

**TOURISM AS A FACTOR OF INCREASING CRIME RATE  
IN SEASIDE TOWNS: A CASE OF WŁADYSŁAWOWO**

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**Abstract**

The study below treats one of the negative factors of the tourism development, i.e. criminal activities. Their increase in tourist centres may serve as one of several research standards concerning the touristic function. The municipality of Władysławowo was used as an example to analyze the criminal factor. On the basis of internal statistics provided by Władysławowo police covering the years 2008-2010, we analyzed the statistical data according to the types of crime, police districts and the period of time (months, weekdays and hours). It is clear to see the negative function of tourism correlated to criminal activities, as 30% of crimes take place in three police districts of the municipality of Władysławowo in the summer months. This has to do with the enormous inflow of people into the area of several of the villages in the Władysławowo municipality, where its inhabitants and tourists become an object of criminal activities. This implies the need for an increased number of police patrols in order to ensure and promote safety.

**Key words:** Władysławowo, tourism, dysfunctions of tourism, crime rate

**INTRODUCTION**

Tourism in Poland plays a special role. After the period of system transformation it has become an important branch of the economy and especially in the last few years it has been perceived as a significant factor of its development. For numerous tourist resorts it is the main, if not the only, factor of economic growth. Tourism leads to an increase in urbanisation and a range of investments due to the development of hotel, catering and communication infrastructure, an increase in employment and consequently a growth of the income of inhabitants as well as it activates local communities in actions towards an improvement of the tourist image of a given town. Besides the broadly understood economic development, tourism influences also other func-

tions, including: health, recreation, education and instruction, urbanisation and raising ecological awareness. Apart from positive functions performed by tourism in the economic and social development, there are also negative phenomena. In the economic sphere they include a rise in prices in fashionable resorts, overexploitation of tourist infrastructure; in the social and cultural spheres they are manifested in uncontrolled building development which spoils the landscape, imposition of limitations and numerous inconveniences in the daily life of local inhabitants, disparity in their income levels, changes in customs, religious and moral beliefs. Moreover, an element frequently occurring in tourist resorts is an intensification of pathological phenomena, such as drunkenness, drug abuse, prostitution, thefts and substantial crime threat (Napierała et al. 2009). Tourist dysfunction also leads to a growing number of road accidents.

The characteristic feature of numerous tourist resorts in which tourist activity is intensively seasonal is the occurrence of pathological phenomena and substantial crime threat. An offence is defined as an act which is prohibited under threat of penalty, committed by a man, dangerous and harmful to the surrounding (Andrzejew 1986).

Tourists often become the crime victims by mere chance and the crime is not directly aimed at them. They can be or victim or criminal. Tourists visiting some regions of the world are exposed to terrorist activities, as it was in the case of attacks in Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon and Syria (Tourism... 2011). The issues concerning the tourism influence on the rise of crime is pointed out especially in the foreign literature. It is a subject that has been formed in a scientific research works only at the turn of 1970's/1980's. especially in the works of Jud (1975), Pizam (1982), de Albuquerque (1984). In many publications, the crime typology was created (Pizam 1999, Tynon and Chavez 2006). It made the described crimes in the different tourist regions of the world were divided into 5 categories:

- urban crime (arson, body dumping, domestic violence, drive-by shooting, gang activity, murder, rape and sexual assault, suicide, and theft);
- assault (personal assault, criminal property damage, and threats against property);
- drug activity (marijuana cultivation, methamphetamine labs, methamphetamine chemical dumps, and armed defense of crops);
- takeover or violence perpetrated by members of extremist or nontraditional groups (e.g., satanic cults, wise use, motorcycle groups, survivalists, militia/supremacy groups);
- other (armed defense of forest products, dumping of chemicals, dumping of household waste

and landscape materials and trespass by undocumented immigrants) (Tynon and Chavez 2006).

