5.1 Introduction

Academic tourism of university staff has been developing in a large part within the Erasmus programme, now known as Erasmus Plus (Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013) since its renaming on the 1st of January 2014. Such trips have been beneficial both for the travelling staff and the destination institutions that host programme participants. The benefits have been listed in the “Report on benefits achieved through Erasmus Plus—a comparative analysis of current practices in Erasmus Staff mobility at European HEIs” (2018), according to which the vast majority of participants were satisfied to have achieved all their set goals during their mobility, whilst the remainder reported partial achievement of their goals. Overall, 99% of those who went on a trip thought that their participation in the Erasmus staff mobility programme had met their expectations to the full. In terms of impact, mobility most strongly affected their professional development. In practice, mobility opened up a new platform for teaching observation, provided research opportunities and exposed academic staff to different management systems. On the other hand, the benefits for the hosting institutions not only broadened intellectual horizons...
(exchanging knowledge, experience, boosting innovations, etc.), but also brought specific economic benefits through participants’ expenditure on goals connected with their travel and stay.

In the research undertaken, the scale of academic staffs’ trips from three universities in Poland (located in Warsaw, Poznan and Lublin) under the Erasmus Plus program in the period 2014–2020 was analysed. Particular attention was paid to the diversity of the features of trips, including destinations (countries, cities). The obtained results allowed us to capture general trends as well as differences in travel of employees of particular universities.

The study included a diagnosis of the trips of the staff participating in the Erasmus Plus programme from the three selected Polish universities mentioned above in the years 2014–2020. Particular attention was given to the diversity of the trips’ specific features, including their destinations (countries, cities). The obtained results revealed general trends as well as differences in the trips of employees of individual universities.

The chapter consists of, apart from the Introduction, which presents the problem, purpose and scope of this research, five parts (Literature review, Data and methods, Results, Discussion of results and Conclusion). The Literature review focuses attention on two main issues. Firstly, it presents the discussion on the terminology applied in literature, especially the difference between “academic tourism” and “educational tourism”. Secondly, the main groups of topics of academic staff mobility are presented: the economic aspects of these trips and the issue of brain drain. This section is followed by a breakdown of the data and methods used. The Results section presents the main information on participants’ mobility, destinations (countries and cities) as well as trends in academic trips and the differentiation of these points between the analysed universities. In the Discussion of results, the Authors focused on selected trends in academic staff mobility, for instance on the greater activity of women in relation to men and more frequent trips of representatives of social sciences and humanities in comparison with other disciplines. The authors also highlighted the role of a destination’s attractiveness and tradition of cooperation in the selection process of a reception institution. In the Conclusions, the Authors drew attention to various factors that may disrupt trends in the development of mobility of academic staff.

5.2 Review of the Literature

According to Rodríguez et al. (2013: 89), “academic tourism”, is defined “as a distinct type of tourism that would include any stays made in higher education institutions in places outside their usual environment for a period of less than 1 year, the main objective of which is to complete degree-level studies in universities and/or attending language courses organized by these centres. Therefore, one could differentiate between domestic academic tourism (if the move to study takes place within the country) and international academic tourism (if the move is abroad)”.
this understanding, academic tourism can be also defined as a part of educational tourism, which is determined as a tourist activity undertaken by those for whom education and learning is the main aim of their trip (Ritchie 2003: 18), so there are trips focused on expanding participants’ knowledge in a specific field or topic. An educational journey can be an open event, carried out by people interested in the proposed topic or field, or closed—intended for participants of a specific educational project (students, pupils, participants of workshops, representatives of a professional group etc.) (Mikos von Rohrscheidt 2008: 77). It can be assumed that academic tourism is part of educational tourism, and the type of participants (i.e. students and academic teachers, or more broadly academic staff) is the distinguishing feature of academic tourism. However, in many papers the term “educational tourism” is applied to students’ and academic teachers’ trips (e.g. Lam et al. 2011; Abubakar et al. 2014; Tashlai and Ivanov 2014).

For the analysis of this phenomenon it is important to note that in the European and Polish documents the term “academic tourism” or “educational tourism” is replaced by the term “mobility of students and academic staff” as the most universal and objective. In the context of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme—which among other functions will encompass the Erasmus Programme—“mobility” is defined as “spending a period of time in another Member State, in order to undertake study, work experience, other learning or teaching activity or related administrative activity, supported as appropriate by preparatory or refresher courses in the host language or working language” (Constructing Paths to Staff Mobility 2007: 10).

