

Historical Hospitality in the Context of the Desacralisation of Religious Buildings: A Case Study of Poland*

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Abstract

Accommodation facilities located in historic castles and palaces are characterised by their architectural uniqueness and the distinctive experiential value for guests. Among historic hotels, a particularly noteworthy group is those established in former religious buildings, including churches and monasteries. Such facilities emerge as a result of the secularisation and adaptive reuse of sacred architecture.

The aim of this study is to identify economic and non-economic factors influencing the development of the post-sacral hotel sector in Poland. The research hypothesis assumes that the development of post-sacral hotels in Poland reflects hoteliers' efforts to adapt tourism products to the purchasing behaviour, expectations and preferences of contemporary tourists.

The study employs a methodology based on the analysis of secondary data, a review of relevant academic literature and qualitative research. The qualitative component included interviews with selected managers and owners of private hotel facilities located in different regions of Poland. Additionally, customer reviews published on the Booking.com platform were analysed in order to identify users' perceptions and evaluations of post-sacral hotel facilities.

The findings confirm the research hypothesis and indicate that the development of such hotels is driven by increasing customer demand for individualisation, exclusivity and intimate forms of accommodation, as well as by hotel owners' willingness to preserve and repurpose former religious buildings.

Keywords: post-sacral hospitality; desacralisation; heritage hotels; adaptive reuse; religious buildings.

Introduction

Hotels located in post-sacral buildings belong to a specific category of accommodation facilities. Their uniqueness is emphasised by their historically religious character. Social changes, the secularisation of life and financial difficulties contribute to the closure of religious buildings. In turn, disused religious buildings encourage the practical utilisation of their assets and heritage in a new manner, including for hotel purposes. In connection with the emergence of further hotel facilities in former places of religious worship, an important issue becomes the identification of factors influencing their development.

The aim of the publication is to identify economic and non-economic factors influencing the development of the Polish post-sacral hotel sector. The article formulates the following research hypothesis: the development of post-

sacral hospitality in Poland constitutes an expression of the adaptation of the tourism product by hoteliers to the specific purchasing behaviours of customers.

The study applies a research methodology based on the analysis of secondary data, a literature review and qualitative research. The subjects of the qualitative research were representatives of both the supply and demand sides from across Poland. The results of the study enabled the achievement of the research objective and the verification of the proposed hypothesis. The findings may be of particular interest to individuals professionally associated with the hotel industry, researchers dealing with hospitality, and especially those specialising in historical hospitality.

The motivation to write the article stemmed from the authors' long-term academic interests related to hospitality, particularly historical hospitality, the desire to continue further research, and the identified research gap in the most recent studies concerning factors influencing the development of hospitality in post-sacral buildings.

Literature Review

The issue of transforming religious buildings into a new, secular form of use has already appeared in both international and national literature. The subject of the causes of the desacralisation of churches and their adaptation to new, practical purposes was addressed by Kowalczyk (2011). According to the author, the key issue remains ensuring an appropriate use for former religious buildings that would not violate the order of the sacred sphere and would remain consistent with the public interest. Wrona (2011) examined issues related to the desacralisation of public space in Poland during the communist period. The author regarded desacralisation as a result of deliberate state policy aimed at limiting the role of the Church. A similar issue in cross-border contexts appeared in the work of Uherek-Bradecka (1985). The author drew attention to the sociological aspect of desacralisation and the threats associated with new functions of former temples connected with architectural interference in the structure of the building. The issue of adapting historic Catholic churches to new functions in Poland and in Western Europe was addressed by Długosz (2019). According to the author, the conversion of a religious building to secular use contributes positively to maintaining the building in good technical condition and sustaining religious identity. Desacralisation in relation to France was discussed by Wojciechowski (2011). The author pointed to the intensification of desacralisation processes in the country and the ease with which an unprofitable church or chapel may be acquired by private individuals. The legal aspects of the desacralisation of religious buildings were examined by Fedeńczuk (2025). According to the author, desacralisation processes should include the consent of the relevant Church, as the owner of the desacralised temple, for its secular use; moreover, the participation of the local community and the opinion of legislative authorities should be ensured. Coomans (2019) concluded that the causes of the desacralisation of temples include: the economic crisis, which increased maintenance costs; the identity crisis of Western societies combined with new forms of social relations and media; and the institutional crisis within established Christian churches. In turn, Mariański (2017) examined the phenomenon of secularisation and desecularisation in the context of the spread of religious pluralism and its practical consequences. Kurek (2011) drew attention to the adaptation of Catholic temples to new functions due to financial difficulties. According to the author, such adaptations are carried out either within a minimalist convention or on the basis of contrast, competing with the existing context. Arno and Wierzbicka (2022), in turn, highlighted the possibility of maintaining the religious character of former temples through new and thoughtfully designed uses.