In the publications the following places were put under such analysis: the countries (for example Italy, Australia, United States, Mexico), the island regions (Bali, Hawaii, Caribbean, especially Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago) and the tourist regions (Florida, Cornwall). In Polish literature the issue of crimes in the tourist places is very seldom mentioned. This subject was taken up by Bartoszewicz (1993).

## LOCATION OF WŁADYSŁAWOWO COMMUNE AGAINST PUCK DISTRICT

The Władysławowo commune is situated within the Gdańsk Coastland at the base of the Hel Peninsula. From the north, the commune is bounded by the waters of the Baltic Sea, from the south-east by the Puck Bay. The Władysławowo commune is located in the northern part of the Pomeranian province, in the Puck district. From the east it borders on the urban commune of Jastarnia, from the west and south-west on the Krokowa commune and from the south and south-east on the Puck commune (Fig. 1). Władysławowo is an urban commune encompassing villages from Karwia through Ostrowo, Tupadły, Jastrzębia Góra, Rozewie, Chłapowo up to Chałupy.



Fig. 1. Location of Władysławowo Commune against Puck district

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The article below tries to establish a typology of the crimes committed within the territory of the municipality of Władysławowo. The source material were the analyses of the security situation made by the Władysławowo police for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 in the area of the so-called police districts of the Władysławowo municipality. The statistical analysis was carried out on the basis of the overall number of crimes, the types of crimes according to the categories established by the district police department in Puck, the number of crimes according to the days of the week, and finally the number of crimes according to the different times of the day. The number of crimes committed within the territory of the municipality of Władysławowo corresponds to about 30% of all crimes committed in the Puck district. The analysis was based on the data from three police districts supervised by the Władysławowo police (Fig. 2). These are:

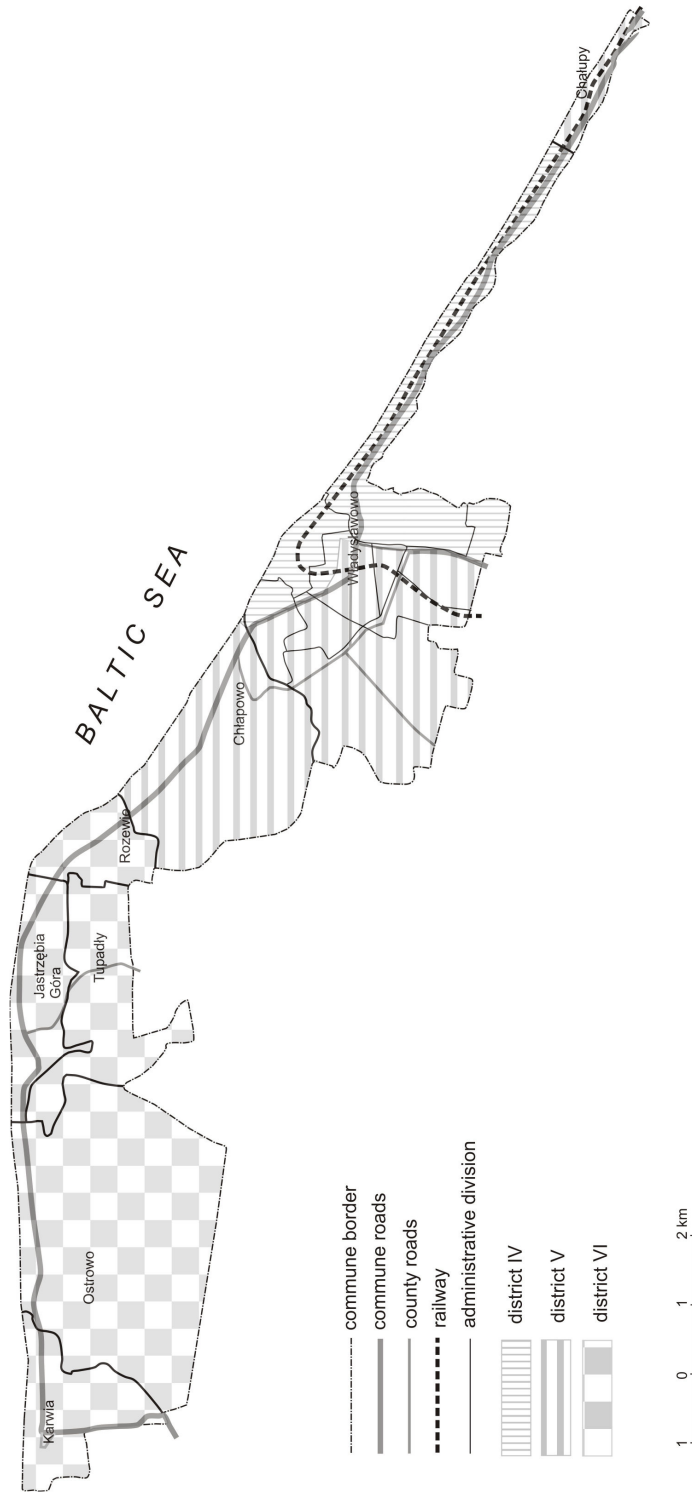


Fig. 2. Police precincts of Władysławowo

- precinct IV – covering in the town of Władysławowo the districts of Śródmieście (including streets: Hallera, Portowa, Starowiejska), district of Hallerowo (area from Żeromskiego street towards railway track),
- precinct V – covering in the town of Władysławowo the following districts: Szotland, Żwirowe, Cetniewo (from Żeromskiego street southwards) and villages of Chałupy and Chłapowo,
- precinct VI – covering the villages of Rozewie, Jastrzębia Góra, Tupadły, Ostrowo and Karwia.

### WŁADYSŁAWOWO COMMUNE IN THE LIGHT OF ANALYSES OF THE STATE OF CRIME THREAT

Due to the characteristic location of the Władysławowo commune and the specialised function performed by all the villages of this commune, the problem are breaches of the law increasing during summer. The quoted crime analyses for 2008-2010 indicate that the particular police precincts of the Władysławowo commune are characterised by a variability in crime rate. In general, a decrease in crime rate by 10.1% has been recorded with regard to 2008. The decreasing trend is characteristic of precincts IV and VI, where crime rate has decreased by 11.4 and 9.3% respectively in comparison to 2008, with the exception of precinct V where crime rate has increased by 21.2% (Fig. 3).

Numerous problems are generated by open air events organised in many localities of the Władysławowo commune (precinct V). What is noteworthy is the fact that or-

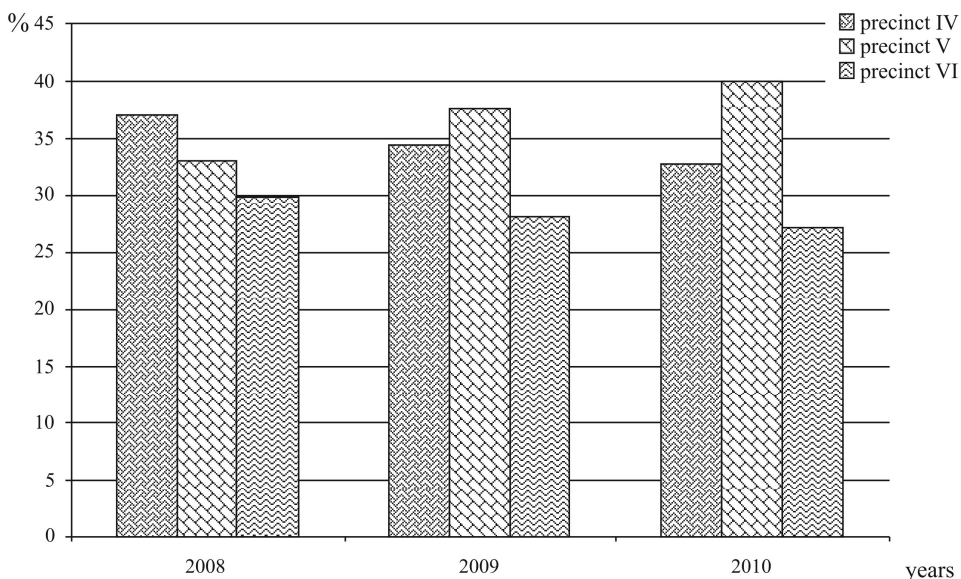


Fig. 3. Number of offences committed in 2008-2010 in total in precincts IV, V, VI of Władysławowo commune

Source: author's own study on the basis of Analiza stanu...

ganisers are unable to provide an adequate policing service and to prepare sufficient parking space as well as systems of signs and lighting of ways of access to the event (Protokół... 2010).

