

Selected Geographical and Tourist Aspects in the Assessment of the Quality and Standard of Living of Polonia in the Greater Toronto Area

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The quality of life is commonly referred to as a determinant of well-being, contentment, happiness or a sense of satisfaction with one's own existence. Often used interchangeably with the level, conditions or standard of living. Quality of life is the satisfaction of meeting all human needs. The main aim of this research is to determine the level and quality of life in terms of tourism by the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area, which includes the city of Toronto and four regions: Halton, Peel, York and Durham. The article will present its own model of objective factors (standard of living) and subjective factors (life quality) interacting with each other with a particular emphasis on geographic and tourism aspects. The main aim of this article is to show how the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area assesses the aspects related to tourism management in the city. The results of the study will be presented on the basis of a survey questionnaire conducted on 583 respondents. The respondents assessed, among other things, whether they were satisfied with the conditions of rest and relaxation in this city, public transport and the environmental quality. Respondents were also asked to evaluate the activity of Polish travel agencies operating in the Greater Toronto Area. The study will also address matters related to improving the quality of life and tourism development in the city. As indicated by the respondents, such activities as supporting existing tourist activities, expansion of bicycle paths or increasing sports and recreational infrastructure (i.e. construction projects of swimming pools, tennis courts) are the main needs in the city, which could contribute to the higher rated aspects of Toronto related to tourism. Data will be presented showing that in the Polish community in the last twelve months their household had enough income to cover the costs related to leisure, vacations, holidays or school breaks.

Keywords: Polish people, Toronto, quality of living, standard of living, geographical and tourism aspect

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Introduction

Quality of life currently constitutes one of the key problems of the research in numerous scientific disciplines. Due to its complex nature, it is considered in terms of philosophy, psychology, ethics, medicine, economics, sociology, physical culture or family sciences. Despite differences in the way of defining the quality of life, researchers agree that its analysis should cover two dimensions: broadly understood objective conditions and subjective welfare (well-being). Mutual relations of the quality of life with tourism and recreation in large metropolises are a fascinating and, at the same time, complex field for multidisciplinary research.

Residents of large cities that also fulfil a tourist function, should benefit from increased tourism and recreation movement, reflected in objective living conditions and a subjective sense of their satisfaction. According to various sources, around 50% of the world's population lives in cities. For comparison, in the 1950s of the 20th century, only 30% of the world's population lived in urban agglomerations. However, forecasts for the next decades do not leave any illusions – cities will develop and their population will grow: in 2050 it will reach 66%, and in Europe 80% (United Nations Organization, 2014). A city constitutes a network of intangible relationships and opportunities that it creates for its residents. It is the level of satisfaction of the residents' needs that is identified with the quality of life in the city (Yuan et al., 1999).

The tourist function of the cities is expressed by a size and level of tourist traffic as well as a level and quality of tourist development. Tourism in a large city blends into its structure and landscape, obtaining features distinguishing it from tourism in the non-urbanised areas or in seaside and mountain resorts (Pearce, 2001). Large cities are usually associated with a heterogeneous society, cultural diversity and a big-city lifestyle. It should also be emphasized that in large cities numerous attractions and facilities are not only created for tourists and they do not solely serve them. Nowadays, tourist functions of the cities are not only of an exogenous nature as differences in the behaviour of tourists and residents who also seek opportunities for an attractive manner of spending their leisure time close to their place of residence, are blurred.

A characteristic feature of the city of Toronto is its multiculturalism with all its manifestations, which combined with a very well-developed base, a high quality of services and proper tourist economy, makes the city and its surrounding areas very attractive.

Toronto is a modern multicultural metropolis that encompasses the entire spectrum of social and cultural diversity. This is a diversified space taking into consideration ethical and racial aspects related to inhabitants that respects the symbols assigned to them. Multiculturalism, defined by Fish (1997) as strong, is manifested – above all – in the ethnic diversity of the inhabitants of the modern cities. From a sociological point of view, development of ethnic groups cultivating various elements of their own cultures constituted an important consequence of their growth. As a result, many urban centres have been and are – to some extent – culturally diverse and thus, multicultural.

This phenomenon is conditioned by both genesis and development of each of them. It can be read from both their history and a sociological portrait of their inhabitants. Therefore, a cultural map of the city is, on one hand, a result of the historical process of its creation, and on the other hand, of migration movements that direct crowds of people to the largest cities of the world. One of these visible ethnic groups in Toronto is the Polish community that has been asked to assess the level and quality of life in the city in the described research.

Migration has become an indistinguishable feature of contemporary societies, therefore an ongoing effort to study migrants' leisure is of fundamental cultural and sociological importance. Research should focus on how leisure among migrants is treated as an adaptation mechanism and identity building in a place of residence, as well as how the role of leisure affects the development of a sense of belonging to a new place (Horolets, 2012), which fundamentally affects migrants' assessment of the quality and standard of urban life.

