

# Accessibility of Polish and Nordic Cittaslow Towns

Alicja K. Zawadzka

University of Gdańsk, Poland

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## Abstract

*The main objective of this article is to indicate transport accessibility (according to two criteria: fly&60 and 6×60×60) and information accessibility (on the Internet) of all Polish (28) and all Nordic (9) towns—members of the International Network of Cities Where Living is Good. The research was conducted using non-reactive methods: content analysis and desk research. The analysis has shown that the fly&60 criterion is met by eight Cittaslow towns (seven Polish and one Nordic), and the 6×60×60 criterion—by five towns (four Polish and one Nordic), which confirms the thesis on the peripheral nature of Cittaslow cities, which in fact may be perceived as an attracting factor. Their location, away from frequently used routes, may attract (some of them already do so) tourists seeking alternative forms of leisure, following a growing global trend of sustainable tourism. The level of accessibility to online information on the Cittaslow towns is varied, but rather low.*

**Key words:** small towns, Cittaslow, accessibility of small towns, peripherality

**JEL:** R40, R41, R50

## Introduction

Small towns—not only the Cittaslow network members—due to limited accessibility resulting from their peripheral location and often underdeveloped public transport networks, as well as a lack of proper tourist infrastructure, tend to lose, in terms of tourist attractiveness, to some bigger cities located in their close vicinity—Rejowiec Fabryczny loses its tourist attractiveness when confronted with Zamość, Nowy Dwór Gdański with Malbork or Gdańsk and Murowana Goślina with Poznań (Zawadzka 2017c, 130).

The research problem presented in the article is part of a larger research issue that concentrates on contemporary issues regarding socio-spatial development of small towns (less than 50 000 inhabitants), which face a number of different problems typical for small towns yet also have some values (both material and social) that are impossible to achieve in large cities and metropolises. The experience gained during interviews conducted with residents during several study visits to the selected Polish and Nordic Cittaslow towns—in 2010: Biskupiec, Eidskog (NO), Svendborg (DK); Falköping (SE); in 2012: Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, in 2016: Nowy Dwór Gdański, Górowo Iławeckie, Gołdap, Ryn—allows us to state that the recognition of the Cittaslow brand is low. There are also noticeable deficits of knowledge among residents not only on the ideological assumptions of the Cittaslow movement, but also on the fact their town is a member of this network” (Zawadzka 2017c, 135).

The research area comprises all Polish (28) and all Nordic (9) towns—members of the International Network of Cities Where Living is Good. The aim of the analyses is to recognize both transport (aviation, road and rail) and information (whether and where information on: towns being members of the Cittaslow network, their general characteristics and all related events are published on the Internet) accessibility.

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**E-mail addresses of the authors**

Alicja K. Zawadzka: alicja.zawadzka@ug.edu.pl

## 1 Dynamics of development and the importance of the Cittaslow network

Nowadays, as of November 2017, 241 towns in 30 countries and territorial areas in the world belong to the Cittaslow network. Poland, after Italy—a founder country having 84 towns in the network, is the second best with 28 member towns. The largest number of Polish Cittaslow towns (20) is located in Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship, two in Opolskie Voivodship, one in Śląskie, Wielkopolskie Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Łódzkie, and in Zachodnio-Pomorskie voivodships. The structure of the Polish Cittaslow network is diverse—both urban communes are members of the network, whole urban-rural communes as well as only towns that are part of urban-rural communes (tab. 1).

Nordic Cittaslow towns are located in Scandinavia: in Denmark (Svendborg, Mariagerfjord<sup>1</sup>), in Norway (Eidskog<sup>2</sup>, Sokndal<sup>3</sup>, Ulvik, Levanger) and in Sweden (Falköping) and also in Finland (Kristinestad) and in Iceland (Djúpivogur<sup>4</sup>). In the rest of the Nordic countries there are no Cittaslow towns. Nordic towns have been joining the Cittaslow network since 2003 while the Polish ones since 2007. Nonetheless, since 2012 at least two Polish towns have become members of the Cittaslow network each year (tab. 2, see page 50). Population of the towns varies, but almost 90% of them have less than 25 000 inhabitants (tab. 3, see page 50).

