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Polish Spas in the Process of Transformation

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Zusammenfassung

Polnische Kurorte im Transformationsprozess

Der ökonomische Transformationsprozess, der in den ehemals kommunistischen Ländern Europas in den 1990er Jahren eingeleitet wurde, beeinflusste alle Lebensbereiche – auch die Tourismuswirtschaft. Abgewirtschaftete Kurorte in Staatsbesitz wurden in vieler Hinsicht transformiert, was unter anderem zum Wechsel des Eigentümers führte. Der Artikel beschäftigt sich mit dem Einfluss des Privatisierungsfortschritts auf die Fähigkeit der Kurorte die Unterstützung von EU-Fonds zu erreichen und bewertet ihn am Beispiel von 16 Kureinrichtungen in ähnlich großen Orten Polens. Er zeigt, dass eine geklärte Rechtsstellung den Unternehmen Stabilität verleiht und die wichtigste Voraussetzung für das Erreichen von EU-Unterstützung ist.

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Schlagwörter: Kurorte, Systemtransformation, Privatisierung, Gesundheitstourismus, EU-Förderungen, Polen

Summary

Economic transition initiated in the former Communist countries in Europe in the 1990s has had a strong impact on all spheres of life including tourism. Depreciated state-owned spas were subject to transformation resulting inter alia in ownership change. The article highlights and evaluates the relationship between progress in privatisation and ability to acquire EU funds by the example of 16 spas located in similar-sized settlements in Poland. It shows that a regulated legal status, thus providing companies with stability, has created optimal conditions for EU fundraising.

Keywords: spas, system transition, privatisation, health tourism, EU funds, Poland

1 Introduction

The development of spas is a complex phenomenon, but most of its determinants are well known. Some determinants, however, are less frequently referred to and appear under specific circumstances resulting from new conditions. In the countries of Central and Eastern Europe the key process contributing to the transformation of spas has been privatisation. But changes in spa profiles appeared not only in countries with a new economic model. As BUTLER (2010) notes, spas have often been prone to new trends, lost their primary goals or have returned to their basic functions (as, e.g., spas in Germany). The spas in Central and Eastern Europe have survived because they have maintained traditionally assigned roles. Nevertheless, change in external conditions resulting from economic transformation has increasingly involved them into contemporary prevention and wellness approaches. It seems that change in ownership and ability to acquire investment have determined the new directions.

Marketisation of the economy and commercialisation of services have set a new framework for the functioning of Polish spas. These processes have initiated a series of changes, which up to this day have inspired numerous discussions, comments and polemics, especially with regard to privatisation of state-owned spas. Main concerns are the limitation of statutory activity (i.e., spa treatment) in favour of an opening up to health tourism, which in fact has created a competitive and attractive offer.

In addition to functional diversification conditions for successful market adaptation were initiated by integration into the European Union (EU). Acquisition of external investment funds has significantly improved the conditions of many spas taking into account that their main problem had been under-investment into infrastructure (see Informacja o bieżącej sytuacji 2008). This has delayed privatisation and made it difficult, despite attempts to invest from the state budget (see Informacja o bieżącej sytuacji 2008).

The task of this article is on the one hand to evaluate privatisation of Polish spas and, on the other, to check the extent to which changes in ownership have contributed to an increased ability of acquiring EU funds. Hence, we will demonstrate the relationship between successful EU fundraising and privatisation in those Polish spas, which had previously been owned by the State Treasury.

We assume that regulated legal status, e.g., completed privatisation, has been conducive to acquiring external funds. We also assume that a consortium of spas is more successful in fundraising than individual companies and that geographical location plays a minor role in acquiring EU funds.

2 Spas in academic research

Spas located in many countries such as Japan[1)], Turkey[2)], the United Kingdom[3)], Spain[4)], Slovenia[5)], Serbia[6)], Russia[7)], Estonia[8)], Romania[9)] and Poland[10)] are subject of numerous studies. Most of them focus on the healing properties of their resources[11)] and are connected with research in the fields of geology, geochemistry and hydrogeology. In the field of health sciences there are works in which attention is paid to the factors, which contributed to the establishment of spas in a particular place or to an analysis of the biographies of the spa's founders.[12)]

From an economic point of view it seems that the crucial factor is the presence of healing waters.[13)] The operation of spas and the consequent development of tourism play an important role in the economy of many settlements[14)] and rural areas[15)] and as numerous studies show – in the economy of regions[16)] and even of entire countries[17)]. Hence, in

