

Network Model of Revitalization in the Cittaslow Cities of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to present a network model of a revitalization of small towns unique in Poland and even in Europe. Fourteen small towns in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship, thanks to their membership in the Cittaslow City network and the establishment of the Polish Cittaslow Association, received significant funds for their development under the Supralocal Revitalization Program of the Network of Cittaslow Cities for 2014–2020. This program is based on a hybrid model of urban development, which was created from the overlap of financial models (ERDF, ESF funds, own funds) and the so-called “social” revitalization model on developing in Poland Cittaslow model oriented to a good quality of life. This is an example of the efficient use by the network of cooperating cities of economies of scale in competing with other urban centers for development measures. Thanks to the unified diagnosis of existing problems in the physical, economic and social space of these cities (delimitation areas, delimitation indicators: unemployment rate and share of people using social assistance in the area revitalized in relation to the entire city), differentiated urban activities were undertaken in integrated financial projects that concerned the restriction of various social dysfunctions, including the problem of unemployment.

Keywords: network model of small cities revitalization, regional and local development, Cittaslow network, social revitalization

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Introduction

Urban regeneration is a cyclical process accompanying cities since their creation and is associated mainly with the degree of wear and tear in the material-spatial layer of the urban-architectural-infrastructural potential (exhaustion of operational durability, devaluation of utility and aesthetic values, the need to introduce technological changes affecting the quality of urban life). Changes in the image of the city and its developmental potentials (spatial, human, technological, etc.) are conditioned by both external changes of a global nature, including political, economic, social, environmental, technological, and critical as well as by internal synergies of cities.

One of the tools for urban development and implemented urban policy is currently revitalization. Since 2007, revitalization has been a key element of the integrated and comprehensive urban policy, which also results from other EU documents such as: The Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion, the EU Territorial Agenda and the Leipzig Charter. The principles contained in these publications allowed the EU countries to create different models of local partnership, favoring cross-sectoral cooperation within the framework of social projects. The urban policy model developed under the URBAN Community Initiative is believed to have played a key role in shaping a new approach to the problems of a social revitalization of degraded urban areas.

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Small cities usually play the role of local administration centers, providing services in the areas of education, healthcare, jobs, entrepreneurship and entertainment. These centers are also supposed to affect the well-being and maintenance of their own inhabitants, but also the neighboring rural population, and to contribute to preventing the migration of people from rural areas to cities, and to achieving balanced regional development, as well as the cohesion and sustainability of Europe.¹ According to Heffner “The traditional small towns’ role of the relatively full servicing the rural background and the mediation between the local and regional market, has almost been liquidated” (Heffner 2009, 60–63). It is necessary to verify the current and future position of cities as growth centers especially in rural areas due to changes such as multifunctionality of rural areas, increasing metropolization processes, migration trends, and the taking over of the traditional functions of small towns by larger cities or external urbanized metropolitan areas. That is why the meeting in the European Parliament of the authorities of the International Cittaslow Association with a group of MEPs in January 2018 was dictated by the need to pay attention to the role of small towns in the development of the European Union, and to support their sustainable development and provide them with a good quality of life.²

In the new EU policy plans through 2020 and adopted methods of financing of EU development, the subject of social revitalization are residents in degraded areas and their social life, not inanimate objects. Taking into account the existing national experience, it can be seen that in the subsequent stages of EU funding of revitalization projects, the ever deeper layers of activities related to urban renewal have been animated. Before and after 2004, the following layers were taken into account first in the revitalization process: aesthetic, architectural and urban planning, infrastructural and technical-technological. The actions taken dealt with either single objects or isolated parts of cities. In 2007–2013, the layers of cultural heritage, natural heritage, together with the aforementioned layers, better harmonized with the principle of sustainable development, but were subordinated to the economic layer rather than the social. After 2013, the social layer of problem areas has taken on a completely different significance in revitalization processes—the previously mentioned layers are subordinated to the needs of a specific community in crisis areas. It is not the last layer of revitalization projects, but the supreme one.

