

## AGRITOURISM LODGINGS IN POLAND AND THEIR UTILIZATION IN 2011-2015

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*У першій частині цієї статті представлено генезис агротуризму в Польщі і було сформульовано його визначення. Потім описані установи та організації, обстежено кількісний статус житло агротуризму в Польщі протягом останніх декількох десятиліть. В основній частині роботи була представлена позиція кількісного житла агротуризму в Польщі, так і в окремих регіонах. Характеризується кількість місць в квартирах, а також їх використання. Була також представлена інформація про кількість туристів (в тому числі іноземних туристів) використання цієї форми сільського туризму і кількість ночей.*

***Ключові слова:** сільський туризм, агротуризм, агротуризм житло, використання житла, Польща.*

**Introduction.** Rural areas in Poland have an exceptional predisposition to the development of agritourism. They result from natural values and rich cultural heritage of the village, hospitality, and care of accommodation providers for the best quality of tourist services. In recent years there has been a lot of interest among tourists of rural areas, which for many of them are unfamiliar area, which has a huge cognitive qualities. Due to the need for direct contact with nature and farm animals agritourism is very popular among urban residents. Rural accommodation is also an excellent alternative to expensive hotels. The purpose of this article was to show the quantitative status of agritourism base in Poland, the dynamics of its changes and its use by tourists. The research method was to analyze the data of the Central Statistical Office of Poland.

**The beginnings of agritourism in Poland.** Tourism in rural areas in Poland and in the world is not a new way of spending free time. In the initial phase of its development was treated as a break for the wealthiest social classes. Trips and stays in rural areas were known European aristocracy, and horseback riding, fishing, hunting and the use of good country kitchen belonged to good behavior. Also, having a summer residence located in rural areas ennobled its owner.

Socio-economic and political system changes initiated in Poland in 1989 particularly affected the Polish countryside and agriculture. Their consequence was a significant impoverishment of the rural population and farmers. They stood in front of the necessity to seek additional sources of income. Many farmers have recognized the opportunity to improve the financial situation of their families at the beginning of tourist activity. In turn, the reduction of social tourism and regression in the Polish tourism industry resulted in greater interest of urban residents rest in the countryside.

The origins of rural tourism in Poland is the beginning of the 90s. Then it boldly began to talk about its ideas and the benefits that arise from offering by the villagers a variety of tourist services. During this period began promoting this form

of recreation, which was directed first to the instructors employed in the agricultural advisory centers, then to the inhabitants of villages and representatives of local governments and local administration. This was the period when created the first publications as guides, started training during the regional and national meetings, seminars and conferences, published the first scientific studies. Appeared the first folders and directories presenting images agritourism facilities in the perspective of the local tourist attractions.

An important moment in the development of rural tourism was creation in 1996 Polish Federation of Rural Tourism "Hospitable Farms". Establishment of the Federation, as the representative of regional associations at the national level essentially influenced on the shape of the organizational structure of agritourism and gave it priority role in the development of rural tourism and agritourism in Poland. Initiated by the Federation of categorization system of rural accommodation base contributed in addition to increasing the quality of tourist services provided in the countryside.

A great help and encouragement for farmers to provide tourist services is the possibility of exemption from income tax revenue created by the agritourism. Important for the development of rural tourism is the possibility of obtaining funds from the European Union for purposes related with diversification of sources of income of rural residents through initiation non-agricultural activities.

It should be emphasized at this point that in Poland there is no official, proposed by the government authorities definition of agritourism. In no law there is also this word. However, it is commonly understood as a form of rural tourism closely related to the functioning farm. Whereas the agritourism lodging is a farm where the next agricultural activity is carried out tourism activities.

