

# **INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGINEERING SCIENCES & MANAGEMENT**

## **THE MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH TECHNIQS OF MEETINGS INDUSTRY IN POLAND BASED ON THE QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MODEL**

**Krzysztof Celuch Ph. D.**

\* Warsaw School of Tourism and Hospitality Management

---

### **ABSTRACT**

Many professional associations, organizations and corporations are looking to expand into global markets including these, which operate in meetings and events industry world. This study explored this growing issue and details the differences in qualitative management and characteristic of congresses, conferences and incentive travel world in Poland. Significant variances are described, as well as, implications and recommendations to Polish event planners and suppliers consider going global and more professional.

The Meetings Industry is a sector of economy related to organizing, promoting and managing meetings, including congresses, conferences, trade shows, corporate events and incentive travels. [1]. The method suggested by the author can be used especially during association meetings and to collect data from corporate clients.

**Keywords:** meetings industry, Poland, congresses, incentive travel, qualitative management.

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the article there is a detailed description and comparison of meetings organised in Poland in 2009-2012. The purpose of this is to show the changes that are taking place, to show seasonality and provide a complete picture of the meetings industry in Poland over the past years. These results, however, must be viewed with caution cause it is only part of the Polish market.

#### **Poland in the rankings of international meetings industry organizations**

2013 was primarily a period of greater interest in Poland as an attractive destination for congresses and conferences. Over 50% of all registered meetings are the ones that, repeatedly in the literature, were considered most important for the organizers. We are even happier with the results of the analysis if we also take into account the data of international associations working on statistics on congresses.

Below are presented some examples of analyses of the Polish market of meetings based on the data of the most influential organizations: ICCA – International Congress and Convention Association and UIA – Union of International Associations.

#### **The number of meetings in Poland between 2001 and 2012 according to the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA)**

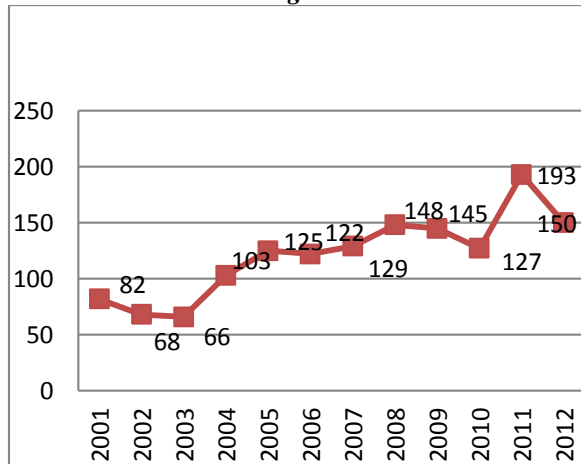
Key reports showing the number of organized meetings of associations in the country include the publications of the International Congress and

Convention Association (ICCA) and those by the Union of International Associations (UIA). [2] These are two organisations, which every year prepare statistics on the meetings industry. Both rankings are an incentive for further development of destinations and quite often represent an essential prerequisite for decision-making for the organizers of congresses.

ICCA creates its ranking on the basis of the data collected on association meetings divided into two categories: international governmental association and international non-governmental organizations/associations which satisfy the following three conditions simultaneously: they take place periodically, they have a minimum of 50 participants, they migrate between at least 3 states.

On this basis, "Statistics Report The International Association Meetings Market" is developed every year. This report shows Poland as a place of meetings of associations between 2001 and 2011. [3] (WTO, 2006) (Figure 1)

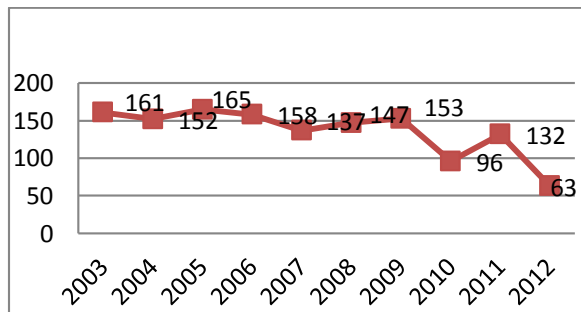
*Figure 1 number of associations meetings organised in Poland in the years 2001-2012 according to ICCA*



