

Przemysław Charzyński¹, Zbigniew Podgórski², Anna Dąbkowska¹, Monika Stawska³

¹ Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Faculty of Earth Sciences, Department of Soil Science and Landscape Management, e-mail: pecha@umk.pl

² Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Faculty of Physical Education, Health and Tourism, Institute of Geography, e-mail: zbigniew.podgorski@ukw.edu.pl

³ The Complex of Primate Stefan Wyszyński Lower and Upper Secondary School in Dobrzejewice

Assessment of the recognisability and attractiveness of regional kinds of Polish cuisine in the context of culinary tourism

Abstract: Eating is an inevitable part of every journey and therefore, expanding the gastronomic offer should be a priority for the tourism industry. There are dishes popular among tourists in particular parts of Poland and they are indicated in this paper. The regions are connected with the products which added to the List of Traditional Products have an opportunity to become famous not only in the country but also to become a great export commodity. However, agri-food products are under special protection and have the potential to become unbeatable in the gastronomic offer when enlisted in the European Union system of Protected Designation of Origin, Protected Geographical Indication and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed. Also current trails in Poland are presented in the paper. On such culinary trails, a tourist can become familiar with both regional flavours and traditions as well as with local customs. There are not too many of them in our country, but new ones are constantly being established and becoming more and more popular. A questionnaire survey was carried out to evaluate the attractiveness of a regional cuisine and its importance in tourism. It consisted of questions concerning the knowledge of regional dishes and the willingness to know them. On the basis of the obtained results, it has been stated that a potential tourist is interested in getting to know new dishes. However, she or he does not know many regional dishes. There were also problems with names and locating the dishes in a particular region correctly.

Keywords: culinary tourism, culinary trail, Polish cuisine, Poland, regional products.

1. Introduction

For centuries the cuisines of different parts of the world have changed their main features and characteristic taste. New ingredients have been introduced as well as new ways of food processing and seasoning. These changes have also affected the Polish cuisine, which led to the loss of many recipes from the past. Nowadays, many chefs try to recreate or rediscover the traditional Polish cuisine and give it a creative new, modern flavour with reflection of the tradition.

The repeated changes in Poland's borders contributed to the introduction of many flavours: Russian, Austrian, French, Lithuanian, German, Jewish and oriental into the Polish

cuisine. That is why it is so difficult to decide to what extent a particular dish is Polish. However, despite those influences, many recipes have been used until now. Soups, which are a characteristic dish of our cuisine, are the ones that should be listed in the canon. The traditional soups include: sour rye soup (*żur*), beetroot soup (*barszcz czerwony*), wild mushroom (especially from boletus) soup (*grzybowa*), duck blood soup (*czernina*). There are as many recipes of those soups as there are regions, similarly with dumplings (*pierogi*), hunter's stew (*bigos*) or meat-stuffed cabbage (*gołąbki*). Products of local agriculture: peas, beans, grain, groats

and potatoes, which became popular in the 18th century, have long been the main culinary ingredients on the Polish lands. The richness

of the woods allows us to include noble ingredients into our cuisine, such as ceps, saffron milk cups, berries, blackberries and wild meat.

2. Culinary tourism

Culinary tourism is a type of cultural tourism. It is commonly understood as an experience and learning by tasting the dishes and beverages characteristic of the visited place connected with sightseeing and getting to know the cultural heritage (Mikos von Rohrscheidt, 2008). Any tourist who wants to experience culinary attractions will get to the product of his interest, regardless of its place of origin. For instance: regional beer connoisseurs visit various places to taste the beer, they often enjoy the attractions offered by beer festivals or fairs. Culinary tourism and its types interpenetrate each other and form an integrated whole.

In the Polish literature, the word “culinary” appeared for the first time in the 19th century and its roots are in Latin: the word *culina* means kitchen in the roman “domus”. The research in the field of culinary tourism started only in the 20th century and the very phrase *culinary tourism* was first used in 1998 in the book of the same title. L. Long (1998) pointed out that for many people food is the most enjoyable part of travelling. It is a gateway to the world of culture visited. It gives the opportunity to experience new sensations as well as to fulfil the curiosity. By tasting original dishes, tourists learn about the true face of the country visited, discover its unique flavours and smells. Italian tomatoes “with the smell of sun”, Viennese coffee, unique Polish hunter’s stew (*bigos*) are the flavours that allow you to feel almost like a native citizen. Such a tourist tries to become a participant, to be “inside” instead of “next to” the life of people in a certain country, region, city or countryside (Matusiak, 2009).