Data from 2011 show that 47% of the population of Toronto is classified as visible minorities. Among them, the most numerous groups are immigrants from South Asia (298,372, or 12% of the population), the Chinese (283,075 – 11.4%), Africans (208,555 – 8.4%), Filipinos (102,555 – 4, 1%) and immigrants from Latin America (64,860 – 2.6%), Western Asia (42,755 – 1.7%), South-East Asia (37,495 – 1.5%), Korea (34,220 – 1.4%), Arabs (22,485 – 0.9%) and Japan (11,965 – 0.5%). Among the remaining inhabitants of the Canadian metropolis, immigrants of British descent (England, Scotland, Ireland) constitute 19%. The remaining population of Toronto that is not regarded as a visible minority, equals 1,313,930 people, representing 53.1% of the total. This number includes the indigenous inhabitants of the Country of Maple Leaf. It should be noted that throughout Canada there are 5 million representatives of visible minorities in total, 96% of whom live in the cities, representing 68% of the total population of the Canadian metropolises. Before 1961, the coloured population constituted 3% of the population of Toronto (Anisef, Lanphier, 2003).

The aspect of history and distribution of the Polish community in Canada is discussed in numerous publications of the Polish specialists of Canadian studies: A. Raczynska (1986, 1988, 1997, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2018, 2020), M. Kijewska-Trembecka (2013), M. Gabryś (2010), M. Krywult-Albańska (2011, 2015), T. Soroka (2013), E. Sojka (2010), J. Matejko (1979), J. Plewko (1995), P. Kaczorowski and others (2002). All the above-mentioned scientists discuss the issues related to history, multiculturalism, migration, Polish pastoral activity and the causes of emigration as well as the Canadian policy towards incoming migrants in their research. So far, there has been no research conducted in the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area that would assess the quality and standard of living in this city with regard to geographical and tourist aspects.

Given the multiculturalism of GTA and the interpenetration of different cultures, nationalities, and origins, it is essential to examine how Polish Canadians assess their

life in this metropolis. Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to determine the standard of living and quality of life of the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area, which includes the city of Toronto and four regions: Halton, Peel, York, and Durham. Because the field research has been extensive, this article presents only some of the results obtained. The Polish community's assessment of the areas of life selected by the author in terms of geography and tourism will be described.

The Course of the Research and the Time and Spatial Scope of the Empirical Research

35,151,728 people lived in Canada in 2016, where 1,106,585 inhabitants were of Polish origin. This is 3.9% of the total population. Ontario, where the Greater Toronto Area is located, constitutes the most numerous provinces inhabited by Polonia. 523,490 people lived in Ontario in the year 2016, while the largest number of people of Polish descent in relation to all residents is in Manitoba, where the percentage of Poles is as high as 6.9%. Provinces of Nunavut and the North-Western Territories are inhabited by the smallest number of people of Polish descent.

The main area of research was the Greater Toronto Area which was chosen because it contains the largest Polonia in Canada, comprising five districts in the Greater Toronto Area: Peel, Halton, York, Durham and the city of Toronto itself.. 259,715 people of Polish origin live in the Greater Toronto Area, which is 4% of the total population in this area. Most Polish people live in Mississauga, in the county of Peel. This population equals 43,350 people, which is 6% of the total population in Mississauga. A significant number of people of Polish origin live in the county of York, in Vaughan. This number includes 18,265 people, which is 5.96% of the total population in the city. The smallest number of Polish people lives in two towns in the county of Durham. This is the city of Brock, with 335 people of Polish descent, and the city of Scugog, with 590 people (Statistics Canada, 2016).

The time period of the conducted research covered the years of 2018 and 2019. In 2018, the pilot studies were conducted, whereas the actual research in Canada was carried out. The field studies took place during the period of September 2019. The research was conducted through Polish institutions operating in GTA; cultural institutions and Polish schools.

During the implemented research, the author has applied the quantitative method. The quantitative methods are commonly associated with the studies where the numbers are used to characterize the properties of observation units and/or to present the research results (although, in fact, other, 'non-numerical' formal objects, e.g., graphs or relationships, are applied). The quantitative research is identified with the statistical methods, which is justified as they occupy a dominant position among the quantitative methods. Providing the explanations by measuring the examined

phenomena constitutes the essence of the quantitative research. The results of these kinds of the research are subject to the mathematical and statistical analyses that enable to determine the causes of their occurrence as well as the connections and relationships that occur between them, which – in turn – is used to determine the principles and regularities and sometimes laws relating to the examined reality. In the quantitative research, the fundamental activity is measurement, without which it would lose its quantitative character. Most often, this measurement refers to frequency of occurrence of the examined phenomena or the degree of severity of the examined feature (Alejziak, 2008)

One of the quantitative studies is a diagnostic survey method in the form of questionnaire surveys. This method has been applied in this research. The results of the research conducted among the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area constituted the fundamental empirical base. The empirical part of the research took the form of the diagnostic survey, conducted with the application of a representative method among the population of Polonia of the Greater Toronto Area. The appropriate research covered a total of 612 respondents, including 583 questionnaires used for the analysis. The research has been carried out among the individuals who were at least 15 years old. The survey questionnaire has been prepared in two languages: Polish and English and consisted of 17 questions and 15 questions in the personal information section. In the quantitative research, answers are most often 'provided' and respondents indicate one of them.

