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## **Perspective centres and routs of the foreign tourism in Byelorussia**

To develop the foreign tourism in Byelorussia, a following requirements should be fulfilled:

- restoration of architectural and historical monuments and their adaptation for the touristic use,
- creation of the touristic centres and areas,
- development of the touristic infrastructure,
- development of services,
- legal security of tourism development.

Restoration of architectural monuments of Byelorussia is essential for the foreign tourism development. Considering the cultural and historical value of monuments and their concentration in Byelorussian cities and towns, one can divide them into two categories. To the first category belongs the city of Grodno, having the largest number of monuments including monuments of the world class. The cities and towns of the second category are: Minsk, Brest, Witebsk, Polock, Homel, Mogilew, Słonim, Nowogrodek, Mir, Nieśwież, Pinsk, Rużany, Postawy, Mstislaw, Synkowicze, Murowanka, Golszany, Bobrujsk.

To create the touristic centres and areas as a necessary elements are considered attractive architectural and historical monuments and developed touristic infrastructure. Such touristic centres are planned in several natural regions of Byelorussia like: Poozierje, Poniemanje, Central Byelorussia, Eastern and Western Polesje and Podnieprowije.

The largest concentration of historical and cultural monuments occurs in western and north-western regions of Byelorussia. On the other hand the best natural resources for the touristic use are in the northern part of the country.

The most attractive for the foreign tourists should be monuments specific for Byelorussia like architecture of castles built in style of Byelorussian Gothic. Also, in many cases, even in small towns one can see places of worship of different denominations that is Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Judaic located in a very close proximity.

Among historical cities of Byelorussia the most attractive is the old city centre of Grodno that is the Old and New Castle, the Orthodox Church of Borys and Gleb built in 13th century, churches and monasteries of 16–18th centuries, and numerous houses of 16–19th centuries.

In the city of Polock, there are: the Orthodox Church of St. Sofia built in 11 century, the Spaso-Efrosinjewski Monastery of 12th century and numerous churches and devilling houses built between 17th and 19th centuries.

In the town of Mira is located a very attractive, for tourists, castle built between 16th and 17th centuries.

Numerous monuments of town of Nieśwież are listed among historical monuments of the world class. Among them are: palace and park of Radziwill family (16th century). Parochial Church with the crypt of Radziwill family (16th century). The City Hall, city gate, monastery etc. Between 16th and 18th centuries the town was a centre of the Nieśwież estate in tail of the Dukes Radziwill and preserved to our days the charm of these centuries.

Monuments of the city of Nowogrodek belongs to the different historical periods. Here, was the first capital city of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. There are remanants of the castle (15th century), historical Witold Parish Church where king Jagiello married queen Jadwiga and where the poet Adam Mickiewicz was baptised. In the city there are numerous places related to the life of Adam Mickiewicz like museum, his monument, school and Mound of Mickiewicz raised in 1926.

In villages Synkowiczy and Murowanka in district of Grodno, are located old Orthodox churches built in style of Byelorussian Gothic.

In developing the touristic infrastructure an intensive reconstruction and modernisation of hotels, motels, restaurants and other touristic objects should be conducted.

At present, in Byelorussia are only ten hotels (5400 beds) capable to serve the foreign tourists. Majority of them are in the city of Minsk (4800 beds). But even in this Byelorussian capital there is much smaller number of hotels than in average European capital (30 beds per 1000 inhabitants). To reach this level in year 2000, the number of beds should increase up to 6000. To meet the European standard, 30% of hotels should offer high level of services (4–5 stars). Three of four stars hotels should occur in every city considered as a potential touristic centre. The total number of such places in the year 2000 have to increase up to 50 thousand and it should constitute 20–25 beds per 1000 inhabitants.

Developing the foreign tourism, one can use, in the first stage, hotels and touristic facilities already existing in provincial localities. The total number of beds, in such places, is estimated for 6200 during the summer season and about 2000 during the winter. The analysis of present capacity of the accommodation

facilities in Byelorussia leads to the conclusion that existing hotels should be modernised and new objects should be build but especially small private hotels for about 50–80 beds each.