The contemporary interest in cuisine, style of eating, regional dishes or local products is one of the motivating factors for tourism. According to Entelec’s research, (Tourists’ attitudes 2000), 42% of tourists look for local specialities that show a local identity while travelling, whereas 67% are able to pay for such a product more than the cost of a “globalised” meal. Tourists are interested in places or spaces

(pub, restaurant, village, city, region connected with a certain dish or product), the history of culinary products as well as technology or the way of serving food. The subjective assessment is influenced by the emotional state of a tourist, his or her attitude, but also with the surroundings in which the dish was eaten or the company with whom the meal was shared. The popularity of culinary tourism among tourists in Poland was determined in the research carried out in 2013. As many as 85% of active tourists declared that they are interested in tasting the regional cuisine’s dishes (Landbrand, Hubert Gonera & Polska Organizacja Turystyczna w Warszawie, 2014).

According to A. Kowalczyk (2005), there are many factors that determine whether a given place is attractive or not, including: being different, varied, traditional or authentic, the price and health properties of products, current fashion and eating habits.

The Polish Association of Culinary Tourism (PSTK) based in Poznań was established in 2011. It aims at promoting the culinary tourism, healthy lifestyle, especially healthy eating, promoting regional cuisines, traditions and habits, initiating and developing the relationships in the tourism and gastronomy services, exploring the culinary traditions of other countries. PSTK objectives are also to organise or cooperate in charity activities, to broaden the culinary awareness, especially among the college and university students, to increase the qualifications and skills of current and future employees of food establishments, and to cultivate national and regional culinary traditions (www.psttk.pl).

It is becoming increasingly frequent that dishes and beverages are the main theme of tourist journeys and the factor of destination choice. Culinary tourism is also closely connected with the cultural heritage of a region. Traditions and regional products are becoming an investment for the future and help to develop the professional activity in rural

areas (Krupa, 2014). According to Z. Kruczek and B. Walas (2009), an increasing interest in culinary tourism has been currently observed, and cultural heritage may become an interesting and profitable tourist product. Moreover, culinary tourism plays an important social and economic role in a region as local societies benefit from traditional products and often transform unattractive (in traditional terms) regions into areas popular on a local, regional or even national and international scale. The-

refore, the development of culinary tourism is very desirable, especially in places where there are no conditions for typical 3S recreation activities (meaning clean waters, forests, thermal waters etc.) or monuments attracting numerous tourists to cultural heritage sites. Culinary tourism also positively influences the preservation of cultural landscapes. Its development becomes an opportunity to create and improve the image of a place or a region (Gonia, 2011).

3. Promotional aspects of culinary traditions of regions

3.1. Culinary trails

According to Z. Kruczek (2002), a tourist trail is [...] *a demarcated route in the tourist space for visitors' needs, leading to the most attractive places*. Tourist routes have two basic functions: tourist and ecological. They are usually demarcated so as to lead visitors to the most valuable places: architectural monuments, natural monuments or museums. They enable tourists to learn about the special value of a region (folklore, customs), provide esthetical experience (picturesque landscapes) and make active leisure and recreation possible at the same time. Thus, they may become a tourist attraction in itself (Stasiak, 2006). Theme trails are said to play a special role. J. Tomczak (2013b) considers them as [...] *an integrated and managed linear system of recreational penetration, including objects representing a specific topic in an given area, linking them to a trail and being accompanied by other elements of the offer connected with the theme in various aspects (events, persons, history etc.)*. The theme trail makes it possible to know and understand the essence of the phenomenon and, thanks to appropriate management, the tourists can easily explore and obtain the relevant information (Tomczak, 2013a). Culinary tourism, closely connected with the cultural heritage of a region, contributes to the creation of theme trails as they allow tourists (in addition to savouring and eating the dishes) to explore the local tradition. Organising culinary trails has now become one of the most popular forms of promoting the culinary tourism (Kowalczyk, 2008). According to A.

Kowalczyk (2008), [...] *a culinary trail is a collective offer of places dealing with cuisine: places to eat, processing plants and farms. Establishment of such trails involves close cooperation of local institutions, producers, manufacturers, bidders, local authorities as well as institutions which deal with organisation and promotion of tourism in a region*.