1) See, e.g., Sekine, Nasermoaddeli, Wang, Kanayama & Kagamimori 2006
2) See, e.g., Seckelmann 2002; Özkaynak 2008
3) See, e.g., Haley, Snaith & Miller 2005
4) See, e.g., González, Comesaña & Brea 2007; Pozo, Carretero, Maraver, Pozo, Gómez, Armijo & Rubí 2013
5) See, e.g., González, Comesaña & Brea 2007
6) See, e.g., Košić, Pivac, Romelić, Lazić & Stojanović 2011; Joksimović & Pavlović 2014
7) See, e.g., Vornov 2000; Bihari-Axelsson & Axelsson 2002
8) See, e.g., Ahas, Aasa, Mark, Pae & Kull 2007; Ahas, Aasa, Roose, Mark & Silm 2008
9) See, e.g., Cooper, Fletcher, Noble & Westlake 1995
10) See, e.g., Kepinska 2003; Kapczyński & Szromek 2008; Grzelak-Kostulska 2012; Środa-Murawksa 2012; Grzelak-Kostulska & Hołowiecka 2013
11) See, e.g., Freeston 1996; Samsudin, Hamzah, Rahman, Siwar, Mohd & Othman 1997; Voronov 2000; Lund & Freeston 2001; Árpási 2003; Dowgiallo & Fistek 2003; Kepinska 2003; Lund 2003; Voronov & Vinograd 2009; Kozłowska, Walencik, Dorda & Zipper 2010; Walencik, Kozłowska, Dorda & Zipper 2010; Lund, Freeston & Boyd 2011; Igliński, Buczkowski, Kujawski, Cichosz & Piechota 2012
12) See, e.g., Prunk, Azman, Frkovic, Skrobonja & Muzur 2008
13) See, e.g., Bachvarov 1997; Özkaynak 2008; Košić, Pivac, Romelić, Lazić & Stojanović 2011; Gössling, Peeters, Hall, Ceron, Dubois, Lehman & Scott 2012; Joksimović & Pavlović 2014
14) See, e.g., Środa-Murawska 2012
15) See, e.g., Iorio & Corsale 2010
16) See, e.g., Baidal 2003; Košić, Pivac, Romelić, Lazić & Stojanović 2011; Joksimović & Pavlović 2014
17) See, e.g., Baláž 1995; Bachvarov 1997; Coles 2003; Ahas, Aasa, Mark, Pae & Kull 2007; Ahas, Aasa, Roose, Mark & Silm 2008; Assaf & Knežević Cvelbar 2011; Bihari-Axelsson & Axelsson 2002; Dwyer, Knežević Cvelbar, Edwards & Mihalic 2012

academic publications referring to spas in the context of tourism offer there are many discussions on the quality and diversity of tourism services offered[18], on changing demands and opportunities to modify the offer[19] as well as on spa tourism as an important tourism product created in particular countries[20].

Spas in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe form a specific set. Their first stages were similar to those in Western Europe, where the precursors in the use of the healing properties of water were the ancient Romans.[21] In the Middle Ages, the advantageous properties of water were forgotten and rediscovered only in the 17th and 18th centuries[22], when industrialisation and urbanisation began. Increased interest in spas emerged then from an increase in leisure time. Spas were no longer reserved for elites.[23] The following years, however, marked by the turbulent history of Central and Eastern Europe, led to separate developments in the two parts of Europe. After World War II, spas in Central and Eastern Europe underwent the rules of a Socialist economy.[24] A quarter of a century since the fall of Communism, it is interesting to see how the economic situation of spas has changed and especially to inquire into their capacity to acquire EU funds.

3 Materials and methods

In Poland 45 spas were registered in 2014 (see Fig. 1). The Polish norm PN-Z-11000:2001 on "Spas – terminology, classification and general requirements" [Uzdrowiska – terminologia, klasyfikacja i wymagania ogólne] offers the following classification with regard to altitude above sea level:

- lowland spas – <300 m;
- submontane spas – 300–500 m;
- mountain spas – 500–700 m;
- high-mountain spas – >700 m (currently there are none).

Most spas are located in the southern part of the country, although there are also some in northern Poland, mostly along the Baltic coast (see Fig. 1).

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18) See, e.g., OMULECKI, NOWAK & ZALEWSKA 1996; SNOJ & MUMEL 2002; GONZÁLEZ, COMESAÑA & BREA 2007

19) See, e.g., COOPER, FLETCHER, NOBLE & WESTLAKE 1995; CHEN, LIU & CHANG 2013

20) See, e.g., HUGHES & ALLEN 2005; ASSAF & KNEŽEVIĆ CVELBAR 2011; DWYER, KNEŽEVIĆ CVELBAR, EDWARDS & MIHALIC 2012

21) See, e.g., LUND 1997; PETRACCIA, LIBERATI, MASCIULLO, GRASSI & FRAIOLI 2006; PENDLEBURY, SHORT & WHILE 2009; CARLINO, SOMMA, TROISE & DE NATALE 2012

22) See, e.g., ROUTH, BHOWMIK, PARISH & WITKOWSKI 1996; HALEY, SNAITH & MILLER 2005; HOPPE, JANICKA, LERCH & BRÜBACH 2008; MAYER, MÜLLER, WOLTERING, ARNEGGER & JOB 2010; JONES 2013

23) See, e.g., GROSE 2011

24) See FLETCHER & COOPER 1996; LIGHT & DUMBRĂVEANU 1999; COLES 2003

Source: authors based on Polish norm PN-Z-11000:2001

Fig. 1: Classification of spas according to altitude above sea level

26 of them are companies[25], which as former State Spa Enterprises [Państwowe Przedsiębiorstwa Uzdrowiskowe, PPU], the most important spa operation in post-war Poland, had been intended for privatisation. From this set we have analysed 16 (located in 22 settlements), i.e., more than 60% of all privatised companies, which according to the Act on the Privatisation of State Companies have been established as one-man companies of the State Treasury. Most of them had applied for privatisation between 1999 and 2001 and thus started the long process of ownership change.

