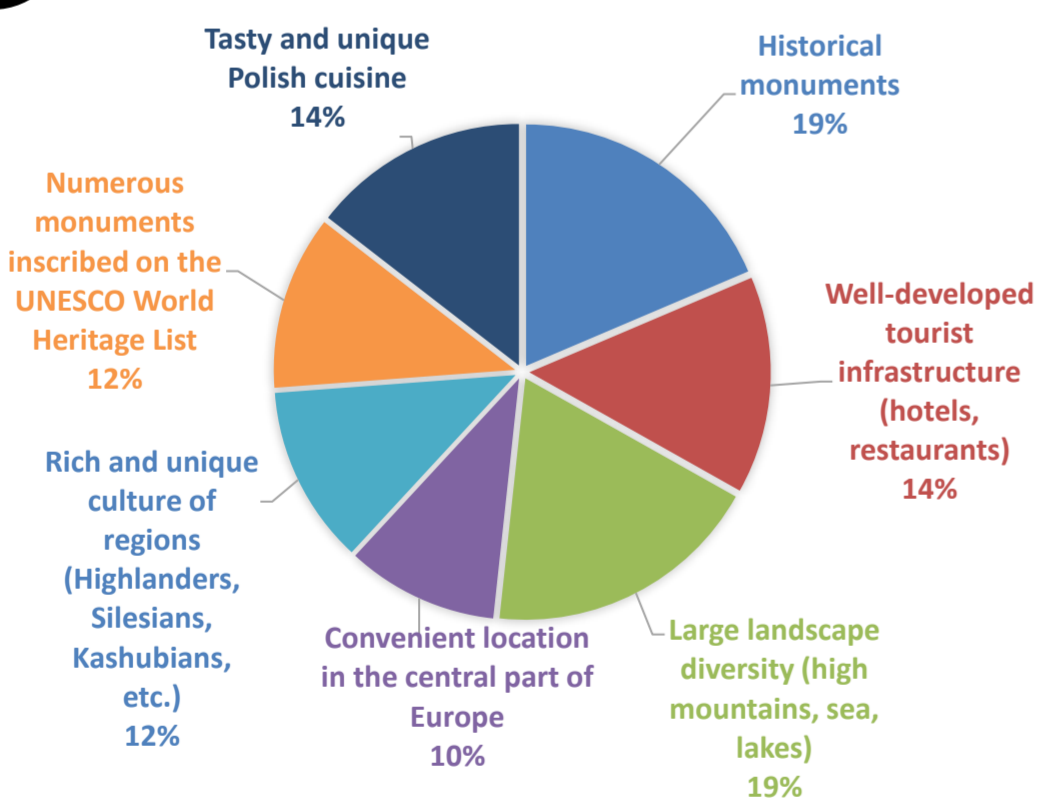
The obtained results showed that the two Polish capitals, Warsaw and Kraków, are the most attractive cities. They were indicated by young respondents as worth visiting the most. Next, there were the capital of the Polish mountains - Zakopane, and Gdańsk - a city located by the Polish sea. The list of appealing Polish places also includes Wrocław, Toruń, and Zamość. The obtained results form a plan for an interesting trip to very different cities, both in terms of their geographical location, historical heritage, and local tourist attractions.

Which of the Polish geographical regions do you consider the most interesting in terms of tourism?



Asking to assign on a scale from 1 to 7, we decided to check which geographical region of Poland young people consider the most interesting in terms of tourism and which they would especially recommend as a holiday destination to foreign tourists. The results of the survey clearly showed that the best place to spend a holiday in is by the Baltic Sea or on the beautiful Masurian lakes. Those respondents who prefer mountain tourism chose hiking in the beautiful Carpathians, the Cracow-Częstochowa Upland, and the Sudetes. Many respondents also noticed the beauty and attractiveness of the Mazowiecka Lowland and the Silesian Upland.