Functional analysis of a culinary trail, understood as a theme trail, should take into consideration a wider range of factors than in the case of a tourist trail. According to J. Tomczak (2013b), these factors include e.g. the main theme, the authenticity of a trail, the course of a route, the choice of facilities, the location, route designation, promotion measures, coordination, addressees, additional attractions and tourist offers connected with a trail. Depending on the main theme of a journey, the type or category of a product and the location of eating establishments, the following culinary trails may be distinguished:

- trails promoting local, traditional and regional dishes (e.g. Subcarpathian Tastes, Silesian Tastes or Tastes of Podhale Culinary Trails;
- trails promoting local, traditional and regional food products (e.g. Lesser Poland Fruit Trail, Bean Valley Trail, Lesser Poland Herb-Scented Village or the trail in the Lower Vistula Valley in the Kujawy-Pomerania province promoting plums and their preserves – Gonia, 2011);
- trails leading to food establishments (e.g. Gdynia Culinary Trail, Białystok Culinary

Trail, Goose Culinary Trail in the Kuyavian-Pomeranian province – Charzyński et al., 2015).

- trails with wine as the main theme (e.g. Subcarpathian Wine Trails; the Lubusz Wine and Honey Trail – Charzyński et al., 2013; Wine Trail of Lesser Poland).

More examples of such initiatives can be found in Banasik and Fiszer (2016). Culinary trails in Poland are becoming an element of regional development. More and more initiatives aim at creating new trails, and the interest of public administration proves that the creation of cultural theme trails, including culinary trails, is considered an important factor of regional development. The Ministry of Sport and Tourism of the Republic of Poland has declared that “the creation of tourist space” is one of the priorities of applications for subsidies with the aim of performing public tasks. This is done by designating, signposting and maintaining trails as well as promoting them in Poland. Also the European Union sees the potential of tourism as a business sector which has the capacity to stimulate the econo-

mic growth and to increase the employment in the EU. The Council of Europe has launched an initiative of the European Cultural Trails and the European Institute of Cultural Routes within the International Council on Monuments and Sites. Also worth mentioning is the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage (www.culinary-heritage.com/). Organising culinary trails is becoming one of the most popular forms aiming at promoting culinary tourism. Trails are characteristic elements of cultural heritage of a region presenting traditional local products, ways of preparing, seasoning and serving them. As valuable products of culture and traces of the past, they are inextricably connected with the past of a local community (Furtek et al., 2013). Culinary trails emerging in Poland are an extremely interesting, crucial and new product of cultural tourism in rural areas, increasing the attractiveness of farms and influencing the development of rural tourism. Culinary trails contribute to the promotion of local and regional cultural traditions and learning about the traditional food (Krupa, 2014).

3.2. Festivals and culinary feasts

Tasting a new exotic dish does not always mean a long journey. There are many places in Poland where culinary festivals are organised. During such festivals you can taste food from all over the world. Some of the events emphasise local and traditional tastes very much. The best known include: International St. Dominic’s Fair in Gdańsk, International Festival of Robbers Cuisine in Skoczów, the European Festival of Taste in Lublin, the Polish Festival of Good Taste in Poznań, Europe on a Fork Festival in Wrocław, the Festival of Taste of Lesser Poland or Midsummer Fair in Wrocław. Culinary feasts are increasingly popular, including mainly: Podlasie Bread Festival in Ciechanowiec, the Festival of Taste in Gruczno, the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Province, the Polish Day of the Pickle in Kruszewo, the Potato Day in Mońki, Podlasie Honey Feast in Tykocin and ”Podlasie Tastes” Culinary Feast. Events organised for beer tourists are also worth mentioning. Except for brewery visits, there are also exhibitions, beer brewing shows and festivals

organised in Poland. During the Archaeological Festival in Biskupin and the Festival of Slavic and Cistercian Culture, you may watch the open-hearth beer brewing. The Cultural Night in Częstochowa, on the other hand, is an event organised by the members of Częstochowa Circle of Brotherhood for Local Beers. Workshops on beer brewing are organised in Lublin and Wrocław, among others. There are also competitions organised, for instance Homemade Beer Competition in Żywiec and Częstochowa and Best Beer Competition in Kraków. The biggest feast of beer is the All-Polish Holiday of Hop Growers and Brewers “Chmielaki Krasnostawskie” and Jan Hevelius International Beer Festival in Gdańsk. Next to big breweries, there are also breweries gathered around the Association of Polish Regional Breweries. Currently, we have more than 30 small and medium-sized breweries in Poland, and more than 60 restaurant breweries – and the number is still increasing (Charzyński et al., 2015). Those are often family businesses producing unpasteurized beer, brewed tra-