Geographical and Tourist Model of Level and Quality of Life in the City – Literature Review

The quality of life arouses interest in a number of sciences, including economics, sociology, psychology, ethics and philosophy. Controversies over terminology of this term is determined primarily by its complexity and differences in the interpretation of its basic components. As a conceptual category, it appeared after the Second World War as it was initially associated with material well-being of the individual; then it was extended to include intangible assets. In the 1950s, Campbell identified good life with consumption, making it dependent on the state of ownership. In 1973, elements of personal satisfaction were already pointed out, in 1975 – the necessary condition of happiness was added (Rokicka, 2013: 166).

Generally speaking, subjective measures can be divided into those that express value judgments and those that relate to the respondent's intentions. Value judgments are, in particular, characteristics of the degree of satisfaction (e.g., from work, home, financial situation, etc.) and self-esteem (e.g., whether the person possesses sufficient preparation for the performed job, self-assessment of the level of income, inhabited flat, standard of the provided services, etc.) (Rutkowski, 1991, 1987).

Complexity of the concept of 'quality of life' results directly from its division into subjective factors (qualitative, non-measurable) – individually assessed from the perspective of the individual and objective ones (quantitative, measurable) – giving a picture of the economic situation based on 'hard' indicators. It is further considered in terms of welfare, standard of living (in an objective, measurable sense) and well-being, quality of life (in a subjective and qualitative sense).

Defining the life situation according to the point of view of the individual/group indicates an individual quality of life – assessment of the specific spheres of life in a subjective and objective way and a collective quality of life that constitutes a generalisation of the individual (separate) qualities of life concerning a specific social group, e.g. inhabitants of the district. The research on the quality of life presents two categories: a direct quality of life as a result of the surveys (this category is presented in this study) and an indirect one, resulting from the public statistics, determined by means of indicators, e.g. 1 physician per 1000 inhabitants.

Consequently, quality of life is a total of the living conditions of the individual/group, shaped in the social, economic, environmental and awareness dimensions of development of the specific space (territorial unit, city) that – in an objective and subjective (quantitative and qualitative) perspective – determines the sense of fulfilment of needs and aspirations for life in a particular place and time.

It should be noted that simultaneous subjective and objective research is connected with their mutual relations. At the same time, it cannot be assumed that an objective improvement in the quality of life is always accompanied by the sensation of subjective improvement in the quality of life and vice versa.

While undertaking the analysis of the factors shaping the quality of life in the city, we should refer to the definition of the quality of life concerning the way of implementing tasks or life plans (Leźnicki, 2011: 214). The manner the quality of life is perceived by individual people depends on a number of socio-economic factors, constituting the character of a particular place (city), but also, and perhaps above all, the desired degree of satisfaction of material and non-material needs. The system of values determines what the society accepts, among others: the manner of coming to power, getting rich in a particular environment, as a key element it determines the choice of appropriate development tasks, individually selected and adjusted to the needs and capabilities of a particular person. On the other hand, the needs of higher and lower levels also result from one's own individual expectations, adopted goals and available opportunities. They ultimately play a decisive role in determining the factors influencing the quality of life. This is an individual who chooses a set of the needs essential for him/her in a particular place and time, therefore the level of satisfaction will be individual for each person (Kaleta, 1988; Borowicz, 1988).

Otok (1987: 79) defines a quality of life as 'a set of spatial-environmental, productive and cultural factors that make up the reality in which a person lives', while K. Piróg (2018) describes a quality of life in the city as a sense of well-being resulting

from the satisfaction of the life needs related to a specific lifestyle and conditions of urban life.

Living conditions refer to the quality of the ecosystem (residential environment) in which residents of the city function. Therefore, it can be assumed that the quality of the ecosystem has an impact on the quality of life, i.e. the better the living conditions, the better the quality of life. While considering the research dilemmas in relation to ecosystem analyses, i.e. analyses of the living conditions, it is reasonable to distinguish between micro-ecosystem, meso-ecosystem and macro-ecosystem. Referring to the division presented by J. Turowski, we assume that a micro-ecosystem (micro-housing environment) includes 'flat, house, home environment'. A meso-ecosystem (wider living environment) includes 'residential complex, housing estate, district'. In contrast, a macro-ecosystem (macro-living environment) includes 'roads, communication and transport channels, facilities and centres of the city, city'. (Turowski, 1979: 40).

According to the research conducted by the OECD (2016), Australia is the country with the highest standard of living and, at the same time, the highest level of satisfaction with the lives of its inhabitants. The next places are occupied by: Sweden, Canada, Norway and Switzerland. Poland is below the average of OECD countries – Poles are less satisfied with their lives than the statistical inhabitants of OECD countries.