**The number of meetings in Poland between 2003 and 2012 according to Union of International Association (UIA)**

The second major report is "International Meeting Statistics" published by the Union of International Association (UIA). UIA creates its ranking on the basis of the data collected on international meetings that meet at the same time four criteria: they last at least 3 days, they have a minimum of 300 participants, the participants come from at least five countries, at least 40% of the participants came from abroad. (Figure 2)

*Figure 2 Number of association meetings organised in Poland in the years 2003-2012 according to UIA*



Source: Own work based on the data of UIA

**MEETINGS AND EVENTS IN POLAND IN THE LIGHT OF NATIONAL RESEARCH**

**Research methodology**

The study was directed to people collecting statistical data in the above mentioned venues and employees of regional Convention Bureaux responsible for these actions. [4]

In accordance with the model adopted by the regional Convention Bureaux – four groups were identified: conference/congress, corporate event, event and incentive trade fairs/exhibitions. For the purposes of the research the following terms were adopted:

- “Conference/Congress” refers to national and international association meetings without a clear distinction between governmental and non-governmental meetings,
- “corporate event” is an event (corporate event) with particular attention paid to the training, workshops, seminars, press conferences, product launching,
- incentive events, including trips, incentive trips as an award or prize,
- “fair/exhibition” is dedicated to major events of any subject, usually taking place on the premises of fair trade venues.

Assumptions and objectives have been verified on the basis of quantitative analysis, and included also in the context of the industry, with a breakdown into meetings and events in the following thematic groups: liberal arts, information technology, ICT, economic & political and medical. The above groups are understood as follows:

- Humanities - meetings and events related to culture and art, such as: history, art, philology, music, ethics, philosophy and those related with society such as: history, archaeology, sociology, psychology, economics and anthropology;
- technological – meetings and events related to architecture and urbanism, automatics and robotics, biocybernetics, construction, electronics, electrotechnology, geodesy and cartography, mining, engineering, chemical technology, transport;
- information and communication - meetings and events related to a scientific and technical domain connected with information processing, including information processing technologies, technologies for producing information processing systems and communication systems, communication and its derivatives;

- economic and political meetings, and events related to economics, politics, finances, management sciences, product knowledge;
- medical - meetings and events related to medical science, pharmacy, dentistry, public health, physiotherapy, medical technology, biological medicine and biogerontology. [5]

Scope of analysis covered meetings and events that took place in Polish towns in 2013, with special attention paid to the cities and regions in which there are individual Convention Bureaux and individual venues that participated in the project.

Adopted criteria for analysis of meetings and events were: the number of participants and their nationality; the duration of national and international meetings and events; categories and types of meetings and events; estimated economic value of organized meetings in Poland.

The collection of data for the study using the electronic questionnaire took place in years 2009-2013. The scope of the study covered the venues that had the ability to coordinate meetings and events according to specific guidelines, including hotels, conference and fair trade centres, universities renting rooms (for meetings), cultural venues renting rooms (for meetings), historical buildings (castles, palaces, manor houses).

**Characteristics of the study sample**

The study involved dozens of structures in which it is possible to organize meetings and events in Poland. Survey questionnaire has been handed over to ten regional Convention Bureaux, of which nine, sent their results in accordance with pre-established guidelines. In addition, it was sent to more than 300 structures in whole Poland.

When summarizing the data from the structures which received information about the study we can conclude that for the second time, the report shows the number of meetings broken down by place of organization.

However, it is worth noting that the analyzed structures represent only a piece of all that have the ability to coordinate meetings and events related to the meetings industry. While these are structures with which cooperation concerning the collection of detailed data may result in the creation of future detailed material on association meetings and corporate events organized in Poland.