The analysis of more than 60 scientific articles published between 2005 and 2017 (of which more than 70% are from 2015–2017) has confirmed the continuously increasing importance of the Cittaslow idea perceived as a research issue. Among the issues being in the scope of interest of researchers representing different disciplines of science there are:

- sustainable tourism (Jung, Ineson, and Miller 2014; Park and Kim 2016; Presenza, Abbate, and Perano 2015) also called slow tourism (Dickinson and Lumsdon 2010; Lowry 2011),
- slow travel (Dickinson and Lumsdon 2010; Sukiennik 2014),
- rural tourism (Hjalager, Kwiatkowski, and Larsen 2018; Khoo-Lattimore and Adeyinka-Ojo 2013), and
- green tourism (Maćkiewicz and Konecka-Szydłowska 2017).

The Cittaslow is also a subject of general considerations on philosophical ideas behind the movement itself, the certification process, the tourist aspect of the phenomenon (the above-mentioned slow tourism as well as eco-gastronomic) and social issues like the slow lifestyle (Galibarczyk 2017; Górski, Maćkiewicz, and Rutkowski 2017; Knox 2005; Konecka-Szydłowska 2017; Kopeć 2012; Lowry 2011; Nilsson et al. 2011; Parkins and Craig 2006; Pink 2009; Presenza, Abbate, and Perano 2015; Rembarz and Labuhn 2017; Salm 2017; Strzelecka 2017b, 2017c; Sukiennik 2014; Zadęcka 2016).

Cittaslow towns in different countries were also investigated in: Australia (Pink and Lewis 2014), Germany (Sept and Potz 2013), Great Britain (Pink 2008, 2011)<sup>5</sup>, South Korea (Sohn, Jang, and Jung 2015), Poland (Hutnikiewicz 2009; Maćkiewicz and Konecka-Szydłowska 2017; Mazur-Belzyt 2014), in Poland and France together (Kwiatkiewicz and Maine 2015), and in Spain (Pink and Servon 2013). In the scientific literature there are also numerous case studies regarding Cittaslow towns: Clonakilty in Republic of Ireland (Broadway 2015); Goolwa in Australia (Park and Kim 2016); Midden-Delfland in Netherlands (Dogrusoy and Dalgakiran 2011); two Turkish towns: Seferihisar (Dogrusoy and Dalgakiran 2011) and Vize (Hatipoglu 2015); two British towns: Aylsham (Pink 2007) and Mold (Jung, Ineson, and Miller 2014); four German towns: Hersbruck (Dogrusoy and Dalgakiran 2011; Mayer and Knox 2006), Meldorf (Zawadzka 2017a, 2017b, 2017c), Penzlin (Zawadzka 2017a), and Waldkirch (Mayer and Knox 2006); and finally seven Polish towns: Bisztynek (Gruszecka-Tieśluk 2013; Poczobut 2010), Lidzbark Warmiński (Gruszecka-Tieśluk 2013; Poczobut 2010; Strzelecka 2017a), Murowana Goślina (Kaczmarek and Konecka-Szydłowska 2013),

1. The capital of the commune of Mariagerfjord is Hobro.

2. The capital of the commune of Eidskog is Skotterud.

3. The capital of the commune of Sokndal is Hauge i dalane.

4. In a further part of the article, Nordic Cittaslow towns are listed in alphabetical order of the member countries' names.

5. Although in the title of the second article there is the UK (thus The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), it actually refers only to Great Britain because there are no Cittaslow towns in Northern Ireland (however, one Cittaslow town is in the Republic of Ireland).