Issues related to historical hospitality have been reflected in the publications of numerous domestic and international authors. Morehouse (2013) described the uniqueness of the services offered by the historic Millennium Biltmore hotel. Peche (2019), in turn, analysed the market of historic hotels in the city of San Antonio. Ownley Cooper (2020) presented an in-depth analysis of historic hotels in North Carolina. An analysis of the concept of historic hotels and their impact on shaping the tourist attractiveness of a region under specific Russian conditions was conducted by I. Kalinina and T. Gołowczenko (2022), as well as Wołochow (2017). According to these authors, historical heritage forms the foundation for tourism development. The history of hospitality in Russia from the 11th to the 18th century and its significance was discussed by Goryushkina and Voroshilova (2023). The authors drew attention to the historical formation of hospitality in Russia and the development of accommodation infrastructure. Dymitrov (2022), in turn, analysed the historical development of hotels in the Macedonian city of Bitola. The author pointed to the systematic development of this sector over time. The possibilities of using historic buildings within the hospitality industry in Azerbaijan were discussed by Sadikowa (2023). The impact of service dynamics, including hospitality services, on the value of historic buildings was examined by Merciu, Paunescu and Merciu (2023). The authors emphasised the negative impact of service dynamics on the heritage value of such buildings. A study of opinions concerning historic hotels in Amasya, Turkey, was conducted by Kendira, Arslana, Özçelik and Bozkurt (2023). Ozkan (2016) examined the

significance of historic hotels in the vicinity of Bursa, Turkey. According to the authors, staying in historic hotels and using their services positively influences guests' opinions. Kaniewska (2007; 2009) conducted a review and inventory of historic hotels in Poland. Kaniewska and Cybulski (2014) analysed the importance of gastronomic services in historic hotels. Issues related to the establishment of historic hotels through the adaptation of historic buildings were addressed by Hyski and Bednarzak (2012) as well as Szmygina (2009). The authors highlighted the benefits arising from the hotel functions of castle buildings. Musiaka (2013) attempted to identify and discuss factors facilitating the use of medieval castles for tourism purposes. Kaganek and Miller (2004) reviewed historic hotels that are members of the industry organisation "Wypoczynek w zabytkach". Rouba discussed the beneficial and positive impact of historic hotels on their surroundings (2010), as well as the consequences of operating historic hotels located in heritage buildings (2004). The development of historic hotels based on thematic routes was discussed by Rohrscheidt (2004) and Szerfer (2013). According to the authors, the popularity of thematic routes among tourists positively influences the development of historical hospitality. Sala (2018) discussed the benefits for the development of historic hotels resulting from membership in selected industry organisations. According to the author, such membership promotes the exchange of experience and joint external representation of the sector. Sala (2021) conducted an in-depth analysis of factors determining the development of historic and boutique hotels of the highest categories. According to the author, the development of unique hospitality is a consequence of the market's adaptation to the exceptional expectations of consumers. Kociszewski and Sala (2022) presented the concept of using historic spaces in the development of the Arche company's network of historic hotels. According to the authors, the Arche company significantly contributes to the revitalisation and adaptation of historic buildings to new functions throughout Poland. Sala (2022a) examined the situation of historic hospitality during the pandemic in local and regional contexts (2022b; 2024). The author demonstrated the significant impact of the pandemic (including lockdowns) on the financial condition of hotels. The determinants of the development of historic hospitality in Krakow were analysed by Kapera, Wolak and Cziomer (2024). According to the authors, the development of historic hospitality constitutes both a major challenge and a benefit from the perspective of sustainable development.