Research into academic tourism is usually focused on student trips (e.g. Golembski et al. 2002; Findlay et al. 2006; Xu et al. 2009; Latosińska and Ludwicka 2010; Slabbert et al. 2012; Lee 2014; Tashlai and Ivanov 2014). The majority of such studies concern international academic tourism. In line with the growing number of articles about students’ educational trips, a variety of issues discussed in the papers can be observed. Most frequently analysed are directions of travel and motives determining the study-abroad destination are analysed (Findlay et al. 2006; Llewellyn-Smith and McCabe 2008; Lam et al. 2011; Abubakar et al. 2014; Lee 2014; Tashlai and Ivanov 2014). Student activity in the field of tourist trips and activities undertaken during the stay, known as travel behaviour, was also examined (Xu et al. 2009; Slabbert et al. 2012). An interesting point of view was presented in the article of Rodríguez et al. (2012). The authors analysed the experience of European Erasmus students in Spanish universities over the 2000–2010 period and attempted to justify that academic tourism is more sustainable than conventional tourism.

The main attention in scientific research focused on students’ travel is not surprising because—according to information from the WYSE Travel Confederation—youth travel has become one of the fastest growing segments of international tourism, representing more than 23% of over one billion tourists travelling internationally each year. A clear trend in the youth travel market has been a shift from leisure travel towards purpose-drive travel, such as work and/or study abroad, volunteer travel and language learning travel (Facts and Stats, website) to improve
their resumes. An additional factor regarding the growing number of trips young people make are wider opportunities to travel, for instance, different academic programs such as Erasmus or Erasmus Mundus as well as cheaper accommodation facilities and transport services. For example, cheaper hostels have overtaken hotels as the most popular form of accommodation for example. And it is important that they are adapting to meet the demands of modern youth travellers and increasing the variety of services they offer (Mohn 2013).

There is little literature available dedicated to trips taken by academic staff. Semi-permanent migration of academic staff to take up jobs in higher education institutions (HEI) outside their home country is also part of academic tourism or—according to the nomenclature of European documents—of academic mobility. It is worth adding that academic tourism of university staff has been developing in a large part within the Erasmus programme, now known as Erasmus Plus since its renaming on 1st January 2014 (Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013). But academic mobility has a long tradition—from the scientific expeditions to Alexandria in ancient times, through trips to developing universities in the Middle Ages and grand tours in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to contemporary migrations to different American, European and Australian higher educational institutions (Jałowiecki and Gorzelak 2004).

Studies into academic staff mobility can be divided into two main groups. In the first group the emphasis is on the economic aspects. This group includes research in which mobility is presented in the context of brain drain and brain gain (e.g. Hansen 2003; Jałowiecki and Gorzelak 2004; Nunn 2005; Brandi et al. 2011). But in the opinion of some authors (e.g. see Lazonick 2007), current international migrations of skilled personnel have also positive aspects and cannot always be defined as a “brain drain” (fr. “fuite de cerveau”—literally “brain escape”). Positive feedback effects exist consisting of remittances (Docquier and Rapoport 2000), trade networks (Gould 1994; Rauch and Trindade 2002) and return migration, bringing back new skills and experience (Domingues Dos Santos and Postel-Vinay 2003). Also, as Ferro (2004: 382) wrote, a “perspective on local economic development induced by skilled migration refers to the fostering of local human capital formation in the country of origin through a mirroring effect whereby the local population invests in its own education”.

It is necessary to remember that according to Jałowiecki and Gorzelak (2004: 299), “even though the term “brain drain” is used quite frequently, studies on the migration of science professionals involve a high degree of terminological ambiguity”. In English literature, the term “brain drain” first appeared in publications on the outflow of scientists and the higher educated, in general, from developing countries. And in this context, we can think of a country being drained of the well-educated section of its population. On the other hand, the word “escape” refers more precisely to migrant people who leave their country due to difficult living conditions or unsatisfactory professional prospects. Many researchers are admitting that the free circulation of people is a fundamental right of the individual, regardless of the reasons of migration. But if the mobility of high-skilled staff refers to migration from a developing country to a technologically advanced one, then the concept of
“brain drain” is valid (e.g. Brandi 2006; Jałowiecki and Gorzelak 2004; Bach 2006). As Brandi et al. (2011: 2) wrote, the mobility of high-skilled staff “must be also considered a major economic activity as it has the potential to create business activities and therefore employment by immigrant entrepreneurs”. These more active, purposeful forms of travel are geared towards personal development, and can also have positive impacts on the destination. This growth represents tremendous socioeconomic opportunities for local communities because youth travellers stimulate local tourism businesses, foster closer social interaction with host populations and champion environmental protection (Facts and Stats, website).