The earlier revitalization projects realized in Poland and the EU dealt mostly with isolated cities and their population. An example of already functioning and well-tested networks of medium and large cities that exchange experience, knowledge and good practices related to urban policy are, among others, networks: URBACT I (2002–2006), URBACT II (2007–2013), URBACT III (2014–2020)³ and EUKN (2005)⁴.

The purpose of this article is to present the first network model of a revitalization of small towns in Poland, and also in the EU. The author describes the urban network development model, which is a hybrid model, resulting from the imposition of a revitalization model and a model for financing urban development on the Cittaslow city network model. One of the initiatives of “network” cities is the development and implementation of the “Supralocal Revitalization Programme of the Network of Cittaslow cities for 2014–2020” (hereinafter: Supralocal RP). It has been developed, in part, on the basis of a socio-economic diagnosis of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship and a social diagnosis made in each of the 14 Cittaslow cities co-creating the program. Despite some imperfections,

1. See: Cities of tomorrow—Challenges, visions, ways forward. European Commission, Directorate General for Regional Policy, October 2011, page 5, [@:] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/citiesoftomorrow/citiesoftomorrow_final.pdf.

2. Document principles were presented by Stefano Pisani, the President of Cittaslow International, and Jacek Wiśniowski, the mayor of Lidzbark Warmiński, see: Sieć Cittaslow w Brukseli lobbuje na rzecz rozwoju miasteczek [The Cittaslow network in Brussels lobbies for the development of small towns], [@:] <https://cittaslowpolska.pl/index.php/pl/aktualnosci/54-inne/794-siec-cittaslow-w-brukseli-lobbuje-na-rzecz-rozwoju-miasteczek>.

3. URBACT—European Territorial Cooperation Program for Sustainable Urban Development—it associates 29 countries, 181 cities, including 23 cities from Poland, and 5000 active participants, see: URBACT III, [@:] <https://www.ewt.gov.pl/strony/o-programach/przeczytaj-o-programach/programy-europejskiej-wspolpracy-terytorialnej/urbact-iii/>.

4. European Urban Knowledge Network has the legal status of a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC); the network includes 15 Member States, including Poland.

the Supralocal RP is part of a new stage in the development of revitalization programs, in which activities related to the renewal of the city are not only spatially-technical in character but result from pre-defined social problems and the needs of the local community. Due to the fact that the completion of integrated revitalization projects is spread over 2018–2020, there are no opportunities to evaluate the assumed program effects. Conclusions regarding the processes of revitalization and the implemented Supralocal RP were based mainly on literature studies (using the method of analysis and criticism of the literature).

1 Urban renewal.

From revitalization through social revitalization to sustainable community

The first revitalization activities were undertaken in Poland in the 1990s, however, the first pilot social revitalization programs were implemented only in 2013.⁵ Attempts at a systemic recognition of revitalization activities undertaken in the country since 1992 were only completed in 2015 with the introduction of the revitalization act.⁶ The national system of support and direction of revitalization activities is created, based on the aforementioned Act, the National Urban Policy, the Act on Public-Private Partnership, the National Revitalization Plan and guidelines for revitalization in Regional Operational Programs for the years 2014–2020.

Unfavorable phenomena in cities were noticed, such as “decapitalization” of housing substance and technical infrastructure, low-cost housing deficit, concentration of social problems in districts affected by industrial restructuring, creation of so-called urban fallows, socio-spatial polarization and creation of specific ghettos of cumulated poverty and closed areas of wealth, urban decay (suburbanization), collapse of urban centers—these are the most frequently indicated examples of unfavorable phenomena faced by Polish cities (Wódcz 2011, 41). The period of systemic transformation also negatively affected the revitalization processes undertaken in Poland (Billert 2006, 2012; Bryx and Jadach-Sepiolo 2009; Skalski 2004). The most frequently mentioned in the literature dysfunctions regarding the undertaken revitalization activities were: using the model of implementation revitalization, which in contrast to the integration revitalization did not take into account the needs of the local community of the degraded area (Kaczmarek 2001; Strzelecka 2011), gentrification mechanisms as specific “colonization” practices of a selected class or social groups (Noworól and Noworól 2017; Pancewicz 2016; Skrzypczak and Łukowski 2011), facade revitalization—the projects took into account the technical and aesthetic values of public space and ignored the repair of an unfavorable social situation in the crisis area (Wojarska 2016), the formation of “islands of growth” and marginalized districts (Pancewicz 2016), lack of integrated actions focused exclusively on areas with a scale of social problems exceeding the average for a city or municipality and at the same time aimed at solving them (Noworól and Noworól 2017), specific quality of life in housing estates (Gzell 2009), lack of right social participation in the management of revitalization projects (Kowalska 2010).