The economic and non-economic aspects of hospitality development have been reflected in both international and national literature. The success factors of hospitality development were examined by Ventura and Cloete (2007). According to the authors, hotel development has unique characteristics and requires specialised managerial knowledge. The elements determining the effectiveness of the hospitality and catering industry in Chiang Mai, Thailand, during the global pandemic, based on the example of a hotel group, were examined by Chen and Kitingern (2020). The authors concluded that the impact of COVID-19 on tourism depends on the duration of the epidemic and the intensity of political safeguards. Khanalizadeh and Ranjandish (2019) characterised the key economic factors influencing hotel development in Iran in the years 1983–2015. The authors emphasised the importance of hotel development, trade in goods, the real exchange rate and real gross domestic product, both in the long and short term. Tourism as a determinant of the development of tourism enterprises in Serbia was thoroughly analysed by Lakicevic and Zarevac (2014). The authors highlighted the importance of tourism promotion in enterprise development. Kosar, Masic, Barjaktarovic and Lazovic (2016) described the economic factors influencing the development of the hospitality industry in Serbia. The authors identified such factors as the method of privatisation, conditions for investment financing, and access to technology and human resources. Franceskin and Bojnec (2023) examined hospitality productivity in Slovenia. The authors emphasised the significance of the 2008 economic crisis and the limited capacity to implement new technologies. Curlin, Kamenjarska, Pejic and Bach (2022) analysed innovation features in the hospitality industry based on Croatian hotel websites. The authors pointed to the lack of innovative functions on the websites of many hotels, with the exception of foreign chain hotels of the highest categories. The importance of selected macroeconomic factors for the development of foreign hotel chains in Croatia was examined by Novak, Petric and Pranic (2011). The authors indicated foreign direct investment, market linkages and tourism flows as strongly positively correlated with the presence of foreign hotel companies in Croatia. The interaction and operating conditions of hotel activity and maritime tourism as significant factors increasing tourism revenue were discussed by Kaludjerovic (2019). The author demonstrated positive correlations between the two types of activity. Milovanovic (2014) described TQM policy as a factor influencing profitability and viability in the hospitality industry. Alecu (2013) outlined the factors determining positive changes in hotel management in Romania. The author emphasised methods of selling products and services for public hotels and the importance of new technologies in the process of managing change in hospitality. The issue of performance in the Italian hospitality sector was presented by Detotto, Pulinam and Brid (2013). Fuentes-Medina, Hernandez-Estarico and Morini-Marrero (2017) discussed the key success factors of the Paradors hotel chain in Spain. The authors highlighted variations in performance depending on location. The significance of tourism for the financial stability of hotels was examined by Mucharreira, Godinho Antunes, Abranja, Texeira Justino and Texeira Quiros (2019). The authors emphasised the importance of macroeconomic factors. Pirogova, Shanygin, Lavrova and Plotnikov (2021) examined the hospitality industry in St Petersburg from the perspective of factors influencing its development. Firlej and Spsychalska (2015) described the diverse

determinants of hospitality industry development in Poland in the years 2004–2013. The authors indicated the importance of external factors. The financial aspects of hospitality enterprises were discussed by Binczysko (2011). The socio-economic determinants of sports tourism development were addressed by Waśkowskiego (2015). Quantitative changes in hotels in Poland in the years 1990–2015 were analysed by Matczak (2017). According to the author, the examined period witnessed both quantitative and qualitative growth in domestic hospitality. The economic and financial aspects of hotel operations were characterised by Puciato (2016). The author conducted a broad analysis of various types of hotels. Dziedzic and Skalska (2012) described the economic conditions for the development of tourism services, including price and non-price determinants. The economic aspects of historic hotels were analysed by Sadkowski and Sala (2024; 2025). The authors emphasised the importance of geographical and architectural assets, financial aspects and service quality. A similar issue in relation to chain hotels was discussed by Sala and Szostak (2024). The authors highlighted the economic benefits for hotels operating within a network structure.

Research Question

The main research problem addressed in this study concerns the identification of factors determining the development of hospitality in post-sacral buildings. In relation to the subject matter of the publication and based on a review of the literature, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: What economic and non-economic factors influence the profitability of establishing hotels in post-sacral buildings?