By analyzing the number of meetings that have been entered into the database, we can note that the vast

majority of them took place in hotels 65.11% - 11785 meetings (in 2012 73.71% - 16545 meetings). On the second place are ranked exhibition and congress centres with 15.9% - 2877 meetings (2012: 13,17% - 3045 meetings). The third place is taken by structures or rooms rented for special events 13.95 - 2525 meetings (2012: 7,78% - 1842 meetings). However, on the last place there are universities 5.04% with 913 meetings (2012: 3.43%-868 meetings. (Tab. 1)

**Table. 1 Number of venues providing statistical data**

Place of event/ venue	Number of venues	%
Exhibition/Congress centre	2877	15,90%
Hotel	11785	65,11%
Venue/Hall for special events	2525	13,95%
High school	913	5,04%
Total	18100	100%

Source: Own work

**Analysis and study results**

The analysis should start from the number of meetings by year and seasonality. Spring period (April, May, June) and autumn (September, October) is the time when there are the most meetings every year. In 2009-2010, the most meetings were held in September (respectively 569 and 2184), while in 2011-2012 in October (3012 and 2434). Traditionally, the months with the least number of association meetings are January and February, and July and August. (Table 2)

**Table. 2 Seasonal number of meetings and events in Poland in 2009-2012**

Months	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	270	981	1661	1613
February	252	1201	1874	1581
March	343	1598	2599	2310
April	347	1506	2420	2138
May	334	1908	2865	2169
June	351	1825	2673	1651
July	214	885	1336	1187
August	183	884	1291	1153
September	569	2184	2947	2312
October	418	2159	3012	2434
November	436	1747	2544	2206
December	283	1122	1838	1546
Total	4000	18000	27060	22300

Source: Own study based on data from PCB POT

The graphs showing the seasonal number of participants are similarly shaped. In 2009-2012, the

events that attracted the largest number of participants were held in March, September and October. In March of each year, the events were attended by the following number of participants – 198,947, 492,535, 591,805, 643,955. Adequately to the chart 2, the smallest number of participants attended meetings held in January, July and August.

**Table. 3 Seasonality of the number of participants in meetings and events in 2009-2012**

Months	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	54369	157956	132804	170178
February	94457	184518	221860	242542
March	198947	492535	591805	643955
April	100778	332726	363537	287908
May	108607	428337	335023	349181
June	93880	199363	221955	294088
July	92866	116002	97597	87802
August	40810	96373	127045	86719
September	199583	481455	487213	491262
October	125680	430869	448607	670581
November	117684	426154	393441	344311
December	93401	196504	256329	327608
Total	1321062	3542792	3687216	3996135

Source: Own study based on data from PCB POT

Table 4 shows the number of meetings and events by type. In 2009, the most meetings were related to humanities - 1251. In 2010, the same high level was characteristic of economic/political events (5295) and technology events (5799). 2011 and 2012 again saw a large increase in events related to humanities - 7126 and 6023.

**Table. 4 Number of meetings and events by type in 2009-2012**

Meeting type	2009	2010	2011	2012
Economy/politics	667	5395	5608	5181
Humanist	1251	3477	7126	6023
Medical	708	1935	3717	3603
Information and communication technology	594	1394	3604	2136
Technology	780	5799	7005	5357
Total	4000	1800	27060	22300

Source: Own study based on data from PCB POT

As for the categories of corporate events, after their two-year dominance, in 2012 the congresses and conferences were most often organised (10 622). The smallest part of all meetings are fairs - every year

they are only about 11% of all meetings, however, they attract the most participants.