The second group of papers is focused on socio-psychological aspects. In these studies mobility is treated as a factor of career progression (e.g. Morano-Foadi 2005; Kopeć and Szopa 2009; Brandi et al. 2011). So mobility here is presented as the opportunities for academic staff development. Based on the research, it is possible to notice that one of the major motivations for HEI staff who take up posts abroad is the availability of research resources, especially in science and technology (Hansen 2003; Gill 2005; Thorn and Holm-Nielsen 2006; Docquier et al. 2007; Genov 2007; Bogdanovićius and Jodkoniene 2008; Brandi et al. 2011; Hasselbalch 2017). The studies in which the push and pull factors in academic mobility are presented, seem interesting. For instance, Brandi et al. (2011: 11), based on survey research in Italy, defined the following push factors that led the researchers to leave their country of origin: greater professional freedom, difficulty in finding a fixed term research contract, difficulty in finding a job in their own specialist field at home, the possibility to come into contact with other research environments. On the other hand, the host country at the forefront of a given research field, the availability of research equipment and offers of study and research opportunities were defined as the pull factors important for incoming scientists.

These studies are usually focused on analyses of Western European academic staff mobility (e.g. Reyneri 2004; Gill 2005; Morano-Foadi 2005; Sastry 2005; Kopeć and Szopa 2009; Brandi et al. 2011; Swinney and Williams 2016 and others). There are few papers on regional analysis of academic staff mobility from Eastern Europe (e.g. Ferro 2004; Genov 2007; Bogdanovićius and Jodkoniene 2008; Tashlai and Ivanov 2014). In Polish literature this issue is rather seldom undertaken. The issue of Polish academic staff mobility was raised, for instance, in the studies of Jałowiecki et al. (1994), Hryniewicz et al. (1997), Jałowiecki and Gorzelak (2004), Knauff et al. (2008), Zielińska and Kowzan (2016) and in research edited by Bujnicki et al. (2015). Many of them explicitly refer to the brain drain problem as the consequence of the outflow of well-skilled staff for economy and science development (e.g. Jałowiecki et al. 1994; Hryniewicz et al. 1997; Jałowiecki and Gorzelak 2004). For instance, Jałowiecki and Gorzelak’s research (2004) based on a large-scale survey questionnaire in Poland (1043 scientific units employing 30,588 scientists), allowed better understanding of the effects of brain drain and a more accurate interpretation of statistical data.

In other studies, the issue of brain drain is raised as one of many aspects of skilled staff mobility, and the accent is placed on factors of mobility, directions or satisfaction of work in the new destination (e.g. Knauff et al. 2008; work edited by Bujnicki
et al. 2015). The work edited by Bujnicki et al. (2015), for example, addresses in particular factors and initiatives that may favour or hinder the mobility of Polish scientists. Various types of researchers’ mobility were analysed, both domestic and international of different duration. The characteristics of the group of scientists themselves were also taken into account, in which the factors determining migration significantly go beyond strictly economic conditions. In the work of Knauff et al. (2008), based on national and foreign sources, the scale of Polish scientists’ migration was estimated, but the authors focused their attention in long migration. Additionally, based on questionnaire research and analysis of social media such as scientists’ blogs, they analysed directions and motives of travel (adopting the conception of push and pull factors), the nature of stay (e.g. scholarship, research grant) and the weight of different factors considered in the decision to return to the country of origin. In turn, the article by Zielińska and Kowzan (2016) concerns the foreign mobility of people with a PhD degree.

In principle, there are no works presenting the mobility of employees of individual universities in Poland in geographical and temporal approach, which is the main aim of our study.