Due to a change in typology of offences in materials on the state of safety within the precincts of the Police Station in Władysławowo in 2008-2010 and thus incomparability, offences of the last two years are discussed. Within the Władysławowo commune, the most frequent offences are thefts of property, which in 2010 constituted 54.4% of total crime in the commune. Another significant type of offence is burglary, which amounted to 25.0%. The remaining ones include damage of property (7.6%) and car theft (6.9%). The gravest category of recorded offences are affrays and battery, robbery and bodily injury, however in total they do not exceed 7% of all the offences committed within the Władysławowo commune. The diversity of offences is comparable in all the police precincts of the discussed area. In 2010 the most frequently recorded offences were thefts of property (24.8% in precinct V, 15.9% in precinct IV and 13.7% in precinct VI) and burglary (9.1% in precinct IV, 8.3% in precinct VI and 7.6% in precinct V). The remaining offences constitute below 10% of the offences recorded by the Police Station in Władysławowo (Fig. 4).

The above quoted offence types result from particular conditions of the tourist resort. This is closely related to the huge flow of people (tourists) in many villages of the Władysławowo commune. Such a situation results in the fact that tourists become an easy target for criminal acts, as they are in unfamiliar surroundings and bring certain property with them (especially vehicles, personal property and money). The fact that tourists make loose, superficial social acquaintances also facilitates criminal acts.

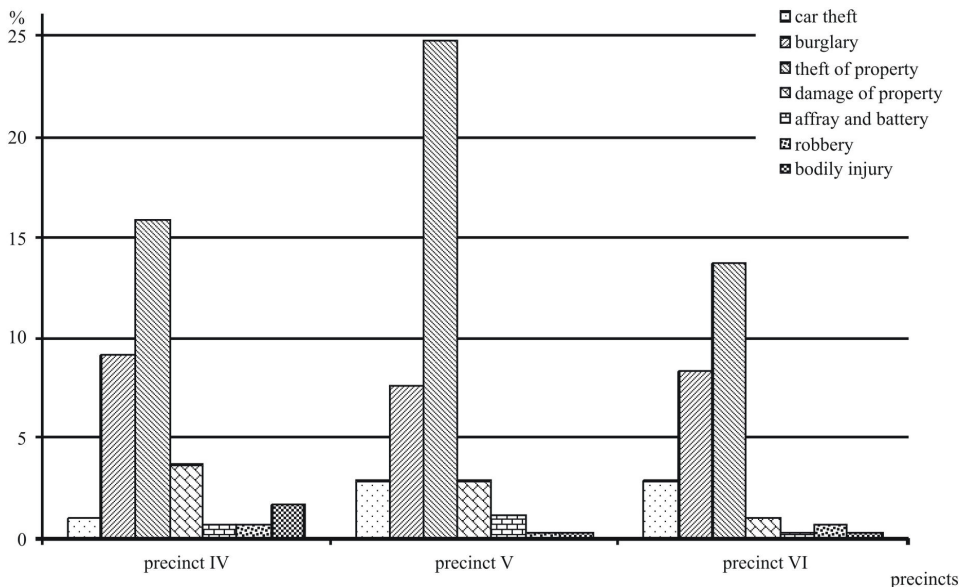


Fig. 4. Number of offences in 2010 according to crime category in precincts IV, V, VI of the Police Station in Władysławowo

Source: author's own study on the basis of Analiza stanu...