Tourism provides cities with energy, vitality and dynamics – it connects people, creates relationships and teaches how to function together despite differences (UNWTO 2012). However, in the face of the global and mass nature of tourism in the cities, the question arises: how to manage tourism in a responsible and sustainable way so that the quality of life of residents thanks to the development of tourism will increase rather than decrease, with a simultaneous inclusion of the needs of tourists.

As a result, the development of tourism in urban agglomerations can significantly influence the quality of life of the city's residents. It may take the form of both opportunities as well as threats: in the event of sustainable management of tourism development, the city and its inhabitants should benefit from it and support activities related to increasing the number of arrivals of domestic and foreign guests. Otherwise, in the event of losing control over the development of tourism, it may become a nuisance to the city's residents and generate problems that consequently reduce the perception of the quality of life in the agglomeration (congestion, traffic problems, price increases, noise, rubbish).

It is a common belief, also reflected in various indices that the quality of life in a city is determined primarily by factors, such as: safety, health care, availability of housing, schools and kindergartens as well as green areas, the cost of living in comparison with average earnings or the quality of the environment (in particular, air purity). However, the aspects related to geographical and tourist factors that influence the assessment of the quality and standard of living by inhabitants constitute an important element in building a quality of life in the city, as presented in this article.

In addition to extensive literature on the quality and standard of living, there has not been a scientific publication regarding the analysis of the assessment of the level and quality of life of the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area up to the present. This is an important issue from the sociological, geographical, migration and cultural point of view. The geography – tourism aspect and evaluation of the satisfaction with the standard and quality of tourism life in the opinion of the Canadian Polonia community has been undertaken in the research.

One of the main assumptions of the research was to construct an individual model of the objective factors (standard of living) and subjective factors (quality of life) and to examine whether the suggested indicators/measures interact with each other. The model has been created on the basis of the prepared questions in the survey questionnaire and takes into account the specific factors that have and may have an impact on the overall assessment of the standard and quality of life. The described model including the geographic (tourism) factors is presented in Table 2. In the demonstrated research, individual relationships will not be described, but only the factors that the author has examined during the research in the Greater Toronto Area will be listed.

The terms, such as *'living conditions'*, *'standard of living'* or *'living standards'* are used interchangeably with the term *'quality of life'*. Some use these terms as synonyms. It should be noted that *'standard of living'* is determined by objective living conditions, and *'quality of life'* is influenced by (also) subjective factors, such as: aspirations and the degree of their satisfaction or perception. The model of the objective factors (standard of living) and subjective factors (quality of life) put forward by the author has included demographic factors, social factors, cultural factors, economic factors, political and legal factors, educational factors, health factors, economic factors and geographical factors that attention has been devoted to in this study.

The main objective of the article is to present the manner the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area assesses accessibility of urban tourism as well as the level and quality of life in terms of geography and tourism. Taking into account the above-mentioned aspects, the author presents her model of the quality and level of life that includes the following geographical and tourist factors: satisfaction with the place of residence, assessment of accessibility to communication in the city, assessment of the natural environment, access to communication between the cities located within the Greater Toronto Area, access to sports facilities, access to culture (cinemas, museums, theatres) as well as assessment of tourist development in the city of Toronto. Table 1 presents the model of the objective geographic factors (standard of living) and subjective geographical factors (quality of life) that have been considered during the empirical research in the community of Polonia living in the Greater Toronto Area.

In the suggested model of the quality and standard of living, each indicator has been matched with particular indicators/measures, both in the factors related to the assessment of the level and quality of life. In her research, the author has primarily asked the respondents how they have assessed transport accessibility in the city,

Table 1

Model of geographical and tourist factors; objective ones (quality of life) and subjective ones (quality of life).

Objective conditions	Indicators / Measures Standard of living	Subjective conditions	Indicators / Measures Quality of life
Geographic (tourism) factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – availability of public transport – transport connections with other cities – respondents' place of residence – quality of the natural environment – accessibility to rest, relaxation and tourism – access to practising sports (sports facilities) – access to culture 	Geographic (tourism) factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – satisfaction with the place of residence – satisfaction with transport accessibility – satisfaction with the environment – satisfaction with possibility of practising sports – satisfaction use of cultural institutions (cinema, theatre, museum)

Source: Author's own compilation.

transport connections with other cities within the Greater Toronto Area, their place of residence in the city (geographical location, location), the quality of the natural environment (objective factors, living standards) and satisfaction with their place of residence, satisfaction with transport accessibility, satisfaction with the natural environment (subjective factors, living standards). Apart from geographical factors, the respondents have also assessed the factors related to tourism. These included: accessibility to rest, relaxation and tourism, accessibility to sport (objective factors, quality of life) and their satisfaction with the possibility of practising sport (subjective factors, quality of life).

