

Regional differentiation of tourist and recreational function in Czechia

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Abstract

The contribution attempts at discussion and enlargement of methodological approaches to the assessment of recreational and tourist function. A simple typology of recreational function is introduced and applied to the territory of Czechia at the level of districts.

Key words: recreational function, commercial accommodation facilities, second homes, Czechia

Introduction

It is just the sector of tourism where great changes in trends, numbers of visitors and guests etc. are clearly visible in the period since the second part of the 1990s and so that supporting of evidences for the new phasis of the transformation era, different in many aspects from the former one, can be shown.

Incomes from tourism and number of visitors started to decline as early as 1997, decrease in numbers of accommodated guests has been stagnating since 1998 with sharper decrease in the turn of the millennium (Statistická ročenka ČR 1997, Ročenky cestovního ruchu, ubytování a pohostinství 2000, 2002, mag Consulting).

Tab. 1 Numbers of accomodated guests in Czechia

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
<i>Total</i>	10,197,236	11,573,744	12,025,563	12,016,339	10,818,716	10,765,987	9,609,645
<i>Foreign</i>	4,558,332	4,975,658	5,482,080	5,609,700	4,666,305	5,193,973	4,579,015
<i>Domestic</i>	5,638,914	6,598,086	6,543,483	6,406,639	6,182,411	5,572,014	5,030,630

Source: Statistická ročenka ČR 1997, Ročenky cestovního ruchu, ubytování a pohostinství 2000, 2002, mag Consulting

Table 1 shows also the development of structure of foreign and domestic accommodated guests. The number of foreign tourists increased by nearly one quarter between 1996–1999 and dropped to the same level of about 4.5 mil. by 2002 with

the exception of the increase in 2001. On the other hand number of domestic tourists increased by about 17% just between 1996–1997 and has been decreasing continuously by now to the level of 5 mil. The causes of decline in both incomes and numbers of guests have been widely discussed and are associated with external factors – recession of the world economy, influence of terrorist attacks, end of so called “fashion effect” for post-communist countries (Vágner 2002) etc. and internal effects – stagnation of Czech economy and tourism promotion, quality of infrastructure and service, criminality etc. (Konceptce státní politiky CR v ČR 2002–2007).

Tab. 2 Share of foreign and domestic guests in the accommodation facilities in Czechia

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Share of foreigners (%)	44.7	43.0	45.6	46.7	43.0	48.2	47.7
Share of domestic guests (%)	55.3	57.0	54.4	53.3	57.0	51.8	52.3

Source: Ročenky cestovního ruchu, ubytování a pohostinství 2000, 2002, mag Consulting own calculation

Tables 1 and 2 declare development of the relative shares of foreign and domestic accommodated guests. It can be clearly seen that the volume of domestic tourism has always prevailed the stays of foreigners. The gap between the values has been decreasing, however, from 14% in 1997 (and 2000) to only 4.6% in 2002. Nevertheless the importance of domestic tourism should be reflected not only in promotion but also in broader scientific research in this segment of tourism, although the incomes and significance for national economy are naturally higher from foreign guests.

Methodical approaches

For the purpose of the assessment of the tourist and recreational function is essential to find out the total number of tourists and recreants (holiday-makers). Because of great significance of second housing for recreation in Czechia, also this segment was involved as a special type of tourism and recreation.

Total Number of Tourists and Recreants (PTR):

- = Number of Foreign Guests (ZCR)
- + Number of Domestic Guests (DCR)
- + Number of Beds in Second Homes (DB)

This indicator is quite simple and does not include for example great number of one day tourists, which can mean a very significant part of tourism and recreation activities in regions. The indicator of beds in second homes shows in fact theoretical capacity of second homes and no real number of holiday-makers in one year as the former ones. It was calculated as the number of second homes multiplied with five as previous surveys on second housing declared (Bičík 2001). For the calculation of theoretical tourist capacity, potential or occupancy also data on capacity of commercial accommodation facilities could be substituted. The data on foreign and domestic tourists in commercial facilities are available every year (ČSÚ, Ročenky cestovního ruchu, ubytování a po-

hostinství, mag Consulting) but the data on second houses were regionally summed up from Statistický lexikon obcí ČR 1992, ČSÚ. Research on second homes shows, however, quite a strong stability in the total number of second homes in last decade, of course with some regional changes.