**Tab. 1.** Basic information on Polish Cittaslow (in alphabetical order)

Town	Voivodship	Type <sup>a</sup>	Part <sup>b</sup>	Accession act
Barczewo	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XXXVIII/2013 Rady Miejskiej w Barczewie z dnia 25 lutego 2013 r.
Bartoszyce	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban		Uchwała nr XXXIX/297/2014 Rady Miasta Bartoszyce z dnia 27 marca 2014 r.
Biskupiec	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr XXXVIII/285/06 Rady Miejskiej w Biskupcu z dnia 30 marca 2006 r.
Bisztynek	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XXXI/149/06 Rady Miejskiej w Bisztyнку z dnia 27 kwietnia 2006 r.
Dobre Miasto	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XXXVII/262/2013 Rady Miejskiej w Dobrym Mieście z dnia 21 lutego 2013 r.
Działdowo	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban		Uchwała nr VII/51/15 Rady Miasta Działdowo z dnia 26 marca 2015 r.
Głubczyce	Opolskie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr XIX/151/16 Rady Miejskiej w Głubczycach z dnia 27 kwietnia 2016 r.
Gołdap	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr XXX/192/2012 Rady Miejskiej w Gołdapi z dnia 28 listopada 2012 r.
Górowo Iławeckie	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban		Uchwała nr XLVII/235/2013 Rady Miasta Górowo Iławeckie z dnia 11 grudnia 2013 r.
Jeżorany	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XIV/80/2015 Rady Miejskiej W Jezioranach z dnia 30 grudnia 2015 r.
Kalety	Śląskie	urban	the whole commune	Uchwała nr 279/XXXI/2013 Rady Miejskiej w Kaletach z dnia 22 sierpnia 2013 r.
Lidzbark	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr VI/39/15 Rady Miejskiej w Lidzbarku z dnia 12 marca 2015 r.
Lidzbark Warmiński	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban		Uchwała nr L/306/06 Rady Miejskiej w Lidzbarku Warmińskim z dnia 14 czerwca 2006 r.
Lubawa	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban		Uchwała nr XVI/170/2012 Rady Miasta Lubawa z dnia 27 czerwca 2012 r.
Murowana Goślina	Wielkopolskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XL/380/2010 Rady Miejskiej w Murowanej Goślinie z dnia 26 kwietnia 2010 r.
Nidzica	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XLII/574/2013 Rady Miejskiej w Nidzicy z dnia 30 grudnia 2013 r.
Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban		Uchwała nr LXIII/282/10 Rady Miejskiej w Nowym Mieście Lubawskim z dnia 20 kwietnia 2010 r.
Nowy Dwór Gdański	Pomorskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr 313/XXXVI/2014 Rady Miejskiej w Nowym Dworze Gdańskim z dnia 30 kwietnia 2014 r.
Olsztyn	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XII-127/2011 Rady Miejskiej w Olsztynie z dnia 29 grudnia 2011 r.
Orneta	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr BRM.0007.7.2015 Rady Miejskiej w Orniecie z dnia 25 lutego 2015 r.
Pasym	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XXIX/191/2013 Rady Miejskiej w Pasymiu z dnia 26 listopada 2013 r.
Prudnik	Opolskie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr LVI/872/2014 Rady Miejskiej w Prudniku z dnia 30 kwietnia 2014 r.
Rejowiec Fabryczny	Lubelskie	urban		Uchwała nr XLI/196/13 Rady Miasta Rejowiec Fabryczny z dnia 24 czerwca 2013 r.
Reszel	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XXII/133/2004 Rady Miejskiej w Reszlu z dnia 12 lipca 2004 r.
Ryn	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr XVIII/155/12 Rady Miejskiej w Rynie z dnia 5 marca 2012 r.
Sępólno	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	urban-rural	only the town	Uchwała nr VIII/38/15 Rady Miejskiej w Sępólnie z dnia 29 maja 2015 r.
Sianów	Zachodniopomorskie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr XXXI/182/2016 Rady Miejskiej w Sianowie z dnia 26 listopada 2016 r.
Rzgów	Łódzkie	urban-rural	the whole commune	Uchwała nr XXXI/237/2017 Rady Miejskiej w Rzgowie z dnia 1 lutego 2017 r.

<sup>a</sup>Type of commune; <sup>b</sup>Part belonging to Cittaslow

Nowy Dwór Gdański (Zawadzka 2017a), Prudnik (Twardowska-Jania 2017), Reszel (Gruszecka-Tieśluk 2013; Poczobut 2010), and Ryn (Gruszecka-Tieśluk 2013; Poczobut 2010).

Not only the members of the network, but also several potential Polish Cittaslow towns, like Puck and Kartuzy (Rembarz and Labuhn 2017) and Rawa Mazowiecka (Kalisiak 2017) were also noted and studied.

