



PL-BY-UA
2014-2020

Sustainable Cross-Border Tourism Development Strategy

Sokolka – Grodno, 2020

Orderer:
Sokolka Municipality
Kosciuszko Square 1
16-100 Sokolka

Contractor:
APRO GROUP
Zambrowska St. 18, 7
16-001 Kleosin

Edition:
Tomasz Dziurbejko
Marcin Ulanowski,

Cooperation and review from Polish side:
Adam Juchnik
Pawel Lange-Kuczyński
Eugeniusz Januszko

Cooperation and review from Belarussian side:
Sergey Donskikh
Lee Jong-Koo
Igor Trusov
Sergei Koleda
Danuta Polubenskaya
Anastasia Glina
Anfisa Savostina
Julia Radionchik

This document has been developed within the framework of Project PLBU.01/0368/16 "Tyzenhauz Trail - creation of a tourist route to promote cultural and historical heritage of two cities: Sokolka and Grodno", implemented thanks to the European Union's financial assistance under the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 co-financed under the European Neighbourhood Instrument. The sole responsibility for the content of this document lies with the author and under no circumstances shall it be deemed to reflect the official position of the European Union.

Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY OF DOCUMENT PREPARATION	3
2	DELIMITATION OF THE PROGRAMMING AREA	6
2.1	Characteristics of Grodno City and Grodno District	6
2.2	Characteristics of Sokolka Powiat	10
2.3	Summary	13
3	ANALYSIS OF THE TOURISM POTENTIAL OF THE STRATEGY AREA	15
3.1	Analysis of natural assets	15
3.2	Analysis of anthropogenic assets	22
3.3	Tourism infrastructure	31
3.4	Infrastructure supporting tourism	42
3.5	Possibilities of connecting the Tyzenhuaz Trail with Augustow Velo, Green Velo, Bialowieza Velo and other cycling routes	44
3.6	SWOT analysis	46
3.7	Summary	50
4	EXPECTED DIRECTIONS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROGRAMME AREA	52
4.1	Trends in tourism demand and tourism markets development	52
4.2	Tourists flows in the programme area	56
4.3	Segmentation of the area's tourism markets	63
4.4	Assessment the attractiveness of the target segments	67
4.5	New Tourist Information Centres in the project area	70
4.6	Possibilities and directions for cooperation between tourist centres in Grodno and Sokolka	71
4.7	Cooperation between the Tyzenhauz townhouses in Grodno and Sokolka. Concepts of using tenements in the context of tourism development.	73
4.8	Summary	75
5	OBJECTIVES AND DIRECTIONS OF CROSS-BORDER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	77
5.1	Intervention logic	78
5.2	Indicative list of key projects	81
6	INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY	85
7	MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY	88
7.1	Monitoring of the Strategy	88
7.2	Evaluation of the Strategy	89

1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY OF DOCUMENT PREPARATION

This "Strategy for the Development of Sustainable Cross-Border Tourism" (hereinafter referred to as "the Strategy") has been developed within the framework of the project PBU.01/ 0368/16" Tyzenhauz Trail- creation of a tourist route to promote cultural and historical heritage of two cities: Sokolka and Grodno" within the framework of the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020, Thematic Objective (CT) - Heritage. The basis for its elaboration was an agreement concluded between the Sokolka Municipality - the Project Leader and its Contractor.

This project is implemented in a cross-border partnership between Sokolka Municipality (Poland) - the Project Leader and its partners from the Republic of Belarus: Department of Sport and Tourism of the Executive Committee of the City of Grodno and Grodno District Branch of the Social Organization "State Tourist and Sports Association". The main objective of the project is to increase the number of tourists visiting and using the tourist offer of Sokolka and Grodno region.

The title "Tyzenhauz Trail" is related to the person of Anthony Tyzenhauz (1733-1785) - Lithuanian court treasurer and starost of Grodno since 1765. Tyzenhauz was the administrator of Lithuanian royal estates in 1765-1780 and it is to him and his accomplishments that Grodno and Sokolka regions owe their intensive economic development in the second half of the 18th century. His person and heritage is still a little known but very interesting page in the history of the Polish-Belarusian borderland, on which the development of cross-border tourism can - and should - be designed. All the more so as the Sokolka and Grodno regions have been closely connected with each other in administrative, social and economic terms over the centuries. And it was only after the end of World War II that they found themselves in two different countries. Today, this long common history is reflected in the family ties, linguistic and dialect wordings, customs and traditions that permeated the borders of the countries. A perfect track of the years of common history is the diverse but common core language denominations. The names of localities or natural sites in Belarusian, Polish and Russian are similar, but are not a direct transcription or translation of a word. This means that their sounds have developed independently during centuries of use by inhabitants speaking different languages. This is a

testimony to the multi-ethnic and multiculturalism of the Grodno and Sokolka regions, which constitute their identity and common heritage.

The structure of the Strategy has been based on the request for offer of the Project Leader - Sokolka Municipality and the contract for the development of the Strategy, which, according to its provisions, consists of 7 chapters, including the one starting it.

Chapter 2 "Delimitation of the programming area" contains a brief description of the area of the study, i.e. the neighbouring Sokolka Poviát with the City of Sokolka in Poland and Grodno District with the City of Grodno in Belarus.

Chapter 3 "Analysis of the Tourism Potential of the Strategy Area" contains a list of the most important tourism values of the area, including natural, anthropogenic and tourist development. The chapter ends with a SWOT analysis of the conditions of tourism development in the area of the study.

Chapter 4 "Expected directions of development of tourism in the Programme area" presents information on contemporary trends in the tourism sector and data on tourism traffic in the Programme area. Then the segmentation of tourism markets in the area was carried out together with the assessment of attractiveness of target segments.

Chapter 5 "Objectives and Directions of Development of Cross-Border Tourism" contains the definition of the vision of tourism development in the Cross-Border Tourism Area of Tyzenhauz Trail and the mission of the entities involved in the Strategy implementation and development of tourism in the area. It also contains a set of operational objectives leading to the development of cross-border tourism. The chapter also contains an indicative list of key projects for promotion and development of tourism products of the border area, which in the near future can be implemented jointly or at least in parallel/simultaneously on both sides of the border.

Chapter 6 "Institutional system of the Strategy implementation" defines the institutional system of the Strategy implementation together with the role of individual participants in this process.

Chapter 7 "Monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy" sets out the methodology and indicators for monitoring of the Programme and the main criteria and rules of its evaluation.

The Strategy was developed using the expert and participatory method. Analyses were based on statistical data, available information on the tourism potential of the area of elaboration, applied in practice methodologies and approaches to territorial planning and development of tourism products and functions of territorial units taking into account - key for the Project objectives - cross-border aspects. The experts' work was complemented by a survey of needs and preferences of tourists and tourism sector on the Polish side. The draft version of the Strategy was consulted with representatives of the project partners as well as representatives of the local tourism sector during 2 open consultation meetings held in March 2020.

2 DELIMITATION OF THE PROGRAMMING AREA

2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF GRODNO CITY AND GRODNO DISTRICT

The city of Grodno and the surrounding it Grodno District are located in the north-western part of the Republic of Belarus. Grodno is the administrative center of Grodno District and Grodno Oblast. It has the status of a city subordinate to the Oblast (voivodeship), which includes two city districts: Leninski (right bank of the Neman River, historical city centre) and Oktiabrski (left bank of the Neman River, historical suburb). As of 1 January 2020, Grodno had 356,9 thousand inhabitants. Grodno is the third largest city in Belarus (14 198 ha), after Minsk and Brest.

The population of Grodno District is 50,1 thousand people and increased by 0.6 thousand during 2019. The District includes the town of Skidel, the town of Sopockin and 360 rural settlements (agrarian towns, villages and settlements). The District is divided into 1 city council and 12 village councils. The administrative center of the District is the City of Grodno, which is not part of it. The total area of the Grodno District is about 26 thousand km². It is the largest district of Grodno Oblast. Its specificity lies in its border location with two European Union countries. The border of Grodno County with Poland is 68 km long and with Lithuania 32.8 km long.

The total population of the City and Grodno District is 407 thousand people, which is about 39,7 % of the total population of Grodno Oblast (1 025,8 thousand people as of 1 January 2020).

The largest settlements in Grodno Region, except for the City of Grodno are :

- the town of Skidel, which has the official status of a satellite town for Grodno – 10,3 thousand people;
- the rural city of Sopockin, located near the Augustow Canal – 1 000 people;
- several rural settlements - large villages, most of which were towns until the mid-20th century and preserved many attractions related to the cross-border historical and cultural heritage: Gozha - about 900 inhabitants, Wierteliszki - about 3 200 inhabitants, Poretchye - 2 800 inhabitants, Lakes - about 2 700 inhabitants, Indura - about 1 300 inhabitants, Odelsk - over 600 inhabitants.

The population of Grodno grew steadily until 2019. However, in 2019 a decrease in Grodno population was recorded. The population of the Grodno district is slowly decreasing - over the last 10 years it has decreased by 3,200 people. The Grodno District has a rural population of 38,800 and the urban population of 11,300. However, taking into account the fact that the city

of Grodno is located on the territory of the district, the urban population of the area covered by this strategy can be considered as 368.2 thousand people, or 90.5% of the total population of the city of Grodno and Grodno District.

As in all Eastern European countries the process of ageing population is observed in Grodno and Grodno District. These negative demographic trends are particularly visible in rural areas.

In the Grodno City people in pre-productive age constitute 19.5% of the population, and in the District area 16.8%. Persons in productive age constitute 61.2% of the population of Grodno and 55% of the District's population. The percentage of people in the post-productive age is growing, which in the City constitute 19.3% and in the District 28.2% of the population.

The City of Grodno is an important transport knot, whose potential is insufficiently exploited. There is a railway and bus station in the City. The airport in Grodno (18 km east of the city) serves only one scheduled flight from Grodno airport to Kaliningrad (Russian Federation) as well as charter flights during the tourist season to Bulgaria, Turkey and Montenegro. The railway station in Grodno is a hub for about 30 train connections: 7 international, 4 national and 19 suburban. The international connections are only with Poland (Kuznica, Bialystok, Krakow) and Russia (Moscow). The most important motorway in the Grodno region is the M6 Minsk - Grodno highway (via Voloshin, Lida, Shchuchin, Skidel). In addition to the M6 motorway, the following national roads run through the Grodno region: R 42 (Grodno - Gozha - Privalka (border with Lithuania, to Druskininkai), R 44 (Grodno - Ruzany - Iwatszewiczi), R 99 (Grodno - Berestowica - border with Poland) or to Wolkowysk), R 145 (Grodno - Ostrino - Radun - Dotishki (border with Lithuania), and the local road Grodno - Sopockin (Augustow Canal). The Neman River, through which intense passenger and cargo traffic took place until the 1960s, has completely lost its transport importance. At present, only one recreational motor vessel "Olga Solomova" is used for tourism purposes in Grodno.

The City of Grodno and the Grodno District are the centre of economic, social and cultural life of the whole region. In 2019, 4,522 national economy entities of various types were registered in Grodno. There are 1,072 economic entities operating in the Grodno region. Thus, 5,594 organisations, i.e. 48.9% of all officially registered organisations in Grodno Region (11,450) were active in Grodno and the Region.

The social and cultural sphere of Grodno and Grodno District is co-created by a number of educational, health and cultural institutions. The educational sphere of Grodno includes pre-school education institutions (nursery schools and kindergartens), general secondary schools (lyceums, gymnasiums and schools), vocational and specialist secondary schools (colleges, vocational schools and lyceums), universities (universities and institutes).

Most vocational education institutions are concentrated in the City of Grodno. There are all 4 higher education institutions in Grodno region, 11 of 19 secondary schools (colleges) and 4 of 17 vocational schools in Grodno Oblast. In the town of Skidel, in the Grodno District operates the State Agricultural Vocational High School.

The economic potential of the City of Grodno includes over 340 economic entities, including 92 enterprises. Of these, 30 are state-owned, 21 local, and 41 are legal entities without administrative subordination (usually private owned). More than 60 of these enterprises are registered as residents of the free economic zone "Grodnoinvest". In total, at the beginning of 2019, 168,200 people were employed in the economic sector of the City and 27,000 in the economy of the Grodno District. The trends of economic changes lead to a gradual decrease in the number of employees in production and an increase in the number of employees in the service sector.

The leading position in the economic structure of the City of Grodno and the entire area belongs to a large enterprise of the petrochemical complex - "Grodno Nitrogen" Inc., which accounts for 32.0% of the total industrial production of the City. Other significant entities from the Grodno City are companies in mechanical engineering and metalworking: "Belkard" Inc. (gears and shafts), "Grodorgmash." (dishwashers and commercial equipment), "Grodno Mechanical Plant". (gas tankers), "BelTAPAZ" (rotary cartridges), "Radio Frequency". (locking device sets, electromechanical sets).

The Grodno region is considered to be one of the leading regions in terms of development of agricultural production, with Grodno District occupying a leading position in the country. Therefore, food industry companies play an important role in the economic structure: JSC "Grodno Meat Processing Plant", JLLC "Queenfood", JSC "Dairy World", UDP "Grodno Canning Plant", ALC "Firma ABC", RUE Grodnohlebprom, OJSC Grodno Vodka Plant, LLC Biokom. One of the oldest industrial enterprises of Belarus is located in the city - JSC "Grodno Tobacco Factory

"Neman", which has been operating for over 150 years. The construction, furniture and light industries are also strong.

The main industrial enterprises in the Grodno District are OJSC "Skidelsky" sugar factory and OJSC "Agrokombinat "Skidelsky".

Grodno District occupies a leading position in agriculture of the Republic of Belarus, producing 20% of all agricultural products of Grodno Oblast. The agriculture of Grodno region is dominated by 13 agricultural production cooperatives (APC). These are modern large commercial farms with 96,000 hectares of agricultural land, including 73,000 hectares of arable land. Milk is produced by 49 dairy farms. The main agricultural sectors of Grodno region are meat and dairy cattle farming, poultry farming, production of cereals, sugar beet, rape, potatoes and vegetables. Meat constitutes 40%, milk 18.6%, sugar beet 8.8% and grain 8.1% of total commercial production.

The forestry sector in Grodno District is represented by two economic entities: State Forestry Commission "Grodno Forestry" and State Forestry Commission "Skidelskij Leschoz". Apart from general forest management, the forests regulate sightseeing, organization of hunting and fishing, as well as - on the basis of their own base - they provide tourist and leisure services and rent equipment for active tourism.

An important feature in the development of tourism is the multi-ethnic composition of the population of the Grodno City and the Grodno District. Traditionally, Polish, Lithuanian, Jewish and Tartar national communities are considered to be the most important in the region, along with Belarusians (62% of the population of Grodno and 56% of the population of the Grodno District). At present, Poles constitute (19.7% of the population of Grodno and 34% of the population of the Grodno District), while Russians constitute 12.2% of the population of Grodno and 7.8% of the population of the Grodno District). However, statistics from the beginning of the 21st century clearly show that only the Polish community survived as an ethnocultural community. Lithuanian and Jewish cultural heritage is represented only by monuments and souvenirs without a significant number of inhabitants. The Tartar population lives mainly in the Iivivsky District.

2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOKOLKA POVIAT

The Sokolka Poviats is located on the Polish border with the Republic of Belarus, in the central-eastern part of Podlaskie Voivodship. It borders to Bialystok, Monki and Augustow Poviats. The Poviats is the eighth largest Poviats in Poland. It consists of 10 communes, including 4 urban-rural communes (with the following towns: Dabrowa Bialostocka, Krynki, Suchowola, Sokolka) and 6 rural communes (Janow, Korycin, Kuznica, Sidra, Szudzialowo), which comprise a total of 423 towns. These units have diverse economic potential and natural conditions. The Poviats headquarter is located in Sokolka - the largest of the four towns in the Poviats.

Geographically, the Sokolka Poviats is located in the area of the Sokolka Hills, which are part of the North-Podlaskie Lowland. The total area of the Poviats is 2054.51 km², of which the areas used for agriculture constitute 87.5% of the area. A significant part of the area is covered by forests. Agricultural wasteland covers 2.08% of the Poviats's area.

Sokolka Poviats is well-connected with external transport networks. International transport corridors run through its area:

- national road No. 19 (Border with Slovakia - Barwinek - Lublin - Bialystok - Kuznica - Border with Belarus),
- national road No 8 (Border of the Czech Republic - Kudowa Zdroj - Warsaw - Bialystok - Korycin - Suwalki - Budzisko - Border with Lithuania)
- railway line (route: Warsaw - Grodno and further in the direction of Vilnius, Riga, St. Petersburg, Minsk and Moscow).

National roads (68.58 km), provincial (157.03 km), Poviats (886.93 km) and communal (632.99 km) roads run through the area of the Poviats.

The Sokolka Poviats has good conditions to serve the population by public transport. These services are provided by external companies. Motor Transport Company in Bialystok S.A. is the main operator that provides services on 17 lines, while the remaining operators operate on 3 lines.

The area of Sokol Poviats is crossed with two 2 railway lines for passenger transport and 1 railway line for freight transport:

- Railway line no. 6 Zielonka - Kuznica,
- Railway line 40 Sokolka - Suwalki.

At the end of 2019, there was 66686 inhabitants living in the Poviát, including 33668 women. The total population of the Poviát is decreasing from year to year. On the territory of the Poviát the predominant number of inhabitants is the rural population - 57.97% of the total population. In recent years there has been a systematic, small decrease in the number of people living in the area of Sokol Poviát. Over the last 15 years the population has decreased by 9%. The number of persons living in the countryside is decreasing, and the number of urban residents is increasing. A further increase in the number of urban dwellers is expected, with a decrease in rural areas and a predominance of women over men, with a decrease in the total number of inhabitants of the Poviát.

The population density in the Poviát is uneven; for the whole Poviát it is 32 persons/km². The population density index (below the national average - 123 persons/km²) is the highest in Sokolka Municipality (82 persons/km²) and the lowest in Szudzialowo Municipality (10 persons/km²). The population is traditionally concentrated mainly in cities. A small population is characteristic for the whole Poviát, and the most areas with a significant degree of afforestation, marshy areas, covered by nature protection, border areas (municipalities: Sidra, Nowy Dwor, Szudzialowo, Krynki).

The population structure by age group for the Sokolka Poviát indicated that in 2019 the share of the youngest age group (up to 14 years old) in the total population was 13,2%, and the corresponding share of the oldest age group (65 years old and older) was 22,7%. The lowest demographic burden on the population in post-school age was in the Sokolka municipality, the highest was recorded in the Szudzialowo, Nowy Dwor and Sidra municipalities.

In the years 2010-2019, Sokolka Poviát recorded a decrease in the number of people in pre-working age by almost 17%, in working age by 8%, while the number of people in post-working age increased by 7%. Demographic projections for Sokolka Poviát assume a progressive increase in the share of population in the age group of 65 years and more.

In Sokolka Poviát all secondary schools were located in four municipalities of the Poviát: Dabrowa Bialostocka, Janow, Sokolka and Suchowola. In 2019, the high school education took place in three schools located in Dabrowa Bialostocka, Sokolka and Suchowola. However, vocational education was possible in nine schools: four technical schools and five basic vocational schools (including one special school). In the technical schools, students could obtain qualifications in the following occupations: agro-business technician, agricultural technician,

economic technician, hotel technician, mechanic technician, catering service organisation technician, wood technology technician, office work technician. The basic vocational schools offered the following courses of education: car tinsmith, hairdresser, small catering cook, varnisher, car mechanic, bricklayer, farmer, carpenter, mechanic-operator of agricultural vehicles and machines, confectioner, gardener, baker, machine tool operator, seller. Moreover, in the communes of Dabrowa Bialostocka, Korycin, Sidra and Sokolka there are secondary schools for adults and post-secondary schools. Supplementary education for adults was additionally offered by post-secondary schools in Dabrowa Bialostocka, Sokolka and Janow.

One of the characteristics of the labour market in the Sokolka Poviast is the dominance of agriculture in socio-economic structures, which is connected with the phenomenon of agrarian overpopulation. In the perspective of the next few years, the movement of people living in rural areas, some of whom will look for work outside agriculture, should be expected.

On the area of the Sokolka Poviast there are 4093 business entities, over 95% of which are private owned companies. The companies of private persons constitute 76% of the total number of business entities operating in the Poviast. The dominant entities are retail and wholesale trade (28%), industrial processing (10%), construction (9%), agriculture and forestry (9%), real estate services (9%), service, municipal and social activities (8%).

Industry in the Poviast is developing mainly based on local raw materials: wood, aggregate, agricultural crops. The largest plants in the Poviast are currently: METAL-FACH Ltd., Sokolka Windows and Doors Inc., Milk Cooperative SOMLEK in Sokolka, Poultry Producers Cooperative "EKO-GRIL", Farmer Ltd., Eskimos Inc., Gum Products Producer "GENES", Production – Retail Cooperative "KRYNKA", Agriculture Plant Jerzy Wilczewski. There are also numerous small plants producing semi-finished products of the wood industry.

In addition, there are about 36 companies which are engaged in the extraction of common minerals in towns: Gieniusze, Janowszczyzna, Wojnowce, Nowowola. They supply this valuable raw material to numerous plants all over the country.

The main concentration of operating business entities are urban centres. Almost 60% of all operating entities are located here.

A significant part of the Poviát area is used for agricultural production. The development of agriculture is supported by good condition of natural environment and traditional agricultural culture in many farms. The prevailing sphere of production in individual farms is plant production (root crops, strawberry, tobacco, rape, currants) and animal production (dairy and meat cattle, pigs, poultry). There are 12 667 farms in the district. The average area of the farm is 15.6 ha. The areas of Sokolka Poviát are a very good place to produce organic food.

A large part of the Poviát, more than 25% of the area (53570.53 ha) is covered by forests. The majority (67%) of them are forests managed by State Forests Companies. The two largest forest districts in the Poviát - Czarna Białostocka and Krynki supply raw wood material to numerous wood processing plants. At the same time, they provide well-developed infrastructure and facilities for tourism and recreation.