RQ2: What factors distinguish post-sacral hotels in the competitive hospitality market?

RQ3: What elements attract guests to post-sacral hotels?

RQ4: What is the profile of guests of post-sacral hotels?

RQ5: What are the contemporary requirements of guests of post-sacral hotels?

Desacralisation and Hospitality in Desacralised Buildings in Europe

The term desacralisation should be understood as a change in the status of objects, persons, beings, phenomena or ideas through their transfer from the sphere of sacrum to the sphere of profanum (<https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/desakralizacja;3891974.html>). Desacralisation constitutes the opposite of sacralisation (sanctification). It is a process of eliminating sacred elements from beliefs, attitudes, organisational structures and religious functions. In its negative aspect, it represents a form of laicisation, secularisation and even profanation. In a positive sense, however, it consists in purifying earthly reality of pseudo-religious interpretations and liberating the essence of sacred values from their phenomenal (symbolic) layer, such as rites, formulas and offices, whereby religious beliefs and attitudes are freed from elements of magic, myths and ideology. Thus understood, desacralisation aims to restore balance between sacred values, such as prayer, sacrifice and liturgy, and secular values, such as work and creativity, etc. Łukaszyk and Snela (1985). In an increasingly secularising Europe, more and more churches, chapels, temples, monasteries and other places of worship of various denominations are losing their original sacred character (Kuryłowicz 2009). The adaptation of religious buildings for secular purposes often provokes social outrage and even protests and demonstrations due to their new function. The transfer of temples to secular uses is particularly incomprehensible to older generations. However, this procedure is very old and was practised by the Church in previous centuries, primarily with regard to buildings that had fallen into ruin, been flooded, burnt down or simply abandoned by the faithful (Kowalczyk 2011). It was also frequently the result of deliberate state policy aimed at combating the Church and limiting its influence on society.

Desacralisation is particularly noticeable on the European continent. The decline in religiosity leads to an increasingly accelerated process of transforming abandoned temples into buildings of a utilitarian character, unrelated to places of worship. These processes are most visible in Western European countries. In the Netherlands, nearly 900 temples have been closed over the past 50 years; in England, 400; and in Germany approximately 150 over the last decade (<https://turystyka.wp.pl/dawne-koscioly-ktore-przekształcono-w-hotele6043993943196801g>). In France, due to the strong separation of Church and state, several Catholic places of worship are decommissioned each year if there has been no religious activity for at least six months (<https://wszystkoconajwazniejsze.pl/pepites/desakralizacja/>). Even in Catholic countries such as Italy or Croatia, such initiatives also occur (Uherek-Bradecka 2021). Parishes most often cease their activities due to a lack of interest among the faithful, declining religious activity and loss of financial liquidity. Churches, chapels and even monasteries often become residential buildings, cultural centres, art centres, restaurants, cafés or accommodation

facilities. Particular significance is attached to hotels located in former places of worship. Examples of hotels situated in former religious buildings in Europe are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Hotels in Former Religious Buildings in Europe, Active in 2026

Hotel name	Category	Number of rooms	Year or century of construction / Year of hotel opening	Location
Kruisherhotel	*****	60	XV/2000.	Maastricht, Netherlands
Hotel Martin's Patershof	****	79	XVIII /2009	Mechelen, Belgium
Abadía Retuerta LeDomaine	*****	30	XII	Sardón de Duero, Valladolid, Spain
Convento do Espinheiro,	*****	59	1834/	Evora, Portugal
Fontevraud L Hôtel	****	54	1101/2013	Fontevraud-l'Abbaye, France
Sozo Hotel	****	24	XIX /1990	Nantes, France
San Domenico Palace	*****	15	1374/1896	Taormina, Italy
Monastero Santa Rosa Hotel & Spa	*****	20	XVII	Conca dei Marini, Italy
Hotel L'Oscar	*****	39	XIX	London, United Kingdom
Hotel Augustine	*****	101	XIII	Prague, Czech Republic
Mandarin Oriental, Prague	*****	99	XIV	Prague, Czech Republic

