Social & Economic Transformations Affecting Rural People and Communities in Central & Eastern Europe Since 1990

EDITED BY

Barbora Babjaková, Anna Bandlerová, David L. Brown, Andrzej Kaleta, Laszlo J. Kulcsar, Joachim Singelmann

Proceedings of Research Conference
Organized by:
Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra – Faculty of European Studies and Regional Development, Slovakia,
Nicolaus Copernicus University Torun, Poland &
the Polson Institute for Global Development at Cornell University, USA

In Nitra – Slovakia, September 2–3, 2013
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Approved by the Rector of the Slovak University of Agriculture on December 1, 2014 as the proceedings of scientific papers.

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I. Introduction

David L. Brown & Anna Bandlerova

An international conference examining rural transformations and rural policies in ex-socialist countries since 1989 was held in Nitra, Slovakia on September 2 & 3, 2013. The conference was hosted by the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, The Nicolaus Copernicus University Torun, Poland, and Cornell University's Polson Institute for Global Development. The conference was planned by an international committee from Poland (Andrzej Kaleta, Nicolaus Copernicus University Torun; Damian S. Pyrkosz, University of Rzeszów), Hungary (Laszlo Kulcsar, University of Western Hungary), Slovakia (Anna Bandlerova, Barbora Milotová and Ivan Takač, Slovak Agricultural University), and the United States (Joachim Singelmann, University of Texas, San Antonio, Laszlo J. Kulcsar, Kansas State University, and David L. Brown, Cornell University). The conference was attended by 54 rural scholars from through the region and the US.

Background

Central and Eastern European nations experienced fundamental restructuring of their social, economic and political institutions during the 1990s. These transformations from state socialism attracted substantial research by scholars under the general rubric of “post-socialist studies”. With few exceptions, this research focused at the national level, examining the restructuring of CEE economies from centralized command to marketized systems (Strak and Bruszt, 1998; Crawford, 1995), the restructuring of political power as entrenched socialist elites fought to retain their authority in the post-socialist context (Higley and Lengyel, 2000; Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley, 1998), the dismantling of well-developed social welfare systems (Elster, Offe, and Preuss, 1998), the privatization of land and agriculture (Verdery, 2003), and the re-insertion of EEC economies into the global system (Guerrieri, 1995).

These transformations produced inequalities between men and women (Eisenstein, 1996), social classes (Ost, 1995), minority groups and especially the Roma (Fonseca, 1995), and across regions and levels of geography (Schafft, 2000).

It is this latter form of inequality and exclusion, e.g., between regions and rural and urban areas, that was the focus of the Nitra conference. The conference focused on four main themes:

a) Structural and institutional transformations;
b) Poverty, inequality and exclusion;
c) Development of land, landscape and environment;
d) Culture, identity and religion.

A special dinner honoring 20 years publication of Eastern European Countryside was a highlight. The conference especially encouraged participation by junior researchers to provide guidance on establishing a productive scholarly research programs focused on regional and rural development in Central & Eastern Europe.

The Conference Program

The conference was comprised of 6 substantively themed sessions and 21 papers. Each session included a professional discussant. Sessions 1 and 2 focused on structural and institutional transformations. The six papers examined various aspects of social, economic and demographic change in Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, East Germany and Latvia. Session 3 concerned local participation and the civic sphere. The four papers examined various aspects of networks, social capital, and development partnerships in Poland and Hungary. Land, landscape and the environment formed session 4’s agenda. In multiple ways these 4 papers from Hungary and Poland examined aspects of sustainable development and environmental planning relevant to rural development. The fifth session examined various aspects of culture, identity and religion in rural areas of East Central Europe. Cultural was examined as a factor in development, and impediments and facilitators of cultural revitalization were identified.
Papers focused on Poland and Slovakia. The final session considered poverty, inequality and exclusion. The authors from Romania and Hungary examined the role of space and place in reproducing and alleviating social inequality.

The dinner celebrating 20 years of *Eastern European Countryside* was highlighted by a presentation from Grzegorz Zabłocki, Nicolaus Copernicus University Toruń, on the state of rural social science examining rural social and economic change in Eastern and Central Europe. His analysis examined published research on rural trends, issues and processes as seen through the lens of the four leading rural social scientific journals: *Eastern European Countryside, Sociologia Ruralis, Journal of Rural Studies and Rural Sociology*. Contributions of the EEC Advisory Council and Editorial Board during its first 20 years were recognized, and a new Advisory Council and Editorial Board were announced. The excellent service of Professor Andrzej Kaleta who established the EEC and edited it for 20 years was applauded, and Monika Kwiecińska-Zdrenka, the new managing editor, was welcomed on board.

**Literature Cited**


# II. Conference Program

## International Scientific Conference

**Social & Economic Transformations Affecting Rural People and Communities in Central & Eastern Europe Since 1990**

Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra – Congress Hall, A. Bernolák hostel, Trieda A. Hlinku 38
Faculty of European Studies and Regional Development
Nitra – Slovakia, September 2–3, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Remark</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 9. 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrival of participants in Nitra</td>
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<td>Accommodation booked at the Student Hostel AKADEMICKÁ street 1755, 94976 Nitra</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. 9. 2013</td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Meeting of Organization Committee</td>
<td>Restaurant Karla at street Wilsonovo nábrežie 88; Members will be picked up at 18:45 at the hostel lobby by prof. Bandlerová</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. 9. 2013</td>
<td>07:30</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>Guests will be picked up at the Reception of the Hostel at 7:30 a.m. Breakfast will be served in the same building where the Congress hall is situated</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. 9. 2013</td>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Registration of participants at the University Congress Hall, ŠD A. Bernoláka, Trieda A. Hlinku 38 949 76 Nitra</td>
<td>Congress hall is situated next to the Hostel AKADEMICKÁ, 1755</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. 9. 2013</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Welcome address by prof. Anna Bandlerová and prof. David Brown</td>
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<td>2. 9. 2013</td>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Plenary Session</td>
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<td>11:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>2. 9. 2013</td>
<td>11:45</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Session presider: <strong>Laszlo Kulcsar</strong>, University of Western Hungary</td>
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<td>12:45</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
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**Structural and institutional transformations**

**Session 1**

1. **Jana Lindbloom, Slovak Academy of Sciences** – Evolving Concepts of Postsocialist Transformation: Studying the Case of Slovak Agricultural Cooperatives

2. **Virág Szabó, Szent István University** – Agricultural Restructuring and the Role of Agriculture in Rural Areas of Hungary since Post-Socialist Transformation

3. **Damian S. Pyrkosz, Bogumiła Grzebyk, Teresa Miś, University of Rzeszów** – Changing Trends of the Socio-Economic Development of Rural Areas in Eastern Poland

4. **Lutz Laschewski, Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg** – Continuous Crisis and Newly Emerging Contestations: Rural Restructuring and Conflicting Definitions of the Rural (Problem) in East Germany

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**Session 2**

**Session 3**

**Session 4**

**Session 5**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>12:45 – 14:30</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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<td>14:30 – 16:00</td>
<td>Session 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Anna Maria Augustyn, Gusztav Nemes</td>
<td>Networking Rural Development in the Post-Socialist Space: Between Grass-Roots &amp; Policy Learning Networks</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Wojciech Knieć, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun</td>
<td>Building Civil Society through Local Partnerships in Rural Poland</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Zsuzsanna Kassai, Szent István University</td>
<td>Building Social Capital through Local Rural Development Partnerships in Hungary</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Anna Kolomycew, Boguslaw Kotarba, University of Rzeszów</td>
<td>Local Leaders or Beneficiaries? Role of the Three-Sectoral Partnerships in the Local Governance. The Case of Podkarpackie Region</td>
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<td>16:00 – 16:15</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>16:15 – 18:15</td>
<td>Session 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Anna Górka, Gdańsk University of Technology</td>
<td>Rural Landscape Planning for Sustainable Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Anna Szumelda, Leuphana University of Lüneburg</td>
<td>Is Small Beautiful? Small-Scale Farming in Poland and its Contribution to Sustainable Rural Development</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Tibor László Csegódi, Szent István University</td>
<td>Energetic-Environmental Challenges Affecting Rural Communities in Hungary</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Gyöngyi Schwarcz, Institute of Regional Researches</td>
<td>Patrons and Clients in a Micro-Region: Endeavours to Establish Permanent Tenancy in Agricultural Land Market</td>
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<td>Welcome by Rector of the SUA in Nitra</td>
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<td>19:05</td>
<td>EEC jubilee dinner</td>
<td>Contribution of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń</td>
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<tr>
<td>20:25 – 20:45</td>
<td>Andrzej Kaleta, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń – Acknowledgement for the Advisory Council and Editorial Board and Appointment of New Advisory Council and Editorial Board</td>
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<td>20:45 – 20:50</td>
<td>David Brown, Cornell University – Final Word</td>
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<td>3. 9. 2013</td>
<td>07:30 – 09:00 Breakfast</td>
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<td>Culture, identity and religion</td>
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<td>09:00 – 10:15</td>
<td>Session 5</td>
<td>Session presider: Joachim Singelmann, University of Texas-San Antonio</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Krzysztof Gorlach, Jagiellonian University Krakow – Culture as a Factor in Rural Development: Some Theoretical Considerations and Empirical Evidence from Poland</td>
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<td>2. Veronika Mezeiová, Matej Bel University – Social Aspects of Cultural Revitalization of Rural Community</td>
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<td>3. Danka Moravčíková, Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra – Social and Civic Participation of Rural Youth: Problems, Messages and Challenges</td>
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<td>Poverty, inequality and exclusion</td>
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<td>Session 6</td>
<td>Session presider: Andrzej Kaleta, University of Toruń</td>
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<td>1. Ágnes Nemenyi, Babes-Bolyai University – Migration for Work in Europe – Consequences for the Rural Families Remained at Home – The Case of Romania</td>
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<td>2. Bálint Koós, Institute of Regional Researches, Hungarian Academy of Sciences Research Centre for Economic and Regional Studies (CERS-HAS) – Aspects and Significance of Rural Poverty in Hungary</td>
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<td>3. László Peli, Szent István University – Territorial Differences under the Global Economic Crisis in Hungary</td>
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<td>13:00 – 15:00</td>
<td>Thematic workshops</td>
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<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>15:15 – 16:45</td>
<td>Final plenary, thematic groups reporting high priority research needs in their respective areas</td>
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<td>16:45 – 18:15</td>
<td>De-briefing of the organizing committee: steps forward</td>
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<td>18:15</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
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Rural Landscape Planning for Sustainable Development.
The Case of Poland

Anna Górka

Abstract
This text results from theoretical study on the possibilities of rural landscape renovation in Poland. The introduction marks new spatial phenomena and the scope of their influence. It indicates social and cultural reasons of the changes, and states the need of their renewed interpretation. The second part of the article contains a description of the degrading cultural landscape of the country and presents its features. It then concludes social deficit of landscape issues and determines its circumstances. Another fragment reveals the state of rural planning and examines the reasons of its failure. At the same time, it particularly points at incoherence of landscape protection in spatial planning system and social imagination of landscape. The fourth part of the text discusses the proposed, landscape model of rural planning. It gives the highest, social rank to the aesthetic engagement in the process of landscape shaping. It postulates including rural landscape into a collection of social, local and national imagination.

Key words: rural landscape, land-use planning, sustainable development, aesthetic engagement, social imagination, landscape thinking

Introduction
Rural landscape in Poland has been undergoing a rapid transformation since the 80s. of the 20th century. It is impossible to leave its real physiognomy changes unnoticed. The scope of the transformations and their character allow to conclude that the country as a social structure becomes an integral part of the global, urban culture. The progressive homogenization of the space and the regret we feel while losing part of its diversity make us appreciate rural features. However, rusticity acquires significance different from the one ascribed in the past and related to agricultural production. It becomes popular and attractive as an aesthetic and scenic non-urban feature. In a democratic world, where lifestyle may be a matter of choice, the country gains cultural recommendation. An unpleasant consequence of these transformations is the fact that the rarer and less traditional, rural landscape belongs to common consumer goods and is subject to commercialization just the way they are.

Covering differences between the city and the country reveals in many ways in the physical space. Concentration of economic activity leads to management of many elements of natural environment and spaces used agriculturally so far. Environmental or agricultural areas evolve into scattered enclaves in urbanized surroundings. This indicates an inversion of the previous relation between the created and natural environment (Lessard, 2001).

Agricultural space is divided into more and more developed systems of communication infrastructure, i.e. transport and telecommunication, as well as energy. Urban sewage and municipal waste are cleaned and utilized outside the city, in sewage plants, dumping grounds and incinerating plants, located in rural areas. Acquiring natural resources and energy from renewable sources requires technologically complex investments. Some of them, as wind farms, become landmarks in rural landscape. Near cities and in areas both touristically attractive and easily accessible due to good road infrastructure, a diffusion or concentration of new settlement of suburban character takes place (Heffner, 2011). Moreover, many commune villages gain their own 'sub-village zones'. The new housing development is accompanied by development of social and technical infrastructure. Numerous recreation buildings, such as funfairs, live heritage parks, amphitheatres and sports centres are located in rural areas, similarly to places where thematic events, festivals or historical event shows are periodically organized.
Urbanization covers lifestyle and system of values of rural inhabitants (Kusiński, 1991; Łoboda, 1994; Pietraszek, 1978). Changes in global economy, including technological development, results in agriculture as a traditional workplace of rural population becoming subject to other functions. The population of cities and the share of urban population in overall number of population is decreasing (at present urban population equals 60.6% of total number of population; in 2002 it was nearly 62%), while the number of population living in rural areas, and particularly around big cities, is consecutively growing. Along with changes and diversity of social structure methods of usage and space management change, which results also from a different significance which people give their activity and the one they would give in the past. New inhabitants, both those who settle permanently, as owners of second houses, which often become the first ones have a particularly strong influence on spatial transformation of rural areas. In many places rural areas involve re-rustification of the management. Paradoxically, the phenomenon of new rustification accompanies the urbanization of the countryside. It is initiated by the needs of the newly arrived inhabitants, holidaymakers and tourists. Their image of the country is idealized. They long for simplicity, freedom and peace of the rural life. They appreciate contact with nature, healthy eating and active forms of spending time. In individual housing development, in housing estate development and in tourist areas urban inhabitants regain the lost, Arcadian country through copying traditional forms of folk housing. Therefore, the roots of re-ruralization stem in the mass culture, which turns to the past and eagerly identifies with decorative picture of the country's folklore. The constant element of the holiday, rural carnival are thematic, folk-styled entertainment parks and live heritage parks. They remove the association of the country and agriculture from the collective consciousness, and replace it with association of fun, relax and health, as well as the fantasy of a happy past.

The progressive urbanization process does not deprive the rural elements of social rank. However, it is the reason why the motifs associated with the country, including landscape elements, change their significance. Therefore, they should be interpreted anew and situated in the order of the culture.

Social significance of the rural landscape
Concentration of the diverse social activity in rural areas leads to profound and irreversible landscape transformations. The visual values of the landscape which decide of its rural character are those particularly wasted. Vast landscape interiors are absorbed by chaotic detached housing development of unified architecture. Recognized panoramas of past, compact villages disappear. Public places and areas surrounding private houses are commonly paved and become car parks. Natural kinds of shrubs give place to exotic plants and evergreen cypresses. Lawns with garden...
ponds and fountains replace traditional, rural flower gardens. Modernization of country roads includes excision of wayside alleys. Industrialized technology of crops leads to elimination of field greenery.

Although lost in situ, the so desired by urban inhabitants rural aesthetics can still be found in commercial media and in restricted areas. It is also professionally presented in park museums. In aforementioned centres and amusement parks it appears as rubbish and kitsch. Commercial ventures, often called centres of regional culture without a reason, exploit the model of rural festivity out of the folk, regional features only.

The indicated fact of disappearing landscapes, which could confirm and support important, collective image of rural idyll, does not reach social awareness. There is no public debate towards settling a real scope of changes, their significance, reasons, effects or methods and tools of shaping rural landscape to match the actual and future social needs. Despite many participants of the transformation process having contradictory aspirations, their public confrontation does not take place. Academic experts of shaping space, namely landscape architects, architects, town planners and geographers, for years have been together forming a thesis of a progressive, irreversible deformation of the rural landscape. Commune governments and inhabitants applying for granting planned investments describe the changes as renovation and modernization. The country in food commercials, tourist folders, TV series, recreated in fashion, music or arrangement of recreational buildings and open air events invariably represent elements of traditional, country folklore and landscapes untouched by urbanization: wild nature and arable ‘golden fields’. According to culture anthropologists and sociologists, media images manifest commodification of cultural values, characteristic for consumer mass society (Baudrillard, 2006; Ritzer, 2004).

Although attempts are made to initiate a nationwide discussion on rural landscape, it still does not reach wider social circles. It is assumed that city newcomers and rural population represent a different attitude towards spatial development of the country and landscape protection (Hernik, 2011; Farstad, 2013). Conflicts are said to arise between the two groups. In Poland the sides of the conflict are usually represented by local government against entrepreneurs and all the inhabitants, while the conflicts most often refer to environmental threats or fears concerning difficulties in everyday life, which may be caused by new investments. Debates over a visual landscape value are rare and are lead by individuals, usually unsupported by the society. The absence of ‘landscape lobby’ is the reason why expenses on landscape protection and biodiversity still constitute the smallest part of resources meant for environmental protection.

In Poland there are no researches (or their results are not made public) on landscape reception, which could confirm presumable differences in attitudes towards the landscape between groups of essential participation in its transformation. The natural intercessors of the rural landscape aesthetics seem to be the owners of second houses, however this category stays statistically unclear. It was only the National Census of 2002 which imprecisely introduced this term to the questionnaires (Heffner, 2011).

Research made for the purpose of this article has proven significant irrelevancy and incoherence of landscape issues according to common belief. The landscape does not exist in common imagination as a place of social engagement. It is a term which is not relevant to real investment activity, as it mainly refers to protected places. Although the majority of new houses and estates have been built ‘in space’, they have not been built ‘in landscape’. Visual harmony and picturesqueness of the surroundings are significant only when they refer to the existing view: they hardly ever accompany self-assessment of the performed changes.

Planning for sustainable development

Landscape deficit is extremely visible not only in a public discussion, but also in the process of spatial planning. Spatial planning in Poland has been subjected to the rule of sustainable development. This idea assumes development, in which ‘the needs of present generation are fulfilled without diminishing the chances of future generations’ (according to the Report of the Bruntland Commission, 1987). The observed scope of changes within rural landscape bears hallmarks of restricted possibility to realize aesthetic needs and self-realization of future generations. Spatial planning of rural areas neither improves, but also often generates quality deterioration of the rural landscape. Planning, development and management of space is of social practice character. In this regard space and landscape are created socially (Jałowiecki, 2010). Today rural shaping in Poland is of a disintegrated or poorly integrated character. As Kamiński (2008) points out, ‘although we are surrounded by planning, it is not necessarily spatial management planning’. Both in urban and rural communes spatial management is regulated by the Act on Planning and Spatial Management of 2003. It obliges the local government to pass a study of conditions and directions of spatial management for
the whole commune area. The study represents a starting point to evaluate local plans. The local plan of spatial management defines legal frame of managing the area it refers to. Despite constant growth, covering rural areas with local plans has remained at very low level for years (Sleszyński, 2012). A prosaic reason of this state are high costs and long period of preparing plans, as well as their quick becoming out of date. In this situation, the most common basis of changing spatial management is an ad hoc localization decision, which does not need to consider the general postulates of the study, as it does not have legal force. Statistic data indicate strong investment pressure and growth of ground supply. The area of agricultural and forest grounds meant for non-agricultural and non-forest purposes is growing. At the same time, a faster growth of these lands than an increase in the total area covered by local plans is observed. This proves weakness of local law. In the future its further weakening may be expected. It is linked to the fact that local plans passed in years 1994–2003 start to expire.

Rural areas in Poland are protected in various forms (Act on Environmental Protection of 16 April 2004, Act on Preservation of Historic Monuments and Protection of Historic Monuments of 23 July 2003). The area of legally preserved nature covers 32.5% of the country. Binding legal acts define a rule of triple protection – nature, culture and landscape preservation (Pankau, 1996). They determine conditions of establishing and functioning of national parks, reserves, areas of protected landscape, as well as landscape and cultural parks. Therefore, spatial planning of rural areas is strongly influenced by investments regarding natural environment protection and cultural heritage. It is proven by annually growing means for environmental protection and culture and improvement in standards regarding water cleanliness, waste management and greenhouses gases emission. However, due to progressive decline of valuable landscapes, their protection slowly evolves into a strictly commercial domain and leads to a laboratorial rusticity revival, such as in the project called ‘Polish network of most interesting villages’ (Wilczyński, 2012).

No less significant is the influence of trade development strategies, e.g. regarding agricultural grounds management, power engineering, transport or tourism. The area to be covered by the local plan, the time of its coverage and its provisions are rarely established by socially evaluated, coherent vision of development, and more often a regional interest of economic trade and its planned investments. This results in atomization of spatial management process. Planning restricted to relatively small areas does not lead to establishing common for the whole territory, long-term rules of social management. At the same time, the main point of institutional planning as a policy creating spatial order is lost. Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that establishing local plans covering even the whole commune or village does not guarantee preserving harmony in space. Where investment pressure is particularly strong, a decomposition of rural landscape elements usually takes place. Even restrictive notations of maintenance plans for rural units are not effective enough to stop this process.

Aims and tools of sustainable management in rural communes are determined by the Rural Development Programme, being a part of the Common Agricultural Policy. Strategies and plans of developing cities and villages, as well as local management plans consider its priorities. Shaping rural space is highly contributed by the participation of Local Activity Groups, which are a social tool of introducing RDP and constitute its rank and file organization. The aims and mission of particular LAGs are included in Local Development Strategies, which should be treated as statements of local communities. On the basis of notations in LDS a conformity assessment of the applied projects and the general and detailed aims of LAGs is made. It is characteristic that landscape results of the funded investments are not subjected to evaluation in LDS. Strategy analysis has proven that LAGs represent instrumental attitude to landscape and allow low rank to its visual values (Górka, 2011). LDS rarely mention the term of landscape itself, and use collection of clichés, stereotypes and conventional opinions to describe it. There are three popular views: rural landscape is nature, material cultural heritage are historic buildings, and protected areas and buildings are tourist attractions. According to LDS, the only valuable part of the landscape is the one which becomes a tourist product. These are areas of preserved nature, seaside beaches, lakes and forests, folk historic buildings and rural cultural tradition – rituals, clothes and food. LDS presents a dual, socially based picture of rural landscape: on one hand a green, quiet oasis and a colourful, cultural element on the other hand. This image does not include shaping a specific, common vision of rural landscape. Determining new areas for development, building a house and new public space management are only of current usage significance and do not constitute a prospective, socially important, aesthetic landscape category. LDS notations interchangeably imply that problems of rural landscape remain completely incomprehensible for the society. The failure of institutionalized rural planning regarding spatial order is followed by landscape absent in the awareness of local communities.
Landscape model of rural planning

The review of spatial processes and collection of spatial planning tools, which influence shaping of rural landscape lead to a conclusion that we will not understand why landscape preservation remains unsatisfactory nor see the source of the main mistake as long as we are stuck in the domain of postulated landscape preservation and consider its necessity. Natural sciences, such as history, geography, archeology, art history and fitosociology provide arguments valuable enough to preserve rural landscape; it is unnecessary to look for others. Natural sciences, such as history, geography, archeology, art history and fitosociology provide arguments valuable enough to preserve rural landscape; it is unnecessary to look for others. Despite that, protection as arbitrarily accepted planning idea appears not to be effective enough. The example of rural landscape in Poland proves that even the most valuable institutional concept remains dead unless it is a part of a social image. However, rural landscape in Polish mass imagination has the form of a landscape painting at the turn of 19th and 20th century. We declare our acceptance for its values just as we appreciate everything which belongs to the past, which stems from remote history, is unique and was kept recognizable.

Choosing location of the house, its building and surroundings management cannot obviously refer to landscape perceived as such. This means that the potential of social engagement in landscape shaping remains unnoticed and unused. It is also implied by descriptions of agrotouristic offers, where building and its surroundings are located outside the landscape (Górka, 2012). Neglecting matters of rural landscape in a large degree results from underestimating how the individual and mass activity influences the visual value of the area. As Molier’s Mr Jourdin was not aware he spoke in prose, it seems possible to be unaware of participation in creating landscape.

According to a definition of the European Landscape Convention, Florence 2001, landscape is “an area perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”. The study of such defined landscape, its complex relations and given meanings allows the most comprehensive grasp of spatial issues in accordance with the rule of sustainable development. Perceiving landscape as a result of social obligation should be a basis for a so-called landscape perception or landscape ideology (Cadieux, 2013) in spatial planning. The offered and developed by Bearleant aesthetic engagement model constitutes a beautiful and substantial foundation of landscape consideration.

Aesthetics, seen as perception by means of senses (Berleant, 2011) covers two levels of experience: direct sense experience and indirect experience. The latter results from knowledge, opinions, personality, life process. It is a kind of an image indirected through senses, an image responsible for the emotions evoked by the landscape. Both kinds of perception: material and semantic (real and imagined) are inseparable. When perceptive image remains semantically neutral, it does not cause a reaction, and while giving pleasure it induces to act differently than while causing distress. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction from aesthetic experience is a basic motive of human behaviour. Therefore, it is aesthetics which stimulates judgement. Similarity of experiences creates assessment standards which makes aesthetics become a social tool and a model of perceiving the world. Aesthetic engagement has large social value and constitutes the key to understanding, not only urban (Berleant, 2011), landscape of everyday life. Ethical assessment of activity undertaken on the basis of aesthetic premises results from verification of its benefits that follow, i.e. improvement in quality of human life. The significance of social imagination on shaping modern societies, expressed in paintings, stories or legends, is also emphasized by Taylor (2010). As many other researchers (Hobsbawm et al., 2008), Taylor points out that the past tends to be a ‘a clean invention’, which allows to appreciate the participation of contemporary societies in creating new cultural values.