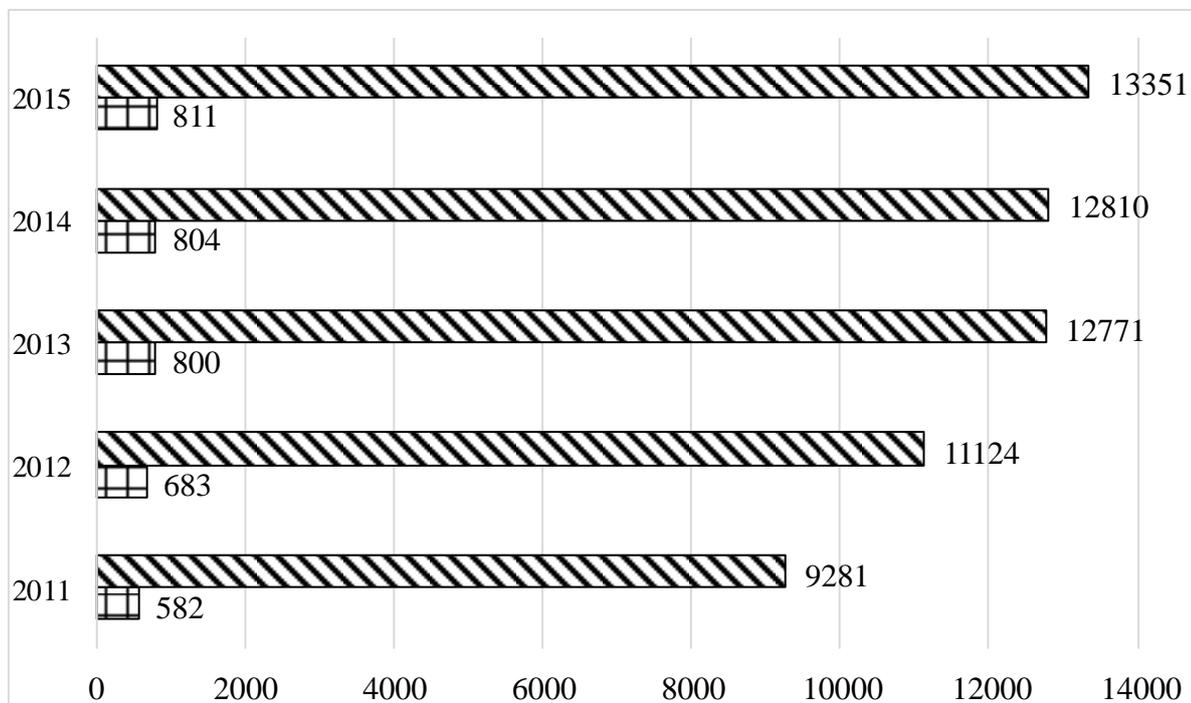
**Institutions and organizations surveyed quantitative status agritourism lodgings in Poland over the last few decades.** For the study the number of lodgings in Poland in recent years was responsible several institutions and organizations. Initially (1990-1997) performed the function of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development with the help agricultural advisory centers (ADC). According to these calculations, in 1990, operated in Poland 590 agritourist farms. In the following years, which were characterized by dynamic development of such projects, the number of lodging increased to approx. 1000 in 1993 and almost 4800 in 1997. Since 1998 data on farm tourism lodgings began to publish the Central Statistical Office (CSO). They differed significantly from the data presented by the Ministry. According to the Central Statistical Office in 1998, it operated 608 facilities providing services agritourism. They had a 5509 beds. In subsequent years, the number lodgings, as well as beds has steadily increased. Data for 2001 were the last, which presented the CSO. Existed then 1,073 apartments, which had 11188 places. In the following years the CSO has ceased studies on this topic. Since 2002, these task was undertaken by the Institute of Tourism, initially using the information obtained from the agricultural advisory centers (2002), and later, until 2007, with individual municipal offices. According to the Institute, on the basis of information obtained from the ADC, in 2002, operating in Poland 6543 farms providing services agritourism (53,216 beds). In the next year, by information from the offices of municipalities this number established on the 3323 households with 32885 beds. The difference in the number of tourist farms reported by the Institute in 2002 and 2003 probably stemmed from the use of different

sources of information. In the following years reported a continuous increase in the number of lodgings. Data from 2007 indicate that functioned then 8790 agritourist farms with 87144 beds. Data for 2007 were recently published by the Institute of Tourism, which stopped this type of research. In 2008, such studies have not been conducted. Information on the number of tourist farms from 2009 published by the Central Statistical Office.