In the national legal interpretation there is no formal definition of social revitalization. Therefore, in the further part of the publication, social revitalization should be understood as “a long-term process of undertaking coherent, integrated activities related to stopping the development of negative social trends, counteracting pathologies and social exclusion and improving safety, initiated and coordinated by the municipal government and/or its organizational units in order to removal of certain areas of cities and communes from the crisis state” (Skrzypczak and Łukowski 2011, 212–213). Currently, the guidelines for revitalization projects force this form of revitalization over “technical revitalization.”

5. 20 pilot programs have been implemented under Social Revitalization Project System 1.17 “Social Revitalization,” conducted by the Centre for Human Resources Development (CRZL); they concerned social revitalization and local partnerships within the framework of the Social Revitalization Programs constituting integral parts of the Local (Communal) Revitalization Programs.

6. See: Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 11 maja 2017 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy o rewitalizacji. DzU z 2017 r. poz. 1023.

In foreign activities, social revitalization is, for example in the United Kingdom, the part of the “Sustainable Community Plan.”⁷ This document was introduced, outlining the vision of the economic, social and environmental development of local communities in the perspective of 20 years, as a coherent development policy including urban regeneration programs. In this document, 8 compatible components are indicated for the needs of building sustainable local communities, also important due to urban renewal programs. They are: governance, transport & connectivity, services, social & cultural, housing & built environment, economy, environmental and equity (McDonald, Malys, and Maliene 2009). Different tools of social sustainability assessment are now implemented in the UK—e.g., social impact assessment (SIA). The planning process of urban regeneration requires “clear statements of community involvement (SCIs), which are statements that explain how the local community and others will be involved in the preparation of local planning policy” (Glasson and Wood 2009, 285–286). Currently, the SIA takes into account the profile of various groups of residents of degraded areas and concerns such as: learning and employment; general well-being, including health, crime and deprivation; community facilities/services; recreation and public open space; social inclusion and community integration; and economic and business context.

2 A hybrid model of the development of a Polish small cities network

The emergence of new models of urban development is the result of a variety of global transformations, including changes taking place in the EU after 2010. The adoption of the hybrid model by the city results from with the following assumptions:

- The territory is defined by its functional, and not only administrative, features. Actions are adapted to specific territorial contexts—to spatial relationships between them. Essential are: integrated investment package and cooperation, dialogue and partnership.
- Revitalization may now involve urban networks, which results from the adoption by the EU of the new Europe 2020 strategy and a new model of place-based approach to regional development.
- Cities use different development models to realize their priorities, with adaptation to possible funding models. Urban revitalization is possible thanks to national and EU funds for social revitalization.
- Affiliation of cities to different types of networks is a necessity and determines their development (New Athens Charter). It is possible to use the scale effect in competing by small towns with larger territorial units for financial resources for their development.
- City networks may use an integrated territorial approach for more efficient use of resources—i.e., endogenous and exogenous development potentials, and territorial specialization (Strzelecka 2016, 2017).

The International Association of Cittaslow Cities currently has 236 cities in 30 countries, and the Polish network comprises 29 cities (including Rzgów and Sianów).⁸ The cities of Cittaslow are promoted as the Cities of Good Life. The quality of life is described by over 70 different criteria included in seven thematic areas: energy and environmental policy, infrastructure policy, urban quality policy, agricultural policy, tourism and crafts, hospitality, awareness and education policy, integration of society and partnership. Creation of this network of cities was a response to the need to redefine how life in small and provincial cities, with strong relations with rural areas, is to go on, how cities are to develop without losing their most valuable assets and resources. The idea of Carlo Petrini, the founder of Slow Food, became a basis for the creation of a network of cities whose philosophy is life focused on good quality. The “Cittaslow project was not a strategy specifically

7. Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run and offer equality of opportunities and good services for all. For communities to be sustainable, they must offer hospitals, schools, shops, good public transport, as well as a clean and safe environment. (Sustainable Communities Plan, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003).