Analysis of the Subjective and Objective Geographical and Tourist Factors by Polonia in the Greater Toronto Area

Urbanisation constitutes a geographical and tourist factor that has a considerable impact on tourist activity and the quality and standard of living in the city. A. Pedro (2006) emphasizes that tourist activity increases with the number of inhabitants. Considering the type of settlement unit, it can be stated that the level of tourist activity of people living in cities is higher than the one of those living in villages (Berlin-Dzikowska et al., 1987). The cause of this situation should be seen in the overlapping of numerous factors that adversely affect the tourist activity of village inhabitants,

e.g. a smaller amount of free time, a lower level of education and income (Aleziak, 1990). However, regardless of the type of settlement unit, the factor that definitely differentiates the tourist activity of the population is the size of spatial units (Wasia-kowa, 1982). The research regarding relations between population density and tourist activity indicates that higher population density influences the increase of tourist activity (Aleziak, 2009). Tourism activity is also highly diversified in relation to the new regions. It results from differences in the level of social and economic development of the regions, the condition of tourist infrastructure and occurrence of tourism and recreation values in the city (Nowakowska, 1989).

Studies of tourism and geographical activity in the context of a city size indicate that the percentage of people participating in tourism increases as the number of inhabitants of cities increases. Therefore, a study conducted in Toronto in the context of satisfaction with accessibility is fully justified. In the opinion of J. Raboteura (Alej-ziak, 2009), the impact of a place of residence is visible in three aspects of participation in tourism: the rate of tourist activity (also in the city itself), length of trips and the nature of destinations. On the basis of the analysis of the research carried out in many countries, Raboteur (2000) estimated the average values of tourism activity rates depending on the number of inhabitants. These are as follows:

- over 1,000,000 inhabitants: 70–80%
- from 100,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants: 50–70%
- from 50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants: 40–50%
- from 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants: 30–40%
- under 20,000 inhabitants: 15–30%

In the survey questionnaire, the author has asked Canadian Polonia about assessment of the subjective and objective aspects related to geographic-tourism factors. Answers to the individual questions can be found in Table 2 (objective conditions, assessment of the living standards) and Table 3 (subjective conditions, assessment of the quality of life). The respondents have been asked to rate each of the listed elements, marking their opinion on a six-point Likert scale – from *I am very satisfied* to *I am very dissatisfied, I have no opinion* (in the case of questions regarding assessment of the standard of living), to assess the quality of life (subjective factors) where they rated their assessment of the geographic-tourism factors from *very good* to *very bad* and *I have no opinion*. The six-point Likert scale has also been used in the question about the problems related to geographic-tourism elements, which – according to the respondents – should be addressed first. The respondents have rated the scale of the problem from *a very important problem* to *an unimportant problem at all, I have no opinion*. Table 3 presents the answers of the respondents to the questions concerning assessment of the standard of living in the context of the geographic-tourism factors.

A. Zajadasz (2014) describes the accessibility of a tourist space in geographical terms mainly in the categories of transport accessibility as an opportunity to get to

Table 2

Assessment of the standard of living of the selected geographic-tourism factors by Polonia in the Greater Toronto Area.

Satisfaction with areas of life	very satisfied	satisfied	quite satisfied	dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	I have no opinion
Availability of public transport	123	122	241	40	40	17
Transport connections with other cities	98	132	214	30	23	86
Respondents' place of residence	98	103	206	89	27	60
Quality of the natural environment	87	69	123	63	54	187
Accessibility to rest, relaxation and tourism	115	268	63	26	17	94
Access to practising sports (sports facilities)	109	209	156	42	17	50
Access to culture	102	239	116	27	21	78

Source: Author's own compilation based on the conducted own research.

the destination by means of communication as well as a system of communication links between cities, tourist trails and lifts enabling tourists to make trips within a selected tourist region to specific places and to move around the city efficiently by public transport (Warszyńska, Jackowski, 1978; Kowalczyk, 2011).

Transport accessibility in the city and the time of reaching the place of rest constitute the aspects that the author has included in geographical factors and has asked the respondents how they assess this aspect in the Greater Toronto Area. In the 19th century, rail transport became the 'spark' that contributed to the development of tourism, while in the 20th century, this function was fulfilled by car and air transport. The development of transport results in a rapid increase in the mobility of society, significantly facilitating and accelerating the possibility of changing the place of residence. The rapid development of means of transport causes an increase in their number and their speed, improves accessibility, travel comfort, travel safety and significantly reduces travel costs (Ziółkowska-Weiss, 2019). Consequently, transport accessibility plays a major role in the assessment of the quality and standard of living of the inhabitants of a specific city. Urban transport and urban mobility related to this, are programmed and transformed by the city authorities (Tarkowski, 2016). However, this is increasingly influenced by the residents themselves. They notice that the transformations that transport in the city will undergo have a significant impact on their quality of life.