ditionally on the basis of hop, malted barley and live noble yeast strains. Many of them are located in attractive tourist places, hence “traditional” tourism can be connected with the culinary one. Except for the possibility of visiting places connected with beer production, there are many events, beer festivals, beer brewing shows or exhibitions in Poland, where you can learn about the production, enjoy beer sampling, or buy a local beer. Those are e.g. Lubin Beer Festival, Warmia Brewing Heritage Festival, Wrocław Good Beer Festival or International Birofilia Festival in Żywiec (Duda-Gromada, 2013). There is the All-Polish Holiday of Hop Growers and Brewers “Chmielaki Krasnostawskie” in Krasnystaw. All the events that take place during the celebrations of beer and its sampling attract about 50,000 guests annually (Kosmaczewska, 2008). Beer tourism is mostly developing in Poland thanks to brewing companies that succeeded in sales, and their success is closely related to advertising and creating new tourist attractions. However, they are mainly focused on mass tourism. Smaller breweries try to reach beer lovers. For a few years now, there has been a dynamic increase in the number of restaurant breweries. Home brewers start their own breweries where they produce special beer. They also organise beer brewing shows, competitions and brewers’ workshops. Their activity is mostly focused on individual beer tourists who look for original beer species. The activity of smaller breweries is supported by brewers’ associations advertising their products home and abroad.

3.3. Regional and traditional products

For a few years, regional products have become increasingly popular as the variety of products available from the mass production is not equal to the quality of their taste. Therefore, regional products usually guarantee a good and distinctive taste. The fact that these are our special products connected with the culture and tradition of particular regions in Poland increases their popularity. Traditional and regional products are of high quality, which is also connected with a protected reputation. Certification of products serves the aforementioned protection. In Poland, the Ministry of Agriculture

The development of specialised wine tourism is a great opportunity for the development of culinary tourism. It means going to wine-making regions where vintners, vineyards and cellars are visited and taking part in various events related to sampling and tasting of local wine and local cuisine etc. Participants of such trips usually buy a few bottles of wine from vintners to take them home. This particular type of leisure time has become popular in the world and recently visiting vineyards has also reached Poland (Bosak, 2013). Poland is a new wine producer and Polish society is just beginning to be a conscious consumer of this beverage. Interest in winery is growing and various associations of producers and lovers are being established. All these phenomena contribute to a fast development of wineries (Radziwiłko, 2012). In Poland, there are more and more farms specialising in grapevine cultivation and wine production. Currently, the vineyards occupy about 1000 ha, and Lubusz, Lower Silesian, Lesser Poland and Subcarpathian Provinces have the most favourable conditions for growing vines. Participating in interesting wine events is a fascinating way to spend your free time, e.g. the Convent of Polish Winemakers or International Wine Competition *GALICJA VITIS*, International Days of Wine in Jasło, Zielona Góra Wine Fest and the Wine Day Celebration in the Treasure City in Środa Śląska. The Honey and Wine Festival in Przemków is greatly celebrated at the last weekend of September. The Zielona Góra Wine Fest takes place every year in September. In November, it is worth going to Kraków for the ENOEXPO Wine Trade Fair.

and Rural Development is responsible for this, and in the European Union – the European Commission.

In 2011-2016, the Lesser Poland Province had the most dynamic increase in the registered local products. Between May 2011 and August 2016, there were 131 new products registered, which makes over 300% increase. In the Subcarpathian Province, a similar number of products was registered – 109 products, however, it was a smaller relative increase, i.e. 109%. Attractiveness of regional cuisine from this region was studied e.g.

by J. Krupa (2016). The smallest number of newly registered products was in Warmian-Masurian Province (6) and Greater Poland

Province (9). However, one should take into consideration a meaningful quadruple difference in 2011 (Table 1).