8. Previous name of association: Cittaslow-International Network of Cities Where Living is Easy. Small town is described as a town with number of inhabitants below 50,000.

designed to develop or re-launch a city. It was and is the realization of what one is and how to make the most of it . . . The Cittaslow network is not something that attempts the export of the Italian model but is an instrument that permits all the member cities to make the life of their citizens more pleasant, more on a human scale, focusing on the unique characteristics of every city. While Cittaslow member must follow general criteria, every national network works out prerequisites of its own in line with the history, traditions and identity of its cities, keeping in mind the central criteria of slowness” (Ubal dini 2009, 251–252).

According to her, the concept of “slowness” does not remain in opposition to the concept of effectiveness/efficiency of cities in their development, but it emphasizes an important (i.e., spiritual, aspect of the city’s functioning). Therefore, according to her, the word “slowness” should be used in the meaning of the word “calmness” in connection with the place and its atmosphere. It means: “desire to regain the rhythms, place, food, contexts on a human scale, a scale that takes into account human dignity and desire for beauty. All of which takes time, as well as intelligence, commitment, love, technology. The slow approach wishes to make the most of the past and in so doing it turns to the best what the present can offer, above all in terms of technology and communication.” According to Ubal dini, the city’s identity is a composition of the following elements: “a sense of belonging above all to one’s city, everything is contingent on this sense of belonging, such as a beauty of the city sites and lifestyle of the city, seeing ourselves, our identity as “being in relation to,” decided sense of autonomy or better the conviction of each city that it is capable of managing its own interests better than anyone else” (2009, 252–253).

A survey conducted in 2011 among one hundred and fifty Cittaslow cities, including six Polish cities, shows that about 60% of Cittaslow cities belong to other networks (Roma et al. 2012, 97). This indicates a certain pattern in the behavior of cities around the world. Through various alliances and building common networks, cities strive to: draw attention to themselves in the conditions of the global economy, pursue common goals, cooperate and create a flexible system of exchange of goods and services, strengthen their development profiles and gain competitive advantages, create specializations in the development of cities that they will be conducive to the implementation of public projects within the network (Farelnik, Stanowicka, and Wierzbicka 2017; Strzelecka 2017, 31–35). Of course, an important condition for belonging to a given network or choice of development model is to determine its development potential and use it for its own and network’s development. Cities indicated the following main reasons for belonging to the Cittaslow city network: improving the protection of historical and landscape heritage, improving the tourist attractiveness thanks to the known brand, the opportunity to discuss specific problems and exchange experiences at the national and international level (Roma et al. 2012, 99). Cities, assessing the effects of implementing the Cittaslow model for the needs of their development, listed as the main benefits: a significant increase in cultural events, protection and support for the creation of local artistic products (handicraft), management of garbage disposal, support for local typical production, housing policy, energy saving and application of alternative energy sources, the impact of the local community on the development of cities, reduction of noise and pollution associated with lighting, elimination of architectural barriers, development of alternative mobility of residents, use of telecommunications network of local authorities, training of tourism operators, organic farming development and development of bio-architecture. The cities belonging to the Cittaslow network positively influenced the development of tourism (38%) and other sectors (22%), while 40% of the cities surveyed indicated that belonging to the network had no influence on the city’s development (Roma et al. 2012, 103).

The hybrid model of development of the 14 cities of Cittaslow in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship, results from the imposition on the dynamically developing model of the Cittaslow city network in our country:

- the so-called model of “social” revitalization, benefiting from a set of the selected product and outcome indicators related to, among others, investment axes 8, 10 and 11, adopted for the Regional Operational Program of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship; and
- financial model based on the financial engineering of EU funds—ERDF, ESF and own funds of the city/municipality.