Source: <https://www.cntraveler.com/galleries/2014-11-18/book-a-stay-in-a-converted-church-temple-and-more>

Hotels located in post-sacral buildings may be classified as a specific form of historic hotels. Historic hotels are facilities situated in unique buildings (e.g. castles, palaces, manor houses) listed in the register of historic monuments with centuries-old traditions. Their characteristic feature is the coexistence of the hotel function with historical, artistic and heritage values. Their distinctive elements include direct contact with history and the possibility of combining a stay with sightseeing of the facility, tasting local legends or the opportunity to participate in historic ceremonies, feasts or events (Sala 2021). Historic hotels may be divided into original hotels (facilities whose original purpose has not changed since their establishment), imitative hotels (hotels that merely imitate elements of historical heritage) and converted facilities (e.g. castles, palaces and manor houses that have been transformed into hotels). Hotels in post-sacral buildings may be classified within the latter group.

Hotels in desacralised buildings in Europe are generally small, often boutique-style establishments of a high category, usually independently operated. Their distinctive features also include attractive locations in the tourist centres of historic cities (e.g. London, Prague), which undoubtedly influences tourist demand. It should also be noted that hotels in desacralised buildings are predominantly a domain of the Old Continent. However, they can also be found in non-European countries, including Colombia, Peru, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Morocco, China, Vietnam and Canada.

Hospitality in Post-Sacral Buildings in Poland

In Poland, a country with deeply rooted religiosity, the adaptation of former church properties constitutes a relatively new phenomenon, which nevertheless gives rise to controversy and objections. From a practical perspective, the renovation of a building for business purposes is costly and far exceeds the cost of purchase alone. It appears, however, that the primary obstacle is not financial, but rather cultural and customary. Poland, compared to other countries (especially European ones), remains conservative and hermetic, and thus relatively reluctant to embrace such bold trends as the adaptation of former religious buildings. Despite these barriers, such investments are taking place. Their occurrence and intensification are the result of the growing influence of Western culture (Baniak 2007).

Desacralisation in Poland may have various forms. One of the first examples of successful desacralisation was the transformation in the 1960s of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Elbląg into the EL Gallery, which to this day serves as a venue for exhibitions. In turn, in the Evangelical Church of the Holy Trinity in Bolków there is the Bolków Historical-Artistic Gallery Ars et Historia. The Evangelical Church in Rydzyna now functions as a concert venue. Meanwhile, in the former Post-Evangelical Church in Lubiąż near Wrocław, cyclical cultural events and concerts are organised, and even weddings take place (https://architektura.info/pl/wiadomosci/aktualnosci/desakralizacja_kosciolow).

In many desacralised churches, museums of various thematic profiles operate, as well as lapidaria, social care homes, libraries and even schools. The largest number of desacralised temples is located in the Lower Silesian, Greater Poland, Pomeranian and Warmian-Masurian voivodeships. Desacralisation in the aforementioned regions primarily concerns Evangelical temples, and in some cases also Czech Brethren or Baptist churches, which were affected by post-war migration and the loss of the faithful. As in other countries, former religious buildings in Poland are also being transformed into hotels, which corresponds to the general trend in the development of historical hospitality (Sala 2021).

This form of management effectively ensures financial resources for the maintenance and conservation of the property, and is often positively perceived by the local community (Sadkowski, Sala 2025). Examples of hotels operating in former post-sacral buildings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Selected Examples of Hotels in Post-Sacral Buildings in Poland, Active in 2026 and Their Characteristics

Hotel name	Category	Number of rooms/bed places	Year or century of construction / Year of hotel opening	Location	Key amenities
Klasztor Cedynia	****	22/43	1266/2005	Cedynia, West Pomeranian Voivodeship	Business facilities, restaurant, parking, facilities for persons with disabilities, pet-friendly
Hotel Podklasztorze	****	58/128	XII/2007	Sulejów, Łódź Voivodeship	Business facilities, restaurant, parking, spa and wellness facilities, family services, leisure activities, pet-friendly
Hotel Ilan	****	40/72	1930/2015	Lublin, Lublin Voivodeship	Business facilities, restaurant, parking, spa and wellness facilities, family services, leisure activities, pet-friendly
Arche Klasztor Wrocław	-	86/149	1896/2025	Wrocław, Lower Silesian Voivodeship	Business facilities, restaurant, recreational facilities, parking, facilities for persons with disabilities, pet-friendly