**Tab. 2.** Chronology of the accession of Polish and Nordic cities to the Cittaslow network

Year	Polish Cittaslow towns	Nordic Cittaslow towns
2003	–	Levanger (NO), Sokndal (NO)
2004	–	–
2005	–	–
2006	–	–
2007	Biskupiec, Bisztynek, Lidzbark Warmiński, Reszel	Falköping (SE)
2008	–	Svendborg (DK)
2009	–	Eidskog (NO)
2010	Murowana Goślina, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	–
2011	–	Djúpivogur (IS), Kristinestad (FI)
2012	Lubawa, Olsztynek, Ryn	–
2013	Barczewo, Dobre Miasto, Gołdap	Mariagerfjord (DK)
2014	Górowo Iławeckie, Kalety, Nidzica, Nowy Dwór Gdański, Pasym, Rejowiec Fabryczny	–
2015	Bartoszyce, Działdowo, Lidzbark, Prudnik, Orneta	Ulvik (NO)
2016	Głubczyce, Sępólno, Jeziorany	–
2017	Sianów, Rzgów	–

**Tab. 3.** Population of Polish and Nordic towns belonging to the Cittaslow network

Population	Poland	Norway	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Sweden	Total
Below 1 000					1		1
1 001–2 000		1					1
2 001–3 000	3						3
3 001–4 000	2	1					3
4 001–5 000	3						3
5 001–10 000	4	1		1			6
10 001–15 000	8						8
15 001–20 000	3	1				1	5
20 001–25 000	4						4
25 001–30 000	1		1				2
30 001–35 000							0
35 001–40 000							0
40 001–45 000			1				1
45 001–50 000							0
Over 50 000							0
Total	28	4	2	1	1	1	37

## 2 Transport accessibility

### 2.1 Town accessibility according to the fly&60 criterion

Most of the Cittaslow's towns, apart from Reszel and Lidzbark Warmiński (in which there are well-known castles), Ryn (where Ekomarina is located) Gołdap (which is the only health resort among all

Polish and Nordic Cittaslow towns), or Svendborg (which was the “Town of the year” in Denmark in 2000) are not main tourist destinations. The ones that are located close to bigger cities and are well connected with them have a better chance to develop tourism. The analysis of the accessibility of the Polish and Nordic Cittaslow towns according to the criterion fly&60 has been done by the author. This criterion is met by a town which can be reached from the nearest city with an airport serving regular connections, in less than 60 minutes, using both road and rail connections.

Spatial distribution of Polish Cittaslow towns has been analyzed. Some of them have cities with airports serving regular connections in their vicinity: Nowy Dwór Gdański—Gdańsk; the towns located in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship—Olsztyn, and because this airport does not offer connections to Warsaw, the analysis also included road and rail connections to Gdańsk. For Sianów, due to the similar distance, two cities were taken into consideration—Szczecin and Gdańsk. For Murowana Goślina—Poznań, or Rzgów—Łódź, for Rejowiec Fabryczny—Lublin, for Kalety—Katowice, for Głubczyce and Prudnik—Katowice and Wrocław. For the Finnish Cittaslow towns—Turku. For Icelandic—Reykjavík, and Höfn. For Danish—Aalborg, Aarhus, and København. For Norwegian Cittaslow towns—Oslo, Trondheim, Stavanger, and Bergen. And for the Swedish Cittaslow town—Göteborg.

Only 7 out of 28 Polish towns meet the fly&60 criterion: Barczewo, Dobrze Miasto, Murowana Goślina, Olsztynek, Pasym, Rejowiec Fabryczny, Rzgów. Among the Nordic Cittaslow towns (9), only the Danish one—Mariagerfjord—meets the fly&60 criterion (tab. 4, see page 52).