5.3 Data and Methods

The research is aimed at specifying features of academic mobility of the university staff participating in the Erasmus Plus programme. The study included a diagnosis of the trips from 2014 to 2017 and a prognosis for the following years up to 2020. The database accounted for the trips of the staff from three selected Polish universities: University of Warsaw (UW), Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin (MCSU), and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan (AMU). Statistical data were obtained from the departments of international cooperation of these universities, that are responsible for the organisation administrative support of university staff foreign trips.

The diagnostic element included analyses referring to features such as: the number of participants of respective trips in a given year split according to their gender, the scientific disciplines they represented, destinations, the length of their trips, as well as the funds they had obtained for their travel and stay. Cartographic studies led to the specification of major directions of the trips in respective years, accounting for similarities and differences in travel tendencies of the staff from the three selected universities. The prognosis section (pursuant to the time horizon in the Erasmus Plus programme) includes forecasts for the 2019–2020 period, by means of two methods (UNWTO 2008): (1) the No-change Extrapolation Method and (2) the Simple Moving Average Extrapolation Method.

The No-change Extrapolation Method (UNWTO 2008)—this is the most basic kind of extrapolation of a historical data set (time series), and it is often referred to as the no-change or naive method. Simple extrapolation methods are often called univariant, because they are only interested in change in one factor, our dependent
variable, over time. For this reason, they are also often referred to as time-series-models. No-change models are used very frequently in tourism demand forecasting and, surprisingly, they often give the most accurate calculations. Calculations were made according to the following formula:

\[
F_t = \frac{A_{t-1}}{C_0} \quad (5.1)
\]

\[
F_t = A_{t-1} \times \left( \frac{A_{t-1}}{A_{t-2}} \right) \quad (5.2)
\]

where:

- \(F\) forecast value
- \(A\) actual value
- \(t\) some time period

Simple Moving Average (SMA) Extrapolation Method—in this method we use an average of the last several values in our time-series. The further back one goes in time to create the average, the more ‘typical’ the value is, and the less affected by unusual values in the dependent variable. The equation for the simple moving average model applied was:

\[
F_t = \frac{A_{t-1} + A_{t-2} + A_{t-3}}{n} \quad (5.3)
\]

where:

- \(F\) forecast value
- \(A\) actual value
- \(t\) some time period
- \(n\) number of past time period.

The calculations took into account the data for the last 4 years.

### 5.4 Results

Employees of three Polish universities took a total of 2362 trips to foreign universities in the analysed period (academic years: 2014/2015–2017/2018)—an average of 590 in 1 year. The outgoing group was dominated by women (1581), who constitute on average 67% of the total number of participants (Table 5.1).

The forecasts (Table 5.1 and Fig. 5.1) indicate that according to the No-change Extrapolation Method the average number of academic staff taking part in Erasmus program trips will increase significantly—in 2019/2020 this is an increase of 22% compared to 2014/2015. At the same time, according to this forecast, the participation of men in trips will also increase. A different result is obtained using the Simple Moving Average (SMA) Extrapolation Method. In this case, the projected number of trips will be less than the last recorded value from 2017/2018 (Fig. 5.1). In the case
of extrapolation-based forecasting methods, the basis for inference is that the trends observed in the past will continue. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 epidemic and suspension of academic exchanges from March 2020 (until a period unknown at the time of writing this article), actual data may be lower than that forecast.

The analyzes of broad fields of education and training represented by the participants of the trips showed that almost half of them belong to Arts and humanities. In this field, the Languages group definitely prevails, with 38% of the total number of participants. The participants in this field in similar numbers include

Table 5.1  The number of participants in trips and trip forecasts by sex in individual academic years

| Academic year | Number of participants | Female number | in % | Male number | in % |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------|------|-------------|------|
| 2014/2015     | 566                    | 373           | 65.9 | 193         | 34.1 |
| 2015/2016     | 600                    | 403           | 67.2 | 197         | 32.8 |
| 2016/2017     | 581                    | 397           | 68.3 | 184         | 31.7 |
| 2017/2018     | 615                    | 408           | 66.3 | 207         | 33.7 |
| Total         | 2362                   | 1581          | 66.9 | 781         | 33.1 |

Forecasted values according to the no-change extrapolation method

|              | Female number | in % | Male number | in % |
|--------------|---------------|------|-------------|------|
| 2018/2019    | 651           | 64.5 | 233         | 35.5 |
| 2019/2020    | 689           | 62.7 | 262         | 37.3 |