Source: Authors' own elaboration

In Poland, the process of transforming religious buildings for hospitality purposes began in the early 21st century, somewhat later than in the countries of Western Europe. Its development was closely linked to political transformations and economic changes, including those within the hospitality market. Currently, investors

associated with the hospitality sector increasingly recognise the potential for the development of former religious buildings. On the one hand, this is motivated by the desire for profit, but also by the need to ensure the continued preservation of heritage buildings and to prevent their progressive devastation (<https://planochronyzabytkow.pl/2025/06/wandalizm-ochrona-kosciolow/>). On the other hand, customers are constantly seeking novelty and distinctiveness, which is reflected in the growing trend towards individualisation. In some cases, this involves the partial allocation of the sacred space for commercial purposes, though without complete alteration of the building's former religious character. Examples in Poland may include monasteries in Hebdów or Tyniec. It should also be noted that within the framework of the existing Cistercian Trail in Poland, there is considerable potential for the development of accommodation facilities, often located in former Cistercian monasteries (Wyrwa 2010). This mainly concerns facilities situated in the western part of the country (<http://szlakcysterski.opw.pl/>).

Research design and methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of the study and verify the research hypothesis, the following research methods were employed: analysis of existing data, critical literature review and diagnostic research. The analysis of existing data and the critical review of the literature were conducted using secondary and netnographic data. Within the framework of diagnostic research, due to the limited number of research subjects, an unstructured interview technique was applied. Direct interviews were conducted with representatives of post-sacral hotels in Poland. Owing to the considerable distance, some interviews were conducted by telephone. The duration of the interviews ranged from 30 to 50 minutes.

The research was conducted from January to February 2026. In addition, in the same period, an analysis of user reviews of post-sacral hotels published on the Booking.com platform was carried out. Particular attention was paid to the most recent reviews concerning the examined facilities.

Results

This section of the study presents the results of the conducted research. The research group consisted of four private post-sacral hotels in Poland identified by the authors. All facilities have been entered into the register of historic monuments and are subject to heritage conservation protection. Three of the facilities were established in former Catholic monasteries, and one on the premises of a former Jewish educational institution and synagogue. Three facilities have been categorised at the 4* level, while one remains in the process of categorisation. One of the facilities is a member of the national Arche hotel network, while the others operate independently.

In terms of size measured by the number of rooms, two hotels may be classified as micro (fewer than 50 rooms), and two as small (between 50 and 100 rooms). The examined hotels differ in terms of the amenities offered. The most extensive accommodation offer is provided by Hotel Podklasztorze, including a spa and wellness zone. Each facility accepts pets, and the majority offer amenities for guests with disabilities. The analysed hotels vary in the length of time they have operated on the market. The facilities are located in the Lower Silesian, Lublin, Łódź and West Pomeranian regions. All hotels are situated in urban areas, although in cities of varying size.

An important issue remains the fact that the operation of each hotel has significantly contributed to maintaining the architectural continuity of the respective buildings. Considering the ownership structure of historic hotels in Poland, the majority are owned by entrepreneurs who have long operated in the property development sector. Thus, activity in the hospitality industry may be regarded as a natural consequence of their previous professional experience, supported by a desire for further investment, the creation of something unique and the preservation of heritage buildings. The transformation of a ruined or neglected post-sacral building for commercial use constitutes a sophisticated means of continuing its function in a different capacity.

Hotel Podklasztorze in Sulejów is one of the most impressive post-sacral facilities in Poland. It constitutes one of two properties managed by the tourism and trading enterprise "Trybunalskie" S.A., a local hotel operator. According to M. Ciosek from Hotel Podklasztorze, guests are attracted by the remarkable monastic atmosphere of the place and the curiosity to learn about the functioning of the abbey in the past. Guests appreciate the combination of tranquillity and the intimate character of the facility with the possibility of carrying out professional duties or resting during their stay. Family stays predominate at weekends, while business stays are more common during the week.