Table 1. The number of registered regional products according to the provinces in 2011-2016 (sources: www.minrol.gov.pl/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych; Włoszczowski, 2013)

Province	May 2011	December 2012	June 2013	May 2014	October 2015	August 2016	increase of the number of registered products from 2011 to 2016	
							in numbers	in %
Lower Silesian	24	35	n/a	41	44	46	22	92
Kuyavian-Pomeranian	24	45	50	54	65	70	46	192
Lublin	79	100	110	123	153	166	87	110
Lubusz	10	13	n/a	32	41	58	48	480
Łódź	57	68	n/a	75	85	102	48	84
Lesser Poland	43	66	n/a	113	152	174	131	305
Mazovian	35	49	n/a	70	86	91	56	160
Opole	49	52	n/a	60	62	62	13	27
Subcarpathian	100	111	136	162	200	209	109	109
Podlaskie	45	46	n/a	49	61	63	18	40
Pomeranian	113	134	136	149	173	174	61	54
Silesian	118	131	132	137	138	138	20	17
Świętokrzyskie	51	54	n/a	66	70	72	21	41
Warmian & Masurian	21	24	n/a	25	25	27	6	29
Greater Poland	83	86	n/a	90	90	92	9	11
West Pomeranian	10	16	n/a	28	35	38	28	280

The number of registered products is constantly growing, however, with varying dynamics depending on the province. It can be assumed that many regions have recognized the importance of regional product certification. Their large number, as in the case of e.g. Subcarpathian Province, affects the culinary attractiveness of the region and may be an important factor in advertising and popularising it as a culinary tourism destination by local authorities, non-governmental organizations and producer groups.

According to the research from 2013, 67% of the interviewed Polish people declare that they

bring culinary souvenirs from their trips. As examples of tasty souvenirs they mostly mentioned cheese (35%). About 14% bring also fish, cold cuts and honey; 10% bring beer, vodka, alcoholic tincture and bread. Wine and sweets were chosen by 7% and fruit and vegetable preserves by 4% (Landbrand et al., 2014). The abundance of regional products will therefore encourage people to relax in a certain region to go shopping.

The map presents the number of products included on the List of Traditional Products of each province until August 2016 and a percentage increase compared to May 2011 (Fig. 1).

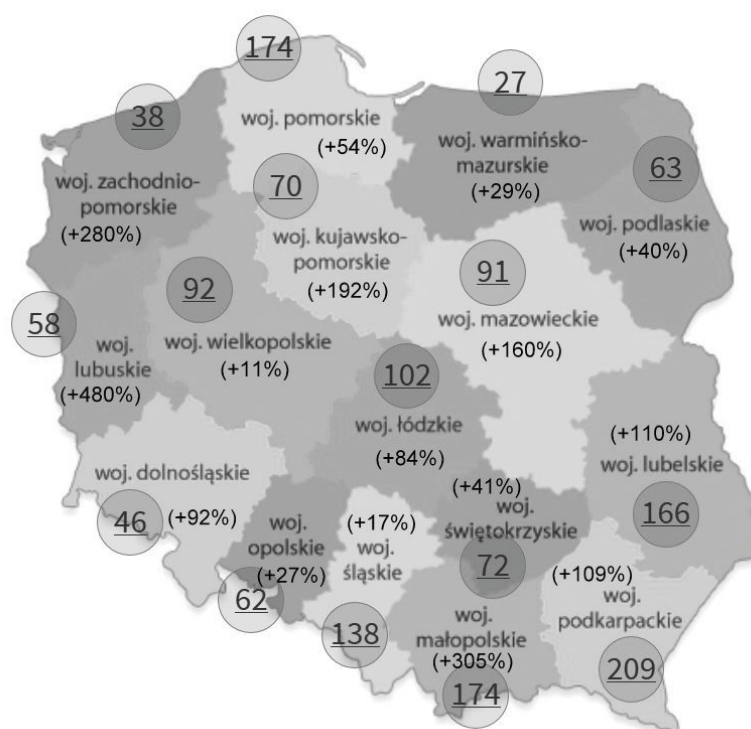


Figure 1. The number of traditional products in August 2016 according to provinces and a percentage increase compared to May 2011

(sources: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, modified; www.minrol.gov.pl/pol/Jakosc-zywnosci/Produkty-regionalne-i-tradycyjne/Lista-produktow-tradycyjnych/)

4. Attractiveness of regional types of Polish cuisine based on the survey results

The material for analysis was obtained in the course of research carried out in 2015 on a group of 123 persons. The questionnaire consisted of 7 questions, including 3 related to demographic features (i.e. age, gender and place of residence) and 4 open questions that enabled us to assess the attractiveness and knowledge of typical dishes in particular regions of Poland. Women were the main group among the respondents – 87% (108 persons), whereas men were a considerably smaller group (13%).

