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GASTRONOMY HAS NO BORDERS
Global Trends in Food Tourism and its Opportunities in Poland

Thesis
CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Degree Programme in Tourism
November 2013

CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES Kokkola-Pietarsaari Unit	Date November 2013	Author Sara Maria Kordek
Degree Programme Degree Programme in Tourism		
Name of thesis GASTRONOMY HAS NO BORDERS Global Trends in Food Tourism and its Opportunities in Poland		
Instructor		Pages 46+5
Supervisor Katarina Broman		
<p>This thesis focused on culinary tourism, global trends in food tourism and its opportunities for Poland. The aim of this report was to study how culinary tourism develops in the global world, with the main inclusion of the trends in Europe.</p> <p>The author of the thesis has analyzed the global trends in gastronomic tourism, examined food tourism profiles, the value of the gastronomic tourism experience and international initiatives with their impacts on regional tourism development. The author used in this research semi-structured interview was applied.</p> <p>A qualitative research method has been used in this report. The author has conducted six interviews in order to examine and analyze respondents' opinion on this topic. Interviewees represented mostly Marshall Offices of various provinces of Poland. The inquiries were delivered electronically. Telephone conversations were also held in order to obtain the necessary information also featured. The main findings of the research were that Poland is a developing country with a big culinary potential, which needs to be promoted in more defined and explicit manners.</p>		
Key words Culinary path, culinary tourism, food tourism, gastronomic routes, gastronomic tourism, gastronomic trails, global food trends, local specialties, Poland, regional products		

ABSTRACT
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 DEFINITION OF FOOD TOURSIM	3
3 GLOBAL TRENDS IN FOOD TOURISM	6
4 FOOD TOURIST PROFILE	9
4.1 Individualism of food tourists	10
4.2 The gastronomic tourism experience	11
5 GLOBAL ACTIONS IN FOOD TOURISM	13
5.1 Gastronomic routes	13
5.2 Global initiatives	15
6 FOOD TOURISM IN POLAND	18
7 RESEARCH METHODS	28
8 RESULTS	31
8.1 Culinary tourism and its influence on the development of tourism in the region	33
8.2 Visiting a place with the main purpose of tasting local specialties	34
8.3 People's interest in local specialties	36
8.4 Patronage of the international organizations and its influence on the recognition of food items	37
8.5 Gastronomic trails	38
8.6 Attractiveness of local products as a key to promoting the region	40
8.7 Suggestions concerning marketing solutions for Polish regions	42
9 CONCLUSIONS	44
REFERENCES	47
APPENDICES	
List of Tables	
TABLE 1. List of respondents	32

1 INTRODUCTION

Every day brings new forecasts indicating further opportunities for traveling, specifying a positive and a negative impact on the tourism industry. The statistics presented by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) show that since 1950, international tourist arrivals have increased by an average of 6.5% per year. It means that until 2005 arrivals have increased from 25 million to 806 million. (Fuad-Luke 2008.)

In recent years, it has been noticed that tourism can no longer be treated as one big sector. Its division has been done many times and among business tourism and leisure tourism, there is one segment that the author is specifically interested in. This niche is called 'food tourism' and it has grown rapidly and become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism. The importance of gastronomy in tourism is gradually increasing mainly because of the close link between destinations, local communities and tourism companies, tour operators and agencies. Local food diversifies tourism by giving a real impression of offering something genuine and unique. Furthermore, it stimulates local, regional and even national economic development. (Global Report on Food Tourism 2013.)

The aim of this thesis is to describe global trends in food tourism by presenting various conclusions regarding global food initiatives. The author presents gastronomic routes especially focusing on Poland as a developing country in terms of food tourism, a country that is benefiting more and more from popular tourism niche.

The report consists of two main parts: a theoretical framework and an empirical part that presents the research results. The first part is started by an explanation of the food tourism term and issues closely related to it. In the subsequent chapters, the author presents global trends concerning food tourism, food tourism profile, the gastronomic tourism experience, global gastronomic routes, international initiatives concerning food tourism and food products in general, as well as future prospects. The following chapter plays a significant role in the whole report concerning Poland as a food tourism destination.

The empirical part of the thesis starts from the presentation of research methods used in this report followed by the introduction of the interviewees. Later on the researcher

presents the questions that were asked to the respondents and its results. Validity and reliability of the research is high due to the fact that all respondents are professionally related to food, tourism, sport and leisure sectors. Besides that, the questions were formed in the way to give a possibility to the interlocutors to present their opinions and facts concerning food tourism development the regions of Poland that they represent. The thesis finishes with an analysis of the results and conclusions that situate Poland among other countries that use their culinary potential in food tourism.

2 DEFINITION OF FOOD TOURSIM

An interesting observation is the association of food with tourism development. Right beside the communication between consecutive destinations, the traveller encounters the phenomenon of eating. Wherever traveling, visiting friends or relatives, food is always on the agenda. Primarily, it is treated as a satisfaction of basic needs. Subsequently, it is a form of social interaction, relaxation, entertainment and finally a form of discovery and learning. It is worth noting that happens that tourists are one-dimensional in terms of needs and interests. Frequently primary travel plans change in succession to newly discovered experiences. Repeatedly it happens due to a desire to discover and experience the local cuisine. According to “Food&Travel” Magazine, those two elements are inextricably linked. Apparently, in the ranking of enjoyable holiday, the majority of respondents indicate catering as one of the more evaluative factors. Based on these reactions it can be concluded that the quality of products can prove to be a very good part of city branding, through which cities and regions can attract tourists. (Food and Travel Magazine 2013.)

As previously mentioned, food is always on the traveller's agenda. Regardless of if somebody is a real food lover or not, everybody needs to include this segment into their holiday planning schedule. It has started a long time ago when tourists were returning to their familiar places to enjoy well-known recipes that reminded them of different times and celebrations. Within the years this need developed and pushed potential travellers to search for new and special cuisine. A central part of the tourism experience started to be focused on gastronomy. It is worth noticing that today, quite a significant group of travellers choose certain destination because of the specialties that they can taste there. (Food and Travel Magazine 2013.) Among many definitions that describe food tourism, there is one, which presents it in a clear and simple way. In accordance with the World Food and Travel Association, food tourism can be defined as: “The pursuit and enjoyment of unique and memorable food and drink experience, both far and near “ (Food and Travel Magazine 2013).

According to another professional source food tourism can be defined as a specific journey described as an experimental trip to a gastronomic region, whose purposes may differ from being recreational or entertainment. The journey includes various visits to gastronomic

festivals, food fairs, and producers of food, cooking shows and demonstrations, everything to have a chance of tasting a quality food product. In general, it is a trip with the aim of taking part in any activity related to food. (Hall & Sharples 2013.)

The above presentation provides a wide overview of motivations driving travelers to specific locations. In most cases it is not limited only to consumption but more precisely, it is a usage of a consumption process to acquire certain knowledge of attributes related to food products, their influence on people's health and finally to learn from different cultures about their specialties. An important factor, very crucial in food tourism, is not only the process of eating and tasting itself but above all to be interested in the process of the preparation of meals and the traditions associated with them. (Global Food Report 2012, 6.)

However, it is necessary to highlight that not all tourists that like to try various cuisines in a certain destination can be classified as food tourists. Food tourists are the ones who partially or totally plan their trips in order to take part in various food venues, such as visiting vineyards, and treat this activity as one of the main points of their journey. (Global Food Report 2013.) According to the Quan and Wang research, over a third of tourist spending expenditures on holidays is devoted to food. That proves that the local cuisine is an inseparable aspect of the holiday experience. The described sector is often interchangeably called food tourism, gastronomic tourism or culinary tourism. Similarly, tourist routes associated with food, depending on the situation, are called gastronomic routes, gastronomic trails, culinary routes or food trails. (Quan & Wang 2004.)

Alternative tourism is a sector that connects tourism products or services with means of supply, organizations and human resources that are different from mass tourism. In that group one can find rural, adventure, eco or food tourism as well as all kinds of thematic tourism. It can be connected with food and wine, traditional music, dark tourism or any other niche. (Hall & Weillard 2000.)

Food tourism is a rapidly developing industry that includes many subsets such as beer tourism, chocolate tourism, cheese tourism, wine tourism etc. The number of subsets is increasing each year mainly because of the number of tourists attracted by food tourism. The second reason is the fact that many local governments have understood that local products may be a perfect trigger to motivate local communities to participate in product

development and marketing of their destination, which in a longer perspective attracts more tourists eager to visit a certain place. Hitherto the most popular subset is the one connected with various beverages such as oenogastronomy that focuses on wine tourism or coffee tourism. (Global Food Report 2012, 5-7.)

Food tourism offers mutual benefits for tourists as well as for destinations. Local products, that would not have such a big marketing power to be well-known outside the country, now can be advertised as connected to its origin, unique, fresh, local organic, sustainable and preserving culinary culture of the region. Travellers have a chance to taste a truly unique meal typical for a certain village, city or region while producers can take many benefits from the fact that their products are desired, generate income, create employment opportunities by providing jobs on various levels, which is exemplary for vineyards. Local agriculture sectors, whose incomes have decreased in the last years due to the rapid urbanization, have a chance to return to their good condition. According to The Global Report on Food Tourism conducted by UNWTO Affiliate Members' series, there are indicators showing a strong link between tourism and food and its positive influence on tourism sector and worldwide economies. Taking all the above-mentioned elements into account, food tourism provides many advantages for tourists as well as for food providers, governments of local regions or countries and all affiliates connected with them. Among the many indicated benefits of culinary tourism emerge some like link between culture and tourism, development of tourist meal experience or support of local cultures. It is worth mentioning that within the development of food tourism and specialized restaurants, local infrastructure for food production is developed as well. Partnership evaluated between restaurants, food producers and the tourism industry definitely helps to improve the communication between regional and national brands through gastronomy and this is strongly connected with the improvement or creation of brand image. Global Food Report mentions also benefits such as development of food and wine exportation, creation of coalitions based on food gastronomy tourism or settlement of standards for local food items, which is very often connected with regulations imposed by European Union that tries to protect regional food biodiversity. As author of this thesis mentioned, there are many positive aspects arising out of the concern for the development of culinary tourism, local communities integrate and it influences people's education of various gastronomic trainings and workshops. (Global Food Report 2012, 5-68.)

3 GLOBAL TRENDS IN FOOD TOURISM

Iñaki Gaztelumendi, the Consultant on food tourism, reported in the Global Report on Food Tourism in 2012 the description of global trends in food tourism. She distinguishes many indicators influencing the fast development of food tourism. Among many of them, she mentions factors concerning a growing market, the description of food tourists, marketing and promotion of the destination, cooperation between the tourism sector and local gastronomies, and the economic impact of food tourism. The main statement included in that report says that today's approach to tourism is paradoxical. On the one hand people are constantly overloaded with effects of globalization and take an active part in supporting it by buying products from different parts of the world, purchasing items on the Internet even if the shipment needs to be delivered over five thousand miles and regularly choose to eat in oriental restaurants. On the other hand, more and more people present an enhanced appreciation of local resources, they are interested in traditional recipes and the way of production. "The world is increasingly open; however, tourists seek experiences based on local identity and culture". (Global Food Report 2012, 10.)

There are many trends driving food or gastronomic tourism. They are a result of a transformed tourist approach to the concept of travelling. The need to lead a well-being lifestyle, seek authenticity, demand quality products, appreciate homemade and time-honoured methods as well as the need to have high-quality experiences, all drive the global trends in culinary tourism. (Global Food Report 2012.)

First of all, there is a trend called 'rejection of MacDonaldisation'. It describes people's rejection towards the model of low cost mass food production. Travellers seek fresh, local and good quality products that let them experience cultural heritage of the destination. (Hospitality Net 2012.)

The following tendency is connected with demographic and household changes. Food tourism opportunities needed to be automatically created after the demographic and household changes that appeared during the last decade of XX century. More and more people chose to eat out which is caused by groups described as the ones that provide the growth of the market for food tourism. According to Barcelona Field Study Centre, there are five basic groups represented by so-called "DINKS" which is a abbreviation of Double

Income No Kids. Those people are usually between 25-35 of age, with no children and wealthy lifestyle. The following group, “SINKS” Single Income No Kids, is a group of people usually between 25-35 of age, with no children and high standards of expenditure. “EMPTY NESTERS” are called parents that have already grown up children that left their family homes. Usually they are people between 45 and 55 years old, highly educated with disposable income. The next group is called “BOOMERS”, they are members of the baby boom generation from the 1950s. The last group is called “DIVORCES” that refers to divorced people searching new partners, they are very often eager to travel and take potential new partners out for dinner (Hospitality Net 2012.)

The following trend is based on the growth of affluence of populations all over the world, which has deepened the impact on consumers' spending. It was noticed that consumers trade up with the items that are a continuation of their aspirations and trade down if the products are only functional. Furthermore, consumers spend more on prepared food, eating out, gourmet products and items bringing them healthy or ethical benefits. They are eager to allocate for this purpose a higher proportion of their income than before. (Hospitality Net 2012.)

The next trend is based on multiculturalism and it is said to be an effect of globalization. At this point it is analysed from a positive point of view as long as it brings growth in international tourism. It is driven for example by immigration, expansion in TV channels and the Internet. Finding exotic food is no longer a problem. Multiculturalism is increasingly being combined with the statement: “ Think globally, act locally”. (Hospitality Net 2012.)

The trend of sustainable gastronomy is warmly welcomed in many countries and according to the predictions it will be an increasingly important factor in the decision-making process of potential travelers. Gastronomy that cares for crucial resources, focuses on the production of the ingredients, ecosystem, provides the employees with work and takes care of the environment stands to be a significant trend influencing the growth of the food tourism sector. “Sustainability implies the protection and conservation of resources for future generations, as opposed to current unconstrained depletion” (Cooper & Erfurt 2002).

'Slow-down philosophy' supports food tourism and is included in the latter global tendency. So-called 'slow travel' integrates with the concept of encouraging travellers to engage in local communities along their route. In accordance with the observation that says that very often the pleasure that would derive from the time spent on traveling is overshadowed by the desire to reach the final destination, the slow travel concept recommends to focus on the process of traveling itself. Travelling should be at least as important, exciting and full of surprises as the destination itself. Tourists have more time to get acquainted with the culture of the destination, preferably through the tasting of its local food. (Research Themes of Tourism 2011.)

4 FOOD TOURIST PROFILE

There are many reasons motivating people to focus more on quality products. The contemporary potential traveller is more cultural in comparison with the average traveler of 20 years ago. A tourist today, through a wide access to online information, is more experienced and well educated. Visitors have become more demanding, they focus on environment issues, take care of their health and seek unusual and unique destinations offering them authenticity. According to Hall & Weillard it is not longer that relevant 'what' is visited but instead 'how' it is visited is more important. That phrase should be definitely a key sentence while discussing special interest food tourists. Consumers do not have a lot of time to spend on leisure activities and that is the main reason why they are able to shorten the time of holidays but raise expenditures. Individuals that can be called 'special interest tourists' frequently wish to be recognised as authorities in different fields, they want to do things that are not part of the mainstream. Food tourism as a new phenomenon seems to be a perfect field for this kind of expectation. (Hall & Weillard 1992.)

Researches show that the populations spend more of their income on gourmet products to be prepared at home but also on eating out. More and more people while shopping take into consideration health and ethical concerns. The great popularity reached by products labeled with the 'Fair Trademark', shows that it is no longer a theory as long as the consumers need to pay more for items marked with this logo. That need pushed many producers to focus more on the quality of food items. (Quang & Wang 2004.)

People's awareness has also risen through many specialized books published recently as well as TV-shows popularizing healthy eating habits, that have become popular in most of the developed and developing countries such as the United States, Great Britain or Germany. The media has a great power to lead people to do almost anything. Currently trends show that it also has a huge influence on determining the selection of food products. A good chef, preferably the one that appears on TV with his cooking show, becomes a celebrity that shapes tourism products as happened in the case of Gordon Ramsey from 'Hells Kitchen' or Jamie Oliver, who in one of his programmes devoted higher focus to a quality food served in school canteens. It shows that culinary education reaches its consumers even in daily life. (Yeoman 2012.).

4.1 Individualism of food tourists

Individualism has a great influence on consumers' choices as well. In these times when most of the things are unified and widely reachable, people seek for uniqueness through choosing local, fresh and good quality cuisine as a way of reflecting their personality. It was also noticed that parents became more open for their children's eating preferences. Families are more democratic and let their children choose what and where they wish to eat. According to Ian Yeoman, globally known futurologist specialized in travel and tourism: "(...) characteristics of different age groups becomes blurred and diverse, more people will expect the places they visit to be adaptable to different aspects of their daily lives"(Yeoman 2012.) It basically means that eating out opportunities are significantly broadened. The trend of individualism was clearly seen in Australia where Starbucks failed as a brand being associated with herd instinct syndrome. Consumers defined coffee from Starbucks as "bland and lacking individuality". The same situation in Australia was met by Kentucky Fried Chicken, which used to be eaten by most of the American tourists visiting this destination. Those days are gone, less and less tourists order "egg and chips" while traveling abroad. (Yeoman 2012.)

Another aspect that has an influence on potential food tourism travellers is globalization, which has significantly introduced multiculturalism to the daily life of societies. Multicultural consumers meet other cultures even if they do not choose to leave their city. Globalization gives the opportunity to watch the latest Bollywood film, do shopping in the Indian store, try Chinese herbs or eat out in the Thai restaurant across the street. Recently it was proved that the favorite dish of British consumers is Indian Curry. Increasing awareness connected with health issues has a great influence on people's purchasing decisions. The global researches conducted mainly in developed countries starting in the United States, show that consumers limited the consumption of fat, sugar and salt by an average of 30 % while the consumption of other food items such as vegetables, fruits and cereals-based products raised accordingly. Those trends made even the big food brands transform their menus. Starbucks coffee started to offer coffees based on soya and fat-low milk whereas McDonald launched various salads, added apple juices and milk with apple to the children's menu and started offering yoghurts with cereals. More and more food venues started offering vegetarian, gluten free, lactose free or low-fat menu options not

only because of the same healthy reasons, but because of the belief that those meals are not a part of the mainstream eating habits. (Yeoman 2012.)

The conclusion from the above-mentioned situation is clear. Food tourists are visitors who expect much more from food. High-quality grown products connected with good life and economic well-being, design and creation of products are key components adding values for tourists and stand to be a way of understanding their decision-making processes. They want to find a certain meaning in what they eat. Sometimes their choices are based on health issues, other times on current trends. However, most of the time, the reason is simple. Travellers wish to acquire knowledge about a certain culture and destination. Through food specialties, typical for a destination, they have a chance to understand more. Careful selection of food products and components becomes a reference point of sophistication, care for the health conscious, individualism and tolerance to multiculturalism. Extremely important here is the gastronomic tourism experience that stands to be the highest need of food tourists. (Global Food Tourism 2012, 7.)

4.2 The gastronomic tourism experience

The gastronomic tourism experience plays an important role in tourists' perception of their trip. According to Javier Bianco Herranz, Director of the UNWTO Affiliate Member Programme, it is divided into three steps. The first one is a tourist's choice based on a reputation of the certain destination. The second one is connected with the actual gastronomic experience during the stay, and the final is described as a post-experience satisfaction factor. (Global Food Report 2012, 4.)

It has been proved that the majority of travelers prefer to visit those destinations that have already established a positive reputation as a place where the satisfaction from quality local products stands on the highest level. The very first example is the Mediterranean cuisine of Greece, Spain, Italy and Morocco, which are included in UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Those countries are frequently visited due to their gastronomic values. Destinations famous for their food variety, intensity and uniqueness, as a positive result of its marketing branding, have a strong positive image that gives to a

potential visitor the feeling of upcoming gastronomic satisfaction. (Hall & Sharples, 2003, 1-24.)

During the actual stay in a certain destination, visitors have or should have a chance to get acquainted with the culture and history through tasting the local food. The level of satisfaction rises with a variety of tried food and participation in various food festivals, events, shows etc. During this time a destination, meaning region, city, restaurant or vineyard, should take care of keeping its visitors satisfied with the served dishes. Travellers that get what they have been previously expecting have a huge marketing power by giving future recommendations. The evaluation made by visitors includes many factors such as attractiveness of the food and environment as well as the quality of the products and service. It is worth mentioning that the attractiveness of the destination is based on many attributes, it is multidimensional and that is the main reason why it is extremely important to work on improving the quality all the time. (Hall & Sharples, 2003, 1-24.)

