Contemporary Threats to the Development of Sustainable Urban Tourism

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1 Introduction

Cities are one of the most common tourist destinations. They are both a destination, and to a large extent, are decisive on tourist transit traffic. This study presents issues related to threats to the functioning of urban tourist destinations in the context of shaping sustainable tourism. Crisis phenomena were classified, distinguishing exogenous, endogenous and mixed phenomena. Particular attention was paid to mixed phenomena that are caused both by the urban economy and the activity of residents, as well as by tourist traffic. These issues are illustrated by case studies.

The main purpose of the work is to identify threats affecting the possibility of shaping sustainable tourism in urban destinations. Additional postulative aspects related to the assumptions of shaping the policy of the development of sustainable urban tourism were also pointed out. For many years, the issues raised have been popular in scientific studies on the functioning of the tourism economy in terms of tourism threats, sustainable tourism and tourism policy. Although the issues raised are of interest to the scientific circles, in the tourism market practice these issues remain an important and constantly unsolved problem. Despite the activity of international organizations, governments, territorial self-governments and cooperating institutions that support their activities, the issues of sustainable tourism, generally and particularly in cities, as well as the threats related to tourism in urban destinations, are still a problem that is much more often undertaken in scientific and educational studies than solved in socio-economic practice.
2 City Tourism

One of the functions of cities is the tourist function. The significance of this function is increasing, which results from the fact that cities are more and more often chosen as destinations for tourist trips for various motives. They also constitute tourist transit traffic (Bramwell 1998). However, since cities are multifunctional by design, there is a system of relations between the tourist function and other cities that is implemented by the city. City tourism is one of the most dynamically developing forms of tourism (Ashworth and Page 2011; Maitland and Ritchie 2010), becoming in many destinations one of the most important elements of shaping economic effects (Postma et al. 2017), being the basis of the creation of socio-economic development (Karski 1990) by influencing tourist entrepreneurship in cities (Bednarczyk 2010; Douglas and Derrett 2001), the labour market (Ladkin 2011) and the standard of living (Kim et al. 2013; Andereck and Jurowski 2006). It is difficult to interpret urban tourism unequivocally, due to the wide spectrum of motives of tourist arrivals that shape-tourist consumption in cities (Edwards et al. 2008; Gospodini 2001). Urban tourism that is often interpreted as metropolitan (Hall 2002) is associated with the destination to which tourist traffic is directed. It is an urban area, or, more broadly, a metropolitan area, with extensive urban infrastructure including transport, stay (accommodation and catering), cultural, sport and recreation, entertainment, commercial, communal and other services for both the needs of tourist traffic and the needs of permanent residents of cities (Rani 2017; Panasiuk 2007). Typical goals attracting tourists to cities are: sightseeing, culture, business, sports, family and social interaction, and shopping. An important element that generates urban tourist traffic is the organization of events, which, in large metropolises, are often spectacular in nature and temporarily affect highly intensified tourism. These events pertain to sport, culture, entertainment, commerce and conferences. However, in the case of some cities, they are also recreational, health-centered (including spa and wellness) and religious in nature.

A city that has destination tourist traffic directed to it is a tourist destination (Borzyszkowski 2012). A tourist destination from the point of view of demand (a direction tourist traffic goes to) is understood as the destination (city) associated with its characteristic functions and properties (Leiper 2004). According to the considerations, a tourist destination should be understood in terms of subject. It is a single entity (institution) or a set of tourist market entities operating in the tourist area, dealing with creating conditions for practicing tourism and creating, and sharing and promoting a tourist offer in this area (Kesić and Pawlić 2001). In this approach therefore, a destination is not only a place. It is also a system of institutions managing the tourist offerings of a city (urban tourist product) that the competent entities representing the destination are responsible for (Page and Connell 1993; Meler 1998), including the implementation of tasks in the field of sustainable development. The entities that institutionally create urban tourist destinations are as follows: the city’s local government, local tourist organizations, economic tourist
self-government organizations operating in a city, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) and other tourist organizations cooperating with the above mentioned entities. The tourist offering of an urban destination consists of commercial services offered by tourist enterprises (e.g. accommodation, catering, local transport, guidebooks) and by public entities alone or in cooperation with commercial entities. These services may be of a market nature, but also may be provided on a non-profit basis (e.g. tourist information, leisure services, cultural, entertainment, sports and recreational events) (Panasiuk 2014). The decisive part of non-profit services is available to both city residents and tourists.