[25] Within the assumptions of privatisation set out, spa companies have been divided according to criteria based on their economic and financial situation, the policy of the National Health Fund [Narodowy Fundusz Zdrowia] in the field of contracts for the services of spa treatment and other factors. As a consequence of the process 23 spas have qualified for privatisation (Hadzik & Szromek 2012).

The set of selected spas has been limited to those located in similar-sized settlements, i.e., in small towns with a population of up to 20,000. We have intentionally omitted large and medium-sized settlements as well as rural areas.

Geographical location has been another criterion: Spas analysed in this article represent three types differentiated by the Polish norm. They are situated in 9 out of 16 Polish voivodships [województwo], the highest subnational administrative level in Poland (see Fig. 1). This has ensured better comparability of the spas taken into consideration.

The spas analysed are very diverse in terms of ownership, and we have divided them into three main categories:

1. transferred without costs to a voivodship: Busko-Zdrój, Ciechocinek, Lądek-Długopole, Szczawno-Jedlina;
2. privatised:
   a. belonging to the Polish Health Resorts Group [Polska Grupa Uzdrowisk, PGU]: the Kłodzko Spas [Zespół Uzdrowisk Kłodzkich], Połczyn-Zdrój, Świeradów-Czerniawa;
   b. belonging to the BPS group of Polish Spas [Uzdrowiska Polskie, BPS]: Iwonicz-Zdrój, Kamień Pomorski, Konstancin-Zdrój, Nałęczów;
   c. managed by private owners: Szczawnica, Ustka, Ustroń;
3. exclusive property of the State Treasury:
   a. in transition: Rabka;
   b. excluded from privatisation: Krynica-Żegiestów (see Table 1).

Based on this categorisation we can state that the process of ownership change of the spas considered has in general been completed. The only exceptions are Rabka and Krynica-Żegiestów. The other companies have either been sold or transferred without costs to their voivodships. However, from the point of view of this research an important issue is the time, which has passed since ownership change. In many cases privatisation decisions coincided with the end of the 2007–2013 EU programme period. The companies were transferred to their voivodships. But we have not only taken into account spas that have been privatised earlier, we have analysed all those located in small towns and intended for privatisation over the entire period of ownership change.

The research has been conducted based on data derived from the official website of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development.[26] The website had been created within a project co-financed from EU funds (European Regional Funds, Operational Programme – Technical Assistance). Information on the projects accepted by the EU Commission available at the website is currently being upgraded and monitored. The EU Grants Map has enabled the identification and location of the beneficiary and a full description of projects: title of application; area where the application has been implemented; operational programme, within which the application has been approved; level of financial support; total costs of the projects. We have also used data derived from the National Court Register [Krajowy Rejestr Sądowy].[27]

[26] The EU Grants Map is available at: *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl*

[27] The Register is available at *http://www.ems.ms.gov.pl/krs/wyszukiwaniepodmiotu*

4 Results

4.1 Ownership change of spas

Transformation in ownership of spas, which before the introduction of market changes had been units of the State Spa Enterprises, has undergone many stages. Some of them resulted from the complicated legal status of privatised assets. (By July 2009, e.g., the heirs of former owners had filed reprivatisation claims on the assets of nine spas.) (Informacja o wynikach kontroli 2010, p. 11). Others emerged due to the not too coherent approaches of the Ministry of State Treasury and the Ministry of Health. According to the report prepared by the Supreme Audit Office [Najwyższa Izba Kontroli] in 2010, "the Ministry of State Treasury changed the criteria for those spas, which should remain unprivatised" and "the Ministry of Health, with whom the list of spas was prepared, did not develop a clear position on those spas excluded from privatisation and accepted the proposals of the Ministry of State Treasury without conducting proper analyses of its impact on accessibility to spa treatment." (Informacja o wynikach kontroli 2010, p. 6).

Privatisation of Polish spas has widely been discussed in books (Hadzik, Hadzik & Mikrut 2009; Boruszczak 2010), academic papers (Wołowiec 2001, 2003, 2005; Burzyński, Golba, Pyka & Szymańczyk 2004; Lewandowska 2007, 2008; Hadzik & Szromek 2012; Kaźmierczak 2013) and sectoral reports (Informacja o bieżącej sytuacji 2008; Łach & Rutkowska 2008, 2010; Informacja o wynikach kontroli 2010).