The last stage of the gastronomic tourist's experience is a "(...) critical indicator for assessing the effectiveness of the products and services of the destination" (Hall & Sharples 2003.) It is not always an easy task to be conducted. Since many cultures have many views. Tourists from different countries have various perceptions of satisfaction and on that base they evaluate the gastronomy level that they had met. Still, no matter how high the tourist's expectations were before visiting a certain destination, service and quality of the products should be kept on the highest level. That is why, marketing management while creating a destination brand image should be careful with the advertisement of that they offer. If it is too exaggerated, most likely visitors will quickly recognize the misleading promotional channels and they will not be afraid to file a complaint, or even worse, post an online negative review of the place, which in a very short period of time may result in significant losses for a given place. In the same way act satisfied customers, most of whom, like to share positive impressions of the holiday. Success is based on contented customers who revisit the destination due to its gastronomy, which leads to a repeated purchase behavior. (Hall & Sharples 2003).

5 GLOBAL ACTIONS IN FOOD TOURISM

Globally there is a tendency to create various gastronomic tours that encourage tourists to visit a certain destination. Moreover, there are more and more regions, destinations that become a part of different organizations and associations. Through that membership they obtain many advantages such as promotion and support. Gastronomic routes have already existed but not in any precise way. Some time ago professional organizers discovered that the combination of tourist attractions with food created a new authentic experience that gives a new sensation and value to the potential visitors. According to Global Report on Food Tourism the idea of a gastronomic route is that it “brings together various types of tourist attractions and offer them in conveniently packaged form so that tourists stay longer in the area than if only one kind of attraction is featured” (Global Food Report 2012, 7). The perfect gastronomic route is the one that connects gastronomic heritage with sites of historical interest giving through that combination a well-balanced gastronomic holiday package. (Global Food Report 2012, 7.)

5.1 Gastronomic routes

There are many gastronomic routes that have already been created, described and promoted. Frequently they are focusing on one of the gastronomic tourism subsets such as wine tourism, coffee tourism or cheese tourism but they may also concern the general cuisine of the destination. Below the author presents several examples of gastronomic trails located in different parts of the world, starting from the one in Australia.

Several food and beverage routes have been established in Australia. For example The Butcher, Baker Winemaker trail that combines trails from all twelve regions of South Australia, it was the very first gastronomic route prepared for travelers focusing on wine tourism. There is a special route guide prepared by the Butcher, Baker, Winemaker trail that includes all relevant information that might be interesting and helpful for the potential visitors. Examples of good guides describing specialized food routes in Australia are many. For instance the Clare Valley Riesling Trail is prepared to welcome any kind of tourist. It includes 25 km of walking, wheelchair and cycling paths throughout the countryside and vineyards. The brochure offers many suggestions concerning places to dine out, have a rest or shop. There is also the Barossa Valley that focuses tourists'

attention not only on wines but also promotes the true regional cuisine of Australia. (SouthAustralia 2012.)

Austria is also a good example of a destination that has developed many tourism routes promoting culinary and agriculturally based routes. Most of them are based around the Styria region and city of Graz. For instance, The Southern Styrian Wine Road is the oldest national theme trail. It was created already in 1955, it includes a 25 km route that passes through eight wine districts. Another, well-known in Austria, route is the Bregenzerwald Cheese Trail, which covers a network of routes on which way travellers have a possibility to learn about cheese production, taste various kinds of cheeses, talk to the cheesemakers, innkeepers and owners of restaurants. Besides that, visitors take part in often-organized food events such as the Gourmet Day, which is accompanied with numerous food concern conferences. (Bregenzerwald 2011.)

The following destination is Croatia for which a promotional product is olive oil. Tourism trails are advertised through an interactive website where tourists have a chance to download maps containing all necessary information such as accommodation basis, places to dine out and maps for four major zones of Croatian olive oils regions which are Buje, Porec, Buzet-Pazin and Rovin-Vodnjan. Tourists on their way have a chance to gain knowledge about olive harvesting and production processes, try dishes containing olives and purchase products related to olives. Visitors cannot be misled because the whole trail is marked with flags of two styles that aim to be a great help on the way to recognize which places are famous for cultivars and modern technology and which ones represent smaller places where traditional processing techniques are used. (Istra 2011.)

Italy is already well known for its unique Mediterranean cuisine. It is also ranked as one of the largest producers of wine in the world. There are many possibilities for tourists to travel on wine trails but the most famous routes are the Castelli Romani Wine Route and The Cesanese Wine Route. Both routes let travellers visit many regions and cities where they have an opportunity to get acquainted with traditions of making wine. Routes include more than 100 members, 13 regionals associations, and many restaurants including 10 farm restaurants. Besides that, for visitors there are olive oil presses, bakeries, ham producers and dairy and a distillery ready to introduce tourists into the wine and regional food productions. The Cesanese wine route passes through the towns of Roiate, Olevano

Romano, Anagni, Paliano, Piglion e Serrone, Affile, Arcinazzo Romano, Genazzano and San Vito Romano. (Wine country 2008.)

5.2 Global initiatives

Global initiatives play an important role in the tourism sector, as the author mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Associations and organizations that support culinary tourism can work as a medium promoting certain activities and destinations. Below the author presents a few examples of global initiatives whose major mission is related to the change in the perception of food associated with those tourism possibilities.

Slow Food is an international association founded in opposition to the widespread culture of fast food, by Carlo Petrini in 1986. It was the very first major initiative of its kind, which was related to the change in the perception of food. This sub-movement promotes regional produce, traditional foods, agricultural biodiversity, educate residents by explaining the influence of fast food on people's health and developing various political programs that aim to preserve family farms. It encourages enjoyment of meals preparation, products selection and consumption in the company of others. The movement found many followers around the world. It is estimated to associate 83,000 members in 50 countries. (Slow Food 2013.)

The Slow Food organization coordinates one more network of food communities, Terra Madre, that is committed to producing quality food products in a sustainable way. The main objective of that network is to introduce, promote and discuss innovative ideas and concepts in the fields of gastronomy, economics and globalization. Several years ago, in 2004, Terra Madre (Mother Earth Organization), organized a meeting in Turin to promote slow food philosophy. The meeting turned out to greet supporters from 150 countries. (Slow Food 2013.)

Further development of Slow Food occurred into the Slow City movement that has similar assumptions and origins but extend the philosophy to various destinations. The inevitable consequence of the emergence of these movements became the gradual clarification of Slow Tourism. The basic assumptions are unchanged, only adapted to the requirements of traveling. The easiest way to describe what is important in slow traveling is to realize that

in that case not quantity of experiences but quality matters. That specified form of tourism is characterized by determinants like respect for local culture, history, traditions and local communities. It celebrates diversity and allows learning, discovering and sharing those experiences with other travellers. (Heitmann, Robinson & Povey 2010.)

Cittaslow is a non-governmental and non-profit movement, which focuses on sustainable development of smaller cities. Main objectives are to promote culture of good living, to cultivate and propagate local traditions and customs. Those aims are aimed to be achieved through research, testing, identifying and solving local problems. The association spreads sustainable development principles but also offers possible solutions on how to restrain and overcome negative effects of globalization such as environmental pollution or negligence of local art. (Cittaslow International Charter 2012.) In 1999, Paolo Saturnini, former Mayor of Greve in Chianti, had a brilliant idea. He considered many possible solutions on how to improve the quality of life in such a small city of Tuscany as Chianti. Paolo Saturnini understood the basic human needs and focused on the idea, which was designed to improve eating habits. (Cittaslow 2013.)

Cittaslow International Network connects cities from different parts of the world, including Germany, the Netherlands, the Nordic countries, South Korea, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Turkey and obviously Italy. There are plenty of cities included and the majority does not exceed a population level of 50 thousand citizens. However, it is crucial to understand that Slow Tourism does not have to be connected with Slow Cities. It would be natural due to the common background, nevertheless there is an enormous number of eco-destinations that tourists can choose from and where they can enjoy unforgettable, ecologically friendly experiences. (Cittaslow 2013.)

Euro-toques was founded on the 18th of November by Pierre Romeyer, Juan Mari Arzak, Paul Bocuse and Pedro Subijana. It is an international organization representing around 3500 chefs and cooks from 18 different countries. The main objective of this organization is to guard the authenticity of the best regional products. They promote good practices of food producers, protect culinary heritage in Europe and guarantee the healthiness of food items. Euro-toques is recognized and appreciated by the European Union as the one that defends Quality Food. Euro-toques fight for proper labelling that provides consumers with information that guarantees a good quality of the products, which is based on solid criteria.

One of the well-known projects was the one, which aimed to create a gastronomic map of Spain. The results were very successful. Tourists visiting mentioned places could be assured that they would find diversified traditions of the regions, quality products, culinary heritage and genuine recipes. Pedro Subijana, President of Euro-Toques in Spain said: “Let us be creative, let us be open to neighbouring cultures, but let us preserve our beautiful regional traditions and adapt them to modern tastes” (Euro-toques 2012.)

6 FOOD TOURISM IN POLAND

Poland is a large country in Middle Eastern Europe with a population of over 38.5 million people. Seven neighboring countries surround Poland, which is also bordered by the Baltic Sea. Looking back at its history, many times it was an area of conflict. The Polish cuisine was influenced by many elements. Over the centuries, the territory of Poland covered the different regions. At some point, Poland stretched all the way to the Black Sea, covering the areas of today's Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. In times of many wars, many migrations and resettlements occurred in Poland. In addition, Poland, for several centuries was a country ruled by dynasties. As a result of political marriages often with candidates from France, Sweden and Italy, many foreign products were transferred to the Polish territory and included into the Polish cuisine. All those factors had a great influence on today's shape and condition of the Polish cuisine. (Visit Poland 2012.)

Traditionally, Polish cuisine includes a lot of meat, mostly pork but also wild game due to the large afforestation of the country (40%). Staple foods are certainly potatoes that Poles prepare in more than a hundred forms. For a very long time the vegetables used most often were cabbage and beetroots, which are still cooked frequently but more often in a more modern variation. Polish cuisine includes a lot of herbs, pepper, sugar and vinegar that gives to meals sweet and sour taste. Traditionally, daily three meals are served, of which lunch is the biggest meal of the day. In contrast to other countries of Europe, which is also true for the countries of the former Eastern bloc, Poles very often cook viscous soups which they have at least two hundred recipes for. (Food tourism 2007.)