3 Network revitalization program of the Cittaslow cities in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship

The “Supralocal Revitalization Program of The Network of Cittaslow Cities For The Years 2014–2020” is undoubtedly an example of the first in Poland and on the European scale approach to revitalization, as a “network regeneration of cities.” The program is implemented by 14 cities, cooperating with each other and co-creating the national network of Cittaslow cities, and the undertaken projects are to ensure their integrated development both on an individual scale and on the scale of the city network. This program is one of the instruments for Cittaslow cities branding. “The objective of the program is parallel, coordinated and targeted revitalization of towns within the network of Cittaslow cities in Warmia and Masuria, so that, while preserving their unique character and values, they could simultaneously offer their residents a similar quality of life. Common and parallel actions in all 14 cities will be much more visible and identifiable than single processes. This will create a common image of cities. In this way, Cittaslow network can build a coherent brand of small urban centres with sustainable development and special natural and historical values.”⁹

The revitalization program includes a network of 14 cities located in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship: Barczewo, Biskupiec, Bisztynek, Dobrze Miasto, Gołdap, Górowo Iławeckie, Lidzbark Warmiński, Lubawa, Nidzica, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Olsztynek, Pasym, Reszel, and Ryn. It is consistent with the “Social and Economic Development Strategy of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship until 2025,”¹⁰ with the objectives of the “Regional Operational Program for the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship for 2014–2020,” with national and EU strategic documents related to the financial perspective 2014–2020 and strategic documents of 14 cities, including local revitalization programs. The organization implementing Supralocal RP is the Association “Polskie Miasta Cittaslow.”

The total area of revitalization, covered by the Supralocal RP, is over 790 ha in 14 cities; the smallest area of revitalization—1,4 ha concerns the city of Pasym, and the maximum—150 ha—Dobrze Miasto.¹¹ Most of the cities discussed have designated one area to be revitalized, while Lidzbark Warmiński and Ryn have two areas, Lubawa and Gołdap, each with four areas, and Nowe Miasto Lubawskie—five areas. In most cases, the area requiring revitalization includes the city centre, covering historical heritage areas, which is associated with the desire of Cittaslow cities to further develop tourism in the scale of the city network. Projects of revitalizations also include the other types of land degradation like post-railway areas, housing estates, the area of the municipality, peripheral areas of the city, green areas (city park, waterside areas of rivers), sports and recreation areas (a beach on a lake). Undoubtedly, the weakness of the descriptions of the revitalization areas is the lack of information on whether the areas indicated for revitalization are covered by the local spatial development plan or not.

The preparation of the Supralocal RP was preceded by a social diagnosis and identification of the needs of residents in the Cittaslow cities in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship. The results of the diagnosis pointed to the “loss of socio-economic functions of small and medium-sized cities as a result of strong external competition and the deteriorating situation in the municipalities surrounding the cities and the negative impact on the development of the cities of Poland’s political transformation after 1989.”¹² The necessity to undertake integrated revitalization activities in the Cittaslow cities resulted mainly from the social, spatial, cultural and economic development conditions of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship, one of the poorest in the European Union. The main problems of this voivodship were in 2012 (and still are):

- unemployment—every fifth professionally active resident (21,2%) was unemployed (in the country—13,4%), due to, among other things, the lack of professional qualifications and low level

9. “The Supralocal Revitalization Program...”, page 5.

10. *Ibid.*, pages 240–241; strategic objectives assuming growth of the competitiveness of the economy, social activity, numbers and network connections and creation of modern development infrastructure.

11. [In the journal European practice of number notation is followed—for example, 36 333,33 (European style) = 36 333.33 (Canadian style) = 36,333.33 (US and British style).—Ed.]

12. “The Supralocal Revitalization Program...”, page 176.