Sokolka Poviát is an area of multicultural and multinational character and the most ethnically diverse in the country. Belarusians, Lithuanians, Tartars and Roma people live here alongside Poles. In the past, also Jews, Russians and Germans lived here. Ethnic and national diversity is reflected in the monuments of architecture, culture and tradition. Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim religious buildings still exist in the district. There are also synagogues and Jewish cemeteries, the Calvinist congregation in Sidra, the Uniate Basilian monastery in Kuznica and the Orthodox church in "Wierszalin", built by the sect of the prophet Ilya.

2.3 SUMMARY

The area covered by the Strategy is characterised by a common and rich historical, cultural, religious and ethnic heritage. This heritage, in its uniqueness and diversity, creates the most important potential of the area, on which tourist products should be built.

Although its peripheral location to the administrative centres, the area is well connected by international, national and interregional transport networks. On the other hand, it is necessary to improve the coherence and quality of local road links, which are the main channels of access to tourist attractions.

The social and economic potential of the area is not evenly distributed. The City of Grodno clearly dominates, being an important administrative, economic, scientific and cultural centre on a supraregional scale. The rest of the territory has a rural character with several urban

centres, the largest of which are Sokolka and Skidel. The economic structure of these areas is dominated by agriculture, which has different characteristics in each country.

The rural areas, still sparsely populated, are characterized by negative demographic trends and population growth is recorded only in urban centers.

In territorial and demographic terms, there is a visible disproportion in favour of the Grodno Region, which together with the City of Grodno has a population over eleven times larger than the Sokolka Poviats. Similarly, the Belarusian part of the study area is over twelve times larger than the Polish part.

3 ANALYSIS OF THE TOURISM POTENTIAL OF THE STRATEGY AREA

3.1 ANALYSIS OF NATURAL ASSETS

Natural values of the City of Grodno and the Grodno District

Most of the territory of the Grodno region is located on the Neman Lowlands. Only the western part is located in Grodno Upland. 75% of the region's territory is located at an altitude of 100-170 meters above sea level. There are no significant differences in height in the analysed area, except for Castle Hill in the historical centre of Grodno.

The climate of Grodno and Grodno District is moderate - winters are mild and humid, summers warm and humid. Average monthly air temperature in January 2012-2018 ranged from -0.7° to -6.5° (in 2018 -2.2°). The average monthly air temperature in July 2012-2018 ranged from +17.1° to +20.2° (in 2018 +19.6°). In recent years, a trend has been observed to shorten the spring season (with peaks in May) and to extend the autumn season. The ongoing climatic changes limit the high tourist season to a maximum of 5 months - from May to September - and also make it difficult to organise out-of-season tourism.

In terms of tourist attractiveness, the most interesting natural resources of Grodno District include the Neman River with its tributaries, the Augustow Canal, forest areas and several large forest lakes.

There are 99 rivers in the Grodno Region. The most famous of them is the Neman River, which is the national river for Lithuanians and Belarusians. On the bank of the Neman River, where the river changes direction from west to north, lies the town of Grodno. The most floating rivers in the area include Kotra, Svisloch, Lososianka, Czarna Hancha, Bierwienka and Gornica. There are also about 30 lakes and artificial water reservoirs in the Grodno area. The largest of them are located in the eastern part of the region: Belye - 557 ha, Rybnitsa - 250 ha, Verovskoe, Molochnoe, Derveninskoe, Zatskovo, Lokno, Mozhnevo, Zatoka, Glubokoye. A special place among the water resources of the Grodno region is occupied by the Augustow Canal - a unique in Poland and Belarus hydrotechnical object from the 1820s, connecting the Vistula and Neman basins. At the beginning of the XXI century as a result of construction of Grodno Hydroelectric Power Plant in the area of Shchechynovo village a large Grodno reservoir appeared.

The Neman River is the third largest river in Belarus. From the point of view of tourism, it is particularly interesting that the Neman flows through Grodno (one of the oldest towns in Belarus with a large concentration of historical and cultural monuments). The speed of the Neman River is only 1-2 meters per second, which makes it attractive for water and hiking tourism. However, the river is getting shallower and more and more overgrown with plants.

Among other rivers of the Grodno region, the right tributary of the Neman River, the Kotra River, deserves special attention. It starts its course in forest areas on the Belarusian-Lithuanian border and then leads its waters southwards through the Schuczyn and Grodno districts. Most of its banks are covered with old deciduous and coniferous forests, which makes rafting down the Kotra River extremely fascinating for lovers of green and active tourism.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to organize rafting races on the Nieman and Kotra rivers throughout the Grodno region. A few years ago on the Neman River, 9 km east of Grodno, near the village of Szczecinowo and the village of Beregowo, a hydroelectric power plant was started up. Its dam completely blocked the flow of the Neman River and crossed the very promising Kotra - Nemunas - Augustow Canal water tourist route. Currently, only three separate water routes are possible: Kotra - Neman (to the village of Beregowo), Neman - Augustow Canal (from Grodno to Niemnowo) and Augustow (Poland) - Augustow Canal - Neman - Druskininkai (Lithuania). In the future the artificial reservoir of Grodno Hydroelectric Power Plant will be used to create a recreational area for the inhabitants of Grodno. In the Grodno Hydroelectric Power Plant project, a lock chamber and a fish boat were planned, but they were not implemented during the plant construction.

The flora and fauna of the Grodno region is very rich. Its forests are home to most of the animals and birds found in the temperate zone. The region has recorded the habitats of many species listed in the Red Book of Belarus. Among them there are such species as: bison, lynx, badger, grey crane, black stork, bearded black stork, little tern, honey whale, kingfisher, green woodpecker. Rare species of plants grow in the area: venereal slipper, great ravine, blueberry willow, curly lily, liver fistula, common tongues, meadow shoot.

Over 30% of the Grodno area is covered by forests. The largest forest areas are located in the northern and north-eastern part of the region - a large part of the primaveral Grodno Forest and a small part of the Augustow Forest.

There are two large forest areas in the Grodno Area: the Grodno Forest (the eastern part of the Grodno Area and the northern part of the Szczuczyn District) and the Augustow Primeval Forest (in the northern part of the District, in fact it is a small eastern part of the forest area located in Poland). The Augustow Canal is located in the Augustow Primeval Forest.

The above mentioned natural areas are managed by: Republican Landscape Reserve "Grodno Forest". (Belarusian part of the Augustow Primeval Forest), Republican Landscape Reserve "Ozery" (Grodno Forest) and, partially, FEZ "Grodnoinvest" as the manager of a special tourist and recreational park "Augustow Canal" (separate sections along the canal, near the Neman River and within the town of Grodno, total of 5 750 ha).

The Republican Landscape Reserve "Grodno Forest" was established in 2007 by connecting various protected areas on both banks of the Neman River. The total area of the reserve is over 20 thousand ha. There are 371 plant species, 121 bird species and 22 mammal species in the reserve. Among them 9 plant species and 12 bird species have been entered into the Red Book of Belarus. The reserve is an integral part of several major transboundary ecological forests and water corridors in the extreme north-western part of Grodno County and adjacent territories of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Lithuania. It is located at the intersection of migration routes of animals and plants. This protection area is an important link in the creation of gene pool migration routes and fits well into the national and international environmental protection networks. The forest covers more than 90% of the reserve's territory. Pine forests dominate, among which there are areas of birch, spruce and aspen. Particularly valuable are lindens, oaks and ash trees along the Czarna Hańcza and Marycha rivers. In the valleys of rivers and streams picturesque spring complexes have been preserved. In the local waters there are rare fish species: brook trout, European grayling, common moustache.

The Republican Landscape Reserve "Oziery" was established in 1990 in the Grodno and Szczuczyn districts in order to preserve in its natural state valuable ecological systems of forests and lakes and unique natural and landscape complexes with the participation of wild plants and wild animals belonging to the species listed in the Red Book of Belarus. The area of the reserve

is about 24 thousand ha. There is a unique system of post-glacial forest lakes on the territory of the reserve: Beloje, Zacovo, Antozero, Bersztovskie, Dolgoje. Among them is the largest lake in the Grodno region - Lake Beloje, with an area of 5.3 km². The bottoms of the lakes form a chain within the boundaries of the ancient tectonic fault of the earth's crust and are a natural monument of the ice age. The main area of the reserve is occupied by subtag forests with spruce, oak and hornbeam. The flora includes over 760 species of higher plants, including 100 species of medicinal, ornamental and food plants. In the "Jezióra" nature reserve there are 175 species of terrestrial vertebrates, including 21 species of mammals, 6 reptiles, 8 amphibians and 136 species of birds. There are 18 rare and endangered animal species in the reserve: 2 species of insects, 1 reptile, 13 bird species, 2 mammals (lynx and badger). Currently, there is a herd of European bison living in the reserve. The State Institute of Nature Conservation Republican Landscape Reserve "Ozery" is active in tourism and excursion and has its own camping site. Currently, there are two two-day eco-tourism trails 10 and 12 km long and two water eco-tourism trails: two-day 16.6 km long and four-day 25 km long.

The main attraction of the Grodno District is the Augustow Canal, a hydrotechnical structure unique for Eastern Europe, connecting the Vistula and Neman river basins. The canal was built between 1824 and 1839 as a water transport route for the export of local agricultural products to Western European markets, but was practically not used for its intended purpose due to changes in economic conditions and the development of rail transport. The total length of the canal is 103 km, of which 45 km are artificially built canals, 35 km of river beds and 21 km of lake area, which are connected to the canal by a system of locks. More than 22 km of the canal runs through the territory of Belarus: from the Kurzyniec lock in the west on the Polish border to the Neman River in the east. Tourists are always very interested in the existing locks, with a total of 18 on the canal, including 4 locks on the Belarusian side of the canal: Dombrovka, Volkuszek, Kurzyniec, 4-chamber lock Niemnovo, and 5 regulator locks.

In 2003 the Augustow Canal was inscribed on the State List of Historical and Cultural Heritage of Belarus. Since then, the canal has been seen not only as a historical and cultural monument, but also as a promising tourist destination. In October 2014, the Belarusian side entered the Augustow Canal on the preliminary UNESCO World Heritage List, as a unique 19th century hydraulic engineering structure. UNESCO experts have decided that the canal itself does not have unique features as a historical and cultural monument, but as a natural site created by the canal, it has a chance to be included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Since the end of 2019, the Belarusian and Polish sides began negotiations and consultations on the possibility of

reappointing the Augustow Canal as a natural site for inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

There are many tourist attractions in the areas adjacent to the Canal. The surrounding forests are home to unique lakes shrouded in legends: Sawek, Czarne, Krugloe, Endrena, Cavenna, Zielonka and Dorgunskoye. South of the channel is dominated by historical and cultural monuments. The most famous of them are the palace and park complex of the magnate Wollowicz family in Swiatsk (XVIII century) and the aristocratic estate of the Mountains in Radziwillowki (XIX century). Moreover, there are 45 battle shelters, bunkers and DOTs (small bunkers with rotating turrets) from the times of World War II (Grodno fortification No 68, so-called "Molotov Line") in the close vicinity, which are very popular with fans of military history.

Natural values of Sokolka Poviát

Sokolka Poviát is located in the northern part of Podlaskie Lowland, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland. It has a largely preserved natural environment - mainly complexes of natural forests (southern part), marshy river valleys (northern part) with valuable and varied vegetation. These areas are characterized by high and unique values, the highest degree of naturalness of vegetation and the highest biodiversity, on a national and European scale. Its most valuable natural objects are: Biebrza National Park in the north, Knyszynska Forest Landscape Park in the central and southern part, Protected Landscape Area Sokolkae Hills in the east and nine nature reserves. The Sokolka Poviát is characterised by relatively clean air and low environmental pollution. Due to the high values of the natural environment, Podlaskie Voivodeship, and thus the Sokolka Poviát, is part of the functional macroregion "Green Lungs of Poland".

The climate of the Sokolka Poviát has clearly continental features, with long winter, short pre-winter and relatively short summer. It is distinguished from other non-Polish areas by the lowest air temperatures. The Sokolka Poviát lays in the cool thermal region of Poland. The average annual temperature for this area is about 6.5°C. The coldest month is mostly January and the warmest is July.

The Sokolka Poviát is characterised by great natural diversity. There is a dense forest complex of the Knyszyn Primeval Forest, naturally formed river valleys, peat bogs, areas of extensively used meadows and pastures and many other habitats of high natural value. The different terrain relief in individual parts of the Poviát, varied microclimatic conditions, low intensity of farming, low

level of environmental chemistry and limited in many regions, direct human pressure are of great importance for the preservation of the wealth of plant and animal species occurring here.

The high biotic potential of the area is evidenced by the wealth of fauna and flora and the presence of numerous protected and rare plant and animal species, as well as a significant number of areas designated by protection status. Numerous animals, characteristic for the Polish Lowland: bison, elk, sams, deer, wild boars, foxes, hares and beavers, are an indispensable element of the natural environment and testify to the high level of preservation of the environment in its natural state.

The Sokolka Powiat is a typically agricultural region, characterised by low average soil quality and high climate instability. Agricultural land predominates in the surface structure. The landscape is enriched by extensive forest areas, rivers and artificial water reservoirs. There have been no significant changes in land use in recent years. Still the largest area is occupied by agricultural land (arable land, meadows and pastures).

There are a total of 429.67 km of rivers and canals in the Powiat, which are divided into two water divisions:

- The watershed of the Vistula River, to which rivers belong: Biebrza, Bierwicha, Brzozowka, Gleboczyna River, Horodnianka, Jalowka, Kamienica, Kamienna, Kamionka, Sokolka Canal, Wogzalski Canal, Kladziewo, Kropiwna, Kumialka, Malowista, Mosciszanka, Olszanka, Poganica, Popiolowka, Sidra, Siderka, Sloja, Sokolda, Starzynka, Trofimowka, Zgierszczyna. Total - 376.52 km
- The watershed of the Neman River, which includes the rivers: Krynka, Nietupa, Losna and Przerwa. Total - 53.15 km

The rivers of the county (except for Biebrza) do not present particularly attractive values for the development of water tourism.

The Sokolka Powiat has no natural standing water reservoirs, but it has 11 artificial water reservoirs, with a total area of 81.32 ha, which have positively influenced the increase in the attractiveness of the Sokolka Powiat area in terms of tourism (agro-tourism, which is becoming more and more fashionable in our times), and at the same time have supplemented the shortage of natural water reservoirs.

The forest cover of the Sokolka Poviát amounts to 25.28 % of its area and is lower than the average of the voivodeship and the country (28.8%). The main compact forest complex in the Sokolka Poviát is the Knyszynska Forest Landscape Park. In the remaining part of the Poviát the forests are scattered to a certain extent, forming smaller complexes. The dominant species in the forests of the Sokol Poviát is pine, and the species that make up the forests are: spruce, oak, birch and alder.

Part of the Sokolka Poviát is located in the buffer zone of the Biebrza National Park and the Knyszynska Forest Landscape Park. The area of National Parks in the County is generally about 10 197.00 ha.

The Biebrza National Park was established in 1993. It is the largest national park in Poland, with an area of 59223 ha. Forest areas in the Park occupy 15 544 ha, agricultural land - 18 180 ha, and wastelands - the famous Biebrza Marshes, in fact the most valuable natural ecosystems - 25 495 ha. A lagging of 66 824 ha was created around the Park. The area of 5 075 ha (including the former Czerwone Bagno reserve) is under strict protection. Due to the unprecedented in Europe marsh and peat areas and very diverse fauna and especially the rich bird world, the Park was placed in 1995 on the list of areas protected by the RAMSAR Convention.

The Knyszyn Primeval Forest Landscape Park with an area of 74 447 ha was established in 1988. The purpose of establishing the PKPK was to protect and preserve the natural resources, cultural and historical values of the Knyszyn Primeval Forest, as well as to create conditions for scientific and didactic activities and to develop qualified tourism and recreation. Its range covers hilly areas in the Suprasl and Sokolda river basin covered with forests of most of the Knyszyn Primeval Forest. The protection here is provided by tree stands, forest river valleys, numerous springs and various geomorphological forms (end moraines, excavation cavities) characteristic of the post-glacial landscape of the area.

The Sokolka Hills Protected Landscape Area with the area of 38 742.0 ha, created in 1986 in order to protect and preserve the areas stretching east of the Knyszyn Primeval Forest, distinguished by their relief, high natural, landscape, cultural and recreational values. The Sokolka Hills is one of the mesoregions that make up the Podlaskie Lowland. They are characterized by the presence of high hills resembling the landscape of lakes, but without lakes existing today. The highest hills east of Sokolka are 236 m and 238 m high, and in the north the so-called Carpathian Mountains are 229 m high.

Nature reserves

- Stare Biele - a peatbog type reserve with the area of 255.65 ha.
- Gora Pieszczana - forest type reserve of the area of 220.10 ha.
- Miedzyrzecze - forest type reserve of the area of 249.86 ha.
- Bahno in Borki - a peatbog type reserve with the area of 286.90 ha.
- Kozłowy Lug - peatbog type reserve with the area of 139.45 ha.
- Stara Debina - forest type reserve with the area of 33.68 ha.
- Woronicza - floristic type reserve with the area of 133.80 ha.
- Starodrzew Szyndzielski - forest type reserve with the area of 79.74 ha.
- Nietupa - faunistic type reserve with the area of 273.73 ha.

Natural monuments

Natural monuments are individual creations of living and inanimate nature or their concentration with a special scientific, cultural, historical and commemorative value and with individual features that distinguish them from other creations. In the area of the county 69 nature monuments have been registered, including single trees (41), tree groups (6), avenues (5), erratic boulders (18).

European Ecological Network Natura 2000

The Natura 2000 network is created within the Poviats:

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs): Refuge Biebrzańska (149,929 ha) and Forest Knyszynska (136,145 ha),
- Special Areas of Habitat Protection (SAC): Biebrza Valley (121 003 ha) and Refuge Knyszynska (136 084 ha).

3.2 ANALYSIS OF ANTHROPOGENIC ASSETS

This chapter contains an inventory of the Strategy area under the account of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, cultural institutions and major events.

Characteristics of cultural heritage objects of the City of Grodno and Grodno District

Grodno occupies a special place in the Republic of Belarus due to the number of historical and cultural monuments. It is often referred to as an "open-air museum" or a "royal city" because from the 12th to 18th century Grodno Dukes, Grand Dukes of Lithuania and Poland lived here

for a long time. At present, there are 67 so-called "complex material, historical and cultural values inscribed on the State List of Historical and Cultural Values of the Republic of Belarus in Grodno. The list includes 448 objects.

- **Defence architecture**

- Fortifications of the fortress of Grodno (46 buildings from the early 20th century),
- Fortifications of the 68th Grodno Fortification Region (45 objects from the years 1940-1941, part of the so-called Molotov Line),
- Fortified settlements of the Jotvingian tribe in Jasudov.

- **Sacral architecture**

Catholic religion:

- St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral (Main Church) in Grodno
- The Church of the Acquisition of the Holy Cross and the Bernardine Monastery (1602-1618),
- The Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the former Brigitte Monastery (1642, now owned by the Nazarene sisters),
- The Church of Our Lady of Angel and the Franciscan Monastery (1635),
- The Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Odelsk (first half of the 18th century),
- The Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Sopotskin (1789),
- The Church of the Holy Trinity in Indura (1815),

Orthodox religion:

- Orthodox church of Boris and Soil (Kolozhkaya) from XII century in Grodno
- Orthodox church of the Nativity of the Mother of God and the convent in Grodno (former Basilica, 1726-1751),
- Holy Protection Orthodox Cathedral in Grodno (1907-1909),
- Orthodox church of Transfiguration of the Lord in Komotovo (1844-1846),
- Orthodox church of St. Alexander Nevsky in Vertelishk (1843-1854),
- Orthodox church of the Protection of the Holy Virgin in the village of Milkovshchina (1908-1909).

Lutheran religion:

- Lutheran church in Grodno (1912, the first church was founded in 1793 with the consent of King Stanislav August).

The religion of Judaism:

- Great Choral Synagogue (Main Synagogue) in Grodno,
- Synagogue in Indura.

- **Residential architecture**

- King Stefan Bathory's Palace in Grodno (now the Old Castle, 1579, originally a castle of Grodno princes from the Rurikovich dynasty, later the Gothic castle of Vitovt),
- The Royal Palace in Grodno (now the New Castle, 1737-1742, built as the Grodno residence of King August III),
- Palace of K. Khreptovich in Grodno (now Grodno State Museum of the History of Religion, 1742-1752),
- Palace of the Vice-Minister of the Grodno Royal Economy (1776-1793),
- Palace of Svyatopolk-Chetvertinsky in Grodno (1786, the building was erected for the Medical Academy of Tyzenhauz),
- Stanislavovo country royal residence (60-70s of the 18th c.),
- The Vollovich Palace and Park Complex in Svyatsk (1779),
- the countryside royal residence of Ponemun (1771)
- Palace of Grodno vice-governor Maximovich (1803).
- Manor of the Gorsky family in Radzivilki (XIX century).