## 2.2 Town accessibility according to the 6×60×60 criterion

Accessibility criterion—6×60×60—means a town that is located at a road distance less than 60 km from one of the six largest cities in the country (in terms of the number of inhabitants) while covering this distance takes less than 60 minutes. The largest cities in Poland are Warszawa, Kraków, Łódź, Wrocław, Poznań, Gdańsk; in Finland: Helsinki, Espoo, Tampere, Vantaa, Oulu, Turku; in Iceland: Reykjavík, Kópavogur, Hafnarfjörður, Akureyri, Keflavík, Garðabær; in Denmark: København, Aarhus, Odense, Aalborg, Frederiksberg, Gentofte; in Norway: Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger, Trondheim, Fredrikstad, Drammen; in Sweden: Sztokholm, Göteborg, Malmö, Uppsala, Västerås, Örebro. The analysis of the location of 28 Polish towns has shown that only three of them meet the criteria 6×60×60: Rzgów (15 km from Łódź, 15 minutes); Murowana Goślina (25 km from Poznań, 35 minutes) and Nowy Dwór Gdański (40 km from Gdańsk, 40 minutes). And among nine Nordic Cittaslow towns, only two: Mariagerfjord (55 km from Aalborg, 45 minutes) and Svendborg (50 km from Odensy, 40 minutes).

## 3 Information accessibility

### 3.1 Partner towns

Partner towns (called also “partner cities”, “twin towns”, “sister cities” or—in Iceland—“friend towns”) are a form of partnership between towns (cities) in different countries, aimed at cultural, economic and information exchange. In order to state whether partner cities of the Cittaslow towns are also other towns being members of the same network, it was necessary to identify the partner towns of all the Cittaslow members. Almost all Polish Cittaslow towns cooperate with partner towns (excepting is Rzgów which has no partner agreements signed, however, it cooperates with the Ukrainian city of Storozhyniec and Italian Sana Bartolomeo Val Cavargna). None of the partner towns of Polish Cittaslow towns are a member of the Cittaslow network.

The partner cities for the Nordic Cittaslow towns are: for Kristinestad (FI)—Sala (SE), Novello (IT); for Mariagerfjord (DK)—Falköping (SE), Lier, Klepp (NO), Kokemäki (FI), Boleslawiec (PL), Bábolna (HU), Viesite (LV)—for Svendborg (DK), Aasiaat (GL), Bodø (NO), Bozhou (CN), Brain-tree Stralsund (GB), Dolný Kubín (SK), Jönköping (SE), Kuopio (FI), Steżyca (PL); for Falköping (SE)—Kokemäki (FI), Mariagerfjord (DK), Lier (NO), Sigulda (LV), Fontanellato (IT). Icelandic (Djúpivogur) and Norwegian Cittaslow towns (Eidskog, Levanger, Sokndal and Ulvik) do not cooperate under such partnership agreements. The above-mentioned comparison of the partner

Tab. 4. Road and railway accessibility of Polish and Nordic Cittaslow towns

Cittaslow town	City with an airport	Distance (km)	Time of road travel (min)	Time of railway travel (min)	Cittaslow town	City with an airport	Distance (km)	Time of road travel (min)	Time of railway travel (min)
Barczewo	Olštyn Gdańsk	20	30	15	Nowy Dwór Gdański	Gdańsk	40	40	–
Bartoszyce	Olštyn Gdańsk	170	160	190	Olštynek	Olštyn Gdańsk	30	30	50
Biskupiec	Olštyn Gdańsk	70	75	–	Orneta	Olštyn Gdańsk	160	120	205
Bisztynek	Olštyn Gdańsk	175	155	–	Pasym	Olštyn Gdańsk	50	50	85
Dobre Miasto	Olštyn Gdańsk	40	45	–	Prudnik	Olštyn Gdańsk	115	105	265
Działdowo	Olštyn Gdańsk	190	175	–	Rejowiec Fabryczny	Olštyn Gdańsk	30	40	25
Głubczyce	Olštyn Gdańsk	60	65	–	Reszel	Katowice Wrocław	215	165	225
Gołdap	Olštyn Gdańsk	175	165	–	Ryn	Olštyn Gdańsk	125	90	175
Górowo Haweckie	Olštyn Gdańsk	25	30	55	Sępól	Olštyn Gdańsk	115	100	165
Jeziorany	Olštyn Gdańsk	140	125	235	Sianów	Olštyn Gdańsk	60	45	40
Kalety	Olštyn Gdańsk	75	65	80	Rzgów	Olštyn Gdańsk	70	70	–
Lidzbark	Olštyn Gdańsk	190	150	95	Kristinestad (FI)	Turku	195	180	–
Lidzbark Warmiński	Olštyn Gdańsk	105	90	–	Djúpivogur (IS)	Reykjavík	85	75	–
Lubawa	Olštyn Gdańsk	155	115	–	Mariagerford (DK)	Aalborg Aarhus	235	205	–
Murawana Goślina	Olštyn Gdańsk	160	60	–	Svendborg (DK)	Kopenhaga	90	90	40
Nidzica	Olštyn Gdańsk	295	270	–	Eidskog (NO)	Oslo	190	170	–
Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Olštyn Gdańsk	70	75	–	Levanger (NO)	Trondheim	175	165	–
	Olštyn Gdańsk	150	130	–	Sokndal (NO)	Stavanger	185	165	–
	Olštyn Gdańsk	35	50	70	Ulvik (NO)	Bergen	15	15	140
	Olštyn Gdańsk	85	80	–	Falköping (SE)	Goteborg	240	185	125
	Olštyn Gdańsk	190	145	–			550	415	–
	Olštyn Gdańsk	50	55	–			55	45	40
	Olštyn Gdańsk	150	140	–			65	50	60
	Olštyn Gdańsk	70	65	–			170	125	125
	Olštyn Gdańsk	165	130	–			120	100	115
	Poznań	25	35	40			75	75	–
	Olštyn Gdańsk	60	50	80			100	100	140
	Olštyn Gdańsk	185	135	175			150	140	–
	Olštyn Gdańsk	80	80	–			125	100	70
	Olštyn Gdańsk	165	135	–					