**Dynamics of changes in the number of agritourism lodgings in Poland in 2011-2015.** For the few years statistical reporting in the field of tourist accommodation in Poland is regulated by the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EU) No 692/2011 of 6 July 2011 on the European statistics on tourism. Data on tourist accommodation facilities are collected through forms KT-1 (compulsory for all facilities with 10 or more beds, report monthly), and KT-2 the forms (for buildings with 9 and less beds, the annual report). The obligation to completed and submitted the form lies with the owner of the facility.

In 2015, according to the Central Statistical Office, were in Poland 811 agrotourism lodgings with 10 or more beds and 3025 lodgings with 9 and less beds. In the next part of this article are presented information regarding only lodgings with 10 or more beds. The reason for this is the fact that the details of the lodgings with 9 and less beds are not available.

In Poland is observed continuous increase of the number of agrotourism lodgings offering 10 or more beds. In 2015 it was 811 objects, which accounted for 8.1% of all tourist accommodation in Poland with 10 or more beds. This number has remained at a similar level from 2013. Details on this topic are presented in Figure 1.



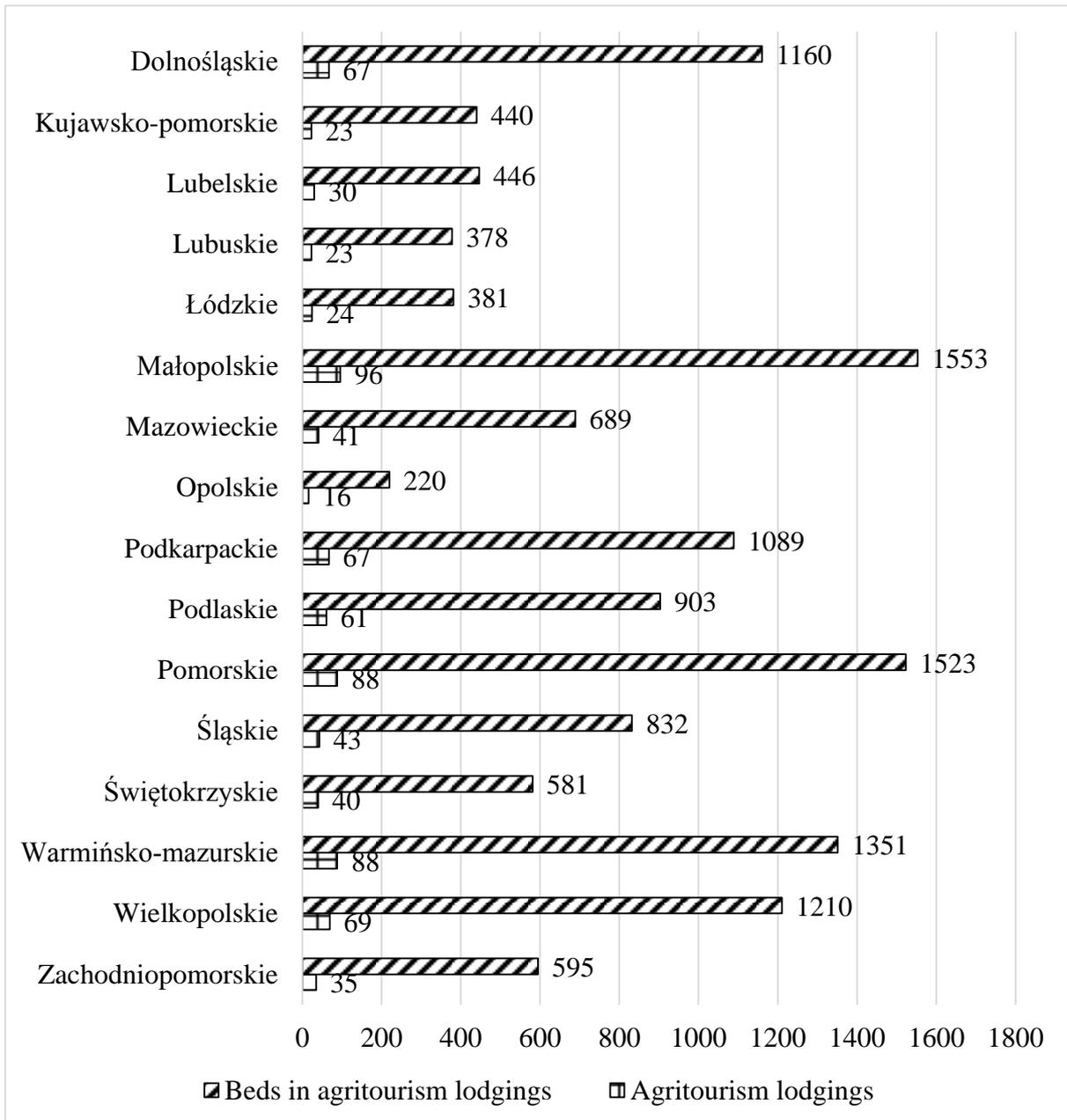
**Figure 1. Number of agrotourism lodgings and beds in agrotourism lodgings in Poland in 2011-2015 (applies only to objects with 10 or more beds)**