Economic transition in the early 1990s introduced new regulations. The first was the Act on the Privatisation of State Enterprises as of 13 July 1990, which was replaced by the Act on Commercialisation and Privatisation of State Enterprises as of 30 August 1996. A list of 26 spas, in which the tasks and competences of the founding body were taken over by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, was presented in the Regulation of 30 September 1996. It created a list of state-owned enterprises, in which the tasks and competences of the founding body are defined by government departments other than the Ministry of State Treasury and in which detailed rules and procedures for their taking over by voivodship governors or the Ministry of State Treasury are documented. However, by the end of 1998, when the conceptual framework for the commercialisation of State Spa Enterprises was formulated, the spas functioned as independent state units with a legal identity and with a varied legal status of asset ownership. Between 14 and 30 December 1998, according to a decision of the Ministry of State Treasury and after the Act on Commercialisation had been introduced, 17 joint-stock companies (JSC) and 9 limited liability companies (LLC) were established starting their activities between January and April 1999. Indirect privatisation with a disposal of shares to the public was implemented. The document entitled "Directions for the Privatisation of Treasury Assets" [Kierunki prywatyzacji majątku Skarbu Państwa] (Załącznik 2000) generally determined privatisation plans (but only qualitatively). However, this did not bring about a significant effect. Only one company was privatised, although as of 19 June 2002 the costs of privatising in the spa sector had amounted to 1,471,404 PLN (not including the privatisation costs of the Nałęczów Spa JSC [Zakład Leczniczy Uzdrowisko Nałęczów S.A.] paid for by the company) (Informacja o wynikach kontroli 2002).

	Name of the spa	Establishment of one-man companies of the State Treasury	Year of priva-tisation	Legal regulation on exclusion from privatisation			Ownership as of January 2014
				20.07.2007	08.10.2008	29.11.2012	
1	Krynica-Żegiestów Spa JSC	01.02.1999	2000				100% shareholding of the State Treasury, excluded from privatisation
2	Busko-Zdrój Spa JSC	01.01.1999	2000				16.01.2013 – transferred without cost to the Holy Cross Voivodship
3	Ciechocinek Spa JSC	01.01.1999	-				20.12.2012 – transferred without cost to Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodship
4	Szczawno-Jedlina Spa JSC	01.01.1999	-				12.04.2013 – transferred without cost to the Lower Silesian Voivodship
5	Lądek-Długopole Spa JSC	01.03.1999	2000				12.04.2013 – transferred without cost to the Lower Silesian Voivodship
6	Szczawnica Spa JSC	01.02.1999	2001				Since 2005 due to the judgment of the Supreme Administrative Court [Naczelny Sąd Administracyjny] an asset of the Stadnicki family; 4.18% remains with the State Treasury
7	Ustka Spa LLC	01.02.1999	2001				27.05.2013 – the process of privatisation was finished – sale to Hotel Lubicz LLC
8	Iwonicz Zdrój Spa JSC	01.03.1999	1999				After privatisation, in December 2011, owner Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund based in Warsaw created by the Polish Cooperative Bank JSC and the Nałęczów Investment Company, JSC with a 1.13% share owned by the State Treasury
9	Kamień Pomorski Spa LLC	01.02.1999	-				After privatisation, in December 2011, owners: Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund based in Warsaw created by the Polish Cooperative Bank, JSC and the Nałęczów Investment Company, JSC with a 1.34% share owned by the State Treasury
10	Konstancin Spa JSC	01.02.1999	2000				After privatisation, in December 2011, owners: Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund based in Warsaw created by the Polish Cooperative Bank, JSC and the Nałęczów Investment Company, JSC with a 0.5718 % owned by the State Treasury

	Name of the spa	Establishment of one-man companies of the State Treasury	Year of priva-tisation	Legal regulation on exclusion from privatisation			Ownership as of January 2014
				20.07.2007	08.10.2008	29.11.2012	
11	Nałęczów Spa JSC	01.01.1999	1999				22.08.2001 – purchased by the Dutch company East Springs International, controlled by Nestlé; after privatisation in December 2011, owners: the Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund based in Warsaw created by the Polish Cooperative Bank, JSC and the Nałęczów Investment Company JSC
12	Kłodzkie Spas JSC – PGU Group based in Polanica-Zdrój (Duszniki-Zdrój, Kudowa-Zdrój, Polanica-Zdrój)	01.03.1999	2000	■			PGU Group - KGHM TFI – established in 2011, the majority owner has been KGHM and the Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund represented by KGHM TFI, JSC
13	Połczyn Spa –PGU Group JSC	01.02.1999	2000				PGU Group - KGHM TFI – established in 2011, the majority owners were KGHM and the Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund represented by the KGHM TFI, JSC
14	Świeradów Spa –PGU Group, LLC (Świeradów-Czerniawa)	01.02.1999	2000	■			Polish Health Resorts Group - KGHM TFI – established in 2011, the majority owners were KGHM and the Investment Closed Fund of Non-Public Assets represented by the KGHM TFI, JSC
15	Ustroń Spa JSC	01.03.1999	2001	■			31.08.2010 – the American Heart of Poland (90.77%)
16	Rabka Spa JSC	01.04.1999	2000				The privatisation procedure has not been completed yet; in the ownership of the State Treasury

Key: ■ applicable □ not applicable

Source: Source: authors based on Regulation of the Ministry of State Treasury of 20 July 2007, Regulation of the Ministry of State Treasury of 8 October 2008, Regulation of the Ministry of State Treasury of 29 November 2012, National Court Register *https://ems.ms.gov.pl/krs/wyszukiwaniepodmiotu?t:lb=t*, Public Information Bulletin *http://www.bip.gov.pl/*

Tab. 1: Ownership changes in the spas analysed

In 2002, privatisation procedures that had been initiated in 13 companies were halted due to a decision of the Ministry of Health until the Act on Spa Treatment, Spas and Areas of Spa Protection was accepted. A year later the Inter-ministerial Group for the Socio-economic Activation of Spas [Międzyresortowy Zespół ds. Aktywizacji Społeczno-Gospodarczej Uzdrowisk] began its work and set out an Integrated Programme for the Development of Spas [Zintegrowany program rozwoju uzdrowisk ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem usług turystycznych] (Zintegrowany Program 2005) with particular emphasis on tourism services and including the privatisation of spa treatment entities.

The accepted solutions, consistent with the new Act on Spa Treatment of 28 July 2005, assumed that the companies would be divided into three groups:
- those excluded from privatisation (with special significance for spa treatment in Poland);
- those intended for privatisation, but with a five-year minimum period of majority shareholding by the State Treasury;
- those intended for full privatisation.

They were chosen to maintain the profile of spa activity and at the same time to raise funds for development. According to the Regulation of the Ministry of State Treasury of 20 July 2007, the first group included 14 companies (nine considered here) (Table 1). In 2008, in the list annexed to the Regulation of the Ministry of State Treasury of 8 October 2008 only seven companies (with four here) were included. In 2012, it was accepted (according to the Regulation of the Ministry of State Treasury of 29 November 2012) that only the Krynica-Żegiestów Spa JSC was to be excluded from privatisation. The second group, i.e., spas controlled by the State Treasury, in fact ceased to exist within a year after introduction, the Ministry withdrawing from the five-year period its majority shareholding.

This (not too coherent) privatisation policy has not accelerated the difficult process of ownership change. Until 2010, only one spa had been sold (Nałęczów purchased by a Dutch company, i.e., East Springs International, in 2001.), while in 2005 Szczawnica Spa JSC [Przedsiębiorstwa Uzdrowisko Szczawnica S.A.] was returned to private ownership.

A breakthrough in the process of privatisation occurred only after 2010: In mid-2010, the enterprise American Heart of Poland gained a majority stake in Ustroń Spa JSC [Przedsiębiorstwo Uzdrowiskowe Ustroń S.A.]. A year later, in 2011, the Polish Health Resorts Group – PGU [Polska Grupa Uzdrowisk, PGU] was formed, whose majority owner was KGHM and the Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund [Fundusz Inwestycyjny Zamknięty Aktywów Niepublicznych] represented by KGHM TFI JSC. Spas included were Kłodzko Spas JSC [Uzdrowiska Kłodzkie S.A.] – a PGU Group based in Polanica-Zdrój, Połczyn Spa PGU Group JSC [Uzdrowisko Połczyn – Grupa PGU S.A.] and Świeradów Spa PGU Group LLC [Uzdrowisko Świeradów Sp. z o.o. – Grupa PGU].

In December 2011, the long process of privatising a further three spas was finished: Iwonicz-Zdrój Spa JSC [Uzdrowisko Iwonicz Zdrój S.A.], Kamień Pomorski Spa LLC [Uzdrowisko Kamień Pomorski Sp. z o.o.], Konstancin Spa LLC [Uzdrowisko Konstancin Sp. z o.o.]. In the case of Nałęczów Spa JSC a change of owner was noted. The new owner – as in the spas above – was the Non-public Asset Closed-end Investment Fund

[Fundusz Inwestycyjny Zamknięty Aktywów Niepublicznych Uzdrowiska Polskie] based in Warsaw [Warszawa] and created by the Polish Cooperative Bank JSC [Bank Polskiej Spółdzielczości S.A.] and the Nałęczów Investment Company JSC [Nałęczowskie Towarzystwo Inwestycyjne S.A.] with some participation from the State Treasury.

Changes in the spas excluded from privatisation until 29 November 2012 (according to the Act of 8 October 2008) were slightly different. On 19th September 2012, the Minister of State Treasury met representatives of relevant voivodship councils and proposed to transfer spa companies to them. In this way the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodship [Województwo kujawsko-pomorskie] received the Ciechocinek Spa JSC [Przedsiębiorstwo Uzdrowisko Ciechocinek S.A.], the Holy Cross Voivodship [Województwo świętokrzyskie] the Busko-Zdrój Spa JSC [Uzdrowisko Busko-Zdrój S.A.] and the Lower Silesian Voivodship [Województwo dolnośląskie] the Szczawno-Jedlina Spa JSC [Szczawno-Jedlina S.A.] (privatised since 2008) as well as the Lądek-Długopole Spa JSC [Lądek-Długopole S.A.]. The governments of the voivodships were obliged to maintain the main field of activity, i.e., spa treatment, provide for the modernisation of infrastructure and solve other issues listed in detailed development plans of individual companies in subsequent years.

The last privatisation concerned the sale of Ustka Spa JSC [Uzdrowisko Ustka S.A.]. It was purchased by Hotel Lubicz LLC [Hotel Lubicz Sp. z o.o.] in 2013.

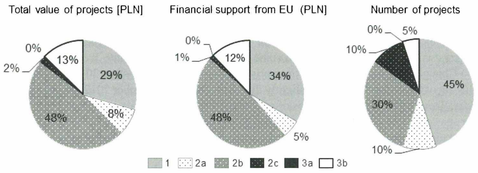
The companies totally owned by the State Treasury included only Krynica-Żegiestów Spa JSC [Uzdrowisko Krynica-Żegiestów S.A.], which is still formally excluded from any sale, and Rabka Spa JSC [Uzdrowisko Rabka S.A.], where the privatisation procedure has still to be completed.

4.2 Ability of spas to acquire EU funds

In our analysis based on information derived from the EU Grants Map we have considered two EU programme periods: 2004–2006 and 2007–2013. During these periods financial support amounting to 69,681,901.30 PLN was acquired by the spas. (The total costs of the projects implemented amounted to 211,855,072.60 PLN.) Within the two programme periods 20 projects were implemented, but only one in the 2004–2006 period.

More than half of EU funds (54%) were acquired by spas the privatisation of which had been completed or which had finally been sold or transferred to the heirs of former owners – Category 2 (Fig. 2, Table 2). All companies in this category, except Iwonicz-Zdrój, benefited from EU funds after ownership changes. The largest financial support (almost half of EU funds) was gained by Polish Spas BPS, mainly due to Nałęczów, which acquired investment totaling 57 million PLN. These funds were not intended, as usually, to improve infrastructure, they were devoted to 'research, development, innovation'. The share of EU financial support for the other spas privatised or sold was approximately 6% of the total value of all funds acquired by companies analysed (and 10% of the total value of projects in spas).

In turn, one third of the total value of EU financial support acquired was received by four companies (Category 1) previously not intended for privatisation. The category does not include companies excluded from privatisation by the Acts of 2007 and 2008, i.e., until 29 November 2012 (Busko-Zdrój, Ciechocinek, Lądek-Długopole) and Szczawno-Jedli-



Key: Category of company: 1: transferred without costs to a voivodship (Busko-Zdrój, Ciechocinek, Lądek-Długopole, Szczawno-Jedlina); 2: privatised: (a) the Polish Health Resorts Group (Kłodzko Spas, Połczyn-Zdrój, Świeradów-Czerniawa), (b) the group of Polish Spas BPS (Iwonicz-Zdrój, Kamień Pomorski, Konstancin-Zdrój, Nałęczów), (c) managed by a private owner (Szczawnica, Ustka, Ustroń); 3: exclusive property of the State Treasury: (a) in transition (Rabka), (b) excluded from privatisation (Krynica-Żegiestów).

Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/*

Fig. 2: Projects implemented in the context of ownership status of the spas analysed

na, which had not been subject to privatisation until 8 October 2008. (The Act of 2007 regulated its status.) The spas showed significant activity in applying for EU funds and implemented nine projects. The funds acquired amounted to 23,353,704.97 PLN, and the total value of the projects implemented reached 62,207,385.86 PLN. However, in their case applications for EU funds had been submitted and implemented before they had been transferred to voivodships, i.e., at the end of 2012 and the beginning of 2013. Hence, we could not evaluate the impact of ownership change on the ability to raise EU funds. They were rather co-financed in this way (in addition to the state budget) to strengthen the position of these companies offered by the Ministry of State Treasury to successfully complete their privatisation. Significant funding was also acquired by Krynica-Żegiestów (12%) – the only company that continued to be excluded from privatisation by the Act of 29 November 2012. In this case the value of financial support was much higher than the average. Relatively little support (1%) was acquired by companies sold to private owners (Szczawnica and Ustroń) receiving less than one million PLN.

In order to compare the financial support acquired from the EU by the spas considered we had to find some objective indicators. As a point of reference we used the value of company capital (determined by their entry in the National Court Register). It is worth mentioning that among these spas more than half of the total capital was held by companies sold (Category 2). More than 22% of the total capital belonged to PGU – KGHM TFI, approximately 15% to Polish Spas BPS and less than 19% to private owners. One quarter of the total capital was held by companies transferred to voivodships: to the Holy Cross, Kuyavian-Pomeranian and Lower Silesian voivodships. The State Treasury managed the capital of the Rabka and Krynica-Żegiestów spas (19%).

	Category of spa (companies)	Total value of projects [PLN]	Financial support from the EU [PLN]	Number of projects
1	Busko-Zdrój Spa JSC	27,428,306.30	9,743,438.10	3*
1	Ciechocinek Spa JSC	8,637,749.00	6,582,372.70	2
1	Szczawno-Jedlina Spa	16,534,379.10	4,482,109.60	2
1	Lądek-Długopole Spa JSC	9,606,951.50	2,545,784.70	2
1	**transferred without costs to voivodships – total**	**62,207,385.90**	**23,353,704.90**	**9**
2a	Kłodzkie Spas JSC – PGU Group based in Polanica-Zdrój (Duszniki-Zdrój, Kudowa-Zdrój, Polanica-Zdrój)	0	0	0
2a	Połczyn Spa – PGU Group JSC	7,606,593.30	2,380,046.10	1
2a	Świeradów Spa – the PGU Group, LLC (Świeradów-Czerniawa)	9,769,232.50	1,353,327.50	1
2a	**PGU Group – total**	**17,375,825.80**	**3,733,373.60**	**2**
2b	Iwonicz Zdrój Spa JSC	7,763,236.70	3,848,866.80	2
2b	Kamień Pomorski Spa LLC	0	0	0
2b	Konstancin Spa JSC	36,068,013.80	7,493,028.10	1
2b	Nałęczów Spa JSC	57,237,762.50	21,766,283.10	3
2b	**BPS – total**	**101,069,012.90**	**33,108,178.10**	**6**
2c	Szczawnica Spa JSC	885,600.00	183,600.00	1
2c	Ustka Spa LLC	0	0	0
2c	Ustroń Spa JSC	3,438,363.60	803,044.70	1
2c	**Managed by a private owner – total**	**4,323,964.00**	**986,644.70**	**2**
2	**Privatised companies (2a+2b+2c)**	**122,768,802.70**	**37,828,196.40**	**10**
3a	Rabka Spa JSC	0	0	0
3b	Krynica-Żegiestów Spa JSC	26,878,884.00	8,500,000.00	1
3	**Property of the State Treasury**	**26,878,884.00**	**8,500,000.00**	**1**
	Total	**211,855,072.60**	**69,681,901.30**	**20**