The essence of landscape perception in rural planning is engagement of the inhabitants and a vision of shaping the landscape. Local societies, which have commonly evaluated and established its image will find enough determination to accomplish them. The prerequisite is a conviction of the importance of the landscape which can be influenced. Practically speaking, it is about accepting the fact that every house makes up our common landscape.

Conclusions

Polish architects, planners and sometimes ordinary people have noticed the visual damage of rural landscape. They have usually pointed to poor quality architecture and more rarely to environmental degradation. Professionals have indicated the loss of landscape beauty and picturesqueness by sprawl of both residential development and infrastructural objects.

They have sought the reasons for the decline of the rural charm in different fields. The spatial law is accused of excessive liberalism. The agricultural economy reduction is seen as the grounds for many new functions that put
the pressure on rural areas. The experts have suspected that growth of personal income and democratization have produced the increase of social participation in rural space. It is also believed that the globalization and mass culture creates new cultural economy based on importance of regional uniqueness. It may provoke the commodification of the separated parts of rural culture. The process has formed rural tourism and changed the farmland to residential plots. Apart from that, the mentioned phenomena relate to new lifestyle of interest in physical activity and healthy eating. However, other reasons for the rural landscape contamination by visually unpleasant buildings have been listed. Some scholars have noted the common lack of spatial education or competence and investors concentrating on everyday practicality instead of the charm of it.

Aesthetic destruction of the countryside is perceived as so complex that the only salvation seems to be protection and maintenance enclaves which are still well preserved examples of traditional rural landscape. The most commonly asked question is how to improve landscape protection. However, even the conservation of enclaves is ineffective. How could it be explained? This is the paradox. The main problem with rural landscape in Poland is that there is no problem. The scenic aspect of rural areas has never been treated seriously enough by Polish people to debate or compete for. First of all, it exists in the social imagination as beautiful nature and picturesque farmland. People do not think about any development in such an image. In Poland the concept of pastoral idyll with rolling hills, meadows, bubbling brooks, small woods, thatched cottages and the pinnacles of chapels shining far in the distance carries neither the national nor social identity, differently from Anglo-American literary traditions (Duncan 2004, Burden 2006). Therefore, the rural ideal has never been intentionally and consequently practised by the wealthy Polish and well educated elite.

Therefore, the question to be asked is not how to make the landscape protection more effective but how to make the rural landscape visible for the public. The most significant task is to give the rural beauty a social sense.

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Changing Trends of the Socio-Economic Development of Rural Areas in Eastern Poland

Bogumiła Grzebyk, Teresa Miś, Damian S. Pyrkosz

Abstract
The paper presents changing trends of the socio-economic development of rural areas in Eastern Poland, including the districts (voivodships) of Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Podlaskie, Świętokrzyskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie. The main body of the empirical material comes from the statistical data gathered by the Central Statistical Office with regard to all Poland and the district NTS2 classification in particular. The analysis reveals the existence of patterns of economic and social underdevelopment and limited competitiveness of Eastern Poland in comparison to the rest of the country in the period 2000–2010. The East of Poland is typically characterized on the one hand by the highest national share of the agriculture-employed population and, on the other, the lowest contribution to the Gross Domestic Product. Among other traits are high unemployment rate in the rural areas, low non-farming activity rate and low capital investment rate. However, the voivodships of Eastern Poland possess a large environmental potential and their favourable features of nature and landscape promote multifunctional development of rural areas. Years 2000–2010 witnessed a number of positive changes, particularly in the Podkarpackie voivodship, including an over fourfold increase in capital investment rate in farming (the highest in Poland), high increase in social capital activity as evidenced by establishment of numerous local action groups and high political election turnout in rural areas. In the future, the specific border location of the region of Eastern Poland creates a window of opportunity for establishing business relations and cooperation networks, which are strongly encouraged under the provisions of the new structural policy of the European Union in years 2014–2020.

Introduction
The process of globalization has brought sweeping changes to numerous spheres of socio-economic life including agriculture and rural areas. The major motive for development of rural areas is their multifunctionality intrinsically linked to sustainable development. The latter is regarded as development of the economic and social spheres which makes room for sustaining the healthy environment (Kokoszka, 2009). Development processes are predominantly affected by local communities’ action-spurred development: they make use of the area endogenic resources so as to enhance its advancement. The fundamental provision of sustainable development it is to encompass the economic, social, spatial and ecological spheres (Kutkowska, 2012). Current discrepancy of the socio-economic development levels across the various regions of Poland is the product of several factors: among them and one of the most significant is the historically determined structural diversity. This characteristic shows that the same development objective can be achieved in a variety of ways. It is hard to imagine an objective formulated for the sake of local strategic development plans in the fragmented – in terms of agrarian structure – districts of the south-east Poland to fit plans of the north-west areas which used to be covered with a network of large state-owned farms before 1990 (Rosner, 2008).

Changes in rural areas have always been the outcome of processes taking place in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. They are often characterized by either strong environmental conditioning or they are historically rooted in the local rural area development ways and means. Moreover, an issue of the local community placement in the regional, national or even international framework also plays a role since it is determined by changes in accessibility, attractiveness, centrality/marginality of rural areas (Heffner, 2012). Problems of rural areas and agriculture have to be approached comprehensively since there is a direct relationship between the processes of agricultural modernization and development of rural areas. Functional modernization of agriculture makes a part of the farm labor redundant and it has to be employed in other non-farming jobs. The process is inevitable, though the rate of the change is hard to be predicted in Poland, particularly in Eastern Poland (Makiela, 2011).
According to Heller (2000), a sound state policy towards agriculture and rural areas requires singling out groups of districts of similar territorial characteristics regardless of their NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) classification used for the purposes of the structural policy of the European Union. Implementation of the national agricultural and rural policy necessitates taking into consideration specificity of local development processes and undoubtedly calls for recognition of regions larger than districts established as units for the NUTS2 classification.

In this light there is a need to carry out research on the development level of rural areas and agriculture in various district groupings with regard to similar social and economic characteristics. This approach could help identify a wider context of problems related to discrepancies in development levels of agriculture and rural areas. In this sense the paper attempts to assess direction of changes in socio-economic development of the regions of Eastern Poland, including the districts of Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Podlaskie, Świętokrzyskie and Warmińsko-mazurskie. The main body of the empirical material comes from the statistical data gathered by the Central Statistical Office with regard to all Poland and the district NTS2 classification in particular for the period 2000–2012 and, occasionally, the period 1990–2010.

Figure 1  Administrative districts (voivodships) of Poland

Characteristics of the socio-economic development of Eastern Poland

Each region has its own set of features that impact their socio-economic development. The basic measures of regional economic development are GDP (Gross Domestic Product) per capita and the volume of capital investment. The share of the Eastern Poland districts in the GDP is significantly smaller compared to the rest of the country: GDP per capita of no eastern district parallels that of the whole country (it typically makes about 67–78% of the GDP per capita for Poland). In 2010 among the eastern region districts the highest GDP per capital was recorded in the Świętokrzyskie district and the smallest in Podkarpackie (Table 1).
Table 1  GDP per capita and capital investment in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2000–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>GDP per capita (current prices) in PLN</th>
<th>Capital investment in mln PLN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>13 728</td>
<td>25 079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>13 632</td>
<td>24 973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>14 517</td>
<td>26 985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>14 931</td>
<td>28 134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>15 287</td>
<td>27 228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other districts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>19 968</td>
<td>41 750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-Pomorskie</td>
<td>17 700</td>
<td>31 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>17 378</td>
<td>31 348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>17 394</td>
<td>34 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>17 034</td>
<td>31 501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>29 753</td>
<td>60 359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>16 115</td>
<td>29 498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>19 355</td>
<td>35 597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>20 930</td>
<td>39 677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>20 730</td>
<td>38 629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>19 514</td>
<td>32 268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>19 458</td>
<td>37 096</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GUS, Rocznik Statystyczny Województw, Warszawa, 2011

The rural areas of Eastern Poland occupy 94 758 km², i.e. 32.5% of the total rural area of Poland. They are situated in the borderland neighbouring with Belorussia, Lithuania, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine. In 2002–2010 the highest population density was observed in the Podkarpackie district contrary to Warmińsko-mazurskie and Podlaskie (Table 2). Rural population tends to settle down primarily in the areas with the natural conditions favorable for agricultural production. High population density can be also noted in the areas close to metropolitan neighbourhoods which provide employment opportunities. With reference to the whole country in 2002–2012 only Podkarpackie and Podlaskie districts evidenced a decline in the share of rural population. The employment structure of rural population is dominated primarily by agricultural employment. Among the regions of Eastern Poland the highest share of farming population is observed in the districts of Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Świętokrzyskie and Podlaskie; the lowest in Warmińsko-mazurskie. The highest decline in the share of farming population in 2010 (as compared to 2002) was noted in Podkarpackie.

Economic activity of population is defined as professional activity in the labor market and it makes one of many features of social life. Moreover, it is of critical importance for regional development since it affects the standard of living. It is also the case with development of rural areas, hence economic activity of rural population impacts the area development (which is also consistent with the idea of sustainable development). Activization of rural population however encounters a number of problems like both official and hidden unemployment, low income, limited labour market and low education level (Adamska, 2010).

In terms of the employment structure, the rural areas in Poland, unlike the countries of Western Europe, are still predominantly agricultural in character (Michna, 2009). Farming remains the main source of livelihood of nearly 13% of all the employed in the national economy in Poland. In Eastern Poland the share of population employed in this sector of economy exceeded 22% in 2012. The exception was the Warmińsko-mazurskie district where the rate paralleled that of Poland (Table 3). The labour-force structure of the rural population is highly determined by agriculture. The farming population on the other hand tends to be more active (both in terms of economic activity and employment activity rates as well as lower unemployment rate) in the market compared to non-farming population (Adamczyk, 2009).
### Table 2  
Population density in rural areas and a share of rural and farming population in total population in the district in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2002–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Population density in persons per km²</th>
<th>Share of rural population in %</th>
<th>Share of farming population in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>97,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>92,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>98,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>104,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-Pomorskie</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>104,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>103,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>98,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>104,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>103,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>98,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>110,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>103,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>106,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>104,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>102,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations based on the data from PSR 2002 and PSR 2010

### Table 3  
Structure of the employed in major sectors of national economy in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2000–2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Agriculture, hunting and forestry</th>
<th>Industry and building</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>40,2</td>
<td>28,4</td>
<td>28,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>29,1</td>
<td>22,0</td>
<td>20,1</td>
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<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>33,4</td>
<td>22,8</td>
<td>25,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>30,4</td>
<td>21,3</td>
<td>24,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>12,5</td>
<td>13,9</td>
<td>12,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>10,1</td>
<td>7,1</td>
<td>7,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-Pomorskie</td>
<td>17,6</td>
<td>14,8</td>
<td>16,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>10,0</td>
<td>7,0</td>
<td>8,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>14,7</td>
<td>13,2</td>
<td>13,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>21,2</td>
<td>15,7</td>
<td>13,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>19,4</td>
<td>11,7</td>
<td>11,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>21,8</td>
<td>12,4</td>
<td>11,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>10,3</td>
<td>7,2</td>
<td>7,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>2,6</td>
<td>2,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>20,6</td>
<td>14,5</td>
<td>14,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>7,1</td>
<td>7,7</td>
<td>7,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>18,7</td>
<td>13,0</td>
<td>12,9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculations based on the data from GUS, Bank Danych Lokalnych
Labor market in Poland, like in the other EU countries, is regionally highly diversified. The use of labor resources can be described by means of rates of economic activity, employment and unemployment. The highest rate of economic inactivity in rural areas was noted in Warmińsko-mazurskie district, in contrast to Świętokrzyskie – both situated in Eastern Poland (Table 4).

Table 4  Selected key rates concerning the use of labor resources\(^1\) in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2000–2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Economic activity rate</th>
<th>Employment rate</th>
<th>Unemployment rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>57,0</td>
<td>56,7</td>
<td>-0,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>55,0</td>
<td>57,2</td>
<td>+2,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>57,3</td>
<td>52,0</td>
<td>-5,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>58,1</td>
<td>58,8</td>
<td>+0,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>54,6</td>
<td>49,3</td>
<td>-5,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>54,5</td>
<td>53,9</td>
<td>-0,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-Pomorskie</td>
<td>56,1</td>
<td>56,9</td>
<td>+0,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>54,1</td>
<td>51,2</td>
<td>-2,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>58,8</td>
<td>58,7</td>
<td>-0,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>55,0</td>
<td>55,4</td>
<td>+0,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>59,0</td>
<td>57,9</td>
<td>-1,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>53,5</td>
<td>54,5</td>
<td>+1,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>56,8</td>
<td>54,5</td>
<td>-2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>52,9</td>
<td>51,0</td>
<td>-1,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>57,8</td>
<td>58,5</td>
<td>+0,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>54,2</td>
<td>50,9</td>
<td>-3,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poland</strong></td>
<td>56,3</td>
<td>55,8</td>
<td>-0,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(^1\)Refers to the population aged 15 and older  
Source: own calculation on the basis of the data from the GUS, US, Charakterystyka obszarów wiejskich, Olsztyn 2004; GUS, Aktywność ekonomiczna ludności Polski, Warszawa, 2012

The lowest unemployment rate in rural areas was observed in the Podlaskie district (Eastern Poland), yet the other districts of Eastern Poland generally tend to show higher unemployment than the national average rate.

In terms of the district share in the total agricultural capital investment, apparent discrepancies are to be observed (Table 5). Among the districts of Eastern Poland, Podlaskie and Lubelskie demonstrate the highest capital investment rates, contrary to that of Podkarpackie. However, recent years have brought an increase in capital investment in all the districts of Eastern Poland.

In reference to the above data, one should observe an over four-fold increase in capital investment in agriculture in 2000–2012 in Podkarpackie and a nearly four-fold increase in Lubelskie, which offers good development prospects for the districts. Moreover, in 2000–2010 the ratio between arable land and tractor units significantly decreased by 28% in Eastern Poland and over 20% nationally. This denotes that farm operators in Eastern Poland consider it necessary to improve competitiveness of their farms, which is an issue of particular importance in the context of European integration and the opportunity to take advantage of the potential the EU funding offers. As for the value of purchase of agricultural produce, Podkarpackie placed the lowest both in the region (Eastern Poland) and Poland in general. It seems that this is precisely the area where agricultural producers should be aided by economic policies, i.e. to identify new markets – including overseas ones – for the district agricultural producers by means of export assistance, for example. The issue becomes even more critical in the light of the fact that in 2010 the district had the second largest number (after the Małopolskie district) of the country's certified organic farming households. It is Podkarpacie where one can find favourable conditions for organic agricultural production. This is the very feature which should be fully taken advantage off, particularly given the fact that organic food is not only healthier but also
more expensive, which should potentially yield higher purchase value of agricultural produce and that, in turn, higher farmers income.

Table 5  Selected key characteristics of agriculture in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2000–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Capital investment in agriculture and hunting (current prices) per 1 ha of arable land in PLN</th>
<th>Arable land size per 1 tractor unit in ha</th>
<th>Value of purchased agricultural produce (current prices) per 1 ha of arable land in PLN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>54,4</td>
<td>214,1</td>
<td>393,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>46,3</td>
<td>190,3</td>
<td>411,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>116,0</td>
<td>259,7</td>
<td>223,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>93,4</td>
<td>202,5</td>
<td>216,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>78,8</td>
<td>194,2</td>
<td>246,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>149,6</td>
<td>176,4</td>
<td>117,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-Pomorskie</td>
<td>148,5</td>
<td>215,9</td>
<td>145,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>95,1</td>
<td>291,1</td>
<td>306,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>129,2</td>
<td>234,3</td>
<td>181,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>73,2</td>
<td>274,9</td>
<td>375,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>127,4</td>
<td>273,9</td>
<td>215,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>189,9</td>
<td>249,1</td>
<td>131,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>191,8</td>
<td>229,0</td>
<td>119,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>108,8</td>
<td>251,0</td>
<td>230,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>152,0</td>
<td>322,4</td>
<td>212,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>118,3</td>
<td>182,3</td>
<td>154,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>116,7</td>
<td>239,7</td>
<td>205,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own calculation on the basis of PSR 2002 and PSR 2010

Quality of human and social capital in the Eastern Poland region

Human capital and its development has become an inherent element of economic processes. Knowledge and skills acquired due to involvement in both non-professional activities or as experience gained in one's profession facilitate better use of production inputs and increases in competitiveness. Moreover, in the process a window of opportunity is created to pass the knowledge and skills on to other members of economic life. The quality of human capital is the primary factor contributing to business success, identification of alternative income opportunities and taking advantage of the EU funding; it also plays a critical role in the process of structural changes in rural areas (Miś, 2009). The quality of human capital depends on education, age, health status, propensity for social and economic activity, ability of overcoming hardships of life, and involvement in local community issues. Further transformation of the Polish rural areas will advance only when high quality of human capital and activity of social capital are provided.

The level of education of rural population varies across the regions of Poland. The rural population of Eastern Poland is dominated by those with primary and lower secondary education (Table 6). Among the districts of Eastern Poland, the highest share of rural population with higher education has been observed in Świętokrzyskie, as opposed to Warminsko-mazurskie. The Podlaskie district has the lowest share of rural population with (post)secondary education as well as the highest share of these with incomplete primary and with no education. Generally, on the one hand the rural population of Eastern Poland tends to parallel the average share rate of higher education population in Poland; on the other, there are significantly more persons with lower secondary, primary and no education in the districts. In effect, a more coherent and deliberate policy to encourage training and continuous education among rural persons should be adopted in the districts.
Table 6  
Education level of rural population in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2002–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Completed education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Others:

|                       |               |               |                                |                                |               |               |                                |                                |                          |                          |
| Dolnośląskie          | 4.1          | 10.2         | 24.2                          | 27.1                          | 30.4          | 26.9          | 35.8                          | 28.5                          | 5.5                        | 7.3                        |
| Kujawsko-Pomorskie    | 3.7          | 8.5          | 19.6                          | 23.8                          | 31.6          | 29.0          | 41.0                          | 33.6                          | 3.9                        | 5.1                        |
| Lubuskie              | 4.1          | 9.1          | 23.4                          | 25.4                          | 30.7          | 28.2          | 36.0                          | 29.8                          | 5.9                        | 7.5                        |
| Lódzkie               | 3.9          | 9.4          | 21.2                          | 25.6                          | 26.3          | 25.1          | 41.7                          | 35.6                          | 6.9                        | 4.3                        |
| Małopolskie           | 4.4          | 9.8          | 23.7                          | 26.3                          | 32.2          | 28.4          | 36.0                          | 29.1                          | 3.8                        | 6.4                        |
| Mazowieckie           | 5.0          | 11.8         | 22.8                          | 26.9                          | 26.6          | 23.9          | 38.5                          | 32.7                          | 7.0                        | 4.7                        |
| Opolskie              | 4.0          | 8.4          | 20.6                          | 23.0                          | 32.7          | 28.6          | 33.9                          | 26.9                          | 8.8                        | 13.1                       |
| Pomorskie             | 4.4          | 9.4          | 20.0                          | 24.1                          | 31.8          | 28.0          | 39.9                          | 31.8                          | 3.9                        | 6.7                        |
| Śląskie               | 5.3          | 11.7         | 25.9                          | 28.0                          | 33.5          | 29.8          | 30.4                          | 24.5                          | 4.9                        | 6.0                        |
| Wielkopolskie         | 4.2          | 10.4         | 21.3                          | 24.9                          | 34.0          | 31.2          | 37.4                          | 29.8                          | 3.0                        | 3.7                        |
| Zachodniopomorskie    | 4.3          | 9.3          | 20.3                          | 23.3                          | 27.5          | 24.8          | 40.9                          | 34.9                          | 7.0                        | 7.7                        |
| Poland                | 4.3          | 9.9          | 22.4                          | 25.5                          | 29.2          | 26.5          | 38.3                          | 31.7                          | 5.7                        | 6.4                        |

Source: GUS, US, Charakterystyka obszarów wiejskich, Olsztyn 2004

Table 7  
Medium age of the population of Poland, in general and in the rural areas, by districts (voivodships), 1990–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>+5.8</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>+3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>+6.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>+5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>+6.1</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>+3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>+6.0</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>+3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-Mazurskie</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>+6.8</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>+6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Others:

| Dolnośląskie          | 33.0          | 36.7          | 39.1          | +6.1              | 31.7              | 34.2              | 36.6              | +4.9                |
| Kujawsko-Pomorskie    | 31.9          | 34.6          | 37.7          | +5.8              | 30.5              | 32.4              | 35.5              | +5.0                |
| Lubuskie              | 31.3          | 34.3          | 37.5          | +6.2              | 30.7              | 32.5              | 35.8              | +5.1                |
| Łódzkie               | 35.0          | 38.0          | 40.3          | +5.3              | 34.6              | 36.4              | 38.3              | +3.7                |
| Małopolskie           | 31.6          | 33.9          | 36.8          | +5.2              | 30.3              | 32.0              | 35.1              | +4.8                |
| Mazowieckie           | 34.3          | 36.7          | 38.2          | +3.9              | 32.8              | 34.4              | 36.6              | +3.8                |
| Opolskie              | 31.5          | 35.4          | 39.5          | +8.0              | 31.2              | 34.9              | 38.8              | +7.6                |
| Pomorskie             | 31.2          | 34.0          | 36.8          | +5.6              | 27.7              | 29.6              | 33.3              | +5.6                |
| Śląskie               | 32.8          | 36.6          | 39.7          | +6.9              | 32.1              | 34.9              | 37.9              | +5.8                |
| Wielkopolskie         | 31.8          | 33.8          | 36.7          | +4.9              | 30.3              | 31.9              | 34.9              | +4.6                |
| Zachodniopomorskie    | 31.9          | 35.2          | 38.3          | +6.4              | 30.0              | 32.2              | 35.7              | +5.7                |
| Poland                | 32.3          | 35.2          | 38.1          | +5.8              | 31.3              | 33.5              | 36.3              | +5.0                |

Source: own calculations on the basis of GUS, Rocznik Demograficzny, Warszawa 2012
Apart from education, an important element that influences the quality of human capital is age: it is young and educated persons who tend to undertake business activities and introduce innovation that changes the face of rural areas (Miś, 2011). The youngest population in the rural areas of Eastern Poland inhabits the Warmińsko-mazurskie and Podkarpackie districts, the oldest Podlaskie (Table 7). The average age of the rural population in Eastern Poland does not greatly differ from the country’s average (36.9ys. in Eastern Poland, 36.3ys. the country). Both in 1990 and 2010 the youngest rural population was found in the Pomorskie district.

Social capital of the Polish rural areas is one of the key determinants of their competitiveness and hence an effective agent of development. It also forms a socioeconomic category whose determination and appraisal are problematic due to their qualitative character. It is generally assumed that the typical indexes of social capital are civic engagement, propensity for cooperation and mutual trust rate. Generally, Polish rural population is characterized by high level of social capital (Spychalski, 2012).

The approach adopted by the Leader program and establishment of local action groups (LAGs) unlock the endogenic potential of rural areas development and in this way they stimulate local communities into action. Among the districts of Eastern Poland the greatest number of LAGs have been started, and are still active, in Podkarpackie, whereas Warmińsko-mazurskie and Podlaskie have shown the most passive in this respect (Table 8).

### Table 8: Number of LAGs and parliamentary election turnout rate in the rural areas of Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Local Action Groups</th>
<th>Parliamentary election turnout rate in the rural areas of Poland in %</th>
<th>Share in the country’s total number in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7,7</td>
<td>41,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9,2</td>
<td>44,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>41,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5,3</td>
<td>39,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-mazurskie</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>34,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5,7</td>
<td>41,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-pomorskie</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6,0</td>
<td>38,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3,0</td>
<td>38,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6,0</td>
<td>41,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11,6</td>
<td>46,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10,4</td>
<td>44,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>35,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>42,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>46,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9,2</td>
<td>43,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>39,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>42,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Higher civic engagement of the inhabitants of Podkarpackie is also demonstrated during elections: among the five districts of Eastern Poland, it was Podkarpackie where one of the highest district turnout rates (44%) had been recorded. However, high civic participation is not characteristic of the whole Eastern Poland region: the Warmińsko-mazurskie district had the lowest turnout rate in the 2011 parliamentary election in the whole country. Nevertheless, Eastern Poland is definitely a region whose inhabitants have frequently demonstrated the power of their civic engagement and joined forces to enhance their social capital.
Multifunctional development in Eastern Poland

The European Model of Agriculture rests on the paradigm of multifunctionality (Czudec, 2009a) which has several definitions and interpretations. It can refer to the agricultural sector in general, a farm household, and it may as well denote non-farming activity in rural areas. Any classification of multifunctional development of rural areas boils down to designation of three fundamental trends:

- securing high quality of agricultural produce,
- extending the scope of farm households activities,
- farm restructuring aimed at resource use improvement (Czudec, 2009c).

The first trend, as Czudec (2009b) notes, encompasses activities like organic farming production methods, high quality produce and assuming by farm households new functions which have been performed so far by the non-farming components of agribusiness (food processing companies or distribution of food).

According to the statistical data (as of December 31st, 2012) in Poland there are 26.5 thousand organic farm producers which are monitored by certification units, including 25.9 thousand farms which operate on the total area of over 650 thousand ha. The organic farms situated in Eastern Poland make 47% of all organic households in the country. Among the 16 districts of Poland, Warmińsko-mazurskie had the most of them (3793 households). Generally, organic farming in Eastern Poland makes a significant part (38%) of all organic farm area in Poland (Figure 1).