Tourism in Poland constantly welcomes an increasing number of visitors. According to the World Tourism Organization report conducted in 2012, it is the 17th most visited country in the world by foreign tourists. The author here tries to present opportunities that lie in the food tourism sector and its promotional potential that could be used by Polish regions and destinations. It is a relevant fact as long as the tourism in Poland contributes a lot to the country's overall economy. For a very long time main tourist offers included recreational areas such as Masurian Lake District, Tatra Mountains and Baltic Sea coastline as well as all sites connected with history, such as Auschwitz, the German Nazi concentration camp in Oświęcim, monuments in main Polish cities such as Krakow, Wrocław, Gdańsk, Warsaw, Lublin, Toruń and Poznań. Since a few years the marketing management of the

country shifted a bit its politic turning towards the genuine attributes of Poland, which are definitely nature, original culture and cuisine. This stands to create a great potential market for visitors seeking unique and real experiences. (Warsaw Voice 2012.) “Culinary, or food, tourism is a major promotional opportunity for Polish regions and their local, traditional products” (Warsaw Voice 2012).

As the author mentioned before, culinary tourism is a rapidly growing sector all over the world. There are many events, festivals and food trails that attract a great number of visitors. Poland as a country of taste has a great potentiality to pursue this kind of tourism as well. In September 2013 the Office of the Chairman of Podkarpacie Province together with the Citybell Consulting, ARC Rynek and Opinia companies, conducted a survey aimed to identify trends in food tourism in Poland. First of all, it focused on examining Poles to check their interest in traditional Polish products and events connected with food. Later on it assessed the impact of food-related tourist products and services on the decision-making process concerning buying choices. (Warsaw Voice 2012).

The results of the survey showed surprisingly positive results. The southeastern province of Poland turned out to be the one that can be proud of its diversified regional cuisine and certified, traditional foods. Jarosław Reczek, the head of the department of promotion, tourism, sports and international cooperation at the Province Chairman’s Office, said: “The findings confirm that this kind of tourism, with its air of something genuine, is the tourism of the future” (Warsaw Voice 2012). From the following comments, the author has recognized repetitive expression talking about today's priorities, with a clear impact on potential tourists, when traveling. A clear picture of contemporary tourist’ needs is shaped, that can be satisfied not only with good quality products offer but also with a chance to get acquainted and explore local authentic culture. (Warsaw Voice 2012).

Anna Proszowska-Sala, general manager at Citybell Consulting and an expert in communication strategies for cities and regions, recently said that Poland needs a complete tourist product that is attractive enough to attract tourists to visit a certain region and provides uniqueness and authenticity. This product should be strong enough to become a brand of the region itself. The survey conducted in Podkarpacie region showed that tourists are a perfect carrier of newly known products. Most of the visitors buy them as a souvenir to bring home Later on they let their families and friends try them, which spreads the idea

of qualified regional food products. Frequently so-called 'culinary trophy' are products that can be easily transported. 35 % of respondents bring cheese, 14 % of them brought food items connected with the local region, such as, honeys and different variants of fish. Among other 'food souvenirs' were cold meats, bread, regional wines and other alcoholic beverages, homemade sweets and pastries, spices, oils, herbs, pretzels and bagels. (Warsaw Voice 2012).

Regions on their way of seeking new opportunities of promotion for their products can take part in culinary trails and International Trade Fairs. During those events it is a perfect time to present flagship local dishes, regional products and specialties. For instance in 2010, Scotland organized a whisky trail which attracted more than a million tourists who contributed with £30 million to the economy of Scotland and generated an extra profit for local distilleries. This year, in September 2013, The International Trade Fairs in Poland, organized a Food Trade. The Trade Tastes of Regions in 2013 was the largest center in the country for promoting Polish, regional, traditional and certified foods. This edition of the show was exceptional, both in terms of number of exhibitors and visitors. This fair exhibition for the first time brought together all Polish regions and the number of visitors exceeded 25,000. (Chlebosz 2013.)

Thanks to the modern ways of travelling and unlimited access to the online sources, Poland can compete for domestic as well as for foreign visitors. That means that the competitiveness of culinary tourism in Poland is gradually rising. Well-prepared promotional campaigns connected with an organized accommodation base, access to the wireless Internet, tested list of restaurants and cafes and preferably prepared routes, showing the designated areas for culinary tourism, create many possibilities for attracting potential visitors. The author found interesting elements that may prove to be a great attraction and the reason for an unforgettable experience that tourists may encounter during their trip to Poland. (Chlebosz 2013.)

Rural areas that not so long time ago were treated as a symbol of backwardness of Poland, today have a great chance to use their attributes in order to attract potential travellers to choose just this place for the purpose of their trip. An additional advantage can be the fact that in many areas of Western Europe traditional agriculture has vanished some time ago and becoming a niche issue. In Poland farms are still functioning and very often the

products that they produce get certifications that proves the best quality. Potential tourists could be warmly welcomed with healthy, traditional and organic food products. Many family farm companies still use traditional methods of production and prepare food in accordance with old recipes. The potentials of these farms can be exploited for both sides. Tourists would experience the uniqueness and get familiar with traditional production methods while trying delicious dishes, whereas producers could create new job opportunities, influence on local economies and generate a lot of income from tourism. (Chlebosz 2013.)

Very often products that are advertised as healthy and organic are not. The strength of traditionally prepared Polish products is that the relevant committees and offices must approve them before they are allowed to be sold as such. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development certify certain food items, while the European Commission grants the EU certification. The Agriculture Ministry is really careful with a nomination of certain food products. It is a relevant fact thus clients can be assured of its quality and standards. To receive this kind of certification food products need to have proven tradition of production for at least 25 years. There are three main quality systems approved by the European Union, Protected Designation of Origin, Protected Geographical Indication and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed. Placed on the product special label, one of the three symbols, guarantees exceptional product quality resulting from specific regional conditions, history or the unique tradition of production. Giving the product designation guarantees its legal protection against attempt to falsification or counterfeiting. Among certified products the majority is connected with meat, confectionery, bread products, full meals and dishes. They are highly recommended due to: "Its multicultural heritage connected with ethnic mix that have shaped the regional cuisine for centuries". (Chlebosz 2013.)

The following advantage that creates many opportunities for Poland as a food tourism country are festivals of 'Food of Flavor'. Poland is divided into 16 voivodships (states) and each of them includes smaller regions. Most of them are aware of the potential presented by food, which can be proved by the amount of people taking part in many 'Festivals of Flavor'. During the festivals there are many attractions organized ready to welcome and educate visitors such as cooking workshops, tasting of local specialties and lectures connected with traditional Polish dishes and beverages. It is extremely interesting

to realize that Polish cuisine combines influences from Armenian, Jewish, German, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Russian and Austrian cuisines. To bear out the previously mentioned events the author lists several well known and lesser-known festivals of taste that are organized periodically in Poland. These are: the Honey Festival in Podkarpacie province, The Pierogi Festival in Pilzno, the Powidlaki Plum Stew Festival in Krzeszów or the biggest one European Festival of Flavor in Lublin. (Chlebosz 2013.)

According to the global trends what tempts food tourists is not only food but also a wide range of beverages. Italy, well known for its wine production raises its profit year by year. That is an opportunity for Poland. Enotourism (enology and tourism), is the wine tourism that develops in Lower Silesia. Those special interest tourists visit at least one place associated with the production of wine during their trip. In addition, visitors use the possibility to taste and explore the production process at the source, participate in the events and festivals connected with wine and finally buy local wines as a perfect souvenir to bring home. Lower Silesia is a region in the country with the largest number of palaces, rich in specific regional architecture. In the province of Lower Silesia there are several wine farms, including some unique places for example, the highest located in Poland in the Old Wielisław vineyard, situated in the Sudeten Mountains at an altitude of 360 meters above sea level or the largest in terms of vineyard cultivation Jaworki in Miękinia. (Chlebosz 2013.)

The last vineyard prides itself on cultivating more than forty types of wine branches. For the purpose of wine production in the Lower Silesia were adapted eighteenth-century buildings that were restored and adapted for the production and storage of wine. These places are enjoying extreme popularity among tourists and lovers of good taste, it stands out also as a certified place of Culinary Heritage of Lower Silesia. An additional attraction of the Lower Silesia region, which creates a perfect opportunity for the tourist promotion of this place, is the proximity of many architectural objects of spectacular nature, some of which are listed on the UNESCO World Heritage Site, such as the Church of Peace. (Chlebosz, 2013.)

Poland takes part in many international initiatives and projects such as Cittaslow, Terra Madre, Slow Food or Ark of Taste. Slow Food is an organization and at the same time a social movement bringing together individuals interested in protecting traditional cuisine

of different regions of the world and related agricultural crops and seeds, livestock and farm management methods specific to those regions. The organization was founded in 1986 by food critic Carlo Petrini in Italy as a backlash against the growing popularity of fast food bars. Poland became a part of this movement on the 4th of December 2002. The organizational structure of the movement is based on the associations of like-minded and like people. Most of the members have a common goal, to provide themselves and everyone else a possibility to fully reap and enjoy culinary global and local discoveries.

Poland also takes part in one global project maintained by Slow Food, the Ark of Taste. It is a program for reconstruction of biodiversity, it was designed to describe and protect threatened plants and animals, as well as ready-made food products. The program name is a paraphrase of the biblical Noah's ark. The Ark of Taste is to prevent the further unification of the food and listen to a diverse nature associated with different regions of the world. Currently, the list of protected Polish products includes just a few items. There is living only in Malopolska red cow, which is under the care of the Cistercian fathers Szczyrzyca, beside that there are another two Polish products, oscypki (sheep smoked cheeses) produced by shepherds, and Maciej Jaros's meads. (Slow Food Polska 2012.)