Development of the transportation infrastructure in Byelorussia should consist in reconstruction of roads connecting main touristic centres and touristic places. Today, even the best Byelorussian road from Brest to Minsk and farther to Moscow, does not meet the standards of the modern highway.

The service centres should be located along main roads in the distance of 60 kilometres one from another. Rest area is planned to be built at every 30 kilometre. Because new road frontier crossings are opened in Berestowica and Domaczew, a reconstruction of the road Berestowica–Wołkowysk –Slonim–Baranowiczi as well as modernisation of the highway Brest–Minsk will be completed.

To facilitate the railway use by tourists, railway stations in Brest, Grodno, Witebsk, Baranowiczi, Połock and other cities will be modernised. Entirely new railway station is currently built in the city of Minsk. New prospects of the tourism development are related with construction of the fast train connection Paris–Berlin–Warsaw–Minsk–Moscow.

The air transport is developed in large cities but construction of new airports is planned also in future touristic centres like national parks “Naroczanski” and “Braslaw Lake”.

A very important for the tourism development is also an unified information system connecting touristic enterprises, hotels, transportation enterprises and other touristic facilities. This system should be connected with the European and world system of touristic information. Also manufacture and sale of touristic souvenirs, maps, folders etc. are very important. Today in Byelorussia exist many small touristic enterprises. But only a few of them have their own hotels like the largest enterprise “Byelorusstourist”, owned in the past by trade unions. This enterprise has 33 tourist offices in different cities over the country, 420 employees, including about 100 excursion guides. The present tendency of individual tourism development by the single touristic enterprises should be replaced by uniform strategy of touristic services and by uniform information network.

Legal support of the tourism development requires new legislation helping in creation of better conditions of activity of the touristic enterprises. Also, the foreign investments should be protected. Creation of the state Byelorussia coordinating organisation for the tourism development is also desirable.

The tourism development in Byelorussia requires large investment. So, in the first stage it is necessary to choose the most important goals. The analysis of present touristic flow permits to distinguish a following, most important problems, showing a growing tendency.

– Emphasis on reception of tourists – former inhabitants of Byelorussia, living now abroad. Large groups of Byelorussian emigrants are living now in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia and in other countries.

– Emphasis on common cultural and historical heritage of Byelorussia and other countries but first of all of Poland, Lithuania, Russia and Ukraine. Between Byelorussia and Poland, were always an indissoluble cultural and historical relations. There are hundreds places in Byelorussia related to the life and activity of Polish writers, born here like: Adam Mickiewicz, Eliza Orzeszkowa, Władysław Syrokomla, or composers like Michał Ogiński, Stanisław Moniuszko, and national heroes like Tadeusz Kościuszko, Romuald Traugutt and famous magnates like families of Radziwill, Sapiecha and Czartoryski.