3 Sustainable City Tourism

The essence of sustainable development comes down to shaping development to enable meeting today’s needs without limiting the opportunity for future generations (Adamczyk and Nitkiewicz 2008). Therefore, the basis for sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of modern times without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Issues of sustainable development refer directly to tourism, urban tourism in particular, which through mass tourism and its constant global growth has a significant impact on the environment (Harris et al. 2012). Not only do high dynamics of tourist traffic in urban destinations bring benefits associated with the improvement of the quality of life while at the tourism site, but they also create dysfunction in its development particularly in relation to mass tourism. The issue of protection and prevention of irreversible degradation of the natural environment and, above all, natural tourist values, is of particular importance for the quality of life of tourism receptionists and the tourists themselves.

The concept of sustainable tourism emerged as a result of research on the links between tourism, environment and development. The basis of the concept of sustainable tourism is to achieve harmony between the needs of tourists, the environment and local communities. Sustainable tourism refers to the broadly understood concept of tourist development in an environmentally friendly way in tourist destinations (Zaręba 2006). Responsible and ethical tourism involves organizing tourist travel in a way that ensures full responsibility for the changes caused in other people’s lives, in their social, cultural and natural environment. It also means providing tourists with better experiences and tourist companies with greater development opportunities (Pender and Sharpley 2008). According to the definition included in Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism Economy, sustainable tourism is understood as one that meets the needs of modern tourists and tourist destinations, while ensuring that these needs can be met in the future (Kurek 2008).

The concept of sustainable tourism development refers primarily to the determination of an acceptable increase in the volume of tourism, one that would not cause negative changes in the environment, which in turn is crucial for the quality of life in the future. It should be emphasized that sustainable tourism is not a type or form
of tourism. Instead, it is a way of functioning, organizing and managing the urban tourism economy (Nijkamp and Verdonkschot 2000; Brelik 2015). It means that from the point of view of urban tourist destinations, such competences are possessed by the city’s self-government with all institutions and business entities cooperating with the city, serving mainly inbound traffic and dealing with the creation and sharing of the tourist offerings. Behaviours and activity of entities operating in urban tourist destinations should create harmonious relations between the broadly understood environment, including both the natural and anthropogenic system, and tourism development. Therefore, it can be concluded that sustainable tourism refers to a situation where negative consequences of tourism activities are not irreversible for the environment, while bringing positive effects to tourists, communities of reception areas, as well as entities providing tourist services.

The use of the concept of sustainable tourism in the conditions of an urban tourist destination applies to all entities involved in the tourism development process: tourists, residents, tourist enterprises and the destination itself (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). The implementation of sustainable tourism rules in practice is associated with the quality of tourist consumption. The level of quality depends on the extent to which the development pace of entities which provide tourist offerings takes into account the possibilities of absorbing the natural environment as well as the volume and structure of tourist traffic, including the impact on guests’ pro-environmental behaviour.

Exploitation of the natural environment and the associated natural tourism values in the tourist service process should take tourist use standards into account (Tang 2015). The standards regarding the natural environment take the form of indicators of tourist capacity and absorption. Tourist capacity indicates the maximum level of use of tourist infrastructures, resulting e.g. from the number of places in the municipal accommodation base. From the point of view of sustainable tourism issues, the tourist absorption index (which determines the maximum ability of a urban destination to accept the burden of tourist traffic) is more important. This indicator informs us about the size of the load of a surface unit, which on the one hand provides guests with optimal conditions of stay, and on the other setsthe upper limit of the permissible load of devastation processes in the environment. In many urban destinations, significant excess of the upper absorption rates are observed. It causes a gradual degradation of the elements of the natural and cultural environment. Frequent excess of these ratios results from the need to maximize economic profitability, which is the result of intensive development of the tourist economy.

4 Contemporary Threats in Tourism

The issues of sustainable development are associated with global premises on potential threats to the environment, which are the result of social and economic activities. The most frequently mentioned global threats include issues of such nature as (Panasiuk 2008):
demographic (environmental pollution is advancing faster than the increasing of number of inhabitants),
- geographical (disproportion between the possibilities of the natural environment and development of production factors),
- technical (uncontrolled development of modern techniques and technologies, from the point of view of ecological requirements),
- economic (producers do not care about the damage in nature).