The key to success lies in creating a competitive accommodation offer based on a close reference to the religious past of the site. The religious heritage of the place is emphasised by atmospheric music based on monastic chants,

the interior design of the rooms (resembling monastic cells), and common areas containing references to monastic traditions. The rich heritage is also reflected in the menu of the hotel restaurant, based on monks' recipes, and in the spa offer, which makes use of monastic, Cistercian herbs, among others. Additional advantages of the hotel include the skilful combination of tradition with solutions expected by the contemporary tourist (spa, gym, conference room, tennis court, craft brewery). Moreover, the facility offers a unique opportunity to visit the museum and the local church.

Hotel Klasztor Cedyňa is a private facility owned by entrepreneur P. Hryniewicz. The factors that determined the establishment of the hotel included a long-held aspiration to acquire a historic property based on medieval architecture, supported by financial capacity and a desire to emphasise personal originality. It should also be noted that the owner demonstrated a willingness to incur financial outlays and undertake considerable effort in order to restore the ruined building to its former splendour and ensure sustainable sources of income.

Klasztor Cedyňa combines new functional uses, namely a hotel and restaurant, with the unique atmosphere of past centuries, which has enabled the restoration of this exceptional heritage building. According to M. Czeszejko from Hotel Klasztor Cedyňa, guests pay particular attention to the meticulously restored facility with its rich religious heritage and Gothic elements. An additional advantage of the property is access to the garden and green areas. Guests appreciate the excellent location, enhanced by the historical character of the town itself. They also show interest in the hotel's Cistercian roots.

The gastronomic offer partly refers to monastic traditions, whereas the interior design of the rooms is primarily oriented towards guest comfort. A significant proportion of customers are business clients, including those organising events. Guests of the facility are demanding, which is reflected in the varied reviews on booking platforms, including critical comments.

Arche Klasztor Wrocław is part of the Arche hotel network, which specialises in the renovation of distinguished historic buildings (Kociszewski, Sala 2022). The network currently comprises 20 properties across Poland, making it one of the largest hotel chains in the country. An unquestionable advantage of the discussed facility lies in its interiors, which have retained many original elements, such as brick walls, decorative tiles, vaults and large windows overlooking the park. In some rooms, original wooden floorboards, simple metal beds and cast-iron structural columns have been preserved. The interior design of the property closely refers to its former religious as well as hospital function.

According to M. Nahach from Arche Klasztor Wrocław, guests are particularly attracted by the possibility of holding wedding ceremonies in the functioning chapel located within the complex. Moreover, due to the fact that a hospital operated on the premises of the monastery for a certain period, former patients visit the facility out of sentiment. Guests also appreciate the unique atmosphere of the stay and the historical character of the place. Hotel Ilan in Lublin is owned by the development company Avir, which may be regarded as a natural example of an investment rooted in the construction sector. It is one of the unique properties in Poland, inseparably connected with the educational and religious functions of its location. The hotel building reflects the rich history of the presence and activity of Jews in Lublin. The facility seeks to maintain Judaic tradition through the display of memorabilia and historical photographs, as well as by cultivating gastronomy based on Jewish cuisine. In contrast, the interior design of the rooms is oriented towards guest comfort rather than an excessive emphasis on the religious character of the site. According to A. Mazurkiewicz from Hotel Ilan, guests are primarily attracted by the uniqueness of Jewish culture on which the hotel is based and by the opportunity to visit the synagogue, where prayers are occasionally held. Moreover, guests appreciate the successful combination of tradition and modernity.

Subsequently, it is worth analysing the general opinions of customers regarding their experiences during stays in the examined post-sacral hotels (Table 3).

Table 3. Guests' Opinions on Stays in Post-Sacral Hotels According to the Booking.com Platform in 2026

Hotel name	Number of reviews on Booking.com	Overall guest rating	Highest-rated category	Lowest-rated category	Most interesting guest reviews
Klasztor Cedyňa	424	7,8	Staff, WiFi	Facilities	"Hotel in a very interesting former monastery building. A wonderful,

					atmospheric place. A building with character, beautifully restored.”
Hotel Podklasztorze	395	9,0	WiFi	Value for money	“A beautiful, atmospheric property. The hotel buildings themselves are beautiful, with many corners to explore.”
Hotel Ilan	1460	8,7	Staff	WiFi	“Spacious rooms. A unique atmosphere throughout the hotel – a place with history.”
Arche Klasztor Wrocław	935	9,4	Cleanliness	Location	“An exceptional place, cosy rooms. Very tasty breakfasts, a monastic atmosphere.”