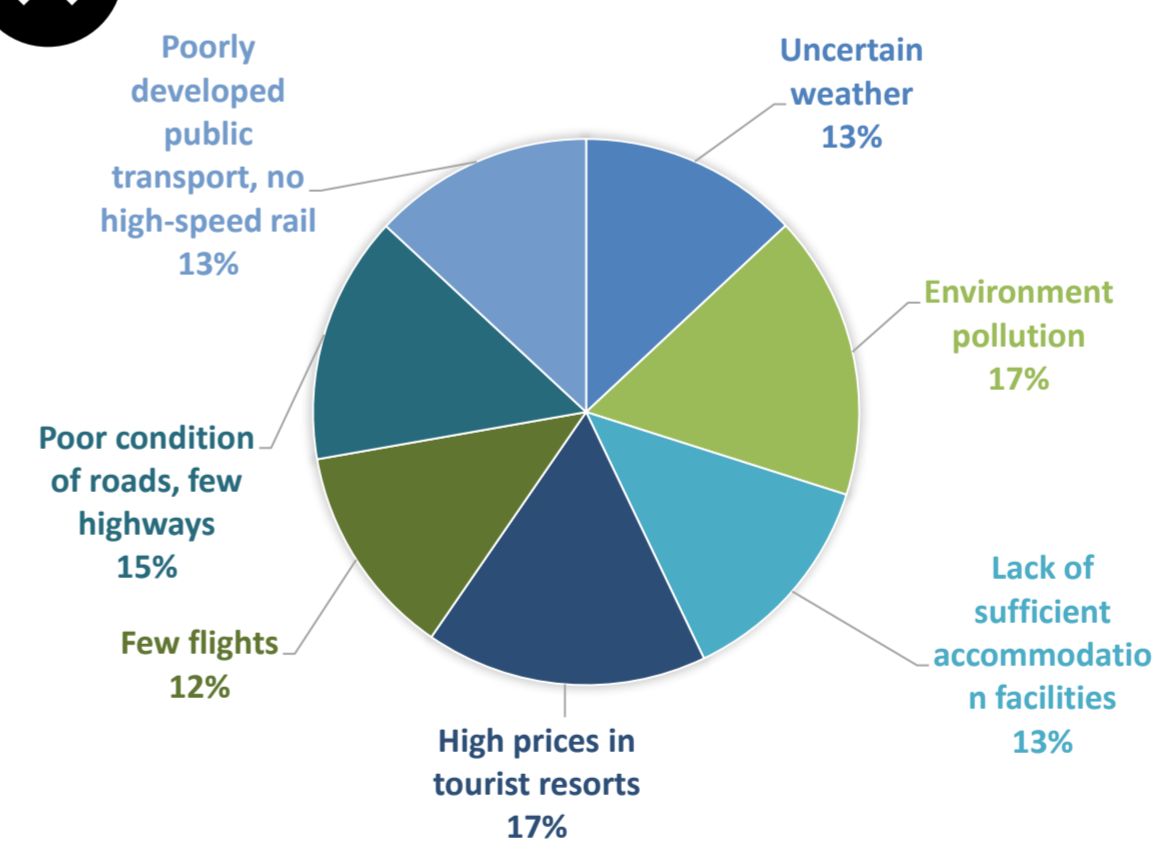
What factors determine attractiveness of our country?



In our survey, we asked to indicate which factors determine that our country is perceived by foreigners as attractive and why they come here so willingly. According to our colleagues, the greatest advantage of our country is the huge geographical and landscape diversity of the area: the access to the Baltic Sea to the north, the high Tatra Mountains to the south, and the numerous beautiful lakes inland. For many, the advantage is our centuries-old historical heritage in the form of castles,