towns indicates that there are no interconnections with only one exception: Falköping (SE) and Mariagerfjord (DK), both members of the Cittaslow network, are partner cities. In addition, one of the partner towns of the Swedish Falköping is the Italian Cittaslow—Fontanellato.

### 3.2 Cittaslow towns on the Internet

Although the Cittaslow network increases the number of members each year, it gains experience in international cooperation and measurable profits to improve the aesthetics and quality of life in cities in the future (e.g., in March 2015, the association “Polish Cities Cittaslow” was established and the Marshal of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship assigned EUR 51,1 million for revitalization of 14 towns being members of this association in 2014–2020), despite increased interest in the so-called slow life and its growing social significance, brand recognition is still low, also among the inhabitants of member towns (Zawadzka 2017c, 128).

Although there is a logo of the association on posters informing about cultural and entertainment events “an orange colored snail turned to the left and bearing houses and steeples of a city,” and in the space of member cities can be found snail sculptures inspired by this logo, this lacks a direct message for the inhabitants, not only about the assumptions of the Cittaslow movement and the objectives set which the city undertook to implement when accessing the network, but also some basic information about the towns’ membership in the network. Possibilities of an in-depth analysis of endogenous capital held at the initial stage of the certification process are not used. The exception is the approach taken by the mayor of Meldorf which involved inhabitants in this process, which created added value: “making residents aware of their endogenous capital, both in the material dimension and in strong social ties” (Zawadzka 2017a, 89–90).

In order to research the presence of the town in the Internet space through the prism of membership in the Cittaslow network, content analysis was performed:

- on the international association’s website,
- on websites of communes of Polish and Nordic members,
- in Wikipedia in English and native languages for individual towns, and
- in the social media and other media.

The main internet platform aimed at promoting the Cittaslow network and informing about current events in member cities is the website of the association ([www.cittaslow.org](http://www.cittaslow.org) alias [www.cittaslow.net](http://www.cittaslow.net)), on which, as of March 2, 2018, all Polish (except for the youngest Polish Cittaslow—Rzgów) and all the Nordic Cittaslow were listed. For the majority of towns (21 Polish and 4 Nordic), there are descriptions of the region, history, monuments and other tourist attractions of the towns (tab. 5).