- of education; in the case of Cittaslow cities, the number of the unemployed higher than the national rate was recorded in Barczewo, Bisztynek, Reszel, Dobre Miasto, Górowo Iławecki;
- the highest in Poland number of people using social assistance per 10 000 inhabitants; the indicator above 15% concerned such Cittaslow cities as Bisztynek, Górowo Iławeckie, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Reszel, and in Pasym the rate exceeded 40%;
- the level of risk of poverty below the minimum subsistence level (13,5%), the risk of poverty below,
- the relative poverty line (24,7%) and the risk of poverty below the statutory poverty line (13,8%), were the highest in the country,
- increase in the number of people aged 50+ in the total number of unemployed people from 17,4% in 2006 to 21,7% in 2012 and a low social activity of people at this age, and
- risk of poverty and social exclusion of social groups such as youths, large families, people aged 50+, people with disabilities and post-working age people.¹³

The socio-economic situation in the cities of Cittaslow is analogous to the situation in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship. The social diagnosis concerning each of the 14 cities shows that people using MOPS (social service) assistance are mostly affected by social dysfunctions (the order is important): unemployment, poverty, disability, long-term or severe illness, incomplete family, alcoholism. Other dysfunctions include domestic violence, having many children, the need to protect motherhood, drug addiction, homelessness, and difficulties after being released from prison. The intensity of these dysfunctions is diverse in the Cittaslow cities in question.¹⁴ It should be emphasized that only the city of Gołdap has presented in the Supralocal RP the results of a survey on the quality of city life and the needs of residents. Vandalism, migrations of inhabitants, low economic and professional activity of the inhabitants, problems of the elderly, helplessness in care and educational matters, impossibility to fulfill the cultural needs of the inhabitants should be added to the negative social phenomena. Social problems are accompanied by destroyed buildings, devastated housing resources, decapitalization of technical infrastructure, including transport infrastructure, dysfunctions consisting in the lack of public spaces in the areas of “blocks of flats,” problems related to the lack of places allowing for active recreation of residents, lack of connections between residents and the city, low quality life of residents.

For the purpose of determining the area of spatial delimitation of territories, as a result of working groups activities in each city of Cittaslow,¹⁵ two indicators were adopted, which were then included in the Supralocal RP:

- value of registered unemployment rate: in 14 cities, this indicator was in 2012 ranging from 7,4% (Ryn) to approximately 27,6% (Pasym), and
- the share of the population benefiting from social assistance in the area revitalized in the general population of these cities in 2012 amounted from approximately 8,4% (Nidzica) to approximately 45,0% (Reszel).¹⁶

The SWOT analysis shows that the opportunity to solve the above problems will be provided by: using available EU funds for revitalization and prevention of social exclusion; development of the tourism sector, including construction and modernization of tourism infrastructure around the region; systemic activities supporting vocational activation of the unemployed and professionally inactive and continuing education and vocational training. The main threats are unfavorable communication infrastructure, poorly developed tourist infrastructure, environmental degradation, low entrepreneurship rate in the examined cities, weaknesses of the social care system (lack of resources, methods for solving the exclusion problem), discrimination of care-intensive environments, and difficult access to education. An important problem related to the development of small towns in

13. *Ibid.*, pages 177–182.

14. *Ibid.*, pages 12–176.

15. *Ibid.*, page 183. The working groups were made up of representatives of education, police, emergency services, non-governmental organizations, municipal social centers, cultural and religious environments, and officials responsible for the problems of spatial development, infrastructure and the environment.

16. *Ibid.*, pages 183–232. The value of these indicators for the analyzed area must be higher than the value obtained for the whole city.

Poland is the acquisition of funds for their revitalization, taking into account their cultural heritage as well as socio-economic aspects of development. Usually, small cities do not go to the second round of applying for revitalization funds, if they act individually, which results from the specificity of raising funds for these processes

As part of this program, 35 integrated, multi-project investment ventures were adopted. The allocation of funds for revitalization under the ROP took place in a non-competitive model. The financing model is currently based on the financial assembly of the ESF, ERDF and own funds. In one case, concerning Dobre Miasto, the project is also financed from the Ministry of Culture fund. The total budget for integrated investment projects is approx. PLN 408 million; in the case of individual cities, this is a sum ranging from PLN 14,2 million (Reszel) to PLN 52,5 million (Lidzbark Warmiński). The projects implemented in cities most often concern the following investment priorities: 9b, 9i, 9iv, 9v, 8i, 6b, 6c, 4c, 4e.¹⁷ From the point of view of the labor market, the following investment axes and priorities are relevant: Axis 8—Areas requiring revitalization; priority 9b, Axis 10—Regional labor market; priority 8i, Axis 11—Social inclusion; priority 9i. All cities included in the Supralocal RP implement projects under Priority 9b, while the majority of cities, apart from Reszel and Lidzbark Warmiński, implement projects under Priority 9i. Only Dobre Miasto uses priority 8i in its revitalization activities.