The dynamic development of global tourism is conditioned by numerous phenomena that are both positive in nature, while stimulating development, and negative in nature, in the form of threats or crises. Threats are mainly exogenous, periodic or permanent, affecting the state of tourism development, and above all the levels of tourist offerings and satisfaction of tourists’ needs in urban destinations. It should be noted that tourist traffic, both destination and transit, is accumulated in cities, especially the largest ones. Therefore, the negative phenomena observed in global tourism concern mainly cities and may have a more intense course there than in the case of areas with developed tourist function in the periphery. Hence, interest in threats to modern tourism should mainly concern urban destinations, especially large tourist metropolises.

The most common threats from the viewpoint of the impact on the functioning abilities of urban tourist destinations include:

1. Exogenous threats, i.e., independent of the functioning of urban tourism (Panasiuk 2013):
   - adverse and unexpected changes in the economic situation, with a mega-, macro- and meso-economic range (e.g. tour operator market),
   - natural disasters in cities and neighbouring areas,
   - climate changes, especially for cities located near sea basins,
   - prolonged adverse weather conditions, mainly in cities of leisure tourist function,
   - industrial disasters in cities and surrounding areas, including transport disasters,
   - social (internal) conflicts not related to overtourism,
   - military and political conflicts (external—bilateral and multilateral),
   - terrorist activities,
   - migration crises,
   - epidemics and pandemics,
   - threats related to the use of information technologies (Zhiyang et al. 2012).

2. Mixed exogenous/endogenous, the processes taking place in urban tourist destinations are imposed by the processes depending on the intensity of tourist traffic overlap:
   - excessive transport congestion (Wilk and Pawlak 2014), causing difficulty getting to and moving around the city’s tourist destination (Riganti and Nijkamp 2008),
the state of the municipal economy functioning in relation to tourist services, including public transport, waste management, access to municipal media; an appropriate level of security becomes a potential threat mainly in the conditions of fluctuations in the volume of tourist traffic,

- condition of the natural environment, including the condition of air and water purity (Łapko and Panasiuk 2019), as well as conditions resulting from the functioning of the transport system in the city and the state of municipal waste management.

3. Endogenous—related to the volume and structure of tourism in the city—i.e. overtourism (Panasiuk 2019b).

The listed phenomena are of a diverse nature. Their causes are natural, social, economic and political. The presented threats with varying severity may affect the interest in the tourist offerings of urban tourist destinations. All of the above phenomena, in relation to the processes taking place on the tourist market, bring direct social and economic effects.

These threats directly affect the limitation of interest in tourist arrivals to cities and their surroundings covered by the above-mentioned phenomena. However, they can indirectly influence general decisions regarding tourist trips to neighbouring urban destinations, tourist regions, countries or even to the continent. In extreme cases they cause an almost complete limitation of global tourist mobility in which large urban metropolises, especially airports, have a decisive role in reaching and providing transit to tourist destinations. In practice, this is happening for the first time in the history of modern tourism and concerns the COVID-19 pandemic.

Negative phenomena in tourism affect changes in the structure of demand, and thus cause changes on the supply side of the tourist market, limiting the revenues of tourism enterprises and at the same time determining the deterioration of the economic situation of cities and people living in them, mainly those employed in the tourism economy.

The most important premise regarding the recognition of threats affecting the functioning of urban tourist destinations is related to the security of tourism economy entities and above all, the safety of tourists and residents in urban tourist destinations. Sustainable tourism policy also plays an important role in this respect.

5 Empirical Examples of Potential Threats to the Functioning of Urban Tourist Destinations in the Context of Sustainable Tourism

For the purpose of empirical illustration of the undertaken problems, two research studies on threats to the functioning of urban tourist destinations will be presented:

1. Water tourism transport service based on the example of a selected city.
2. Condition of air pollution in urban destinations and its affect on travel decisions of potential tourists.

### 5.1 Water Tourism Transport Service

The example focuses on the issue of water transport tourism in Szczecin—a port city and capital of the region in northwestern Poland, inhabited in 2019 by approx. 402,000 residents. The volume of incoming tourist traffic in the city is relatively low, both generally and in relation to water tourism. The relation between the tourist traffic generated by water tourism participants and the demand for services was analysed, with particular emphasis on transport services, as well as the demand arising from the operation of the vessels for supply and waste collection services.