Key: see Fig. 2 (* including one for 2004–2006)

Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/*

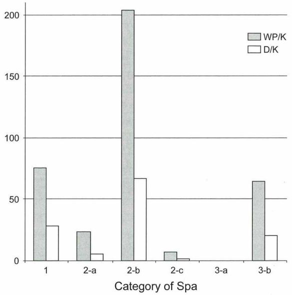
Tab. 2: Projects implemented from EU funds by spas analysed according to ownership

Comparison of the value of financial support, the value of projects implemented and the value of spa capital enabled us to better assess the advantages achieved in particular groups of companies (Table 3, Fig. 3, 4). The indicators show that the best effects were

Category of spa	Value of project [PLN] A	Value of financial support [PLN] B	Value of company capital [PLN] C	WP/K A/C*100	D/K B/C*100
1	62,207,385.90	23,353,705.00	82,320,000.00	75.6	28.4
2a	17,375,825.80	3,733,373.60	72,771,710.00	23.9	5.1
2b	101,069,012.90	33,108,178.00	49,564,160.00	203.9	66.8
2c	4,323,964.00	986,644.70	61,050,000.00	7.1	1.6
3a	0.00	0.00	21,300,000.00	0.0	0.0
3b	26,878,884.00	8,500,000.00	41,720,000.00	64.4	20.4

Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/* (as of 24 April 2014) and the National Court Register *http://www.ems.ms.gov.pl/krs/wyszukiwaniepodmiotu* (as of 7 March 2014)

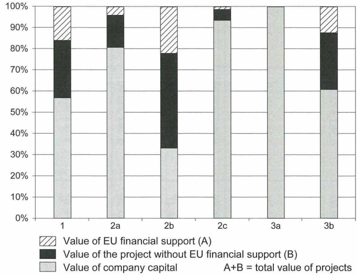
Tab. 3: Value of projects and value of financial support in relation to the value of company capital according to category of spas analysed



Key: see Table 3

Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/*

Fig. 3 Value of projects and value of financial support in relation to the value of company capital according to category of spas analysed



Key: see Table 3

Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/*

Fig. 4: Comparison of the value of company capital with the total value of projects and EU financial support according to category of spas analysed

achieved by privatised companies (Category 2), especially Polish Spas BPS. The value of financial support reached 67% of the companies' capital value and the value of projects exceeded it twice. The companies owned by the State Treasury during the programme periods acquired funds at a level of 20–30% of their capital. The exception is Rabka, which has still to implement a project and is still waiting for final decisions concerning ownership.

We have also analysed the ability of spas to acquire EU funds in the context of their geographical location according to the Polish norm PN-Z-11000:2001 (Tab. 4, Fig. 5). Considering this factor, lowland resorts proved to be most active acquiring 7 million PLN from EU funds per spa with the total value of all projects in a single spa amounting to almost 20 million PLN. If we remove from the lowland type those spas located at the seaside, which did not implement any project in the period analysed, then the results are 10 and 27 million PLN, respectively. Submontane spas acquired the lowest amount of EU funds: Although each of them implemented one project on average, the total value of EU funding was only 1.5 million PLN, and the average total value was 3.7 million PLN. Similar mean funding figures and total values of projects (despite some differences in their number) were noted in submontane-mountain and mountain resorts, which received on average 3 million PLN funding per project with the average overall value approaching 10 million PLN.

It seems that the main factors affecting the value of financial support acquired are first of all the type of ownership and then the type of the project. As we have mentioned, most