*Source: own study based on data of Central Statistical Office of Poland.*

In 2015, agritourism lodgings in Poland had nearly 13.5 thousand beds. This

represented 1.9% of all beds in tourist accommodation establishments with 10 or more beds. This number, compared to 2011, increased by 4,070 beds (30.5%).

A significant number of agritourism lodgings in Poland functioned in 2015 in Malopolska province, Pomorskie and Warmia-Mazury. This information illustrated in Figure 2.

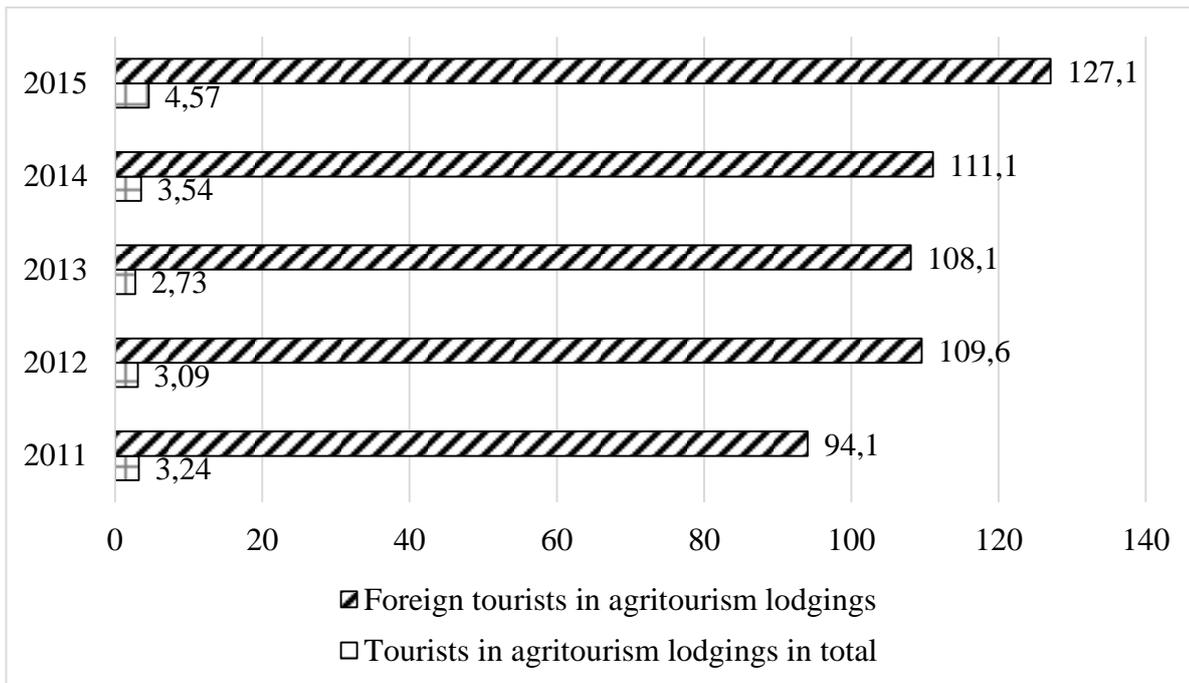


**Figure 2. Agritourism lodgings and beds in agritourism lodgings in the provinces in Poland in 2015**

*Source: own study based on data of Central Statistical Office of Poland.*