Another international initiative is the Cittaslow Movement, which was established in 1999 in Italy, it is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to support urban cultural diversity, environmental protection, promotion of traditional local products and to improve the quality of life. Already in 2004 one of the Polish cities, Reszel, became a part of the Cittaslow Movement. The goal has been achieved through the cooperation of the three institutions: The local government of Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship, Reszel Municipality and the Cultural Association "The Castle" in Reszel. A year later, in 2005, three other cities: Biskupiec, Bisztynek and Lidzbark Warminski decided to join the International Movement forming together with Reszel, the Polish National Cittaslow Cities Network. Today's network associates another five cities- Lubawa, Murowana Goślina, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Olsztynek and Ryn, giving a total amount of nine member towns. Poland occupies the fourth place in terms of the number of member cities in the world (Cittaslow 2013.)

The objectives of the National Network are consistent with the objectives of the main association, which is not conducted for profit. Main principals aim to spread cultural

promotion and good life “through research, testing and implementation of solutions to organizations”. (Cittaslow Polska 2013.)

To the National Network can join all cities with less than 50,000 residents, with exceptions for legitimate decisions of the Association. Polish National Cittaslow Cities Network cooperates with so called friends of Cittaslow. These include cultural and scientific associations, non-profit associations and trades that wish to support the activities of the Association by financial support for specific projects, technical and scientific cooperation or patronage. When giving examples of activities and projects taking place under the patronage of Cittaslow the author focuses on particular examples of several member cities. (Cittaslow Polska 2013.)

Reszel is a small town located in North Eastern Poland, with many monuments belonging to the Cittaslow network. Reszel is the first city in Poland, which has decided to join the association. In the Reszel municipality four companies are already certified by the European Culinary Heritage Network (Warmia-Masuria Powiśle). During the year, the city organizes festivities with craftsmen, music, and circus and drama groups. Reszel, is a city seen as a blend of greenery, parks, and monuments. Tourists have the opportunity to participate in a field trip attractions tourist trail, where they can hear from the guide stories related to the city and its history. Positive projects in the city are the educational programs aimed at increasing the environmental awareness of the youngest residents of the city. For example segregation of waste, promotion of recycling, growing plants or raking leaves. Additionally education associated with a balanced diet and appreciation of the value of the basic elements of the environment such as water or air, is arranged. (Reszel 2013.)

Gastronomic routes are already developed and well promoted in many European countries and not only Australia, California or Thailand have proved that many tourists are seeking to spend some time on discovering new cultures through their cuisine. Polish regions have many food trails organized but only a small part of them is well advertised in whole Poland and beyond the borders. Here is a task for the PR management of the regions and people associated with food tourism. Some of the gastronomic routes focus only on certain kinds of products such as wine, beer, cheese whereas the others combine regular sightseeing of the region with a chance of trying various specialties typical for a region. Below the author describes a few food trails with a tight promotional potential. The reader should keep in

mind the fact that contemporary travellers are seeking for genuine, traditional and unique food products that bring them unforgettable experiences. Quoting the International Culinary Tourism Association, culinary tourism is “the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences” (International Culinary Tourism Association 2012).

For example ‘Carp Route’ is a guide to the ponds and fish farms in the Carpathian and Lublin region showing the richness of their natural and cultural heritage. In these areas there are 18 local fishing groups, and in the waters belonging to the group are mainly carp. Each group has released a map, which contains a lot of tips to consumers and tourists. In order to promote inland fishery and its products, a number of information boards indicating the fish farms, points of fish sale, angling and dining options, have been put up. An addition to the uniqueness of the place, is that there are varieties of carp uncommon and rarely seen in other places. Breeders often refer to the tradition of the thirteenth century, when on Polish tables ruled carp and its breeding was engaged with monastic-Cistercian monks. It is worth mentioning that in the quality system ‘Quality and Tradition’ three manufacturers of carp participate. (Chlebosz 2013.)

Silesian Region is characterized by a variety of natural, from lowland to mountain landscape. The richness of nature in the company of many historic buildings of architectural increases the attractiveness of the region. In order to protect valuable natural areas on the site created two national parks: Karkonosze National Park and Table Mountain National Park. The first one is also part of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Particular value in Europe are also located in this region Lower Silesian Forests that the surface of 120,000 hectares is the largest such area in the southern part of the Poland. Aside from inspiring sites associated with nature, history and culture, Lower Silesia has to offer meetings with its culinary tradition. Due to the historical migration, these sites are occupied by representatives of all regional groups as a significant influence on the shape-specific, heterogeneous cuisine of the area. (Chlebosz 2013.)

The development of Lower Silesia is now firmly based on promoting traditional culinary products, regional and organic. Any place with rich natural beauty, historical and touristic, offers a product connected to it and which is typical of the region. A lot of products are listed in the UNESCO Regional Products, and some on the list of Culinary Heritage. Tourists can enjoy various food festivals and try specialties that suit their taste. There is a

long list of products to try or bring home. Exceptionally tempting is a visit in the largest ecological vineyard in Poland or a visit in land of hills Trzebnice where tourists can try traditionally produced apple cider. Poland is famous for its orchards. One of them, founded 20 years ago, produces not only apples, but also a number of apple products. In this way, visitors have the opportunity to taste the unsettled juice, dried apples, jams and pastries with the addition of apples. In this 'culinary cauldron' you can also find wonderful certified meat and perfectly made plum jam, which, in combination with the standard tourist route, creates the unique elements of food tourism. (Chlebosz 2013.)

The advantage of the Podlaskie region is certainly its environment with fragments of Bialowieza Primeval Forest, the only place in Europe where the bison is naturally found. Although the area is primarily agricultural, tourism begins to play a greater role here. One of the differentiators of this region is the multiculturalism and multi-religiosity of its inhabitants. This region has a great potential, unfortunately not fully used. Small towns, interesting buildings, religion connected sites, huge green areas full of clear lakes and wonderful, unique nature of reserves create a perfect experience for tourists. Thanks to the existence of many water areas such as lakes and rivers it is a well-known place for practicing water sports and inner water sailing. Podlasie is a home to many nationalities, and here live Belarusians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Russians, Tatars, Roma, and in the past the Jews and Germans. This all contributes to the diversity of history, religion, customs, culture, and above all the culinary tradition. (Chlebosz 2013.)

Already 45 regional products are certified on the Traditional Regional List Products. All products are available for traditional and gourmet lovers during regularly organized fairs and festivals of flavor. Moreover it is possible to taste and buy them in small family businesses and agritourism farms. Tourists visiting that region must try one of its specialties. Among many of them, there is matured ham, coolers, maturing pastries, cheese, honey, and fish. All of them have their genuine brand names that sometimes are difficult to distinguish even for Poles from different parts of Poland. Broad popularity among tourists is the annually held Herring Day, which is organized in April, during which a variety of activities are arranged for smaller and bigger customers. However, one of the highlights of the region is the National Canoeing Rally, which is a great excuse to organize festivals and fairs, at which several exhibitors present their products, and tourists have the opportunity to satisfy the eyes and the stomach. (Chlebosz 2013.)

Lubusz Province, due to its captivating landscapes, forests, lakes, rich flora and fauna, well-kept beaches and swimming areas, creates a very attractive tourist destination. In Lubusz there are many interesting architectural and historical monuments, such as the Cistercian Monastery, Castle of the Knights in Lagow Lubuski, Międzyrzecz Region of Fortification and one of Europe's largest nature reserves, which is the winter home to bats. Food travellers can enjoy a wide range of events organized here. One of the biggest events in the region is the annual harvest festival that is held every year in September. Another attraction may be the oldest Polish film festival 'Night of water lilies' and rally enthusiasts of fortifications. Focusing on aspects that may interest potential culinary tourists, in this region there are long traditions of winemaking and beekeeping dating back to the medieval times. Cultivated with greater or lesser intensity over the years, today this region has become an important part of tourism promotion. Therefore, the main products in the specific brand of the region are honey, wine and mead. Highly active in this area are winemaking and beekeeping associations that undertake various initiatives to disseminate information about the wine and honey, as well as Lubusz culture and traditions. On this base, in the region the Lubusz Wine and Honey Route was created. On the trail visitors can sleep, eat, watch the vineyards, take a look at the old tools and methods of manufacture of the products and try the unique taste of wine and beekeeping products. The route has 40 stops, including more than 20 wineries. The entire trail is more than 300 kilometers and often reveals to tourists wonderful, hidden places that cannot be found while regular sightseeing because they are not included in most of the tourist guides (Chlebosz 2013.)

7 RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to present and describe the research methods used for this report. Research itself is a process of inquiring and investigating issues in order to solve practical problems and increase knowledge on various topics. It is a systematic, ethical and methodical tool. According to Collis and Hussey, research may review or synthesize already existing knowledge, provide solutions to problems or explain new phenomena. It can also be a combination of all of the above (Collis & Hussey 2003). In accordance with Veal (2006) there are three main types of research: descriptive, explanatory and evaluative (analytical). Some of the researchers mention as well a predictive type of research. Research can be approached in a number of ways, quantitative or qualitative, applied or basic and deductive or inductive. Many projects combine those methods, for example using qualitative and quantitative research methods together. (Collis & Hussey 2003.)

The research method used for this project was the qualitative research method. Qualitative research method assumes three basic ways of conducting a research: in-depth interview, structured interview and semi-structured interview. In-depth interview method aims to improve understanding of social and cultural phenomena, not necessarily to create objective facts. (Fidel 1993.) The structured interview method assumes that each of the respondents receives and answers exactly the same questions in the same order. It helps to create a reliable comparison between answers afterwards. The questions in this type of research can be close-ended or open-ended. (Lindlof & Taylor 2002.) The last type of qualitative research method is semi-structured interview. It differs a bit from a structured interview because it is not that rigorous. The semi-structured interview allows bringing up new ideas through its partly open form. Questions and suggestions are a result of what the respondent says. The interviewer should precisely highlight the theme of the research as to not let the respondent get distracted while answering. (Lindlof & Taylor 2002.)

According to Michael W. Firmin “the semi-structured interview is a qualitative data collection strategy in which the researcher asks informants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions”.(Firmin 2008). In this report semi-structured e-mail interviewing was used. This method was chosen after the author had recognized many advantages related to it. According to the report published in 2006 by the Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, e-mail interviews do not generate costs

connected with administration issues such as telephone bills or costs connected with commuting while conducting face-to-face interviews (Murray 1995). Literature review shows that e-mail interviewing is a rapidly increasing method. Starting from 1994 this method was used by Foster to study the ways in which “university instructors conducted curriculum planning and to explore the advantages of e-mail interviewing” (Lindlof & Taylor 2002.)

In the following years many researchers, for example Murray in 1995, Persichitte, Young and Tharp in 1997, Murray and Sixsmith in 1998, Curasi in 2001, Kennedy in 2000, Karchmer in 2001, Meho and Tibbo in 2003, Lehu in 2004, Harrison in 2004 and many others applied this method. A particular way of conducting e-mail interviews varied among mentioned researchers between all possible types: in-depth interview, semi-structured interview and structured interview. (Lindlof & Taylor 2002.)

In this report the author has used the semi-structured e-mail interviewing method of qualitative research method. Ten questions were formed and sent to several potential respondents. Seven of them answered the questions, giving valuable responds. Research was conducted in the Polish language and later on translated into English by the researcher. A few times the author conducted phone conversations with the aim of explaining the research purposes. The author chose this method motivated by several factors. First of all it increases access to individuals difficult to reach in face-to face meeting due to geographic location or in case interlocutors prefer online interaction over face-to-face or telephone conversation. It eliminates expenses connected with calling or travelling and time needed for transcribing. Furthermore, the researcher is not limited to conducting one research at the same time. Respondents can answer at a time suitable for them, which sometimes may cause some delays that is why it should be predicted while planning the research. Additionally interlocutors have a possibility to share their experiences and suggestions in their own environment and are more focused on the theme because they are not distracted by independent factors or by the researcher him/herself. (Pettigrew, Fidel Bruce 2001.)

In accordance with Denscombe (2003) responses gained through the e-mail interviewing research method have the same quality as the ones gained with more traditional methods. Several researchers reached similar conclusions during their studies, which aimed to compare both face-to-face interviews and e-mail interviews, for example Curasi in 2001, Meho and Tibbo in 2003, Murray and Harrison in 2004. Curasi discovered that the actual

interviewee's' response is dependent on who is being interviewed and who the interviewers are (Curasi 2001). It also depends on how skillful in online interviewing both sides are. A common tendency that appears in online interviews is to receive short and very precise responses to the questions posed. (Wang 1999.)

In this report the author conducted several interviews in order to derive personal experience and opinions of respondents concerning food tourism and its opportunities for Poland. Opinions of the interlocutors were collected and analyzed. Results of the interviews that the author presents later in this report have been analyzed in terms of compatibility and contrary experiences. The whole empirical part of this report is based on quality information and data collection. Validity and reliability of conducted research seems to stand on the right level. Questions were clear in order to avoid misunderstandings. Interviewees were chosen carefully to include people professionally connected with the topic of this report. (Wang 1999.)

8 RESULTS

This research was conducted to deepen knowledge about culinary tourism, explore global trends in food tourism, analyze future prospects in this field and finally to examine potential opportunities for Poland as a food tourism destination. The interview consisted of ten questions, which aimed to investigate the relationship between regional cuisine and the development of tourism in the certain area. The questions focused on culinary tourism, regional food products, certifications, food trails and festivals as well as potential promotional opportunities for Poland. Interviewees were not forced or lead while answering the questions.

In this chapter the author presents the results obtained after having all answered gathered and analysed. This required from the author accurate and detailed analysis and ranking of answers depending on the topic questions. The task repeatedly has been difficult due to the chosen method that did not allow for a direct contact with an interlocutor and immediate reaction to the received answers. Sometimes the reply to certain questions was similar in the case of several respondents and completely different for other questions. The author had to carefully analyse the answers of all respondents so as not to miss any important information or suggestions. The results and information about respondents are presented below.

This research was carried out with the help of interviews. The author tried to meet with people connected with tourism industry on a professional level. Most of the time, face-to-face meetings were impossible to be carried out due to various reasons such as lack of time or inconveniences associated with commuting to certain places. That was one of the reasons why the researcher decided to instead choose the structured e-mail interviewing method. The questions were designed in a clear and readable way. Both the questions and answers have been created in the Polish language. For this report, the author has translated them into English. The following part of the report presents seven respondents together with a short description that explains their professional positions.

TABLE 1. List of respondents

NAME AND SURNAME OF RESPONDENT	FIELD OF PROFESSION
Mrs. Edyta Klasa	Department of Environment and Agriculture Pomeranian Province Marshal Office
Mrs. Marcelina Szuba	Co-owner of Rural Educational Household 'Dworek Tradycja'[Country House Tradition]
Mrs. Monika Grygier	Department of Social Infrastructure Faculty of Regional Tourism, Lubusz Province
Mr. Rafał Serej	Department of Agriculture and Environmental Lublin Province, Marshal's Office in Lublin
Mrs. Natalia Tarkowska	Department of Coordination of Promotion, representative of Marshal's Office Warmia and Mazur
Mrs. Kamila Wróbel	Office of the Marshal of the Opole Province. Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism
Mrs. Agnieszka Kostecka	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Marshal Office of the Opole Province.

8.1 Culinary tourism and its influence on the development of tourism in the region

The author has analyzed the received answers, which altogether gave a big picture of experiences, observations and suggestions for future prospects. All interviewees have heard before about food tourism so this term is not new for them. Some of the respondents admitted that very often they become culinary tourists while travelling.

In the second question the author asked if in the opinion of the interviewees, support and development or promotion of local cuisine can have an influence on the development of tourism in the certain region. In a general aspect the answers were similar, all interviewees said that in fact it might have a big influence on the tourism development. Klasa said that the originality of regional cuisine is a tourist attraction. Building on the raw material harvested locally contributes to the economic development of the region and should be promoted, which is possible through local specialties.

Szuba answered that local cuisine has a huge impact on the development of tourism in the world, each region has its own distinctive cuisine, which brings many tourists eager to try those specialties. Grygier answered the question in details, giving examples from Lubusz voivodship that have been implemented in this area and it concerned development of tourism. As a brand products wine and local cuisine have been used, which confirms that there is an attachment between culinary tourism and development of tourism in general. Regional products can be transformed into the business cards of the region, as a result of drawing on its unique character: the culture and traditions. Besides that, the involvement of the local community contributes to its development, while providing stimulus to the flowering of local entrepreneurship.

According to Serej, definitely such actions like supporting or promoting local cuisine have an impact on the development of tourism. By increasing the value of destinations for culinary qualities, the ability to discover new tastes, flavors recalled from childhood is raised. These and other additional advantages of different regions in the respondent's opinion contribute to the increased number of tourists and increase the amount of funds left in these areas. The following respondent, Tarkowska, claims that food specialties have an impact on the tourism development, it can be one of the additional strengths of the region

which has been recognized in the communications and promotional activities aimed directly at tourists.

The following interlocutor, Wróbel, notes a strong relationship between the kitchen and tourism. This is particularly evident among those who are interested in cuisine, traditional and regional products. They visit the place where it is possible to try special dishes. This is usually associated with a visit to the certain area, tourist destinations that are located in the vicinity of culinary attractions. Respondent Kostecka, states that people now live in a world without culinary barriers. It is possible to try products from across the world, admire the variety of flavors offered by different cultures and countries. Kostecka notices a dynamic development in consumers' attitude towards healthy eating habits. It is highly relevant to provide a wide range of products available in the food service market, that would be genuine and healthy and at the same time would represent national or regional cuisine. That would create a complete picture of the particular region. The Regional Government of Opole is a member of the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage, which promotes the region through traditional and innovative food. Regional Network "Culinary Heritage Opole" brings together producers, processors, restaurateurs, who produce high quality food from raw materials mainly sourced locally. The functioning of this network in the region allows for the practice of culinary tourism, which is becoming a larger group of followers.

8.2 Visiting a place with the main purpose of tasting local specialties

In another question, the author undertook issues related with local specialties, asking whether the respondents observed any relationship between local products and the number of tourists arriving in the location. The author then asks about the Polish products that in the opinion of the respondents seemed to be the most attractive for potential tourists. Respondent Klasa, observes this association and concludes that products produced in the quality systems (regional, environmental) and the ones, that are listed as Traditional Products kept by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in collaboration with the Marshal Offices of Provinces, are particularly attractive.

Second respondent, Szuba, says that those products that are locally produced, organic, such that consumers know the way “from farm to fork” are extremely attractive. Szuba pointed out rapidly growing trends connected with the Slow Food Movement that fights for preservation of traditional recipes that people start to miss. Later on there is an example given on which base, it is clearly seen that some products taste only the same in the certain regions. For instance Polish bread whose unique taste cannot be copied. It is offered in England, France or in Central America but due to the different longitude and used corps, the final taste is slightly different. Tourists arriving to Poland might be interested in trying dumplings, sauerkraut or Polish sausage.

The following respondent, interlocutor Grygier, notices the connection between cuisine and tourism. According to the given information, especially popular food tourist items in Lubusz Voivodeship is wine and honey as well as connected with it Wine and Honey Trail.

Respondent Serej, starts from giving global examples of the strong association between brand food products and tourism. The respondent noticed this kind of practice in Portugal, Porto, where apart from its several UNESCO World Heritage Sites there is a well-developed product, Porto wine. Many tourists come to Porto in order to visit various manufacturers and places that refer to the wine production. It is also possible to taste and purchase products manufactured right there. A similar example mentioned was Scotland with its whiskey distilleries, and France with its vineyards, where tourists often got to buy fine wines directly from the manufacturer, which are wine produced on a small scale but that is the main reason why those products are so special. The respondent also tells about this practice in Poland. Slowly among the producers of cheeses that entered in the European system of quality, there is an opportunity to visit shepherds during the cheese production and buy cheese directly produced by them. The following respondent Tarkowska, did not notice travelers, whose main motivation to visit a certain destination is cuisine. The next respondent Wróbel, did not comment on the tourists who come to a specific location because of the cuisine of the region but points out a number of products that could be particularly attractive to potential tourists. Among the mentioned products there were cold meat (Kokrzekwa, Górki brands), honeys such as the one from the apiary Zarodowa from Maciejowice, bread (Ekostyl) or local dishes, for instance from Chocianowice, Żlinice, tinctures.