Most of the respondents, i.e. 28.8% live in towns with 100,000 to 500,000 citizens and 25.2% in cities with over 500,000 citizens, while 24.4% of the respondents come from towns with 10,000 to 100,000 citizens, and only 6.5% come from small towns. About 17.1% of the respondents choose countryside as a place of residence.

Most of the respondents represent the age between 19 and 26 – 92.7%. People aged 27 to

40 years accounted for 4.1% of the respondents and those representing the age of 41-55 and above 55 years old – 1.6% each.

The next question concerned the knowledge of particular dishes, products or beverages. The aim of the question was to establish the number of people having knowledge about particular dishes and food products from 9 selected regions of Poland. The question was related to dishes representing the cuisine of Kashubia, Silesia, Lesser Poland, Lemkovina, Greater Poland, Kuyavia, Warmia & Masuria, Podhale and Kurpie. Providing correct answers was very difficult for the respondents, which was proven by the fact that as many as 23 respondents (19.3%) could not even enumerate one dish relevant to the aforementioned regional cuisines. The questionnaire showed that dishes typical for Silesia, Podhale and Greater Poland are most commonly known. Accordingly, 70%, 57% and 51% of the respondents could name at least one dish characteristic of those regions.

The least known were cuisines of Lemkovina (18%) and Kurpie (15%) – Fig. 2. Silesian and Podhale cuisines are the most recognizable ones also according to the research by Pawlak et al. (2016)

Different versions of herring, e.g. made in vinegar, “Kashubian way”, “under cover”, were indicated as characteristic of the Kashubian cuisine. Fish soup, fritters (*ruchanki*), swede soup and duck blood soup (*czernina*) were enumerated. However, only 36% of the respondents correctly indicated one of the known dishes from this region.

Silesian dumplings were the best-known dish from the Silesia region – 43% of the respondents. Rouladen with red cabbage and red cabbage were also enumerated. Altogether about 70% of the respondents listed one dish from the Silesia region.

Providing names of the dishes from the Lesser Poland region caused the most difficulties. *Oscypek* (smoked sheep milk hard cheese) and *kwaśnica* (sauerkraut soup) were mentioned several times as characteristic of this

region. However, 36 people correctly named at least one dish from the region. Pretzel was the most popular (15 respondents). *Maczanka* (pork sandwich), tripe soup (*flaki*) and *moskole* (moskol pancake) were also listed.

On the basis of the obtained results, it was found that Lemkovina dishes and products are poorly recognised. Only less than 20% of the respondents were able to give a name of even one dish. Dumplings with buckwheat, *ciurka* soup and *adzymki* were most often mentioned. There were also answers indicating dishes that are not characteristic of Lemkovina cuisine, e.g. *blini* or *bobalki*.

Greater Poland cuisine was mostly associated with the so-called *pyry with gzik*. Most of the respondents named this dish as characteristic of the Greater Poland region. Also St. Martin’s croissants, *pyzy* (round potato dumplings) and *kluski* (kind of dumplings without filling) were mentioned. In conclusion – 51% of the respondents could say at least one characteristic dish for this region.