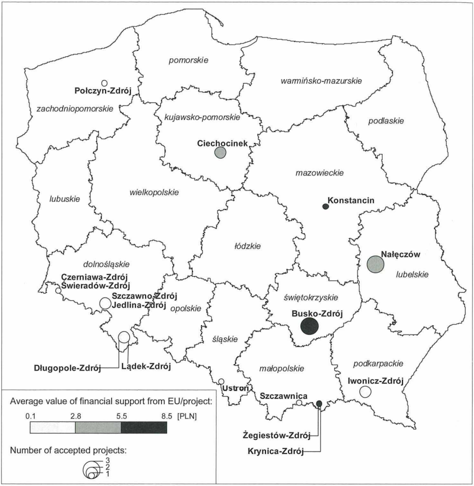
	Category of spa (companies)	Type of spa according to the Polish norm PN-Z-11000:2001	Total value of project [PLN]	Financial support from EU [PLN]	Number of projects
1	Busko-Zdrój Spa, joint-stock company	lowland	27,428,306.30	9,743,438.10	3*
1	Ciechocinek Spa, joint-stock company	lowland	8,637,749.00	6,582,372.70	2
1	Konstancin Spa, joint-stock company	lowland	36,068,013.80	7,493,028.10	1
1	Nałęczów Spa, joint-stock company	lowland	57,237,762.50	21,766,283.10	3
1	Połczyn Spa – the Polish Health Resorts Group, joint-stock company	lowland	7,606,593.30	2,380,046.10	1
1	Kamień Pomorski Spa, limited liability company	lowland (seaside)	0	0	0
1	Ustka Spa, limited liability company	lowland (seaside)	0	0	0
	Total	**lowland**	**136,978,424.90**	**47,965,168.10**	**10**
	per spa	**lowland**	**19,568,346.41**	**6,852,166.87**	**1.4**
	per spa	**lowland (excluding seaside spas)**	**27,395,684.98**	**9,593,033.62**	**2.0**
2	Iwonicz Zdrój Spa, joint-stock company	submontane	7,763,236.70	3,848,866.80	2
2	Kłodzkie Spas, joint-stock company – the Polish Health Resorts Group headquartered in Polanica-Zdrój (Duszniki-Zdrój, Kudowa-Zdrój, Polanica-Zdrój)	submontane	0	0	0
2	Ustroń Spa, joint-stock company	submontane	3,438,363.60	803,044.70	1
	Total	**submontane**	**11,201,600.30**	**4,651,911.50**	**3**
	per spa	**submontane**	**3,733,866.77**	**1,550,637.17**	**1.0**

	Category of spa (companies)	Type of spa according to the Polish norm PN-Z-11000:2001	Total value of project [PLN]	Financial support from EU [PLN]	Number of projects
3	Lądek-Długopole Spa, joint-stock company	submontane-mountain	9,606,951.50	2,545,784.70	2
3	Szczawno-Jedlina Spa	submontane-mountain	16,534,379.10	4,482,109.60	2
3	Świeradów Spa – the Polish Health Resorts Group, limited liability company (Świeradów-Czerniawa)	submontane-mountain	9,769,232.50	1,353,327.50	1
	Total	**submontane-mountain**	**35,910,563.10**	**8,381,221.80**	**5**
	per spa	**submontane-mountain**	**11,970,187.70**	**2,793,740.60**	**1.7**
4	Krynica-Żegiestów Spa, joint-stock company	mountain	26,878,884.00	8,500,000.00	1
4	Rabka Spa, joint-stock company	mountain	0	0	0
4	Szczawnica Spa, joint-stock company	mountain	885,600.00	183,600.00	1
	Total	**mountain**	**27,764,484.00**	**8,683,600.00**	**2**
	per spa	**mountain**	**9,254,828.00**	**2,894,533.33**	**0.7**

* including one for the period 2004–2006

Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/*

Tab. 4: Projects implemented from EU funds by spas analysed according to geographical location



Source: authors based on EU Grants Map *http://www.mapadotacji.gov.pl/*

Fig. 5: Spas according to the number of projects financed and their average value

of the projects implemented (80%) were connected with the improvement of infrastructure (building, modernisation and reconstruction). The value of the projects amounted to 68.5% of the entire EU financial support. Just two spas (Nałęczów and Szczawnica) implemented four projects in the field of modern and competitive production technologies. These spas gained more than 30% of the total value of financial support acquired. The least important factor related to the ability to acquire EU funds was geographical location. Considering the fact that some spas belong to two types and taking into account the considerable diversification within some types, it is not possible to assume that geographical location is a significant factor in acquiring EU funds.

5 Conclusions

Based on this research we can conclude that

1. privatised spas were not able to raise more EU funds than spas owned by the State Treasury;
2. spas with completed privatisation and spas sold or transferred to former owners (Category 2) show considerable differences resulting from the policy of the group of spas. Spas managed by private owners (Category 2c) acquired less funds, because they have less own company capital to invest than spas being part of consortia. The latter have been the most effective, especially Nałęczów[28] investing into a project connected with Research & Development;
3. spas belonging to the State Treasury, except Rabka, have gained significantly more EU support for the improvement of their infrastructure (especially Krynica-Żegiestów, which is excluded from sale). After they had invested, they were immediately transferred to voivodships; (At the end of November 2012, a regulation on their exclusion from privatisation was introduced and at the beginning of December the first spa was transferred without costs.)
4. a regulated legal status supports the acquisition of funds from external sources (including EU funds).

This means that our assumptions formulated in the introduction have in general been confirmed, however with one modification: A regulated legal status is an asset for fund raising not only, when it results from completed privatisation, but also when the company is guaranteed to be excluded from privatisation.

We have thereby shown that economic factors play the key role in acquiring EU funds, while location factors are of minor importance.

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[28] A further route to EU fundraising stems from the fact that this spa resort is the oldest privatised company (since 2001). Some similarities can be noticed in the case of Szczawnica (since 2005 the property of the Stadnicki family). These resorts have completed investment in infrastructure and now may invest in very profitable productive activities, which will provide a financial source for future investment.

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