These offences can be accounted for by the behaviour of tourists who, in a majority, through a lack of common sense and their carefree attitude as well as disobeying of basic safety principles, provoke criminal acts (e.g. leaving car windows open on an unattended parking space, open window in a hotel room while guests are out, leaving property unattended on the beach during bathing) and create favourable circumstances for the offender. Another important risk factor is carrying large sums of money, especially in the evening when tourist activity considerably increases. The most dangerous places are those with a high intensity of pedestrian flow, shopping and leisure areas in all tourist localities.

An analysis of individual police precincts of the Władysławowo commune in 2010 reveals a clear diversity in the number of committed crimes. The two most frequent offences, occurring in particular precincts of the Władysławowo commune are identical with those recorded in total in the whole commune. The most frequent offences in precinct IV are theft of property (48.5%), burglary (27.7%) and damage of property (11.2%). A disturbing type of crime is bodily injury – as many as 5.2% recorded in this precinct. The remaining offences include car theft (3%), affrays and battery (2.2%) and robbery (2.2%). In precinct V most frequent was theft of property (61.9%) and burglary (19.0%). Relatively frequent were offences of damage of property (7.4%) and car theft (7.4%). In precinct VI the pattern of crime categories is different. While the first two types have the same place in the hierarchy of offences recorded by the Police Station (theft of property 50.5% and burglary 30.6%), the third in frequency is car theft, which constituted as much as 10.8% of offences of precinct VI.

A small number of offences is related to damage or destruction and they are typically a consequence of hooliganism or alcohol consumption. Also a small number of offences concerns affray, robbery and bodily injury, which constitute below 2% of all the offences in the analysed precincts. The number of off-season thefts and burglary results from the fact that most of the facilities are closed or left unattended and without appropriate technical precautions (e.g. lack of anti-theft doors, alarm systems, monitoring). Difficult weather conditions such as rain, strong wind and early dusk are also favourable for committing crimes.

The discussed offences have a similar pattern in each analysed year (Fig. 5). The highest crime rate occurs in summer. In July the number amounts to over 30% of all offences. Due to the location of the Władysławowo commune, summer is a period of intensive work for the Police Station. During the summer season, i.e. July and August, the workload of the police is almost equal to that of the remaining 10 months, which by analogy should signal the need for strengthening of the forces five times (Protokół... 2010). These data can be interpreted in two ways. The small differences in the number of crimes committed in the analysed period are a result of reaching a certain stable level and crime saturation. Another interpretation of this phenomenon is related to an improvement in the effectiveness of the police in this area with respect to prevention and detectability of these types of offences. It should be highlighted that in order to prevent escalation of criminal acts, the local forces were supported by officers from the Riot Control Branch of the Provincial Police Headquarters in Gdańsk, Bydgoszcz and Białystok. A clear decrease in crime rate is observed in September, due to an outflow of tourists and the end of holiday season.

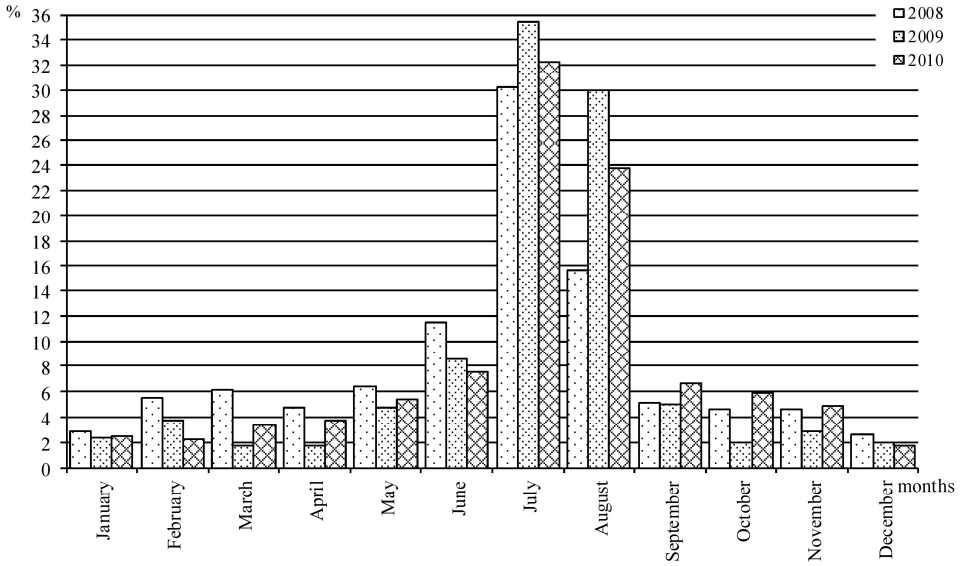


Fig. 5. Number of offences committed in the precincts of the Police Station in Władysławowo in 2008-2010, divided into months  
Source: author's own study on the basis of Analiza stanu...

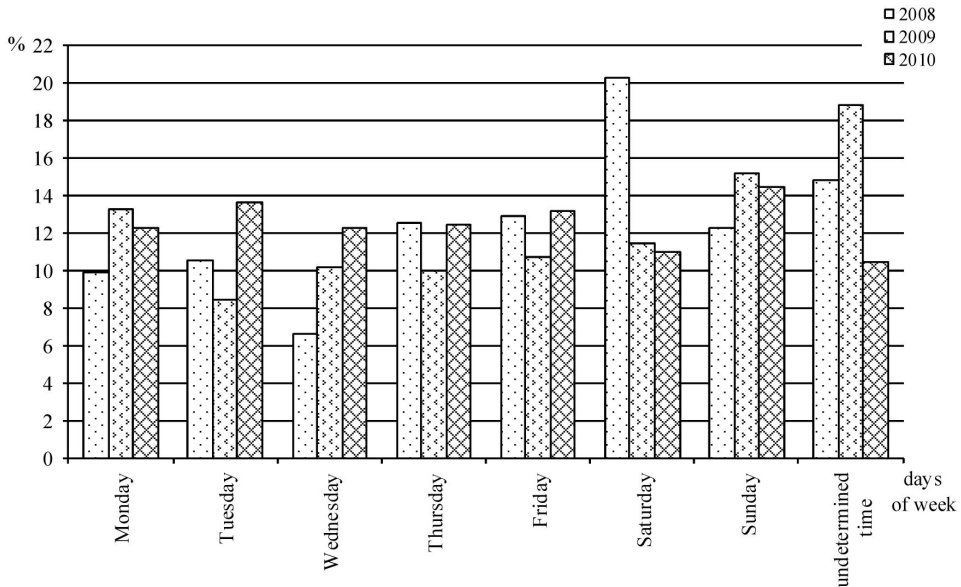


Fig. 6. Number of offences committed in the precincts of the Police Station in Władysławowo in 2008-2010, divided into days of week  
Source: author's own study on the basis of Analiza stanu...



Very informative is the characteristics of committed offences according to the day of the week (Fig. 6). Offences committed during weekdays normally do not exceed 13% of all crimes. The year 2009 stands out in the characteristics as then offences committed on Saturdays constituted slightly above 20% of crimes. An increase in offences committed on Sundays is observed. This results from the fact that many people take weekend trips to seaside resorts during the whole year, which is favourable for criminal acts. Sunday is also the day when the inhabitants of seaside towns and villages travel most often leaving behind their possessions. It is also noteworthy that quite significant is the number of interventions during weekends (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) as a result of an inflow of young people from the Puck and neighbouring districts to seaside resorts for parties and events.

An important element characterising the state of safety is time scope (Fig. 7). While in 2008 there was no clearly defined period during the day when offences were committed, already in 2009, and especially in 2010 the fact is clearly observed. Most offences were committed at night, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., which constituted over 40% of crimes committed in 2010. This fact is related to relaxed vigilance of potential victims as well as to the ease of committing criminal acts under the cover of natural darkness (at night).