The fact that urban transport has a very high impact on the quality of life is demonstrated by the annual ranking of the world's cities in terms of quality of life. Despite including various indicators, those in which the share of car transport is low, dominate. Some of them are famous for sustainable transport – a large share of public transport, cycling and walking. In the ranking of cities with the highest quality of life prepared in 2019 by Mercer, these were in order: Vienna, Zurich, Vancouver, Munich, Auckland, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Copenhagen, Geneva and Basel. In the 2019 ranking published by The Economist Intelligence Unit, these were in order: Vienna, Melbourne, Sydney, Osaka, Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto, Tokyo, Copenhagen and Adelaide (Kopeć, 2019).

The increase in the number of travellers is also significantly influenced by tourist development and the related development of tourist services. 'Tourism infrastructure is one of the basic elements of tourist attractiveness of tourist reception areas' (Kurek, 2007: 83). The following aspects are of great importance for travellers: a developed network of accommodation facilities, modern resorts as well as access to sports facilities and broadly-defined culture.

It is considered that if a region, country or town is to be attractive for tourists, it should have an element attracting them, e.g. clean air, monuments, access to culture and various attractions that are not found elsewhere. Diversity constitutes one of the most important features of tourism. Taking this diversity into account, while analysing tourist attractions, they can be grouped – after Swarbrooke (1995) – in the following way:

- features of natural environment,
- anthropogenic sites (buildings, places) that were created for purposes other than attracting tourists. These include, for example, religious, fortification and other facilities that currently attract a significant number of visitors who consider these places to be a tourist attraction;
- anthropogenic sites (buildings, places) which have been specifically designed to attract visitors and meet their expectations. These include, for example, theme parks;
- access to culture (theatres, cinemas, museums).

Culture may be very important in building individual satisfaction from personal life. Satisfaction with the way the individual spends his/her time is connected, among other things, with the use of art, participation in cultural life, possibility of pursuing a hobby or the feeling of personal development, which translates into a subjective perception of life satisfaction. In the event of active participation in culture, regularity seems to be of great importance, in a way accumulating satisfaction from personal effort put into this form of spending free time. The diversity of cultural offers in which the individual can participate, and the independence of choosing various activities as a form of entertainment seem to be vital (Cuyper et al., 2012; Wheatley and Bickerton,

2016). As a result, each form of culture in the city and opportunity to participate in it significantly influences the assessment of the level and quality of life.

While analysing the answers to this question, the respondents have most often indicated that they are satisfied with accessibility to rest, relaxation and tourism. There were as many as 268 answers of this type. The second most frequently provided answers have indicated satisfaction with the accessibility to culture – 239 people. As far as satisfaction with public transport is concerned, as many as 241 people have answered that they are moderately satisfied, similarly as they are satisfied with their place of residence. As many as 206 people have given this answer. 187 people did not have opinions on assessment of satisfaction with the natural environment in the city and 86 people did not have opinions concerning transport between the cities. This significant number of answers to this question may indicate that the Canadian Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area is urbanised and uses their means of transport to move to another city. 115 people are very satisfied with accessibility to tourism and 109 with availability of sports facilities and possibilities of practising sport. Assessment of the natural environment (54 respondents) and access to public transport (40 respondents) were in the first place among all provided answers indicating considerable dissatisfaction with these aspects.

One of the research objectives was to check how the Polonia in the Greater Toronto Area assesses the quality of life (subjective assessment) of the selected geographic-tourism factors. Table 3 presents the answers to this question.

Table 3

Assessment of the quality of life of the selected geographic-tourism factors by Polonia in the Greater Toronto Area.

Element of meeting the needs in the city	very good	good	quite good	bad	very bad	I have no opinion
Satisfaction with the place of residence	100	128	205	78	16	56
Satisfaction with transport accessibility	114	132	134	58	47	103
Satisfaction with the environment	102	136	179	23	19	124
Satisfaction with possibility of practising sports	107	211	150	48	19	48
Satisfaction with activities of Polish travel agencies	102	198	132	50	12	89
Satisfaction use of cultural institutions (cinema, theatre, museum)	152	231	127	27	23	23

Source: Author’s own compilation based on the conducted own research.

The respondents assessed their quality of life in the Greater Toronto Area in a separate question. 205 people have rated their place of residence as average. 47 people have assessed transport services in the city in terms of quality of life as very bad and 23 people have evaluated their use of cultural facilities, such as; cinema, theatres, museums as very bad. Respondents have also been asked to assess the activities of the Polish travel agencies operating in the Greater Toronto Area. The activity of the Polish travel agencies was assessed very well by 102 respondents and well by 198 people, thus confirming that their quality of life related to the activity of the Polish business entities in Toronto is an important aspect increasing their overall satisfaction with the quality of life in this city. Only 12 people who have participated in the survey have rated the work and activities of the Polish travel agencies in the Greater Toronto Area as very bad.