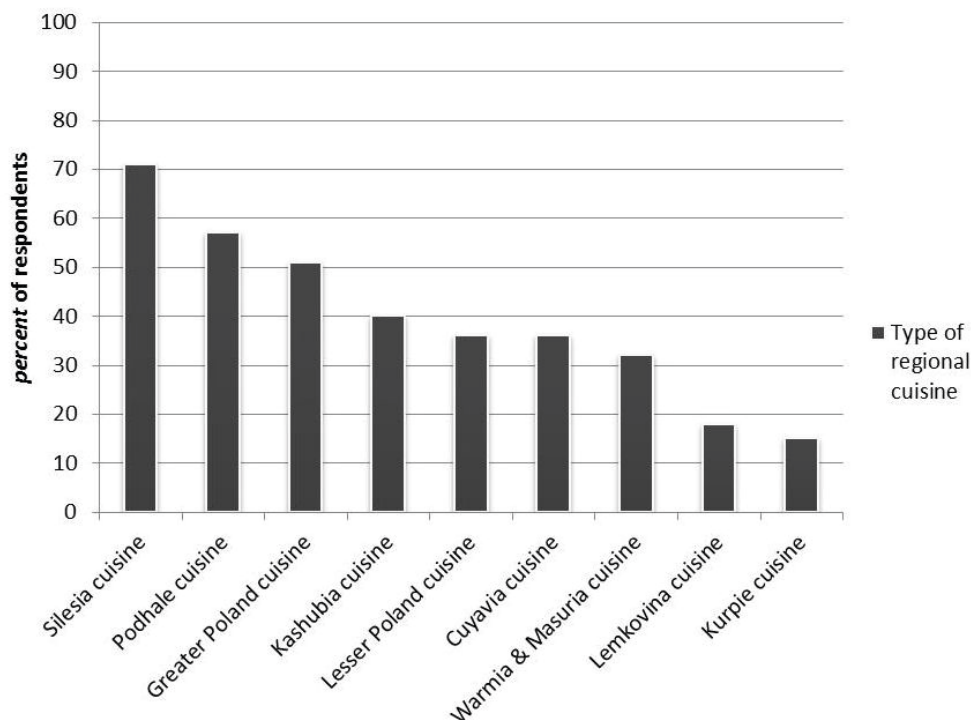


Figure 2. Respondents’ knowledge of at least one dish from a particular region in Poland (source: Survey conducted by the authors, n = 123)

It was assumed that since the survey was conducted also in Kuyavian towns, knowledge of the Kuyavian region should not cause any problems. However, not everyone was able

to name even one characteristic dish for the region. Lack of relevant knowledge may be caused by the fact that except for the direct questionnaires, part of the answers were obtained

via the Internet from people probably outside the region. Only 36% of all respondents could name at least one dish or regional food product. It appears from the collected data that Kuyavia is mostly associated with duck blood soup (*czarnina*), cabbage with peas and incorrectly with Toruń gingerbread. Individual persons gave the names of less popular dishes, such as plum soup or Kuyavian oil made in Kuyavia.

In Kołuda Wielka (near Inowrocław), there is an experimental station of the National Research Institute of Animal Production (Fig. 3A). Long-term breeding and research resulted in a different breed of goose Biała Kołudzka (white goose from Kołudza) (Fig. 3B). Although goose meat has been promoted as a regional specialty for several years, none of the respondents considered it as a Kuyavia-specific product.



Figure 3. Experimental Station of the National Research Institute of Animal Production in Kołuda Wielka; Biała Kołudzka goose (Photo by A. Dąbkowska)

There were few answers – only 32 – providing examples of particular dishes from the Warmian-Masurian region. The respondents found *dzyndzałki* (kind of dumplings) and *farszynki* (kind of potato knodel) most characteristic. They associated the region mostly with fish prepared in various ways (e.g. smoked fish, fish soup). Moreover, one person named a tincture – *niedźwiedziówka*, i.e. alcoholic beverage based on honey and spirit.

When it comes to Podhale cuisine, the answers were not varied. Podhale region is mainly associated with cheese – *oscypek* (smoked sheep milk hard cheese) and *bundz* (sheep milk cheese) and *kwaśnica* (sauerkraut soup). About 57% of the respondents named at least one dish of that cuisine, including 37% choosing *oscypek* as a characteristic product and only individual persons chose roasted mutton, *bryndza* (sheep milk soft cheese) and *hałuski* (thick soft noodles or dumplings).

The cuisine of Kurpie also proved to be unpopular. Only 15 respondents correctly named a dish from this region: Kurpie cake (*babka kurpiowska*), barley soup (*krupnik*), *kołduny* (stuffed dumplings), cabbage with mushrooms and *rejbak* (potato cake).