- **Architectural systems**

- Historical layout of the centre of Grodno (180 objects)
- the historic centre of Grodno (180 buildings),
- Historical layout of Eliza Ozheshko street (complex of 20 buildings),
- Historical layout of Sovetskaya street (complex of 19 buildings),
- Historical layout of Bolshaya Troitskaya St. (complex of 14 buildings),
- Historical layout of Zamkovaya street (complex of 14 buildings),
- Old Castle complex (7 buildings and structures),
- New Castle complex (5 buildings and structures)
- the house of merchant Muravyov (about 1890),

- **Monuments of architecture**

- Masalsky's tenement house (about 1726),
- The building of the former Grodno Dominican school (30-60s of the 18th century),
- "Music wing" or "Curved outbuilding" (around 1765),
- House of the administrator of the Grodno Royal Savings during the Tyzengauz (1780),
- Wooden lamus on the territory of the former Brigitte monastery in Grodno (the end of the 18th century),
- The Old Lamus of the Grodno Royal Monastery (1765-1780),
- The Old Grodno Theatre (now the Grodno Regional Puppet Theatre, mistakenly considered the "Tyzenhauz Theatre", about 1793),
- Firefighter's Tower (1902),
- The building of the Grodno Real College of Tsarevich Alexei (1907),
- building of Peasant Land Bank (1913),
- House of Riflemen (1936),
- House of Trade Unions (1955),
- The Palace of Culture for textile workers (1959),
- The building of the Grodno Regional Drama Theatre (1984).

- **Natural values created by man (parks, lagoons, canals, etc.)**

- Augustow Canal
- Lake Jubilejnoje
- Grodno Zoo
- Grodno Water Reservoir of Grodno Hydroelectric Power Plant

- **Cultural and art institutions, museums, cultural parks, open-air museums, art galleries, galleries, exhibitions**

- Grodno Regional Dramatic Theatre
- Grodno Regional Puppet Theatre
- District Philharmonic in Grodno
- Dance and Song Group "White Roses"
- "Grodno Band"
- Musical Theatre "Rada"
- State Historical and Archaeological Museum in Grodno
- Grodno State Museum of the History of Religion

- about 40 indoor facilities: museums, museum exhibitions and exhibition halls, including twenty school museums of local history.
- Department of Ethnography, Folklore and Crafts of Grodno Regional Cultural Centre with 7 field branches

- **Cultural events**

Folklore festivals:

- National Festival of National Cultures (once every two years)
- National Exhibition - Fair of Crafts and Folk Artistry "Kaziuki" in Grodno
- Open Festival "Augustow Canal in the Culture of Three Nations" (Dabrovka Lock)
- Feast of Unity of Folk Art, Folklore and Nature " Augustov riverands " (Dabrovka Lock)
- Easter Egg festival in Sopockin
- Saint Hubert's Day (Grodno)

Music festivals:

- International Festival of Orthodox Chanting "Kolozhsky Blagovest " (Grodno)
- The regional Polish-Belarusian Festival "Grodno - Bialystok Artistic Meetings".
- International Jazz Festival "GRODNO-JAZZ".

Theatre and art festivals:

- International Festival of Puppet Theatre Art "Dolls on the Neman River" in Grodno
- The summer ball at Eliza Ozheshko in Grodno.
- International open-air workshops of sculptors in the agritourism complex "Grodno's Korobczyce Estate" near Grodno

Historical reconstructions:

- International Festival of Slavic Martial Arts "German Massacre" (Prival Recreation Centre)

Subculture festivals:

- International Motorcycle Festival "Хавайся ў бульбу!" in Grodno
- Big Mini Street Art Festival in Grodno
- Retro-Car Festival "SUNDAY AUTOGRODNO.BY" in Grodno

Culinary festivals:

- Regional "Cheese Festival" in Grodno
- "Odelsk Festival" in Odelsk with tasting of local traditional cuisine
- The "Millers' Day" festival in Odelsk

Business forums:

- General National Exhibition - Euroregion "Neman" "At the crossroads" in Grodno

Pop culture events:

- Regional "Miss Grodno" competition.
- Grodno Fashion Show" fashion festival
- Open Regional Dance Festival "Grodno Lace" (Grodno)

• **Sports competitions in the Grodno region.**

- The Neman Spring International Water Marathon (March-April, Nemново Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- The International Scandinavian Walking Semi-Marathon "Krochym Razm" (May, Dombrovka Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- Festival "Feast of the sea" which includes: beach volleyball competition in the framework of the open regional festival of folk art "Augustov Canal invites friends", competition in the swamp football, "Swimming on anything" (May, Dombrovka Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- The championship of the Republic of Belarus in orienteering (June, Dombrovka Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- Running marathon on the rough terrain "Augustov Canal" (June, Dombrovka Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- International bike marathon "Susedzi" (July, Dombrovka Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- International water marathon "Augustov Canal" (September, Nemново Lock at the Augustov Canal),
- The School of Survival open pedestrian marathon (October, Nemново Lock on the Augustov Canal).

Most of the sports events in Grodno County are concentrated on the territory of the Augustov Canal, which proves its great potential for the development of active tourism, both for amateurs and professionals (so-called qualified tourism and extreme sports competitions). Many of these events can serve as a basis for the development of cross-border tourism products and can also be used as marketing tools in promoting cross-border cooperation.

Characteristics of cultural heritage objects in the Polish part - Sokolka Poviast:

Sokolka Poviast covers following urban municipal units: Dabrowa Bialostocka, Sokolka and Suchowola, as well as rural municipal units: Janow, Korycin, Krynki, Kuznica, Nowy Dwor, Sidra and Szudzialowo. In the Poviast and Sokolka Town we can find many interesting objects of historical, cultural and touristic character, which can undoubtedly influence the attractiveness of the Tyzenhauz Trail.

- **Defensive architecture**

Bunkers in the Sokolka region are part of the 68th Grodno Fortified Region and were built on the line Malowiste - Trzyrzecze - Hamulka - Kamienna Nowa - Leipzig - Lesnye Bohatery

- **Sacred architecture**

Catholic religion:

- St Anthony of Padua Church in Sokolka
- Church of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ in Sokolka
- Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Kundzin
- Neo-Gothic Church of the Finding and Elevation of the Holy Cross in Korycin
- St. George Church in Janow
- Classicist parish church of St. Peter and Paul in Suchowola
- Late Baroque Church of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, with a complex of monastery buildings in Rozanystok
- Church of St John the Baptist in Nowy Dwor
- Church in Zalesie from 1602-1623 in the early Baroque style.
- The parish church called Divine Providence in Kuznica was built in the years 1863-1864.
- The Roman-Catholic Church of St. Peter and Paul. Roman Catholic Church of St. Vincent Ferrerius and St. Bartholomew the Apostle in Szudzialow
- The complex of the parish church of St. Petersburg St. Stanislaw Bishop Martyr in Dabrowa Bialostocka
- The wooden church of St. Anna from the 17th century in Kamienna Nowa
- St. Anne's Church in Krynki

Orthodox Religion:

- Orthodox cemetery chapel of St. Martyr Pawel of 1900 in Sokolka,
- Orthodox cemetery from the 19th century in Sokolka,
- St. Alexander Nevsky Orthodox Church in Sokolka,

- The Orthodox Church of St. Peter and Paul in Samogroda,
- The cemetery at the Orthodox Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Samogroda,
- Cemetery Orthodox Church of the Holy Martyrs Boris and Soil in Jurowlany,
- Orthodox parish church of St. George the Victorious in Jurowlany,
- The Orthodox Church of St. Petersburg The Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God in Krynki built in 1864.

Muslim religion:

- Wooden mosque in Bohoniki
- Wooden mosque in Kruszyniany
- Muslim cemetery (mizar) in Bohoniki
- Muslim cemetery (mizar) in Kruszyniany

The religion of Judaism:

- Jewish cemetery from the 18th century in Sokolka,
- Hasidic Synagogue from Slonim in Krynki,
- Caucasian Synagogue in Krynki,
- The Old Synagogue in Krynki,
- Synagogue in Suchowola,
- Jewish cemetery in Nowy Dwor.

Protestant religion

- Ruins of the Calvinist church from the 16th century in Sidra,
- Evangelical cemetery in Sokolka.

• **Residential architecture**

- The Eynarowiczs' (Eunarowiczs') Manor House in Sidra from the early 20th century
- The ruins of the Calvinist congregation of the 16th century in Sidra
- Larch manor from the 18th century in Losna Mala

• **Architectural systems**

- Pre-war tenements along Bialostocka and Grodzieńska streets in Sokolka
- Urban layout of the town from the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries in Sokolka
- The tenement house, at 1 Pilsudskiego Street, from the first half of the 19th century,

- Roundabout crossroads - in the central part of Krynki Town there is an original roundabout, the only one of its kind in Poland and one of the two in the world (the second one probably in Paris), from which 12 streets radiate.

- **Places of martyrdom and national memory**
 - Monument commemorating Poles deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan in Sokolka
 - Granite relief - Allegory of Science from 1933 on the front elevation of the Adam Mickiewicz Primary School No. 1 in Sokolka
 - Bas-relief, front elevation of the Primary School No. 1 in Sokolka from 1933,
 - A monument dedicated to the victims of the Nazi crime in Buchwalowo.

- **Natural assets created by man (parks, lagoons, canals, etc.).**
 - Lagoon in Sokolka
 - Lagoon in Kuznica
 - Lagoon in Sidra
 - Lagoon in Krynki
 - Lagoon in Korycin
 - Lagoon in Janow

- **Cultural and art institutions, museums, cultural parks, open-air museums, art galleries, galleries, exhibitions**
 - Museum of the Sokolka Land in Sokolka
 - Culture and Education Park Korycin - Milevshchyna
 - The Fr Jerzy Popieluszko Memorial Chamber in Suchowola
 - Weaving Chamber in Janow
 - Cultural Centre in Sokolka
 - Old School "Village Culture House" in Wojnowce
 - Municipal Centre of Culture, Sports and Tourism in Korycin
 - Municipal Centre of Culture, Sports and Tourism in Janow
 - Municipal Centre of Culture, Sports and Tourism in Suchowola
 - Centre of Three Cultures in Suchowola
 - Municipal and Communal Cultural Centre in Dabrowa Bialostocka
 - Cultural Centre in Nowy Dwor

- Cultural Centre in Sidra
 - Municipal Cultural and Sports Centre in Kuznica
 - Sports and Recreation Centre in Krynki
 - Municipal Cultural Centre in Krynki
 - Centre of Muslim Education and Culture of Polish Tatars in Kruszyniany
 - Municipal Cultural and Recreation Animation Centre in Szudzialowo,
 - Tatar Islamic Cultural Centre in Suchowola,
 - Sports and Recreation Centre in Sokolka.
- **Cultural events**
 - Sokolka Days
 - National Strawberry Days in Korycin
 - Days of Korycin
 - Trialog in Krynki
 - "Sabantuj" Tatar Culture Festival in Kruszyniany
 - Europarade of Wind Orchestras in the Centre of Europe in Suchowola
 - Festival of Culture and Tradition "Local Vibes" ("Swojskie Klimaty") in Suchowola,
 - "Wreaths" - an outdoor event in Sokolka referring to Slavic beliefs and rituals,
 - Sailing regatta for the Mayor of Sokolka Cup.

3.3 TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

Grodno District with the City of Grodno

- **Accommodation and catering**

In 2019, there were 65 accommodation facilities, including 46 hotels, in the entire Grodno region. At the end of 2019, the number of rooms was 1,611 and the lump sum capacity of hotel rooms was 2553 beds. The number of people accommodated in hotels and similar facilities in 2019 was 155 472 (including 69 620 thousand foreigners), and the occupancy rate was only 30%. The average occupancy rate of hotel rooms in Belarus in 2019 was 32,2% (due to a higher rate of 44,4% for Minsk).

In January 2020, there were 18 hotels operating in Grodno: 12 hotels and 6 hostels. Their total capacity was 822 beds. The largest hotel facilities are "Tourist (129 rooms), "Neman" (75

rooms), "Semashko" (42 rooms), "Omega" (30 rooms), "Slaviya" (24 rooms and two separate hotel suites), "Sports" (18 rooms), "Kronon Park Hotel" (15 rooms), "Semashko" apartment hotel (13 rooms), "Prival Hotel" (13 rooms). There are 2 biggest hotel facilities in Grodno under reconstruction: "Belarus (188 rooms - 500 beds) and "Grodno" (over 110 rooms). The last one was taken over by a Chinese investor, OOO Quan Shen Commercial and Industrial Corporation. Partial opening of the "Belarus" hotel is planned in 2020. (o 40%).

In 2019, 66 531 people, including 34 432 foreigners, took advantage of accommodation in hotels in Grodno (in 2018 - 65 590 in total, including 31 834 foreigners, in 2017 r. – 60 111 in total, including 26 096 foreigners).

According to the data of the Municipal Executive Committee of the City of Grodno, the load factor of the state hotel facilities of Grodno exceeds 40%. Private city hotels do not provide similar information, citing trade secrets. Traditionally, Grodno tourist enterprises complain about the lack of hotel rooms in Grodno during the tourist season and at weekends. Especially when it comes to accommodating a large group of tourists up to 50 people (1 tourist bus).

Thanks to the development of visa-free tourist traffic, in addition to hotels in Grodno, 9 private chalets have been built in a few years, which are very popular among young people and foreign tourists. The offer of accommodation is supplemented by apartments offered by private companies. The largest of these is the Eurovuyut company, which offers 32 rental flats in Grodno.

In 2018, there were 440 catering facilities in the town of Grodno, with a total of 26,443 seats. In the Grodno region at the same time there were 60 catering facilities with a total of 3,754 seats. In 2018, the turnover rate of gastronomic facilities in Grodno increased by 14% compared to the previous year. It is in the city of Grodno that the largest increase in the number of catering establishments is observed - from 356 in 2014 to 440 in 2018.

As of 1 December 2019, there were 478 catering establishments with 27,916 seats in Grodno. In the period from January to December 2019, 38 new catering facilities for 1,473 seats were opened. In 2020, the city plans to open 20 new catering facilities.

Sanatoriums and resorts occupy a special place in the tourist infrastructure of Grodno and Grodno District. There are four sanatoriums and spas with over 1100 beds in the Grodno region:

- Sanatorium "Ozerny" (7 buildings on 17 hectares, 394 beds);
- Poretchye Sanatorium (3 buildings on 10 hectares, 345 seats);
- Sanatorium "Neman-72" (2 buildings on 5.6 hectares, 250 seats);
- Sanatorium "Pearl" (3 buildings on an area of 5.2 ha, 150 seats).

Sanatoriums in the Grodno District specialize in the treatment and prevention of respiratory, digestive, hormonal and metabolic disorders, nervous and genitourinary system diseases. All sanatoriums offer tourists excursion and recreation programmes, as well as a number of additional services.

- **Sports and leisure facilities**

The largest sports facilities in the town of Grodno are the Neman Central Sports Complex (Neman CSK), the Ice Palace of Sports with Cultural and Sports Complex and the Municipal Company of Physical Culture and Water Recreation "Akwacentr".

Neman CSK consists of a modern stadium with 8,500 seats, football fields and tennis courts, "Champion" fitness centre, Arena Cafe, sports hotel, conference room and many other facilities.

The Ice Palace of Sports in Grodno is the nest of the local hockey club Neman, the multiple champion of Belarus in ice hockey. The capacity of the Ice Palace is about 2,500 people.

The "Akwacentr" has the only 50 m long swimming pool in the Grodno region, water attractions, children's pool, sauna, bathtub, gym.

- **Hiking trails**

At present there are nine tourist **bicycle routes** on the territory of Grodno district on the territory of Augustov Canal:

1) 401 - "Augustovsky Trail" (25 km): from the international cycling route R65 (Finland - Greece) to the v. Rudavka (Republic of Poland) - seasonal border crossing "Rudavka-Lesnaya" - lock "Kuzhynets" - lock "Volkushek" (Republic of Belarus) - v. Forest - lock "Dombrovka" - transition to the right bank of the canal - along the canal to the tract Tsarevo - v. Sonichi - radial exit to the lake Zelenka - v. Nemново - lock "Nemново" - tourist base "Nemново".

2) 402 - "Fox Mountain" (72,7 km): tourist base "Nemново" - lock "Nemново" - v. Golovenchtsy (border zone) - the bank of the Black Gancha River - r. Maryha - v. Kalety - lake. Cavenya - Endreniya lake - v. Lesnaya - lock "Dombrovka" - farm Tartak - v. Noviki - gp Sopotskin - v. Radivilki - v. Ostasha - tourist base "Nemново".

- 3) 403 - "By way of magnate Volovich" (40 km): Mr. Sopotskin - v. Noviki (frontier zone) – lake Dorgunskoye - 2nd frontier post named after F. Kirichenko - v. Dorogun - v. Markovtsy - v. Boyary - v. Perstun - v. Svyatsk - v. Vasilevichi - v. Sopotskin.
- 4) 416 - "Grodno Fortress" (72 km – not marked): v. Zagorany - fort No. 1 - v. Naumovichi - fort No. 2 - v. Labno Ogorodniki - fort No. 3 - v. Strelchyky - fort No. 4 - v. Korobchitsy - fort No. 6 - v. Malaya Olshanka - fort No. 7 - v. Pogorany - fort No. 9 - v. Grandichi - fort No. 13.
- 5) 419 - "Rajgorod" (67 km): the tract of Pyszki in Grodno (Festivalna St.) - on route No. 412 to Fort No. 13 - Grandicza St. (road P42) - v. Goza - v. Palnica - v. Grodno. Fault - Goža - v. Palnica - v. Palnica - v. Skabany - v. Dubrova - v. Privalka - border crossing "Privalka-Raigardas" - v. Švendubre (highway A4) - Druskininkai (Lithuanian Republic).
- 6) 433 - "In the footsteps of Yatviags" (48 km): tourist base "Nemnovo" - airlock "Nemnovo" - Zelenka lake - v. Sonichi - tract Tsarevo - airlock "Dombrovka" - v. Rynkovci - ferry crossing to the v. Svendubre (highway A4) - v. Druskininkai (Lithuanian Republic). Forest gate Usova - doty 68th Ukrperayon - farm Tartak - Sandy lake - v. Radivilki - dam-regulator "Kurkul" - tourist base "Nemnovo".
- 7) 434 - "Tyzengauz Trail" (59 km): Tyzenhauz square - Soviet square - Suvorova street – Lake Jubilejnoje - v. Korobchitsy - border crossing "Bruzgi-Kuznica" - v. Bohoniki (PL) - Sokolka (PL).
- 8) 470 - "August Velo" (49.6 km): the border crossing "Lesnayat-Rudawka" - v. Rudawka - v. Dombrovka - v. Sonichi - tourist base "Nemnovo" - v. Radzivilki - palace and park complex Vollovichi in the v. Svyatsk - v. Zarechany - the city of Grodno.

It should be noted that six routes are marked: № 401, № 402, № 403, № 412, № 418, № 419. The rest are extremely promising for tourism development in the region.

The following cycling routes are currently in operation in Grodno City:

- 1) 412 - "Chalk Mountains" (31 km): the nature reserve Pyszki in Grodno (Festivalnaya Street).
- 2) 418 - "Health Path" (6.15 km): the nature reserve in Grodno (Festivalnaya Street).

In addition, there are six **water routes**:

- 1) 408 - "Unknown Europe" (67 km): Augustov Canal (Republic of Poland) - sluice "Mikashuvka" - seasonal border crossing "Rudavka-Lesnaya" - sluice "Kuzhynets" - sluice "Volkushek" (Republic of Belarus) - sluice "Dombrovka" - dam-regulator "Kurkul" (sluice "Nemnovo") - route No. 409 on the river. Ostashanka - along route No. 411 along the Neman river - seasonal border crossing "Privalka-Svendubre" - Druskininkai (Lithuanian Republic), and are currently being created to promote the cultural and historical heritage of two cities - Sokolka and Grodno.

2) 409 - "Augustovskoe kolochko" (7.5 km): tourist base "Nemnovo" - the river Ostashanka (to the place of inflow into Neman r.) - Augustovsky canal - gateway "Nemnovo" - dam-regulator "Kurkul" - the river Ostashanka - tourist base "Nemnovo".

3) 410 - "Chyornaya Gancha" (24 km): "Stary Bridge" - r. Marykha - Chernaya Gancha r. - v. Kadysh - v. Quiet (before inflow of Chernaya Gancha r. into Neman r.).

4) 411 - "Neman" (65 km): city beach of Grodno (Mostovaya street) - v. Gozha - v. Ploskovtsy - v. Shabany - seasonal border crossing "Privalka-Svendubre" - Druskininkai (Lithuania).

5) 415 - "Kotra" (27 km): v. Bershty - r. Kotra - v. Golovachi - v. Kashubintsy - Skidel - v. Ogorodniki (before inflowing into Neman r.).

6) 417 - "Ozerny": Salatye v. - Verevskoe lake - Derveniskoe lake - Beloe lake - v. Lakes.

Route No. 409 is the most popular among tourists both citizens of the Republic of Belarus and citizens of the neighboring countries. The second most popular route is route No. 410: tourists like picturesque places of Grodno Forest. The third place is given to route No. 411. Route "Kotra" (No. 415) is a promising route and will be further developed in the future for full use by tourists of the region.

There are also five **hiking** routes in Grodno region:

1) 405 - "Nemnovsky" (4 km, marked loop): tourist base "Nemnovo" - airlock "Nemnovo" - dam-regulator "Kurkul" - tourist base "Nemnovo".

2) 406 - "The war started here" (2 km, marked loop): airlock "Dombrovka" - along Augustov Canal to the fortifications of the 68th fortified region - farm Tartak - house of airlock master - airlock "Dombrovka".

3) 420 - "Kupalinka" (4.85 km, marked loop): sanatorium "Pearl" - along the river Neman - recreation area "Kupalinka" - tract Pyshka in Grodno (Festivalnaya St.).

4) 421 - "Pearl" (5 km): sanatorium "Pearl" - along the Neman river - recreation area "Kupalinka" - Pyshki tract in Grodno (Festival street). In the opposite direction from the route # 420.

5) 422 - "Pine Tear" (2,9 km): tourist base "Nemnovo" - v. Yatvez.

Most of the above routes were implemented within the framework of international technical assistance projects "Unknown Europe - development of tourism infrastructure of the Polish-Belarusian border near the Augustov Canal and the Neman River" (2008-2010), as well as "Ecological transport uniting neighbours" (2013-2014, Cross-border Cooperation Programme "Lithuania-Latvia-Belarus").