In the prepared questionnaire, the author has also asked the respondents about the issues that – in their opinion – should be addressed first, thus improving their general level and quality of life in Toronto. Among the suggested aspects, there were four related to the geographical and tourist aspects of the city. They included support for the existing tourist activities, e.g. through subsidies from public funds, extension of the bicycle paths, promotion of tourism in the Greater Toronto Areas and an increase in sports infrastructure in the city (extension of the sports facilities). The answers to this question are in Table 4.

Table 4

Which of the following problems should be addressed in the first place? Please, rate each aspect.

Problems in the Greater Toronto Area	very important problem	important problem	quite an important problem	problem of minor importance	unimportant problem at all	I have no opinion
Support the existing tourist activities, e.g. through grants and subsidies for the activities	231	182	115	27	5	23
Extension of cycling paths	94	132	136	74	74	73
Promotion of tourism in the city Toronto	276	103	104	26	25	49
Increase in sports and recreation infrastructure (development of sports facilities, e.g. construction of swimming pools, tennis courts)	115	193	138	26	17	94

The quality of life in cities and other settlement areas depends equally on the actions of local authorities as well as on the initiatives of residents. In particular, this quality of life relies on the economic condition of the city. Local authorities may initiate specific actions in the economic sphere, e.g. to stimulate and facilitate the development of entrepreneurship, reduce taxes that are the responsibility of the commune authorities, develop infrastructure to increase the investment attractiveness of the town, etc. According to the respondents, a very important problem that should be addressed by the city authorities is to support the existing tourist activities, e.g. through grants and subsidies for the activities and promotion of tourist business entities from the public funds of the city. This opinion has been expressed by as many as 231 people. However, according to the respondents, promotion of tourism in the city of Toronto constitutes an issue that should be addressed first. This is a very important issue for 276 people. 94 people did not have an opinion on the increase in sports and recreational infrastructure (extension of sports facilities, e.g. construction of swimming pools, tennis courts), with 193 people believing that it is an important issue to be considered by the city authorities. For 74 people, the extension of cycling paths is not a significant problem at all, considered at the level of the improvement of quality and living standards in the Greater Toronto Area.

Another question in the survey questionnaire related to the issue of tourism and travel opportunities for the Polish community living in the Greater Toronto Area was whether respondents or persons in their household experienced the situation when they lacked money for costs of relaxation, holiday leave as well as summer or winter holidays of the children over the last 12 months.

The respondents had three answers to choose from, namely: 'No, there has not been such a situation', 'Yes, there has been such a situation', 'I do not know, I do not remember (I do not want to answer)'. 391 people have answered that there has not been such a situation that they lacked money for expenses related to the treatment or purchase of medicines they needed over the last year. As many as 158 people have refused to provide this answer and 34 respondents have admitted that there was a situation when they did not have enough money to cover the costs of treatment over the last year.

Discussion and Conclusion

A tourist area is defined in the literature as a factor or set of factors attracting tourists (Kowalczyk, 2007), while a cultural landscape comprehensively reflects natural phenomena and processes related to human activity (Myga-Piątek, 2005), is a resultant of history and culture, which are expressed in the way of life and human's relations with the natural environment (Rembowska, 2002). Each national and ethnic group has developed distinctive elements that set them apart from other population groups.

The diversity of ethnic and national groups makes tourists more frequently and more eagerly include in their travel plans cities, towns and regions where one can get acquainted with the culture, and the traditions of selected minorities (Rath, 2007). Each minority currently cultivates old traditions and customs, often uses its own language and writing, its own religion, and is distinguished by its clothing, music, handicrafts, etc. All these elements become tourist attractions, determining the great influence of the cultural heritage of national and ethnic minorities on the development of tourism in Toronto and the geographic and tourist areas after the city itself.

Taking into account the described area that is inhabited by a large number of people of Polish origin, this article pertains to an important topic related to the assessment of the level and quality of life of tourist and geographical factors by the Polish community living in Toronto. Such extensive research within this field has not been conducted so far. As Horoles et al. (2018), write, immigrants' leisure is still under-researched. Recreation in the natural environment in particular. Therefore, in her research, in addition to geographical factors affecting the quality of life ratings in the GTA, the author asked respondents how they rated the availability of recreation, relaxation and tourism (e.g. parks) in the city and what they thought the availability and opportunity for sports in the city was. Although promoting positive recreational experiences in nature may seem less pressing than satisfying immigrants' basic needs such as education or employment, outdoor recreation contributes positively to immigrants' quality of life (Stodolska, Shinew, 2009) and helps prevent a number of mental and physical disorders (Chiesura, 2004).

The presented material constitutes only a part of the research and issues that were raised and examined during the field research among the Polish community in the Greater Toronto Area in 2018–2019. On the basis of the presented data concerning the issues related to tourism and geographical development, it can be concluded that:

- While studying the standard of living, the Canadian Polish community is most satisfied with accessibility to leisure, relaxation and tourism as well as sports facilities.
- While examining the quality of life, the Canadian Polish community highly evaluates their satisfaction with the activity of the Polish travel agencies operating in the Greater Toronto Area and access to culture in its broadest sense (cinemas, theatres, museums).
- The Canadian Polish community believes that the promotion of urban tourism and support for existing tourism-related businesses are very important aspects to be addressed by the city authorities.
- A significant proportion of the respondents declare that they did not lack money for costs of the trips and traveling during the last 12 months.