The least objects of this type was in Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubuskie and Opole province. To a large extent these numbers are related to the tourist attractiveness of these regions, as well as actions, aimed at promoting the development of non-agricultural rural areas.

With the services of agritourism lodgings in 2015 benefited more than 127 thousand tourists, including more than 4.5 thousand people from abroad. Details on this topic are presented in Figure 3.

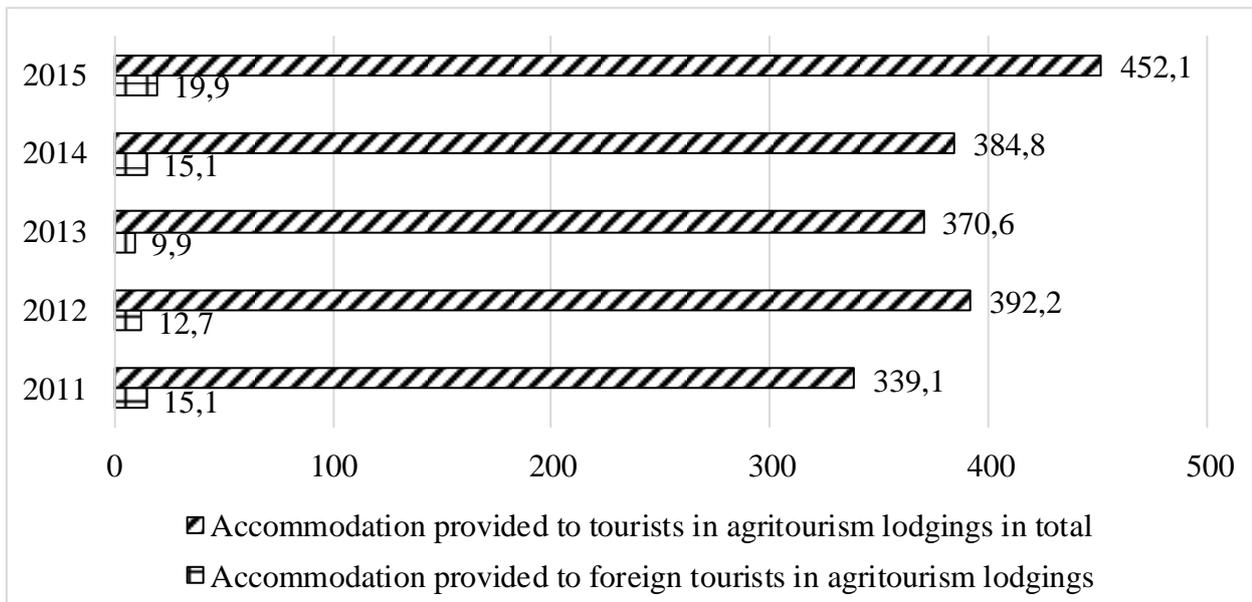


**Figure 3. Tourists in agritourism lodgings in thousands in 2011-2015 (in thousand, applies only to objects with 10 or more beds)**

*Source: own study based on data of Central Statistical Office of Poland.*

In 2015 tourists using agritourism farms accounted for only 0.5% of all tourists using tourist accommodation. Among those who rested in the 2015 farm tourism lodgings 96.4% were Poles.