Within the framework of the international technical assistance project "Tyzenhauz Trail", implemented by the Department of Sport and Tourism of the Grodno Executive Committee and

the Grodno Regional Department of the public association "Republican Tourist and Sports Union" together with the Sokolka Commune of the Podlaskie Province of the Republic of Poland, tourist routes are created and marked:

- 1) 426 - "Korolewski" (pedestrian, 7.5 km): Grodno railway station - TIC - historical city centre - railway station.
- 2) 427 - "Grand Ducal" (cycling, 18 km): Grodno railway station - Ozheshko street - historical city centre - Pyszki tract - railway station.
- 3) 434 - "Tyzenhauz Cross-border Cycling Trail" (33 km along the Belarusian part, 26 along the Polish territory): Tyzenhauz Sq. in Grodno - Yubileinoe lake - agro estate "Karalinskiy Falvarak Tyzenhauz" - v. Korobchitsy - v. Bruzgi - border crossing "Bruzgi-Kuznitsa" - v. Kuznitsa (Republic of Poland) - - Nowedziel village - Tolcze village - Malawicze Dolne village - Bohoniki village - Sokolka (tenement house at 1 Pilsudski Street).

In 2018 the Department of Sport and Tourism of the Grodno Oblast Executive Committee in cooperation with the Union of Rural Communities of the Podlaskie Voivodship within the framework of the programme of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Polish Aid" in the area of the August Velo canal was implemented the project "Supporting the development of entrepreneurship in tourism through the development of infrastructure of the Grodno region", within the framework of which a bicycle route "August Velo" was laid. All 49.6 km of the route are marked. It runs through the August Velo Canal and is connected to the international route "Green Velo", which runs through the Podlaskie Province of the Republic of Poland. In Grodno the route "August Velo" near the GUK "Grodno Regional Philharmonic Society" at the intersection of Suvorov Street and Sovetskie Border Guards Street intersects with the route "Tyzenhauz Trail".

In the future it is planned to combine Belarus, Poland and Lithuania by bicycle routes. The next stage is the route "Bialowieza Velo". It will pass through three districts of Grodno region: Grodno, Berestovitsky and Svislochsky. If you follow this route, you'll get to Bialowieza Forest. From there - through the bicycle checkpoint "Pererov Bialoveza Forest " - you'll get to the Polish territory of the forest. In this way it will be possible to join the existing routes "Euro Velo" and "Green Velo", but only from the other side. A part of Brest region wants to be involved in the network of bicycle routes as well.

Besides, horse riding route No. 414 "Zevany Castle" was created (12 km, practically not used): "Zevany Castle" (ATC "Korobchitsy") - v. Korobchitsy - Partisan Camp (ATC "Korobchitsy") - fort No. 4 - fort No. 5 - v. Korobchitsy - "Zevany Castle" (ATC "Korobchitsy").

State Enterprise "Republican Landscape Reserve "Lakes" has developed six not marked **ecological tourist** routes, two of which are water routes:

- 1) Route No. 1 (10 km, water): Lake Agent - Beloe Lake - square 66 of Ozerskoye lesnichestvo - Beloe Lake - "Khimik" tourist base.
- 2) Route No. 2 (12 km, water): Antozerov Lake v. Novaya ore - Solomyanka River - Zatskovo Lake - Beloe Lake - pier of water sports school.
- 3) Route No. 3 (14.5 km): v. Strievka - the highway Grodno Ozery - v. Tabolskaya Budka - ecotourism parking in square 173 - the river "Rechki" - the estate Grodno Forestry Grodno Forestry GLHU - v. Bogushovka.
- 4) Route No. 4 (25 km): Lake Agent - Beloe Lake - v. Podbeloe - lake Beloe - dam - lake Zatskovo.
- 5) Route No. 5 (16.6 km): v. Rybnitsa - the highway Grodno - the parking lot for organized ecotourism in the square 173 - the river "Rechki" - v. Tabolskaya Budka - the highway Grodno - Ostrino - v. Strijivka.
- 6) Route No. 6 (15.1 km): the v. Rybnitsa - the Grodno River - organized ecotourism parking in the quarter 173 - the river "Rechki" - the estate of the Grodno Forestry "Grodno Forestry" - v. Bogushovka.

The Sports and Tourism Department of the Grodno District Executive Committee has developed many excursion and bus routes:

- 1) "My family angle, I am so glad to see you": v. Gozha - v. Perelom - v. Krinichnaya - v. Privalka - v. Gozha.
- 2) Sightseeing tour: Grodno - v. Zarechanka (Rushnika Museum) - v. Lojki - v. Svyatsk - agent Ratichi - v. Naumovichi (Fort No. 2) - Grodno.
- 3) "Vertelishki: past in the present": agent Vertelishki.
- 4) "Small Radzima of Eliza Azheshki": Grodno - v. Milkovschina - v. Zalesna - v. Kamenka - Grodno.
- 5) Sightseeing tour: Grodno - v. Ratichi - v. Svyatsk - gp Sopotskin - v. Naumovichi (fort number 2) - Grodno.
- 6) Sightseeing tour: Grodno - v. Naumovichi (Fort № 2) - gp Sopotskin - Augustov Canal - Grodno.
- 7) Outlook tour: Skidel - v. Golovachi - Skidel.
- 8) sightseeing tour: Grodno - Kvasovka-ag Svisloch - Grodno.
- 9) sightseeing tour: Grodno - Koptevka - v. Novoselki - Indura - Lutskowliany - Odelsk - Grodno.

- 10) sightseeing tour: Grodno - Putrishki - Wertelishki - Oziery - v. Golovachi - v. Skidel - v. Zhitomlya - Obukhovo - Grodno.
- 11) "Paraccia: Hell's Stanzas and Agaradka": v. Porechye.
- 12) "We've found a fortune" (45 km): Grodno – v. Odelsk.
- 13) "Pravetsya Parecha glory to Nesets" (7 km): v. Porechye.
- 14) "Looks of forgotten products" (22 km): Grodno – v. Koptevka.
- 15) "Yndura Sennja. Indura siennya." (25 km): v. Indura.

These excursions are local, represent local culture and include visits to local history museums at educational institutions and culture departments of the districts. There are also excursions on the territory of Augustov Canal: "Augustov Canal - Cradle of Three Nations", "Augustov Canal - Pearl of Prinemansky Krai", "Grodna - Sapotskin - from the past to the present", "Road of Memory" (visiting the fortifications of the 68th Grodno fortification), "Unknown Fortress" (forts of Grodno fortress). In Grodno: "Grodno is the city of castles and palaces", "Grodno literary and artistic", "Jews of Grodno", "Cult constructions in Grodno", etc.

Sokolka Poviats with the City of Sokolka:

- **Accommodation and catering**

According to data from the Central Statistical Office, there were 10 tourist accommodation facilities with 10 and more beds in Sokolka Poviats in 2019. In total, they offered 271 beds. In 2019 they were used by 12383 tourists, including 1030 foreign tourists. A total of 27111 overnight stays were provided, including 1 989 for foreign tourists.

However, the analysis of tourism potential conducted in 2020 shows that there are many more tourist facilities providing accommodation services. Most of them are agritourism farms, rural tourism or apartments for rent. Below, the tourist industry of the Sokolka Poviats is characterized and specified.

The city of Sokolka is the largest city in the Sokolka Poviats, which brings together the most important public and local government institutions and private entities. It has the best developed tourist and recreational, cultural and transport infrastructure.

The tourist potential of the Sokolka Poviats in terms of accommodation is formed by 10 facilities. These are mainly private entities with several to several dozen beds per facility. There are no

higher standard hotels, e.g. 3-star ones. The entities are focused on individual, business or occasional clients (e.g. weddings), as well as pilgrims.

The second important branch responsible for servicing tourist traffic is the catering industry. There are 14 catering facilities of various standards in the City of Sokolka. These are restaurants, bars, pizzerias, cafés and taverns. Most of them offer regional (Podlaskie, Tatar, Belarusian), traditional and Italian dishes (pizza, spaghetti).

Characterizing the tourist industry in the Sokolka Powiat, it can be said that the dominant role is played by agritourism entities, rural tourism or small guesthouses. In 2020 there were 58 facilities providing accommodation services, which are mostly located in rural areas. They are focused primarily on individual clients from outside the region, as well as occasional clients from the Sokolka County planning to organize various private events. The list of accommodation facilities by commune is as follows: **City of Sokolka:** Zacisze Restaurant, Sokolka Apartments, Polish Family House Heart, Banquet Hall and Kalinowski Guest Rooms, EMEF Training and Service Centre, Alice Guest Rooms, Restaurant and Verde Guest Rooms, Stanislaw Krawiel Guest Rooms, Bakunowka Inn. **Sokolka Commune:** Agritourism Farm Green Valley in Kuryly, Agritourism Farm "On the Hill" in Bachmatowka, Agritourism "Chata Bieszczadzka" in Stara Kamionka, Guest Rooms Pucilowska Ewa in Pucilki, Agritourism, The banquet hall in the Guard, "Zielone Wzgorza" Agritourism Farm in Ostrowek, Roscislawowka Agritourism in Drahle, Mahmed's Agritourism in Bohoniki, "Na tartarskim Szlaku" Agritourism in Bohoniki. **Sidra Commune:** Ludomirowo Agritourism Farm in Zalesie, U Sacharkow Agritourism in Zalesie, Reut Agritourism Farm in Holiki, Pod Grusza Agritourism Farm in Poganica. **Janow Commune:** "U Sawickich" Agrotourism Farm in Rudawka, Agrotourism in Krasne. **Dabrowa Bialostocka Commune:** Agritourism farm in Szuszaewo, agritourism "Wieża Marzeń" in Nowa Wies, agritourism farm "Chata za wsia" in Hamulka, agritourism "Kozlowka Biebrzańska" in Malyszowka Kolonia, rural tourism "Uroczysko Trzyrzeczki" in Trzyrzeczki, agritourism "Zagroda wiejska" in Jasionowka Kolonia, Zajazd "Na Skarpie" in Dabrowa Bialostocka. **Suchowola Commune:** Agritourism by the pond in Okopy, agritourism "House of stone" in Horodnianka, "RICO" guesthouse in Horodnianka, agritourism "Biebrzańska Chata" in Karpowicze, Poniatowski guesthouse in Suchowola, Agritourism farm "Arizona" in Suchowola, agritourism "Puszczykowka" in Pokosno Kolonia, a pension "Majatek Morgi" in Morga, agritourism "Pod turem" in Leszczany, agritourism "Gajewo Podlasie" in Laudańszczyzna. **Korycin Commune:** Inn "Trivento" in Korycin, Inn "Biesiada wedna" in Korycin, Guest rooms "Gosciniac koryciński" in Korycin, Hotel Biesiada in Kumiale. **Krynki Commune:** Guest rooms "Fazenda" in Krynki, Guest rooms "U Antka" in Krynki, Agrotourism "Natura" in

Lapicze. Agritourism "Home at the End of the World" in Lapicze, agritourism "Lowisko u Stacha" in Trejglach, agritourism "Jolanta" in Kundzicze, agritourism in Zyliczy-Czumicze, agritourism "Lesna Cisza" in Leszczany, Agritourism Tatar Inn "At the End of the World" in Kruszyniany, Agritourism "Jurta Tatarska" in Kruszyniany, Pension "Ekowczasy u Lejli" in Kruszyniany, Pension "Dworek pod lipami" in Kruszyniany. **Szudzialowo Commune:** Frontier StopPoint in Poczopek.

A client from outside the region, i.e. a typical tourist in the Sokolka Poviát, is especially looking for peace and quiet, contact with nature and learning about the culture of the Polish-Belarusian borderland. The biggest tourist traffic takes place in the summer season and late spring and early autumn.

However, the analysis of typical catering facilities in the Sokolka Poviát carried out in 2020 shows that there are 14 entities in total. These are mainly bars, inns and small restaurants focused on individual customers, especially tourists or travellers, and occasional weddings. Their territorial layout is as follows: **The City of Sokolka:** Kresowia Bar, Pizzeria & Pub "Maly co bit", Pizzeria & Restaurant "Peperoni", Pasta Baron & Thai Rolls, Tiger Turkish Kebab, Tasty Bars, Restaurant "Zacisze", Pizzeria "Robertino", Bistro and traditional ice cream "U Matczaka", Café "Old school", Bar "Niemen", Inn "Pod Sokolem", Café "Astra", Restaurant Verde. **Kuznica Commune:** Urbanek Bar in Kuznica, Bona Restaurant in Kuznica, "Zajazd Sosna" Restaurant in Chreptowce. **Dabrowa Bialostocka Commune:** Restaurant, Inn "Na Skarpie" in Dabrowa Bialostocka, Bistro "Lakomczuch" in Dabrowa Bialostocka, Bar "Kebab, Lody" in Dabrowa Bialostocka. **Suchowola Commune:** Restaurant "Oko na Biebrze" in Suchowola. **Korycin Commune:** Restaurant "Biesiada weselna" in Kumiala, Inn "Trivento" in Korycin. **Krynki Commune:** Inn under larch in Krynki, Restaurant Tatar Inn "Na koniec swiata" in Kruszyniany, Restaurant "Jurta Tatarska" in Kruszyniany.

So far, the potential resulting from the border location has not been used to a satisfactory extent by small, individual entrepreneurs from the trade and service sector, nor has an offer for a stay directed to a foreign tourist been created.

- **Sports and leisure facilities**

Sports and Recreation Centre in Sokolka - is the main sports and recreation facility in the region. It consists of a large indoor swimming pool, sauna and jacuzzi complex, gym and conference rooms. During the winter season, an ice rink is opened, where is possible to learn how to skate and take part in recreational ice hockey activities. For the youngest there are classes in the

paddling pool with various inflatable toys, as well as a playroom where occasional events such as birthdays for the youngest are organized.

In addition, there is a complex of illuminated sports and recreation fields with grass slabs, artificial surface, multifunctional playground for handball, basketball and beach ball, as well as two tennis courts.

The Sports and Recreation Centre in Sokolka has 49 beds (all year round) in a holiday resort on the Sokolka Lagoon. In the resort by the lagoon it is possible to rent water equipment (canoes, boats, sailing boats), use two volleyball fields or just relax on a guarded swimming pool and clean, sandy beach.

In the whole Sokolka Poviát there are 35 sports clubs that are active in various sports, especially in mighty ball, volleyball or athletics.

- Hiking trails

A total of 15 hiking trails run through the Sokolka Poviát. A special attraction of the Poviát is the "Tatar Route" containing numerous sites related to the local heritage of Tatar population. The tourist value is also the places of religious worship such as the Sanctuary in Rozanystok, mosques: in Kruszyniany and Bohoniki, as well as cemeteries of cultural diversity, ethnic and religious diversity.

Among the more important tourist trails one can distinguish:

1. Sokolkae Hills Bike Trail: Sokolka - Malawicze Dolne - Bohoniki - Bobrowniki - Suchynicze - Babiki - Upper Jurowlany - Krynki - Kruszyniany - 30 km
2. Route of Four Cultures: Bobrowniki - Luzany - Kruszyniany - Krynki - Jurowlany - Babiki - Zubrzyca Wielka - Wojnowce - Malawicze Dolne - Bohoniki - Klimowka - Tolcze - Kuznica - Saczkowce - Nowy Dwor - Bobra Wielka - Ponarlíca - Lipszczany - 51,8 km.
3. Sokolka Cross-border Trail: Sokolka - Malawicze Dolne - Klimowka - Tolcze - Nowedziel - Kuznica - Kowale - Saczkowce - Kuscińce - Nowy Dwor - Bobra Wielka - Sieruciowce - Choruzowce - Rygalowka - Siolko - Kopczany - Bartniki - Nowe Lesne Bohatery - Wolkusz - Rudawka - Mikaszowka - 81 km.
4. Large Tatar Trail: Sokolka - Szyszki - Bohoniki - Kamionka Stara - Wierzchlesie - Talkowszczyzna - Swidzialowka Nowa - Nietupa - Kruszyniany - 57km.
5. Borderland Cycling Route Wandering: Krynki - Kruszyniany - Szaly - Gorany - Ostrow Nowy - Ostrow Poludniowy - Ostrow Polnocny - Szudzialowo - Talkowszczyzna - Kopna Gora - Surazkowo - Podsuprasl - Reze. Jalka - Czarna Bialostocka - Czarna Wies Koscielna - Kopisk - Wasilkow - Nowodworce - Ogrodniczki - Ciasne - Lesniczowka Izoby - Krolowy Most - Downiewo - 149.5 km.

6. Janow - Korycin Bike Trail: Janow - Mlyn Sitawka - Jasionowa Dolina - Wyludki - Wyludy - Zabrodzie - Romaszkowka - Szumowo - Aulakowszczyzna - Gorszczyzna - Milewszczyzna - Rudka - Korycin - 24 km
7. Bike Trail Korycin - Suchowola: Korycin - Zabrodzie - Kizielany - Polomin - Kopciowka - Jalowka - Grodzisk- Zwierzyniec Wielki - Domuraty - Horodnianka - Ostrowek - Laudańszczyzna - Okopy - Suchowola - 69km.
8. Napoleonic Trail: Krynki - Swidzialowka Nowa - Lesniczowka Turowo - Nowosiolki - Krolowy Most - Kozi Las - Zednia - 36 km
9. Trail in the Footsteps of the January Uprising: Sokolka - Wojnachy - Zawistowszczyzna - Igryly - Planteczka - Lipina - Woronicze - Kopna Gora - Lipowy Most - Pieszczana Mountain Reserve - Chomontowszczyzna Reserve - Pieraciosy Wilderness - Walily Station - 49 km
10. Route of the Old Borderland: Sokolka - Bachmatowka - Stara Rozedranka - Wilcza Jama - Gora Jasienicha - Niemczyn - Zamczysk - Brzozowka - Wojtachy - Great Forest Reserve - Cashier's News - Poniklica - Knyszyn - 66 km
11. The Blessed Father Jerzy Popieluszko Sanctuary Route: Rozanystok - Dabrowa Bialostocka - Stara Kamienna - Nowa Kamienna - Zwierzyniec Wielki - Route 670 - Landanszczyzna - Okopy - Suchowola - Janow - Korycin - Przystawka - Bialousy - Sitkowo - Niemczyn - Czarna Bialostocka - 73 km
12. Molotov Line Shelter Route: Markowcy - Wolkusz - Kurianka - Lipsk - Jalowo - Szuszałewo - Kamienna Stara - Trzyrzeczki - Hamulka - Domuraty - Chmielowka - Podhorodnianka - Dolistowo - Wroceń - 100 km
13. Film Path: Tykocin - Bialystok - Janow - Sokolka - Wierzchlesie - Suprasl - Krolowy Most - 165 km
14. Rhyme Trail: Gorany - Grzybowszczyzna Stara - Leszczany - Studzianka - Gorany - 8.5 km
15. People's Handicraft Trail: Czarna Bialostocka - Czarna Wies Koscielna - Lapczyn - Zamczysk - Janow – Sokolka

3.4 INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORTING TOURISM

This chapter presents the saturation of the area with the infrastructure supporting tourism, i.e. providing additional services to tourists, such as commercial and medical services.

In 2019, the retail sector of Grodno City and Grodno District consisted of 2504 retail facilities. Including 2256 facilities in the city of Grodno and 248 retail facilities in the Grodno area. In total, this constitutes about 32.9% of all retail facilities in Grodno Oblast (7 621 facilities). Out of the

total number of retail facilities in Grodno County only 52 are shopping centres and 467 are pharmacies. In 2019, the retail surface of shops in Grodno reached 234 182 sq m, and 16 893 sq m in Grodno District. Most (86,5%) of all retail facilities in Grodno region are private, 8,8% are state owned and 4.7% are foreign owned. At the same time, in the structure of retail trade turnover in 2019, enterprises with foreign capital accounted for 22,1 % and private 66,1 %. This is due to the fact that foreign trade enterprises of Grodno region are large investors, while the private sector is mainly small enterprises and retail outlets (individual entrepreneurs). The share of food products in retail trade is quite high. Over the past five years, it has remained steadily at around 57%.

Currently, there are several large shopping centres in Grodno, the most famous of which are "Old City". The construction of the largest shopping and entertainment complex in the country "Trinity" is underway, where 64.2 thousand sq.m. will be designated for trade and 6.2 thousand sq.m. for catering.

In September 2019, the following retail facilities were used by residents of Grodno region:

- 11.8 thousand commercial facilities with a retail surface of 649.6 thousand square meters, including over 6 thousand shops with a retail surface of 599 thousand square meters;
- 48 markets with 11.4 thousand commercial places;
- 52 shopping centres with 1,240 retail outlets and 25 catering establishments.

The healthcare system of the City of Grodno and Grodno Region is based mainly on public sector units. There are several private medical centres in the City of Grodno and the largest medical facility in the region is Grodno Regional Hospital. In 2019, circa 2,900 doctors, more than 6,000 middle-class medical personnel worked in the health care facilities of the City of Grodno and Grodno District. Over 3,900 beds were available in the hospitals. Despite the high potential of local health care facilities, medical tourism in Grodno area is at an early stage of development. Currently, dental practices and cosmetic services are most popular among foreign tourists.

The tourism potential of the town of Sokolka and the border part of the Sokolka Poviát is much less developed economically than the neighbouring Grodno region. This is mainly due to the smaller number of inhabitants and economic entities in the area. The town of Grodno is similar in size to the town of Białystok, therefore the possibilities of economic development are much greater than those of Sokolka and the neighbouring municipalities.

According to data from the Central Statistical Office in 2019 in Sokolka City 1942 economy entities were registered, of which 1532 were individual persons conducting business activity. Taking into account the type of activity there were 43 entities operating in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing; 455 entities operating in industry and construction; - 1 444 entities conducting other activities. It is also worth noting that among people conducting business activity there are only 50 companies dealing with accommodation and catering services and 35 related to culture, entertainment and recreation. Most of the registered companies operate in wholesale and retail trade, car repair (461 entities), construction (248 entities) and industrial processing (209 entities). In the city of Sokolka there are 10 pharmacies, while in the whole Sokolka County there are 18 pharmacies and pharmacy outlets.