In accordance with KostECKA food is and integral part of everyone's life. One of the key elements of increased tourist flow is certainly the local cuisine of destinations, resulting in their minds the memory of taste associated with a specific place. The region of Opole province is characterized by a diverse cuisine and culinary multi traditions resulting from the multiple origins of the inhabitants of this part of Poland. The Opole region, represented by this interlocutor, offers a large number of attractive products with a special attention devoted to products such as Silesian Kołacz, holding the EU designation 'Protected Geographical Indication'. Tourists are looking for the products marked with the logo 'Culinary Heritage' because this logo guarantees only unique products available in the region. The mark is increasingly recognized across Europe and thus tourists visiting this region are looking for food with this particular designation. The specialty of the Opole Silesia is Silesia Sunday Dinners, where visitors can enjoy regional dishes, homemade chicken soup with hand made noodles and roulade, potato dumplings and red cabbage. Many restaurants, especially in rural areas, have this offer on their menus.

8.3 People's interest in local specialties

The next question was to verify the interest of local communities in regional products as well as to check when this interest intensifies. The first respondent, Klasa, notices that local products draw people's attention and it especially increases during regularly held events related to food during which it is possible to purchase them. The following respondent, Szuba, says that Poles enjoy trying regional specialties. The access of the certain articles is definitely easier for them than for foreigners but even if the products are not widely available they are eager to seek them. Festivals, events and exhibitions help. However it is highly important to pay attention to which companies take part in those kinds of events. Visitors must be sure that the event, that they take part in, does not let random fast food stalls participate. The third respondent, Grygier, notices this interest among tourists, he gives examples connected with his region. Grygier mentions the Wine Festival organized in Zielona Góra during which there are many tours around vineyards and mountains that attract visitors.

The following respondent, Serej, notices an increase in the culinary interest among travelers during promotional events such as well-organized fairs during which wine of the region is promoted or contests such as Culinary Heritage- Taste of Regions Contest.

Respondent Tarkowska, said that he clearly notes that the interest is much higher than in previous years, interlocutor suppose that it may be associated with the popular trend of eco-food, high-quality food that is based on traditional regional recipes created from regional products. Festivals and regional food products can promote increasing interest, but it should be combined with the promotion, going beyond the region (e.g., nationwide or international). Trade can contribute to its popularity, but on the condition that they are available to the general public, not just aimed at exhibitors. Following respondent Wróbel, for example mentions AGOTRAVEL Fair in Kielce, which is an international showcase of local specialties. Exhibitors, from most parts of Poland, sell and organize tasting of local products. Beside that there is also a possibility for producers to reach visitors directly, for instance as it happened during the Opole Festival of Flavors.

In accordance with respondent Kostecka, the interest in local specialties is large, but their availability is still negligible. In addition to fairs, festivities and numerous commemorative events, it is hard to get to local producers. However, all the above-mentioned projects dramatically improve the condition of interest in regional products. The Opole region deserves special attention to annually organized festival and competition "Our Culinary Heritage - Tastes of the Regions", which promotes and rewards dishes from the region and the products that are manufactured on the premises. During the festivals there is conducted a direct sales of regional and traditional products which seems to be especially attractive for tourists.

8.4 Patronage of the international organizations and its influence on the recognition of food items

The following topic that was the matter of the next question was connected with the Slow Food organization. The author asked interlocutors if they had ever heard about this organization. All of the respondents had heard about this organization. Moreover, some of them showed a deeper interest in what the organization works for and what is connected with its statement (Tarkowska and Kostecka). Additionally, Kostecka, points out that Opole Voivodship is a member of the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage, which promotes culinary trend of short food chains and regional products. This network brings together 27 regions from across Europe and includes nine Polish regions, including the Opole Province.

In the following question the author asked the respondents about their opinion upon the patronage of the international organizations such as Slow Food or Terra Madre, or the certification of the European Union awarded to certain products, and if it has an influence on development or recognition of these products. Respondent Klasa, agrees with this statement. Szuba said that it is a difficult topic. Very often small producers and suppliers that represent good quality regional products cannot enter the market due to the Polish law that does not allow doing it without special permissions. A multitude of conditions required to be met by small-scale producers often exceed their capabilities becoming unprofitable. Grygier says that it is possible. The respondent Serej and Wróbel, agree that such certificates in fact help local products. In Tarkowska's opinion, it does not necessarily influence on development, but certainly it increases recognition and prestige. Kostecka says that nowadays world is the era of globalization and it is full of conscious consumers that are looking for local products that are marked with certifications that guarantee regional origin and quality. In this respondent's opinion signs should be international in the way that consumers from different countries can recognize them, for example the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage, Protected Designation of Origin and Traditional Specialities Guaranteed.

8.5 Gastronomic trails

The European trend is the creation of organized tourist routes, which are accompanied by a range of gastronomic attractions. For example, the tourist can go on a culinary tour of the olive groves in Croatia associated with the ability to try products containing olive oil and olives or attend lectures on oil production processes, which were mentioned in the first part of this report. That theme was the subject of the following question. Respondents were asked if the creation of those kinds of organized gastronomic trails is a good idea to be used for promotional purposes of the destination. According to Klasa, it is a good idea, it promotes a certain destination and additionally stimulates the development of rural areas as well as it helps to develop local entrepreneurship.

Respondent Szuba thinks that it is a wonderful idea. The answer included the suggestion for gastronomic trail connected with rural areas where tourist could take part in receiving the milk directly from the cow, make a butter or cottage cheese on their own and take part in many natural attractions that would increase their experience in this destination. Another

food trail could be connected with apples that Poland is the second biggest exporter in Europe. This kind of route could include picking up the apples and making many dishes and cakes that include this ingredient. The following interlocutor, Grygier, admits that gastronomic trails are a good marketing idea. As an example the respondent mentions Lubusz gastronomic tour 'Honey and Wine', which attracts many visitors. In the respondent's opinion if there are sufficient conditions in the region to create those kinds of routes, it should definitely be created and promoted.

Serej, also mentions already existing food trails that work successfully such as Sheep Cheese Trail that connects 31 huts, where the production of cheese is done. While participating in this food route it is possible to try various fresh sheep milk products such as cheeses made of sheep milk 'oscypek', 'bryndza', cottage cheese from sheep's milk 'bundz', the whey from sheep's milk, zentyca, type of cheese produced mainly in the Podhale region 'redykołek' and take part in their production process. Respondent also suggest that gastronomic routes does not have to be monothematic, a good idea is to combine many different products that increase the attractiveness of the trail.

Tarkowska, concentrates on gastronomic trails that focus on wine and cheese. Interlocutor notices that Poland will not become so fast second Italy or France of Europe, which developed food trails and welcome many food tourists each year, but there are no limitations to promote gastronomic trails connected with wine under the condition that those routes would not be only centered in one region but located throughout the whole of Poland in order to extend its length and variety. At the same time, the message sent to the tourists should be short and concrete as well as should include tourist's needs, perhaps the best solution would be to organize food trail that connects two or three regions. While working on the creation of gastronomic routes, management groups should remember that products function here as a brand of the region but should not be the only one attraction.

Moreover food tourists are eager to gain knowledge about the culture, architecture, history, handicrafts of the destination, as it is possible to do in the Małopolska Voivodship (Lesser Poland Voivodeship) with its 'Routes of Małopolska'. The following respondent, Wróbel, who represents Opole (Opolskie) Province, notes a growing trend related to culinary travels and tourists intrested in local specialities. Creating this kind of gastronomic route is certainly a crucial thing from the point of view of creation of the brand image of a certain

region, products that become an attraction of the route cause positive tourist emotions. From the voivodeship of view, there is an eager and need to promote among other products, honeys. While thinking about Poland in general, respondent suggests products that in his opinion have the biggest potential such as apples, plums, hops, grapevines, mushrooms, meat, bread, cottage cheeses. Those products stand out with their high quality. According to Kostecka, Polish culinary has a lot to offer to foreign tourists, from mountain sheep cheese by Silesian roulade with red cabbage or the Kashubian strawberries. Every Polish region has its own individual taste and a wide range of unique products. Creating a gastronomic route enables the access for potential tourists to get acquainted with the flagship products of the region. Each region offers a wide range of dishes and products that certainly impresses not only one tourist.

8.6 Attractiveness of local products as a key to promoting the region

The following question aimed to estimate the respondents' opinion on local products such as sheep cheese, Lisiecka sausage (Kiełbasa Lisiecka), Slivovitz Lacka (Śliwowica Łącka) if they are attractive enough to attract potential tourists that would like to visit Polish regions and cities with the main purpose of tasting those products. The first respondent, Klasa, claims that around regional products there need to be created or arranged additional attractions which together create an experience with added value that entertain tourists, for instance trail connected with strawberries (strawberries picking) or the one related to plums (On the plum trail). Szuba points out that the most important thing is a good marketing plan. It seldom happens that a product becomes famous without any promotion. That aspect should be well-organized and implemented, that in the final result product becomes a brand of the region itself and can be a tourist opportunity for the region and Poland.

A similar answer was received by Grygier, whose opinion on this topic shows that product itself does not have such a big marketing power as gastronomic route related to it or other events and festivals. Serej, thinks that Polish product can attract potential tourists to visit a certain place with the main purpose to try it. Such a trip lets tourists to take part in the production process, culinary workshops and finally there is a possibility to purchase favourite specialities at the source. However there is a danger that necessarily need to be

prevented. Producers have to keep the quality of the products at the highest level and do not lower it due to the eager of increasing the number of production.

Tarkowska, on the example of 'Małopolska Trail' proves that local food can be a main trigger for attracting tourists. Thanks to organized promotional campaign and well planned food trails, there is no chaos, visitors know what to search for and how, beside that all attractions of the region are pointed out which potentially increases the number of tourists visiting places that they have never heard of before. The next respondent, Wróbel, says that local specialities are integral part of the region and what is connected with it should be used as a brand image building aspect. It helps to create an experience of uniqueness and increase the attractiveness of the area. Kostecka says that only few tourist travels only for culinary purposes to explore new tastes, most of the time it is rather an element of travel, not a destination in itself. The unique qualities of local products must be compatible with the entire environment in which they are located, climate, location, history of the region, monuments, tourist attractions and the base of the city. Getting to know the product is closely related to learning about the traditional culinary, historical, people who produce them so it is not only the product itself, but also the whole culture associated with it. Usually people producing products, they are enthusiasts who put their heart into what they do, their aim is to create products that in a special way will even enthrall and encourage tourists to return to them, to certain regions.