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on <https://www.booking.com/>.

The analysis of the data presented in Table 3 indicates a varied number of guest reviews. Hotel Ilan received the highest number of reviews, whereas Arche Klasztor Wrocław achieved the highest overall rating. Guests particularly rated highly the approach of the staff and access to Wi-Fi. Among the reviews published on Booking.com, customers frequently highlighted the atmospheric character of the properties, rooted in their rich sacred heritage and architecture. In addition, they appreciated the quality and range of services offered on site. Therefore, guests of post-sacral hotels are individuals who attach importance both to the historical character of the place of stay and to the contemporary quality of service and amenities.

Study limitations

The most significant research limitations encountered in the study include restricted access to sensitive data and the refusal of participation in interviews by some managers and owners of post-sacral hotels. It should also be noted that certain facilities temporarily or permanently suspended their operations during the period of the research. Moreover, some properties were put up for sale, which renders their future uncertain. The considerable distances to hotel facilities dispersed across Poland limited the possibility of direct contact with their representatives.

Summary

On the basis of the conducted research, the authors were able to answer the research questions posed.

RQ1: What economic and non-economic factors influence the profitability of establishing hotel facilities in post-sacral buildings?

The factors that significantly influence the profitability of establishing hotel facilities in post-sacral buildings are strictly related to the owners' intention to expand or diversify their existing business activities, their willingness to further invest available financial resources for profit, and their aspiration to possess an original property with a historical background that distinguishes itself through its uniqueness from other facilities.

RQ2: What factors distinguish post-sacral facilities in the competitive hospitality market? Post-sacral facilities operating within the hospitality market are distinguished primarily by their unique atmosphere, rooted in the broadly understood religious history and past of a given site. A significant role is also played by their characteristic architecture. Depending on the property, hotels make varying efforts to preserve and emphasise the spirit of their religious heritage, for example through interior design or the amenities offered.

RQ3: What elements attract guests to post-sacral hotels?

Guests are primarily attracted to post-sacral facilities by the opportunity to explore the property and to experience its unique religious history. In addition, access to specific amenities offered by the property plays an important role (e.g. participation in prayers, holding wedding ceremonies on site).

RQ4: What is the profile of customers of post-sacral hotels?

The customer of post-sacral hotels is decidedly an individualist, seeking intimate facilities that ensure an appropriate level of luxury and access to amenities. It is also a sensitive person who looks for distinctiveness in contrast to the standard offer of modernist chain hotels.

RQ5: What are the contemporary requirements of guests of post-sacral hotels?

The contemporary requirements of guests of post-sacral hotels are based on a desire to make use of refined facilities that distinguish themselves from the general body of hospitality establishments. These expectations are often expressed through a demand for access to an extensive range of accommodation services.

Post-sacral hotels undoubtedly constitute a unique and niche segment of the hospitality industry, oriented towards a specific group of customers seeking originality and a touch of avant-garde. Recognising favourable market conditions and changing consumer preferences, entrepreneurs acquire declining properties, transforming them into commercial facilities while simultaneously rescuing them from further degradation and oblivion.

In conclusion, the main objective of the study has been successfully achieved. On the basis of the results obtained, the authors reviewed the key economic and non-economic factors determining the development of post-sacral hospitality in Poland. The economic and non-economic aspects of post-sacral hotels constitute crucial factors in their operation and development within the market. Furthermore, the development of post-sacral hospitality in Poland represents an expression of hoteliers' adaptation of the tourism product to the specific purchasing behaviours of customers and an indication of forward-looking thinking.

The findings of the present study may serve as a starting point for further, more in-depth research into this sector of hospitality in the future. Taking into account the volatility of the current economic situation, the war in Ukraine and its consequences, as well as the continued development of the hospitality industry, the authors recommend conducting further research on the operation of hotels located in post-sacral buildings in the future.

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