Water tourism is one of the forms of tourism identified, due to the setting of its practice. It covers various types of recreational and sport activities in water, on water, as well as the use of water as a transport route, especially for cruising and sailing. In the latter approach, water tourism creates demand for land transport services, for freight transport in particular, mainly road transport. Regardless of the benefits directly addressed to the needs of tourists, a significant part includes benefits directed to the needs of tourists whose recipients are mainly permanent residents (Ashworth and Godall 2013). The fast and reliable movement of urban goods supports the urban lifestyle, supporting retail trade, sport, recreation, culture and entertainment (Quak 2008). The product distribution system is responsible for supplying accommodation, catering facilities and means of passenger transport, including water—both at sea and inland.

As part of municipal services, special attention should be paid to:

- public transport used for the needs of tourist traffic,
- other communal services, i.e. water and sewage, heating, purification, energy distribution, which are necessary for the provision of services by accommodation facilities and at the same time support the operation of vessels calling at ports, such as sea and river cruisers and yachts, served by freight transport, including specialized vehicles.

Water tourism and its transport service can be a significant problem in sustainable tourism activities. This applies in the widest extent to cruising, which serves thousands of passengers in a short time, along with the service of the ship itself, which becomes a significant challenge for municipal services.

The total number of tourists in the city selected for the research, using the accommodation base in 2017 was approx. 380,000. The number of water tourism participants was around 13,400, which represents about 3.4% of the total volume of tourist traffic, including 2354 cruiser sea passengers, 8423 river cruiser passengers and 2568 yacht passengers (Łapko and Panasiuk 2019).

In the case of sea cruisers the average time of stopping at the port was 10 h, during which passengers had an opportunity to explore the city or use commercial services.
This generates demand for passenger car transport services. During this time, vessels are supplied and several dozen tons of cargo are delivered. What is also important is that sea passenger ships deliver waste (up to approx. 3.5 tons), for which several containers with a capacity of 10–15 m³ are used, that, after being filled, are exported to a waste collection point at the port. Food waste is picked up the same day, and the rest of waste remaining must be taken to a landfill within 4 days.

River cruising has the largest share in water tourism traffic in the analysed city. Annually, it is approximately 130 ships, 8400 passengers and 1400 crew members. Ships can be served by local carriers with bus rolling stock, as well as to a limited extent by public transport. Therefore, it can be stated that tourism in the field of water tourism does not fundamentally affect the state of use of the city’s transport system. Despite organizational and logistical problems related to the short-term stay of larger maritime vessels and their service, the scale of water tourism did not significantly affect the state of tourism management in the city and the aspects of sustainable tourism. In 2017, a great maritime event took place, which was the final of the Tall Ships Races regatta. It caused a significantly greater demand for transport services related to the needs of water tourism participants and their units for one week. The event is organized irregularly and in the long run does not create significant threats.

Tourists arriving in ports on board of yachts use the widest range of port services. It results from the fact that they organize tourist trips on their own, providing themselves with food, among other things (Jennings 2007). Limited space on vessels, and often the limited possibilities of storing food in appropriate conditions, necessitates shopping in ports or using catering services. The yacht docks at the port for an average of 1–2 days. Sailors wanting to sightsee the city organize their tours and often use public transport. The marina has 40 guest and 33 residential places. In 2017, 1027 yachts and about 2600 tourists entered the port. Waste collection is not a problem here. The bins at the port are emptied cyclically.

The presented example concerning the service of water tourism transport in the city indicates that the relatively small scale of both water and tourist traffic does not significantly threaten the natural environment of the city. The seaport along with the municipal economy have no problems in handling this traffic and do not reduce the quality level of residents’ lives and do not negatively affect the state of sustainable tourism.

5.2 Smog as an Assessment Element of Tourist Attractiveness

The assessment method for the level of tourist competitiveness (Crouch and Ritchie 1999), which is used in research on the level of tourist development in an area, is tourist attractiveness of the area (Hu and Ritchie 1993; Cracolici and Nijkamp 2008). Tourist attractiveness, defined as a sum of subjective and objective assessments of individual elements of tourist supply within the limits set by a specific price and income level (Wodejko 1998), can be used to assess the state of sustainable tourism.
in cities. In addition to the basic elements that determine the level of tourist attractiveness, such as tourist values, tourist development, and transport accessibility, an important element of the assessment is the condition of the natural environment and the results of its protection activities (Milewski 2005). Specific aspects of measurement include, first and foremost, issues related to the status of: treated wastewater, generated and managed waste, devastated, degraded and reclaimed land, as well as emissions and pollution reduction, including air quality in particular (Schianetz and Kavanagh 2008).

Tourist attractiveness is a measure that enables qualitative assessment of a city’s tourist products over a certain period of time. Based on an individual quality assessment of an overall tourist offer and its individual elements, a tourist makes its collective assessment and makes purchasing decisions (Decrop 1999). This measure also applies to the assessment of tasks carried out by municipal authorities in the field of environmental protection, alone and in cooperation with entities offering services to tourists. It is also important to determine the tendency of indicators (e.g. emission of pollutants—improvement or deterioration) (Panasiuk 2011). One of the detailed elements determining the tourist attractiveness of an urban destination is air quality, analyzed by the emission of solid and gaseous pollutants (dust and chemical compounds) (Anaman and Looi 2000).

The level of air quality, as an element of tourist attractiveness assessment, determines the tourism competitiveness of an urban destination and informs about the potential level of threats to tourist participants. Information on the state of air quality in the city can directly influence decisions related to going on a tourist trip to a specific city. Many factors can influence these decisions, including:

- travel obligation: private, business,
- travel theme: leisure, health, cognitive,
- accompanying persons: alone, with family, including children,
- departure time: in a high or low season, especially in the period with more or less favorable level of air quality,
- method of organizing your stay: on your own or purchased from a travel agency,
- detailed elements of the offer: e.g. means of transport, including public,
- the scope of the offerings and tourist stay in the city—e.g. staying mainly in closed facilities (e.g. cultural, sports and tourist base), as well as in places and objects located outdoors,
- health: the participants’ health condition, e.g. related to diseases (e.g. respiratory system, allergies) or susceptibility to poor wellbeing in conditions of poor air quality.

The state of air purity and information available on this subject become factors that influence not only travel decisions and the structure of the elements determining a full tourist offer, but also the overall tourist image and potential tourists, i.e., people who make comparisons of places (cities) that may become their destinations in a closer or longer perspective for their own needs. These issues can be subjected to a long-term assessment along with observation of the activities of public authorities, including those in individual tourist cities that are related to the impact on the air
quality level in a certain time perspective (Avgostis and Achana 2002). Problems that take into account the quality of air in the perception of tourists are of a long-term nature and directly affect the assessment of tourist destinations and decisions of arrivals to cities, and is confirmed by research conducted in Europe (Arbul et al. 2015; Katircioglu et al. 2014) and China (Dong et al. 2019; Zhang et al. 2015; Xu and Reed 2019; Ahmad et al. 2018), as well as in other countries (Ng et al. 2016). Therefore, reduced air quality can influence decisions related to tourist arrivals in cities and require action from local authorities to limit the negative impact of smog on urban tourism economy through measures to improve air quality in the short and long term. At the same time, it should be emphasized that, especially in European cities, low air quality is particularly relevant to the autumn–winter period when intensive pollution is emitted related to the heating of houses, flats and buildings operated by enterprises and institutions, in addition to emissions of industrial and transport pollution occurring with varying intensity throughout the year.

The study of air pollution’s impact on inbound tourism in cities concerns the decisions of tourist trips to cities by potential tourists. The survey was conducted in 2019 on a sample of 509 people living in various regions of Poland, aged 18–75. The respondents were asked about the impact of the state of air pollution on decisions regarding domestic and foreign tourist trips to cities, separating business and private trips. They indicated that air quality is taken into account only to a small extent when planning tourist trips. Less than 4% of the respondents said that they are always interested in information on the subject of air quality before traveling to cities, and about 17% only sometimes. At the same time, this kind of information is a little more sought after for private trips rather than for business ones. In relation to trips to cities in Poland, about 5% of respondents said that they are always looking for such information, 18.5% sometimes, and when traveling abroad, 2.5% always, and 15.5% sometimes. Almost 55% of respondents have never checked such information, and about 25% have not even thought about it. In the case of trips with children, interest in information on the level of air quality when traveling to Polish cities increases to 7%. However, in the case of foreign cities, only 1% of respondents checked such information. Much more interest in the state of air quality in urban tourist destinations was indicated by tourists taking long-term private trips (over 1 month)—13% (Łapko et al. 2020). Basing on the selected research results, it is difficult to draw clear conclusions. The growing problem of smog in many Polish cities has not so far significantly affected the purchasing decisions related to urban tourism. On the other hand, however, it should be noted that the consumers perceive the problem. This is not supported by the results of empirical research but based on conversations with travel agents selling tourist packages, such as to cities in China where customers inquire about smog in cities that are potential destinations. After an agent points out poor air conditions in a particular city, customers decide against such a destination and look for another offer.

Both case studies on threats to sustainable urban tourism cover two aspects:

- the impact of tourist service on the urban natural environment, and
the condition of the natural environment for decisions related to tourist arrivals in cities.

Relations between tourist traffic to cities, urban tourist economy and the natural environment along with the socio-cultural one are linked and mutually conditioning, in accordance with the general concept of sustainable tourism. In both examples, the analysed phenomena are characterized by a relatively low level of intensity. In the first example, the volume and structure of water tourism traffic in the analysed city, despite the fact that it presents some potential threat to the sustainable tourism economy of the city and the condition of the natural environment, does not cause interference due to its relatively small scale. Therefore, it can be concluded that, above all, the mass and high concentration of tourism over time constitute the greatest threats to sustainable urban tourism. In the second example, despite the widely available information on poor air conditions in many urban tourist destinations with well-developed tourism, no significant restrictions on travelling are observed. This demonstrates the common model of tourist behaviour associated with tourist trips to the most popular large tourist metropolises without significant impact of certain threats, but also suggests relatively low social awareness. In the conducted research, the respondents were asked to identify a city, which in their opinion is associated with risk due to reasons of low air quality. However, it is difficult to objectify the results of these studies. The respondents were Poles, and they recognized large global metropolises, including European ones, as well as Asian cities and many large cities in Poland as such cities.

6 Assumptions of the Concept of Sustainable Urban Tourism Development Policy

A constant increase in tourist traffic in many urban tourist destinations and the dynamically progressing development of mass tourism cause an increase in demand for the natural and socio-cultural environment. Pressure on the pace of tourism development may result in the inability to defend the environment. Therefore, public authorities must intervene and include issues related to the impact on sustainable tourism within the scope of objectives, activities and financing under their tourism policy. Only then it will be possible to create responsible sustainable urban tourism, which should be the basis for the involvement of all participants, i.e., tourist enterprises, city government, tourists, and residents.

The presented issues regarding threats to the development of sustainable urban tourism should be the basis for actions undertaken by competent tourism policy entities. Tourism policy, as a sectorial policy, is the activity of determining economic, political, social and cultural objectives that are related to the development of tourism; it obtains comprehensive positive effects resulting from the existence of supply and demand and it strives to meet social needs in the field of tourism by specifying the necessary means. More fully, tourism policy should be defined as an activity of the state and its organs, consisting of the determination of economic and social
goals related to tourism, as well as the selection of appropriate instruments needed to achieve them, thereby leading to the shaping of the tourism market structure in tourist demand and supply–demand relations. According to sustainable tourism, the main tasks of tourism policy include: shaping the optimal size and structure of tourism, coordinating the development of tourism with other areas of the economy, as well as rational use of tourism, labor resources and capital in the field of tourism (Bosiacki and Panasiuk 2017).

In practice, tourism policy is pursued by policy entities that are public bodies, including local governments and supporting institutions. Entities use specific policy instruments, which are the means to achieve the objectives and tasks, influencing policy recipients, i.e., suppliers of tourist offers (enterprises and tourist destinations) and tourist consumers (tourists).

In subjective terms, tourism policy has a hierarchical structure. It is made up of entities as follows: global (e.g. UN WTO), European Union institutions, national central bodies (e.g. NTA—national tourist administration), local government units and tourist organizations. From the viewpoint of development policies of urban sustainable tourism, the bodies of municipal self-government and cooperating institutions are decisive (e.g. local tourist organizations). From the research on sustainable tourism policy carried out by Guo et al. (2019), the basic issues include ones related to participants in tourism policy (policy entities and recipients), planning goals and tasks, as well as climate policy and its impact on sustainable tourism.

Priority measures to develop sustainable urban tourism include (Pender and Sharpley 2008; Niezgoda 2006; Panasiuk 2008; Gawel 2013):

- striving to preserve and protect nature resources and native culture,
- shaping diversity of natural and cultural assets along with activities that support their maintenance,
- involving residents in the development of tourism (already at the planning stage) and creating new sources of income,
- integrated planning in the urban economy,
- focusing the tourism industry on reducing waste and saving energy and water,
- stimulating pro-ecological behaviour among tourist staff, residents and tourists,
- creating international openness and tolerance as well as a healthy lifestyle in harmony with nature,
- promotion, by city authorities, of an open market and free policy exchange of tourist services subordinated to the principles of sustainable development and respecting international environmental law,
- pro-quality initiatives taking into account appropriate ecological development, shaping the relation between tourist growth and city tourism development,
- care for human health, both tourists and residents.

Urban sustainable tourism policy should be a way of encouraging new forms of economic activity through employment policy and promoting environmental protection. The planned activities should be undertaken as part of the participatory process, in cooperation with the municipal government along with direct providers of tourist services, by defining specific goals and indicators of sustainable development in
order to limit negative effects of tourism on the environment as well as promoting the preservation of local and traditional values. The adopted goals and tasks, along with the applied sustainable development indicators, should apply to both short and long-term activities (Castellani and Sala 2010). Risk associated with the policy should be taken into account in the process of task implementation. One of the most common barriers to the practical implementation of sustainable tourism policy is the relation between economic priorities and social and environmental issues. This barrier is, among others, strongly associated with the short-term policy of local authorities, determined by their term of office. Therefore, short-term goals dominate. Policies for sustainable urban tourism require close coordination of municipal self-government with tourism economy entities and entities representing other economic sectors, i.e., transport, housing, environmental protection and resource protection, as well as institutions dealing with the fiscal system, social affairs and resource management (Dodds and Butler 2019). According to the document adopted by OECD countries (Policy Statement—Tourism Policies for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth 2017), tourism economy in the context of sustainable development should be treated as an engine of inclusive growth, creating high-quality jobs, business opportunities and regional development, mitigating negative impact on local communities and better dissemination of benefits in the city economy as well as among residents and tourists.

The policy of sustainable urban tourism development should be long-term and lead to an attempt to limit the impact of threats on the functioning of urban tourism economy. These activities should be based on the introduction of policy instruments (economic, administrative and legal, promotional and informational) and indicators for the assessment of sustainable development, ultimately affecting the offer of tourism enterprises, tourists’ purchasing behaviour, and the ratio and mutual relations between tourists and residents in order to limit negative effects of threats that affect consolidation and development of sustainable urban tourism.

7 Conclusion

On the basis of the analyses of issues related to sustainable urban tourism in the face of existing threats, the causes of these phenomena were identified, distinguishing those of an exogenous and endogenous nature and those which, depending on their detailed nature, concern both aspects. One of the most important problems of modern tourism, especially urban destinations, is overtourism. These issues have not been characterized. They result from mass tourism and are widely and thoroughly analysed in the literature (Dodds and Butler 2019; Seraphin et al. 2019; Goodwin 2017; Panasiuk 2019a). A less perceived problem related to the functioning of urban tourist destinations are the issues of the condition of the natural environment, an example of which is, among others, air quality. Problems with smog are slightly taken into account by tourists when choosing urban destinations, as evidenced by the presented results of empirical research. From the viewpoint of a tourist coming from Poland and living in a large urban agglomeration, experiences regarding the state of air
quality in the hometown should influence the choice of tourist destinations that guarantee smog-free air. Despite the potentially low interest in air pollution indicators by Polish tourists travelling to cities in the country and abroad, it is necessary to emphasize the need to be interested in these problems both in the scale of cities and in macroeconomic terms. Similarly important problems in securing adequate state of sustainable tourism in the city is the functioning of municipal services in handling inbound tourism, including mainly transport and cleaning. In the field of maintaining sustainable development of urban tourism, taking into account the existing threats, appropriate actions should be taken, especially long-term ones by the municipal government in cooperation with all stakeholders that represent the tourist economy (tourism enterprises) along with their clients (tourists) and urban society.

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