The analysis of 8 operational objectives of the Supralocal RP indicates a still significant and predominant share of “hard” (spatial-technical) measures over “soft” (socio-economic) measures. However, it should be emphasized that the planned revitalization of buildings, including historic buildings or public utilities, as well as public spaces to a greater extent than in the projects implemented in 2007–2013, are related to future workplaces, raising professional qualifications of people from social exclusion groups, places of cultural, sports, educational and tourist activities and improving security and reducing crime.

The spatial and technical measures concern such things as protection of cultural heritage, improvement of energy efficiency of buildings, promotion of ecological means of communication, creation of favorable conditions for development of commercial and service functions and improvement of conditions for development of tourism, local retail trade and gastronomy through revitalization of public space, renovation and modernization of building substance and strengthening of the housing function, revitalization of facilities related to education, science and culture and adjustment of their equipment to modern standards, modernization of sports and recreation facilities and areas, modernization and expansion of social facilities and public facilities. The scheduled socio-economic activities are:

- creating conditions for the functioning of entities supporting the development of social cooperatives, professional activation and improving professional qualifications, creating new places for work;
- increasing social cohesion by eliminating poverty, reducing social inequalities, increasing employment and social inclusion;
- raising the education level of residents (marginalized groups), increasing their creativity and ability to innovate;
- development of adaptive abilities in social and economic contacts, through an appropriate care and education system as well as mobilization and activation of the population of degraded areas; and
- supporting cooperation between educational entities and business entities through the transfer of knowledge and experience.

Equally important activities are the improvement of social infrastructure, including the improvement of conditions for rest and spending free time by supporting initiatives for children, youth and seniors, as well as creating and supporting social networks.

The majority of the 35 projects will be finalized in the second, third and fourth quarter of 2018. In 2019 and 2020, 4 projects will be completed. In the first and second quarters of 2018, the completion of 5 projects is planned in the municipalities of Reszel, Lidzbark Warmiński, Ryn, and

17. “The Supralocal Revitalization Program...”, pages 12–175.

Olsztynek. This will result in approximately 200–250 new jobs, related, among other things, to the creation of 5 Social Integration Centres (CIS), two Centres for Vocational Activation, Education Centre, Entrepreneurship Support Centre, Volunteer and Rescue Centre, Woda Youth Centre, Family Support Centre, the creation of social enterprises in five cities. The total value of 35 projects (measure 8.1) is estimated at approximately PLN 153,2 million, with the EU contribution (ERDF, ESF) amounting to PLN 124 million.¹⁸

Conclusions

In the case of the 14 small Polish cities of Cittaslow, we are dealing with a new model of revitalization, i.e., a network and supralocal revitalization program of small cities, which harmonizes with the Cittaslow model of cities and the adopted financial model (ERDF, ESF, own resources). Prepared by cities the Supralocal Revitalization Program (2014–2020) is undoubtedly an innovative undertaking. It is one of the more important network activities of the Cittaslow cities of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship influencing their development. It has local and regional dimensions, is a comprehensive activity in designated areas of spatial delimitation and is aimed at improving the quality of life in individual cities, adjusted to the needs of their residents. The Supralocal RP fits in with the European and national urban policy plans, thanks to projects deeply oriented towards social revitalization. The revitalization process is based on the principle of sustainable development and integrated social, spatial, cultural and environmental activities, preceded by socio-economic diagnosis. Evaluation of the effects of the projects being realized in these cities will be available during 2018 and 2019. However, the scope and type of implemented projects largely guarantees the implementation of social needs in the cities of the Cittaslow network.

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18. See: Szczegółowy opis osi priorytetowej. Obszary wymagające rewitalizacji Regionalnego Programu Operacyjnego Województwa Warmińsko-Mazurskiego na lata 2014–2020. Appendix No 4. List of projects identified by ROP W&M as part of the non-competitive model, pages 94–104.

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