The next question was about the actual preparation of tourists for their journey. The

majority of respondents – 60.2% – stated that they do not perform any research on local cuisine before their trip. Lack of action to obtain relevant information is probably caused by the spontaneity of preparations and the idea that the implementation of a previously accepted tour programme will still give them the opportunity to taste regional specialities. The actual preparation (39.8% of the respondents does so) helps the tourists pay special attention to regional products and reduce the risk of disappointment when the “exotically” called dish, as e.g. *karminadle* – a traditional Silesian

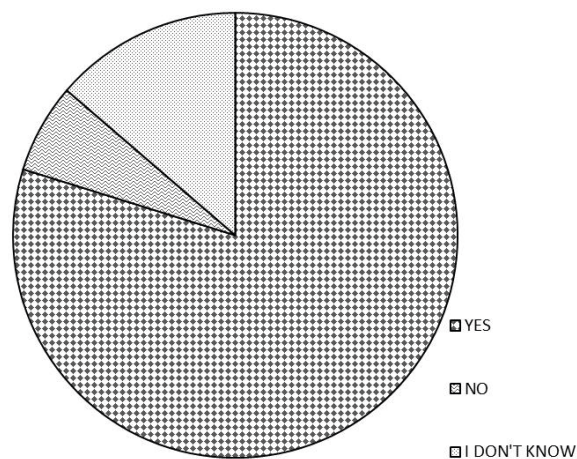


Figure 4. Willingness to participate in a trip with a culinary theme

dish, turns out to be a familiar dish, known as minced meat cutlet. First of all, it is worth mentioning that giving up previous search for information on the cuisine specialities of the visited region forces the respondents – 68.5% (85 people) – to look for restaurants or bars offering dishes of regional cuisine during their trip, which is connected with the loss of time and in many instances giving up finding such a place.

The obtained results also indicate the demand for interesting offers addressed to

culinary tourists. As many as 79.8% of the respondents showed willingness to participate in theme trips in order to get acquainted with dishes and culinary products of a particular region connected with sightseeing, getting to know the culture and tradition of a region. Only 13.7% of the respondents could not decide and 6.5% claimed no interest in such an offer (Fig. 4). The importance of food for a modern traveller can also be proven by common mentions on postcards sent from journeys (Buczowska-Gołabek, 2016).

5. Summary and Conclusions

For centuries eating meals together has been a crucial element of life. After a busy day of work, studies and other duties, people sat at a table. It was often the only time and place where family members met together. Also during celebrations, the table full of special dishes played the most important role. In the rush of modern life, eating meals together has slightly lost its value. We do not pay such attention to it, because of the pace of modern life and lack of time. Meals are prepared quickly and ready meals are often bought and consumed quickly and at different times. Despite the increased pace of life, many of us began to see the need of change in the kitchen and during meal preparation. We also pay greater attention to the ingredients of products and their origin. We are starting to appreciate new tastes and various ways of preparing the food. TV shows with celebrities or chefs teaching us how to cook are extremely popular. The number of programmes and books on healthy cuisine continues to increase. The popularity of healthy and interesting cuisine also causes changes in tourism. It is not enough anymore to go sightseeing, to appreciate the landscape etc. Modern tourists want something more: contrary to pervasive globalisation, they want to enter into authentic local culture, learn customs, try unknown dishes and beverages as well as to discover local delicacies. This “search” for tastes has become a reason of the culinary tourism development.

The research showed that young people are open to new tastes, eager to try new dishes and products, especially regional ones. Healthy natural products of high quality are

desirable and sought after. The uniqueness of dishes, their local flavour and the richness of flavours may be of special value to the tourists. Consumption of meals is a crucial element of journeys, and a local cuisine may become one of the attractions. Analysis of the culinary tourism in Poland indicates that culinary tourism trails are the basic element of culinary tourism marketing. In 2014, there were over 20 operating culinary tourism trails in Poland with traditional and regional products in their offers. Because they are a relatively new development, they are not well known and not recognised by tourists. Simultaneous advertising of culinary trails with advertising of traditional products from regions with trails should be conducted through coordinated actions of institutions, organisers and creators of both the trails and those who promote the regional products. Therefore, building a shared brand for all trails, impeccable information on their specificity and offer as well as effective popularisation should be a priority.

Due to the limited knowledge of regional cuisine in Poland by the younger part of the society, as evidenced by the questionnaires whose respondents were mostly young people, it would be necessary to improve the education about products and dishes from different regions of Poland as part of the intangible cultural heritage of the country. Agricultural and food products are under special protection and thus have a better chance to become known through the European Union system of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical

Indication (PGI) or Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TCG).

Advertising regional and traditional products, culinary trails, culinary festivals and workshops would attract potential tourists not only from our country, but also in a long per-

spective from abroad. Polish cuisine, with its variety, unique taste and centuries-old tradition of the products, has a huge potential to become famous among foreigners. However, long-term and deliberated gastrodiplomatic actions are necessary.

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