Consequently, the development of tourism has a significant impact on the functioning of cities as well as changes and uses of urban space. It should also be added

that, as a result of the suburbanisation processes, the historical centre of many cities is losing its attractiveness in favour of suburban areas and new areas of the cities offering new products, such as business districts, conference centres, shopping centres and theme parks. Uncontrolled suburbanisation causing an urban sprawl is unfavourable from the perspective of the development of leisure services in the city. It loses a significant proportion of potential, often wealthy customers working in the city, yet settling in the suburban areas. These problems are exacerbated by a poor development of the transport infrastructure and emerging transport congestions that do not encourage the use of leisure time services in the city. Thus, an efficient transport system is particularly important for large cities and metropolitan areas, not only because of the access to tourist and sports facilities however, as confirmed by the results of the research group presented in the article, it is important in the daily efficient and fast movement in the city, which is connected with the assessment of the quality and standard of living in the city.

Hsu & Hsu, 2012; Jacka, 2005; Li, 2006, proved in their study that due to work exhaustion and a lack of free time, migrants rarely go out after work and are reluctant to spend money on leisure activities. Their research suggested that there are significant differences between ethnicity and minority race in terms of park visitation patterns, recreation styles and participation rates in recreational activities. Studies have shown that Latinos are more likely to visit parks in large, family groups than non-Latinos and African Americans (Gobster, 2002). In contrast, research by Horoles et al. (2018) showed that although interracial/interethnic contact in urban parks is rather superficial, it can contribute to building mutual understanding and reducing conflict (Gentin, 2011; Peters, 2010; Peters, Elands, Buijs, 2010). Park visits also contribute to developing attachment and a sense of belonging to the community (Peters et al., 2010). Such visits to recreational sites provide a sense of relaxation and comfort and help reduce loneliness among immigrants (Peters, 2010; Rishbeth, Finney, 2006) which largely contributes to a better assessment of the quality of life in terms of geographic and tourist perceptions of one's place of residence.

Inadequate access to recreational facilities and services, which may result from a lack of familiarity with existing public and commercial recreational service offers in the city, may influence migrants' assessments of quality and standard of living in terms of tourism and recreation. Inadequate access may also result from specific characteristics of the place of residence (e.g., impoverished city center neighborhoods with few green spaces, parks, trails, and sports facilities) that are not coincidentally related to the marginal status of migrants (e.g., housing in such areas tends to be cheaper and therefore accessible to migrants). Inadequate access to sports facilities may also be related to a lack of access to state-subsidized recreation possibilities or other services that would provide more time and savings which could be devoted to urban recreation and leisure (Ruble, Shaw, 1991). Long et al. (2011) showed in their study that further distance from home to recreational sites (e.g., a city park)

discourages migrants from taking up recreational and sporting activities that they could have taken up at sites offered to residents by the city.

As Stodolska et al. (2016) claims, activities to foster opportunities for immigrants to experience their host country through contact with nature are needed. These activities could include school trips for immigrant children to nearby nature reserves, creating low-cost opportunities for immigrant families to visit more distant recreation and tourist destinations, and providing information about outdoor recreation possibilities in the city and on its periphery.

The quality of public spaces, man-made urban landscapes and architecture are important for the living conditions of the urban population. As 'soft location factors', they play an important role in attracting businesses based on knowledge, a skilled and creative workforce and tourism. In order to ensure the development of the city, the authorities must primarily take care of the quality of life in the city (Niezgoda, 2006). The concept of *smart cities* whose idea is to organise urban space in such a way so as to fulfil all expectations of the inhabitants effectively, which will contribute to an increase in their quality of life, is also becoming widespread.

The quality of life and urban consumption depend on the development of infrastructure and broadly defined leisure services, spatial order, unique attractions, a high quality of the public spaces and overall aesthetics of the city. In cities of the highly developed countries that have recognised the significance of these development factors and regarded the improvement of the quality of life in the city as the basic objective accompanying the planned activities and attracting tourists has become one of the determinants of the city development policy; tourism is also an important sector of the economy, hence the typical modern development projects supported or financed by local authorities – e.g. construction of stadiums, congress centres, museums, establishment of parks, etc. At the same time, the broadly understood tourism and entertainment sectors become the workplace for a significant part of the inhabitants (Clark, 2003), which increases their level and quality of life. In this context, the tourism policy of the city includes a whole range of measures to support the development of urban tourism and to give tourism the appropriate socio-economic importance and sustainability. This results in the development of the tourist function that enhances the quality of life of the inhabitants and has a positive impact on other sections of the urban economy.

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