In the Warmińsko-mazurskie and Podlaskie districts organic farming areas occupied 112,945.30 ha and 55,804.15 ha respectively which placed them the second and the third in the ranking of districts with the largest amount of organic farming areas. In the period 2002–2012 the area of organic farms in Eastern Poland increased nineteen-fold. The average size of organic farms has risen above 26 ha, compared with the national average of 10 ha for traditional farms. It seems that the principal reason for the increased acreage of organic farms, as opposed to the traditional ones, is the necessitated by the multifunctionality of farm production, i.e. economy of scope, since to support large enough homogenous production, large acreage of land is required.
Another key trend of multifunctional development of rural areas in Eastern Poland is farm tourism. Apart from the important financial/income aspect, it also helps rural communities stay in touch with city dwellers and strengthen interpersonal ties. In 2011 accommodation in the rural areas of Eastern Poland was provided by overall 4.5 thousand entities which offered in total 47.2 thousand beds (27.7 thousand beds in 3 thousand farm rooms and 19.5 thousand beds in 1.5 thousand rural private rooms). In the light of the total number of rooms in farms and private houses in the Polish countryside, the share of those offered by the households in Eastern Poland was significant and equalled 39% and 34% respectively. Moreover, the Podkarpackie district with its 989 tourism farms had the second largest number of tourism farms in the whole country, which reflects the region's high tourist attractiveness.

Table 10  Number of tourist farms and private houses offering tourist accommodation in Poland, by districts (voivodships), 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Districts/voivodships</th>
<th>Tourist farms</th>
<th>Private houses offering tourist accommodation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>Share in the country's total number in %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubelskie</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>5,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podkarpackie</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>12,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podlaskie</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>7,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Świętokrzyskie</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>3,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmińsko-mazurskie</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>9,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolnośląskie</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>8,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kujawsko-pomorskie</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>3,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubuskie</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Łódzkie</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>2,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Małopolskie</td>
<td>1 344</td>
<td>17,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazowieckie</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>4,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opolskie</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomorskie</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>7,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Śląskie</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>4,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wielkopolskie</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>5,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zachodniopomorskie</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>4,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>7 852</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Turystyka w 2011, GUS, Warszawa 2012, p. 51

Another form in which rural households extend the scope of their activities and hence adopt multifunctional approach to making a living in the countryside is production of traditional and regional food stuffs. They are characteristic of a given area and usually have a long production history in the area. Among them one can distinguish products of protected designation of origin (PDO), products of protected geographical indication (PGI) and guaranteed traditional specialties (TSG) (Czudec, 2009b).

The third trend in multifunctional development of rural areas is economic restructuring of farms. Their main objective is lowering farm operation costs and supplementing the farm income with off-farm income. Van der Ploeg and i Roep observe that historically any off-farm job was symptomatic of poverty in farm families who were not capable of making a living with farming. As a matter of fact it marked a beginning of the farm/household closure. Nowadays, however, the situation has dramatically changed and more and more farmers choose to work off-farm and not to give up running a farm and rural living at the same time (Czudec, 2009c).

In the serious, least to say unstable socio-economic situation of the majority of the EU countries today, a question is if the above trend of multifunctional development in rural areas seems particularly relevant. The statistical data do not project an optimistic picture: 30.2% of the Polish population does not have their own source of
reliable income (i.e. dependants). What is worse, three out of the five districts of Eastern Poland have this index even higher: Podkarpackie (33.6%), Świętokrzyskie (31.3%) and Warmińsko-mazurskie (31.3%) (GUS, 2012).

One of the most critical determinants of development of multifunctional agriculture is the future of the idea and policy of sustainable development. Once the notion extends its impact beyond the sphere of mere theorizing, declarations and political band-wagoning, and it becomes a priority in global, regional and local scales, it will enhance social and environmental trends in development of agriculture: this model is an integral part of sustainable development (Czudec, 2009b).

In the light of the above ideas, it seems critical for the Polish agriculture and rural areas, particularly in eastern districts of Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Podlaskie, Świętokrzyskie and Warmińsko-mazurskie, to increase their rate of development: not only is it necessary due to the region underdevelopment in relation to other regions in the EU but the other districts in Poland, too.

Conclusion

Eastern Poland is a highly diversified region as demonstrated by the disparities in basic socio-economic indexes of the five districts. Among them, Świętokrzyskie has the highest share in the GDP, in contrast with Podkarpackie. Regarding the capital investment, however, it is Podkarpackie which spends the most, as opposed to Podlaskie. The district, on the one hand, enjoys the highest capital investment in agriculture, the highest value of purchased farm produce, the lowest rural area density and the lowest rural unemployment rate; on the other comma it has the highest share of rural population with lower secondary, primary or no education. In 2000–2010, Podkarpacie recorded the country’s highest (fourfold) increase in investment capital in agriculture (the value still lags behind that in the other districts and regions of Poland though), the lowest arable land acreage per a tractor unit and high level of social (capital) activity as demonstrated by the number of LAGs and high election turnout rates. However, it seems that Eastern Poland is a region which in economic terms is underdeveloped in many ways. It is the region which contributes the lowest share of the Gross Domestic Product and the capital investment. It is characterized by relatively low population density, which increases the cost of technical infrastructure building. Finally, Eastern Poland has the highest share of agricultural employment and the high rural unemployment rate.

Apart from the above mentioned economic disadvantages, Eastern Poland is a region whose natural quality and beauty have become its huge resource. It has large environmental potential and favourable conditions for its natural landscape, which can enhance the multifunctional development of rural areas. The increasing number of organic farms, which account for nearly half of all the farms in the country, paralleled by the increasing acreage of organic farms, undoubtedly give a positive signal for the future of rural households. Furthermore, rapidly developing tourist farming which takes advantage of the features of the natural environment seems to prove that this development trend should be followed on the way to economic revival of the region.

Finally, the borderland character of the region of Eastern Poland is not to be disregarded. This aspect should be an important element of the regional development policy in the future. Establishing business relations and building cooperation networks are given a strong preference in the new structural policy of the European Union in 2014–2020. In this sense, Eastern Poland is a region of a huge economic, social and environmental potential. Expertly designed comprehensive policies can enhance the multifunctional development of the region and its rural areas in particular, and overcome decades of the region’s underdevelopment.

References


Building Social Capital through Local Rural Development Partnerships in Hungary

Zsuzsanna Kassai, Tibor Farkas, Izabella Oláh

Introduction

Partnership working has become widely employed in the rhetoric and practice of EU public policy, particularly in rural development policy (Edwards et al., 2001; Scott, 2004; Yarwood, 2002). Lowndes and Sullivan (2004) identified three drivers for the increased use of partnership arrangements. The first one is efficiency, since partnerships can more efficiently use existing resources through reducing duplication and they can also add value by facilitating service suppliers. Finally, the third one is accountability, because partnerships can better hold local service providers to account and to communicate their own views (Lowndes-Sullivan, 2004).

Local rural development can benefit from partnership working because of the local sensitivity, better financial support possibilities and the decrease of public-private conflicts (Yarwood, 2002). In addition, local partnerships enable ‘new geographies of collaboration, a vibrant culture of participative democracy and the potential for innovative actions’ (Hart and Murray, 2000 cited in Scott, 2004). Rural partnerships are assumed to balance and improve both economic growth and social equity, which are key tenets of sustainable development. Partnership is seen as necessary, because no party can achieve its goals without support of others (Scott, 2004).

Economist continuously would like to cut the size of bureaucracy and increase the economic efficiency in Hungary. In theory, passing responsibilities to the private sector could achieve this goal. From this perspective local partnerships appear ideal. However, it is still only a theory that public-partnerships can help, since because of the cultural and institutional settings in Hungary the national government seems to be unwilling to transfer real decision-making responsibilities to non-governmental actors (Regéczi, 2005). According to Regéczi, the Hungarian government see public-private partnerships rather from a market-oriented approach, than as an innovative governance instrument. The government is willing to involve private partners to partnership only from economic necessity. However, usually financial support in itself is not enough for the successful operation of local rural development partnerships. In addition to the building up of appropriate infrastructure, active participation of local actors and appropriate level of social involvement, the existence of some soft social factors are also essential to success. Such a soft factor is the social capital. On the basis of the concepts of Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), Putnam (1993, 1995), Fukuyama (1995, 2002) the social capital is a mixture of trust, relations, norms regulating social behaviour and civil social activity. Therefore, we examine these factors in this study.

A wide range of literature (e.g. Füzér et al., 2005) proves that social capital has an essential role in poverty alleviation and sustainable rural development. Several surveys (e.g. Füzér et al., 2005; Giczi and Sik, 2009; Hankiss, 1989; Kulcsár, 2006; Skrabski and Kopp, 2008; Szakál, 2006) confirm however the social capital in Hungary is much lower than the indicators of Western European countries. Hungary belongs to the countries with low level of trust both in persons and institutions and the civic participation is also low. Where social capital is weak, there are conflicting values and a lack of trust, which hinder any economic or social development activities. Since if there is low level trust between the business partners the transactional and administrative costs are going to increase, which results in the loss of efficiency (Tóth and Jóna, 2012). Moreover, it often results in personal distress and a higher mortality rate. For this reason, it is a crucial task to increase the social capital of Hungary.

Some research findings (e.g. Katonáné, 2006; Kis, 2006; ÖIR, 2004) reinforce that local partnerships is an important factor in the creation of social capital, moreover in its utilization as a resource. It is considered that social capital is increasing through partnership working and so the efficiency of such type of rural development programmes is improved. On the other hand, some research projects (Shucksmith, 2000) prove that endogenous development programmes based on partnership advance those who have already had appropriate social capital and capacity.

Therefore, the objective of our country-wide research has been to survey whether local rural development partnerships really contribute to the building up of social capital of local community and the development of
cooperative willingness, thus enhancing more efficient utilization of available resources, improvement of exploitation of development opportunities, in other words the successful operation of partnership. In our opinion, social capital is one of the minimum factors of local rural development.

Material and methods

The role of rural development partnerships in building social capital was studied through the example of the current Hungarian LEADER Local Action Groups (hereinafter called LAGs). We put the LEADER programme in the scope of the research, because one of the most important aims of this rural development initiative is to build local capacity by constructing and developing social capital.

Interviews and two countrywide surveys were conducted in the circle of leaders of Management Offices and members of LAGs between 2011 and 2012. The so gained primary data were analysed by different statistical methods. To examine first the data structure single variable tests were employed. Cross-tabulation was used for the examination of relations among nominal and ordinal variables listed in the survey of members of Local Action Groups. The relations among metric variables of the fact sheet completed by leaders of administrative organizations and the relations among indexes produced from variables of the questionnaires of LAG-members were analysed by correlation-calculations. The following formula was used for calculating part-indexes:

\[ I_{ij} = \frac{\sum x_{ij} - x_{i\text{min}} \times n}{(x_{i\text{max}} - x_{i\text{min}}) \times n} \]

where:

- \( \sum x_{ij} \) – the total score of the received answers for the given question regarding the examined LAG
- \( x_{i\text{min}} \) – the minimum score of the answer that can be given for the question
- \( x_{i\text{max}} \) – the maximum score of the answer that can be given for the question
- \( n \) – the number of answers for the given question regarding the examined LAG

Each part-index was between 0 and 1. While 0 means that the examined attitude is not typical at all for the given partnership, 1 means that it is completely characteristic of it. The part-indexes were not weighted, because each of them is considered equally important. Finally, each index was determined as a mean of part-indexes calculated on the basis of answers for the belonging questions. The following indexes were created: the Participation Index (PAI) includes the participative characteristics of LAG-members. The Activity Index (AI) demonstrates how actively the members take part in the work of LAG. The Trust Index (TI) shows the extent of trust among LAG-members. The Cooperation Index (CI) contains the characteristics of cooperative willingness of LAG-members. Finally, the LAGs were clustered on the basis of these indexes.

All the 94 operating partnerships were involved in the research, but only 83% of them answered our questionnaire (Table 1). In each region at least eight LAGs took part in our survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Number of LAGs in the region</th>
<th>Number of the examined LAGs in the region</th>
<th>Proportion of the examined LAGs in the region %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Great Plain</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Transdanubia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Great Plain</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Hungary</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Transdanubia</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Hungary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Transdanubia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own editing, 2013
17% of the partnerships however showed no inclination to participate in our research at all. A part of them had already taken part in other research before and some paper had been published which gave least favourable account of their operation. Other partnerships assumed that we did the research by order of the Paying Agency and if we had found some operational problems, the Agency would have applied financial sanctions against them. So they did not trust and did not want to cooperate with us.

On cluster analysis not all the examined partnerships were grouped, because it was regarded inevitable to consider the opinion of each sphere. So only those 51 partnerships were classified by the indexes where at least two local governments, two civil organizations and two entrepreneurs answered the questionnaire appreciably (Figure 1).

Figure 1  LEADER Local Action Groups examined by indexes
Source: own editing, 2012

Results concerning social capital and cooperative willingness

Primarily, the personal trust among partners was examined. Trust enables cooperation, so without it the implementation of local development strategy can be in danger. In the course of the research work the personal trust among partners was examined, but the general trust was not. The respondents assessed the trust among members, how much they kept their promises and how they could rely on fellows when problems arose.

According to the majority of partners participating in the research the personal trust was strong inside the LAG. Only one-fourth stated that the trust among members was weak or totally missing. More than three-fourth of the members stated the partners kept their promises. The overwhelming majority of respondents felt that they could really rely on the others in case of any problems. Hardly one-fifth felt that the partners would not help if needed.

The social capital grows in the partnership through contacts among the local governments, civil organizations and entrepreneurs. However, most of the members kept in contact relatively rarely between the partnership meetings. One-tenth of the respondents did not communicate with the other members at all and more than half of them only monthly or even less often. One-third of the members established a connection with the others weekly or even more often.

The social capital strongly influences the cooperative willingness, since only forced associations can be built without the trust among partners. Eighty percent of the examined Action Groups cooperated with another national LAG. But only every other LEADER partnership participated in international cooperation. According to the survey the partnerships have shared information, experiences and results, have given opinion on legislation drafts, agendas, and have consulted with each other about the interpretation of regulations in the frame of cooperation. Besides, more
Action Groups have elaborated common projects, have appeared together in regional and national programmes, exhibitions, have promoted the products of each other, even some of them mentioned that they have organised common trainings for the new colleagues.

In this paper mainly the cooperative willingness within the rural development partnership and with the superior authorities – with Steering Authority and Paying Agency – are studied. The cooperative willingness among members was judged favourably in most of the LAGs, only twenty-seven percent of the members stated that it was weak or there was not any cooperation within the partnership (Figure 2).

![Figure 2: The cooperative characteristics of LAG-members in %](source: own editing, 2013)

The leaders of management offices spoke even more positively about the cooperative willingness among members; only one-fifth stated that the cooperation was weak.

The respondents appreciated the cooperative willingness among LAGs and Management Offices (MO) even better than within partnerships. Hardly more than one-tenth of the members reported on the lack of cooperation (Figure 2). The leaders of Management Offices had similar opinions.

According to the majority of respondents the cooperative willingness among the LAGs and the superior authorities (Steering Authority (SA) and Paying Agency (PA)) is also definitely favourable (Figure 2). Those respondents were unsatisfied with the cooperation who stated the relations among the authorities and the Action Groups were one-sided, because the LAGs were in subordinate position. These respondents miss the meaningful negotiation, the possibilities of expressing of their opinion; they say that 'the socialization of legislation is only ostensible'. Local partnerships 'have become empty, only administrative tasks are managed by the organizations, 'the upper levels determine the scope of actions of LAGs in a dictatorial way'. The concerned heads of Management Offices say that more dialogues, two-sided communication and larger compromise skills would be necessary. The Steering Authority should look at Action Groups as partners not only at rhetoric levels, but also in practice instead of the sub- and superordinate relations.

Moreover, it is also examined how the partnership actions have contributed to the development of cooperation of local community, according to the members. The results of the survey show that according to the prevailing majority of members the work of Action Groups really contributed to the improvement of cooperation of the local community. Hardly more than one-tenth of the members and out of the Management Offices stated that the partnership did not foster the cooperation of local community. In these LAGs the cooperative willingness among members proved to be quite weak, the partners gave priority to their individual interests instead of the collective interests.

The majority of LAG-members and leaders of Management Offices considered that the partners were motivated for internal and external cooperation. In general the members were able to place collective interests in front of individual interests. Those LAGs where the cooperative skills were lower explained this feature mainly with the following three reasons:
- The traditions of community cooperation are missing in the region, most of the partners have not known each other before setting up the LAG, and therefore the trust needed for cooperation have not emerged yet.
- The conflicts among members made the cooperation impossible. A narrow group has monopolized the LAG for own purposes and so the cooperation with them have made no sense for other partners.
- The members have lost their motivations for cooperation due to the bureaucratic barriers and legislation which have made their operation impossible. They felt they invested money, time, and energy in vain, and they received nothing in return.

Results concerning participation and activity of LAG-members

The intensity of participation is related to the extent of social capital of partners as well. In our opinion, the larger is the social capital that the partners possess, the bigger is their participation willingness. In this paper we examine the participative characteristics of partners in planning, decisions, meetings, different events and tenders.

If partners do not participate in the drafting of development plans, then its measures and the real development needs of partners may differ significantly. Therefore, it is important that more and more partners would contribute with their ideas to the strategy. In most of the LAGs, however, the participation willingness in composition of development strategy was quite low according to the survey. A little bit more than one-third of the respondents contributed to the development plan with their ideas or opinions (Figure 3).

Although the majority of respondents stated that new tender possibilities had an essential part in their accession to Action Group, only two-fifth of the members submitted applications in the first two rounds of New Hungary Rural Development Plan (hereinafter called NHRDP) Axis III (Figure 3). The majority of members gave three reasons for their passivity in application. A part of them said that failed to submit application due to the lack of time. Another part explained his passivity with the changes in his financial circumstances. The third group declared that the local development strategy did not match with the development needs of his region because of the bureaucratic regulations and conventional planning, for this reason he did not write project proposal.

![Figure 3](image-url)  
The participation characteristics of LAG-members in %  
Source: own editing, 2013

While more than half of the representatives of the public sphere (56%) wrote application in the first two rounds of NHRDP Axis III, less than one-third of the civil and business sphere representatives did so. Probably it had an essential part in this tendency that most of the tender titles were key development target areas for most of local governments. Moreover, the local governments possessed the appropriate human capacity and the own financial resources needed for project proposals. The tenders supported by NHRDP Axis III had relatively large budget, therefore higher amount of own sources were required which could not be ensured by civil organizations or with more difficulties than by the local governments.
Thirty-seven percent of the respondents submitted proposals in frame of the first round of NHRDP Axis IV (LEADER) (Figure 3). The activity in LEADER proposals had significant relation to neither the school qualification, nor the sphere representation. This feature can be explained by the fact that the budget of proposals in case of Axis IV was smaller. Therefore, smaller own financial sources were required for their implementation, so unlike Axis III, the local actors with less financial sources could submit proposals as well.

The survey has revealed that the participative willingness of members in meetings and other events was low as well. One-tenth of partners had never attended meetings and one-fifth did it only rarely. The participation at other events – like forums for informing citizens, gatherings and trainings – was even lower than at the meetings. While one-third of the respondents attended rarely, five percent have never been to any event yet. The latter ratio is better than the participation rate at the meetings.

Prior to the research it was assumed that the participative willingness was higher in the smaller Action Groups, because in these LAGs it was easier to inform the members about the possibilities of participation, find such occasions when the majority of members can be presented at the meetings and support partners in preparing proposals. However, there was no significant relation between the size of Action Group and the participative willingness of members on the basis of correlation analysis. Nevertheless it was proved in the course of research that those members, who had shown larger participative willingness in certain above mentioned activity, took part more intensively in the other fields of partnership actions, too.

Beside participation frequency of members, the activity of partners in partnership actions also determines the efficient operation of partnership. Since if too many members are inactive, then the partnership may become inoperative.

Almost two-third of the respondents considered himself active participants. On the other hand, twenty-eight percent stated that they took part rather in passive way. Some of them said that they were passive because of lack of time, others accounted for apathy. According to the third group of respondents the partnership do not operate appropriately because only a narrow group’s interests were taken into consideration during the decision-making processes. So they consider themselves peripheral members and cannot see the point of participating more actively due to their disappointment.

Almost one-tenth of those who completed the questionnaire did not take part in the decision-making of Action Groups and the implementation of regional development strategy at all. Most of these members stated that they did not care the collective interests, but they joined the partnership for personal reasons. They became partners mainly in order to be well informed regarding on-going events and developments occurring within the regions, but they did not want to participate in the collective work.

The respondents thought the local governments were the most active, the civil sphere was on the second place and the entrepreneurs seemed to be the least active participants (Figure 4).

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**Figure 4**  
The activity of members representing the three spheres (%)  
Source: own editing, 2013
Slightly more than one-tenth of the respondents from the public sector stated that they were passive observers or they did not participate at all in partnership actions. Almost two-fifth of respondents had the same opinion regarding representatives of civil organisations and sixty percent of partners considered the representatives of the business sector inactive (Figure 4).

**Grouping LAGs**

We were inquiring whether the Hungarian LEADER partnerships were totally heterogeneous and all of them could be only separately developed based on their own characteristics or a more homogenous structure could be elaborated in order to facilitate the determination of areas to be developed. The classification was accomplished by cluster analysis. The four clusters can be seen on Figure 5.

![Cluster Classification Image](image_url)

**Figure 5** The classification of the selected LAGs  
Source: own calculation and editing, 2012

LAGs belonging to the first cluster had extreme points along negative values in the cases of all the partnership dimensions. Therefore, this group was named ‘**weakly-operating, underdeveloped partnerships**’. The following development objectives can be set up in these LEADER regions:

- to improve the participation willingness of members at meetings, different events of the LAG and local tenders,
- to urge the activity of members from all the spheres,
- to improve cooperation skills inside the partnership and with superior authorities,
- to strengthen personal trust among partners.

LAGs belonging to the second cluster had extreme points along positive values in the cases of all the examined partnership dimensions. Therefore, this group was named ‘**well-operating partnerships**’. The most important aims in the cases of LAGs belonging to the second cluster are the followings:

- to increase the proportion of participation in local tenders, mainly to strengthen the activity in LEADER Axis proposals,
- to improve the activity of business sphere in partnership actions,
- to maintain trust and cooperative willingness among members by e.g. trainings, community meetings, organising programmes, etc.
As regards partnerships belonging to the **third cluster** the participative willingness was low, the activity was medium, the intent to cooperate with fellow members was good and the trust was strong. Therefore, this group was named ‘**partnerships characterized by low participative willingness, but strong social capital**’. The most important goals in case of Action Groups belonging to the third cluster are the followings:

- to improve the participative willingness within partnership in the work of LAG, the different programmes and proposal submission in the frame of NHRDP Axis III.,
- to urge passive partners to participate in a meaningful way,
- to develop the cooperative skill with Steering Authority and Paying Agency.

In LAGs belonging to the **fourth cluster** the participative willingness was higher in comparison to the others, the activity was medium, the cooperative willingness was small and the personal trust among members was weak. Therefore, this group was named ‘**partnerships characterized by high participative willingness, but small social capital**’. The most important goals are the followings in case of partnerships belonging to the fourth cluster:

- to improve the activity of civil and business sphere members,
- to develop the cooperation skills among members as well as with Steering Authority and Paying Agency,
- to further strengthen personal trust among members.

**Conclusions and recommendations**

It would be advisable in the future to give higher priority to **cooperation**, because it would enhance local activity, stimulate more efficient utilisation of local resources and more efficient handling of local problems. In our opinion, the cooperation should be encouraged in four areas: the cooperation willingness among partners should be increased, the cooperation with external authorities should also be improved, the international cooperation between Local Action Groups should be extended and the projects targeting the cooperation should be prioritized in the frames of NHRDP Axis IV applications.

The lack of international cooperation is usually explained by the lack of financial resources, but the research results proved that in many cases there is not even the slightest need in LAG members to participate in international cooperation. Most of the Action Groups do not give any priority to build up international cooperation. It should be taught to the members that joint conferences and study tours, transfer of good practices and exchange of experiences can considerably enhance the efficient operation of partnerships. In case of borderline action groups, the current cooperation should be made closer.

In the first round of NHRDP Axis IV, only eight percent of awarded LEADER grants were spent on projects which targeted the development of cooperation within and between regions. Therefore, much more attention should be given to the support of these types of projects in the next rounds of inviting project proposals.

The quality of cooperation is basically determined by the **trust** among partners. Hungary belongs to the countries with low level of trust, the trust both in persons and institutions is weak (Giczi and Sik, 2009). Our research has also proved that the downward trust is missing from the system and it prevents the cooperation between local, regional and national bodies and led to the over-regulation of application system and exaggerated severity towards local level. Most of the people, however, regarded the personal trust between members within the examined LEADER partnership good.

The quantity and quality of contacts between members was not appropriate. Among the weaknesses of Action Groups the heads of Management Offices often listed the lack of trust between the different sectors and towards the management. Building up trust takes a lot of time but it can be accelerated by increasing the number of personal meetings. More attention should also be given to the introduction of advantages and possibilities of cooperation to the membership.

The work in partnerships has contributed to the development of social capital in all the LAGs but not equally for each partner. We pointed out the work in partnership is advantageous primarily for those members of the local community who already have more social capital. We found that the local political elite have greater power in partnerships – due perhaps mainly to the greater social capital – than the other social groups. It has been proved in the research that the trust among the members of the public sector is much stronger than in case of the civil or business sector.

In most of the LEADER partnerships the **participation willingness** was low in the course of planning and implementing development strategy, in LAG-meetings and different gatherings, exhibitions, forums and training
courses. Moreover, manipulative or passive participation were experienced in many LEADER partnerships. While the manipulative participation is simply pretence, in case of passive participation ‘people participation by being told what has been decided or has already been happened’ (Pretty, 1995).

The so-called non-participation (see Hayward et al., 2004) was also a typical phenomenon in some of the examined partnerships. In this case the rational decision of members is the reason for the lack of participation. Most of them joined the partnership not in the interest of the community but rather for personal reasons. They often become partners in order to be well-informed concerning the local development and fund-raising possibilities but they do not actually want to participate in the work of the partnership.

According to the survey more than one-third of the members were inactive in partnerships. The representatives of the entrepreneurs were the most passive in LAG work out of the three sectors, but the representatives of the other two sectors were not active enough, either. The above results concerning the participation and activity of members proved that the work in partnership does not always end in real and actual involvement of partners.

In spite of the above mentioned problems, the LEADER programme still has ensured more extended and deeper involvement of local actors than the top-down directed rural development projects but it would be advisable to further deepen and widen the participation. It would be important to define those who totally reject cooperation within the partnership. When the reasons of their passivity are explored, it can be decided whether it is worth working on their activation. In case of those who totally reject cooperation, it is not worth further encouraging their involvement in the partnership. But the participation of those should be facilitated who show at least some minimum willingness to cooperate and have been absent only for the lack of trust or some other personal reasons.

References


Role of the Local Governments in the Multi-Sectoral Partnerships: The Case Study of Selected Partnerships Based in Podkarpackie Region

Anna Kolomycew, Boguslaw Kotarba

Abstract

The concept of multi-sectoral partnership is analyzed in terms of voluntary and institutionalized cooperation between representatives of three different sectors: public, private and social. The idea of this kind of partnership is associated with the new approach to the local development implemented in all EU member states. Initially, multi-sectoral partnerships were provided as an instrument of rural areas development, where they took the form of Local Actions Groups (LAGs). The authors of the paper discuss the idea of multi-sectoral partnerships in relations to the category of local leadership. In particular, they focus on major domestic factors determining partnerships creation and current functioning. Based on the field research, the authors tried to demonstrate that the unique and generally unknown partnerships in the form of LAG, formalization accompanying their formation and the incentive in a form of financial support, which resulted in their natural leaders frequently becoming the representatives of local authorities. In the following paper the authors try to discuss only the selected aspects of multi-sectoral partnerships exemplified by the case of LAGs established in Podkarpackie region that occupies the southeastern part of Poland. Presented discussion is based on the empirical data gathered by the authors of the paper.

Key words: local action group, LEADER approach, leadership, public governance, rural areas.

Introduction

Leadership is a phenomenon that is of interest to both theoreticians and practitioners. It still remains valid and important due to the complexity and the constant transformations of the public sphere. Over the years, one might observe changes in the methods of defining the categories of leadership. However, it is mostly associated with influencing a group or an individual in accordance with the previously agreed objectives and goals (Northouse, 2010).

Leadership processes can be analyzed in many ways through taking into account their nature and genesis, motivations and means of initiating actions, their course and variability or the range of impact (both subjective and objective) and the power of influence. In this context, this category will be the analysis as a set of parallel processes, conditioned by a number of factors depending on the subject, as well as those over which one has no control. It should be emphasized that leadership should be dealt with as a relationship that involves two parties: the leaders and their supporters (Northouse, 2010).

The following paper is mainly concerned with the category of leadership in relation to the concept of new public governance as a model of governance in the public sphere, whose key components are networks formed on the basis of different types of partnerships (Osborne, 2010). The multi-sectoral partnerships in the form of local action groups (LAGs), which are discussed in this paper illustrate a special type of partnership, highly formalized and structured, primarily designed as a tool for rural area development. They are territorial structures, joining representatives of the three sectors in order to take common actions. The overall aim of this paper is to present the role of the local governments in the process of their creation, development and functioning.

Starting the investigation we have assumed the hypothesis that local governments dominate the multi-sectoral partnerships in the form of the LAG and the expected bottom-up nature and grass-roots initiative of partnerships is a pretence. Excessive formalization related to their establishment discouraged even the most active representatives of local communities. Helping to organize the new form of cooperation on the local level, the public sector naturally became its leader.

To verify the hypothesis we have been trying to answer the following questions: Who was the main initiator of multi-sectoral partnership establishment? What was the purpose of the appointment of such an entity? What is the
structure and what are the rules of partnership functioning in the form of the local action group? Based on the goals and decisions made by the partnerships, can we conclude that LAGs do participate in local governance?

The presented studies are based on the empirical research conducted in Podkarpackie region from 2010 till 2013 by the research team led by A. Pawłowska from the Department of Political Science, University of Rzeszow. The results submitted in this paper have been produced during the first (quantitative) stage of a research project titled “The Intersectoral Partnership in the Process of Creation and Implementation of Local Development Strategies in the Podkarpackie Region”1.

Definitions and types of leadership

Over the years, the understanding of the category of leadership has evolved due to the changes observed in the social and the public sphere. One of the newest concepts of the leadership is network leadership strictly related to the idea of new public governance (Gąsior-Niemiec, Pawłowska and Kołomycew, 2012a) and promoted by the European Union vision of territorial development based on the leadership of local communities, so called community-led local development2.

Network leadership is characterized by a large number of actors involved in the processes of leadership on both sides: the leaders and followers, as well as the dispersion of responsibilities and decision-making centers and the bottom-up nature of the initiatives. The traditional model of leadership is largely unitary in nature and typical for highly structured formal organizations. The dominant and arbitrarily imposed way of decision-making also characterized the traditional model of leadership. In turn, network leadership is more focused on the relationships and the collective nature of the processes, rather than the very sources of leadership (Reinelt, 2010): The network model did not completely replace the traditional leadership, both models co-exist and the strong dominance of traditional leadership is clearly seen in the public sphere, including the local level. Interestingly, this style is becoming more common also for non-governmental organizations (Przewłocka, Adamiak and Zajać, 2012)3. With regard to the concept of public governance as a recently recommended approach in the public sphere by European Union institutions, the issue of leadership took on a new dimension (Crosby, Byson and Stone, 2010). Surely it cannot be equated solely with the ability to make decisions. In the concept of new public governance the role of formal leaders in the decision-making process can be less important that in the traditional (hierarchical) model of leadership in the public sphere as well as in the case of a typical managerial model of public governance (new public management). Presently, leadership in the public sphere is more widely understood and therefore only partially turns out to be consistent with the category of decision-making (Gąsior-Niemiec and Kołomycew, 2013).

In the context of new public governance, it seems appropriate to identify leadership as the ability to set targets and courses of actions and coordinate the activities of different actors. Therefore, leadership can be individual as well as collective, which means that it can be implemented by a charismatic individual, including representatives of local authorities (mayor, member of the local council), social sector (representative of local NGO) or a local entrepreneur as well as an “initiative group” which constitutes a part of the local network/partnership (Gąsior-Niemiec and Kołomycew, 2013). The last solution mentioned above would be the most appropriate in terms of the new public governance model.

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1 Project: Intersectoral partnership in the proces creation and implementation of local development startegies in the Podkarpackie region”. Research project no. N N114 250039 funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland is being carried out at the Department of Public Administration and Social Policy, Institute of Political Science, University of Rzeszów. See more: http://www.politologia.univ.rzeszow.pl/en/research-projects.

2 Strong interest in multi-sectoral partnerships in the form of LAG which can be observed nowadays follows from the fact that in the new perspective of the European Union 2014–2020, LAGs will be not only a mechanism of the rural areas development but the preferred instrument of European cohesion policy implementation and a key element of the concept of community-led local development (CLLD). See more: Rozwój lokalny kierowany przez społeczność, Polityka spójności na lata 2014–2020, Komisja Europejska 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/community_pl.pdf (access: 30.07.2013).

3 Analyzing the specificity of the social sector, it seems that this trend is even progressing in Poland. It is evidenced by centrally controlled and regulated forms of cooperation of the social partners with local governments and the introduction of new mechanisms of cooperation, which only creates the appearance of wide access. In practice, they are inaccessible to informal groups. Thus, implemented regulations limit potential participation and involvement in the public sphere issues.
However, the network leadership model is close to the model of participatory leadership. In the context of this article it is worth quoting the three-component typology of leadership by Prokop. This author distinguished: a bureaucratic model, a managerial model and a participatory model. Particularly interesting in relation to the concept of good governance approach is the participatory model which relies on the cooperation of various actors in the public sphere with common goals, among which local development is the most important. The essence of this model is to strive to build lasting relationships for a strong and effective partnership. A variety of communication tools and instruments of social participation used by local actors should support these goals. However, this model has also some disadvantages. One of them can be a risk of the network structure being dominated by interest groups. Their decisions would be influenced by particular interests and own goals, but not the local community interest. Another disadvantage might be the difficulties with the maintenance of the partnership's durability. This model assumes stability of the relationship of the involved actors. Thus, the aim of this model is not the realization of individual actions, but the long-term cooperation, which can be seen from the problems identification till the task implementation (Prokop, 2008).

Both models assume a broad spectrum of actors involved in activities undertaken in the public sphere. In practice, local authorities in accordance with the applicable law are responsible for public governance in the territorial units. And in fact they are seen as real local leaders. At this stage of the implementation of the new public governance approach, it is unlikely that formal leadership has been replaced by complex, wide open models, in which local authorities would be one of the actors participating in the decision-making processes. However, one might take into consideration the differences between two distinct forms of leadership. They differ in the level of transparency and responsibility for the decisions taken. With respect to the specific of leadership at the local level, the diverse range of the leaders’ impact and its effects as well as the nature of the leaders’ relationships with local community members are also significant.

**Characteristic of the multi-sectoral partnerships in a form of local action group**

Multi-sectoral partnerships are understood in terms of voluntary cooperation of entities representing three sectors (public, private, civil/social) who are engaged in the process of identifying and defining problems of public sphere and involved to elaborate solutions to those problems, characterized by equal footing, shared resources, responsibilities, risks and benefits – steadily becomes a standard approach to public policy-making and policy-implementing at all levels – European, national, regional and local. Over the recent years this kind of partnership is promoted specifically by the EU as one of the preferred mechanisms to carry out its policies as well as the policies in the EU’s member states. The European shift towards regionalization, decentralization of public policies and service delivery and territorial cohesion, combined with the principle of subsidiarity, makes regional and local development policies almost “natural” arenas for such partnerships to be created. In the following case study, multi-sectoral partnerships are exemplified by network-like structures called Local Action Groups (LAGs) which have been created within the framework of EU-funded programmes to trigger and sustain rural development in underprivileged rural areas in the European countries. Additionally, LEADER approach has been seen as a tool to compensate for some negative side-effects of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy, including its adverse socio-economic impact on some segments of the rural population, unemployment, depopulation, lowering standards of public utilities, diminishing access to public services as well as related ecological and environmental problems. Unlike the top-down and uniform rural development policies implemented in European countries till the mid – 1980s, the policies basing on the LEADER approach have been characterized by several principles (The LEADER Approach …, 2006). Namely, they are claimed to be: a) bottom-up approach (activities initiated by the local communities members), b) territoriality (implementation of activities in the area for which the strategic document was developed), c) existence of social ties (as a guarantee for the exchange of experiences, achievements and resources at the disposal of partners), d) networks (both formal (institutionalized) appointed on European, national, regional and local level as well as informal networks formed on the basis of personal contacts (LEADER w Programie Rozwoju…, 2009), e) partnerships (appointed to combine various actors, representatives of the different sectors, their resources and potentials to achieve synergy (The LEADER Approach…, 2006), f) innovations (understood as the creation of new solutions for problems occurring in the local area, as well as finding new ways to use existing resources to local governance and local promotion, g) integrity of actions (denoting balanced and common problem solving), h) cooperation (in addition to collaboration of partners coming from different sectors, it also implies closer relations with other stakeholders/actors of the local system).

In 2004 Poland became an EU Member State what meant, inter alia, the inclusion in all of the EU policies, including the policies concerning rural areas. The period of 2004–2006 was the first steps in the LEADER approach in Poland
Leaders of the multi-sectoral partnerships. The case study of Podkarpackie region

In the later part of the following paper the authors would like to present some findings of the LAGs established in the Podkarpackie region, which occupy rural areas in the southeastern part of Poland. The total number of existing Local Action Groups in this region is 31; the survey covered 26 of them. The representatives of the remaining five groups refused to take part in the survey. The research has been carried out by quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview questionnaire) methods. The quantitative part has been conducted from March to December 2011 and the qualitative from September to December 2012.

The final study was preceded by a pilot study conducted in 2010 (Kołomycew, 2012). The quantitative parts of the study, based on the questionnaires were intended both for ordinary members as well as for the members of the LAGs boards. The total number of tested LAGs’ members was 652. The qualitative study was conducted in the selected LAGs. It included ordinary members of the LAGs, members of the LAGs’ boards and employees of the LAGs offices/secretariats (Pawłowska and Kołomycew, 2013).

The first issue to be addressed in the context of the LAGs and local leadership processes is the membership structure of these entities. Based on the results of the quantitative studies presented in Table 1, it is clearly visible that more than ⅓ of LAGs’ members asked about the sector, institution or organization they represent as a LAG’s member, admitted that they represented themselves. The second largest group of LAGs’ members (26.6%) were the representatives of local governments. However, it should be noticed that in the group of people declaring that in the partnerships they represented only themselves a significant number was associated with the local authorities and local administration, including the staff of the municipal offices or municipal (local) agencies such as community centers, libraries, schools or municipal companies. This information has been disclosed during the interviews. Less than 20% of the LAGs’ member represented the non-governmental organization. Although the idea of multi-sectoral partnerships in the form of LAG involved linking partners representing three sectors (with the formal requirements for the appointment of LAG impose a duty to ensure at least 50% of the representatives of the authorities for social and economic development), the economic sector was the least interested in participating in this structure. Only 8.1% of the members of all LAGs based in Podkarpacie region represented private (business) sector.

4 Podkarpackie region is one of the 16 Polish regions (corresponding to NUTS level 2 according to the classification of territorial units for statistics EUROSTAT). It covers an area of 17 844 km (5.7% of Poland) and is occupied by 2.97 mln people (5.5% of the population of Poland).

5 The low levels of business representatives was the result of a different logic of the private sector goals. It is primarily profit-driven. In addition, due to the area of the LAG, the action can only engage entrepreneurs operating in rural areas (rural and semi-urban areas), and thus largely small, family businesses, mostly the service operators. In some cases, which is also found in the course of qualitative research, the entrepreneurs involved in the activities of the LAG simply wanted to raise awareness of the possibility to receive financial support under Axis IV of the Rural Development Programme 2007–2013.
Another issue taken in the course of the study was the initiative to establish the multi-sectoral partnership. As the results shown in Table 2, the undisputed leader in this area were local governments. Nearly ¾ of the respondents indicated that their LAG is an initiative of the local authorities. It can be assumed that local governments saw the opportunity to obtain additional funds and decided to make an effort to create the previously-unknown structures of the local partnership. Definitely, an important motivation for such actions was the external funds that could be allocated for the local development support activities. Such an approach assumes that local governments tried to treat the LAG as an “own” instrument to promote local development, fuelled by additional external financial support. Following this line, the introduction of a number of safeguards in the form of the LAG partnerships seems to be justified. They were designed on both EU (EC no 1698/2005) and national level legal acts (Dz. U. 2007, no 64, pos. 427) to protect multi-sectoral partnerships against the domination of the public sector (for example in the form of mandatory quotas in the bodies of the LAG).

However, a closer examination of the LAGs establishment conditions, the way they were carrying out activities identified in the Local Development Strategy and the current functioning of the LAGs’ offices, shows that, in practice, without the support of local governments this type of multi-sectoral partnerships – in most of the cases in Podkarpackie region – would not have come into being at all. One of the most difficult obstacles was the excessive formalization, which meant that even active members of the local community were not always able to properly prepare the documents necessary to establish a LAG with proper legal form (See more: EC no 1698/2005; Dz. U. 2007, no. 64, pos. 427) as well as the strategic document (Local Development Strategy) that would be the basis for the actions taken. The crucial problem for all LAGs was the lack of funds for their current functioning (including LAGs’ offices operating, employees’ compensations), due to the refinancing instead of advance system of support from the Rural Development Program 2007–2013. These problems, are not related only to the LAGs based in Podkarpackie region, but were indicated by all LAGs operating in Poland (Ocena…, 2012).

The analysis of the particular LAGs in Podkarpackie region revealed the differences in the partnerships initiating process. For some groups, such as LAG Dolina Sanu, LAG Liwocz or LAG Serce Roztocza, the surveyed members did not have a doubt as to who had initiated the partnership and all pointed to the representatives of the local governments. In the cases of 14 LAGs from Podkarpackie region, more than 80% of their members indicated the local government as the initiator of the partnership. For the rest of the LAGs indications on this issue are distributed rather evenly. However, it seems to be interesting that the group of the partnerships whose members do not know

### Table 1
The structure of the LAGs’ membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of entity in the partnership structure</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-governmental organization (association, foundation)</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of local governments</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on the results of quantitative research

### Table 2
The initiators of Local Action Groups creation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who came up with the idea to establish multi-sectoral partnership in the form of LAG?</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The representative of the local government</td>
<td>74.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The representative of the non-governmental organization</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to say</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The individual</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The representative of the business sector</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on the results of quantitative research
Social & Economic Transformations Affecting Rural People and Communities in Central & Eastern Europe Since 1990

who was the initiator is significant. Complementing this information with the data from the interviews it can be concluded that the questioned persons were not members of the LAGs from the very beginning of its existence and therefore are not able to indicate the initiator. Another explanation is the active cooperation of the social partners (non-governmental organizations) and representatives of the local governments in this region, with a long tradition that exists on many levels. Consequently, members of the LAG simply could not distinguish and identify the originator of their partnership.

Another issue in the relations between local governments and LAGs based in Podkarpackie region was the most practiced way of decisions making. The observed practices confirm the leading role of the local government’s representatives in the structure of multi-sectoral partnerships. The vast majority of the questioned members pointed out voting as the principal means of decision-making. Only less than 10% indicated agreement by way of a consensus (consensus without voting) (Table 3). Certainly, voting is the easiest and fastest way to make decisions and the typical practice of public authorities. However, this distribution of responses may indicate unfamiliarity with the idea of the multi-sectoral partnership by its members. The essence of the partnership are the negotiating approach and the search for the optimal solution from the point of view of all members (Pawłowska and Kołomycew, 2013).

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the mode of decision-making?</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voting</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through a common approach (consensus without voting)</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulating manner</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otherwise</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to say</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* possibility to select more than one answer
Source: Own calculations based on the results of quantitative research

There are variations in the distribution of answers about the leading forms of decision-making among the LAGs based in Podkarpackie region. On this basis, it can be assumed that in addition to the “voting”, some LAGs actually use other ways of decision-making. Such groups can include, among others, LAG Czarnorzecko-Strzyżowska, where 75% of respondents indicated “voting” as a main way, but they felt that also “consensus without voting” is sometimes used (50% of respondents). A similar situation could be observed in LAG Lasovia, where the all members indicated that “voting” was a leading way of decision-making and in addition 25% of members admitted that also “consensus without voting” was used.

During the interviews an attempt was made to verify and complete the information given above. It should be noted, however, that it was voting that was the most commonly accepted way of decision-making. The consensus is rather used at the initial stage of the decision-making process for example, at the debate’s onset, in order to prepare a draft decision, which will then be put to the vote. The results of both quantitative and qualitative research pointed to a dim awareness of the social participation and deliberation on the local level. This observation is confirmed by the distribution of answers to another question relating to the consultation activities undertaken by the LAG. Also, in this case the solutions practiced by local governments can be noticeable. Slightly more than half of the respondents indicated that decisions related to the planned activities of the LAGs are put to the consultation. A third of respondents did not know whether this process actually took place (Table 4).

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6 In some groups, such as LAG Dolina Strugu, LAG Partnerstwo dla Ziemi Nizanskiej, LAG PROWENT significant percentage of the respondents indicated NGO as a partnership originator. But even in this cases there was strong cooperation between public and social sector. The well know example is LAG Dolina Strugu that was initiated by the Regional Agro-Industrial Society “Dolina Strugu” (Regionalne Towarzystwo Rolno-Przemysłowe “Dolina Strugu”) founded by four local governments in 1991. See more: G. Ślusarz, Przedsięwzięcia o znaczeniu strategicznym do wspólnej realizacji przez gminy mikroregionu “Dolina Strugu” wynikające z ich strategii rozwoju. In Rozwój lokalny w Dolinie Strugu, Towarzystwo Rolno-Przemysłowe Dolina Strugu, Tyczyń-Rzeszów 1998.

7 The surveyed members of LAGs could have indicated more than one way/mode of the decision-making. So the results do not add up to 100 percent.
Table 4 Consultation of the LAGs activities with the local community members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the decisions of the LAGs consulted with the local community members?</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aes</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to say</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on the results of quantitative research

The information given above was supplemented during the interviews and the results let us conclude that in practice only the obligatory issues related to the Local Development Strategies were submitted to the consultations. These issues related primarily to changing / updating indicators of the local development strategies implementation and transfer of funds from one group planned activities to the other. The vast majority of the LAGs’ members were not familiar with those matters. Therefore it can be concluded that the consultations carried out in some cases were only instrumental. They were carried out mechanically, because of the formal requirement. The fictitiousness of the consultation process was also confirmed by a nationwide report developed by the PSDB. It indicated that only 60% of all LAGs based in Poland consulted the important issues with its members (such as the criteria for assessing applications). However, in every fifth LAGs the main decisions were taken by the LAG’s bodies (Ocena..., 2012). Such methods of activities bring multi-sectoral partnerships closer to the mode of operation used by the local authorities for which consultations are also a “necessary evil”, and in practice are narrowed down to a situation where they are mandatory (Długosz and Wygnański, 2005).

It should be pointed out that in some of the LAGs based in Podkarpackie region the percentage of questioned people who indicated consultations as a commonly used tool of planning LAGs’ activities was much higher than the average for the region (for example in LAGS such as Subregion Magurski – 100%, Liwocz – 92.3%, Partnerstwo 5 Gmin – 86.7%, Kraina Sanu – 83.3%, Ziemia Przemyska – 81.3%). It is difficult to unequivocally indicate the goal and the range of the topics of the consultation in particular LAGs. Based on the information received during the interviews that they concerned only the changes of local development strategies.

The last issue argued in this paper is the relation between the creating and functioning of the multi-sectoral partnerships in the LAG formula and available financial resources. When asked about the chances of creating partnerships without external financial support, the vast majority of respondents considered that this structure would not have a chance to emerge without this support (Table 5). Nearly a quarter of the respondents had no opinion on the subject. It can therefore be assumed that the formation of the partnerships was largely motivated by the available financial resources and the desire to use them for local development. It is natural that it was the representatives of local governments that had access to the information about the support program funded by the EU in the first place, which may explain their initiating role in the partnerships’ structure.

Therefore, it can be concluded that for many partnerships (if not most of them) the bottom-up nature which should be the essence of the multi-sectoral partnerships was fictitious and the newly created entities became an additional tool for the local government’s actions. However, this pragmatic approach to the local development evidences the real local leadership which involves the use of all possibilities and opportunities to achieve the goal, which in this case was the development of a territorial unit. Knowledge, availability of financial resources, qualified staff and experiences in EU projects implementation owned by local governments naturally resulted in taking over the role of the initiator and leader of the partnerships. Analyzing the problems of partnership working as a LAG, it is important to underline that the problem was not the desire of local governments to dominate a new form of cooperation on the local level, but rather the fact that the members of the local communities, however active, were not capable of complying with all the formalities required (Kotarski, 2012). For some LAGs in Podkarpackie region all the questioned members agreed that their LAG would not have come into existence but for the external support (LAG

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8 On the basis of the interviews conducted in the period October–December 2012.
9 H. Kotarski highly assessed the quality of social capital in Podkarpackie region but pointed on its territorial differentiation. He also stressed that residents of Podkarpackie region are characterized by a rather low level of generalized social trust and involvement in the affairs of the public sphere, but a high level of confidence in the immediate environment (especially the neighborhood). See: H. Kotarski, 2012. Zróżnicowanie społeczno-ekonomiczne regionów a kapitał społeczny mieszkańców. In Region i regionalizm w socjologii i politologii, red. A. Pawłowska, Z. Rykiel, Rzeszów p. 310–312.
Dolina Sanu, LAG Dolina Wisłoki, LAG Partnerstwo 5 Gmin, LAG Partnerstwo Ziemi Niżańskiej, LAG Serce Roztocza, LAG Zmia Łańcucka). A greater optimism in this case showed the members of such groups as LAG Kraina Sanu, LAG PROWENT, LAG Siedlisko, LAG Trygon, LAG Zmia Brzozowska). In these groups, 50% (and less) of questioned members admitted that their group would not have been created without financial support.

Table 5 The relationship between the creation of partnerships and the availability of financial resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possibility of LAG creation without support from EU funds?</th>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Will LAG survive without financial support?</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard to say</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>Hard to say</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculations based on the results of quantitative research

The future of partnerships in the form of LAG seems to be uncertain. Therefore, the future role of local governments is significant. Approximately ⅓ of the questioned LAGs’ members felt that the partnership would continue to function even after the EU funds had been discontinued. Significantly more respondents (approx. 50%) did not know what the future of the partnership to which they belong would be without the external support. The most optimistic were the members of LAG CK Podkarpacie, LAG Kraina Sanu, LAG Serce Roztocza and LAG Zmia Przemyśska. Still, this is a moderate optimism, because the chances of further development of LAGs (even without EU funds) were indicated by 50–60% of the surveyed members. In the case of LAG Dolina Sanu all of the members who participated in the research felt that their partnership had no chance to survive.

However, in some groups, local governments are not waiting for the end of external support and already started to support their partnership. In addition to membership fee which is also an important source of revenue, local governments help in many ways depending on the situation and the conditions of LAG functioning and local needs (for example administrative capacitance, consulting, rental of premises and equipment, assistance in the LAG’s tax implementation). In the view of those local governments which already support LAGs, multi-sectoral partnerships in this form are so deeply rooted in the local systems that their achievements and potential cannot be wasted.

Conclusions

The role of local governments in the structure of multi-sectoral partnerships that has been presented in this paper was certainly not exhausted and did not fully reflect the substance of the relationship between the local entities concentrated in these partnerships. The issue of multi-sectoral partnerships as a core element of the concept of multi-stakeholder governance – new public governance – in the public sphere is much more complex and multi-layered. The new approach to the public governance on the local level definitely is a theoretical base for local arrangements such as networks, partnerships as preferred structures and modes of deciding about (based on consultations) and implementing established solutions for territorial development.

The growing popularity of this model of local governance, both partnerships and the issue of leadership in their structure and in local territorial systems in general take on a new meaning. Evolution of the concept of leadership, aiming to a complex and multi-actor form seems to be natural with the speed and multifaceted changes taking place in the public sphere. They generate new needs and create situations in which the individual leader is not able to cope. Nowadays we can observe a strong need of local partners to work together. Their diverse resources, experiences and possibilities can help to solve emerging problems effectively.

Undoubtedly, which was shown in the theoretical part of this paper, the model of leadership evolves from direct leadership (actions conducted directly by the leader), towards a model in which the leader is a strategist.
and coordinator of the solutions, but not anymore the direct executor of all undertaken action. The new model of leadership is certainly much more difficult to achieve. It requires extensive knowledge and strategic abilities, managerial competencies and ability to anticipate the future in order to meet emerging needs.

Do local action groups and considered in their context, local governments are moving towards a new model of local leadership? It is difficult to assess. Certainly multi-sectoral partnerships are an innovative solution on a local level and local authorities need to face them. Are partnerships in a form of the local action group a threat to the position of leadership traditionally reserved for the local authorities? It is unlikely in the near future. Partnerships in that form are currently too weak to become an independent local leader. One might think that if they are so weak, perhaps they should be dominated by local governments? It would not be a good solution because of the bottom-up nature of the multi-sectoral partnerships and social capital which was actually being built around them. The obvious limitation of the bottom-up nature of the multi-sectoral partnerships is the excessive formalization. Therefore, in order for such multi-sectoral partnerships to come into existence, the support and know-how from local governments was essential, which was what the authors were trying to prove in this paper.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the local action groups created in the Podkarpackie region have been in majority set up and existed under the structural constraints imposed by the European Union’s regulations concerning public programmes to support and sustain rural development, which were adopted by the Polish law system. Even though, theoretically, they are meant to diminish the predominance of public sector representatives in the field of local development, in practice the local action groups often turn out to be instruments of the local authorities. This situation was caused because of two main reasons so called “strategic” and “utilitarian”. Firstly, since the Polish law makes the local authorities responsible for local development, they try to fish out for and pull together all available resources within their reach, including those offered by the European Union. From this point of view, local authorities were proved to be the dominant force to initiate local action groups creation, even though – theoretically – those groups should be based on the equality of partners represented different sectors (private/economic and civil/social) and maintaining the proper balance of them in the partnership bodies. Secondly, the local authorities, just as probably all other entities involved in the public sphere, are ready to take any action to meet the necessary criteria to get access to the EU funds, including local multi-sectoral partnerships creation and building local networks – even though their future and longer-term activity might be questionable and undefined in the initial phase.

As it was evidenced by the research in Podkarpackie region, despite several years of multi-sectoral partnerships in the form of local action groups practicing, network partnerships and negotiated decision-making forms created on the local level still seem perceived as commonly unknown and not really compatible with the Polish political, administrative and civil (social) culture. The local action groups as it was researched, are not yet deeply embedded in their local communities as well as not very well recognized as a bottom-up, grass-rooted, multi-sectoral cooperative form based on the local network of social, economic and public representatives who can together decide (in the conciliation manner/way) about the future of the local development. Therefore, far from being truly participatory instrument of local development and local leader, the multi-sectoral partnerships in the worst case can turn into another instrument used by the local authorities and other interest groups wanting to secure external funds and protect particular aims. The next EU programming period of 2014–2020 will probably show the role and possibilities of multi-sectoral partnerships (in the form of local action group) in the local development whether they are real local leaders or structures completely dominated by the local authorities.

References


USTAWA z dnia 7 marca 2007 o zasadach wspierania rozwoju obszarów wiejskich z udziałem środków Europejskiego Funduszu Rozwoju Regionalnego na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich, Dz. U. 2007, no. 64, poz. 427 z późn. zm.
Introduction

Despite the fact that the German unification has brought about the most significant economic crisis and fundamental changes in living conditions for East German rural areas, "rurality" or "rural life" has not mattered much as a concept in public and political as well as scientific discourses during the 1990s. On the one hand post-socialistic transformation was perceived as a fundamental, unanimous and non-spatially differentiated process. On the other hand, in the high times of the neoliberal Zeitgeist, West Germany Agricultural Policy reframed the policy agenda from a social towards "competitive farm business" agenda.

In persona, the agricultural minister Borchert, who came into power 1993 following the Bavarian peasant Ignaz Kiechle, represented this new policy focus. Symbolically, this policy shift was reflected in the official terminology – the main policy objective was not anymore on the preservation of peasant farming ("bäuerliche Landwirtschaft"), but the support of farm entrepreneurs ("landwirtschaftliche Unternehmer").

Beyond agriculture, West Germany’s main policy addressing rural areas before the German unification had been the so-called “Zonenrandförderung” – one of these untranslatable German neologisms – which focussed on the border regions to the neighbouring socialist states, in particular alongside the German-German border. It is clear that after the German unification this policy became obsolete.

In recent years, the concept of “rural” has experienced a remarkable resurgence in the political, public as well scientific discourses. However, in this paper, it is argued that the notion of rurality is differentiated across different discourse arenas. In the following, firstly, the idea to study rurality as discourse is briefly elaborated. Then, a short summary of major social changes and development trajectories in rural East Germany is given. It is argued that the social diversity in as well of rural spaces has increased. The increasing diversity is reflected in the diversity of public and policy arenas, in which rural has become an issue. Four main rural discourse formations are outlined

Rurality as a discourse

Discourse analysis addresses the linguistic, identity and knowledge base of policy. It starts from the premise that our knowledge, discursive (speaking, writing), and non-discursive practices (that what we do) are structurally connected. Thus, discourses represent the knowledge and understanding of the reality. However, discourses not simply reflect the reality, but construct reality in the way that facts are interpreted and practices are defined and legitimised.

This paper builds primarily on a discourse analysis approach by Jäger, which is based on a Foucaultian concept of discourse. Discourse is understood as an institutionally formed practice of speaking (ibid, 82). This approach emphasises the notion in Foucault’s analysis that a discourse is both a mode of production, as well a linguistic practice. So to say, what is said is dependent on the regulated context, where and when something is and can be said. The rules of a discourse may exclude and include actors, create discursive events and define discursive forms, which regulate what can be said and how and when something has to be said. Discourse analysis is relevant not since they are expressions of interest-based social practices, rather discourses are linked with concrete actions and the exertion of power. Like Foucault, Jäger calls this interaction between discursive and non-discursive practices ‘dispositive’. A dispositive can be understood as a triangle of discursive and non-discursive practices and their reification or visibility in form of physical objects. In addition, Keller distinguishes for both discursive and non-discursive practices between practices of discourse production and practices of discourse effects. In this sense, a policy field can be understood as a dispositive that combines discursive and non-discursive practices as well their reification in form of a set of political instruments and objectives. The important consequence of this is that the totality of dispositive helps to define the boundaries of a discourse. The production of discourse can only be understood in relation to discourse effects and vice versa.
As we will see, this proposition has some important implications for the following analysis, when we look at the state of research with regard to rural discourses. Perhaps the most prominent discussion of rural discourses is that of Frouws who studied the ‘contested re-definition’ of the Dutch countryside. The context of this analysis has been the formulation of new policy plan for the design of Dutch territory (the non-discursive practice) having in mind a rurality as a concrete space that is co-produced by man and nature. Frouws distinguished three different discourses – the agri-ruralist, the utilitarian and the hedonist discourses – that all three express different propositions about current processes, relevant policy objectives and measures to be taken. His paper has been subject to major review by who scrutinised the linkage of theses rural discourses to different notions of sustainability. Both papers focus on different meanings of sustainability and rurality expressed by groups of actors within a single policy arena, that is agricultural policy and land development. In this sense, we may speak of a ‘real’ rural discourse, in the sense that the concept of rurality is the core to be defined.

However, if the introductory statement is true that rurality has not mattered much as a concept in German public, political and scientific discourses during the 1990s, then the question arises whether it is correct to speak of rural discourses. Rather, one might think of rurality as a concept, which is a discursive element of other discourses. It is also possible that the concept of rurality is linked to particular discursive positions that is the ways, how (groups of) actors are enmeshed in divers discourses and may formulate a more or less coherent world view.

At this stage, it is useful to reconsider early constructivists writings in rural research by the Belgian sociologist Marc Mormont, who at the time provided a critical review of rural sociological research arguing rurality should be considered as a ‘category of thought’. Firstly, he described rurality as a binary, dualistic conceptualisation (or framing) of the spatial organisation of society. Under some conditions the rural-urban dichotomy is a useful category to distinguish spatial diversity of social, phenomena. Historically, as Mormont argues, the prominence of the concept of rural-urban divide is related to industrialisation. However, according to this view, industrialisation processes creating the rural-urban divide are not the dominant social forces in (post-) modern societies anymore. Indeed, many rural researchers support the idea that rural-urban linkages become more divers and that rural areas are increasingly differentiated. Instead, Mormont argued further, there are multiple social movements and social projects targeting rural spaces, all of which think of rurality in different ways. Thus, we have to distinguish between processes, which take place in rural space, defined in a geographical sense, and rural as an idea and or project, which people have in mind (independently, if these projects target rural spaces in the geographical sense).

Subsequently, the concept of rurality may be a discourse or a discursive element in different public, policy and scientific discourses. It can be loaded and connected with rather different meanings and social practices. For an anti-capitalist group, the term rural can be associated with egalitarian and non-monetary modes of social organisation; for nationalists, the land may be related to ethnic symbols and cultural roots and serve as a paramilitary training ground; and for liberals, the term rural may be a refuge for individual freedom and protection from state control, and, of course, negative associations of the rural are possible as province, culturally backwardness and so forth. Finally, discourses and different discourse positions may make use of, but also can ignore this concept in expressing its view.

Thus, the re-emergence and growing popularity of rurality as political and public concept primarily means that public and policy issues are framed in form of an urban-rural divide. If Mormont’s view, that industrialisation processes creating the rural-urban divide are not the dominant social forces in (post-) modern societies anymore, is correct, then, a framing in terms of an urban-rural divide is either particularistic, contingent or wrong. One can think of the agrarian rural discourse nowadays as a particularistic one, since agriculture is not anymore the dominant economic activity in rural areas, and its activities are only loosely connected to other spheres of rural life. Sometimes the urban-rural divide is not the only possible way to frame spatial diversity in a binary geographical category. An alternative, dominant spatial frame in the unified Germany is the West-East divide, and further, the South-North gap.

In the following, after a brief summary of major social changes in rural East Germany, three political and a media discourses are sketched, in which rurality has re-emerged as an important discursive element.

**Post-socialist rural change in East Germany**

This section summarises the major social changes in rural East Germany in the past two decades. More detailed descriptions have been published elsewhere. Figure 1 provides a brief overview of fundamental economic and institutional changes and processes, and the immediate and long-term outcomes they were connected with. Here, only some of many developments are mentioned.
Drivers for social change after 1990

1. The German Unification has meant a fundamental shock for the East German rural economy that was built on three pillars. An extended agricultural sector employing about 845 thousand people, and thus a large majority of people living in villages and small towns; the industrial sector, which has been established mainly in rural towns, (including the mining sector); and finally the military forces. The GDR was the region with the highest density of soldiers in the world. About 700 soldiers were allocated in East Germany about half of which are members of the Soviet Army. The peaceful withdrawal of the Soviet Army is probably the least known success story in the difficult process of German unification.

In addition, about 30 thousand so-called “border soldiers” were employed at the inner German border. Despite the fact that the Soviet Army has tried to maintain rather disconnected from locales, its sheer size – in particular in less populated areas – meant that the local labour markets were significantly impacted. All these sectors declined dramatically after the German Unification. With regard to industries, German policy tried to maintain some industrial cores, which only occasionally were situated in rural areas, such as brown coal mining in the Lusatia region south of Berlin.

2. German Unification also meant an almost complete abolishment of existing institutions. They were replaced by regulations according to West German and European law. This institutional transfer has been both a blessing – since new rules had not been found, but were quickly available – but also a curse. Since even the tiniest rule changed, the institutional knowledge of East Germans was degraded, and everyday routines were destroyed. In the face of the economic crisis this provoked additional stress for East Germans, who had to adapt and re-organise almost any aspect of everyday life. This supported a feeling of being displaced in its own country for many East Germans.

However, institutional transfer has not been a process in one direction. New regulations did not work straight away, but it took some years until administrative and legal procedures started to function sufficiently. These were the high times of entrepreneurial actors in all spheres of the society, which often produced creative solutions, but also terrific failures.

3. Agricultural employment shrunk by about 80 per cent within three years after the unification. Due to high cost, the project of re-establishing family farms was started with only little enthusiasm and the main financial support
to start-up new farms stopped in 1997 (but not the financial support for existing farms in general). In the end, it has been the well-trained and well-organised managing elite of the former cooperative and state farms who successfully established most new farms or remained managers of the successors of former cooperatives. They also learnt to play the politics quickly and were able to mediate and even modify political programs as well as privatisation policies in their favour. The strongest opposition against capping of EU direct payments to the farm sector during several EU negotiations since 1999 was found in the German delegation, which was protection the interest of the large East German farms until today. Similarly, the large East German farms also managed to gain some privileges in the process of privatisation of state owned agricultural land.

4. Finally, it should not be ignored that general social processes have transformed these initial changes during the last two decades. Presumably, the most important change in everyday life and the economy is the rapidly growing availability and relevance of information and communication technologies. One has to recall that according to the official statistics in 1990, only 17.2 per cent of all GDR households had an own telephone connection. Today, despite East German regions are still lagging behind, more than 90 per cent of all households have a telephone, mobile phone(s) and/or internet access (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2014).

Immediate impacts

1. The economic shock in 1990 created an unprecedented labour market crisis (not only) in rural East Germany. In 1990, the East German labour force was about 6.5 million people. German policies tried to mediate the social consequences of this crisis by expanding early retirement measures to an extent that almost all (a total number of about 800 thousand), who were at the age of 55 or more and working in a company that had to reduce staff were more or less ‘forced’ to retire. Also, a second labour market of about two million people was created to reduce unemployment, to qualify employees and support local communities, who benefited the most of these measures. However, despite all these measures unemployment skyrocketed from zero to over 25 per cent and maintained on a high level. Thus, to a great extent, the rural economy became and remains a transfer economy till date, in which local consumption is strongly dependent and influenced by unemployment aid, employment measures, and pension regulations. In the face of persistent labour market crisis labour unions outside of the public sector continued to be weak, and in particular rural labour markets remained largely unregulated. East Germany became the “Wild East”, where existing legal labour market regulations were difficult to be enforced.

2. For large parts of the young generation – for young women more than for young men – the only opportunity was to emigrate to West Germany (or even further). In face of the crisis young women postponed the birth of the first child. The impact of the combination of this behavioural change and emigration was a sharp drop of the birth rates after 1990. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the most rural federal state in East Germany, the number of born children dropped from about 23,000 in 1990 to 8,934 in 1994. It has however stabilised at a level between 12 and 13 thousand born children per year (Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden 2014b).

3. The unification process created a couple of social inequalities between West and East Germans, old and new (land) owners or employed and unemployed. The metaphors of “passive winners” and “active losers” have been used to characterise the fateful character of the individuals’ repositioning in the post-socialist order. A part of this story is that in many villages a handful of highly subsidised farmers occupied all the land, while a large share of the rural population tried to survive with low paid, and insecure jobs, and to make a living through a combination of work income, household subsistence and social welfare payments. While the downsized and increasingly efficient agricultural sector rapidly became a symbol of successful transformation, the rest of the rural economy remained a picture of misery.

4. For environmental management and nature protection the unification process and the economic crisis has meant a window of opportunity. Nature protection has been the only realistic option to make use of sudden abundance of mine reclamation land and un-used and for other civil purposes now unusable military sites. Also, environmental policies were rated highly on the public policy agenda. In May 1987, a few years before unification, Klaus Töpfer became the first Minister for Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety for West and later unified Germany, who later became the Executive Director for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). At the same time, Environmental Policy started to become a core policy area for the European Union in the forefront of the Earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. In the early years after the unification, many National Parks, areas for nature protection and biosphere reservations were newly established or extended in rural East Germany. Agricultural decline reduced pressure on marginal land, and offered opportunities for extensive
farming, re-naturation and, in particular, the restoration of fenland. The formerly fenced German-German border turned into a new “green belt” right in the centre of the unified Germany, and in 1996 the wolves celebrated a highly symbolic as well as controversial return to Germany on a military training site in Upper Lusatia. Since the wolves population has quickly grown in a countryside, which in the last century has been continuously violated for brown coal extraction and military purposes.

**Long term outcomes**

After more than 20 years, the institutional, natural and spatial conditions have increasingly differentiated the East German countryside. Economic development trajectories differ between Western regions, which are closer to West Germany, and Eastern parts at the Polish and Czech border, regions with potentials for intensive agriculture and less favoured areas, regions with high tourist potentials or post-mining landscapes, rural areas close to main motorways and agglomerations, and poorly accessible regions. The federal states have followed different economic strategies, and the public money for economic restructuring and investments into public infrastructure was also unevenly allocated.

The agricultural sector has turned into a high-tech, low labour intensive industry that only contributes a small share to the rural economy both with regard to GDP as well as employment. Most rural regions have rapidly turned into a low-paid service economy. Where tourism potentials existed tourism has become the main employer. Well-paid industrial jobs are rare.

The continuing labour market crisis has been the basis for high level of net emigration from most rural areas. Between 1991 and 2011, the five new East German Länder Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pommerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia lost almost 2 million inhabitants, which is about 15 per cent of the population. Only in the state of Brandenburg, which surrounds Berlin was the population loss considerably lower, since it benefits from Berlin’s urban sprawl.

Since migration is stratified with regard to age structures, this net migration in combination with the low birth rates, and an extended life expectancy, have contributed to a rapidly aging society. On average, East German rural areas are more negatively affected by population decline and ageing. This has triggered a debate about future provision of public services, but also about the availability of qualified labour force. At the centre of the debate are health services, since on the one hand ageing – and in particular, the rapidly growing share of the very old – is expected to increase the demand for health services, and at the same time the available qualified labour force appears to shrink and the attractiveness to work and life in remote areas is decreasing. This is reflected in the symbolic debate about succession problems of “Land Doctors” in the countryside.

Beyond the changing demography, the social stratification in rural areas has changed significantly. New (non-agrarian) middle classes, mostly employed in the service sector, emerged. Multi-locality is a widespread way of living, both of rural people temporarily or continuously working elsewhere in urban areas, in West Germany or even abroad, as well as urban dwellers maintaining a second home even in the remotest most remote parts of the countryside. Often, these forms of living provide the basis for people that decide to start a new business in the countryside as individuals or in cooperation with others. These actors have often acted as innovators and have been discussed as “Rural Pioneers.” Long-term unemployment also contributed to a social disembedding by large parts of the population. These socially excluded have been attributed as the “superfluous”.

**Agro-Nature Discourse**

During the 1990s, Germany society and German politics were preoccupied with issues such high unemployment, the increasing state deficit and the changing role of a unified Germany in a changing world order. Whereas environmental problems had encouraged the debated about the direction of farming in the 1980s, the rural became a subordinated political concept. Here, I want to focus on findings, which were addressed by the research group "AgChange", led by Peter Feindt. This group studied agricultural policies in Germany as a contested discursive field. According to their analysis, two types of framings structure the discursive field of agricultural policy: the nature view and the political ideology. With regard to the nature view the authors identified a polarity reaching from, a focus of nature as a place of belonging, countryside and ecology, on the one hand, to, a perception of nature as resource on the other hand. Similarly, political ideologies are described as being polarized between an egalitarian view on the one end, focussing on the social integration of agriculture, and a market liberal, competitive paradigm.
The authors have identified four different political paradigms: “Agricultural in need of protection”, “multifunctional agriculture”, “competitive agriculture” and “globalised agriculture” (ibid, pp. 289). All these models differed with regard to the nature view as well as with regard to the political ideology (see figure 2).

(1) The “Agricultural in need of protection” paradigm may be understood as the old political paradigm, which calls for the state to protect agriculture for market forces and market failure. Protection is part of a social contract to ensure the productive function of agriculture, the provision of safe and affordable food.

(2) The “Competitive Agriculture” paradigm may be understood as the opposite political model to the first paradigm, which sees subsidies as inefficient, and focuses on state failure rather than market failure.

(3) The “Globalised Agriculture” focuses on the protection of consumers rather than on agricultural producers. Market failure may occur due to information asymmetries between producers, retailers and consumers, and the concentration of market power.

(4) The “Multifunctional Agriculture” paradigm is paying particular attention to the multiple production and ecosystem services connected with agricultural production.

The concept of rurality is only relevant in paradigms (1) and (4), in which rural livelihoods are explicitly mentioned. However, both paradigms differ with regard to the beneficiaries and the nature view. While the “Agricultural in need of protection” paradigm sees the farming community as the main beneficiary and focuses primarily on the production function of agricultural, the “Multifunctional Agriculture” paradigm also addresses the interests on non-agricultural actors and emphasises more strongly the non-productive, environmental services functions of farming.

For the other two paradigms “rural” is not a relevant concept. Thus, the disappearance of “rurality” as guiding political concept during the 1990 may be seen in connection with the domination of the (neo-liberal) “Competitive Agricultural” paradigm during this period. Thus, today agricultural policy is not rural policy per se, since the dominating political discourse refers to a delocalized vision of a high-tech agriculture, for which the local context socially as well as environmentally is mainly perceived as constraint.

Thus, it is not surprising that agriculture has increasingly become the object of public protest even in the poorest and remote parts of rural East Germany. The main topics are currently the animal welfare and mass production, land grabbing and the “maizing” of arable land, due to the intensification of biogas production and intensive cattle breeding.

The analysis of conflict structures often points to two discursive positions. One, which focuses on economic pressure and calls for producers’ economic freedom, and the other, which challenges the “industrialization of agriculture” and...
emphasises the localized nature of farming, negative externalities of agricultural production and calls for alternative agricultural model, where farming is integrated in rural development, and a focus quality of rural life.

**Demographisation of the Rural**

The policy field of spatial planning in Germany is institutionalised in very specific manner. Spatial planning is at first a task of the regional states (the Länder). However, the federation is responsible for infrastructure of national importance, coordination and also convergence. According to the German Basic Law the "Federation shall have the right to legislate (...) if and to the extent that the establishment of equivalent living conditions throughout the federal territory or the maintenance of legal or economic unity renders federal regulation necessary in the national interest" (Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, Art. 72 (2).

This objective shapes spatial policies in several ways:

1. It functions as guiding principle for German system of spatial planning (Raumordnung), which foresees the cooperation between federation and the Länder for the establishment of spatial plans for all relevant spatial developments. These spatial plans are the main instruments to coordinate regional infrastructure developments between the states, and to shape the activities of the autonomous self-governing municipalities.

2. Spatial planning has a strong focus both on uneven economic development, but also on the provision of equivalent public services ("Daseinsvorsorge").

3. Generally, the federation is not allowed to finance tasks of the Länder or municipalities. Thus, since 1967 the constitution defines the joint task for the improvement of regional economic structures as legal basis through which the federal government is allowed to co-finance investments in business relevant infrastructures or to support regional development. Currently, financial support is allocated on the basis of the concept of "structural weakness", which is defined on the basis of income and employment indicators. According to this definition in the current financing period all of East Germany and a few West German regions are target areas for measures financed through this joint task.

In 2006 a special issue of the journal “Politik und Zeitgeschichte” was published titled “Ländlicher Raum” (Rural Areas), in which the authors tried to send a common dramatic message: the rural, even further, the rural crisis is back! This publication is particularly noteworthy, since this journal is issued as an insert to the newspaper “Das Parlament” which is distributed by the German Federal Parliament. Thus, it is highly recognized in the political process.

This publication has been remarkable also for some further reasons. It marked a return of a dichotomous urban-rural framing of spatial developments, which seemed to have vanished out of the spatial planning debate. In two conceptual papers the authors discussed this dichotomy referring to a center-periphery approach, arguing that society is spatially more or less hierarchically ordered, and that the concentration of power is increasing. The message is that rural areas are subject to a process of peripherisation, which is understood as an incremental weakening and/or disconnection of socio-spatial developments from dominant centralization processes. Despite the fact that the authors say that urban areas may also be subject of peripherisation processes, the provided evidence and the underlying message is clear: rural areas appear generally to be subjects of peripherisation processes. In a dramatic account a further paper even diagnoses the collapse of the rural society.

The special issue is also remarkable with regard to another aspect. While the authors refer mostly to empirical evidence generated in rural East Germany (in particular the North East of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) the conclusions are drawn for rural areas in general. Notwithstanding, if this is generalization is appropriate, the centre-periphery/urban-rural framing can be seen in another context, which is the end of the post-socialist transformation discourse in East Germany. In the light of this shift, the formerly dominating East-West divide is continuously replaced by other discourses. The political agenda is shifting from a perspective of catch-up modernization process in East Germany to a more general view on uneven spatial development. The East German rural crisis is not anymore linked with post-socialist transition, but spearheading a new, general phenomenon – the peripherisation of rural spaces. Indeed, the terms "transformation" and "post-socialism" do not even appear anymore as concepts to explain the uneven spatial development.

The drivers for this newly emerging discourse on spatial inequalities at the beginning of the new century are in two fold. One the hand it is the vain endeavour to close the development gap between West and East Germany. It has become apparent that the historically unparalleled attempt to rebuild East Germany infrastructure and to force the
economic recovery by transferring an incredible amount of estimate 1.2 trillion € between 1990 and 2010 (Blum et al., 2010) will – despite huge progress – eventually fail to completely close the gap.

The general economic downturn in Germany around the year 2000, and the rapidly increasing state deficit, combined with the perception of an increasing underinvestment in West German infrastructure triggered a debate, how much conversion can be afforded and how much inequality is justifiable? In Germany, since, as mentioned earlier, providing equivalent living conditions is a constitutional state objective, this is a sensitive issue. In face of the state budget constraints, this political consensus was questioned, when a study about the demographic consequences suggested, that there would be a growing consensus that it would be almost impossible to maintain a sufficient public infrastructure in remote rural regions.

Barlösius and Neu have called this demographisation, a kind of discourse, which directly links development potentials with demographic projections. According to this discourse rural decline appears inevitable since the trajectories of population change are based on fundamental long term changes, which cannot be easily changed. Thus, since this demographisation discourse neglects the action spaces and room to manoeuvre, it has come about as a justification not to act and even to withdraw public support (ibid, p. 88).

The counter-discourse to the (neo-liberal) demographisation discourse may be called “Land Innovation”, which stresses the potential of local communities to act, and calls for the development of new ideas, instruments and policy support for rural communities.

The Energy Turn and New Rural Infrastructure Discourses

In 2000, the governing red-green coalition decided to boost the renewable energy sector. The new Renewable-Energy-Law substantially increased feed-in tariffs for energy from solar, water, biomass or geothermic sources. This measure in conjunction with additional support for energy saving and research as well as Development provided the basis for a rapid increase of energy production based on renewables. Since, the share of renewable energy has increased from just over 6 per cent in 2000 to over 22 per cent of total electricity production at the beginning of 2012.

The major project of the “Energiewende” (energy turn) as Conrad Kunze puts it “begins in the countryside”. It is a major project – to use Hilary Tovey’s terminology – acting “on” the rural. However, traditional rural images played a significant role in the political discourse. The most prominent image has been the energy village, a vision of energy autarkic rural communities. A second image is the return of the productivist model of agriculture turning the farmer into energy farmers (“vom Landwirt zum Energiewirt”).

The "Energiewende" has been a rather technical project. So, it took some time to realise that. Despite broad public support, the social realities in rural areas created many obstacles, and social as well as ecological outcomes have been sometimes at least ambiguous. Suddenly, the engineers of the “Energiewende” had to realise a new – essential rural sociological knowlege – that the social rather than the technical complexities in rural areas determine the progress as well the outcomes of this restructuring process.

1. Small communities often lack capacities to act collectively, and social capital has to be created to set up models of community energy like the bioenergy villages. These energy models have to be embedded in heterogeneous social contexts and are shaped by social conditions (e.g. ownership structures) and communication processes.

2. The energy farmer has quickly been confronted with increasing scepticism both in the public as well in the farming community itself (“food or fuel” debate), protest against increasing negative externalities (in particular the increasing maize production “Vermaisung”).

3. Many new energy plants, in particular windmills, have been confronted with strong local opposition. This stubborn rural response has quickly been defamed as a general unwillingness of new rural middle classes (“not in my backyard”, NIMBY) opposing any type of change. It is only recently that a more differentiated picture is evolving, which takes local actors’ concerns more seriously and acknowledges the relevance of planning procedures as well as distributive effects of such plants for its acceptance. Often energy plants are perceived as unfair, since the profits are shared only by the investors, while the costs such as a changing landscapes, loss of property values and lower income from tourism are shared by many.

The “Energiewende” is an on-going project. According to the energy concept of the current German government, by 2050 renewable energy shall contribute about 80 per cent of the gross electricity production. Even if increasing energy efficiency is taken into consideration, it is apparent that this project will significantly shape and restructure rural areas in
the years to come. Beside the construction of even more and bigger energy plants, the energy grid has to be reconstructed and new lines must be built to transport energy from the new energy production sites to the urban centres.

Thus, in this discursive field, the main issues are local acceptance and planning procedures. While the perception of the "stubborn" or NIMBY rural is close to a political agenda that is looking for fast track, top-down planning procedures, in which not too much effort is spent in endless participatory process, the alternative village and rural cooperation view is calling for even more and better participation.

Rural Idyll

Earlier this year media analysts were stunned about an “unbroken success” of the printed magazine “Landlust”, which is celebrating a rural image and a rural lifestyle, which seems to be aesthetic, problem free and peaceful. It is not so much the existence of this update variant of the rural idyll, which is surprising, but its quantitative success. “Landlust” has increased its sales within 8 years from zero to over 1 million copies. In 2012, it sold more copies than the famous political weekly magazine “DER SPIEGEL”. This increase is taking place in a market environment that is suffering from declining circulations and reporting closures of magazine titles as well as printing houses.

Beyond its own success, “Landlust” created a market niche for epigones such that the total market has already increase far beyond 1.5 million sold copies per edition with 4 to 5 million readers. At the same time, other regional media formats like the NDR – a regional television programme provider – production “Landpartie” attract great interest too.

According to media analysts the readers of Landlust are mostly middle class and with up to 75% women. Almost 80% of the Landlust readers own or have access to a garden. They rate good food, gardening and wellness significantly higher than the average of the population. Part of the success of these new “Land” oriented printed and TV media formats construct a counter position to technology, by focussing on deceleration, enjoyment and wellness. On the other hand, it appears to be an upgrade of what used to be the “family” or “Landfrau” pages at the end of the weekly farmers’ magazine. Thus, it does not seem to be very much of a surprise that “Landlust” is published by the Landwirtschaftsverlag Münster, a publisher owned by the farming community, which specialises on specialists books, weekly newspapers and monthly magazines for farmers and also hunters.

Discussion

In this paper it has been argued that concept of rurality has experienced a remarkable resurgence in the political, public as well scientific discourses. However, the revival of rurality does not seem to constitute a single discourse, rather rurality has become a discursive element in different discourse fields and policy arenas.

In the agriculture-nature discourse field rurality is an element of particular discourse positions, which seek to re-localise agriculture, and highlight its ecological and social, local embeddedness. It is of little relevance in those discursive positions that are built on a perception of nature as resource and favour market-oriented solutions.

In the field of spatial planning with regard to public services the re-emergence of a notion of urban-rural divide appears to be part of wider process, in which the uneven spatial development is not anymore framed according the historical East vs. West /post-socialist vs. capitalist. Thus, the reasons why rural East German are not picking up economically are not anymore seen in different historical paths. Instead, they are seen in general processes of peripherisation. Since this peripherisation processes are continuing the worst scenarios studied in rural East German seem not to be an expressions of a post-socialist tragedy anymore. Rather, it seems to spearheading a trend, which will eventually reach many other rural areas, too. The demographisation discourse is a special variant of this view, basically arguing that the development potentials of remote rural areas will be substantially reduced by population decline and ageing. Approaches to develop and even to service such areas are futile, and subsequently a planned regression is required.

The major German project of the “Energiewende” has had and will further have a substantial impact on many rural areas. Notions of rurality are available in two main discourses about the involvement of rural actors in these processes. The first, the community energy discourse is strongly referring to rurality in the sense of a classical Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft dichotomy and seeking to build on and revitalise, but at the same time modernise presumably “traditional rural” actors and images such as villages, farmers and co-operatives. The second, the “stubborn” or "NIMBY rurality
discourse sees rural actors more as a hindrance to "Energiewende" and calls for less participation and favours of fast-track planning procedures.

Finally, the new idyllic "Landlust" public media discourse stylises rurality as an almost problem and work free zone and way of living centred around home, quality food, gardening and a specific new rural chic.

The notions of rurality are not independent form each other. However, they do not form a coherent worldview. Thus, this fragmentation of rural discourses reflects the increasingly hybrid reconstitution of the global countryside, in which heterogeneous entities are aligned in a variety of ways. Paradoxically, the notions of rurality do not reflect this hybridity, but they mostly seem to remain in traditional ways of thinking and largely draw on widespread rural images of village, peasantry, cooperation and natural beauty.

The resurgence of rurality in public debates is also an expression of a progressing German integration, in which the East-West divide and the narrative of post-socialist transformation are more and more replaced by new political agendas and new framings of problems and causal relations.

References


International Migration for Work Consequences on Rural Families Remained Home
(The Case of Romania)

Ágnes Neményi, Kinga Gál J.

Abstract
The study is analyzing the consequences of international migration for work on families remained home in a Romanian rural sample. There were identified five types of effects: financial, on spouse relation, on children, on old members and on number and composition of population. The most important are the financial effects, but there are invisible side effects, as deterioration of spouse's relations, diminution of parents' rolls for children. There is a reevaluation of importance of old family members, they are key social links between migrants and remained family members.

Key words: migration for work, micro-and macrosocial consequences.

In the period 2008–2009, in an ERSTE Foundation financed project was made by the author (together with assistant Kinga Gál J.) a sociological research on a sample of migrant families living in Romanian countryside. The aim was to identify the consequences of international migration for work on rural families.

As methods of work, in the first stage were chosen three historical regions of the country, in every region a village with high rate of migrants, in the sample villages were chosen a number of families with migrants and to them was applied a questionnaire, with five topics:

I. Work abroad.
II. The family and the household.
III. Family relations in the household, future plans.
IV. Economy, land, sources of living.
V. Old family members

The three sample localities were Petrești (county Satu-Mare), Feldru (county Bistrita-Nasaud) and Vladnic (county Bacau). Why were chosen rural settlements? After the economic and social changes of 90'th, rural population became more vulnerable to became unemployed, also having a lower educational level, there were poor possibilities to obtain a job and living resources, remaining only traditional agricultural activity which couldn't generate money, only food for subsistence.

There were identified five types of consequences on families remained home:

1. Financial consequences.
2. Consequences on spouses.
3. Consequences on children.
4. Consequences on old family members.
5. Consequences on whole population.

About the sample
The sample of the population is composed by 201 rural families (households) where all have one or more migrant members. The sample population has four segments:

– Sample of asked person.
– Sample of migrants in the same family.
– Sample of aged family members.
– Sample of all family members.

Between the migrants were heads of family, spouse, children etc. (see the table 1) The table shows the rate of heads (18,6%), spouses (8,6%), and more than 60% children, because between migrants is high the rate of younger
generation. Between the sample settlements there are important differences which demonstrate differences in age composition of migrants.

Table 1 Who is working abroad from your household?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/Variable</th>
<th>Petrești</th>
<th>Feldru</th>
<th>Vladnic</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>no.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of household</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35,6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse/Husband</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20,0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>37,8</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>65,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step child</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandchild</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister/Brother</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter/Son in law</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister-in-law/Brother-in-law</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle/Aunt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About all segments of sample population a general characteristic is: low educational level, involved mainly in agricultural activities, or commuting earlier in industrial units, with high unemployment rate after the collapse of heavy industry and mining, without any financial resources of living, high number of children.

Financial consequences

The most important consequences on families were linked by remittances. How much money are sending home migrants? This is a key question, because the weight of money sent home is correlated by future plans linked by return home. Also is influenced by the type of relation between the migrant person and family members remained home. As other sources show (see Adevărul 10 June 2011, www.adevarul.ro) in a whole year Romanian migrants made 12 thousand million Euro economies, from witch remittances were only 2,8 thousand million Euro.

Some comparisons show the diminution of remittances in time, so are indicating that a high rate of migrants (60%) does not plan to return home. This is a new phenomenon, and is linked by the deterioration of economic situation of the country. But here there are also other consequences: the European crisis, offering lower number of jobs for migrants, also less paid jobs for them.

Family members remaining home need an important economic sustainment, because living in rural settlements, has low economic resources.

As former data show (see Neményi, 2009) there is a huge correlation between poverty, family size, access to land and international migration intensity, because in an other rural sample the more intense migration was present in such village, where there is higher the poverty, the families are composed by high number of members (more children), and also the access to land is restricted (there is small amount of agricultural land in the region). In that region the weight of migrational flow was three times higher than in other regions of that sample. In the present sample all families has migrants, but between the sample villages there are also differences in the intensity of migration.

Average family size level in our sample is:

- In Petrești is 3,56 persons /family (total family number 53, total family members number 189, number of migrants 90).
- In Feldru is 3,69 persons/family (total family number 88, total family members number 325, number of migrants 161).
- In Vladnic is 4,26 persons/family (total family number 60, total family members number 256, number of migrants 131).
As the data of the last Romanian census show\textsuperscript{11}, the average number of households in rural area is 3.03, but there are important differences between the ethnic groups: for Romanians 3.01, for Hungarians 2.82. We mention, in our sample, in all villages the average number of households is higher then the average rural number of persons/households. But it is important to say again, this sample is composed by only migrant families, and the high number of persons in households can be responsible for acting for international migration. Studying the data with number of persons in the household, there is a low rate of one, two and three persons, and very high (28.36%) the rate of those families with more then 5 members (the highest in Vladnic 36.67%).

Average migrant number/family is:
- In Petrești is 1.69 person/family (total family number 53, number of migrants 90).
- In Feldru is 1.82 person/family (total family number 88, number of migrants 161).
- In Vladnic is 2.18 person/family (total family number 60, number of migrants 131).

So, there is a positive correlation between the family size and number of migrants, with the growing family size is higher the number of migrants.

Another correlation is, between the amount of agricultural land existing in the family property and the migrational potential. Those families without land or less amount than half hectare of land are migrating easier than others. 10.77% of the sample has less then half hectare of arable land, 21.54% has no land. The average size of land/household in our sample: In Petrești 1.86 ha/household, in Feldru 2.78 ha/household, in Vladnic 1.93 ha/household. But, agriculture is not so attractive mainly for young rural people, is not offering a high status, or money, so in some regions, if migrational experience is developed, more and more people try the experience of working abroad.

\textbf{Figure 1}  \hspace{1cm} Number of persons who live in the household

\textbf{Sources of living}

In a question we asked the families about sources of living. Between them one third (29.5%) constitute wages, the second source represent state pensions (21.8%), the third source are social security received for children (13.5%), the fourth source are agricultural pensions (7.7%), and sale of agricultural products (5.1%), the fifth source are social security (4.8%), and only 4.9% of the resources are recognized as money from remittances. It is important to mention the weight of those (4.2%) without any resources. The highest percent with missing of money resources was in Feldru, where 8.9% has nothing as resource for living (question nr 33).

Expenses

Our data show as well as other sources, the most important expenses made by migrant families are linked by construction or reconstruction of own dwellings. In all villages’ migrant families houses has the highest quality. On the second place were acquisition of equipment for houses, 63.7% of our sample was recognizing such expenses. 12.1% of the sample population made acquisition of agricultural land, the highest rate was in Feldru, 18.1%. In the asked population 6–7% spent money for buying agricultural machines, 4.5% spent money to start a business, 24.4% buying pc, and 41.8% to travel.

Between the consequences of migration an important may be the start of a business. In Feldru we experienced a case of a former migrant who started a business by constructing on own land a restaurant with motel after a 6 years migrational experience. Two brothers are involved in the business (one of them is working in the present time in Ireland with all family).

In the everyday expenses there are some radical changes in the migrant families, appearing new types of money spending: 20% for life insurance, 25.9% has bank loan, 17.9% spent for investments, 52.2% spent for agriculture. Remained low expenses for education 26.9%, for culture 24.9%, and was growing for pharmacies to 73%.

Related to agricultural consumption 13.9% of the sample is not producing food, 30.8% producing a quarter of household necessity, 21.4% half, 14.9% three quarter and 18.9% all products for the household.

All the households are well equipped: 89.1% have mobile-phone, 39.8% cars, (average/country is 28.6%) 92.5% refrigerator, 96% TV, 81.1% TV-cable, 76.5% washing machine, (average/country is 73.9 %) 39.8% has a pc, and 25.9% has savings.

To a hypothetical question, how plan to spend a higher amount of money, first answer was to offer them to poor people 90.5%, second answer was to give to own children 89.6%, third was to offer to the church 87.6%, the next was to own necessities 79.6%, 63.7% put in bank, 48.3% start a business and 17.4% wish to emigrate. The migrational potential was the highest in Vladnic 26.7%.

So concluding the expenses of remittances sent home, the most important expenses are:
- The family remained home receives an important financial sustainment for everyday life.
- The most important rate of remittances is used in construction of a house (home), or reconstruction of an existing home.
- Equipment buying for home.
- Start a business.
- Buy agricultural land or use money for agricultural investments.
Consequences on spouse

In our sample 72.1% are married, so all these families are confronted by problems, where distance is the most important item. The asked families recognized changes in family life, where for 37.3% these changes resulted worst situation.

Traveling abroad and staying longer period of time away, the relation between spouses is spoiling, sometimes there is a good occasion to leave the spouse. (In our sample 6.3% recognized divorce). This is a high percent in a population where for 96.5% family life is very important.
Social & Economic Transformations Affecting Rural People and Communities in Central & Eastern Europe Since 1990

Figure 5  Relation with spouse

How appreciate your relation with spouse?

Figure 6  Family harmony

How are your appreciating your family harmony comparing to the last year?

Figure 7  Opinions about people who are working abroad

Opinions about people who are working abroad

Petrești  Feldru  Valdnic  All

DA/DN  Change own thinking  Are helping those remained home  Divorce easier  Have a better financial situation
Consequences on children

There are different situations, young people accept to postpone having children.

In the case of families with children there is an important financial sustainment for children. But often parents leave children, they remain with grandparents or other relatives (or, as there were some cases, remain alone), so parent duties are missing. In a former research (www.soros.ro) there were identified changes in children comportment, suicide trial, the school performance is considerable diminished, and there are important difficulties in school activity integration.

Consequences on old family members

As in other study the authors were showing (Neményi, 2011) the international migration for work has important consequences on ageing of families remaining home.

In the situation of migration of adult children (it was 60 % in our sample), there is a reevaluation of old family members, because they help own children and grandchildren in housekeeping, they make the maintenance of grandchildren and other old or sick family members. Sometimes they are visiting family members abroad and supervise grandchildren. Those remaining home take care of household. Make agricultural activities, and with these activities are making own sustainment.

In our sample, which was choose having one or more persons being in international migration, 40.8% was represented by persons over 60 years old, this rate is higher with 10% then the corresponding average age rate in the country. So, the data demonstrate a high rate of ageing of the sample regions. In this group women's rate is higher (52.4%), then men's (47.6%), but identical rates are in the whole population.

![Figure 8](image-url)  Proportion of the sample of persons over 60 years in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/Variable</th>
<th>Petrești</th>
<th>Feldru</th>
<th>Vladnic</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asked household (nr.)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked person over 60 years (nr.)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of the sample (%)</td>
<td>28,30</td>
<td>51,14</td>
<td>36,67</td>
<td>40,80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age groups

In the population over 60 years, we made three groups: 60–70 years, the largest group (63,4%), 71–80 years (32,9%), and 81–90 years (3,7%). By marital status, half are married (51,2%), 26,8% are widows, and 22% are single. The ethnic belonging: 68,3 Romanians, 3,7% Hungarians, 15,9% Csángó, 12,2% German. By religion 47,6% are Orthodox, 45,1% Romano-Catholics, 6,1% new religion, 1,2% Greek Catholics. 80,5% of elderly has a medical assurance, but 19,5% are without. The rate of men-women is 47,6% men and 52,4% women, the gender relation of aged people is equilibrated.
Figure 9  The age of family member over 60 year in %

Figure 10  Gender of family members over 60 year in %

Figure 11  Marital status of family members over 60 year in %
Between them 8% has any living resources, 32.2% has a salary (they are economically active), 21.8% has state pension, 24.1% agricultural pension, 1.3% obtain resources selling agricultural products, 1.3% has profit from some investment. Asking by the amount of financial resources, 8% has nothing, 52.7% has less than 500 RON/month, 25.7% has between 500–800 RON, 13.5% has over 800 RON. The data show a high level of poverty of rural aged people (1 Euro = 4.21 RON).
Family role of aged members

Aged family members in high percent (75%) take care or educate grandchildren, oversee them, they take part in nursing of sick family members, 80% work in the household, 70% feeding domestic animals, 70% working in agriculture and 80% make own household governance. We can see the intensity of involvement of aged people in grandchildren's care and education, 25.6% are involved daily, 9.8% weekly, 2.4% monthly.
Social & Economic Transformations Affecting Rural People and Communities in Central & Eastern Europe Since 1990

Figure 16  In what measure do you employ overseeing your grandchild?

Figure 17  In what measure do you employ in the nursing the sick family members?

Figure 18  In what measure do you employ in helping about work around the house?
Figure 19. – In what measure do you employ in feeding the domestic animals?

Figure 20. In what measure do you employ in helping in agriculture?

Figure 21. In what measure do you employ in helping in household governance?
Consequences on whole population

International migration for work has an important contribution to population diminution, first by postponing children birth. Also we can speak about a considerable brain drain: last months thousands of doctors leaved the country. As a newspaper mentioned (Adevărul 10.06.2011, www.adevarul.ro) Romania lost 3 million people, more than in any war!

Counting the rate of those who do not return, this number is higher and higher. The population being in migration is younger then the whole population, this process is aging the remaining part.

Conclusions

International migration for work is generating important consequences on families remaining home, we identified five: financial, on spouse relations, on parent-children relation, on old family members, and on age structure of country population. In this process there is demonstrated a reevaluation of aged members of these families, they are important contact persons, or links between the remaining and migrating members of families. The study was finished in 2010, but the process of international migration for work is maintaining, as the annexes of this study show, the migrational flux is on higher level, but changing the destination countries depending by the economic situation of EU countries. From 1st of January 2014 started the liberalization of Romanian and Bulgarian citizen to 14 member states of EU which created a new situation for Romanians. In the next period we find the consequences of this new low.

Annexes

Map 1 – percent of population in migration abroad from whole population on county level
Figure 22  Age groups of migrants short term and gender

Figure 23  Age groups of migrants long term and gender
Figure 24  Percent of population in migration abroad from the whole population short term on county level

Figure 25  Percent of population in migration abroad from the whole population long term on county level
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The Population and Labour Market Flows in the Ex-Socialist Non-urban Areas of Latvia

Liga Rasnaca, Zenija Kruzmetra

Abstract
Population and labour market flows show significant changes in non-urban areas in the ex-socialist period. Latvian society has experienced intensive out migration during the last two decades, particularly after accession to the European Union (EU). Population numbers in non-urban areas around main urban centres, by contrast, are slightly increasing. The theory of space of flows could be applicable for a theoretical explanation of the inevitability of the changes in population and labour market. The authors have studied how labour market flows differ in regions and if there is an impact on population size changes around regional centres.

Key worlds: space of flows, population inflows and outflows, regional differences

Introduction
The current research interests of the authors lie in the population and labour market changes caused by remarkable social changes in non-urban territories which took place at the beginning of the 21st century and are determined by transformations in the Latvian political and economical systems and global processes. The focus of the paper is the population and labour market flows in the ex-socialist non-urban areas (population inflows and outflows, employment and unemployment).

Latvia is characterized by an intensive labor migration outwards with varying intensity during the last two decades. The situation is made more complex by the negative natural growth. Such processes mostly characterize ex-socialist Central and Eastern European countries, as opposed to Western Europe and the United States. Authors are interested in how these processes in ex-socialist countries could be explained by the space of flows theory. One of the research aims is to analyze the possible connectivity of these flows with the labour market relations in non-urban areas.

Authors’ novelty of conceptual approach manifests itself in the appraisal of the advantages of Manuels Castells’ space of flows theory for the analyses of population and labour market flows in the ex-socialist non-urban areas.

Theoretical background
The theoretical basis is the space of flows theory and its dangerous impact on non-protected areas (Castells, 2000; Marsden and Smith, 2005). American sociologist Manuels Castells' space of flows theory underlines the influence of people, capital and knowledge to the labor market relations. Castells argues that the existence of production industries in the labour market is a necessary prerequisite for the successful development of the service sector. There is a lack of protection mechanisms in non-urban areas against the dangerous influence of space of flows. This in turns threatens the maintenance of functioning local labor markets. As a result, people in non-urban areas are unprotected against the necessity of outward migration. The concept „labour market” has been used to characterize geographical areas or different segments of economics as well as an arena where an employee exchanges his/her labour for wages, status or other goods achievable by work (Kalleberg and Sorensen, 1979). There are some differences and specifics in the structural characteristics of labour market dynamics in non-urban and urban areas in ex-socialist countries. Similarly to Western European countries labour market relations in ex-socialist non-urban areas are mostly long-term as opposed to short-term as in urban areas (Doogan, 2005).

The concept „labour market flows” is generalized to describe occurrences which are studied in various fields of social science – Economics, Politics, Human Geography, the Law sciences and so on. Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines Labour market flows as Statistics on labour market describing the labour market experience of individuals over the reference period, that is, how many persons have moved into and
out of jobs and into and out of being unemployed or are outside the labour market, rather than just changes in the number of persons in these situations and in the labour force characteristics of groups (OECD, 2002). The term is close to „dynamic of labour market”, referring to „changes in jobs that take place as well as entries into and departures from economic activity affected by hiring, separations and the establishment and closure of self-employment activities” (ILO, 2002). Labour market flows could be characterised as containing in-flows and out-flows (Gottvald, 2005). The authors focus their attention only on flows, not hiring process and other activities in the labour market, so the term „labour market flows” is more appropriate. The labour market flows show increase, decrease in work places, growth and decrease of employment and unemployment. The current study concentrates attention on these changes. The particular, more detailed processes in labour market (for example professional, social mobility) are not analysed. Researchers started the analysis of labour market flows by exploring employment/unemployment statistics in sufficient period (Gottvald, 2005). Changes in the labour market relations in urban and rural areas cannot be considered separately from their previous historical development, because the opportunities of the present moment have emerged from the configuration of political, economic, social and cultural elements developed during the previous periods. Depending on past experience, “path dependency” allows to explain how individual or collective agents may adjust to a changing environment and which behavioural models may turn out to be productive (Ghezzi and Mingione, 2007). Path dependency could be an obstacle for adaptation to social, political and economic changes in an ex-socialist society. The individuals’ freedom of action is restricted by local aspects: remoteness of territory, limited availability of infrastructure, information and communication technologies and problems with human and social capital. Castells wrote that “Society shapes technology according to the needs, values, and interests of people who use the Technology”, and that the social implications of new information and communication technologies are in their interaction with social and economic structures and processes (Castells and Cardoso, 2005). The authors’ focus their attention to the contradictions of these processes are happening in different areas.

Terry Marsden, professor at the Scottish University of Aberdeen and researcher of rural development, divides three possible variations of development of European rural areas: agri-industrial, post-productivist and sustainable rural development (Marsden and Smith, 2005). Terry Marsden’s model of sustainable development relates to Castells’ theory of space of flows. Labour market relations can only be created if new labour market processes are happening (e.g. establishing of new employers, need for employees of a different qualification, knowledge and skills, change of the number of employees etc.). That is why in non-urban areas the access to the „space of flows” is essential to the sustainability of labour market.

More intensive population flows occur in peri-urban territories, where communities are non-homogeneous due to population mobility. They are made up of different groups of people who have different interests in regard to the processes of economic changes and governance (Korf and Oughton, 2006). This fact is often not taken into account in the analysis of territorial units, instead it being taken for granted that there are ideal and universal tendencies that are characteristic to all people who form communities, with no thought given to political and economic circumstances (Harvey, 1989). Giddens argues that even the least influential urban residents are social agents who take part in the local reproduction of regional, national and global social relationships (Giddens, 1984). This can fully be applied to urban residents who migrate to peri-urban territories.

Tania Ford, a researcher from the United Kingdom, has focused on increased population numbers in peri-urban territories and, in seeking explanations for this trend, has concluded that there are four identifiable processes in the increased number of residents. The process involves suburbanisation, counter-urbanisation, centripetal migration, and the selection of more attractive places of residence in the peri-urban territory (Ford, 1999).

The authors focus their attention on both population and labour market changes as well as the complexity of empirical research in these areas.

Methods

Both quantitative and qualitative social research methods were used to describe population and labour market flows in non-urban areas. The research data included published and unpublished data from the Latvian Central Statistical Bureau concerning the dynamics of population numbers, migration and employment, and materials from two surveys: data from a survey conducted by the Department of Human Geography of the University of Latvia Faculty of Geography and Earth Sciences “Residents of the Riga Agglomeration” (2007–2009) (Kruzmetra, 2011) and "Specific Problems of the Labour Market of Latvia and its Regions” (Rasnaca, L., (In the group of researchers),
Research findings: Population flows

The population of Latvia is shrinking because of both a reduction in natural growth and migration. By contrast, population numbers in non-urban areas around main urban centres are slightly increasing. The distribution of residents in Latvia is uneven and for a long time there has been a high concentration of residents in the central part of the country. During the last decades there have been social changes which have only intensified this uneven distribution of population.

The meaning of non-urban areas has changed for local residents and wider society. During the second half of the 20th century the values of people all over the world began to change and wealthier people began to seek living spaces outside of the city centres – in suburban areas, peri-urban areas and in closer or more distant rural territories. Scholars have argued that the establishment of peri-urban territories will be one of the main elements in the development of non-urban areas in the future (Caruso et al., 2001, 2011). This process leads to a new inflow of residents and, consequently, to an increase in the population numbers and substantial changes in population structures.

The authors analyzed changes in population numbers in Latvia and the areas which surround the eight largest cities of Latvia in order to assess the situation in peri-urban territory development (Figure 1). The authors analyzed data relating to the increases in population numbers, including those that can be attributed to migration.

Figure 1: Long-term net migration in non-urban areas around urban centres in Latvia, 2005–2011
Source: authors’ elaborated according data of Latvia CSB

Authors pay special attention to changes in the population composition in peri-urban areas around Riga. Respondents were divided into four groups in terms of how long they have lived in the territory:

1) Those who are born there.
2) Those who moved to the peri-urban territory of Riga prior to 1991.
3) Those who moved to the peri-urban territory of Riga between 1991 and 2000.
4) Those who moved to the peri-urban territory of Riga after 2000.

The research shows that the residents of the peri-urban territory of Riga can be divided in at least three groups:

(1) those that have arrived from Riga and other cities and towns,
(2) those coming in from rural territories,
(3) those who were born in the territory (Figure 2).
It was also important to compare the results not just in terms of the selected territories, but also in different time periods when the respondents had moved to peri-urban areas. A series of empirical studies conducted in the peri-urban and suburban zones of various Central and Eastern European cities have also confirmed that the process became more intense in the early 21st century (Brown and Schafft, 2002; Hirt, 2007; Ouredniček, 2007; Kahrik and Tammary, 2008; Letmaa, Tammaru and Anniste, 2009).

Furthermore there are fundamental differences in the reasons why people have moved if we compare the answers given by respondents who moved during the 1990s and those who did so during the first decade of the 21st century. That is why the presentation of results differentiates between those respondents who have lived at their new place of residence for more than 10 years and those who moved to the peri-urban territory since 2000. The community of newcomers was analysed on the basis of an in-depth study of the group of respondents who moved from Riga.

First, the authors compared those who have lived in the municipalities adjacent to Riga for a long time and have not moved at all with those who arrived from Riga after 2000. The research involved indicators related to demographics, socioeconomic and mobility factors.

In terms of other indicators, however, there are fundamental differences between the migrants who arrived after the year 2000 and those who have lived in the same place for more than 10 years. These indicators include age, education, income, employment, frequency of travel and types of transport. Those respondents who have moved from Riga since the year 2000 tend to be younger than those who have not moved at all, and those from Riga also are more likely to have a higher education and a higher level of income. More than 70% of the respondents who moved from Riga are employed, while only slightly more that a half of those who have lived in the peri-urban areas of Riga for a long time have permanent jobs. People migrating from Riga are more likely than others to live in private houses, which confirm the fact that the boom in the construction of private houses in local municipal territories near Riga attracted greater flows of migration from the capital city.

People who have moved to the peri-urban territories of Riga have very seldom done so because of job opportunities in the suburbs or because of structural changes in the labour market. Most respondents moved while keeping their current jobs. That is why the residents who moved to peri-urban areas from Riga are actively involved in commuting. Most of them travel to Riga every day for work purposes, and nearly all of them drive their own cars. Less than one-half of the respondents form the municipal territories that are more distant from Riga are involved in commuting, and most of them visit Riga slightly less regularly than others. This trend indicates the functional meaning of the capital city not just in terms of jobs, but also in the availability of services and of opportunities for spending their leisure time.

The authors also compared the motivations for migration between those respondents who migrated from Riga and those who came from other places. Family circumstances were mentioned most often in both groups of respondents (35.1% and 40.0%). That is a classification of motivations that can involve a number of explanations. Some moved to bring families together or to create a new family, while others had various social problems.
The second most frequently mentioned reason to migrate away from Riga is related to housing (33.9%). This confirms the presence of suburbanisation in the peri-urban areas of Riga, not least in terms of the aforementioned fact that most of those who have migrated from the capital city live in private houses. For migrants from other places, by comparison, the second most frequently mentioned motivation was work (23.6%). The third most frequently mentioned reason for moving away was living environment (16.1%). Notably, this is a very broad concept which can involve the attractiveness of the surrounding natural environment, the level of infrastructural development, or the availability of services. The overall conclusion is that the peri-urban zone is an attractive moving destination in Latvia, although there is also a need for a more in-depth analysis of various forms of population structures in these areas.

The detailed model of population flows in Riga’s peri-urban areas also reflects population flows around regional centres and small towns as employment and service centres (Kruzmetra and Rasnaca, 2007), but they are not very visible and are less intensive. These population flow studies show significant territorial regrouping of the population. The motives of migration are various and changeable.

Research findings: Labour market flows

The dynamics of population flows show the processes could be largely explained by labour market changes. Due to the political transformations at the end of 20th century the structures of national economies and sector divisions have changed. The proportion of people employed in agriculture and the industrial sector in Latvia has noticeably shrunk and many private sector employers have entered the labour market. They also make up the majority of employers today. The relations between employees and employers have not developed in an isolated market zone; instead they have been affected by the global processes (economic growth, crises, recession) and the political and economical changes after accession of Latvia in the European Union. The influence of European Union and global processes grows along with the expansion of the labour market: new employers and migrant workers are entering the Latvian labour market. Nevertheless, outwards flow dominates. It consists mostly of the workers previously employed in agriculture, industry as well as specialists in education, culture, science and health care, amongst which there are highly skilled professionals. Insufficient number of workplaces results in unemployment. The shrinking industrial and agricultural sectors could be one of factors influencing the lack of work places in Latvian labour market. The structural adjustment is an ongoing process in Latvian labour market and the formation of a new socio-economic structural composition could be observed.

Unemployment was a new phenomenon for the ex-socialist Latvian society in the end of 20th century. The new challenge for Latvia society was socio-economic crises in the first decade of 21st century. The impact of socio-economic crises (2008–2010) resulted in high two figure unemployment level (Figure 6). There are only two possibilities for those who cannot find their place in the labour market: to leave locality, region, state or find an alternative way of life (without participation in the labour market) (Figure 3). The data from various sources show the validity of authors’ preposition (approximately 15% out-migration during the last 10 years) and a high level of long-term unemployment.
and clients of Social services (CSB, 2014A). The proportion of people employed in agriculture and the industrial sector in Latvia has noticeably diminished and many private sector employers have entered the labour market, they also make up the majority of employers today (CSB, 2014B).

The number of work places has been cut during socio-economic crises, especially in trade, construction and public services (Figure 4).

Figure 4  Labour market flows: occupied work places in Latvia 2005–2012
Source: authors’ elaborated according data of Latvia CSB (CSB, 2014 A)

The evidence of Labour market shrinkage or enlargement shows the dynamics of change in the Labour market. Due to demographic changes the numbers of young people of a working age are decreasing. For the working age population most often alternative becomes marginalisation (alcohol, drugs, offending, living on parents’ means, etc.) (LM, 2013). The regional division included five NUTS 3 planning regions: Riga region, Kurzeme region, Latgale region, Vidzeme region and Zemgale region. The Riga region is urban, Kurzeme region is intermediate, but Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale regions are rural regions according Eurostat typology (Eurostat, 2014A).

The number of occupied work places was cut due to socio-economic crises in 2008–2009. The years 2011–2012 show slow improvement of the labour market situation and availability of work places, but it could be observed only in the Riga region (urban impact), not in rural areas without big cities (Figure 5).

Figure 5  Labour market flows in Latvia regions: employment 2007–2012
Source: authors’ elaborated from Latvia Statistical Bureau (CSB, 2014 B; CSB, 2014C)
Evaluating the analysis of statistical data from the perspective of Castells’ flow theory, it can be stated that across the regions the number of work places are not growing even after the end of the socio-economic crises. The differences between rural regions are statistically evident in unemployment, but not in employment level (Figure 5, Figure 6). It means that labour market outflows let to limit short term unemployment risk, but could result in long-term social consequences (aging, lack of employees etc.). The difficulties to create new work places even after “a crisis is over” could be explained as remotesness of rural regions. The remoteness means lack of resources provided through flows. The tendency to give preference to long-term labour market relations could influence possibility to create short-term work places in rural regions. It could be interpret as social inertia in non-urban labour market or as the problems of the labour market structure in non-urban areas. It means facing a higher instability – risks in the labour market of small towns and rural territories where fewer industries are represented, and opportunity – for both employers and employees.

![Figure 6 Labour market flows in Latvia regions: unemployment 2007–2013](source: authors' elaborated according Latvia Employment State agency data (ESA, 2014))

The registered unemployment rate in Latvia in July 2013 was 9.5%. It is rather high, even taking into account that unemployment according the Labour market survey is higher (12%) according to data from Eurostat (Eurostat, 2014B). The changes in unemployment level after crises and invariable number of work places draw attention to authors’ preposition (Figure 3) about out-migration or inactivity/marginalization of employees in case of long-term unemployment or even threat of long-term unemployment.

The ex-socialist features of population in non-urban areas are expressed as nostalgia for large industrial type enterprises that would employ a large number of the local population. This is often illustrated by the interviews with municipality chairpersons. This nostalgia can create a barrier for involvement of new forms of employment and encouragement outflows of non-urban population. The results of case studies show the division of responsibility in economy that has been inherited from the socialistic system of management and is difficult to be changed, the lack of integration and coordination between industry monitoring institutions does not allow implementing entrepreneurship supporting strategies. To a certain extent “path dependency” is expressed at the level of organised structures, which can be associated with the neo-institutionalism theory. The role of regional centres as nodes of employment possibilities in non-urban labour market was vaguely marked by employers and municipality chairpersons in some case studies. The possibility for regional centres to become employment providers for surrounding area are limited by level of salaries and poorly provided public transport in non-urban areas. The service sector development (major increase of employment in urban areas) is limited by weak action of space of flows as technological and administrative power in non-urban regions due to remoteness and specific features of localities. The analysis of the labour market shows differences in employment and unemployment flows in urban and non-urban areas. Empirical analysis of regional labour relations differences validates the preposition of influencing area factors on labour market flows.
Conclusions

The detailed model of population flows in Riga’s peri-urban areas is evident. It reflects population flows around regional centres and also small towns as employment and service centres, but it is not so visible. This population flows study show significant territorial regrouping of the population. The dangerous influence of flows varied in different territorial scale. The impact of flows depends also on social adjustment, not only infrastructure, territorial remoteness.

Current occupational structure is disadvantageous for socio-economic non-urban development. Weakness of non-urban labour market stimulates multi-step population outflows. The possibilities of labour market flows act against development in non-urban areas in ex-socialist Latvia. The industrial adjustment is necessary. Disadvantaged occupational structure could be compensating by the accessibility to urban centres. Space of financial, technological, administration etc. flows do not cover remote non-urban areas and create new outflows. The distant power of flows acts as dangerous force, emptying non-urban areas.

The migration flows model could be applied to non-urban areas around urban centres of different scales. It related with Castells’ theory which pointed the significance of urban centres (as employment and service centres) as nodes of flows. Mardsen’s theory lets to explain path dependency of people’s activity in remote non-urban ex-socialist areas: as lack of capability to resist the dangerous influence of space of flows. Therefore long term unemployment and depopulation is growing in these regions. The rural areas are in unfavourable situation even after crisis is over. There are differences in social patterns how people join outflows in rural regions.

It is important for future to study experience of population and labour market flows in non-urban areas in other ex-socialist societies as well as strategies of the individual and collective, public and private agents capable to resist the dangerous power of flows to prevent empty space, depopulation and facilitate sustainability.

References


Rural Restructuring and the Role of Agriculture in Rural Areas of Hungary after Post-Socialist Transformation

Krisztián Ritter, Virág Szabó, Kinga Nagyné Pércsi

Abstract
In the last decades significant changes and increasing territorial differentiation could be observed in the rural areas of the European Union. One of the most important elements of the changes is the strengthening and changing of the expression rural. Another element is the general problems of the rural areas often caused by the decreasing importance of agriculture in employment. In the first part of this study we show the most important elements of the agricultural and rural change emphasizing the effects of agricultural unemployment in Hungary after the 1990s. The long-term strategic objectives of the EU Rural Development Policy in the 2014–2020 programming period are as follows: the competitiveness of agriculture, the sustainable management of natural resources and the balanced territorial development. In this strategy agriculture remains key element as solution for rural problems. Relating to the above mentioned in our primary research we tried to analyze the potential of agriculture in employment enlargement of rural areas. In cooperation with four villages of Nógrád county Hungary, a survey was carried out in summer of 2012 questioning the local population about their economic and social conditions, the situation of the local communities and their development ideas, with special focus on the role and potentials of agriculture. Analyzing the role of agriculture in employment based on literature and summing up our research findings, as main conclusion the key role of agriculture solving rural problems have to be emphasized in the new rural policy indeed, especially in the following topics: the social functions of traditional agriculture based on local resources, the strengthening of viable farms, the increasing importance of diversification and the labor-intensive products with high added-value.

Keywords: Agriculture, Employment, Rural Development

Introduction
In the last decades significant changes and increasing territorial differentiation could be observed in the rural areas of developed countries, firstly in Western Europe, but – parallel with the political and economical transformations in Eastern-European Countries – all over the European Union (EU). These changes have been accelerated by the unequal expansion of economical and social effects of the globalization that affect rural areas and settlements, their development and local economy differentially (see Byrden and Hart, 2004).

Rural Restructuring
One of the most important elements of the changes is the strengthening and changing of the expression rural, since it has meant a totally different and new dimension for the society and the economy in the developed countries for a while. It has been shown by the suburbanization, by the re-evaluating of natural resources, by the economic development of a certain part of the countryside (the so called new rurality – see Granberg et al., 2001) etc. In addition, as the major place of the raw material production in agriculture and food industry, rural areas play important role in the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as well. For a long time, rurality has been defined by the predominance of agriculture in the economic activity, in the social and environmental context and in the ethic values of an area. Now, the transformation made in the European economy and the wide distribution of industry and services in the territory have profoundly modified the rural dimension, resulting in growing integration between city and countryside.

In spite of the above mentioned, general problems of the rural areas – mainly caused by the fact that the importance of agriculture has gradually decreasing in the employment – cannot be ignored (e.g. depopulation, fewer employment

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12 In this paper – similar to the general approach in the EU – the term is used according to the modified original OECD typology (OECD 1994) based on population density and grid cell system (see EC 2010).
opportunities, increasing social burdens, accessibility to the basic services etc.) (see e.g. EC, 2008; EC, 2012a; SERA, 2006).

Although declining agricultural employment is a general tendency in developed countries, it has no the same effects everywhere because of the special characteristics of territorial structure. Negative tendencies hit more rural areas with traditional agriculture, lower skilled and ageing human resources, lack of bigger cities, and with unfavourable accessibility, especially in post-communist Eastern-European Countries, where globalization – the territorial aspects of economic and social processes following the political transition – has many times increased negative impacts (EBRD, 1999 and 2002; SERA, 2006).

Without introducing the discourse or the different interpretations of the globalization, this paper aims to underline just the most important and generally agreed consequences that especially affect rural areas. One of them is the emerging importance of territorial competitiveness. In literature the often – and according to Bristow (2005) mainly in economic context – used term of competitiveness means indeed the ability of accommodation to the rapidly changing global economic and social circumstances (Lengyel 2003). This ability has a very strong influence on territorial inequalities.

Videlicet rapid changes in the international economy confront rural regions with some obvious threats but also with significant opportunities. These changes include globalization, improved communications and reduced transportation costs, changing trade patterns for commodities, and the emergence of important non-farm activities in rural regions. Globalization, increased accessibility (development of transportation infrastructure and ICT) and new migration patterns are offering new opportunities for rural areas to develop. In many rural areas the diffusion of clusters, as seen in food processing activity or in other industries, has played an important role in improving the economic performance of the area. Moreover, thanks to the improvement in transport links, a large number of rural regions have been able to take advantage of some emerging elements that increase their economic and social performance; this is the case of some rural areas that have been able to respond to the new demand for services, such as clean environment, attractive landscapes and cultural heritage (OECD, 2006).

The assets of rural regions and improved transport links and infrastructure can serve to retain or attract people and businesses. The infrastructure helps reduce factor costs for businesses. Therefore in the past twenty years many rural areas have shown an increasing capacity to attract permanent investment. As a consequence, many rural regions have experienced positive employment growth rates\(^{13}\) in industrial and service sectors (and parallel a loss of agricultural jobs).

Localization parallel with globalization is an important factor as well, advancing local values and endogenous resources of the countryside (Moseley, 2003). So a large number of successful rural regions have been able to valorize public or quasi-public goods such as a clean environment, attractive landscapes and cultural heritage (including food). It raised the demand of residential houses and commuting which have played an important role in changing the economic and social aspects of many rural areas. Easier commuting across longer distances has expanded the sphere of influence of major urban areas enabling people to live in rural regions while working in cities.

Rural assets such as quality of life and environment, natural heritage and other amenities are also more in demand and constitute real attributes that attract investment and workers as well. All these factors have contributed to a partial reversal of the trend of rural out-migration in many rural areas in countries such as France, the UK and Italy and also in some of the EU's post-socialist Member States, such as Poland and Hungary (OECD, 2006).

The positive perspective on globalization highlights the increasing post-productivist countryside by the economic and social changes (Ilbery and Bowler, 1998), growing social demand on the new functions of the space (for example tourism, recreation, environment functions etc. see Marsden, 1995), expansion of services, industry and technology, and integration of new rural economy into the regional, national and international economies (Clout, 1993). However, as these changes are strongly related to improved transport links that make investment, recreation and residential location in rural areas increasingly feasible, growth tends thus to be concentrated on the more accessible rural regions.

While positive effects could be realized in accessible rural areas, countryside in general terms shows considerable heterogeneity and differentiation (Byrden and Hart, 2004; EC, 2012a). Globalization has escalated competition, as

\(^{13}\) Before the economic crisis began in 2008 – based on SEGIRA (2010) – from the mid 1990s, both GDP/capita and the employment rate in EU's rural regions had shown a positive trend, and the growth of GDP/capita in rural regions had been higher than in urban regions since 2001, due to a strong growth in New Member States especially from 2006 onwards.
it has brought competitors at international level close to or into local markets sweeping away former geographical, identity-based community borders that had defended the local products, industry and cultural traditions of rural areas earlier. Meanwhile new technologies and intensive production have been crowding out manpower from labour-market, especially in case of agriculture. According to Kulcsár and Brown (2005) modernization accompanied by globalization changes the rural social structure as well. It coincides with other opinions in literature where negative perspective on globalization highlights mainly the social aspects, especially from the rural point of view: e.g. cultural homogenization (Fiss and Hirsch, 2005), vulnerability of local societies (Kirby, 2006), the risk of poverty and social exclusion, and increasing inequality (EC, 2008; Wade, 2003).

Rural areas tend to show a weaker economic performance and face significant challenges in comparison to other regions in OECD countries and in EU as well. The problems stem, in general, from a declining and ageing population and from distance to markets and services. These characteristics have an impact on enterprise dynamism and job creation, on the accessibility and quality of educational and other public service resources, on the quality and density of infrastructure, and so on. This factors can interact to generate what has been called the circle of decline (Figure 1) for rural areas (EC 2008, OECD 2006).

![Circle of declining rural regions](Source: OECD, 2006)

Actually, the problems of rural areas in the field of demography, remoteness, education and labor market may generate their own circles, and may interact, reproduce and amplify the phenomenon of poverty of rural areas. The labor market circle starts with poor labor market opportunities of many rural areas, which force many qualified people to migrate and thus worsen the quality of the local labor force; a low-skilled labor force is a disincentive for investment by domestic or foreign firms in the area; the consequence is a further deterioration of labor market situation. This kind of **vicious circle**, in which unemployment and lack of services lead to **rural exodus** (movements of population and economic activity out of rural regions over the past few decades) has been a common pattern in rural regions ever since the agricultural sector began to shed employment (EC, 2008; OECD, 2006; SERA, 2006).

**Decline of agricultural employment**

In the advanced stages of economic development, such as in the case of the European Union or OECD – despite its internal differences – the connection between agriculture and rural seems to become weaker because of the development of industry and services in the countryside (OECD, 2006). European agriculture currently faces several major global challenges including enlargement, more liberal trading arrangements, environmental issues, changes in consumer preference and in the degree and nature of public support.

Historically, one of the main ways the sector has adjusted to these competitive pressures is by continually reducing the amount of labour used by means of adopting new technology and structural adjustments such as larger farming units. The result in many regions is that agriculture now makes up a small part of the total employment. However, even in these regions as well as those where agricultural employment is of much greater importance the inexorable trend of labour moving out of the sector seems to continue (see EC, 2012a).
In the past, the agricultural sector was often the engine for growth in rural economies and represented the predominant source of rural income, employment and output. That situation has changed, principally because agriculture is no longer the main sector in rural regions, either in terms of output or employment (Table 1). While agriculture has an important role in shaping rural landscapes in the EU, its weight in rural economies is often low and declining (OEC 2006).

### Table 1: Role of agriculture in the EU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employment in agriculture*</th>
<th>Agriculture's share in Gross Domestic Product in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000 employed in agriculture (1000 persons)</td>
<td>Share in total employment in %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EU25</td>
<td>EU15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>12730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>9562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>10680</td>
<td>6770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>10761**</td>
<td>5400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Including hunting, fishing and forestry, **EU-27

Source: Eurostat and Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) data

During the last 20 years agricultural employment has generally been characterised by a continuous decline in the EU. The number of persons working in agriculture decreased on average by 2.3–2.5% per year and this trend has remained the same for EU-27 in the last few years. The primary sector represented 13% of the jobs in predominantly rural regions of the EU-27 in 2009, decreasing to 6% in intermediate regions and 1% in urban regions. While the share of the tertiary sector in employment has increased in all regions between 2004 and 2009, the reverse is true for employment in the primary sector. The structure of employment in predominantly rural regions differs between the EU-15 (Member States joined before, 2004) and the EU-N12 (Member states joined after, 2004). In 2009, employment in the primary sector was significantly higher in the EU-N12 (23%) than in the EU-15 (8%). Furthermore, employment structures differ between countries and types of region. The highest employment rates in the primary sector are found in the predominantly rural regions of Romania (39.0%) and Bulgaria (30.7%). Predominantly rural regions of Poland (25.3%), Greece (22.8%) and Portugal (22.1%) also present above-average rates. On the other hand, employment in the primary sector in the predominantly rural regions of six Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Sweden) is below 5%. Over the period 2004–2009, the share of primary sector jobs in predominantly rural areas of the EU-27 has decreased by 2.2 percentage points. This decrease has been particularly strong in the EU-N12 (-3.2 percentage points), with Lithuania (-8.5 percentage points), Poland (-6.3 percentage points) and Latvia (-5.2 percentage points) being the most affected countries. The predominantly rural regions of Spain (-6.0 percentage points), Estonia (-3.8 percentage points) and Austria (-2.9 percentage points) also experienced reductions in the importance of jobs in the primary sector. Only two countries, Bulgaria and the United Kingdom, increased the share of jobs in the primary sector in the predominantly rural regions during the period 2004–2009 (+4.4 and +1.0 percentage points, respectively) (EC, 2012a).