One of the requirements the member town undertakes to subscribe to the “Cittaslow International Charter” is to put the association’s logo on its official letter paper and website.<sup>6</sup> The analysis of the content posted on the official websites of the municipalities (as of March 2, 2018) shows that on most of them (21 Polish and 7 Nordic) there is the association’s logo (tab. 5), and its location varies: in a noticeable place at the top of the website—Barczewo, Biskupiec, Jeziorany, Kalety, Lidzbark Warmiński, Nidzica, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Olsztynek, Orneta, Prudnik, Ryn oraz Sokndal (NO), and from the side or bottom of the website—Bartoszyce, Bisztynek, Dobre Miasto, Lidzbark, Lubawa, Nowy Dwór Gdański, Pasym, Rejowiec Fabryczny, Reszel, Sępólno, Kristines-tad (FI), Djúpivogur (IS), Svendborg (DK), Eidskog (NO), Levanger (NO), Ulvik (NO). In most cases of Polish pages, clicking on the logo causes a redirect to the [cittaslowpolska.pl](http://cittaslowpolska.pl) website. The exceptions are the Lidzbark’s and Olsztynek’s websites (on the Lidzbark’s website a calendar of events related to membership in the Cittaslow network opens, and the logo on the Olsztynek website is inactive). On the communes’ websites of Nordic Cittaslow towns, clicking on the Cittaslow logo opens a page with information about both the Cittaslow association and the town in the context of its presence in it. The exception is the website of the commune of Eidskog (NO), where a link redirecting to [cittaslow.com](http://cittaslow.com) is invalid. There is no logo of association on the following websites of the communes: Działdowo, Głubczyce, Gołdap, Górowo Iławeckie, Murowana Goślina, Sianów, Rzgów, Mariagerfjord (DK) and Falköping (SE).

6. See: Cittaslow International Charter, 12 May 2014, [@:] [http://www.cittaslow.org/sites/default/files/content/page/files/257/charter\\_cittaslow\\_en\\_05\\_18.pdf](http://www.cittaslow.org/sites/default/files/content/page/files/257/charter_cittaslow_en_05_18.pdf).

When searching cities and towns on English version of Wikipedia website (as of March 2, 2018) only for five of them is there information on membership in the Cittaslow network (tab. 5): Reszel, Kristinestad (FI), Djúpivogur (IS), Levanger (NO), and Sokndal (NO). When searching on the websites in native languages<sup>7</sup> only for eleven towns is there such information (tab. 5): Biskupiec, Bisztynek, Głubczyce, Pasym, Prudnik, Reszel, Ryn, Djúpivogur (IS), Svendborg (DK), Levanger (NO), and Sokndal (NO).

**Tab. 5.** Accessibility of information on the Internet about Polish and Nordic Cittaslow towns

Cittaslow town	Description of the city at <a href="http://cittaslow.org">cittaslow.org</a> ( <a href="http://cittaslow.net">cittaslow.net</a> )	Presence of the Cittaslow logo on the commune website	Presence of information about the town's membership in Cittaslow on the Wikipedia website in English	Presence of information about the town's membership in Cittaslow on the Wikipedia website in native language
Barczewo	yes	yes	no	yes
Bartoszyce	yes	yes	no	no
Biskupiec	yes	yes	no	yes
Bisztynek	yes	yes	no	yes
Dobre Miasto	yes	yes	no	no
Działdowo	yes	no	no	no
Głubczyce	yes	no	no	yes
Gołdap	yes	no	no	no
Górowo Iławeckie	no	no	no	no
Jeziorany	no	yes	no	no
Kalety	yes	yes	no	no
Lidzbark	no	yes	no	no
Lidzbark Warmiński	yes	yes	no	no
Lubawa	yes	yes	no	no
Murowana Goślina	no	no	no	no
Nidzica	yes	yes	no	no
Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	yes	yes	no	no
Nowy Dwór Gdański	yes	yes	no	no
Olsztynek	yes	yes	no	no
Orneta	no	yes	no	no
Pasym	yes	yes	no	yes
Prudnik	yes	yes	no	yes
Rejowiec Fabryczny	yes	yes	no	no
Reszel	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ryn	yes	yes	no	yes
Sępólno	no	yes	no	no
Sianów	yes	no	no	no
Rzgów <sup>a</sup>	no	no	no	no
Kristinestad (FI)	yes	yes	yes	no
Djúpivogur (IS)	yes	yes	yes	yes
Mariagerfjord (DK)	yes	no	no	no
Svendborg (DK)	no	yes	no	yes
Eidskog (NO)	no	yes	no	no
Levanger (NO)	no	yes	yes	yes
Sokndal (NO)	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ulvik (NO)	no	yes	no	no
Falköping (SE) <sup>b</sup>	no	no	no	no

<sup>a</sup>Rzgów does not appear on [www.cittaslow.org](http://www.cittaslow.org) alias [www.cittaslow.net](http://www.cittaslow.net).