Forecasted values according to the simple moving average extrapolation method

|              | Female number | in % | Male number | in % |
|--------------|---------------|------|-------------|------|
| 2018/2019    | 590           | 66.9 | 195         | 33.1 |
| 2019/2020    | 597           | 67.2 | 196         | 32.8 |

Fig. 5.1  Number of participants and trip forecasts in the academic years
representatives of *Language acquisition* (detailed field 0231) and *Literature and linguistics* (0232) (Fig. 5.2). Other significant detailed fields include staff of *Political sciences and civics* representing 03—*Social sciences, journalism and information*, and staff of *Earth sciences* from the 05 group—*Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics* (Fig. 5.2). On the other hand, a comparison of the fields represented by employees of individual universities showed a tendency for more frequent trips of representatives of *Literature and linguistics* and *Political sciences and civics* in the structure of trips of staff from MCSU and AMU than the University of Warsaw. On the other hand, a comparison of the fields represented by employees of individual universities showed a tendency for more frequent trips of representatives of MCSU and AMU in the fields of *Literature and linguistics* and *Political sciences and civics* than in the case of other fields.

Concerning the spatial coverage of Polish Erasmus Plus included participants from 37 countries (including three non-European). Spain is the most frequently chosen country in all universities, to which 464 trips were made, i.e. 1/5 of the total. The second most popular destination is Italy, 315 trips (13%) followed by Germany 233 trips (9%).

The same countries, in the same order, are among the leaders selected by the UW and AMU employees. At MCSU, however, the country chosen most frequently by university staff is Portugal, followed by Italy and Germany (Fig. 5.3). The number of people choosing specific countries in individual academic years is quite similar. In 2017/2018, there is a noticeable increase in trips to Germany, especially in the case
of AMU. At the same time, interest in traveling to Spain is dropping every year at this university, as well as at MCSU (Fig. 5.3).

In the analysed period, the number of cities and towns to which employees of the three examined universities travelled increased significantly. And so, in the period 2014/2015 scientific employees of the UW went to 68 European cities, and in 2017/2018—to 155 cities. In the first studied period they travelled most frequently to London (17), Valencia (7) as well as Granada and Athens (6 trips each), while in 2017/2018 the most often visited universities were in London and Madrid (12 trips each), Prague and Vilnius (10 trips each) as well as Budapest (9) and Vienna (8) (Fig. 5.4). In turn, Adam Mickiewicz University’s research workers went to 87 cities in 2014/2015, most often to Lisbon (19), Barcelona (11) and Granada (10), while in 2017/2018—to 96 cities. Among them, the travels trips to Barcelona and Prague (8 each) and Kiel and Potsdam (5 trips each) were the most frequent (Fig. 5.4). The smallest number of cities and towns are visited by academic staff of MCSU. In 2014/2015 they went to 28 cities and in 2017/2018 the number of visited cities grew to 48. In both of these periods the number of trips most often ranged from one to two. In 2014/2015 Lisbon was the most often visited city (4 trips), while in 2017/2018—Granada (3 trips) (Fig. 5.4).

The length of stay of academic staff during Erasmus Plus trips indicates a growing tendency. The arithmetic average of the length of stay at a foreign university in the 2014/2015 academic year was 5.3 days, and in 2017/2018 it increased to 5.8 days. A detailed analysis of this indicator indicates some differences between the
analysed universities. This value for AMU and MCSU is similar and amounts to 4.6 and 4.7 days, respectively. Employees of the University of Warsaw perform longer stays. On average, they spend 6.1 days at universities abroad.

Travel and individual support costs depend on the choice of travel direction and duration of stay. Within the Erasmus Plus program, the rates of travel and individual support are harmonized and set at EU levels. Travel costs per participant depend on the distance from their place of origin to the venue of the activity. The rate of individual support per day is set depending on the country of the activity. In some cases, if necessary, individual support includes one travel day before the activity and one travel day follow. The average amount of financial support per participant was EUR 697. In this case, there are noticeable differences between the analysed universities. The lowest grant amount was recorded at the University of Warsaw, where it amounted to EUR 657. This is due to the fact that travel costs are financed in individual support costs, which are therefore lower, and that some of the trips were financed from other funds. The average amount of funding for the trips from the University of Poznan was EUR 749. The highest average co-financing amount was recorded at MCSU, where it amounts to EUR 815. In this case, the increase in average costs was influenced by financing 11 trips to countries outside the EU (including Brazil, the USA and Taiwan).