**Table. 5 Number of meetings and events by category in 2009-2012**

Meeting type	2009	2010	2011	2012
Congresses / conferences	2127	6420	9873	10622
Corporate events	1221	9669	10715	4657
Incentive events	295	903	4051	5305
Fairs / exhibitions	357	1008	2421	1716
Total	4000	1800	27060	22300

Source: Own study based on data from PCB POT

### SUMMARY

The summary prepared is just a fragment showing the volume of Polish meetings industry. However, thanks to the methodology preserved in recent years, we can start a professional analysis of this area of the economy. A summary of the data for a period of five years, in spite of the changes in the test method, allows us to show the trends and the nature of the Polish meetings industry. [6]

Cooperation of Poland Convention Bureau of the Polish Tourist Organization with regional Convention Bureaux, recommended organizers of congresses and incentive travel, universities and venues allowed to collect data from 15 voivodeships, dozens of venues and gave a chance to analyse meetings and events world. Gathering so much data was possible thanks to the cooperation with our partners, but also by adding data from outside the area in which the regional Convention Bureaux operate. [7]

The average duration of the congresses in 2013, during which the study was conducted amounted to 3,857 day, and the average length of stay of the participant - 4.35 days (+/- 7.6%). This means that some of the participants lived in the place of congress longer than its duration. The estimated average number of nights in accommodation is 2.88 (+/- 12.9%). The average daily expenditure on accommodation amounted to PLN 204.2 (+/-13.1). When it comes to spending on food, shopping and transportation, the obtained estimates are characterized by little precision. What is interesting is that less than 37% of the respondents declared using food services. [5]

When it comes to the average duration of the fair, during which the study was carried out, it amounted to 3,514 days and estimated time of participation in the fair by their participants is 2.69 (+/-4.7%). The average number of nights associated with participation in trade fairs is 1.44 (+9%). This relatively small value stems from the fact that a large proportion of the guests are inhabitants of the

voivodeship where they are taking place. The average daily expenditure on accommodation rated for participants of the fair is at PLN 86.8 (+/-12.3%). In the case of the fairs, the data collected allow a relatively precise estimate of the daily expenditure on food and beverage services and for the use of cars and taxis. [8] The former amounted to PLN 25.6 (+/-19.9%) and the other PLN 23.7 (+/-15.1%).

A key message from the paper is, first and foremost, the estimated number of nights purchased by participants in the meetings and events in 2013, which is approx. 5,19 million, accounting for approx. 15.9% of total accommodation provided that year in Poland. The sales volume of accommodation services is established using the previously presented estimates of the number of nights and information concerning the estimates of expenditure on accommodation services amounting to PLN 230 per night. The volume of sales of accommodation services assessed in this way amounted to approx. PLN 1 195 million (approx. 6%). If we use sales volume ratio per working person, we can calculate that the meetings industry has contributed to the creation of jobs for more than 7700 people. Its added value is about PLN 580 million on a national scale.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Celuch, K., & Siemiński, J. (2010), *Kształtowanie następnego pokolenia profesjonalistów dla turystyki biznesowej* [Shaping the New Generation of Professionals for Business Tourism], Wydawnictwo Uczelni Vistula 2010, p. 113 [in Polish]
- [2] ICCA country and city ranking, 2009, International Congress and Convention Association, Amsterdam
- [3] World Tourism Organisation: *Measuring the Economic Importance of the Meetings Industry. Developing a Tourism Satellite Account Extension* (2006) Madrid: World Tourism Organisation
- [4] Catellan A. (2010) *Environmentalists NGOs and the construction of the culprit: semiotic analysis*, UK: Emerald, *Journal of Communication Management* Vol. 15 issue 4
- [5] Celuch K., 2014, *Raport Przemysł spotkań i wydarzeń w Polsce – Poland Meetings and Events Industry Report 2014*”, Polska Organizacja Turystyczna, Warszawa
- [6] Celuch K., Davidson R. (2011) *Better Business Results through Motivational Experiences and Incentive Travel*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uczelnia Vistula
- [7] Wallace E., Mathai M., Heath A. (2008) *The Convention Industry Council Manual*, Washington: Convention Industry Council
- [8] Davidson R, Rogers T., 2006, *Marketing Destinations and Venues for Conferences, Conventions and Business Events*, Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford