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SPATIAL PLANNING AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL URBAN TOWNS – VISIONS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

PLANOWANIE PRZESTRZENNE A ROZWÓJ MAŁYCH MIAST – WIZJE XXI WIEKU

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ABSTRACT: Today, spatial planning is playing a more and more significant role in forming spatial development at the local level (municipality, town/city). It is closely connected with numerous documents underlying the implementation of the sustainable policy in the sphere of local development. The article presents an analysis of relevant planning documents at the national level, especially, at the level of the Podlaskie, Świętokrzyskie and Opolskie Voivodeships (provinces). Based on the analysis of spatial functioning in the range of small cities (towns) located in two provinces in the so-called Poland B (Eastern Poland) and one province in the so-called Poland A, the initial recognition of the impact of small urban centres on the regional development was made at different levels. The current economic system rooted in the premises of the innovative development of regions requires conducting detailed studies in the field of investigating its internal structure and external dependencies. As a complex, dynamic mechanism, generating an increase in the quality of life corresponding to the human resources, it also requires an appropriate management remaining in harmony with modern, strategic and spatial economy. The article selectively determines the problems appearing in the economic system of a region and indicates the need to solve the most essential development problems, e.g. those arising due to the obligatory introduction of social and economic scientific descriptions as the fundamental documents for the needs of creating sustainable development of the small-town landscape.

KEY WORDS: spatial planning, region, small town, economic system, cultural identity, small-town landscape

ABSTRAKT: Planowanie przestrzenne odgrywa coraz istotniejszą rolę w kształtowaniu zagospodarowania przestrzennego na poziomie lokalnym (gmina, miasto). Jest to ściśle związane z licznymi dokumentami leżącymi u podstaw wdrażania zrównoważonej polityki w sferze rozwoju lokalnego. W artykule przedstawiono analizę dokumentów planistycznych obowiązujących na poziomach: krajowym i regionalnym, a w szczególności województw podlaskiego, świętokrzyskiego i opolskiego. Na podstawie analizy funkcjonowania gospodarki i istniejącego zagospodarowania przestrzennego wybranych małych miast położonych w dwóch

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województwach tzw. Polski B (Polska Wschodnia) i jednego województwa tzw. Polski A, rozpoznano wpływ małych ośrodków miejskich na różne poziomy rozwoju regionalnego. Obecny system gospodarczy zakorzeniony w przesłankach innowacyjnego rozwoju regionu wymaga szczegółowych badań w zakresie jego wewnętrznej struktury i zewnętrznych zależności. Jako złożony, dynamiczny mechanizm, generujący wzrost jakości życia odpowiadający zasobom ludzkim, wymaga również odpowiedniego zarządzania, w harmonii z nowoczesną, strategiczną i przestrzenną gospodarką. Artykuł selektywnie określa problemy funkcjonujące w systemie gospodarczym regionu i wskazuje na potrzebę rozwiązania najistotniejszych problemów rozwojowych, np. na obowiązkowe wprowadzenie społecznych i ekonomicznych opisów naukowych jako podstawowych dokumentów dla potrzeb kształtowania zrównoważonego rozwoju krajobrazu małomiasteczkowego.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: planowanie przestrzenne, region, małe miasteczko, system gospodarczy, tożsamość kulturowa, krajobraz małego miasteczka

Europe needs strong cities and regions that live well.

Leipzig card (2007)

Introduction

Spatial planning tends to be an efficient tool in realisation of the sustainable social and economic development of regions. The planning space, as limited goods, requires a rational management. For that reason a multidisciplinary cooperation is needed in the so-called planning teams at various levels of organisation of the planning system. The basis of the spatial planning corresponds to a skilful combination of many issues connected with varied structures of given areas and their appropriate solving in the spatial terms. Currently, in the case of urban space, the concept of a town consistent with various dimensions (built-up, technical infrastructure, social infrastructure, economy and others) is being implemented. It could be supposed that such a concept will be in force in the near future. However, more and more frequently, modern cohesion is converted into a network of urban bands absorbing the so-called 'classical' towns connected by the supposed urban 'continuum' created within the range of small and big towns (*Expertise...*, 2010).

A modern, dynamically developing, region has got many valuable elements, which have also been formed on the basis of civilisation-related urban planning experiences from the past. Such elements create its cultural identity, which – appropriately reinforced by the cohesion of the settlement structure – is perceived as a lasting value, aspiring to be the cultural heritage passed down to future generations. The European regions of the 21st century should be strongly connected in the economic way due to integrated networks of 'streams' in the range of connections providing a high level of employment and competitiveness in local, regional and global markets.

Modern economy, determined by processes of globalisation, integration and specialisation at the local, regional and global levels, tends to prefer the model of economic development based on innovation and knowledge. Such a development considers mainly the spheres of production, construction, services and development of the agricultural and forestry sectors.

Development needs determine the search for the most favourable solutions in the field of strategic planning of management corresponding to the environmental potential of the region, namely, deprived of chaotic features and anchored in planning stability (Strzyż 2005).

The objective of this study is to indicate the role of spatial planning in the regional development based on selected examples of the region space existing within the so-called Poland A (Opolskie Province) and that from the so-called Poland B (Podlaskie and Świętokrzyskie Provinces) in the sphere of shaping landscapes and, especially, small-town landscapes. According to the data from the Central Statistical Office in Poland, at the beginning of the year 2018, there were 930 cities/towns, and starting with 1 January 2019, there will be 940 of them.

Results of the research

Contemporary plans of spatial development of the urban space, consistent with the regulating guidelines of the updated *Athens Charter – the Athens Convention* (2003)¹ and then *The Leipzig Charter for the sustainable development of European cities*,² the *Urban Agenda for the European Union*³ and the *National Spatial Development Con-*

¹ *The Athenian Charter* was prepared under the guidance of a French modernist – an architect and planner of the Swiss origin, i.e. Le Corbusier (1887-1965). It appeared in the form of a document in 1933 in Athens. It was in connection with the 4th International Congresses of Modern Architecture. The Charter was published in 1943. It discussed the separation of the so-called functional areas of the town to create a rational and healthy living space according to the slogan: “Sunlight, air, greenery” propagated by Le Corbusier from 1926. It was a suggestion of recommendations addressed to architects for reconstruction of destroyed towns and cities, mainly during World War II. Its strong impact as a manifesto of the modernist urbanism lasted until the 1980s. The Charter included the recommendations, such as: the town must allow freedom for the individual and provide him/her with a possibility to act in favour of the community; as a functional unit, it has the urban functions (flats, work, traffic, leisure); the flat must be the most important issue in urban planning, building residential blocks of flats as an alternative to increasing the density of residence; the workplace must be located as close as possible to the place of residence; open spaces, including recreational ones, must be next to the living spaces; the subordinate link between the key functions of the town/city should be met by the requirements of communication; individual functions of living, working and resting should be separated by green areas. The following zones were suggested for towns/cities: the centre (administration, banks, commerce, culture), the area around the town/city centre in order to separate this zone from that dedicated to living, then another zone separating the residential area from the zones of industry or craftsmanship, outskirts; integrated residential areas depending on the green areas – the so-called satellite ones.

² *The Leipzig Charter for the Sustainable Development of European Cities* was accepted as a document on 24 and 25 May 2007 in Leipzig, during an informal meeting of the ministers of the EU states dealing with the development of towns/cities and their territorial cohesion.

³ *The Urban Agenda for the European Union* tends to be a consequence of the implementation of the requirements of the EU international agreement of the so-called Pact of Amsterdam (2016). It mainly aims at releasing the potential for towns/cities located in Europe, where there are 74% of jobs in the EU, 70% of the EU policies are implemented by the local authorities, 85% of the EU GDP is generated by towns/cities. In the case of Poland, the common urban policy involves, e.g. urban revitalisation, investments in the systems of the so-called *smart cities*, The Integrated Territorial Investments (Polish abbreviation: ZIT), etc. This policy refers to social challenges (insufficient number of flats and houses, territorial segregation and gentrification,

cept until the year 2030 (2013), *Strategy for Responsible Development until 2020 (with a prospect until 2030)* (2017), should implement some constructive solutions leading to the creation of a coherent, harmonious planning space by promoting the so-called European ideals in this field. However, it is difficult to implement such laudable ideas without economic analyses of individual regions, prepared for the needs of creating the Local Development Plan.

For these research studies, an analysis was carried out of chosen towns which had been granted again or have just been granted their municipal rights. Such units were classified as micro-regions which created their own urban space and polarised the surrounding rural areas. These particular towns are components of the spatial structure of three regions: Podlasie Voivodeship (21 towns), Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship (23 towns) and Opolskie Voivodeship (12 towns), all of which are spatially perceived within the range of Polish administrative units – provinces. These regions vary in terms of their environmental as well as social and economic conditions. Consistent with the terminological conditions, a region or a micro-region, tends to be a spatial unit, which is distinguished by specific, individualised features of the environmental potential (Strzyż 2005), therefore, towns meet such requirements.

Creativeness of private entities in towns appears to be the most common development-oriented power. The owners of properties, enterprises, mainly small and medium-sized ones, investors and inhabitants themselves co-decide within the range of the development spheres of towns as well as promotion of the participatory budget, where they can co-decide in terms of selecting specific investments realised from the public funds (Jadach-Sepioło, Sobiech-Grabka, 2016). Towns, similar to larger municipal units, can become places for discussion among individuals and various social and economic groups. Changes that take place in the social and economic relations within such small towns can lead to their harmonious development or to a slow process of their collapsing. It should be perceived that private entities play an important role in this process, since they actively participate in deciding about the future of the town and creating proper conditions for its development through realisation of strategic spatial planning (Polish abbreviation: SPP), local planning and revitalisation of degraded areas because of the fact of being involved in programming the activities dealing with revitalisation.

The available analyses of the issues of small towns (Bartosiewicz, Marszał et al. 2011; Bisaga 2004; Chądzyński et al. 2007; Marszał 2007, Piontek 2010; Jadach-Sepioło 2011; Jadach-Sepioło, Sobiech-Grabka et al. 2016; Słodczyk et al. 2004; Nytko-Wołoszczuk 2004) have allowed developing the impact assessment and progress in the field of the examined units (Table 1).

social exclusion, the need for better education, access to better health care for all social groups), environmental challenges (deteriorating the air quality due to low emissions, increasing energy efficiency of residential buildings, rationalisation of waste management) and economic challenges (the demand for innovation – incubators and other centres of creativity, and accessibility of services provided, supporting new investments).

The indications for planning and spatial development of the studied region were included in the Spatial Development Plan of Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship (2014). Additionally, every administrative unit of the municipal and/or urban character should have its own local legal acts in the form of the Local Spatial Development Plans (Polish abbreviation: MPZP) based on eco-physiographical studies and the studies known as the Study of Conditions and Spatial Development Directions (Polish abbreviation: SUKZP).

The reasons for the differentiation in the development of the Local Spatial Development Plans in particular spatial units of Poland result mainly from the lack of financial sources in municipalities and cities in order to form such documents (Figure 1). It often occurs that local self-government units create projects of the Local Space just for small sections of the managed space, i.e. parts of a street, or/and individual property/plots. The organizational structures of the planning space with the use of the Local Spatial Development Plans for small parts are very convenient, especially due to mainly practical and investment reasons. Having diagnosed the environmental potential and

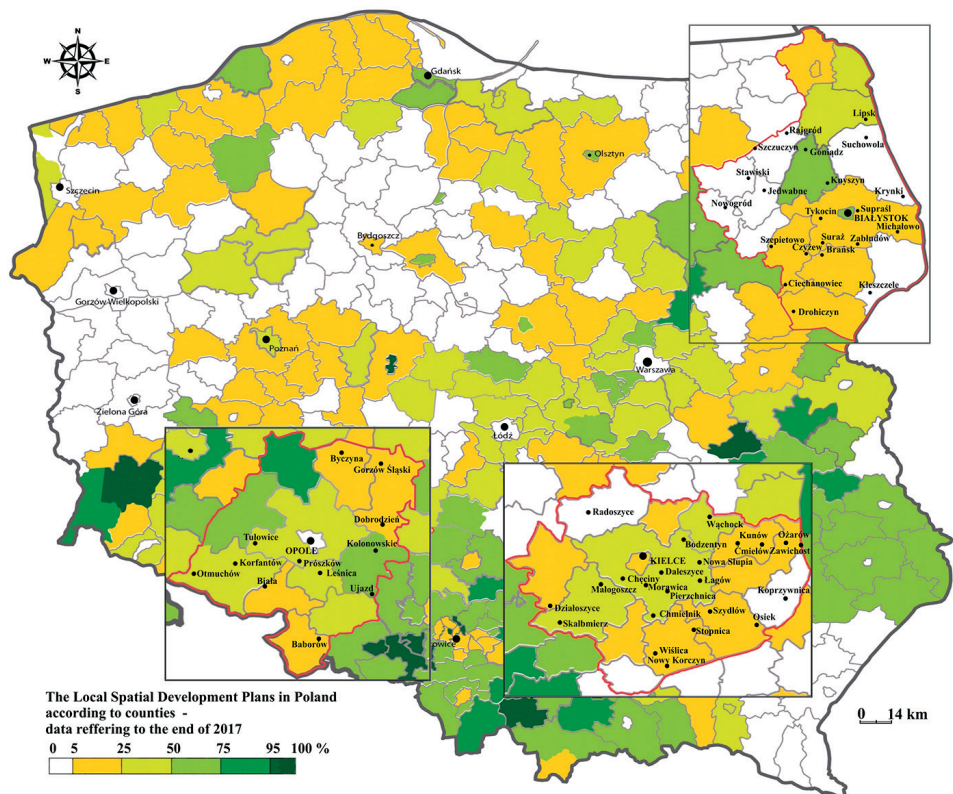


Fig. 1. The Local Spatial Development Plans in Poland according to counties – data as of the end of 2017

Source: M. Strzyż 2018. Scientific description based on the data found: <http://www.bip.gov.pl/> [access: 03.05.2018].

determining the functional aspects of the studied area within the Local Spatial Development Plans can verify the ways of developing this particular area. Deviations from the indicated functions in the Local Spatial Development Plans require re-modification of this document, which involves significant financial costs and a two-year period of the project implementation as well as adopting it in the form of a new resolution approved by self-government bodies.

To assess the impact of urban management and formation of space in towns on their development, the following data range was established so as to perform the multifactorial analysis of information strata:

- density of the population,
- surface coverage in the range of functional areas (settlement, services, production and storage, agricultural, greenery, technical infrastructure, wasteland),
- slopes (gradients) of the area,
- ecological (passageways) corridors,
- areas and sites (natural and cultural ones) legally protected.

The analysis was carried out with the use of ArcGis platform, specifically, ArcGis 10.3 created by Esri. Application of information strata (layers) allowed separating 5 classes in the range of the intensity of occurrence of the analysed spatial phenomena. The outcomes of the analysis are demonstrated in Table 1.

Additionally, the table shows the most sufficient, possible opportunities for the development of a particular town. The examined towns are characterised by investment areas or other spatial functions, which tend to be predominant and appear to be distinctive while considered from other centres.

The functions of developed areas in the town should correlate so as the town can live at all time of the day or night. Therefore, it is planned to introduce a development plan as a local planning act. Such a plan is to involve the whole area of the individual administrative district in an obligatory way, which means that it will identify the areas for development in the sphere of buildings, agricultural land, green areas and others. It is arranged to establish the so-called minimum rate of the zoning change fee⁴ or a new tax depending on the value of land itself.

Planning activities in the field of spatial development require a lot of professional knowledge of the interdisciplinary character, quite frequently exceeding the standard structure of planning or spatial management. Specialists must also have well-established knowledge dealing with the regional development theory, since the aim of planning studies is to stimulate the development of a region so as to improve the quality of life of the local society. Firm economic systems created in the circumstances of sustainable development can also provide them with the possibility of allowing the maintenance referring to high values of the environmental, cultural and anthropogenic potential (Strzyż 2005).

⁴ Also known as rezoning fee – usually charged by the county/ local authorities for a property rezoning request.

Table 1

The urban structure of the chosen provinces (voivodeships) against the background of demographic and historical conditions in 2018

Province	City/Town ^a	Popula- tion ^b	Date of establishment/ granted municipal rights	Assess- ment ^c	Develop- ment ^d
Podlaskie Province	Brańsk	3,785	10 th -11 th century; 18/01/1493	4	5
	Ciechanowiec	4,655	12 th century; 1413	4	1
	Czyżew	2,640	before 1187; 1733-1870; 2011	2	3
	Drohiczyn	2,011	11 th century; 1498	3	1
	Goniądz	1,827	before 1493; 1547	3	3
	Jedwabne	1,624	before 1455; 1736	2	3
	Kleszczele	1,297	15 th century; 1523-1950; 1993	3	4
	Knyszyn	2,782	—; 1568	3	3
	Krynki	2,424	before 1429; 1569; 2009	3	5
	Lipsk	2,376	before 1533; 1580-1870; 1983	3	3
	Michałow	3,073	before 1832; 2009	3	3
	Nowogród	2,173	before 1400; 1427-1869; 1927	3	4
	Rajgród	1,571	around 9000 BC; 1568	4	4
	Stawiski	2,229	before 1401; 1702-1871; 1919	3	1
	Suchowola	2,196	16 th century; 1777; 01/01/ 97	3	3
	Supraśl	4,621	1st half of 19 th century	4	1
	Suraż	992	12 th century; 16/09/1445	3	3
	Szczuczyn	3,426	1425; 09/11/1692	4	1
	Szepietowo	2,209	19 th century; 2010	3	3
	Tykocin	1,980	11 th century; 1425-1950; 1993	4	1
Zabłudów	2,476	1553; 1553	3	3	
Święto- krzyskie Province	Bodzentyń	2,238	1355; 1355-1870; 1994	2	5
	Chęciny	4,421	before 1275; before 1325	5	2
	Chmielnik	3,752	before 1241; 1551	2	5
	Ćmielów	3,014	before 1388; 1505	3	5
	Daleszyce	2,914	before 1222; 1569-1869; 2007	5	1
	Działoszyce	913	before 1220; 1409	3	3
	Koprzywnica	2,497	1268-1869; 2001	3	3
	Kunów	3,021	1365-1502; 1535-1869; 1990	3	3
	Łagów	1,650	1375-1870; 01/01/2018	5	1
	Małogoszcz	3,809	before 1136; 1408-1869; 1996	5	4
	Morawica	1,730	14 th century; 01/01/2017	5	2
	Nowa Słupia	1,600	1351-1869; 01/01/2019	2	5
	Nowy Korczyn	1,031	1258-1869; 1/01/2019	2	3
	Osiek	2,004	13 th century; 1430	4	2
	Ożarów	4,594	1569; 1569; 1988	5	4
Pierzchnica	1,063	13 th century; 1359-1397; 1869	3	3	

Table 1 contd.

Province	City/Town ^a	Popula- tion ^b	Date of establishment/ granted municipal rights	Assess- ment ^c	Develop- ment ^d
Święto- krzyskie Province	Radoszyce	3,267	1370-1870; 01/01/2018	3	3
	Skalbmierz	1,292	12 th century; 1342-1870; 1927	3	3
	Stopnica	1,434	12 th century; 1362-1869; 2015	3	3
	Szydłów	1,109	1329-1869; 01/01/2019.	3	1
	Wąchock	2,795	before 1179;1454; 1994	4	2
	Wiślica	533	1326-1870; 01/01/2018	3	1
	Zawichost	1,793	before 1148; 1255	3	1
Opolskie Province	Baborów	2,933	12 th century;1340-1575; 1718	3	5
	Biała	2,454	13 th century; 1327	3	3
	Byczyna	3,651	before 1054; before 1268	3	5
	Dobrodzień	3,749	before 1267; 1374	4	1
	Gorzów Śląski	2,451	before 1241; 1274	3	1
	Kolonowskie	3,324	1797; 1973	4	5
	Korfantów	1,841	1335-1742; 1809-1945; 1993	2	1
	Leśnica	2,668	13 th century; 1217	3	4
	Otmuchów	4,946	before 1115; 1347	4	5
	Prószków	2,603	1250; 1560-1915; 2004	2	3
	Tułowice	4,000	1447; 2018	4	4
	Ujazd	1,770	1155; 25/05/1223	2	5

^a The Local Spatial Development Plans in force – established for the particular town in line with Fig. 1; ^b Population;

^c Assessment according to multifactorial analysis in the class assessment: 1 – poor, 2 – average, 3 – good, 4 – very good, 5 – excellent; ^d Development consistent with the development of regional theory – Table 2: 1. The location theories, 2. Polarisation, 3. Regional development, 4. The Institutional Theory 5. Bioregionalism.

Source: M. Strzyż 2018. Scientific description based on personal research.

The knowledge of the development theories relating to regions, established in the 20th and the 21st centuries, tends to be useful in the sphere of planning activities, also with respect to small towns (Table 2). Unquestionably, these theories create the bases for a rational management of the environmental potential of the region. Many of the theories demonstrated below, however, are now out of date (have changed fundamentally) due to a different approach towards the use of the natural and cultural environmental potential, the character of the organisation in the field of economics and economic systems and the needs of the so-called information society. For the purpose of this research, currently available theories of the regional development, which should be used when creating the development of towns, were selected (Table 2).

It must be underlined, though, that the location theories – in force since the 1980s – have been readily replaced by the following theories: the theory of diffusion of innovation, of sustainable development, of polarisation, of industrial district, of network development, of 'learning regions', of bio-regions and of clusters (Table 2).

Table 2

The development of regional research theories in the 19th and the 20th centuries – selected theories in the sphere of town development

Theory	A brief description of the theory
The location theories	A. Weber: A theory of industrial location – looking for the location of the manufacturing industry based on the 'least cost principle', namely the lowest total cost of transport per unit of production
	J.H. von Thünen: The town surrounded by farmlands (agriculture), which create concentric circles depending on the land use as a result of the costs of transport. The heaviest products and those of the perishable nature should be produced as close as possible to the market (intensive farming), and the circles including forest, extensive farming, and breeding are located farther
	Walter Christaller: The Central Place Theory, i.e. the location of a particular place (settlement) results from their central functions (most often the town)
	August Lösch: The theory concerns the maximisation of the profit by the intensified activity of competing enterprises in order to obtain a spatial balance in the range of economic activity
Regional Development	W. Isard: The theory of regional studies (Regional Development) emphasised not only the new research problems of the practical and/or social and economic nature, but it gave the opportunity to solve the regional problems by the use of scientific, i.e. mathematical methods. The theory was developed by Hagerstrand (1967) who was a creator of the model and empirical research dealing with the diffusion of information and innovation
Polarisation	J. Schumpeter: The theory of the sector polarisation is a theory of innovation including: the process of the creative destruction (inventions destroy the previous economic and social structure), the innovative environment for the entrepreneurship, research and scientific resources of the region, well-qualified (skilled) workers, experienced managers and professional administrative staff, high level of the technical infrastructure (mainly, telecommunication and aviation infrastructure) offices and banks, the political and social participation, social values, traditions of the regional entrepreneurship, rich markets (outlets), the network of cooperating institutions
	G. Myrdal's Theory of Circular Cumulative Causation: The Regional (Cumulative Causation) Theory states that a place once promoted (at least once invested in) has a better chance of its development. The workforce and the capital flow into places characterised by the most favourable conditions for running a business. The process of the weak dynamics in the range of the economic activity, people and prosperity occur spreading from the centre to outer parts, the process of sources disappearing from the poorly developed areas to the well-developed ones (the location of a large investment in a weak area stops the process), the concept of 'vicious circle' (spatially uneven economic development, a long-lasting historical process based on the economic, political and cultural factors. Consequently, the rich areas develop faster and the poor areas enter a period of economic stagnation
	P. Prebisch reexamined the principle of Ricardo's theory of comparative advantages. He created the concept of centre and periphery, namely, the developed regions get richer at the expense of poorer regions
	J. Friedman's Core and Periphery Model combines manufacturing and service activities of the most competitive firms located in the strongest region centres, mainly, metropolitan ones. Centres dominate over their peripheries in the economic, political and cultural spheres

Table 2 contd.

Theory	A brief description of the theory
Regional Development	<p>The theory of development 'from below'(endogenous theory) tends to be an addition to the development 'from above' (exogenous theory). It involves the use of natural sources of the region and the qualification of human sources (the so-called hard and soft factors of the development) under the influence of the initiatives of local societies to satisfy their own needs. As for the economic practice, the theories of the development 'from above' did not limit the differences in the incomes of the population of the peripheral regions, contrary to the theory of the development 'from below'</p> <p>F. Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory also known as dual-factor theory; The theory of basic needs is determined by the pyramid of society's needs. The bases of this pyramid refer to the biological needs, followed by the needs of being secure, social relationships, the respect, and the needs to satisfy the states of consciousness related to the performed work. The balanced development of the region must be based on its own sources without referring to the pressure associated with the fast economic growth. It will then result in the development of productive forces</p>
Bio-region-alism	<p>The Bioregional Theory was created in the 1970s (in the U.S. and Canada). It shapes the bio-centric attitude that is opposed to the anthropocentric and regionalist attitude. Bio-regionalism tends to be the act of the nature preservation and the harmonious coexistence with it. People living in such bioregions should protect the 'naturalness' of nature, which constitutes the uniqueness of the bioregion. The theory has not found a wider application in practice</p>

Source: M. Strzyż 2012. Scientific description based on R. Domański 2018, S. Korenik, A. Zakrzewska-Półtorak et al. 2011.

The prevailing principles of spatial planning and spatial development are rooted in the regional research conducted in the 20th century (Table 2) and require paying attention to the dependencies which appear in the space, namely, local and regional. Moreover, the concept of development itself is identified by the creation of positive qualitative and quantitative changes, i.e., protecting jobs and other living conditions, cultural development, security and future prospects. Their local nature results from the spatial range relating to a small area, e.g. municipality, town, village, and it depends on internal (local) and external (non-local) factors. The internal factors are caused by the specificity of conditions of the local environmental potential, due to which development strategies are implemented. Such development strategies aim at increasing the life quality for the inhabitants of the particular area. In contrast, the external factors consider the economic and spatial policies of the particular country and neighbouring regions.

Development of a region includes economic and spatial processes, and phenomena, which cause the formation of new, creative and innovative values in the region in the sphere of new goods and services to satisfy regional and supra-regional needs as well as high-quality permanent and soft location factors.

Regional development is related to the entire regional (usually national) system as a resultant of the development of individual constituent regions. The American approaches identify regional and local development as economic development, which is a stimulant of the overall economic growth. However, the European approaches refer

to such a development as a comprehensive recognition in the light of effectiveness and irreversibility, i.e. apart from the existing economic changes, there appear also qualitative changes of the social, cultural and anthropogenic character (Domański 2018).

The range of increasing attractiveness of the local and regional space can be evaluated by factors of increase in the sphere of communication accessibility (roads, rails, aviation, telecommunications), the number of private entities dealing in the sector of market services, the number of entities with foreign capital, the value of investments in the region, gross value fixed by assets in the private sector, funds spent on research and development activities, the number of institutions associated with businesses, the level of profitability in the range of SME sector or the amount spent on investments dealing with the complex technical infrastructure of areas for economic activity. Unfortunately, at the level of local planning studies, there are no economic studies that would represent the source of development of the Local Spatial Development Plan.

It is hoped that there will follow a recovery of the SEZ in the region's area, created as clusters of the local entrepreneurship development.. The cluster theory (smaller cluster – larger clusters) of the regional development is the foundation of technological locations of the so-called 'science and development parks', namely, business incubators. Their task is to create local production systems in special zones of industrial complexes (special economic zones – development zones). Spatial management of the zones is of a focused character and aims at creating strong industrial complexes, which will be significant in the development of spatial surroundings. According to Porter (2001), a cluster is a geographic gathering of strongly connected firms, specialising in the field of suppliers, related branches of industries, professional organisational environment (office, financial units) as well as scientific and research sphere (patent institutions, standardisation foundations, legal institutions). Clusters are characteristic of a developed economy, often of a big city nature (Piontek 2010). The development stage of clusters considers their development similar to the product life-cycle, hence, one distinguishes clusters that are: embryonic, growing, mature, declining. They have the ability to create jobs in a growing, stable or descending way. Concerning the distance range, clusters can show local, regional, national and supranational connections. They connect associated sectors in a narrow or wide related way. They are also characterised by deep or shallow stages of the production chain. Clusters have a specific competitive position. They can be a global, national or regional leader or have an average (weak) competitive position. Attributable to the technological significance of clusters, they can be of a high, average or low innovativeness (Chądzyński et al. 2007).

Clusters create internal benefits in the sphere of increase in the productivity of local enterprises, increase in the innovation due to the links or closeness of business entities, dynamic growth in the number of new enterprises. Conversely, external benefits represent the strength of regional development, involving an increase in the range of availability of business-related services, investments in the infrastructure, the population's income growth, mainly because of generating new jobs. Derived from the analysis of existing clusters, Mayer-Stamer divided clusters into: clusters related to Italian indus-

trial districts (dominance of small and medium-sized enterprises – SMEs characterised by strong specialisation and mutual relationships based on trust, e.g. Silicon Valley), hub-and-spoke clusters (in a particular area, co-operation of large firms, which are hierarchically connected with numerous SME sector firms, e.g. Toyota City, Seattle – Boeing), satellite clusters (dominance of SME firms – dependent on external firms with the lower operating costs, e.g. Manaus – the region in Brazil).

Research studies of clusters can be based on an analysis of connections between sectors by examining, for example, input-output matrices (Input-Output method – the method of inter-branch flows), the location factor analysis (the method of high points survey – LQ – *Location quotient*) = $(E_{ij} / E_j) : (E_{in} / E_n)$, where E – means the employment in the industry (added value, income, number of firms), an analysis of qualitative data from interviews, surveys – the expert method (case study) – (Chądzyński et al. 2007).

The existing clusters of Opolskie Voivodeship, Podlaskie Voivodeship and Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, function as the so-called business incubators and constitute an example of good practices in this area. The development of clusters is supported additionally by the financial sources of the European Social Fund. In the periods of 2007-2013 and 2014-2018, Poland was the largest recipient of the EU assistance among all the European Union member states. The realisation of the human capital programme allows getting the chance of acquiring good education, improving professional qualifications, and – in the case of creative people – setting up their own businesses.

The programme participants have the chance of discovering their own, existing potential in overcoming the development problems that increase the quality of life. By the end of 2011, over 300,000 residents of the above-mentioned regions under analysis benefited from the programme. It happened mainly due to the creation of pre-school institutions, offering equal educational opportunities for schoolchildren at various levels of education, provision of support and treatment of disabled children, confirmation of appropriate professional skills, scholarships providing support for the most talented youth, setting up individual companies, social cooperatives, innovative teaching based on the Finnish educational system, professional vocational training, developing individual passions and interests among young people, individual activities in the sphere of development for the youth from primary schools in the regions, improving the social and economic status of women, maintaining the cultural identity of the region (Hlebicka-Józefowicz et al. 2012, Piontek 2010).

The analysis of the small towns indicates diversity of the existing development potential. Modern spatial development plans regarding the urbanized space, appropriate to the guidelines of the updated Athens Charter (2003) and the National Spatial Development Concept until 2030, should introduce and implement constructive solutions to allow creating a coherent and harmonious planning space by promoting European ideals in this field. However, it is extremely hard to implement such ideas without relevant analyses of the local economy prepared for the purposes of creating the Local Spatial Development Plans.

Summary

The utilitarian use of knowledge on the given region should create bases for development of economic systems at the local level, e.g. the level perceived from the perspective of small towns. However, an analysis of such systems is fundamental while properly creating projects of Local Spatial Development Plans. The social and economic studies should be treated on equal terms with eco-physiographic studies. Their internal structure should involve a diagnosis and valorisation of the potential in the range of the economic and social environment of the studied area. The knowledge contained in such studies would create the bases for determining the directions of the spatial functions in the Study of Conditions and Spatial Development Directions and rationalisation of the spatial development in Local Spatial Development Plans. In the planning procedures, one should aim at simplifying the spatial planning system while, at the same time, improving the quality level of projects included in the Local Spatial Development Plan.

The analysis of small towns (Table 1) indicates the complexity of planning and spatial development issues as well as a differentiation in the field of the environmental and spatial conditions, including social and economic conditions of a modern microregion and a region. As a result, there is a need to support the development of small towns that can take part in the renaissance of the urban units in Poland.

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