In the following question the author asks about the general opinion on Polish food, its diversification, attractiveness and what could stand for a potential barrier for a potential tourists coming to Poland. Klasa claims that Polish food should be attractive enough. Barrier can be a low number of Polish products available beyond the borders of the country and difficult access of food items which quality stands on a very high level. Respondent Szuba says that Polish food is very attractive and the only difficulty for foreigners can be the culture barrier. Products that are unknown abroad, way of mixing ingredients or the way of serving may seem to be odd or even weird. As an example, there was given a situation of Poles travelling to Asian countries where it is a habit to eat very spicily seasoned food, snakes, interior parts of the animals or plants that for Polish people are unknown. It does not mean that they are not tasty, but they are simply not included into the Polish cuisine.

Grygier says that the Polish menu includes various products and dishes that are specific only for this region of Europe but it only raises its attractiveness. Respondent does not see any barriers for foreign culinary tourists eager to get acquainted with Polish cuisine. Serej, also thinks that Polish cuisine is very attractive to encourage foreigner to visit Poland. The promotional campaign should be more focused on certain food items and it would be more successful if there were taken into consideration aspects such as who is the target group. Very often information about Polish tourism is very good but available only in the Polish language, which stands to be obviously, the highest, difficulty for foreign tourists. For Tarkowska and Wróbel, it is difficult to answer this question. Kostecka claims that Polish cuisine has a very wide range of dishes, and hence is extremely attractive in terms of taste, and thus is able to attract crowds of traveling visitors. In the opinion of the answerer the only barrier may be a problem with the terminology of some of the names of dishes, but it is probably in every foreign cuisine.

8.7 Suggestions concerning marketing solutions for Polish regions

In the last question the researcher asked about the ways and suggestions on how Polish regional products could be promoted in order to advertise their potential. Respondent Klasa, suggests to work on many areas at the same time, in order to influence many agriculture and culture sectors of the country. An important element is to take care about certifications of food products. Szuba's idea is to cooperate with local governments that have the biggest influences on changes in the region. Attractions created around regional specialities should be connected with history of certain products, process of its production, workshops, events and festivals.

Grygier says that Poland together with Polish regions have to make a use of the current food trend. High-quality products, distinguished by the unique taste and aroma made according to traditional recipes, characterized by uniqueness and originality, become fashionable. That is the chance for Polish products and culinary tourism in Poland. Serej suggests following the examples of western countries taking into account the Polish specifics of how this can be done. Some ideas to be successful in another place need to be adjusted due to a different culture, history and climatic conditions of the specified region. Responsible institutions should create an integral marketing plan that is complete. Perhaps starting from a list of traditional Polish products is a good first step. According to Tarkowska, the ideal solution would be to directly reach consumers - not through

promotional activities, advertising but just right through the food festivals and by placing regional products in selected stores.

The next respondent, Wróbel, does not suggest any solutions on this theme. Kostecka suggests that polish regional products could be promoted to foreign guests via airlines, coaches and rail lines. The idea would be to inform travellers about places where they can find and try regional dishes as well as purchase them. Another idea could be to serve regional dishes to foreign visitors staying in the hotels in order to make them good ambassadors of high quality food. It is also important to emphasize the need to reinforce the importance of the criterion of origin, taste and way of regional products. Continuing, the good idea would be to provide training for chefs in each region to have served customers with distinctive products of the region. The dissemination of promotional materials, brochures, flyers, folders on regional food producers, and information about regional products, as well as the administration of frequently visited websites devoted to high-quality regional food, such as site of the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage, which is a member of the Opole region, and which through its international character promotes products from our region would definitely help to promote Polish high quality regional products.

9 CONCLUSIONS

In this conclusion the author has tried to specify results and describe them in the most transparent and accurate way. After having made the analysis, there appears a clear picture of Poland as a country with a huge gastronomic potential that can be used in order to promote culinary tourism. Respondents represent six of sixteen regions of Poland. All of them agree with the statement that local products can be a perfect brand of the region attracting tourists to visit a certain province.

Conclusions are created in order to present the analyzed responses given by seven interlocutors that the author conducted the interview with. All interlocutors are professionally connected with the field of tourism, agriculture, sport, culture or recreation. Even though the researcher tried to prepare questions beforehand and keep the whole process of interviewing under control, as long as it is possible during e-mail interviewing method, some difficulties appeared. On the one hand structured e-mail interviewing offers many opportunities for the researcher such as an access to many potential interlocutors that could not be reached in any other way. This method can be applied quickly and let interviewees to answer in the time most convenient for them. Few interviews may be held at the same time, which quite often stands to be a great advantage of using this type of method. However, interviews that are conducted in non face-to-face way are easy to be delayed and it happened in a few examples while creating this report.

The first difficulty was connected with reaching the respondents. Researcher had to contact particular people explaining them a purpose of conducting a research. Quite many times the author of this report did not receive an answer at all and in some other cases the request was rejected. Author was prepared that it may take several days or weeks before an interview is completed but still in some cases it took almost a month, which seems to be a relatively long time for answering questions. The researcher met another difficulty while analyzing the responses. It is important to remember that this kind of research is one-dimensional because it is based only on text. Due to that fact, the author did not have an opportunity to read facial expressions and body language of interlocutors that narrows participants' interpretations of the responses.

The analysis and summary of all the responses received presented a clear picture of opportunities and threats connected with Poland and its gradually developing food tourism. Many regional specialties were mentioned in the answers, which proves that there are food items that it is worth to promote. All interviewees had heard before about food tourism so this term was not new for them. In the respondents' opinion, support, development and promotion of local cuisine can have an influence on the development of tourism in the certain region. The respondents observed relationship between local products and the number of tourists arriving in the specified destination. Some of the respondents notice that local products draw people's attention and it especially increases during regularly held events related to food during which it is possible to purchase them. All interviewees admit that Poles enjoy trying regional specialties.

The respondents agreed on the point that creation and promotion of gastronomic food trails is a good idea in order to attract tourists potentially visiting Poland. Created food trail should be complex by focusing on each aspect of tourism that would give travellers a fully satisfying tourist experience. Festivals and regional food products can promote increasing interest, but it should be combined with the promotion, going beyond the region (e.g., nationwide or international). Beside that food tourists are eager to gain knowledge about the culture, architecture, history, handicrafts of the destination and that is the main reason why touristic offer should be complex, it needs to give a feeling of offering a full package that includes quality food samples and related to the destination's historical, cultural and natural attractions combined with interesting sites proposition.

While analyzing the interview the author noticed many opportunities for Poland as well as threats. Polish government departments and agencies responsible for branding and encouraging the tourists to visit a particular place can benefit from global trends in food tourism forecasting growth of tourist interest in local specialties. Gastronomic trails in Poland already appeared in some places due to the regional richness in particular products such as plums, apples, strawberries, honey, wine etc. According to the respondents' opinion culinary trails are a perfect way to attract tourists' attention and promote regional products. Perhaps similar success can lay in the organization of festivals and food related events. It is a chance for regular consumers as well as for more organized food tourists to taste local specialties and take part in many workshops organized during those events.

Many of the respondents admitted that certified food items clearly stand to be more recognizable among tourists not only domestic but foreign as well and it creates a chance to preserve regional tradition and culture of production. Nowadays, more and more often, people focus not only on product itself but they appreciate the traditional way of production that gives them additional value to the travelling experience. Comparable benefits bring the patronage of international organizations related to food such as Slow Food, Terra Madre or mentioned before European Union Certifications.

According to the interlocutors, Polish food seem to be very attractive for foreigners. The difficulty on the way to get acquainted with national dishes can be a low availability of regional food products in nationwide and stores and beyond the borders. Barrier for Polish producers and small suppliers that represent good quality regional products, can be the difficulty of entering even the Polish market due to the strict Polish law that does not allow doing it without special permissions, that quite often are difficult to obtain. A multitude of conditions required to be met by small-scale producers often exceed their capabilities becoming unprofitable. Respondents suggested also a wide range of promotional ideas that could be used in order to make regional, local, Polish products more recognizable, which at the same time raises people's awareness concerning a certain destination. The mentioned suggestions included advertisement in the venues that gather big numbers of people, on airplanes, at the travel agencies places. The good idea is to train local chefs in order to give them suggestions how to serve local products in the most attractive way. Additionally food festivals, events accompanied with brochures and leaflets could be a good step to try.

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GASTRONOMY HAS NO BORDERS

Global trends in food tourism. Opportunities for Poland

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This survey is part of the thesis written by Mrs. Sara Maria Kordek. Participation in it is an valuable tool on the way to investigate the relationship between regional cuisine and the development of tourism in the certain area. Answers to these questions should not take longer than 10 minutes. Thank you very much for your help and effort.

1. Culinary tourism is developing rapidly throughout the world. Have you ever met up with the term of culinary tourism?
2. In your opinion, support, development and promotion of local cuisine, can have an influence on the development of tourism in this region? If so, how?
3. Have you noticed tourists visiting a place, with the main purpose to try, learn and taste local specialties? What products seem to be the most attractive?
4. Do you notice people's interest in local specialties? Which events potentially increase the interest (exemplary, festivals, special events, trade shows related to food)?
5. Have you ever heard of the Slow Food organization or any other organization of this type?
6. Do you think that patronage of the international organizations such as Slow Food, Terra Madre and the certificates given to regional products by the European Union, in fact, have a real impact on the development or increase in recognition local products?
7. European trend is the creation of organized tourist routes, which are accompanied by a range of gastronomic attractions. For example, culinary tour of the olive groves in Croatia associated with the ability to try products containing olive oil and

olives or attend lectures on oil production processes. Do you think that creation of those kinds of organized gastronomic trails is a good idea to be used for promotional purposes of the destination? If so, why?

8. Do you think that local products such as local cheeses, honeys, wines or cold meats can be attractive enough to encourage potential tourists to visit the regions where those products are produced?
9. Do you think that polish food items can be used in order to promote a certain tourism regions in Poland? Is food a good thing to be promoted? Why?
10. Could you suggest any ideas that could be used in order to promote local products in a way that it would help to promote food tourism in the particular destination?

Thank you for your time and effort!