5.5 Discussion of Results

Research results present new, basic knowledge indicating several trends observed in the academic staff’s trips. These include (1) greater activity of women in relation to men, (2) more frequent trips of representatives of social sciences and humanities, such as: *Language acquisition, Literature and linguistics, Political sciences and civics* in comparison with other disciplines and (3) a large number of trips to countries with high tourist attractiveness.

![Cities and towns visited by academic staff of three Polish universities in 2017/2018](image)
As it has been shown above, analysis of mobility data clearly indicates greater participation of women in undertaking trips under the Erasmus Plus in the period 2014–2020. Of all the staff members who went on the program mobility, the majority (67%) are women. Such value is due to the predominance of women on the men working at universities. This situation is particularly visible in units related to humanities; whose representatives constitute the largest group of Erasmus Plus participants. A detailed analysis clearly shows that there are 129 working women per 100 working men at the analysed universities. In the faculties related to language and linguistics women share reaches usually over 60% and even 70%. This is reflected in the proportion of women and men participating in the programme. There are 202 mobile women for every 100 mobile men. So, in other words, two out of three mobile staff members are women.

It is worth recalling the fact that for several decades there has been an increase in the number of women taking active steps to develop their scientific careers. This is evidenced by the data presented in the report prepared in 2006 for the European Commission: in 1990/1991, only 18% of the mobile teachers had been women, in 2000/2001 this proportion had risen to 33% (Bracht et al. 2006: 112). At present, this ratio between men and women is the opposite.

An official data of the European Commission (2014: 42) for 2013 showed a 60% share of women in the total group participating in the programme; it is worth noting that in the STT group (staff mobility for training) this share was as high as 74%. One of the most recent documents: Report on benefits achieved through Erasmus Plus (2018: 10) points out that the majority (61%) is female. So the comparison of data compiled for Polish universities with other sources indicates that they are quite consistent.

Trends observed at universities in Poland associated with high activity in the field of academic tourism of representatives of such science areas as Language acquisition, Literature and linguistics Political sciences and civics representing, are consistent with the results presented in the Report on benefits achieved through Erasmus Plus (2018). With regard to staff mobility, it has been observed that “of those who went on mobility and are academics, slightly more than 1 in 3 academics have a background in Humanities, Languages and Philological Sciences, and Social Sciences” (Report on benefits... 2018: 9). The authors of this report stated that today languages and philological sciences are the most represented groups in academic staff mobility. This is an increase as compared to the findings of a 2000/2001 study on Erasmus teachers (Janson et al. 2009: 123). According to this study, in 2000/2001 languages/philology teachers represented 12% of teaching fields in mobility (13% today in the current project). In this respect, an interviewee states that today “there are faculties like philology, which are very mobile, others like sports which are not mobile at all” (Report on benefits... 2018: 9). It is difficult to state unequivocally whether the observed dominance of representatives of the humanities and social sciences is a permanent trend. Because in the period “2000/2001, academic staff in engineering was the largest group, with a 17% presence. This has significantly halved to 9% in 16 years, according to our findings. According to the same study, all other fields had a percentage of respondents below 10%. Today this has changed
with Language, Humanities and Social Sciences being above 10% (with 13%, 11% and 11% respectively)" (Report on benefits... 2018: 9).

The large number of trips of representatives of Language acquisition, Literature and linguistics, Political sciences and civics during the audited period may be related to the specificity of these disciplines and the potential for their development through trips. These include opportunities such as learning a language in a natural environment, learning about the realities and cultural context relevant to humanities and social sciences. This means that visits abroad, in addition to focusing on classes according to the schedule, have “added value”, associated with an important from the point of view of the profile of philology or social science discipline, stay in the studied environment - this allows researchers to learn about its realities and “immerse” in culture. The arguments cited in the Report on benefits... (2018) are also relevant, “one of the interviewees explains that non–humanities scientific subjects may be less represented in mobility due to the availability of other funds covering research trips “To be sure: staff travels a lot (especially in natural sciences, they have a lot money for it), but for scientific reasons only (research, conferences) and with own funding” (Report on benefits... 2018: 10). Continuation of research related to academic tourism, taking into account all the trips of the academic staff, will allow to determine to what extent the identified trends are significant and permanent.