In 2015, agritourism farms granted more than 452 thousand. accommodation (including almost 20 thousand. foreigners). Data for the remaining years is presented in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Accommodations provided to tourists in lodgings agritourism in thousands in 2011-2015 (in thousand, applies only to objects with 10 or more beds)**

*Source: own study based on data of Central Statistical Office of Poland.*

Accommodations provided in agritourism lodgings accounted in 2015 0.6% of the total accommodation in tourist accommodation. In relation to foreign visitors, this percentage was only 0.1%. Among foreign visitors dominated citizens of Germany (9348 nights), Ukraine (4465 nights), Russia (663), the Netherlands (638) and Bulgaria (599)

It's worth mentioning that utilization of beds in agritourism lodgings in Poland in 2015 was approximately 12.5% (this value is similar to previous years). During the holiday season (July - August) is about 25%. This indicator is relatively small. In hotels and holiday youth centre for comparison, the value is 40%, in hostels almost 50% and in health establishment up to 80%.

**Summary.** Rural tourism and agritourism in Poland are popular forms of tourism, and the number of such objects is growing dynamically. This is due to intensive promotion of rural tourism and agritourism, which is realized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Polish Tourist Organisation, Polish Federation of Rural Tourism "Hospitable Farms" as well as many regional and local associations of rural tourism and agritourism can be expected steady growth of this number. The reason for this is also increase of interest in recreation in the countryside among urban residents. For people looking for peace and quiet is a great alternative to noisy, overcrowded and overrated popular tourist resorts. Great importance for the development of rural tourism is also a growing interest in the villagers commencement to provide this type of service, which is supported by the availability of European Union funds.

A lot of interest (in particular foreign visitors) enjoy the ecological agritourism farms. At the end of 2015 on the website of Polish Federation of Rural Tourism "Hospitable Farms" were presented 63 lodgings of this type. Some of them is a member of ECEAT (European Centre for Ecological Agriculture and Tourism).

For the further development of agritourism is necessary to promote it among potential tourists, as well as care for the quality of the offer. Very important in both cases is the activities of Federation "Hospitable Farms", which is the administrator of site „agroturystyka.pl”.

The Federation participates in many tourist and agricultural trade fairs and exhibitions, and promoting rural tourism. The Federation moreover is the owner of categorization system of rural accommodation. The idea of this system is the same as in the case of hotels. Categories is a symbol of the sun. Participation is voluntary. At the end of 2014 the Federation has developed a „Program of development and promotion of the system of categorization of agritourism and rural tourism facilities in Poland”. So we can hope that implementation of the actions contained in it will help to boost the development of this form of tourism in Poland.

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#### **Аннотация**

##### **Завадка Ж.**

##### **Агротуризм гостиниц в Польше и их использование в 2011-2015**

*годах В первой части статьи представлен генезис агротуризма в Польше и сформулировано его определение. Затем описываемые институты и организации обследовали количественный статус агротуризма в Польше за последние несколько десятилетий. В основной части статьи была представлена позиция численного агротуризма в Польше и в отдельных провинциях. Характеризуется количеством мест в квартирах, а также их использованием. Была также представлена информация о количестве туристов (в том числе иностранных туристов), использующих эту форму сельского туризма и количестве ночей.*

**Ключевые слова:** сельский туризм, агротуризм, агротуризм, размещение, польза.

#### **Annotation**

##### **Zawadka J.**

##### **Agritourism lodgings in Poland and their utilization in 2011-2015**

*In the initial part of the article presents the genesis of of agritourism in Poland and were formulated its definition. Then described institutions and organizations surveyed quantitative status agritourism lodgings in Poland over the last few decades. In the main part of the paper was presented the position numeric agritourism lodgings in Poland and in individual provinces. Characterized by the number of beds in lodgings, as well as their use. Was also presented information on the number of tourists (including foreign tourists) utilization this form of rural tourism and the number of nights.*

**Key words:** rural tourism, agritourism, Agrotourism lodging, utilization accommodation, Poland.