<sup>b</sup>There is only a 3 min 50 s long video promoting Falköping.



The international association—Cittaslow International—does not receive widespread social media coverage: its Twitter profile (as of 2 March 2018) is observed by over 5 000 people; Instagram profile by over 1 000 people,<sup>8</sup> the YouTube channel has less than 300 subscribers. The profiles on Facebook: Cittaslow International has been followed by over 15 000 people, Cittaslow Polska—by over 3 000 people. Only two towns created individual profiles. However, the profile Cittaslow Ulvik—is followed by just one person, and the profile Ogilla Cittaslow Falköping, which is observed by 36 people, actually means “cancel Cittaslow Falköping.”

The Polish website ([cittaslowpolska.pl](http://cittaslowpolska.pl)), apart from some information on current events regarding the association, reports on past events, and a press repository on Cittaslow, contains also contact details and photos taken in all member cities, except for the youngest Polish Cittaslow town—Rzgów. There are no descriptions of the member towns (e.g., information about the region or places and buildings worth visiting). Despite the fact that each town has a reference to the official websites of the commune, on most of them, as already mentioned, when you click on the logo of the association, you return to [cittaslowpolska.pl](http://cittaslowpolska.pl).

There is no separate website aimed at promoting the Nordic cities, but on the official website of the commune of Kristinestad (FI), there is a folder for all the Nordic Cittaslow towns. In addition, some member towns have created their own websites: Reszel ([cittaslow.reszel.pl](http://cittaslow.reszel.pl)), Svendborg ([cittaslow.svendborg.dk](http://cittaslow.svendborg.dk)), Mariagerfjord ([cittaslow-mariager.dk](http://cittaslow-mariager.dk)).

## Summary

“Provincial towns are often overlooked in tourist guides and, because of their size, are not marked on the regional maps. Only a few of them are capable of promoting themselves using their spa status or taking advantage of the fact that a famous scientist or artist was born there” (Zawadzka 2017b, 99). Spatial distribution of the cities—i.e., their dense network, visible especially in Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship, fosters the combination of several tourist destinations into one tourist trip. Moreover, tourist offers of the majority of the Polish Cittaslow towns are not attractive enough to spend more than one or two days there. Certainly, their diversity, number and high spatial concentration are advantages of the Polish Cittaslow towns as good impressions after visiting one of them may trigger further visits in other towns of the network.

The peripheral location of the majority of the Polish and Nordic Cittaslow towns, along with the lack of railway connections, defines the tourist characteristics of these small towns. This may be an advantage, for example for a tourist tired from the stimulus of big cities (their rich offer of culture and entertainment but also global hotel networks, restaurants or shops and large number of other tourists) and wanting to take advantage of a different, calmer form of leisure, quiet and calmness—the rarest goods of the modern western world. “The socio-spatial conditions of small towns make them increasingly popular destinations for tourists travelling in the rapidly growing global trend called “sustainable tourism,” “green tourism” or ‘slow tourism’ as an alternative to the “all-inclusive,” touring trips or accommodation in a 5-star hotel. This form of relaxation may seem to be archaic and old fashioned; however, it is a response to today’s fast-paced and consumer-centered nature of globalization” (Zawadzka 2017b, 100).

Access to online information on the Polish and Nordic towns in the context of their membership in the Cittaslow network varies, but it is rather low, and on official websites of the communes, it is often limited to mentioning that a given city belongs to the network. “A proper promotion emphasizing benefits of sustainable tourism can increase tourist attractiveness of small towns. However, in spite of the fact that more revenues from the increased tourist traffic comes into the town’s budget, institutions and individual households, the local leaders have stressed that they are not interested in development of mass tourism, but they would rather expect to host well-informed and interested tourists traveling individually or in small groups” (Zawadzka 2017b, 100).

Due to the fact that the towns’ information accessibility needs to be refined, this kind of promotion should be encouraged. It will encourage local authorities to actions aimed at increasing the

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8. Apart of that, there are over 40 000 on Instagram posts marked #cittaslow.

number of tourists visiting their towns on the one hand, and on the other it will counteract mass tourism that may lead to the loss of the genius loci of these small towns in a long term perspective.

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