Poland has participated in the Erasmus programme since the academic year 1998/1999, and the number of academic staff’s participants has increased each year, but the countries chosen most often are generally the same. Our research showed that the selection of destinations to a large extent covered southern European countries (mainly Spain, Italy, Portugal) perceived as the main European tourist destinations, which leads to the conclusion that the motivation for choosing a destination is linked to its attraction in terms of tourism. In analyzed period 2014–2018, trips to Spain from researched three universities accounted for 19.6% of all teaching trips, to Italy—13.3% and to Portugal—5.6%. In next order, academic teachers were choosing countries of western Europe such as Germany (9.9% of all teaching trips), the United Kingdom (6.6%) and France (6.5%). When it comes to Central Europe, the most important destination of academic trips is Czech Republic (6.1%). The same countries were at the forefront among destinations selected as part of teaching, but in a slightly different order in particular academic years. These results are generally consistent with the Report on benefits... (2017) and official 2015 EU statistics (European Union 2015). According to Report on benefits... (2017: 12–13), the most visited countries in staff mobility are Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, Germany and France. Moreover, according to official 2015 EU statistics, the same countries are the most popular destinations for academic staff teaching visits (European Union 2015: 10). A slightly different information can be found in a Polish report Program Erasmus+ w Polsce (2018: 28–29). According to this source, Polish workers of HEIs most often selected institutions from Spain, Czech Republic,
Slovakia, Italy and Germany in 2000–2018. But these results do not change the general picture of spatial differentiation of academic trips’ directions.

We did not research the motivations of choosing the destination places of academic staff’s teaching mobility, but analysis of the results shows that academic teachers try to join attraction of the places with opportunities of self-development. It is frequent that a long time tradition of cooperation between universities or faculties is important. For instance, in the case of numerous travels to Germany, not only the neighborhood, but also the developed traditions of cooperation between universities (e.g. between AMU and Kiel University—CAU) play a significant role. We have a similar situation in the case of the selection of Czech Republic (cooperation between University of Warsaw and Charles University in Prague) and also France (cooperation between University of Warsaw and University of Montpellier). We should also remember that one of the main motives of choosing direction of a teaching trip is always the language availability of the country.

We can conclude that, in general, Polish academic staff behave within the framework of the chosen directions of Erasmus Plus trips, just like their colleagues from other countries. They try to join tourist attractiveness of a place with opportunities of self-development. Additionally, the data of Polish student’s mobility shows that universities from Germany, Spain, France, Italy and Portugal have been on the top of HEIs selected by them for years (Program Erasmus+... 2018: 28). F. Pedró (2009: 412) wrote, that “despite country differences in duties or rights, academics do recognize themselves as being much the same all over Europe”. We can say that not only academic staff, but the whole academic society is being much similar all over Europe.

5.6 Conclusions

The presented results of quantitative analyzes can also be a good starting point for deepening research both in the field of socio-psychological aspects of trips (verification of the importance of factors such as the tourist attractiveness of selected places of career progression or statements in the literature about brain drain), as well as analyzing the impact of this type of visitors on destinations (economic effects, type of infrastructure and services used, etc.). Financial resources allocated for trips in connection with destinations (countries, cities) indicate the main beneficiaries, i.e. locations where these funds are spent (on accommodation, transport, meals and other expenses related to travel and stay). When comparing grant rates with the number of trips to specific destinations, the economic effects of this type of academic tourism can be estimated.

Academic tourism in the considered aspect appears to be poorly recognized both in terms of the specificity of demand and supply. This requires further analysis (quantitative and qualitative), taking into account its scale, spatial diversity and multi-faceted effects on its popular destinations.

The observed changes in the conditions for the development of academic tourism depend primarily on institutional decisions. Many factors that are current at the time of writing, (such as health security or protests of the academic staff regarding air travel and the carbon-footprint created by business trips, etc.) may cause a lower
dynamic of real trips. In this situation, recommendations of higher education institutions and tourist operators are mainly associated with the organization of alternative forms enabling remote exchange of knowledge, experience and remote teaching through e-learning platforms, teleconferences, webinars, etc. Popularizing and improving remote teaching tools in COVID-19 conditions can contribute to the consolidation and development of these trends.

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