After finding up the total number of tourists and recreants the Index of Tourist and Recreational Function can be calculated with use of relation of the number of tourists to the residential function of the region (represented with the total number of inhabitants):

Index of Tourist and Recreational Function (TRF):

= Total Number of Tourists and Recreants (PTR) / Permanent Population (PO)

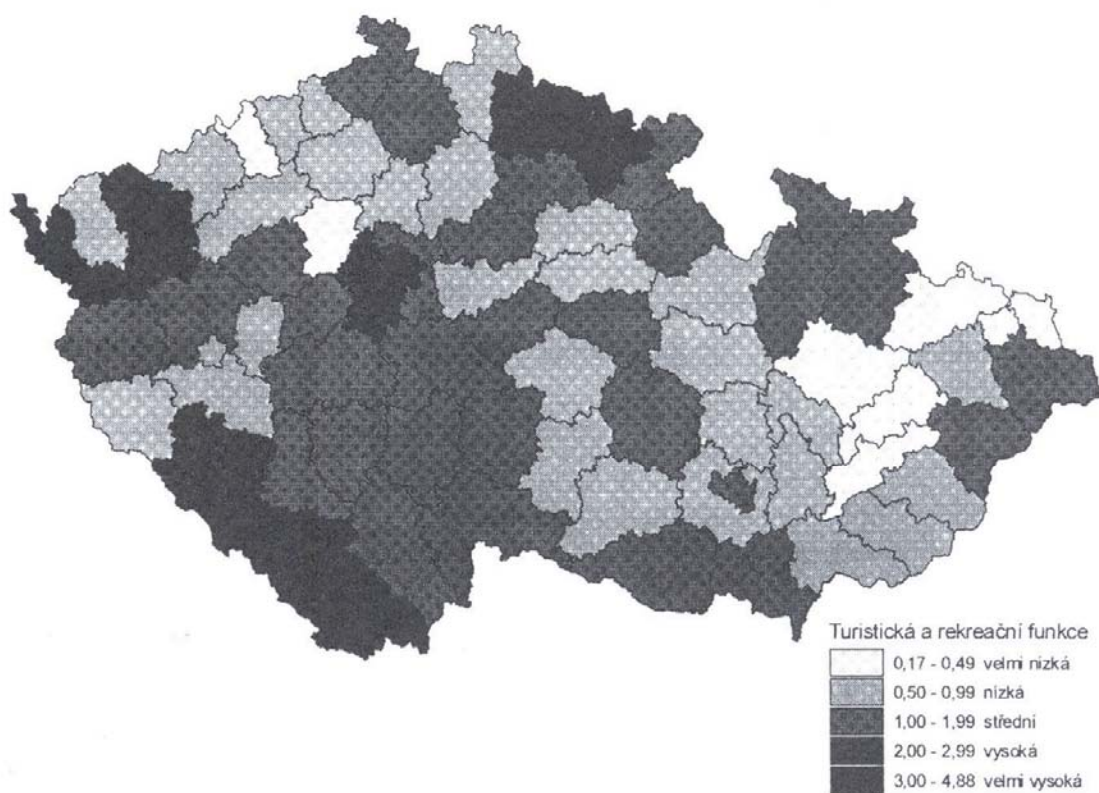
The indicator of the number of permanent population can be substituted e.g. with the area of a region (km²) which should result in an index of recreational load. Other indexes can be constructed, too.

Typology of tourist and recreational function was worked out on the basis of quantitative relations between three dominant forms of tourism. Theoretically six different types can appear:

Types of tourist and recreational function:

A – ZCR > DCR > DB [foreign tourists > domestic tourists > second homes beds]

B – ZCR > DB > DCR [foreign tourists > second homes beds > domestic tourists]



Zdroj: Ročenka Mag Consulting 2002, Statistický lexikon obcí 1992

Map 1 Tourist and recreational function in districts of Czechia

- C – DCR>ZCR>DB [domestic tourists>foreign tourists>second homes beds]
 D – DCR>DB>ZCR [domestic tourists>second homes beds>foreign tourists]
 E – DB>ZCR>DCR [second homes beds>foreign tourists>domestic tourists]
 F – DB>DCR>ZCR [second homes beds>domestic tourists>foreign tourists]

Regional Differentiation in Czechia

Values of the indicator of the tourist and recreational function were divided at the level of Czech districts into five intervals from “very low” up to “very high” (Map 1). Districts with the maximal and minimal values are shown in Table 3.

Tab. 3 Districts in CR with maximal and minimal tourist and recreational function

Okres	TRF
Trutnov	4.88
Semily	4.44
Český Krumlov	3.79
Prachatice	3.48
Cheb	3.30
Karlovy Vary	2.84
Jablonec n. N.	2.79
Praha	2.53
Klatovy	2.51
Praha-západ	2.40
Opava	0.37
Ostrava-město	0.36
Karviná	0.17

Source: Ročenka cestovního ruchu, ubytování a pohostinství 2002, mag Consulting Statistický lexikon obcí ČR 1992, own calculation

An enormous tourist function can be still seen in Prague even despite of relation of the number of accommodated tourists (more than 2 mil. in all years under survey) to the residents. In the beginning of the 1990s more than one third of foreign tourists were accommodated in Prague. The share of Prague has well decreased during last ten years and now represents only about 20% of all foreign accommodations in CR. The attempts at decentralization and deconcentration of tourist activities and promotion of other Czech regions seem to be at least a little bit fruitful (Vágner 2003). The maximal values of TRF were revealed in the border regions either with high share of foreign tourists (Cheb-Westbohemian Spas) or with proportional share of foreign and domestic tourists with also a significance of second housing function. The Krkonoše Mts. districts (Trutnov, Semily) represent also the regions with transformation of a

high share of corporate organized winter and summer recreation under socialist period towards commercial tourist facilities. In both districts number of tourists and recreants prevails over the residents more than four times. (Similar situation but with lower intensity is shown in the Beskydy and Jeseníky Mts. in Northern Moravia and Silesia). The other region with very high TRF was discovered in the South Bohemia (Český Krumlov as one of the most popular city, cultural, convention and congress, the Lipno artificial lake with huge amount of foreign and domestic tourists and holiday-makers, high share of domestic tourism and second homes in the Prachatice district at the former Iron Curtain). High values can be seen at the districts in the recreational hinterland of Prague, due to extreme density of second homes above all. Brno as the second most important city destination forms also high recreational function of some Southmoravian regions (Podyjí). The high tourist and recreational function of Czechia overall can be supported with the fact that at the most districts the total number of tourists and recreants prevails residents. The areas with minimal TRF are formed in the lowland and sparsely forested areas with big density of population and dominant agricultural or industrial function (broader zone from Haná to Polish border – Ostrava and Opava region, Kladno as an industrial centre and a “dormitory” of labour for Prague, Most in the Northwestbohemian coal basin).

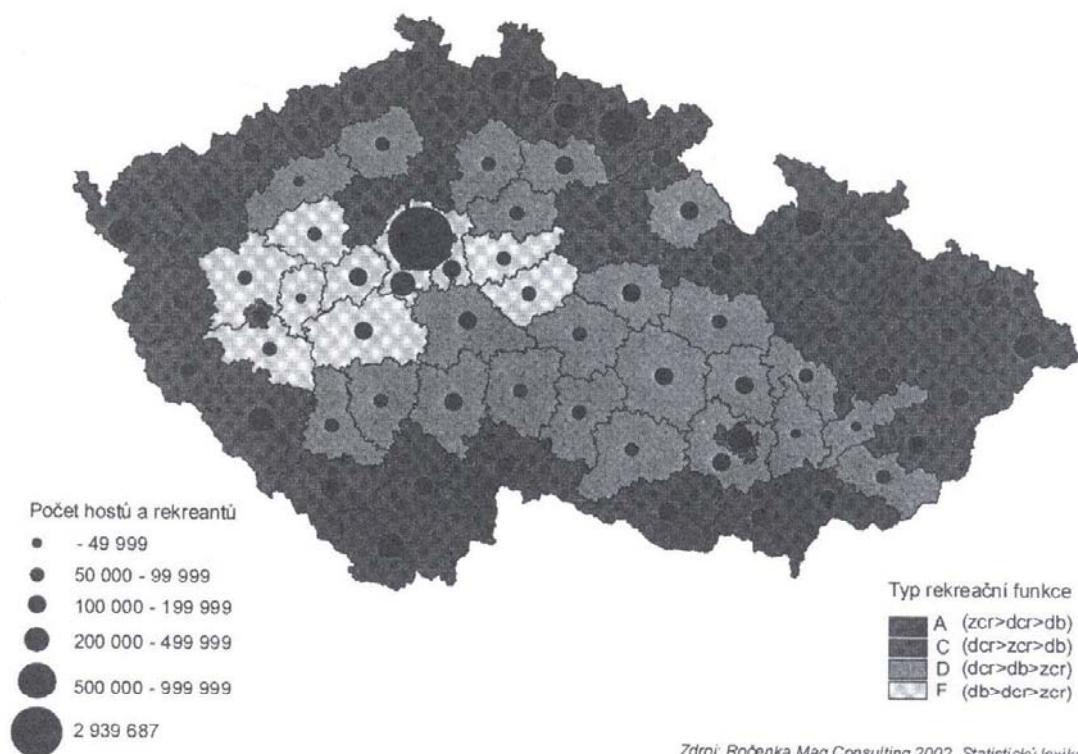
Typology of tourist and recreational function in Czechia

Map 2 and Table 4 show that not all six theoretically constructed types exist in the reality.

Tab. 4 Types of Tourist and Recreational Function in districts of Czechia

Type of TRF	Districts
A – [ZCR > DCR > DB]	7
B – [ZCR > DB > DCR]	0
C – [DCR > ZCR > DB]	36
D – [DCR > DB > ZCR]	23
E – [DB > ZCR > DCR]	0
F – [DB > DCR > ZCR]	10

Only four different types were revealed with majority of districts in type C and D with prevailing domestic commercial tourism (59 of all 76 districts – 80%). Majority of foreign tourists is in 7 districts – major cities – Praha (84% of accommodated guests), Brno, Plzeň, Westbohemian Spa districts and, maybe surprisingly, two districts in the hinterland of Prague (Kladno and Mělník). It can be caused with quite low tourist and recreational function and probably also due to statistic data which can include also some foreign people seasonally commuting to their jobs etc. Especially Mělník would probably change its type if also other forms of one-day tourism and recreation (hiking, biking in Kokořínsko area above all) are included. Type C where domestic tourism is followed with foreigners copy in fact all the border regions with other concentration



Zdroj: Ročenka Mag Consulting 2002, Statistický lexikon obcí 1992

Map 2 Type of recreational function and numbers of guests and recreants (holiday-makers) in districts of Czechia

especially on one-day tourism would bring broader and more plastic picture to the regional differentiation of the tourist and recreational function. Tourist and recreational function and its types should be surveyed also in different time periods to be able to reveal some development and perspective trends. Use of the proposed methods at more detailed levels (municipalities) or at other countries could bring an interesting comparison of the importance of tourism and its different forms at the international level, especially in the framework of the contemporary and future EU countries.

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