Taking into account the data of the Central Statistical Office from 2019 concerning the whole Sokolka Poviát, it can be stated that there were 4032 registered business entities. The largest number of enterprises are micro enterprises (3857), small enterprises (146), medium-sized enterprises (26) and large enterprises (3). The majority of enterprises operate in wholesale and retail trade (890), construction (593), industrial processing (398), including the production of food and beverages (47) and transportation (298).

When analysing the activities which are directly related to tourist services, it should be pointed out that the accommodation activities are carried out by 33 entities, food service activities (67), activities of tour operators, travel intermediaries and travel agents and other reservation service and related activities (5). In addition, creative cultural and entertainment activities are carried out by 20 entities and sports, entertainment and recreation activities are carried out by 54. There are 2 hospitals with 210 hospital beds, 19 pharmacies and pharmacy points, 6 outpatient clinics, and 12 supermarkets and 9 marketplaces.

3.5 POSSIBILITIES OF CONNECTING THE TYZENHUAZ TRAIL WITH AUGUSTOW VELO, GREEN VELO, BIALOWIEZA VELO AND OTHER CYCLING ROUTES

The Tyzenhauz Cross-border Cycling Trail as a new cross-border tourism product has many opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with other currently existing tourist routes in Poland and Belarus.

One of the leading and top routes is the Green Velo Eastern Bicycle Route. The trail leads through five voivodeships of eastern Poland (Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie, Podkarpackie

and Swietokrzyskie) and is over 2,000 km long. It is the longest, consistently marked cycling trail in Poland. It runs mainly on asphalt public roads with low vehicle traffic intensity, through the area of five voivodeships located in the eastern part of the country. Along the trail there are 228 Cycling Service Facilities equipped with stands, shelters and benches, waste bins and information boards.

Possible variants of connecting the Tyzenhauz Cross-border Cycling Trail with the Green Velo route may be carried out near the town of Suprasl in the Knyszyn Primeval Forest or near Karpiniec in the municipality of Suchowola, in the Biebrza National Park.

Another possibility is to join the newly created Augusto Velo Trail, which is marked out along the Augustow Canal, both on the Polish and Belarusian sides. At the Polish-Belarusian border post in Rudawka/Lesnaja you can cross the border on foot, by bike or in a canoe. It is undoubtedly an interesting, cross-border tourist attraction, which gives further opportunities to develop active tourism in Poland and Belarus.

Both the Green Velo Trail and the Augustow Velo Trail are far away from the planned course of the Tyzenhauz Cross-border Cycling Trail. The connection of the above mentioned routes would have to be made by marking out new, attractive tourist and landscape links between the mentioned routes. An intermediate variant could be to define routes along the Polish-Belarusian border from Sokolka to the north, up to Rudawka through municipal and county roads in Sokolka and Augustowski Poviats. Such a combination could significantly liven up the tourist traffic along the Polish-Belarusian border and would result in the emergence of new players in the area of tourism and surrounding tourism on both sides of the border.

The development of bicycle tourism is very positively perceived in the Grodno region. This idea is actively lobbied by two public organisations at the same time: Republican Tourist and Sports Union (LLC "RTSS") and SOV "VeloGrodno". An important role in promoting cycling is played by the annual cross-border cycling marathon "Susedzi", which takes place regularly on the Augustow Canal. These competitions contribute to the promotion of cycling tourism as an active holiday.

In the future it is planned to connect Belarus, Poland and Lithuania by bicycle routes. In particular, to create the "Bialowieza Velo" route, which will run through three Belarusian districts: Grodno, Beretovitski and Swislocki. That will allow to reach the Bialowieza Forest and

from there - through the "Pererov/Bialowieza" bicycle border checkpoint - to pass to the Polish territory of the Forest. In this way it will be possible to include the Tyzenhauz Cross-border Cycling Trail to the existing "Euro Velo" and "Green Velo" routes on the Polish side. In the future, the network of bicycle routes should run through the territory of both Grodno and Brest regions along the entire border with the Republic of Poland.

Currently from April to October cyclists can cross the Belarusian border at the border checkpoint "Lesnaja-Rudawka". So far, the number of international cyclists is low due to the small number of marked cycling routes and poor promotion of cross-border cycling tourism. In 2018, only 566 cyclists crossed the Belarusian-Polish border checkpoint "Lesnaya-Rudawka". According to specialists from the Grodno City Executive Committee, 917 visa-free tourists entered the checkpoint during the 2019 tourist season. In 2020, a special canal for pedestrians and cyclists is planned to be opened at the Bruzgi/Kuznica border crossing point.

3.6 SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Good communication accessibility of the area in an international and national context.
- The common history and heritage of the region, which stems from the fact that until the mid-twentieth century Sokolka and Grodno developed within the same territorial and administrative units.
- Distinguishing multiculturalism of the region - coexistence and interpenetration of Belarusian, Polish, Lithuanian, Jewish and Tartar traditions.
- Numerous attractive facilities and events related to ethnic and religious diversity of the region, as the nucleus of new concepts of cultural tourism products.
- A unique and interesting historical figure of Tyzenhauz, which may become a hallmark and touristic mark of the area as a tourist destination.
- The marked out Tyzenhauz Trail as a new and still one of the few cross-border tourist trails on the Polish-Belarusian border creates potential for developing new tourist products.
- A large and attractive tourist centre: the city of Grodno with an interesting history, a large concentration of monuments and tourist attractions and a developed tourist offer.
- Attractive conditions for the development of various forms of specialized (natural, cultural) and active (walking, cycling, water, horse riding and skiing) tourism.

- Large potential of Neman and Augustow Canal for the development of water tourism.
- Presence of distinctive and recognizable (flagship) tourist products such as the City of Grodno, Augustow Canal and Tatar Route.
- Good conditions for the development of ecological education and educational tourism based on the offer of Grodno and Knyszyn Primeval Forests.
- Still developing tourist base and infrastructure.
- Well-developed system of tourist trails with the potential of their inclusion in the network of flagship tourist products.
- Active public institutions and non-governmental organizations related to tourist promotion of the area.
- Resilience and adaptability of the tourism sector to changes caused by emergencies.

Weaknesses

- Low tourist recognition of the cross-border area as well as the person of Tyzenhauz itself.
- Lack of a coherent strategy for the development of the region as a tourist destination (including the creation of a thematic tourist products, its clear market positioning and the fight for the target markets).
- Weak potential of the local tourism sector and low level of cooperation and integration in the sector.
- Too ineffective cooperation of local partners interested in developing tourism in the region: Local government - tourism industry - forestry - associations etc.
- Simple and basic character of most tourist services.
- Lack of integral and innovative approach to the area's tourist offer.
- Relatively low quality of tourist services in the context of knowledge of foreign languages and competences of tourist sector employees, diversity of offer, availability and degree of use of electronic systems of tourist information, international certification of tourist facilities and other electronic services.
- Insufficiently developed tourist infrastructure and its uneven saturation on both sides of the border.
- Lack of coherent and integrated information policy, including a common strategy for promotion of the area.
- Lack of coordinated system of handling tourist traffic in the cross-border area.

- Communication accessibility of the area and its tourist attractions in the local layout requiring improvement.
- High level of seasonality of tourist traffic.
- Short tourist season, no offers influencing increase of tourist traffic in low season.
- Lack of characteristic brand tourism products promoting the region.
- Local and not very competitive character of tourist attractions (except flagship ones).
- Too small number of events of national or international character organised in the Project area, especially in Sokolka Poviát.
- Lack of water attractions and modest recreational and sports offer of Sokolka Poviát compared to the Belarusian part of the borderland.
- Short-term character of tourist's stay, lack of leisure offer and longer stay.
- Lack of specialized and in-depth research on tourist traffic and motives of incoming tourists in the cross-border area.
- Too little use of the unique values of cultural environment and ethno-religious diversity of the area in promotion and the offer itself,
- Unprecedentedly strong and difficult to assess and respond the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on the tourism sector.

Opportunities

- Stable economic and political situation in Poland and Belarus.
- Polish membership in the European Union, what establishes the access to EU funding for cross-border projects.
- Cross-border location of the area on the border of Poland, Belarus and Lithuania, constituting a cognitive attraction attracting new tourists and creating conditions for developing new tourism products and cross-border initiatives in the tourism sector.
- Growing interest of tourists from the European Union in visiting countries located directly behind the external borders of the EU, including Eastern Europe.
- Abolition of the visa requirement for foreigners in tourist traffic in the Grodno area (Grodno Visa Free).
- Convenient infrastructure of border crossing points (Rudawka/Lesnaja, Kuznica/Bruzgi, Bobrowniki/Berestowica and planned Lipszczany/Sofijowo).
- Positive forecasts for growth in tourist traffic in Central and Eastern Europe.

- Tourism trends in Europe focused on active tourism, promotion of healthy lifestyle and fashion for active recreation combined with the possibility of improving health.
- Growing cross-border shopping tourism.
- Increased demand for weekend trips.
- European society becoming richer and richer, reflected, among other things, by an increase in the proportion of income allocated for tourism purposes.
- Development of information and communication technologies and e-services dedicated to the tourism sector.
- Possibility of using social media as a tool to promote the area.
- Availability of tourism support and cross-border cooperation under national and foreign assistance programmes.
- Prospects for the development of niche services in response to the changes in tourism demand caused by COVID-19

Threats

- Complicated formal requirements related to the crossing Schengen zone border by non-EU citizens.
- Change of preferences and/or redirection of tourist streams to other tourist destinations.
- Lack of direct connection of the Tyzenhauz Trail with other leading cycling routes in Podlaskie Voivodeship (Green Velo, Augusto Velo, Bialowieza Velo).
- High dependence of tourist offer on weather conditions.
- Transformation of the Augustow Canal into a recreational area for the residents of the Grodno region and gradual displacement of tourists.
- Growing competition from large and self-sufficient suppliers of tourist services on the local market, offering competitive, comprehensive and positioned tourist products related to the stay tourism.
- Making new areas of Belarus available for visa-free tourism.
- Deepening the differences in attractiveness of tourist values and the degree of tourist development between individual administrative units of the area.
- Deterioration of the quality of tourist offer due to low price expectations.
- Loss of price competitiveness of tourism in the border area.
- Insufficient financial resources for implementation of plans related to development of sustainable cross-border tourism.

- Lack of active state policy on supporting cross-border tourism.
- Change of preferences and directions of tourist streams.
- Unclear and unstable legal regulations and bureaucracy - a barrier to the creation and functioning of tourist enterprises.
- Economic crisis affecting the amount of money spent by households on tourism.
- Emergencies restricting tourist traffic.
- The uncertain length of the COVID-19 pandemic (including the possibility of its recurrence).
- Unknown realities and rules of functioning of the sector in the situation of the new normality of po-COVID-19.

3.7 SUMMARY

Summing up the analysis of the tourist tourism potential of the Sokolka and Grodno region, it is to be concluded that it has considerable potential for development in the area of tourism. The multicultural character of the borderland, a large number of green areas, communication accessibility and the curiosity of potential tourists in the eastern European areas create opportunities to introduce new tourist products, including the promotion of the Tyzenhauz Trail. According to the analyses and programming documents on both sides of the border, the demand for active and "green" tourism, healthy eating and learning about new cultures, traditions and monuments is growing. Tourists want to visit lesser-known places, where they will not meet large bunches of people, so they can rest, relax and listen to nature in peace and quiet. They pay more attention to ecology, the way of travelling and sightseeing, the quality of food and the experience of something completely different, unusual. They more often choose small, climatic agritourism accommodation that allows them to escape from large, urban metropolises better than larger hotel facilities. It is precisely these tourists' needs that can be met as part of the commercialisation of the Tyzenhauz Trail, as there are no hotels in Poland and Belarus, except for the town of Grodno itself, but there are rural tourism providers.

Additionally, the trends of "slow life", "slow travel", "slow food" create opportunities for tourism development in underdeveloped and slowly depopulated rural areas on both sides of the border. When choosing the direction of travel, tourists are looking for interesting places that will provide them with many new experiences related to culture, tradition and history. They want to get to know the local community, feel the culinary tastes of the region, immerse

themselves in stories, legends and curiosities that cannot be read in the guidebooks, but only heard from the hosts of agritourism farms.

The Sokolka and Grodno regions fit perfectly with this concept, as they have many still undiscovered places, rich history and tradition of the eastern frontier, as well as hospitality and kindness of the local inhabitants. However, in order for a tourist to learn about the advantages of the Tyzenhauz Trail as a tourist destination, it is necessary to carry out a number of activities which will stimulate and develop the tourism flows in the area.

The challenge, in order to meet the needs and expectations of tourists indicated in the study, will be to strengthen cooperation between the broadly understood tourism industry from Poland and Belarus. It will be necessary to develop common promotional and marketing tools, interest of new persons and entities in activities in the field of tourism and commercialization of cross-border tourism products in the form of programmes, packages and comprehensive tourist offers addressed to specific target groups. Additionally, the awareness and knowledge of the inhabitants of the frontier area should be raised in terms of importance of tourism in the economic development of the area. Only through extensive cooperation and collaboration of various sectors (agriculture, catering, transport, services) it will be possible to introduce "short supply chains" based on local and traditional products. That will make the tourist offer more attractive, attract new tourists to the destination, while for the inhabitants of cross-border areas it will give new opportunities to earn money and improve the quality of life. It will also be necessary to involve young people in the tourist development of the region, as this will, among other things, stop the trend of depopulation of rural areas on both sides of the border. If children and young people are interested in various types of cultural events, activities, meetings, etc., they will be able to participate in the development of tourism in the region. If children and young people are interested in various cultural events, activities, meetings, etc., they will be more willing to participate and help in the tourist development of the region.

4 EXPECTED DIRECTIONS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROGRAMME AREA

4.1 TRENDS IN TOURISM DEMAND AND TOURISM MARKETS DEVELOPMENT

The Marketing Strategy of Poland in the Tourism Sector for 2012-2020 adopted by the Council of the Polish Tourist Organisation on 5.12.2011 identifies the main global trends in tourism demand and supply and the most important economic, socio-political and technological phenomena with their potential consequences. These provisions are largely consistent with the content of the State Programme 'Hospitable Belarus' for 2016-2020, approved by the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus № 232 of 23 March 2016 and the draft Strategy for the Development of Tourism in the Republic of Belarus until 2035. An extract from this analysis is presented below.

TRENDS	CONSEQUENCES FOR TOURISM SECTOR
DEMOGRAPHICAL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ageing population; • Third age (50+), but those who reach it will have better health and greater purchasing power; • Smaller families; • The number of more experienced tourists will grow faster than the overall demand for tourism products; • Population decline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demands on quality, safety and comfort; easy and fast transport; • Individualisation of the needs of people in two age groups, i.e. 55-65 and 65+, and consequently the need to differentiate offers and marketing communication system for these segments; • General increase in demand, especially for trips to distant countries and short stays; increased demand for trips to cities and other short trips abroad after the season; • Increased demand for quieter leisure and leisure facilities • Increased demand for products for single travellers ("singles" and "empty nests"); • Increased demand for luxury and specialised products;
IMPROVING EDUCATION AND SKILLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of events in which art, culture, history and development of spirituality play an important role; • Building a product based on creativity; • Increased demand for specialist products; • Development of "product manager" professions.

HEALTH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing health awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health aspects will be taken into account when choosing the destination and form of spending time; • Active or active holidays will be more popular; • The demand for wellness products will increase;

NEW TECHNOLOGIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased role of information and sales via the Internet; • New forms of visualisation via the Internet • Growing role in communication and information of mobile phone and GPS; • The emergence of Internet communities and their displacement of the importance of traditional promotional portals in marketing communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigation to compare offers and compose trips from available modules and make direct bookings, including low, promotional prices; • Virtualization of trips, presentation of attractions in 3D; • Development of mobile information and booking applications; • The importance of new technologies and GPS will increase in promotion. The role of global Facebook tools may decrease in favour of other new ones; • Necessity of creating portals that accumulate products, offering extended products (e.g. through airlines and travel agencies).

LEISURE TIME	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pressure of everyday life and diverse needs will reduce the travel budgets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheaper trips, shorter trips, with a need for rest; • Giving up one longer holiday for a few shorter ones.

TRANSPORT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-cost airlines will increase their market share, but they will face a horizontal integration process; • Lack of liquidity in traffic; • Development of high-speed trains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short stays close to home, with easy access; • Decrease in the importance of coach companies; • Development of sea voyages; • Travel time will influence the choice of place of destination; • Overbooking.

CLIMATE CHANGE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warming of the climate and occurrence of weather anomalies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in average summer temperatures will cause the "3S" type of

	<p>recreation to move further north;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the coming years, changes in climate conditions in Europe may cause a fundamental change in travel patterns and influence the choice of destinations.
--	---

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental awareness will continue to grow. • The role of investment in sustainable regional development will increase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regional character of the destinations will become more important, the attractiveness of "virgin" areas and regions and the demand for ecotourism and nature-based products will increase; • Tourists will prefer places where the local population is willing to welcome visitors; the quality of service will increase in importance; • A dialogue between partners is essential to promote the harmonious and sustainable development of tourism; the partnership should be a central component of action at all levels (European, national, regional, public and private); • Greater attention should be paid to indicators of density, absorption and capacity; • The role of environmental quality must be enhanced; • Passing on the costs of sustainable development to tourists; • Environmental responsibility can become a competitive advantage for tourism products, particularly on the European market; • Introducing environmental brands.

SAFETY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The persistence and deepening of local crises, terrorism, pollution; • Political disturbances in various regions of the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased security costs; • Critical tourists will report complaints faster if the product offered does not meet standards; • Increase in environmental and environmental complaints; • Requires flexibility for countries and the tourism industry in case of emergencies; • Temporary shifts in demand.

LIFESTYLE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consumers with sophisticated tastes openly express their needs; • Lifestyles in Western society are gradually changing - individual needs are becoming increasingly important; • New consumers from emerging markets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more critical attitude towards quality and value for money; • Alternative ways of spending money and spending time will compete with holiday trips, and different directions and standards of accommodation will compete with each other; • More diverse customer behaviour: "modest holidays this year, luxurious holidays next year, far away this year, close next year"; • The experience will lead to a revisit of attractive places learned in the past ("back to basics"); • Decreased demand for fully organized tours; • Service providers will benefit more if they are able to create completely new products that stand out from others through added value; • Creation of new niche segments in tourism demand.
--	--

MARKETING MANAGEMENT	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of innovation; • Active tourism policy; • Decentralisation; • European Union's subsidiarity policy; • Joint promotion projects (EU, V-4, cross-border). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel agencies should focus on niches and their role as travel experts. The offer will focus on providing support to clients before and during the journey; • There will be many European support programmes such as Calypso (for senior citizens); • Place marketing will become more important; • The importance of marketing at regional and local level will increase and the role of national tourism organisations will be reduced to image building; • Intensification of public-private partnerships; • Further development of vertical and horizontal integration and improvement of destination management, including at regional and local level; • Building brands; • Regions offering a full, diversified and sustainable product will be selected more often and will require better management.

The basic trend on the tourism demand side is contained in formula 3 E - education, entertainment, excitement. New forms of tourism will be developed, such as questing, as well as forms of city sightseeing with the use of thematic games, museum, biographical, study, culinary, folk, literary and film culture, tanatotourism and others.

It is believed that the future motivation for choosing a destination will be the formula:

NOT WHERE, BUT WHY

The current COVID-19 epidemic has had a drastic impact on the tourism sector, as tourism necessarily involves human interaction and the movement of people travelling within their own country and to other countries. The sector has experienced a rapid and sharp drop in demand and a sharp drop in jobs at global level, which is threatening many businesses. Tourist companies were among the first to close down after the introduction of measures to stop the spread of the virus, and tourism activity is one of the last to start again, on a gradual basis. Despite the proven resilience of tourism to other crises, the depth and extent of the current pandemic is likely to have a more lasting impact on international tourism than other industries. Especially in the context of potential long-term changes in the behaviour of people, who will probably be more cautious about travelling abroad in the future.

This means that the business models of tourism companies need to be reformulated, and new solutions need to be implemented for a return to 'new normality'. But it can also stimulate sustainable segments (rural areas, nature, health, niche products/services).

4.2 TOURISTS FLOWS IN THE PROGRAMME AREA

The volume of tourist traffic in the Strategy area is difficult to estimate due to the lack of available and complete statistical data aggregated at the territorial level corresponding to the Strategy area. This situation is additionally hindered by the fact of the cross-border location of the area, and thus the distinctiveness of statistical research systems of Poland and Belarus.

Available information on tourist traffic is heterogeneous, often selective and scattered among different administrators. This is a common situation, because synthetic data on tourism are generated mainly on the national level, less frequently on the regional level, and certainly not on the local level. Therefore the analysis of tourism in the area covered by this Strategy must be

limited to presenting and discussing available data on tourist flows. The key analytical limitations should be taken into account as tourism data are defined and aggregated in different ways and by different categories of entities using individual systematic approaches. In such a situation it is difficult to talk about development trends, but we get a certain - obviously inaccurate - picture of the scale of tourist traffic in the area of the Tyzenhauz Trail.

Characteristics of tourist traffic on the Belarusian side

Despite the significant tourism potential associated with a high concentration of natural and anthropogenic tourism resources, the City of Grodno and the Grodno District as a whole did not play a significant role in the national tourism industry for a long time. In 2010-2015, the number of foreign tourists served by all tourist organizations of Grodno region ranged from 1,226 to 2,888 people, which represented 0.9% to 2.1% of all foreign tourists in the Republic of Belarus.