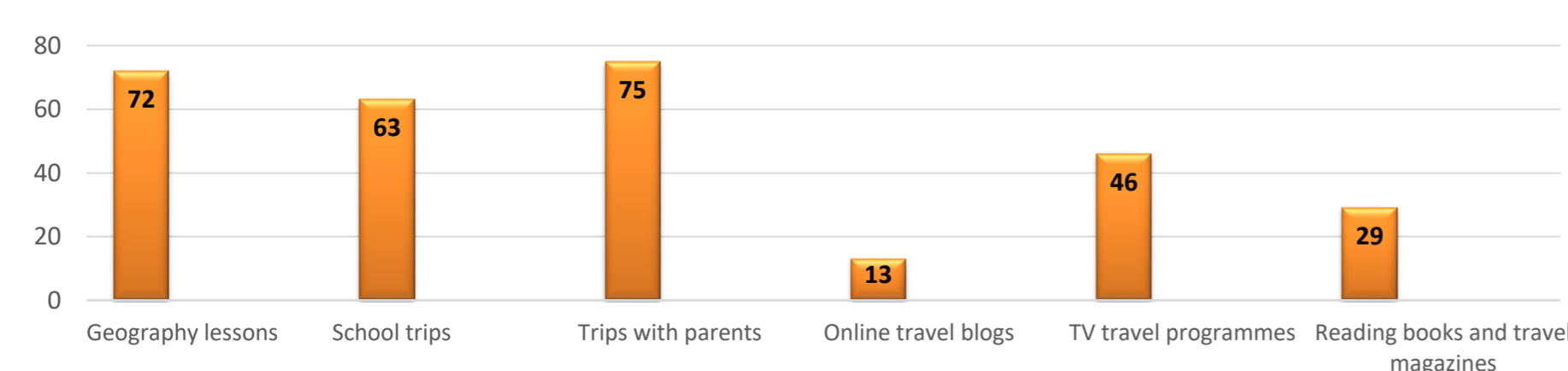
ruins of fortresses, and numerous monuments inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Young people also noticed the development of the tourist infrastructure offered to visitors in the form of easily accessible and comfortable accommodation and gastronomy. Many also appreciated the rich and unique culture of individual regions of Poland and the inextricably linked local flavors of Polish cuisine.

What factors discourage tourists from visiting our country?



We also asked what discourages tourists from visiting our country, and thus negatively affects foreign tourism in Poland. In the first place, our respondents indicated the high prices in tourist resorts and environmental pollution in some regions of Poland. The respondents also noticed the still insufficient number of highways and the poor quality of local roads, which undoubtedly make travelling and exploring the country difficult. Some of the respondents pointed to the still underdeveloped public transport and the lack of high-speed rail, which would greatly improve our tourism. When it comes to rest at the Polish seaside, the uncertain weather was emphasized. Some respondents would develop the accommodation base more and indicate the insufficient number of air connections with our country.

How do you get to know your homeland? How do you gain knowledge about the geographic curiosities of our country?



The final part of our survey consisted in asking our respondents about their personal experiences related to getting to know and promoting the beauty of their country. The respondents admitted that they get to know their homeland mainly through holiday trips with their parents. A similar number of respondents indicated geography lessons and school trips as sources of knowledge about geographical, historical, and cultural curiosities of our country. A much smaller group watches TV travel programs and reads books or magazines on the subject. The least popular and still underestimated form of acquiring travel knowledge turned out to be internet blogs run by other travellers.

Conclusions

- ➔ Most young Poles perceive their country as attractive to young foreign tourists. They consider Poland to be a good place to invite foreign friends to and show them its beauty and unique character.
- ➔ According to the respondents, places that should be of particular interest to foreigners are the capitals of the individual geographical regions, rich in historical monuments and modern tourist attractions, as well as the capital of our country, Warsaw.
- ➔ The factor that guarantees interest in Poland is its unique geographical location, offering a rich variety of terrain and landscapes, and the multitude of tourist attractions associated with it. Combined with the huge number of historical monuments and the cultural uniqueness of individual regions, Poland is undoubtedly a desirable destination for foreign guests.
- ➔ Young respondents are aware of many existing inconveniences, such as the insufficient number of motorways or the poorly developed network of public transport connections. However, these should not significantly reduce the interest of tourists.
- ➔ The results of our study confirmed the hypothesis that Poland's tourist attractiveness is valued highly, and therefore there is a great chance for the tourism economy of our country to flourish again after the crisis caused by the pandemic.

Data sources

- turystyka.wp.pl - data of the Central Statistical Office
- herbymlast.waw.pl - pictures of city coats of arms
- https://pl.freepik.com/darmowe-wektory - picture of tourists
- original survey conducted among students