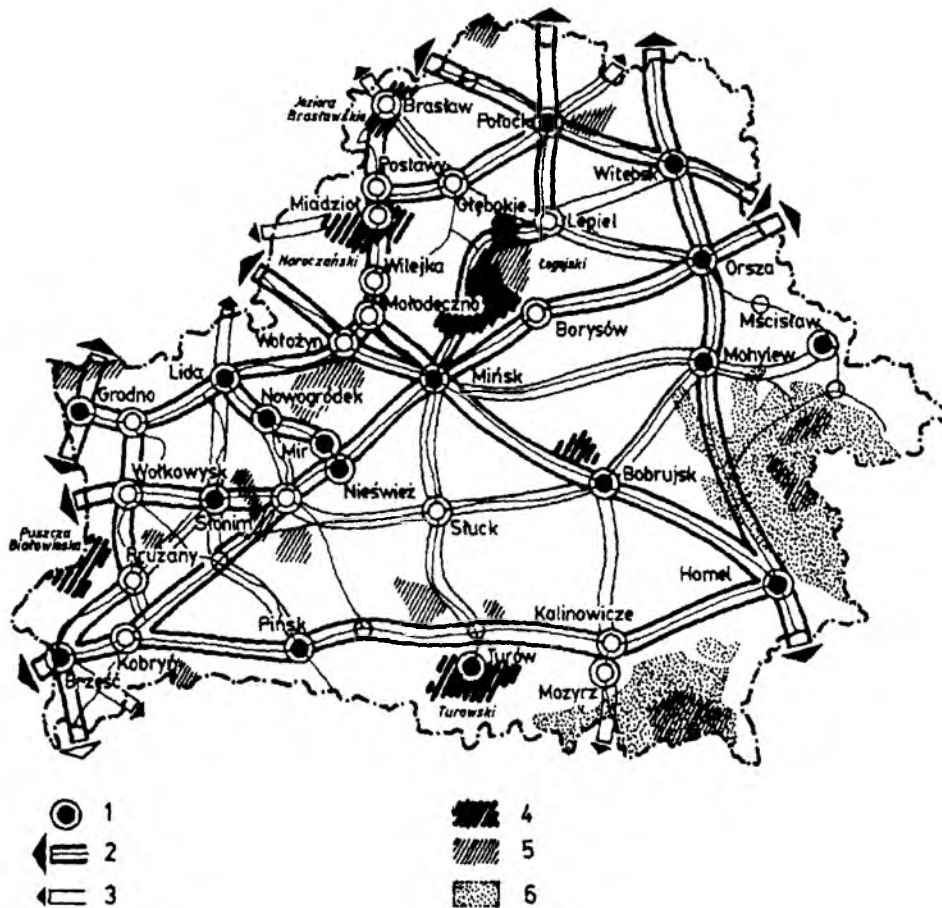


Figure 1. Potential touristic cities and routes in Byelorussia. 1 – Potential touristic centers, 2 – Main touristic routes, 3 – Touristic routes, 4 – National Park, 5 – Natural reserve, 6 – Areas affected by nuclear radiation higher than 5 Kv/sq · km

– Opportunity created by geographical and transportation location of Byelorussia on the touristic routes from Western Europe to Russia and farther to Asia. Tourists passing across Byelorussia to other destinations will have an opportunity to stop and rest for a few days and to see interesting touristic objects located along their itinerary.

– Natural resources of Byelorussia provide good conditions for development of the therapeutic tourism in ecologically safe regions, as well as for organisation of hunting, fishing, canoeing and horse-riding.

– It is important to preserve and to create new impulses for tourism from countries of former Soviet Union, that is Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Asiatic republics, Caucasus but also from other East European countries – Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Bulgaria.

Taking into consideration all factors of the foreign tourism development one can distinguish a following Byelorussian localities as the prospective touristic centres: Grodno, Brest, Minsk, Nowogrodek, Nieśwież, Mir, Słonim. On the basis of these cities one can develop a network of touristic routes in the triangle of Grodno–Minsk–Brest. This area has the largest touristic potential.

Touristic routes, may include also such cities and towns like: Skidel, Murowanka, Lida, Krewo, Zalesje, Wiarzynka, Mikołajewszczyzna, Zasław, Bieriozowka, Świtez Lake, Zaosie, Synkowiczy, Żyrowice, Kosowo, Rużany, Białowieża, Kamieniec.

The main touristic routes for the first stage of development are: 1) Grodno –Wołożyn–Minsk, 2) Grodno–Kobryn–Baranowiczi –Stołbce –Minsk, 3) Nieśwież–Mir–Nowogrodek–Lida, 4) Grodno–Wołkowysk–Słonim–Baranowiczi, 5) Brest–Kamieniec–Białowieża, 6) Brest–Prużany–Wołkowysk–Grodno, 7) Branowiczi–Świtez Lake –Nowogrodek.