The situation on the Grodno region international tourism market started to change for the better from 2016 due to the development of visa-free tourism. Since the introduction of visa-free travel, the number of foreign tourists who visited the city of Grodno and Grodno District has increased dramatically. According to data from the Department of Sport and Tourism of the Grodno Oblast Executive Committee, the area was entered under the visa-free regime:

- 2017 - 49,239 persons;
- 2018 - 92,463 persons;
- 2019 - 121 986 persons;
- January 2020 - (before the introduction of quarantine measures related to COVID-19 pandemic) - 5 944 persons.

In 2019, 66 531 persons, including 34432 foreigners, stayed overnight in accommodation facilities in the City of Grodno. In 2018, 65590 and 31834 persons respectively, and in 2016, 60111 persons, including 26096 foreigners. Similarly, the number of persons using sanatorium services is growing, with 9676 persons in 2019, including 3370 foreigners (in 2018 9265 persons in total, including 3229 foreigners, and in 2016 8401, including 2873 foreigners).

According to experts from the World Trade Organization, about 80% of all international tourist travel in the world takes place between neighbouring countries. As far as the visa-free tourism system for the City of Grodno and the Grodno District is concerned, this number reaches 96.7%.

According to the results of 2019 64,0 % of all foreign tourists who have experienced visa-free travel in Grodno District are citizens of Lithuania, 30,7% of Poland and 3.6% of Latvia.

The generator of the visa-free tourist traffic is the well-known since the end of the 19th century Lithuanian city of Druskininkai - the centre of spa and sanatorium recreation. Guests of Lithuanian spas visit Grodno as part of one-day excursions, with the program including sightseeing, meals and free time for shopping. In January 2020, one-day trips accounted for 35,12 % of all tourist arrivals under the visa-free travel regime.

Polish tourists, especially young ones, are more likely to stay in Grodno for 2-3 days or order coach trips for 2-3 days in the "Land of the Old Republic". They are more and more often interested in active recreation, but little interest in shopping in Belarus.

Rapid development of visa-free tourism has led to the fact that until today Grodno region has not solved old problems related to organization of visa-free tourism (in organized groups) and increase of Russian tourists. In particular, in 2018 the number of all foreign tourists who visited the Grodno region was 94 820. At the same time the number of foreigners who visited the Grodno region under the visa-free regime was 92 463. Thus, the number of foreign tourists who visited the Grodno region on the basis of a tourist visa was only 2,357, which is fully responsible for the data for 2012-2015.

At the same time, the introduction of visa-free tourism enabled the Grodno region to make a real breakthrough in tourism development. In 2019 Grodno region was visited by 121 986 foreign tourists, accounting for 30,1 % percent of all foreign tourists in Belarus. By comparison, in 2015, the rate did not exceed 2%. This success was achieved only thanks to the fact that the city of Grodno and Grodno Oblast were included in the 'Grodno Visa Free' tourist zone. In 2019 almost 25% of foreign tourists visited the Grodno region in July and August - about 14 thousand people per month.

Most of the tourist streams are now concentrated in Grodno, which is visited by all foreign tourists, including those from Lithuania, Poland and Russia. A visit to the Augustow Canal is seasonal (from May to September) and is much less frequent than a visit to Grodno. There is little tourist traffic in the towns of Poretchye and Ozerny, which is associated with the location of the well-known sanatoriums "Poretchye" and "Ozerny" in Belarus and Russia.

Characteristics of tourist traffic on the Polish side

Characterizing the group of potential tourists of the Tyzenhauz Trail, it should be differentiated according to the purpose and form of travel and the specific needs and expectations of customers.

Tourists visiting the Sokolka Poviát most often choose tourist facilities far from the cities, located in the direct vicinity of nature. While travelling, they visit places of cultural and religious heritage, and try the delicacies of borderland cuisine, especially Tartar, Belarusian and Podlaskie. They expect silence, tranquillity, relaxation in the bosom of nature, and learning about the traditions and culture of the Polish-Belarusian borderland.

There are two dominating areas in Sokolka Poviát, especially visited by tourists from Poland and abroad: the upper pool of the Biebrza River which is part of the Biebrza National Park and the Knyszynska Forest Landscape Park. Both places are very popular among citizens of European countries such as: Germany, the Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Spain, Lithuania and Belarus. They are attracted by intact nature, which can be admired all year round. It is precisely the element of nature and the possibility of viewing it that is the most desirable value chosen by foreigners. As a result, the tourist traffic in Podlaskie Voivodeship is significantly lengthened, as the best birdwatching times are outside the summer season, especially in early spring and late autumn, when birds (geese, cranes) travel from and to warm countries, stopping in crowds on marshes, swamps and fields. However, during the winter, tourists are very eager to go to the vicinity of Krynki and Knyszynska Forest to see huge flocks of bison, even over 100 specimens. It is similar with other forest mammals, such as deer, elk, which in winter look for food on cultivated fields. By keeping the right distance, being cautious and knowing their places of residence you can meet these wild animals with your own eyes.

Another element that affects the tourist traffic in Sokolka Poviát is its location along major national and international roads. Tourists from Scandinavia or the Baltic countries very often travel in campers or motorcycles, where the main destination is southern European countries. However, when passing through Podlaskie Voivodeship, they often stop for 2 - 3 days to sightsee, do some shopping or get fit for the further journey. This is an opportunity for new and little-known tourist destinations to better promote themselves, to provide specific information on tourist and surrounding offers, as well as the opportunity to visit Belarus, as the trip outside Schengen zone is something exotic and interesting among EU citizens.

Turning to the characteristics of domestic tourist traffic, it's worth mentioning that the Sokolka Poviát was most often visited by residents of the Mazovian, Podlaskie, Pomeranian, Silesian and Wielkopolskie provinces. The most important motivation for tourists coming to Sokolka region is to perceive it as a place of extraordinary and intact nature, where you can come across a mosaic of many cultures, religions and nationalities. A large number of tourists visiting the Tourist Information Points in Podlaskie Voivodeship asked questions about visa-free traffic to Grodno and the Green Velo Eastern Route. It is clear that these two tourist attractions are well recognized by tourists from Poland.

According to public statistical data, in 2019, entities providing accommodation services provided 1989 overnight stays to foreign tourists (non-residents). The largest number of overnight stays were taken by citizens of Belarus - 741, Ukraine - 538, Lithuania - 168, Russia - 106 and Germany - 66.

Narrowing the analysis, the main group of tourists visiting the city of Sokolka, which are pilgrims and people visiting places of religious worship, should be distinguished. These tourists visit the Collegiate Church of St. Anthony in an organized way. These are usually one or two-day coach trips from Poland and abroad. Tourists are attracted by church events and religious aspects. In addition, they also visit the Mosques in Bohoniki and Kruszyniany, which are also the main points of most tourist and pilgrimage programmes.

According to data for 2019, the Tourist Information Point in Sokolka itself was visited by 248 people, while in 2018 there were 198 people and in 2017. 193. Most tourists visited Sokolka in July and August and in May and June. It is also worth noting the data concerning the visitors to the Sokolka Land Museum, which in 2019 was visited by the Museum of Sokolka. was visited by 4758 people in 2019. These were mainly organised groups - 59, including 21 groups of children and youth. Individual tourists who visited the museum were 1149 people, including 29 foreign tourists.

In a survey conducted in March 2020, as part of the work on this Strategy, addressed to Polish respondents (mainly from the Sokólszczyzna region), information was obtained which defined the preferences of tourists and opinions of representatives of the tourism sector in the context of the possibilities of development of the Tyzenhauz Trail in the Sokolka region. The analysis below takes into account the most important conclusions and the most frequent answers to the questions asked in the survey.

The vast majority of the respondents (97%) considered that the development of tourism in the cross-border area of Poland and Belarus is an opportunity to improve living conditions of its inhabitants. At the same time, it was pointed out that the possibilities of conducting and developing tourism activities in the cross-border area of Poland and Belarus are at a favourable and sufficiently favourable level, within the framework of activities planned in the strategy and project.

In the next question, the vast majority of the answers provided concerned specific measures, such as expanding the accommodation and catering facilities, carrying out more effective, efficient promotion of the region and local culture, as well as creating a symbol of the region's recognisability which will serve to achieve the goal and make the tourist offer of the cross-border area of Poland and Belarus more attractive.

However, in order for these objectives to be achieved, it is necessary to ensure and increase the level of cooperation and collaboration of the tourist industry on both sides of the border. The respondents pointed out that the Sokólszczyzna tourism industry is willing to cooperate and cooperate, but it encounters many formal, legal and organisational obstacles to the joint development of tourism in the region, which should undoubtedly be an element of further actions and strengthening of tourism economy in the area in the future. A positive link of the local community involved in the development of tourism may be the production and sale of local products/services within short supply chains. Local businesses on both sides of the border consider that the development of local products and their commercialisation would increase the attractiveness of the tourist offer of cross-border areas. The recommended and applicable sales activities identified in the study could be: selling local products directly at the place of production, sales at fairs, markets, exhibitions etc., as well as sales via the Internet.

The next questions within the framework of the survey concerned tourist traffic and the needs and expectations of potential tourists. The respondents indicated that the cross-border region of Poland and Belarus is most characterised by the diversity of cultures and customs, traditional cuisine and the peace and quiet of the area. However, it was also noted that the tourist infrastructure of the cross-border region of Poland and Belarus is mostly underdeveloped. In addition, they stated that the region's tourist offer is mostly difficult to access, as there are few offers and advertisements that would make it easier to find interesting tourist facilities and/or

attractions. The respondents stressed that they have to spend a lot of time to find an interesting offer, compared to other tourist destinations in Poland.

The last questions in the survey concerned the preferences and tastes of potential tourists choosing the tourist offer of the Polish-Belarusian borderland. The analysis of the answers shows that when selecting the offers, the tourists are mainly guided by the form and characteristics of the accommodation, possibilities of active leisure and the price for the services offered. The most common form of spending time, when using the tourist offer, is to stay in the place of accommodation and at the same time use the surrounding tourist attractions. In addition, when using the tourist offer, tourists also purchase traditional local products and local services available only in the region. They most often pointed to such products/services as: food products, souvenirs and tourist publications, services provided at the place of rest (e.g. guide, cultural, equipment rental, recreational). It is worth noting that some respondents would definitely be more willing to buy local products and services if they were more promoted and available in the region and on the Internet.

To sum up, taking into account the answers given by the respondents, it should be stated that the cross-border area of Poland and Belarus, namely Sokólszczyzna and Grodno region has great opportunities to develop various tourist products, both cultural, culinary and active. The geographical location, natural, historical and cultural values allow to create interesting and original tourist offers, which can attract crowds of tourists from Poland, Belarus and Europe. However, in order to achieve this, it is necessary to take care of the quality, comprehensiveness and standard of offered tourist and surrounding services, because a tourist is quite picky nowadays and having the whole world at his or her fingertips, he or she should receive something unique and "exotic" to choose the Tyzenhauz Trail as their next tourist destination.

Cross-border passenger traffic

The information on border traffic is based on data collected by the Podlaskie Border Guard Division, which publishes such data for each of the Polish-Belarusian border crossing points on a monthly basis. Data on the following border crossings related to the area of analysis were analysed:

- Kuznica – railway border post,
- Kuznica/Bruzgi – road border post,
- Bobrowniki/Brzostowica – road border post,

- Rudawka/Lesnaja water/cycling/pedestrian border post.

The table below shows personal border traffic at the above-mentioned crossings.

Border post	Country of origin	Direction	2010	2012	2014	2016	2017
Kuznica railway	to Poland	94343	166817	59561	12108	30020	36810
	from Poland	60376	88123	52751	12617	31641	36834
Kuźnica	to Poland	1056601	1135150	1296621	1151793	1344574	1292511
	from Poland	1080041	1165559	1314742	1211258	1195905	1361197
Bobrowniki	to Poland	546743	744448	721201	643263	737259	728847
	from Poland	663000	902807	742914	1171151	779997	777836
Rudawka	to Poland	68	175	53	105	1640	1537
	from Poland	198	188	118	166	1769	1612
Total	to Poland	1697755	2046590	2077436	1807269	2113493	2059705
	from Poland	1803615	2156677	2110525	2395192	2009312	2177479

As it can be seen from the table above, the passenger traffic has remained stable in recent years. The highest is at the Kuznica/Bruzgi road crossing and the smallest, of course, at the Rudawka/Lesnaja river crossing.

4.3 SEGMENTATION OF THE AREA'S TOURISM MARKETS

In the area of the study, several segments of the tourism market can be identified which already create benefits, or, if properly managed, can bring significant benefits to local communities. The dominant role play:

- active and specialised tourism,
- spa and health tourism,
- nature and sightseeing tourism
- rural tourism, agritourism,
- school and didactic tourism,
- family tourism - weekend
- cultural and participatory tourism,
- business tourism.

Active and specialist tourism - refers to people for whom an important element of the trip is to undertake a particular type of recreational or hobby activity. It is based on the natural and landscape values of the area, as well as its cultural heritage. The area of the Strategy has the potential to be attractive for people who value active leisure in various forms such as: hiking,

cycling or trace skiing. Within this segment, the most popular in the area are: in summer - hiking, cycling and horse riding, in winter - trail skiing and sleigh rides. It is a year-round customer. These people willingly participate in sports competitions, events, they also use the catering offer. This type of tourism is popular mainly among young, educated people, although the age criterion is not the most important.

Motives and style of travel

- Realisation of interests (very often they are passionate about it)
- Escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life
- Contact with nature - relaxation
- Going out with a group of friends
- Willingness to participate in sports competitions
- Key importance for them is the available tourist and, to a greater extent, para-touristic infrastructure - trails, equipment rentals, sports facilities, as well as interesting surroundings - natural and cultural values of the area.
- The passion for active recreation

"Weekend tourists" - (average stay of 2 - 4 days) - young and middle-aged individuals and families with a profile of 2+, travelling at weekends, especially "long" ones (Polish specificity). Tourists looking for opportunities to spend time in an interesting way. Interested in rest, recreation, entertainment and fun. This is a segment with very high development potential. However, to develop it, it requires an interesting offer of events and attractions as well as a cheap catering and accommodation base. In the surveyed area, present in a very small number, hence the created tourist product should take into account the needs and motives of this group of customers. The key element of the offer should be "all inclusive" packages.

Motives and style of travel

- Rest - contact with nature
- Going out with your friends
- Entertainment that exploits the uniqueness of the place
- Getting to know the culture, history, participating in events, resting in an interesting place

"Rural tourism, agritourism and ecotourism" - people using the accommodation and catering facilities in the countryside, focused on a healthy lifestyle, seeking peace and quiet. This applies both to people choosing agritourism accommodation, i.e. accommodation in functioning farms, and accommodation in rural dwellings. Ecotourism is of particular importance for the studied area, because in this respect a great development potential is observed in the discussed area. It is also an evolving niche in the context of changes in the tourism market caused by the COVID-19 epidemic. Potential tourists from this group are seeking to choose what they call: micro-trips. Local hikes are expeditions that do not require time, money, equipment or training. They are "pocket trips", designed to meet people's needs on a permanent basis, allowing them to escape from the city, recharge their batteries and experience adventures in a few days or a weekend.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version)

Motives and style of travel

- They value natural qualities, they seek peace and quiet, contact with the environment.
- Opportunity to spend time on the farm (education of children)
- The opportunity to meet and get to know people
- Rest in a clean environment

"Nature and side seeing tourism" - individuals travelling in Poland and abroad. This group is interested in the cognitive values of the area and these are mainly natural, to a lesser extent cultural values. In order to encourage them to come, it is necessary to have good cuisine, appropriate accommodation and easy access to interesting plants, rare animals and interesting forms of animated and inanimate nature. A very important role is played by the availability of tourist trails and information presenting the natural wealth of the area.

Motives and style of travel

- They value natural qualities, they seek peace, quiet and contact with the environment.
- Availability of hiking trails, maps and information about natural curiosities of the area
- The opportunity to meet and get to know people
- Entertainment that exploits the uniqueness of the place
- Unique natural values, sightseeing, nature paths, monuments and nature reserves, landscape parks

"Children and youth - educational, recreational and active tourism" - organized groups of children and youth. Educational visits based on the unique natural and educational values of the area, as well as anthropogenic - monuments of material culture and the existing sports and recreation offer (equipment rentals, swimming pools, pitches, etc.).

Motives and style of travel

- Educational and cognitive motives (culture, geography, natural sciences, history)
- Implementation of the school curriculum (green schools)
- The willingness to relax and to be in contact with nature

"Cultural and participatory tourism" - these are people of all ages, with a predominance of young people, who are characterized by an innovative way of getting to know the country and abroad - through active participation in cultural or entertainment events. They are very often people with higher education and school children. It is a formula that includes organized and individual trips to visit museums, historical and cultural sites and participate in cultural events. The group also includes people with interests related to the history, culture and ethnography of the area. They are also participants of sports events and their viewers and observers.

Motives and style of travel

- Realisation of interests
- Cultural, historical, ethnographic education
- Participation in events
- The search for unconventional forms of entertainment
- The opportunity to develop your passions, talents
- Spending time

"Hobbyists" - people of various ages, a group of amateurs and professionals, people interested in developing their interests, connected mainly with natural values or the history of the area.

Motives and style of travel

- Fulfilling interests that require appropriate facilities and infrastructure
- Interestingly organized events for groups with special interests
- Searching for unconventional forms of spending time
- Meeting people with similar interests

- Access to places to spend time actively, according to your interests

Business tourists - people visiting the area in connection with their professional activity. Participants of conferences, trainings, business meetings, collective events and motivation meetings. Costs incurred by institutions and enterprises. Stays of 2 - 3 days. Participants often do not even leave their accommodation, which is mainly hotels *** and ****, which they use during their stay. They carry out the trip program purchased by the organizer. This is still a growing segment, but it is limited to the offer presented by the hotel.

Motives and style of travel

- Performance of official duties
- Want to visit interesting places at the employer's expense
- The search for entertainment
- Meeting people with similar interests
- Integration of a team or group of colleagues
- The desire to impress others

The process of analysing the profiles of tourist groups and the state of tourist development of the area has led to the selection of target market segments corresponding to the current and planned tourist attractiveness of the area. In the course of works on defining the segments, their importance for tourism economy and potential growth was also assessed. On the basis of qualitative assessment of market situation a list of target segments was established according to their economic importance, possibilities of development of the offer and use of tourist values of the area. Market segments defined in this way constitute a starting point for creating a promotion and marketing communication strategy, as different market communication tools should be used for each group of consumers.

4.4 ASSESSMENT THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE TARGET SEGMENTS

Tourist products can be grouped, classified and arranged in many ways and according to various criteria. For the purpose of this study the following terminology and classification of tourism products has been adopted:

- **Urban and cultural tourism** - includes organized and individual trips to visit cities, museums, historic (historical and cultural) sites and participate in cultural events. A form of participation in cultural tourism is also religious and pilgrimage tourism. Forms:

- sightseeing of cities with a high concentration of cultural attractions (city break), short group and individual stays as part of a tour, participation in cultural, sporting and other events, sentimental and ethnic trips, visits to post-industrial and post-military facilities.
- **Business tourism - MICE** (acronym for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions/Events) - includes trips related to professional activities: congresses, fairs and exhibitions, business meetings, collective events and incentive meetings. Costs incurred by institutions and companies. Forms: congresses, conferences, seminars, incentive trips, fairs and exhibitions (participants and visitors), individual stays of business guests.
 - **Recreational, active and specialized tourism** - is carried out in order to regenerate physical and mental forces, takes into account a wide range of recreation with the use of the natural environment (mountains, lakes, rivers, coasts), as well as specialized tourism events (the so-called qualified tourism), taking into account all types of specialized interests. It also includes leisure and/or therapeutic trips to spas using natural healing conditions, so-called health tourism.
 - **Tourism in rural areas** - includes all forms of tourism activity in rural areas, including farm stays, folklore events, folk crafts, traditional life in farms. Agritourism, ecotourism, visiting national parks, reserves.
 - **Cross-border and transit tourism** - including one-day cross-border tourism and short visits to do shopping, take part in events, addressed to people staying in the 50 km long border area, and offers related to transit traffic. It is, however, a product that is not always branded, but is to be a priority in the area of the study and be its market differentiator. In total, all products discussed later in the study are intended to have a cross-border character and/or impact. And it is this cross-border specificity that constitutes the clouds of the tourist offer of the area.

Within the above product groups of tourism products were distinguished, for which accessibility, importance and importance for tourism development were determined, according to the scheme below:

- XXX - priority products
- XX - basic products
- X - secondary products
- O - no products in the group

Types of tourism	Cross-border Tourist Area of the Tyzenhauz Trail			
	Poland		Belarus	
	City of Sokolka	Sokolka Poviát	City of Grodno	Grodno District
MICE, incl.:				
Conferences and seminars	X	X	XXX	X
Business travel	X	X	X	X
Urban and cultural tourism, including				
Cultural events and events	XXX	XX	XXX	XX
Sightseeing and staying in the city	XX	X	XX	X
Pilgrimages	X	X	X	O
Ethnic, cultural and sentimental journeys	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Transit and border tourism	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
One-day visits	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Group tours	XX	XX	XX	XX
Tourism in rural areas, including:				
Agritourism	O	XXX	O	XXX
Ecotourism	X	XXX	X	XXX
Active and specialized tourism, including:				
Hiking	XX	XXX	XXX	XX
Bicycle tourism	XXX	XXX	XXX	XX
Canoeing tourism	X	O	XX	XXX
Horse tourism	O	XX	O	X
Sailing tourism	X	O	O	XX
Winter sports (cross-country skiing, snowshoes, skating)	X	XX	X	XX
Holiday tourism, including:				
Stays in natural areas	O	XX	O	XX
Hiking	XX	XX	XX	XX
Waterside stays	XX	O	O	XX

4.5 NEW TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES IN THE PROJECT AREA

Tourist information is an essential component of tourist promotion system. The list of its addressees goes far beyond tourists and visitors to a certain area. Tourist information is not only a collection of necessary data, but should create a system in which the basic scope of information, the mode of searching, collecting, updating and sharing are subject to commonly accepted standards. Modern tourist information systems are based on three basic groups of data:

- information on tourist assets (attractions),
- information on tourist facilities and services,
- information on available tourism products (service packages).

The POLISH TOURISM INFORMATION SYSTEM developed by the Polish Tourist Organisation distinguishes the following organisational forms of tourist information distribution at the local level:

- centres: regional and local tourist information centres,
- tourist information points, which may be permanent, seasonal or occasional,
- self-service information points.

In the area covered by this Strategy there are several institutions which offer tourist information services in accordance with their formal objectives:

- The Tourist Information Centre located at Eliza Orzeszkowa Street in Grodno,
- Sopockin Cultural and Tourist Centre in Sopockin,
- Tourist Information Point at the Sokolka Land Museum in Sokolka,
- The Three Cultures Center in Suchowola.

Of course, some fragmentary tourist information in its material version is also available from tour operators, providers of hotel and catering services, or in institutions and facilities of tourism infrastructure such as national parks, local authorities, cultural institutions, etc. Similarly to analogue data sources, also digital tourist information resources are dispersed, incomplete, profiled and fragmented. There is no integrated, coherent and, above all, comprehensive system of tourist information for the Strategy area, which has a direct impact on its low recognition, knowledge and preferences of tourists, which significantly reduces its attractiveness as a tourist destination.

Within the framework of the Project PLBU.01/ 0368/16, support for the tourist information system has been provided by establishing and equipping the Tourist Information Point in Sokolka (together with an info-kiosk), which will be located in a historic tenement house renovated within the framework of the project. The Tourist Information Centre in Grodno will also be supported in order to provide comprehensive services to tourists and promote potential on both sides of the border.

4.6 POSSIBILITIES AND DIRECTIONS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN TOURIST CENTRES IN GRODNO AND SOKOLKA

It is desirable that the institutional system of tourist information in the Cross-Border Tourism Area Tyzenhauz Trail should be based on two pillars:

- The Tourist Information Centre located at Eliza Orzeszkowa Street in Grodno,
- Tourist Information Point in Sokolka.

These institutions would cover the national parts of the Strategy area where they would perform leading and coordinating functions for the tourist information system. Their areas of cooperation should include:

- aggregating, processing and providing comprehensive tourist information covering the area of the Sokolka Poviát, City of Grodno and the Grodno District,
- permanent and systematic promotion of touristic, cultural and historical values of the area of the Tyzenhauz Trail,
- cooperation with national institutions and tourist information and promotion networks and foreign partners,
- cooperation with local, national and foreign media, cooperation with authors and publishers of analogue and digital publications in promoting the area,
- preparation of publications in the field of tourism, culture, sport and recreation for own use,
- participation in the creation and content filling of external digital tourism information and promotion systems,
- cooperation with local authorities in the field of tourist information and promotion,

- maintaining permanent cooperation with travel agencies, tourist organizations, cultural institutions and other non-governmental organizations in the field of creating and promoting tourist products of the area,
- cooperation with universities, in particular those with a tourist profile,
- permanent tourist advice and intermediary services,
- acquisition and distribution of tourist publications, regional souvenirs, gadgets,
- stimulating and encouraging cooperation between tourism industry entities and producers of local products from the Sokolka Poviast and Grodno region, inter alia by introducing cross-border baskets of local products and short supply chains between industries;
- initiating trainings and courses aimed at improving the qualifications of tourism sector staff,
- supporting and co-organising tourist events and competitions,
- design, implementation, management and development of a dedicated tourist portal and its integration with available information bases and local portals,
- designing and introducing interesting, original and comprehensive tourist packages that would show the uniqueness, diversity of attractions and advantages of the cross-border area
- research on the level of satisfaction of recipients of services provided by the tourist information system.

Appropriate programming and support for their future activities and the definition of principles and forms of cooperation would contribute positively to:

- integration of the tourist information system in the area of the Tyzenhauz Trail- linking together, integration of tourist information available from various sources, implementation of a system for updating databases, improvement of system management,
- technical improvement of the accessibility of the tourist information system from different places and through different channels,
- better adapt the information and the way it is conveyed to the expectations of particular target groups, including people with disabilities.

As part of the development of an integrated digital environment for the development of cross-border tourism, the Tourist Information Centres in Grodno and Sokolka will promote:

- active implementation of solutions in the field of electronic document management among entities of the tourism sector,
- introduction of modern solutions in the field of information and communication technologies on tourist trails as well as historical, cultural and ecological tourism facilities,
- creating multilingual information services to assist in selecting tourist destinations,
- Development of an integrated information platform containing complete and up-to-date information on the actors and facilities of the tourism industry on both sides of the border,
- implementation of an electronic guest tourist card.

4.7 COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TYZENHAUZ TOWNHOUSES IN GRODNO AND SOKOLKA. CONCEPTS OF USING TENEMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.

One of the activities carried out within the Project PLBU.01/ 0368/16 „Tyzenhauz Trail- creation of a tourist route to promote cultural and historical heritage of two cities: Sokolka and Grodno" is renovation of the historic townhouses in Sokolka and Grodno and equipping them for cultural purposes.

On the Polish side, there is planned a renovation of a historic nineteenth-century tenement house at Pilsudski Street in Sokolka, located on the frontage of the market square in the 17th/18th century urban layout. The renovated building will host an exhibition and conference room, educational and handicraft workshops, a room devoted to person of Tyzenhauz and its times and administrative rooms with the Tourist Information Point.

On the Belarusian side, the project includes renovation of the building on Tyzenhauz Square in Grodno with the purpose of creation of so-called Tyzenhauz Gallery - a multifunctional building with representation – conference room, exhibition and concert halls and administrative rooms.

As a result of the project, 2 new multifunctional facilities will be opened to the public, which should become flagship points on the Tyzenhauz Trail, not only as places to visit but also as centres for incubation, promotion and implementation of cultural and educational events with a cross-border dimension. The tenement houses should also act as centres for intercultural dialogue, highlighting the importance of the contribution of different cultures and expressions of national, ethnic and religious diversity to the heritage and way of life the frontier area.

It is necessary to develop a common cultural programme and calendar of events promoting the cultural wealth of the Polish-Belarusian borderland. The horizontal priority of cooperation between the two tenement houses should be to build a tourist brand of the area based on the historical figure and heritage of Tyzenhauz by promoting the heritage of the borderland, initiating and co-creating tourist products and cooperation in the field of cultural education.

The concept of cooperation between the two tenement houses should include:

- activities in the field of cultural education;
- organization of various artistic, cultural, entertainment and occasional events of local, national and international character;
- exhibition activities;
- organization of permanent and temporary exhibitions,
- organizing meetings, conferences;
- conducting information and promotion activities in the field of heritage and tourist offer of the borderland;
- creating conditions for the development of artistic handicraft;
- initiating and carrying out projects in the field of art and culture;
- cooperation with institutions, self-government entities and non-governmental organisations;
- collecting, developing, storing and making available monuments,
- conducting various forms of publishing activity;
- adding a cross-border dimension to cultural events;
- preparation of cultural events that will become the destination of tourist arrivals;
- preparation of cultural events taking place outside the strict tourist season in order to extend the season;
- creating a year-round weekend cultural offer for tourists;
- facilitating the exchange of good practices, developing cooperation networks and discussion platforms.

The institutional cooperation of both tenement houses can have a positive impact:

- development of forms and attractive ways of information, cultural promotion and dissemination of important cultural content,
- promotion and implementation of modern cultural tourism management techniques.

4.8 SUMMARY

In the summary of this chapter it should be stated that the Tyzenhauz Trail area has the potential to become an interesting, accessible and active cross-border tourist destination in the Polish-Belarusian frontier area.

First factor is the geographical location of Sokolka Poviát and Grodno District. The area is located in the Green Lungs of Europe zone, one of the most forested places on the European continent. Such a privilege is worth to take advantage of it. It can be facilitated by current global trends and great interest in ecology, including ecotourism. Tourists all over the world, and especially from Europe, are looking for new, unusual and safe places to learn about a local culture, history and nature. Therefore, when creating tourism products, the target profile of the ideal, desired tourist should be defined, so that it corresponds to the specificity of the region and the possibilities and scope of services provided by entities from the tourism industry.

The next factor is the form, scope and quality of tourist services. The area of the Strategy has two different legal, administrative and language systems. It causes the additional activities and procedures related to border crossing, however, much simpler than in other neighbouring countries in the Schengen zone. Currently operating border procedures of Poland and Belarus provide opportunities for cooperation and tourist exchange between the neighbouring countries. However, in order to take advantage of this opportunity, it is necessary to improve the quality and scope of offered tourist services on both sides of the border.

It may be helpful to define certain standards related to tourist service on the Tyzenhauz Trail. This task is primarily the responsibility of the tourism industry, however, public institutions can provide significant support and help in the implementation of a specific project. Creating a common system of quality, service and verification of tourist traffic would give a concrete answer about the tourist potential of the borderland. Increased tourist traffic will allow opening new business entities and activating local, mostly rural communities. An excellent solution is a "short supply chain" between local producers and the tourism industry. The possibility of offering cross-border tourists local products in the form of a basket can contribute to the economic development of border areas and stimulate entrepreneurship.

Finally, it is worth to refer to the possibility of connecting the Tyzenhauz Trail with other tourist routes in Poland and Belarus. The most important and natural connection is the cooperation with the Augustow Velo trail, which runs along the Neman River and the Augustow Canal. It is a trail in the field of active, natural and family tourism, which attracts new tourists every year. Moreover, the Augustow Velo trail is connected with the Green Velo bicycle trail, which gives further opportunities to attract active tourists from Poland and abroad.

In future activities, projects and initiatives partners from Poland and Belarus, who are interested in cooperation in the field of cross-border tourism and tourism-related services, should systematically build the brand of the Tyzenhauz Trail, by means of unified and conforming to European standards of tourist services, partnership promotion and marketing of the trail's values and pro-development activities, involving an even wider group of suppliers of tourist offers from Poland and Belarus.

5 OBJECTIVES AND DIRECTIONS OF CROSS-BORDER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The starting point for the process of planning the development of tourism in the cross-border area was the use of authentic features, which have their origin in the unique characteristics of tourist values and traditions of the border area. The main pole of growth for the development of tourism in the area covered by the Strategy is precisely the long-term impact of the effects of Project PLBU.01.01.00-20-0368/17-02 *"Tyzenhauz Trail - creation of a tourist route to promote cultural and historical heritage of two cities: Sokolka and Grodno"*. The tangible and intangible effects of the Project have a chance to become a catalyst for positive changes and development trends in the cross-border tourism sector along and around the Tyzenhauz Trail.

This Strategy sets the conditions for the creation of a branded territorial product for a functional area linked to the unique cross-border tourism product - the Tyzenhauz Route - developed under the Project. The concept of the Cross-Border Tyzenhauz Trail Functional Area treats its territory as an integral subject, as an original, exceptional, unique package of goods and services. It includes elements such as: natural and anthropogenic values, infrastructure and services of the destination as well as its availability, image and price paid by the consumer. In the near future, integrated tourist areas in this sense will form the basis of global tourism development.

The strategy assumes increasing the tourist attractiveness of the Polish-Belarusian border region by, among other things, using the locally dispersed potential, combining/packaging tourist offers, binding and merging elements of tourist infrastructure and integrating activities in the field of promotion and development of branded tourist products. The strategic and operational objectives, both at the stage of their definition and implementation, take into account the horizontal principles of sustainable development, non-discrimination and equal treatment of all social groups, including accessibility of adopted solutions for people with disabilities.

The logic of the Strategy's intervention is based on forms of active, cultural and specialized tourism, supported by the potential of historical, cultural and ethnic values of the Sokolka region in Poland and the Grodno region in Belarus.

5.1 INTERVENTION LOGIC

Vision

Cross-border Tourist Area "Tyzenhauz Trail" is a well-known and popular area of developed and sustainable tourism, based on the unique natural, historic, cultural and national values of the Polish-Belarusian borderland and attractive infrastructure and a wide range tourist offer.

Mission

The cross-border tourist area "Tyzenhauz Trail" with its competitive offer of tourist products, the hospitality of its inhabitants, high quality services and cooperation of within the tourist sector of the border area provides conditions for comfortable rest and active leisure on both sides of the border and growth of cross-border tourist streams.

Strategic objective

The strategic objective of the development of tourism in the "Tyzenhauz Trail" Cross-Border Tourism Area is to increase the number and extend the stay of tourists by developing existing and introducing new tourism products with cross-border impact based on the heritage of the border area.

Operational objectives

Operational objective 1:

Development of cross-border tourism and tourism-related infrastructure based on the border region's heritage resources

Operational objective 2:

Creation, maintenance and development of cross-border tourism products and services

Operational objective 3:

Development of tourism information and promotion

Operational objective 4:

Effective management, institution building and cooperation in cross-border tourism

Priority directions for action:

Development of tourism infrastructure

- Development of cultural tourism assets (renovation, adaptation and revitalization of resources and creation and making new tourist attractions available).
- Development of active tourism assets (development of the offer through construction of new and extension and modernisation of existing facilities and infrastructure of active tourism).
- Development of natural tourism resources (creation, making available, marking and protection of natural tourism objects and infrastructure).
- Development of rural tourism assets (improvement of the rural tourism offer in qualitative and quantitative dimension).
- Infrastructural preparation of tourist facilities and attractions (transport accessibility, parking places, bus stops, resting places, sanitary infrastructure, information points, hot-spots etc.).
- Development of hotel and catering infrastructure (increase in quality, quantity and diversity of offered accommodation and catering services).
- Development of tourism infrastructure (coherent system of marking tourist trails, cooperation of tourist information centres, development and provision of facilities related to leisure industries).
- Support for tourist investments under revitalisation, urban and rural development programmes.

Development of competitive tourist products and services.

- Inclusion of the Tyzenhauz Trail into national and international tourist route networks.
- Incorporation of the Tyzenhauz Trail into one large Polish-Belarusian-Lithuanian borderland route (Great Eastern Tyzenhauz Route)
- Creation of distinctive cultural tourism routes (religious, sentimental, historical) in the region.
- Cooperation of public, social and private sectors on the tourism level
- Creation of integrated packages of tourist services combining several services and types of tourism based on segmentation of clients
- Development of tourist services that contribute to reducing the seasonality factor
- Creating and attracting cultural, entertainment and sports events of a supra-local range

- Creation of joint cross-border events in the calendar of events on both sides of the border
- Development of the medical and spa tourism services sector.
- Adaptation of key tourist reception areas to the needs of tourism traffic.
- Development and implementation of certification and management systems in the tourism economy sector.
- Using information and communication technologies in promotion and distribution of tourist products.
- Development and integration of tourist content in public and digital space.
- Introduction of new technology solutions to tourist area management.
- Promotion and dissemination of innovations in tourism and tourist services.
- Conducting research on tourist traffic and analysis of the received tourist profiles in order to create new and improve current tourist products.
- Building a system of commercialization of tourist products.

Tourist information and promotion

- Development of standards for joint promotion and tourist information for the needs of tourist movement.
- Creation of an integrated system of tourist information in the Internet.
- Development of tourist information infrastructure directly serving tourist streams, including tourist information centres and points.
- Promotion and dissemination of tourist products at external events, including national and international fairs, exhibitions and events.
- Cooperation with local, regional and national tourism organisations
- Joint promotion of the region and the tourism products in internal promotional materials
- Promotion and dissemination of the use of information and communication technologies in the tourism sector.
- Use of modern electronic economy systems for the development of tourism.
- Creating new forms of tourism economy promotion and initiatives related to tourism development.

Effective management, development, cooperation and monitoring system in tourism.

- Creating conditions for cooperation in tourism economy.

- Creation of an efficient partnership cooperation platform integrating and developing joint activities for tourism development.
- Development of standards of cooperation in the tourism sector of the borderland.
- Development of network cooperation and cooperation links with participation of tourist organisations.
- Involvement of local communities in building products and services of tourism economy.
- Development of education for tourism and training of tourism sector staff.
- Support and promotion of entrepreneurial and creative attitudes in tourism economy.

5.2 INDICATIVE LIST OF KEY PROJECTS

Key projects are the undertakings of strategic nature for the implementation of the Strategy, the implementation of which is important for the achievement of its objectives, as well as will significantly contribute to the implementation of the cross-border cooperation policy, sectoral policies and development strategies of the border regions. The indicative list of key projects below means that the information provided for individual projects is indicative and reflects the best knowledge about them at the time of compiling the list. They can - and often should - be reviewed, supplemented, modified, and developed with new activities and ideas.

Their implementation is a process that requires the creation of a cross-border network of public, private and non-governmental sector partners. In this context, the positive experience of partnership cooperation in the implementation of cross-border projects in the border area allows to expect that the key projects indicated below or their selected activities will be successfully implemented.

KEY PROJECTS:

Key Project 1. "Development of Active Tourism Infrastructure along the Tyzenhauz Trail".

Project Objective: Improvement of tourist attractiveness of the Tyzenhauz Trail and its promotion as a place of active tourism.

Scope of intervention: Joint preparation and implementation of coordinated investments improving accessibility, quantity and quality of active tourism facilities in the border area.

Key Project 2. "Tyzenhauz Velo"

Project objective: Integration of the Tyzenhauz Trail with the borderland's flagship bicycle routes in order to create a coherent cross-border tourist brand product in terms of content, logistics and offer.

Scope of intervention: delineation, marking and tourist development and promotion of the bicycle route on the route Sokolka – Tyzenhauz Trail - Grodno - Augustow Velo - Mikaszowka/Green Velo - Sokolka.

Key Project 3. "Integrated Promotion System of the Cross-border Tourist Area Tyzenhauz Trail".

Project Objective: To increase the recognition and preferences of the selection of the Cross-border Tourist Area Tyzenhauz Trail as an attractive tourist destination and reception.

Scope of intervention: Comprehensive promotional campaign addressed to key groups of recipients, conducted with the use of diversified and modern promotional tools.

Key Project 4. "Integrated Tourist Information System".

Project Objective: To provide comprehensive, coherent and easily accessible information on the attractions and tourist products of the borderland

Scope of intervention: Design and implementation of a coherent tourist information system using analogue and digital means of marketing communication tailored to tourists' expectations.

Key Project 5. "Cross-border Tourism Cluster Tyzenhauz Trail".

Project Objective: Promotion and development of network and cooperation links in the sustainable tourism sector of the Cross-Border Tourism Area Tyzenhauz Trail

Scope of intervention: Programming and development of network connections in the tourism sector of the borderland strengthening the recognition and competitiveness of the tourist offer of the area.

Key Project 6 Cross-border Culinary Trail "Dinners with Count Anthony Tyzenhauz".

Project Objective: Promotion and development of culinary tourism offer of the Polish-Belarusian borderland based on its culinary heritage and resources of traditional local products.

Scope of intervention: Creation, preparation and introduction of a new, area-specific culinary tourism product based on local culinary traditions.

Key Project 7 "Cross-Border Ecological Route "Green View"

Project objective: Promotion and development of eco- or "green" tourism in the Polish-Belarusian borderland based on common natural resources and waterways (River Lososianka).

Scope of intervention: Shaping and promotion of a new tourist product based on local natural resources and modern principles of sustainable development on the tourist market.

Key project 8 "Künststadt or the city of craftsmen" on the Lososianka River

Project objective: To create a cross-border tourist destination linked with the revival and popularisation of production technology and traditional crafts in the times of Count Anthony Tyzenhauz.

Scope of intervention: Creation and equipping of a thematic cultural park associated with the manufactures and crafts of the Grodno Royal Economy in its heyday under the management of Count Anthony Tyzenhauz, stimulating the development of cross-border event tourism, local crafts and traditional economic activities.

Key project 9 "Cross-border Cultural Route "Royal Theatre".

Project objective: To revive and popularise the theatre arts and forms of leisure activities popular in the times of Count Anthony Tyzenhauz and to promote them through cultural and participatory tourism ("event tourism").

Scope of intervention: Creation and promotion of a new tourism product based on local historical and cultural heritage and anthropogenic tourism resources, followed by the creation of unique cross-border tourism product packages.

Key project 10 "The Digital Tyzenhauz Trail".

Project objective: Involving new target customers of the generations Y (Millennials) and Z (Zoomers) by digitising and online accessibility of tourist resources with elements of questing games, creating 3D models and augmented reality applications.

Scope of intervention: Application of panoramic video techniques, application of filters for selecting the chosen routes, sightseeing objects, development of an interactive map, development of a mobile tourist application with the possibility of reading QR codes in tourist objects with synchronisation of the web portal interface.

Key project 11 "Tyzenhauz melody - creating a musical and spectacular tradition to promote the common historical and cultural heritage of Grodno and Sokolka".

Project objective: Preservation and popularisation of unique regional musical and production traditions (theatre performances, city festivals and shows) through the revival of the intangible cultural heritage of Grodno and Sokolka of Antoni Tyzenhauz era (late 18th century).

Scope of intervention: reviving the historical tradition of the "Royal Thursdays" (receptions) in Grodno and Sokolka as creative platforms for communication and creative synthesis of regional

creative intellectuals, assistance in the formation and professional growth of young artists from Grodno and Sokolka, creation of interactive multi-lingual Internet resources aimed at reviving the intangible historical and cultural heritage of the cross-border region of Grodno and Sokolka and stimulating cross-border cooperation in the field of cultural heritage.

6 INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The implementation of a strategy for the development of tourism or a tourism product (the Tyzenhauz Trail), especially in cross-border perspective, is a complex and multi-stage process, requiring the involvement of a number of different actors: public sector entities, entrepreneurs, tourism operators, NGOs, etc. In this process it is very important that the activities of these entities are properly coordinated in order to allow effective and efficient implementation of the Strategy. The development of tourism and tourism products requires mainly ensuring appropriate organisational conditions and financing of measures related to that development. It is also about applying organizational and financial support tools and appropriate cooperation mechanisms of entities from the tourism sector of the borderland and its environment. The following groups of entities will be of key importance here:

- entities coordinating the process of creation and sale of tourist products - tourist traffic service units,
- entities that create the individual elements of the tourist product,
- entities mainly related to tourism services: accommodation, catering, entertainment, guiding services; they are also tourist attraction managers, as well as public entities responsible for the creation of certain elements of tourism-related infrastructure,
- institutions providing financial and substantive support for the process of Strategy implementation and development of tourism products, i.e. self-government units, tourism organisations, social organisations, financial institutions and others.

Organization and coordination of the implementation of the Strategy will require following conditions:

- creation of a formal basis for cross-border partnership enabling comprehensive management of tourism in the border region,
- the update of the Strategy,
- parallel implementation by all stakeholders of their own tasks, the results of which will be used to achieve the objectives of the Strategy,
- consistency of implemented actions with market expectations - focus on the economic aspect of creating tourist products,
- creation of a functional communication platform between individual entities enabling synergic implementation of individual tourist products and implementation of tourist offers of the area in the system of selling tourist services locally and abroad,

- undertaking by institutions related to cross-border tourism common tasks serving the Strategy, the results of which will be used to create, develop and improve individual tourism products.

The Strategy implementation system must be based primarily on the local structures of the borderland, i.e. local government units, locally and sector competent public administration institutions, local tourist organizations, national parks, forestry entities, trade associations, commercial entities servicing tourist traffic and other entities responsible for creating tourist products.

Managing the development of tourism products in the context of cross-border partnerships is about creating the right conditions for the activity of local actors and refers to identifying the necessary changes and developing effective methods for their implementation. The process of Strategy implementation should be based on the following principles:

- the welfare of the border region's inhabitants as the most important good,
- a focus on results, which requires the establishment of a system for monitoring and evaluation of performance,
- integration of local borderland communities around the ways of solving problems,
- ensuring participation and feedback from tourism stakeholders,
- inclusion of all residents, especially those from disadvantaged groups, and to ensure that they can benefit from the effects of development,
- partnership of priorities and equal opportunities,
- focusing on action,
- responsibility and revision,
- ownership of the mission and development objectives.

The natural and anthropogenic assets that play a key role in the creation of tourism products are a major magnet for tourists. This results in the concentration of numerous, complementary entities serving tourists in a small space. The structure of the local tourism industry is heterogeneous, very diverse and fragmented, which in a way "condemns" tourism companies to cooperation. The specific features of tourism favour the spontaneous establishment and development of networks of tourist and surrounding tourism enterprises bearing the characteristics of tourist clusters.

The Cross-Border Functional Area Tyzenhauz Trail has the potential and critical mass to become one of the few cross-border tourism clusters. As a result of the implementation of the Strategy and the introduction of new cross-border tourism products, it can meet all conditions of the definition of a tourism cluster created by M.C. Benig, according to which it is a specific group of tourist attractions present in a certain area, provided by high quality equipment and services, politically and sociologically coherent, in which there is a marriage between the production chain and cultural aspects, organized on the basis of professional management, creating as a result an uniform and competitive network of organizations with significant strategic advantage.

The cooperation of so many, and so different entities enables the creation of complex tourist packages, consisting of mutually complementary goods and partial services (accommodation, catering, various types of attractions, souvenirs, additional services, etc.), also includes other activities, which include, among others:

- joint promotion (website, trade fairs, promotional publications, cooperation with the media, etc.),
- organisation of dedicated training courses as part of education program for tourist staff,
- increase the possibility of seeking additional funding (including EU funding) for the development of economic infrastructure and tourism development,
- synergy and better strategic planning of activities,
- lobbying - creating pressure groups on issues important for the tourism industry.

When the local tourism sector of the border region appears, or rather matures, to institutionalise itself in the form of a cluster initiative, it would take over the tasks related to the development of cross-border tourism products and their continuous management, including monitoring (including: assessment of the quality of the entire product and its individual components, monitoring customer satisfaction) and product modification (exchange of the weakest elements, enrichment of the offer, etc.).

7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY

7.1 MONITORING OF THE STRATEGY

Planning is a continuous process that takes into account the need to modify objectives and actions, which needs monitoring and review mechanisms to provide the necessary information for the decision-making process.

Monitoring is an important element of the process of current management of public programmes, aimed at ensuring correct and efficient implementation of programmes financed from public funds, by collecting reliable data about those programmes, comparing them with assumed indicators and taking decisions on changes in those programmes with the participation of local, economic and social partners. Monitoring is a process of collecting, processing and analysing data on the scope of implementation of the Strategy objectives. For the monitoring of the level of implementation of the Strategy it is important to create a system of indicators that would allow to measure the scope of its implementation and the applied development instruments, and thus to provide reliable information for the needs of making decisions both on current and strategic issues.

The basic function of monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy is to enable efficient management of its implementation by monitoring the progress of implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of implemented measures and undertakings.

It is necessary to record, analyse and update key development conditions, which ensure the possibility of flexible response to changing external conditions. They may cause the necessity to modify the objectives adopted in the document and force a change in the ways of their implementation.

The responsibility for conducting the monitoring procedure will lie with the Project Leader - Sokolka Municipality, which in cooperation with the Partners from Belarus should - on the basis of the available indicators of the Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 Programme and the projects implemented by the Sokolka Municipality - establish common rules for observing, measuring and reporting on the process of achieving the assumed objectives specified in the Strategy. They should take into account the measurability of indicators and the availability of

data and sources of information on the occurring social and economic phenomena and processes.

The next stage will be to define and entrust the competent persons or entities with specific tasks in the field of permanent collection and verification of data on important parameters important for the implementation of the Strategy. These persons will also be responsible for cyclical preparation of reports describing the course of implementation of the adopted objectives.

7.2 EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY

An inseparable element of monitoring the progress of the implementation of the Strategy is the evaluation of the effectiveness of actions taken, both on the basis of specific material indicators, the effectiveness of the use of financial resources and the effectiveness of obtaining funds for financial assembly, as well as the evaluation of the effectiveness of the system of the Strategy implementation.

Evaluation of the Strategy should be understood as assessment of its value in relation to previously defined criteria and on the basis of relevant information. It is an evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy in terms of comparison of the actual results with the planned, wider socio-economic impact and comparison of incurred expenditures with the results (efficiency analysis).

The main evaluation criteria to be used in the evaluation of the Strategy are

- Effectiveness - to determine whether the objectives have been achieved,
- Efficiency - comparing the resources involved with achievements at the level of outputs, results or impacts,
- Relevance - to assess the relevance of the objectives to the needs of the local economy,
- Utility - comparing local needs with the achievements of the Strategy
- Sustainability - to determine the long-term sustainability of the effects of the Strategy.

The conditions under which the tourism sector and cross-border partnerships operate, as well as the position of its participants, should be assessed.

Current conditions of the sector - areas of measurement

- Resources

- Human resources
 - Access to qualified personnel
 - Access to volunteers
- Infrastructure
 - Quality of tourist and tourist - related infrastructure
 - Quality of public space
- Business climate
 - Quality of local living standards
 - Relative costs of doing business
 - Legal conditions and barriers
- Supporting entities
 - Support for entrepreneurship and innovation in tourism
 - Support by professional bodies
 - Support by business support institutions
 - Public support
 - Public support programmes for tourism
 - Public support institutions
 - Suppliers
 - Access to materials and equipment at local level
 - Access to business services at local level
 - Access to capital at local level
- Environment
 - Local actions
 - Distance from competitors
 - Distance from customers
 - Competence / potential of economic and social actors
 - Entrepreneurial development potential
 - Potential for product and service development

Current position of cross-border partnerships - areas of measurement

- Essence
 - Critical mass
 - Number of participants
 - Proportion of sector representation

- Number of joint projects
- Responsibility
 - Decision-making structure
 - Responsibility in partnership
- Range
 - Number of customers/contractors
- Interactions
 - Identity
 - Internal awareness
 - External recognition
 - Links
 - Local links
 - External Links
- Dynamics
 - Innovation
 - Innovation
 - Revenue from new products and services
 - Development
 - Number of new entrants
 - Level of development of tour operators

The evaluation study should be carried out within 5 years from the moment the Strategy is developed. Its aim will be to assess the degree of achievement of its objectives, as well as the effectiveness of the adopted system of its implementation. Conclusions and recommendations resulting from the evaluation report may be used to consider a possible modification of the provisions of the Strategy.

Supplement

Project description

Programme description

Historical portrait of Count Anthony Tyzenhauz

Project PLBU.01/0368/16 "Tyzenhauz Trail - creation of a tourist route to promote cultural and historical heritage of two cities: Sokolka and Grodno"

Carried out within the framework of the Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020, Thematic Objective (CT) – Heritage as the cross-border partnership of the following institutions:

Sokolka

- Sokolka Municipality (Poland) - the Project Leader
- Department of Sport and Tourism of the Executive Committee of the City of Grodno (Belarus)
- Grodno District Branch of the Social Organization "State Tourist and Sports Association" (Belarus).

The project is implemented on the basis of Grant Agreement no. PLBU.01.01.00-20-0368/17-00 of 03.01.2018. The project began in March 2019 and will end in June 2021. The period of project implementation and its activities is 24 months, and the next 3 months is the formal and financial settlement of the project - 27 months in total.

Project budget:

Total value of the project: 2,139,254.66 euros.

Grant awarded: 1,925,329.19 euros.

The overall objective of the Project is increase of the number of people visiting and availing the tourist offer of Sokolka and Grodno County containing common cultural, historical and natural heritage.

The target group of the project are the inhabitants of the border areas of Sokolka and Grodno taking part in conferences, exhibitions, workshops, cycling rallies, including school pupils, painters, domestic and foreign tourists who prefer active forms of recreation; TSU employees responsible for the development and promotion of tourism in the cities, tour operators, guides, members of non-governmental organisations.

The project involves the organisation of the following joint cross-border events:

1. Renovation of 2 tenement houses included in the list of monuments for social purposes:

- in Sokolka at 1 Pilsudski Street

-in Grodno on Tyzenhauz Square.

2. Establishment of the Tourist Information Point in Sokolka in a renovated tenement house and the provision of equipment for the Tourist Information Point in Grodno.

3. Organisation of 3 cross-border conferences:

- The inaugural conference in Sokolka,
- scientific and closing in Grodno.

4. Handicraft workshops in Sokolka and Grodno for young people aged 13-16 from Poland (20 people) and Belarus (20 people).

5. Organisation of 4 cycling rallies along the "Cross-Border Tyzenhauz Cycling Trail":

- after a ceremonial opening of a tenement house from Sokolka to Grodno,
- the Sokolka region Rally,
- after the ceremonial opening of the building in Grodno,
- the rally in the Grodno region.

6. Organisation of two 10-day painting plein-air workshops: in Sokolka and Grodno.

Workshop participants: 5 artists from Poland and 5 from Belarus.

During the plein-air painting workshops there will be two-day workshops for school children:

- in Sokolka (20 people from Poland),
- in Grodno (20 people from Belarus).

7. Organisation of workshops for people related to the tourist industry in Sokolka and Grodno.

Participants of the workshop:

- in Poland - 12 people from Poland related to the tourist industry (2 two two-day meetings in Poland and 1 two-day meeting in Belarus);
- in Belarus - 12 persons from Belarus related to the tourism industry (2 two two-day meetings in Belarus and 1 two-day meeting in Poland);

8. Organisation of theatre workshops, including vocal workshops in Grodno and Sokolka, preparation of a performance in 3 languages. Preparation of musical setting by groups of choristers in Sokolka and Grodno.

9. Organisation of handicraft workshops in a renovated tenement house in Sokolka (graphic, sculptural, ceramic, weaving) for the inhabitants of the Sokolka region.

- 30-hour graphic workshops (linocut art),
- 30-hour sculpting workshop,
- 30-hour ceramic (pottery) workshop,
- 30-hour youth weaving workshops,
- 30 hours of weaving workshops for preschool children and younger primary school pupils.

10. The development of a cross-border strategy for the area of the Tyzenhauz Trail with public consultation at the level of the public, private and tourist sectors.

The map below shows the course of the "Cross-Border Cycling Tyzenhauz Trail" developed within the project.

Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020¹

The Cross-border Cooperation (CBC) Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine for 15 years supports the cross-border development processes in the borderland of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine by co-funding diverse projects. All projects funded within the Programme are non-profit ones and contribute to the improvement of quality of life of inhabitants of eastern Poland and western Ukraine and Belarus. Each undertaking financed within the Programme shall demonstrate strong cross-border effect, not only through established partnership between institutions from these three countries, but mainly thanks to the results of the activities and its positive impact on the border territory.

1st Programme edition was implemented in years 2004-2006. At that time, Programme structure and financing of projects were much more complicated than it is now (in Poland costs were covered by the European Regional Development Fund, while the Belarusian and Ukrainian sides used funds from the TACIS), nevertheless with the total EU financing of 45,8 M EUR, 167 projects developing the borderland were financed.

Within 2007-2013 edition Programme was implemented under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). Its financing from EU budget significantly increased up to over 170 M EUR and using that funds 117 projects were implemented. These were large infrastructure, regular and umbrella projects. They resulted in multiple improvements in such sectors and areas as social infrastructure, healthcare, education, tourism, protection of cultural heritage, security and last but not least border-crossings' infrastructure and services.

In the programming period 2014-2020 the Programme operates under the framework of the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The ENI supports sustainable development along the EU's external borders, helps reducing differences in living standards and addressing common challenges across these borders.

In terms of the budget, the Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine is the biggest ENI CBC programme at the EU land borders over 170 M EUR will be granted from the Programme to projects focusing especially on protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage of border areas, infrastructural accessibility of the regions, improvement of border-crossings' infrastructure, procedures and services as well as development of healthcare and public security services.

The Programme Strategy was adopted following the socio-economic analysis carried out at the request of the Managing Authority, in which the common national and regional priorities of the

¹ Source: www.pbu2020.eu

participating countries and their regions were identified. It is also based on the experience from the previous programming periods. The Programme Strategy takes also into account the opinions of the various stakeholders on the common needs and challenges the Programme area is facing. It finally reflects the decisions taken by the representatives of the Poland, Belarus and Ukraine in order to focus on the thematic areas in which the participating countries can address common problems and deal with the joint assets.

The ENI Cross-Border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020 is the document defining most important issues regarding the realisation of the Programme, its context, goals and functioning. It defines areas of interest which will be realised thanks to co-financed projects and which are represented by four Thematic Objectives and their priorities:

HERITAGE

Priority 1.1 Promotion of local culture and history

Priority 1.2 Promotion and preservation of natural heritage

ACCESSIBILITY

Priority 2.1 Improvement and development of transport services and infrastructure

Priority 2.2 Development of ICT infrastructure

SECURITY

Priority 3.1 Support to the development of health protection and social services

Priority 3.2 Addressing common security challenges

BORDERS

Priority 4.1 Support to border efficiency and security

Priority 4.2 Improvement of border management operations, customs and visas procedures.

Historical portrait of Count Anthony Tyzenhauz

Count Anthony Tyzenhauz (1733-1785) came from an old European family that left a clear trace in the history of Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Belarus, Sweden and Russia (de Tysenhusen, von Tiesenhausen, Tyzenhaus, Tyzenhauz). The family line of Anthony Tyzenhauz goes back to 12th century to the house of the Segeberg family from German Holstein to the 12th century. His legendary ancestors Engelbrecht and Theodorek participated in the first wave of German colonization of the Baltic countries at the beginning of the 13th century. Their descendants owned castles and lands on the territory of today's Latvia, occupied bishop's cathedrals and carried out important diplomatic tasks. Over time, various branches of the family were given the titles of Counts of the German Empire, Swedish Barons and Counts of the Russian Empire. At the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, during the fights between the Republic of Poland and Sweden for Inflants, one of the branches of the family moved to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The village of Kamionka in the eastern part of Grodno County became their patrimonial property. With time, the Counts of Tyzenhauz became associated with the local nobility and assimilated completely into the Republic of Poland. Anthony's great-grandfather, Stefan Tyzenhauz (d. 1708), was governor of Novgorodek and left large rural properties in Belarus and Lithuania to his five sons.

Anthony Tyzenhauz was born in 1733 in Novolno, in present-day Grodno region. At the Jesuit Academy in Vilnius he received an education typical of aristocratic youth. Friendship with the future king Stanislaw August Poniatowski (1732-1798, king of Poland 1764-1795) determined the fast state career of Anthony Tyzenhauz. In 1761, he was first elected ambassador of the Grodno nobility to the Warsaw Sejm (state parliament). In 1763, he was a writer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and in the following year became a honourable Lithuanian equerry. In 1764, Tyzenhauz was already the Marshal of the Grodno nobility and an active member of the Sejm. Soon the newly elected King Stanislaw August Poniatowski entrusted him with the management of all the royal estates (so called economies) in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and in 1765, after the death of Jozef Masalski, Tyzenhauz became the court treasurer of Lithuania and starost of Grodno. It did not take Tyzenhauz five years to climb to the top of his career! But more importantly, the young treasurer enjoyed the full confidence of the king and received a *carte blanche* to carry out bold economic reforms on the royal properties.

In the second half of the 18th century, the economic backwardness of Poland in relation to Western European countries was already a known fact, but the way out of the economic deadlock was unknown. And most importantly, no one wanted to take responsibility for bold reforms with uncertain results. Anthony Tyzenhauz has resolutely undertaken the task of economic reform of the royal economy in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The main platform for economic experimentation was the Grodno Royal Economy. It was the largest economy in terms of area and the second largest in terms of population (42,000 in 1783), which brought the king the highest income - 160,000 zlotys per year in the 1820s. (while all the economies in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania brought a total of 388 thousand zlotys). Apart from the town of Grodno, the economy included several towns and many villages in the western part of Grodno County: Sokolka, Krynki, Janow, Lipsk, Suchowola, Dabrowa Bialostocka and others. Tyzenhauz received extraordinary powers from the king to carry out reforms. He concentrated the main "sectors" of power in his person: administrative as mayor of Grodno, representative as marshal of Grodno district nobility and economic as administrator of all royal economies. Besides, Tyzenhauz was well acquainted with the Grodno district, in the eastern part of which the Tyzenhauz family estates (Kamionka, Protasowszczyzna, Spusza, Jelnia, Dębrowo, etc.) were located, and where he began his political career as a state parliament delegate of the Grodno district and Grodno deputy starost.

On the initiative of Tyzenhauz, all the rural land belonging to the royal economies was transferred under the direct control of the royal administration and the lease contracts with the local nobility were terminated. The obligations and services of the peasants have been clearly defined. The royal manors and mills were established. For the first time, "municipal shops" and "municipal cash registers" appeared, to which peasants were to transfer grain and money in the event of a crop failure or natural disaster. With the help of invited foreign craftsmen, 47 manufactories with about 1,850 employees were established. Of these, 23 workshops worked in Grodno. A wide range of goods was produced - from beer, playing cards, aristocratic belts and those based on fashionable French models of carriages to dresses, fabrics and weapons. Old roads were renovated and the new ones constructed, the riverbed of the Niemen River was cleared and a canal was dug which connected the system of lakes in the eastern part of Grodno County with the Niemen river.

Tyzenhauz was one of the forerunners of vocational education in the Republic.. Under his leadership, a medical academy, a corps of cadets, schools for surveyors, accountants and builders were established in Grodno, and the creation of parish primary schools was stimulated.

In order to popularise educational ideas, Tyzenhauz founded a printing house in Grodno and started publishing "Grodno Newspaper", the first magazine on the territory of present-day Belarus and Lithuania. A Grodno theatre with an orchestra and a theatre and music school was opened.

Thanks to the invited European architects (D. de Sacco, Y. Meuser, etc.) the rational principles of European urban planning and development were tested for the first time in Grodno and the Grodno Royal Economy lands. To this day the Grodno city district of Horodnica (Tyzenhauz square, Orzeszkowa street and E. Żiliber park), the cities of Sokolka and Krynki have preserved the original layout and a number of buildings from the times of A. Tyzenhauz.

Unfortunately, extensive reforms of Tyzenhauz have failed. The ordering of agriculture resulted in an increase in peasant duties and dissatisfaction of the villagers, which led to numerous complaints, unrest and even an armed uprising in the Szawel economy in 1769. Most of the manufactories were unprofitable and the goods produced there were not competitive due to high price and low quality. Determination and royal favour caused Tyzenhauz many enemies among tycoons and nobles, who constantly intrigued against the mighty treasurer. In 1780, irritated by numerous complaints and the lack of high income from his properties, King Stanislaw August Poniatowski removed his recent favourite from the management of the royal economy, although nominally he retained his position as Lithuanian treasurer. The humiliated Tyzenhauz went to Warsaw, where he died in 1785. Until the end of his life he tried to justify himself to political enemies for accusation of fraud and incompetence.

Less than ten years later the legend of the wise reformer Tyzenhauz and his reforms began to take shape. A series of tragic events - the Polish-Russian war of 1792, the Grodno Sejm and the Second Partition of the Republic of Poland in 1793, the Kosciuszko Uprising in 1794 and the Third Partition of the Republic of Poland in 1795. - forced the contemporaries to take a new look at the affairs and personality of Count Anthony Tyzenhauz. A country that was forced to oppose the external aggressors by 'Kosynier' troops (peasant recruits dressed in coats and armed with scythes installed upright) was acutely aware of the need for modern industry and remembered the reforms of Tyzenhauz. Forgotten by everyone at the end of his life, he became the epitome of progress and reforms after his death.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, on the lands of Poland, Belarus and Lithuania, Count Anthony Tyzenhauz became a symbol of modernisation - the first economic reforms aimed at

creating modern industry and transport infrastructure, the first transfer of European technologies, the first system of vocational training, the first experience of rational urban planning and development, and a significant contribution to the education of the nations of Eastern Europe.