

Baltic Coastal Zone No. 9	
(159-167) 2005	Institute of Biology and Environmental Protection Pomeranian Pedagogical University Słupsk

UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE COASTAL REGIONS OF POLAND ILLUSTRATED WITH EXAMPLES OF COASTAL GMINAS IN WEST POMERANIA VOIEVODSHIP

Eugeniusz Rydz, Paulina Szmielińska

*Institute of Geography, Pomeranian Pedagogical University in Słupsk,
ul. Partyzantów 27, 76-200 Słupsk, Poland
e-mail: rydz@pap.edu.pl*

Abstract

The article presents problems of unemployment in the districts of the coastal gminas in West Pomerania Voievodship. The region is characterized by high touristic attraction and considerable volume of investment into touristic services. Besides rapidly developing areas, there are also agriculture districts characterized by the necessity to increase incomes of the inhabitants and improve the condition of infrastructure.

The aim of the article is to answer the question: does tourism in its economic aspect stimulate economic performances and in consequence cause a considerable decrease of unemployment in the described region. Analysis includes differences of unemployment intensity and its structural factors that allow to identify the causes and also to define options and directions of further transformations.

Key words: unemployment, labor market, touristic function, coastal gminas

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Structural transformations of the nineties influenced all regions of Poland, their positive and negative economic and social results effectuated all spheres of life including the labor market. Transformation processes originated in spatially differentiated social and economic conditions that intensified the differences of the development's level of particular regions and in consequence led to a considerable spatial differentiation of conditions, quality of life and options of development of people.

The West Pomerania is one of the regions, which have suffered from relatively high level of unemployment since it was first recorded in Poland. In 2003, unemployment rate recorded in West Pomerania Voievodship was 28.2%, which placed the Voievodship on the second position in Poland (with Polish average of 20.0%).

Territorial differentiation of the researched area is one of its basic problems. It con-

cerns not only the level and intensity of the described occurrence but also some specific, firm features of the unemployed. Regional disproportions appear in the direction east – west. The lowest level of unemployment has been recorded in the neighborhood of Szczecin agglomeration and the area situated along the west border of Poland, the highest level of unemployment has been recorded in former Koszalin Voievodship and particularly the regions of Polanowska Height and Białogard Plain, with former state farming system.

West Pomerania Voievodship performs various important functions in social and economic measures. The touristic function, concentrated in the coastal holiday resorts areas and developed in favorable conditions belongs to a group of functions, which emerged after 1990. The described Voievodship is placed on the first position considering the number of accommodation facilities in Poland, and the second position (after Małopolskie Voievodship) considering the number of tourists using the available accommodations.

Among numerous advantages connected with the development of tourism, the economic function seems to be prevailing since it is said to help to reduce unemployment and generate new jobs in sectors providing direct or indirect services for tourists (Bosiacki 2000). The researchers would like to find an answer to the question if tourism in its economic aspect stimulates economic performance of touristic attractive areas located in West Pomerania Voievodship, and in consequence causes a considerable unemployment drop in the described area. The meticulous analysis included 15 basic administrative units (towns and gminas) situated in direct neighborhood of the Baltic Sea. They cover 9.6% of West Pomerania Voievodship and group 17.9% of the Voievodship's population.

The most important factors influencing the development of tourism in the described region are landscape and esthetic qualities, bio-climate, sandy beaches, versatility of anthropogenic qualities of the landscape. The region boasts healing minerals such as therapeutic mud, which can be found in Kołobrzeg, Kamień Pomorski, Międzyzdroje and Świnoujście or saline ground waters in Dziwnówek, Kamień Pomorski, Kołobrzeg, Międzywodzie and Świnoujście.

A group of towns and gminas characterized by best developed accommodation facilities includes: Rewal (32 000 accommodations), Kołobrzeg (23 000 the town and 12 000 gmina Kołobrzeg), Mielno (23 000), Dziwnów (18 000) and Międzyzdroje (12 000) (Szwichtenberg 2004).

The touristic function during the season becomes a function of great importance to numerous districts and their populations: it changes the rhythm of life and the character of towns and districts situated in the coastal zone and the vicinity of the sea. The function influences considerably local economy affecting small business of trade and gastronomy (Rydz and Jażewicz 1999). Touristic activities of local economy also become factors influencing growing demands for labor in services provided for tourists (both strictly by touristic service and paratouristic service).

According to the results of the international research, creating a single job in a touristic economy generates 2-2.5 jobs in other spheres of economy (Bosiacki 2000). One can assume that the development of touristic traffic influences, in a positive way, the economic and social situation of the gminas.

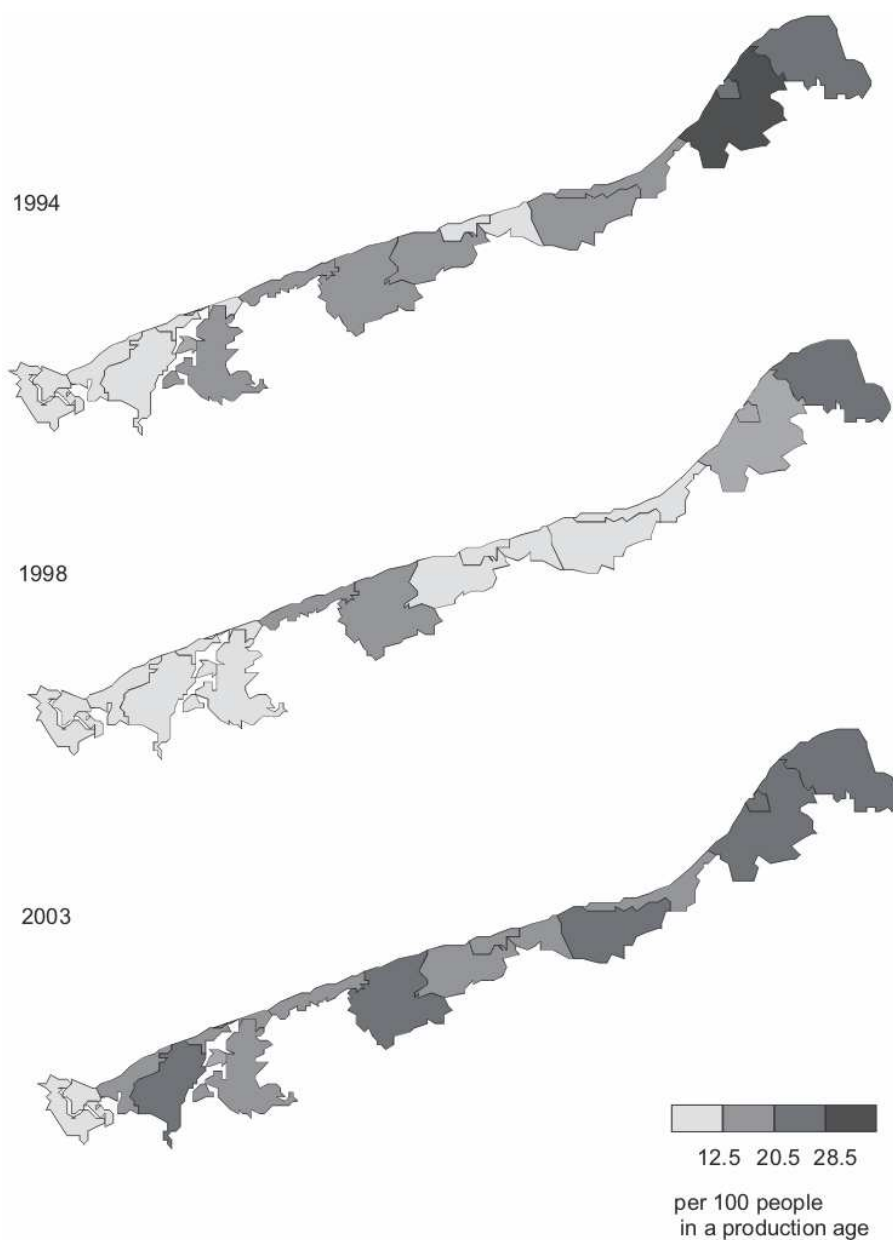


Fig. 1. Changes of intensity of unemployment in the coastal gminas in West Pomerania Voievodship between 1994-2003

Source: The labor market of the former Koszalin Voievodship in 1994. WUS Koszalin 1995, The labor market of the former Szczecin Voievodship in 1994. WUS Szczecin 1995, Poviats in West Pomerania Voievodship, US Szczecin 1999, Unemployment in West Pomerania Voievodship in 2003, US Szczecin 2004

Since the moment of liberating market mechanisms and generating registered unemployment, Polish coastal regions have been afflicted with unemployment problems. In period of its extreme intensity in the first phase of a transformation process in 1994, scientists observed conspicuous disproportions in allocation of the occurrence in the analyzed region (Fig. 1). The number of the unemployed in the majority of the coastal gminas per 100 people in production age showed a falling tendency in the region's average¹ (20.5%). Particularly low values of the indicator were recorded in the west part of the Voievodship – in Świnoujście, Międzyzdroje, Dziwnów, and also in Kołobrzeg and a neighboring gmina Ustronie Morskie. Gmina and town of Darłowo and the gmina of Postomino located in the east edge of the region were placed above the average.

The period between 1994-1997 is considered an interval of economic animation in Poland and in consequence a term of improvement of situation on the labor market. An average unemployment indicator dropped to the level of 13.7% in the region, and in the majority of the coastal gminas it dropped considerably below the average – 3.8% in Świnoujście, 6.0% in Międzyzdroje, 7.1 % in Kołobrzeg. A high level of unemployment remained unchanged in gminas situated in the east part of the Voievodship – gmina Postomino (23.3%) and the gmina Darłowo (19.6%) characterized by a high dynamics of falling unemployed rate in comparison with the 1994 records.

Entering the labor market by a demographic explosion generation, the slowing down of economic growth and international competition imposing difficult structural adjustments caused another wave of unemployment after 1998. In consequence, the number of the unemployed considerably increased in the described province, including also the coastal regions. A percentage of the unemployed in a group of people in a production age in 2003 was 12.1% in Świnoujście and 13.0% in Kołobrzeg up to 26.5% in gmina Darłowo and 25.2% in gmina Postomino. In the majority of gminas the unemployment rate was recorded on a higher level than in the previous year 1994. The radical and extreme changes were recorded in gmina Wolin, Będzino and Trzebiatów (Fig. 1).

The studies show that the gminas characterized by well developed touristic function with a great number of accommodations (especially those open a whole year – sanatoria, 'green' schools etc.) prove to generate favorable conditions to increase dynamics of decreasing the level of unemployment in periods of economic animation. However, increasing dependence of local economy on external demand for the coastal recreation qualities and touristic services make both the income and provided service preserve a strictly seasonal character (Dutkowski 2004). The situation is connected with serious fluctuations in the level of unemployment over the year and its considerable decrease in periods of unfavorable circumstances. Another factor limiting the influence of tourism on a local economy is the fact that the majority of investors in this sector come from other regions of Poland which causes outflow of income generated in this region.

¹ Average estimations concern an area in West Pomerania Voievodship existing in 1999, estimations include the gminas, which joined a territory of the Voievodship.

The labor market in the agricultural gminas and gminas with developed traditional farming system has not been revitalized yet and the agriculture sector has not been integrated with tourism. The coastal zone gminas still preserve and develop traditional production systems and do not adjust their structures in order to satisfy the needs of tourism.

Gmina Darłowo is an interesting example illustrating a distinct transformation of an agriculture function into a touristic one, which resulted in limiting the level of unemployment between 1994-1998 (the 1994 records show the highest coefficient in the whole analyzed region).

Aggravation of the situation on the labor market in the region of the Polish coast (also visible in the mentioned above gmina Darłowo) has one more crucial reason. It is an intensifying crisis and basically a total decline of all sectors of Polish maritime economy. In a great number of coastal gminas fishing used to be considered a basic and often the only source of income of fishermen's families.

Table 1

Structure of the unemployed in the coastal gminas of West Pomerania Voievodship
in 2003 (according to selected categories)

Gmina	Women	Unemployed for over 12 months	Unemployed below 25 years
	in % of the total number of the unemployed		
Rewal	48.2	45.2	18.1
Trzebiatów	56.6	48.9	25.0
Dziwnów	59.8	46.2	16.2
Kamień Pomorski	52.2	49.6	23.5
Międzyzdroje	53.1	38.5	18.5
Wolin	53.7	50.7	23.3
Kołobrzeg (urban gmina)	55.5	42.8	20.9
Kołobrzeg	52.3	36.7	27.6
Ustronie Morskie	51.0	33.3	22.1
Będzino	55.0	50.5	24.0
Mielno	56.5	43.1	18.3
Darłowo (urban gmina)	56.3	47.3	18.2
Darłowo	49.8	49.8	20.2
Postomino	50.4	48.9	21.8
Świnoujście (urban gmina)	57.6	42.2	21.3

Source: Unemployment in West Pomerania Voievodship in 2003. Statistic Office in Szczecin. Szczecin 2004

Structural features and a level of development in particular segments of the market remain, apart from unemployment problems. The essential issues in the analysis of the described phenomenon. According to the results, one should emphasize that the described region is characterized by a low level of structural transformations, which is considered a typical feature of Polish unemployment. Segmentation of the labor market concerns particularly such features as sex, education and age.

A symptom of differences between the position of women and men on a labor market is a fact of unequal opportunities for work. In circumstances of a massive unemployment, the problem gets more intense and indicates that the position of women on the labor market is of minor importance. The highest rate of unemployed women was recorded in urban and urban-agriculture gminas, reaching its peak in Dziwnów – 59.8% (Tab. 1). The men outnumber the records of the unemployed in 2003 merely in two gminas Darłowo (the rural districts) and Rewal.

An important and distinctive features that allow a proper analysis of the complex situation on a labor market is time of being out of work. Long-term unemployment generates economic degradation, reduces the social position of the unemployed and first and foremost – from the point of view of relocating options on the labor market – causes devaluation of qualifications, indisposes the unemployed towards work and making another effort to find a new source of income. The highest percentage of the unemployed for a period of over 12 months was recorded in the agricultural gminas, where the process of transforming a former state sector led to bankruptcy of former state farms and generated a great number of poorly educated unemployed not prepared to face new circumstances (Tab. 1). Therefore, lower than average level of development of tourism in such gminas was not able to absorb the labor force surplus.

The main source of the unemployed's problems are their low qualifications connected with an insufficient level of education. The transformation period determined a structure of unemployment defined according to parameters of education since the largest group of the unemployed permanently consists of people poorly educated and qualified (Fig. 2). The gminas with the poorly educated unemployed include: Postomino, Darłowo (rural districts), Będzino and Wolin. It confirms the prior thesis maintaining that agriculture labor markets are difficult to restructure². The number of the poorly educated unemployed tends to be smaller in the urban districts, what is an effect of more favorable structure of education of an urban population (better access to education). In the presented context, it is interesting to have a closer look at gmina Rewal, that is placed third (just after Kołobrzeg and Świnoujście) as regards the level of education of the unemployed. It is an example of a rural gmina with a great number of well educated people, which is the effect of migrations of the population to this attractive touristic area³.

² In case of gmina Wolin its advantage and at the same time one of its limitations is an area of „Woliński National Park”.

³ Based on data from National Census – in 2002 10% of the gmina's population had university education. Better records concerned only Kołobrzeg – 12.2% and Świnoujście 11.2%.

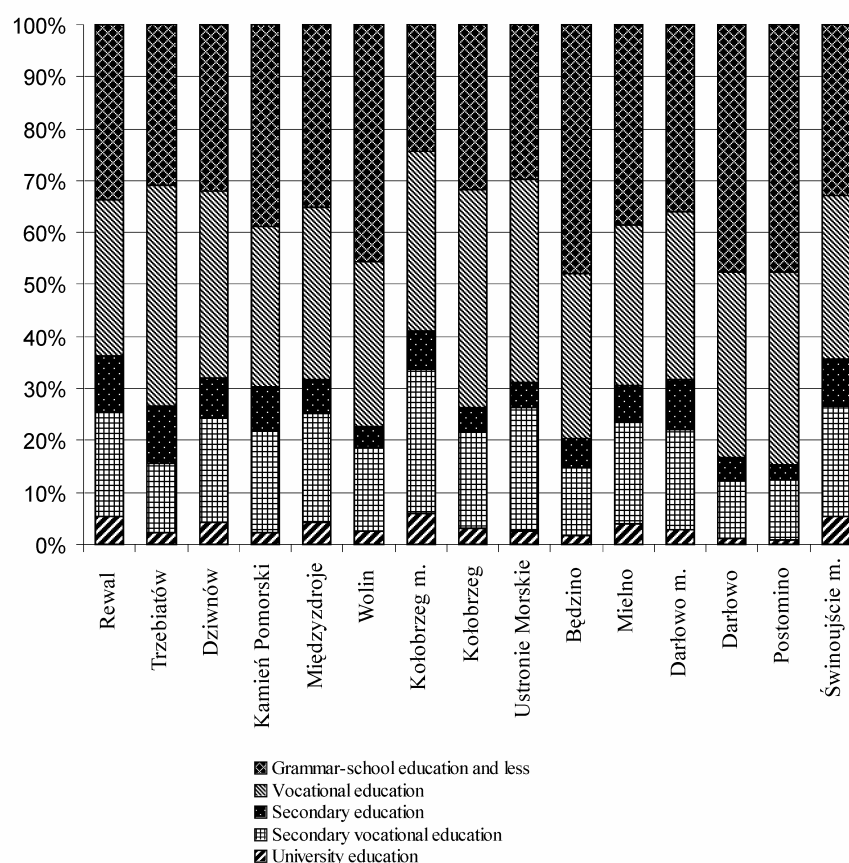


Fig. 2. The structure of the unemployed in the coastal gminas of West Pomerania Voivodship in 2003 according to education

Source: Unemployment in West Pomerania Voivodship in 2003. Statistic Office in Szczecin. Szczecin 2004

In the coastal zone there are recognized two types of districts: rapidly developing and utilizing touristic and poorly populated coastal areas of agriculture or combined agriculture and forestry character. Neither avoided the problem of unemployment, however, the results of the research confirm their discrepant character. The number of unemployed in the gminas, which were not forced to develop touristic services was larger than projected by its distinct structural origin. The population and authorities of those districts most often claim that the situation on the labor market and generated income might improve together with developing of tourism. However, it might cause disastrous consequences such as overinvestment and modification of recreation qualities in relation to touristic attraction of the districts and a lack of basic technical infrastructure (Dutkowski 2004). An insufficient number of jobs is re-

corded also in the regions with very well developed touristic function that is the result of macroeconomic conditions. However, unemployment in the mentioned districts has a character dictated by the existing circumstances. It is also important to understand that treating tourism as a remedy for all problems might lead to focus on initiatives within this particular sphere at the cost of other economy sectors and make the economic situation depend on a touristic market environment. Moreover, discrepancies between the low level of touristic services and their high prices and affluence of Polish society might aggravate the situation of apparent harmony between service providers and consumers.

REFERENCES

- Bosiacki S., 2000. Gospodarka turystyczna – mity i rzeczywistość. W: Gospodarka turystyczna u progu XXI wieku. (Touristic economy – myths and reality. In: Touristic economy on the turn of the 20th century). Bosiacki S. (Ed.), AWF, Poznań. (in Polish).
- Dutkowski M., 2004. Przeszłość, problemy i perspektywy gospodarki strefy brzegowej. W: Naukowy przewodnik po polskim Wybrzeżu. (The past, problems and perspectives of economy of the coastal regions. In: Scientific guide to Polish coastal regions). Furmańczyk K. (Ed.), US Szczecin, (in Polish).
- Rydz E., Jażewicz I., 1999. Funkcja turystyczna małych miast Pomorza Środkowego. (Touristic function of small towns of Central Pomerania). *Śląskie Prac. Mat.-Przyr.* 12c Geogr., 181-218, (in Polish).
- Szwichtenberg A., 2004. Turystyka i rekreacja. W: Naukowy przewodnik po polskim Wybrzeżu. (Tourism and recreation. In: Scientific guide to Polish coastal regions). Furmańczyk K. (Ed.), US Szczecin, (in Polish).
- Szwichtenberg A. (Ed.), 1990. Wpływ turystyki na zagospodarowanie przestrzenne obszarów nadmorskich. (Influence of tourism on spatial management of the coastal regions). KONB, Koszalin, (in Polish).

BEZROBOCIE NA POLSKIM WYBRZEŻU NA PRZYKŁADZIE GMIN NADMORSKICH WOJEWÓDZTWA ZACHODNIOPOMORSKIEGO

Streszczenie

Województwo zachodniopomorskie pełni w przestrzeni społeczno-gospodarczej kraju wiele znaczących funkcji. Do tych, dla których po roku dziewięćdziesiątym powstały sprzyjające warunki rozwoju, należy niewątpliwie funkcja turystyczna, wyraźnie skoncentrowana tu w nadmorskiej strefie rekreacyjnej. Wśród licznych korzyści wynikających z rozwoju turystyki, najczęściej wymienia się te związane z jej funkcją ekonomiczną, często wskazując, że turystyka przyczynia się do redukcji bezrobocia i tworzenia nowych miejsc pracy w branżach obsługujących bezpośrednio lub pośrednio uczestników ruchu turystycznego.

Na podstawie przeprowadzonych badań stwierdzono, że gminy o bardzo dobrze rozwiniętej funkcji turystycznej, charakteryzujące się wysoką liczbą miejsc noclegowych (zwłaszcza całorocznych – sanatoria, zielone szkoły itp.) cechuje większa dynamika spadku poziomu bezrobocia w okresach ożywienia gospodarczego. Jednak rosnące uzależnienie gospodarki lokalnej od zewnętrznego popytu na przybrzeżne walory rekreacyjne i usługi turystyczne

powoduje w znacznym zakresie sezonowość dochodów mieszkańców i sezonowy charakter pracy w usługach turystycznych. Pociąga to za sobą duże wahania poziomu bezrobocia w ciągu roku oraz znaczący jego wzrost w okresie dekonjunktury.

W gminach o charakterze rolniczym lub z dużym udziałem rolnictwa niemożność rewitalizacji rynku pracy po dawnych strukturach pegeerowskich oraz brak integracji gospodarki żywnościowej z turystyką w dalszym ciągu stanowią problem. W gminach słabiej wykorzystywanych turystycznie wystąpił większy stopień utrwalenia zjawiska bezrobocia, co wskazuje na jego wyraźne strukturalne podłoże. Mieszkańcy i władze tych terenów najczęściej upatrują możliwości zwiększenia dochodów i poprawy sytuacji na rynku pracy w lepszym zagospodarowaniu turystycznym, co z kolei może powodować zagrożenie inwestycjami i działaniami obniżającymi walory rekreacyjne, ze względu na dużą atrakcyjność tych obszarów i brak podstawowej infrastruktury technicznej. Niedostatek miejsc pracy występuje także na obszarach o bardzo dobrze rozwiniętej funkcji turystycznej, co jest wynikiem uwarunkowań makroekonomicznych. Bezrobocie na tych terenach ma jednak w większym stopniu charakter koniunkturalny, na co wskazuje większa płynność rynku pracy.