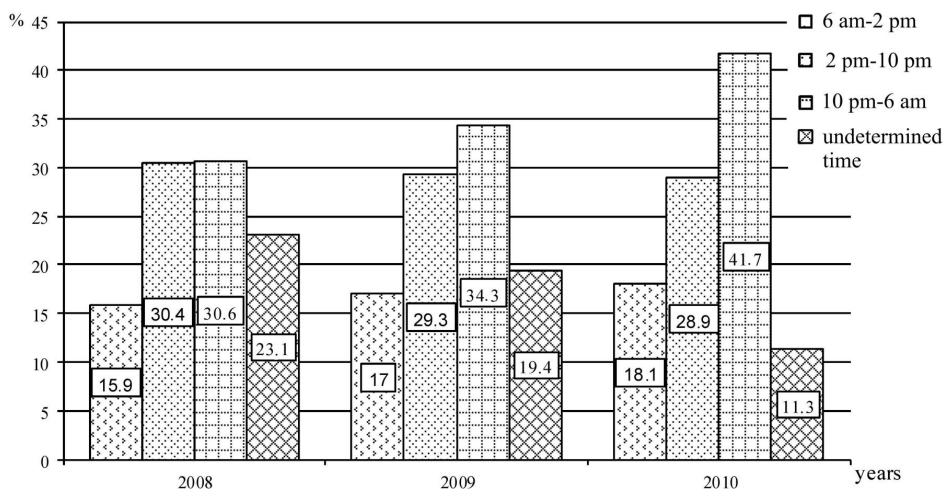


Fig. 7. Number of offences committed in the precincts of the Police Station in Władysławowo in 2008-2010, divided into hours of day

Source: author's own study on the basis of Analiza stanu...

## SUMMARY

Tourism has become a factor stimulating not only the economic growth of the region but also threats related to an intense flow of people during the summer season. The research performed by the Institute of Tourism in Warsaw in the 1990's revealed on the example of Władysławowo that the negative phenomena form a dissonance with the tourist assets of the commune, and that the characteristic types of offences include organised crime, financial frauds and thefts (Bartoszewicz 1993).

The crime threat is actually much more serious, as not every wronged person notifies the police of the incurred loss. An additional impediment for planning and locating patrols is a lack of specification of the time and place of the incident by the wronged people. An unfavourable factor is a lack of seasonal police stations in many tourist resorts. Establishing of several of those in tourist resorts could contribute to an improvement of safety both among inhabitants and tourists staying in seaside localities as well as an improvement of prevention.

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TURYSTYKA JAKO CZYNNIK WPLYWAJĄCY NA WZROST PRZESTĘPCZOŚCI  
W MIEJSCOWOŚCIACH NADMORSKICH  
NA PRZYKŁADZIE GMINY WŁADYSŁAWOWO

**Streszczenie**

W niniejszej pracy zwrócono uwagę na jeden z negatywnych aspektów rozwoju turystyki, jakim są zjawiska przestępcze. Ich nasilenie w miejscowościach turystycznych może posłużyć za jeden z mierników badawczych funkcji turystycznej. Na przykładzie gminy Władysławowo przedstawiono rozkład przestępczości. Na podstawie materiałów wewnętrznych z lat 2008-2010 Komisariatu Policji we Władysławowie dokonano analizy przestępstw według ich kategorii, rejonów policyjnych oraz przedziału czasowego (według miesięcy, dni tygodnia i godzin). Widać wyraźnie funkcję negatywną turystyki związaną z działaniami przestępczymi, gdyż około 30% przestępstw popełnianych w trzech rejonach policyjnych gminy Władysławowo przypada na miesiące letnie. Wiąże się to z olbrzymim przepływem ludności na terenie licznych miejscowości gminy Władysławowo, gdzie zarówno turyści, jak i mieszkańcy stają się obiektem działań przestępczych, dlatego też istnieje potrzeba wprowadzenia większej liczby patroli policyjnych, aby zapewnić i zwiększyć bezpieczeństwo.