In the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) the transformation of the agricultural workforce since 1990 has been much more pronounced due to restructuring processes during – political, economical and social – transition. For example in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Estonia, there was a significant slump in agricultural employment in the first years of the 1990s with annual average change rates of -10% to -30%, coinciding with a consolidation of large scale farm structures and the release of non-family labour. This has been followed by a more stable period, but with an annual decrease exceeding that in the former EU-15 countries (SERA, 2006; Swinnen et al., 2005).

In Hungary, due to the restructuring in agriculture, privatization of former state-owned farms and compensation of farmers after the political transition (see Brown et al., 2006; Burger, 2006), agricultural employment failed between 1980 and 2011 from approximately 20% to less than 5% (Source: HCSO – Hungarian Central Statistical Office).

It is commonly agreed, that technological change leads to labour saving processes, which are adopted most quickly by larger farms. Labour input per hectare and animal respectively has been drastically reduced during the last decades in EU (Swinnen et al., 2005). For the CEEC – where agricultural production was generally more labour intensive than in the EU-15 – farm modernization and the reduction of the labour force have been accelerated by EU accession (SERA, 2006).

The exceptional increase of agricultural productivity over the last few decades now means that the modern supply chain for commodity production includes relatively few farm producers and that there is increasing concentration
of production in relatively few rural places. Decline in agricultural employment has been compounded recently by falling public sector employment, which had been in many cases the main source of job growth in rural regions. In some Eastern Countries (Poland, Bulgaria, Romania) the problem of farmers and agricultural workers is even more severe because of the transformation of the agriculture from state to private farms. Problems of fragmentation of farms and small dimension of economic activities represent important determinants of poverty and exclusion for farmers and their families. As a consequence of the decline in full-time agricultural employment, farming households rely increasingly and significantly on non-farm income. As full-time farm employment has decreased, part-time farming and off-farm work have become more prevalent among farm households. In many countries there are significantly more part-time than full-time farmers. In the EU-25, 54% of farmers worked in 2003 only part time (SERA, 2006), and in 2005, at EU-27 level, only 15% of the family farm holders were working the equivalent of a full time in agriculture. However, this share increases with the size of the farm: 76% of farm holders with more than 100 ha worked full time. Moreover the diffusion of very small or even semi-subsistence farms is a matter of serious concern because in most Eastern and Mediterranean countries (Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, Greece, Italy, Portugal) less than 30% of farmers have other gainful activities which can top up the income received from agricultural activities. Diversified sources of income may indeed reduce the risk of poverty among farmers. Therefore small farmers appear to be a specific group at risk of poverty and social exclusion in rural areas (EC, 2008).

The adjustment by farm families to a mixed revenue structure is part of a much larger transformation of the sector that has seen significant consolidation of farm enterprises. Farmers with larger or more capital intensive holdings will tend to be full-time farmers, while those with smaller farms will tend to seek alternative forms of income. There is some polarisation in the sector, and this has clear regional implications. Farm structure is partly a function of the productive characteristics of the land itself; in other words, some areas are more conducive than others to the consolidation of farmland. Thus farm structure will vary from one region to another, and, in consequence, the agricultural component of individual and regional revenues will also vary (SERA, 2006; EC, 2008).

Countryside in general terms shows big heterogeneity and differentiation in OECD and EU countries as well. On the one hand the areas creating the most spectacular development are rural, on the other hand there are several places forgotten by the actors of global economy, decision makers and politicians, accumulating structural disadvantages that defeat local endogenous initiatives and development.

The changes in the global economy of the past few decades were experienced by Hungary in a special way, since in addition to those changes it had to face political and economic transition and their consequences, resulting significant spatial differentiation greatly influenced by inherited/historical problems and ability of adopting to globalization (see Barta et al., 2005).

While slow reevaluation of the roles and functions of countryside can be observed in Hungary as well, rural areas have been the losers of transition in general. A considerable part of these areas – especially forgotten places – were not able to make a reply to the processes of the new market economy and the globalization, and have cumulated significant disadvantages.

The land use and ownership structure of the agriculture as well as the farming structure have fundamentally changed after the transition. The sector’s role in the employment has sharply dropped, which did not affected the rural areas the same way, due to the spatial structure and the change in the spatial characteristics of the economy. The negative effects hit more those rural areas, which have agricultural traditions and unfavourable structure of the human resource and where there are only few towns. The decreasing role of agriculture is accompanied by the crowding out of former agricultural labour of the labour market and the difficulties they face while flowing into other sectors. One of the most important indicators of structural problems in Hungarian rural areas is long term agricultural unemployment: the crowding out of former agricultural labour of the labour market and the difficulties they face trying to flow into other sectors. Strong correlation was supposed between this indicator and the general socio-economic underdevelopment of a region at micro-regional level.

Based on our earlier research – aiming to discover Hungary’s rural areas suffering from agricultural employment crisis (with high and lasting unemployment rates in agriculture – see Figure 2) and to compare them to the spatial

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14 Originally the expression “forgotten places” is title of a book edited by Lyson and Falk about the main problems of rural America, emphasizing peripherality and accumulation of economic and social disadvantages (see Lyson and Falk, 1993).
inequalities – the areas involved in the examination have strong correlation with the spatial inequalities form the agricultural unemployment aspect (Ritter, 2010).

Figure 2  Hungarian micro-regions with agricultural employment crisis
Note: based on a) the reduction in the rate of agricultural employment (on the basis of the census in 1990. and 2001.); b) rate of registered agricultural unemployed people in the given year; and c) rate of lasting (registered more than 12 months before) agricultural unemployed people (on the basis of the data of the Hungarian Employment Office between 1990–2003).
Source: Ritter, 2010

The analysis of the relation between agricultural unemployment and spatial inequalities at micro-regional level has been carried out with factor and discriminant analysis by important indicators had been created on the basis of the literature and other researches. The sources of original data were the census of 2001 and the HCSO T-STAR database for 2003 aggregated to the analysed territorial level. These have been supplemented with two other indicators from other researches, namely the HDI, indicating the development of the human resource (see Human Development Report, 1990; Obádovics and Kulcsár, 2003) as well as the complex indicator of accessibility (by Faluvégi, 2004). As a result eight main rotated factors (Table 2.) explain territorial differences and processes in Hungary.

Table 2  Factors of territorial differences in Hungary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Variance in %</th>
<th>Cumulative in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic dynamism (F1)</td>
<td>11,46</td>
<td>22,48</td>
<td>22,48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social status and level of development (F2)</td>
<td>10,63</td>
<td>20,84</td>
<td>43,31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification (F3)</td>
<td>5,57</td>
<td>10,93</td>
<td>54,24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism (F4)</td>
<td>4,41</td>
<td>8,65</td>
<td>62,89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youthfulness (F5)</td>
<td>3,52</td>
<td>6,90</td>
<td>69,79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth (F6)</td>
<td>3,39</td>
<td>6,64</td>
<td>76,44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization (F7)</td>
<td>2,83</td>
<td>5,55</td>
<td>81,99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural orientation (F8)</td>
<td>1,75</td>
<td>3,42</td>
<td>85,41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: based on HCSO data and own calculation
Source: Ritter, 2010

15 According to the analyses two original variables – average years of education and the income base of personal income tax – have had the highest eigenvalues in explaining territorial differences in Hungary in micro-regional level.
Based on independent samples T-test and discriminant analysis the selected 18 micro-regions suffering from agricultural employment crisis are significantly in more unfavourable social and economic status, the qualification of the human resource is much lower and the agriculture clearly have strong role compared to other areas (Figure 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients</th>
<th>Functions at Group Centroids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social status and level of development (F2)</td>
<td>0,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification (F3)</td>
<td>0,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural orientation (F8)</td>
<td>-0,543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3 Result of discriminant analysis by factors
Note: based on HCSO data and own calculation
Source: Ritter, 2010

Being aware of the relation with the spatial inequalities and the characteristics of the labour leaving the agriculture, it can be stated that there is no possibility for that labour to get back to the labor market, at least in short terms. It is because there are limited job opportunities, it is difficult to access the workplaces outside the area and the level of qualification and the age structure of the human resource are not sufficient. These factors, however, raise the issue of the development potentials locally. This is really important from the unemployment perspective because in long terms it is the economic development and not the employment- and social policy that can bring real positive results, according to the literature (Fekete, 2006). Several reasons make articular the importance of agriculture in the rural development in similar areas. The first reason is the traditions of agricultural farming and the importance of the accumulated knowledge. The loss of such knowledge and experience is a real danger if the role of the sector is decreasing. A further reason is that in these areas agriculture is usually the single one alternative (or chance), providing living and earning for the population. In this approach, taking advantage of and strengthening the social function of the agriculture are principal task of the developments.

Material and Method

The Faculty of Economics and Social sciences of the Szent István University signed an “adoptation” and cooperation agreement with four villages in Nógrád County in June 2010 after several months of preparation. The abovementioned villages are: Bokor, Kutasó, Cserhátszentiván and Nógrádsipek. According to the agreement, the villages become research field of the researchers and students of the Faculty and the Institute of Regional Economics and Rural Development of the Faculty provides help with rural development project proposals. In the framework of the cooperation a survey was carried out in summer of 2012 questioning the local population about their economic and social conditions, the situation of the local communities and their development ideas. In the primary survey, special focus was placed on the investigation of the role and potentials of agriculture and this paper concentrates on those results.

With random samples 62 households of the four settlements – 10% of all the households covering 15% of the total population – were questioned. The primary data was analyzed with SPSS program and in this study descriptive statistic method is applied to display the results.

Research findings

The analysed settlements in question are located in the center of Nógrád county, which is a disadvantaged area of the country (Figure 4).

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16 Based on the research, in average 60% of this labor force have only maximum eight grades finished (in primary school), and 25–30% of them are older than 45 years in the selected micro-regions (Ritter 2010).
Nógrádsipek has a central position among the four villages due to its extra tasks in public administration. Although it is close to the other villages on the map, it takes about 45 minutes to get to any of the villages mentioned above on the road. Anyway, the poor accessibility and the peripheral location is characteristic to all the settlements. Nógrádsipek, Kutasó and Bokor are isolated from other settlements, since they have only one road in and out of the village. They are not linked to other settlements. Except for Nógrádsipek, which has stagnating population number since 2000 (673 permanent inhabitants), the settlements have ageing population and negative migration figures. The population of Cserhátszentiván is 143, of Bokor 108 and of Kutasó 111 (in 2011, Source HCSO). Regarding the infrastructure, Nógrádsipek has the most favourable location and it has its own school as well as the public utilities are provided. In the smaller settlements, however, both the infrastructure and the basic services lag behind. The population can use the most important services only in the larger settlements nearby. Due to their poor accessibility, these larger settlements cannot become centers of such areas. It might be the explanation for the fact that households need to face the challenges due to the lack of local jobs and the peripheral location as well (Figure 5).

Since there are not enough job opportunities, the active population commutes and works mainly in the larger cities nearby (Pásztó, Szécsény, Hatvan, Budapest – see Figure 6) primarily outside the agricultural sector.
The rate of registered unemployment is 10–11%, but the real unemployment is much higher than that figure. The number of businesses is very low and there are even fewer operating enterprises in the area. 54 of the 62 families questioned, none runs business. Out of the 8 operating enterprises 6 deal with agriculture. The full-time farmers work locally and mainly in their own businesses.

Agriculture, which was an important sector earlier, has miscellaneous roles at the moment. On one hand, due to the natural endowments, the number of full time farmers is not really high (except for Bokor, where there are more people dealing with sheep or running a cheese factory). On the other hand, the number of household which have market gardens is very high (80%). Berry production and livestock breeding are common, mainly raising poultry and rabbits.

Vegetable and crop production is carried out in small scale (excluding the few agricultural businesses), however, nearly 50% of the households responded do not keep animals at all and do not cultivate lands (Figure 7).
Agricultural activity provides jobs for two people in the families on average, the households produce primarily for self-sufficiency. Only seven households out of 62 trade with their products – mainly at their homes. There are only three households which rent arable land and only eight families get land-based direct payment from the EU.

As two-thirds of the households identified the lack of jobs as the most important local problem, the research tried to examine what could be the potentials for job creation (Figure 8). According to 50% of the households questioned, the solution for employment enlargement would be agricultural and forestry developments as well as the revival and use of agricultural traditions.

![Figure 8](possible_solutions.png)

**Figure 8** Possible solutions for creating jobs (by % of the asked households)

Source: own edition, 2013

35.5% of the households would start agricultural production if there were suitable funds available, another 37.1% might do the same and rest (mainly pensioners) said no for this possibility.

**Conclusions**

In its Communication the EU confirmed the important role of rural development policy under the CAP for increasing employment in rural areas and underlined that the creation and preservation of jobs and employment must be one of the priority objectives of rural development programmes (EC, 2012b). Based on the results of our research analyzing the economic and social possibilities of Hungarian rural settlements in Nógrád county, we identified also the lack of local jobs as main problem and prior objective of the previous programming period. From the economic and social point of view, agriculture is one of the most important sectors in rural areas on which rural areas’ growth and sustainability could be based (EC, 2012b). Despite farms have become fewer and labour has been laid off thus reducing the share of agriculture in local employment (e.g. less than 5% in the analyzed settlements), agriculture might regarded as a key sector for many rural areas by our research as well. However employment enlargement in rural areas cannot be based only on primary agricultural activities, based on our results the emphasis should be placed many times on the self-supply and subsistence functions of agriculture. By short supply chains alongside consumption; using and promoting local products; the production of bio food products including organic agricultural production; farm diversification (e.g. integration of agriculture into the tourism sector) positive spill-over effects could be established in lagging rural areas.

At the same time, apart from the agricultural potentials (mentioning the fact the agriculture is losing significance), it is extremely important to expand and develop the local economy, the availability of basic services and infrastructure, to create a successful local community which is able to carry out local development with the help of rural development policy. Due to the lack of local employment possibilities, it is inevitable to develop the relationship between the peripheral small settlements and the surrounding centers, to improve the accessibility and the public transport because they all contribute to the expansion of job potentials and the introduction of local agricultural products on the market.

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Regional Involvement of Periodicals Concerning Rural Sociology Exemplified with Central and Eastern Europe

Grzegorz Zabłocki

Abstract
The text aims at showing to what extent the social processes occurring within rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe in the past two decades have been reflected in the articles published in three periodicals concerning rural sociology. This knowledge allows for more adequate interpretation of research achievements of rural sociology popularized in the aforementioned periodicals, and – on this basis – determination of modern level of regional diversity of social sciences.

Keywords: regional involvement of social sciences, rural sociology, Central and Eastern Europe, periodicals, social sciences

Regional or cultural differences in ways and results of approaching social sciences have been the issues discussed within these sciences for a long time; still, it has not led to development of one, generally accepted standpoint in connection to these issues. Recent, spectacular examples of dispute on the issue are two publications published in "Contemporary Sociology" 40, no. 4. The author of one of those was Piotr Sztompka, the president of International Sociological Association (ISA) between 2002 and 2006 (Sztompka, 2011), the author of the other was Michael Burawoy, the president of ISA between 2010 and 2014 (Burawoy, 2011). The dispute concerned selection of speakers for scientific conferences organised by ISA. To put it simply, their standpoints were as follows: the former called for the value assessment of achievements in sociology on the basis of a sole criterion of their universal, theoretical and methodological value. The latter questioned the possibility of developing a sole criterion which would be appropriate to all achievements; therefore, he was in favour of taking the best achievements from the particular regions of the world into consideration.

The phenomenon of regional or cultural differences in theoretical and methodological assumptions and in cognitive and practical results of approaching social sciences was already perceived by the participants of anti-positivist and anti-naturalistic breakthrough in social sciences; among others, representatives of humanistic sociology. According to their interpretation, the knowledge of object of cognition would also be dependent on cultural or social qualities of researchers, including their regional location (Nowak, 1961; Ossowski, 1961; Malewski, 1961). Researchers investigating the same social phenomena would have a right to draw different conclusions since results of analyses would be influenced by cultural, social or geographical characteristics of both investigated objects and investigators themselves. The issue of regional diversity of social sciences was; among others, taken up at the 11th Congress of Polish Sociological Association in 2000. According to Jerzy Szacki; with regard to the issue, one should avoid both the model of social sciences, which offers cognition that would totally pass over spatiotemporal conditionings, and the model, in which one only gets to know what here and now is (Szacki, 2003). Still, it is the standpoint that does not offer solutions for all the variants that can be found between these two extremities.

Methodology of Analysis
Since these issues are the subjects of controversy with no recognised theoretical settlements, the knowledge of how these are solved in practice is worth gaining. Below, there are methods offered by three periodicals representing one of social sciences' subdiscipline – rural sociology. To popularise this subdiscipline and communicate achievements in this scope (at least within Western countries), national and regional associations integrating rural sociologists were established, and those set up periodicals promoting rural sociology and its achievements. Quarterly “Rural Sociology” (RS) have been published for nearly 80 years, and it was created by American Rural Sociological Society, and quarterly “Sociologia Ruralis” (SR), which has existed for over 50 years, is published by European Association
Social & Economic Transformations Affecting Rural People and Communities in Central & Eastern Europe Since 1990

for Rural Sociology. Both are in English, the former is published in the USA, the latter in Great Britain. The third periodical under discussion is “Journal of Rural Studies” (JRS), which is also published in English by international Elsevier concern (with its registered seat in Amsterdam).

Each of these periodicals’ goal is to disseminate the best achievements within rural sociology without any cultural or territorial restrictions imposed on their activities. However, one can presume that some issues are more interesting and closer to publishers, editors and readers than others, even if it is not expressed directly. Since two of these periodicals (SR and JRS) are issued in Europe, and one of those (SR) by European Association for Rural Sociology, they should show relatively considerable interest in social processes on the continent according to the hypothesis of regional or cultural determinants. The third one (RS), with regard to its American origin, should show much less interest in Europe than in the United States.

Nevertheless, with regard to the following circumstances:

a) modern, global access to electronic versions of periodicals;

b) lack of specific declaration concerning territorial limitations of interest in social phenomena within rural areas;

c) popularisation of English as a language of international scientific communication.

These three periodicals can be perceived as the ones communicating the most valuable issues of rural sociology (irrespective of longitude and latitude of the area of phenomena interesting to rural sociology).

Do they actually communicate these issues? If not, to what extent are they focused on the region, in which they are created? Is there a great diversity of periodicals’ interest in the particular parts of geographically coherent region inside this region? To what extent the social processes occurring in the rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe are considered in these periodicals?

To answer those questions, the subject matter of 420 articles published in these periodicals were examined. Approximately 140 articles from each periodical were analysed with the focus on the following periods: 1996/1997, 2002/2003 and 2008/2009; therefore, there were nearly 50 texts from one periodical concerning one of the mentioned periods.

Regional Involvement of Periodicals Concerning Rural Sociology

According to the hypothesis of regional determinants of social sciences, social phenomena occurring in Europe as a whole or in the particular European countries were considerably seldom subjects of articles in RS in comparison to SR and JRS. In RS, only 4 percent of the articles were dedicated to the mentioned issues within the examined period, and those articles concerned the particular region or state. As many as 81 percent of the articles in RS referred to the USA, and 4 percent to Canada.

In case of SR, the share of texts concerning Europe/European countries was 78 percent, and in case of JRS it was 55 percent. Therefore, these two “European” periodicals were considerably focused on their own region.

This means either almost all phenomena worth investigating by rural sociology were available and examined in the USA or in Europe, or that these three periodicals were publishing research results mostly concerning the region where they are created. Since one cannot really assume the first possibility – namely, that almost all sociologically significant phenomena in the rural areas take place only in the USA and Europe – it was assumed that these periodicals disseminate knowledge that mostly concerns their own regions, and not the most important and the most thoroughly examined social phenomena from the rural areas of the whole globe.

A very considerable share of articles concerning own region in RS (85 percent concerned the USA or Canada) means that the periodical basically omitted social phenomena of the regions that constitute 86 percent of land surface of the world, and inhabited by 95 percent of the world’s population. Admittedly, rural sociology does not offer any establishments concerning the level of correspondence of knowledge and number of publications of this discipline with an area of the particular region or a number of its residents. Still, the shown disproportion seems to be close to

17 The analysed issue was what region or country the investigated article concerned. Most of the analyses omitted theoretical and methodological texts, as well as, those comparing areas of different regions.

18 Few “themed” special issues of that period was omitted (the only exception was the special issue 3/2008 of “Sociologia Ruralis”).

19 Apart from the area of Greenland and Antarctica.
one of the extremities against which Jerzy Szacki warned. Therefore, there is going to be much less reference to this “highly regional” periodical further in the text.

Over half of the articles of SR and JRS was dedicated to phenomena of their own regions; still, 22 percent of SR articles concerned other regions, while in JRS it was 45 percent. And although these other regions (all regions but Europe) constitute 92 percent of land surface and 90 percent of population of the world, one should admit that SR and JR considered other regions in their articles to much greater extent than RS.

However, there are great differences concerning frequency of publishing articles on regions other than their own and articles on particular parts of own region also visible between SR and JRS. If one separates Western Europe from Europe and adds the USA and Canada to it, as well as, Australia and New Zealand, then these three regions, hereinafter referred to as “the Great Three”, were subjects of approximately 90 percent of articles; concerning a specific region, in these periodicals (also in RS, the share of articles on “the Great Three” was about 90 percent). Simultaneously, the countries of “the Great Three” constitute 23 percent of land surface and only 11 percent of population of the world.

![Figure 1](image.png)

Figure 1 Percent of articles about “Great three” and its share in population and territory of the world

Similarly considerable differences were perceived in connection with the frequency of publishing articles on the particular parts of own region. If one assumes that the area of Central and Eastern Europe includes 13 states and European part of Russia (from Poland and Czech Republic on the west, Estonia on the north and Slovenia, Hungary and Bulgaria on the south), then it is the area constituting 65 percent of Europe's area and populated by 40 percent of the continent's inhabitants. Social processes in Central and Eastern Europe; defined in that way, or in its states constituted the matter of 11 percent of articles concerning a specific European country in SR, and in JRS it was 8 percent of such publications. Therefore, in these two “European” periodicals, this vast part of the continent and its population was considered only to a very small extent.

Simultaneously, Central and Eastern Europe are the parts of the continent where rural areas and population constitute a large percentage; thus, the very low share of articles on this topic among the total number of articles concerning a specific European country requires explanation. It is not the area of no rural sociology, neither it is the area of no social processes that would draw the interest of rural sociologists. On the contrary, tradition of investigating social processes is as long here as this in the USA or Western Europe, although the former one was called rural sociology a little bit later in time. From the beginning of the 90s of the 20th century, this part of Europe has been undergoing the processes which strongly influence the functioning of agriculture and rural population of these countries – the processes of political transformation and privatisation of agricultural land – but the two “European” sociological periodicals drew little attention to it: in the analysed sample of articles from 1996/1997, only one text (published in JRS) concerned these processes. In the publications from 2002/2003 there were four such articles (one in SR and three in JRS) and between 2008 and 2009 – there was none. Among 140 analysed articles published in RS within the whole period of 1996/1997–2008/2009 there was none on this topic.

On the other hand, these processes were extensively discussed in the periodicals concerning rural sociology issued in the countries of mentioned subregion. Among the articles published in Poland between 1995 and 1999 in “Eastern European Countryside”, which is an annals in English, nearly half of those concerned the aforementioned processes;
between 2000 and 2004 these constituted 14 percent; and between 2005 and 2010 – 7 percent (Zabłocki, 2013). In quarterly “Wieś i Rolnictwo” (Village and Agriculture), which is the main periodical concerning rural sociology in Polish, 19 percent of sociological articles between 1991 and 1995 were dedicated to transformation processes, reforms, and integration with the European Union; it was 35 percent of articles between 1996 and 2000, and 57 percent between 2001 and 2005 (Gorlach, 2006). On the other hand, among 420 analysed articles from RS, SR and JRS, there was none which main subject would be (anticipated or confirmed) effects of integration of 10 states of Central and Eastern Europe with the European Union (in 2004 and 2007) in relation to rural population.

All in all, one can state that not only American RS but also “European” SR and JRS considerably downplayed the processes occurring in Central and Eastern Europe. However, that kind of SR and JRS editors’ approach did not solely concern the mentioned part of the continent. Balkan countries (including seven countries as Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania), were not the subject of a single text in the examined period of 1996/1997–2008/2009. Admittedly, the area of these countries is only 3 percent of the area of Europe and it is similar with percentage share of their population in the European population; still, it is difficult not to consider this fact as a sign of marginalisation; especially, when one associates it with the fact that other country, which area constitutes only 2 percent of the area of Europe (admittedly, the population of this country constitutes 8 percent of the continent’s population), was the subject of as many as 50 percent of articles concerning a specific European country published in SR and as many as 54 percent of such articles published in JRS. This country was Great Britain (the UK). In this case, one should discuss a strong domination of articles on this country among the articles published in both analysed periodicals. If the high over-representation concerns Great Britain solely, it will be reasonable to call both periodicals “British” and not “European”. However, the “over-representation” also concerned Greece (even after omitting 8 articles dedicated to this country in “themed” issue 2/97 SR) and – admittedly, to much lesser degree – Scandinavian countries.

What is more, both periodicals devoted relatively little attention to three countries of Southern Europe (namely, Italy, Spain and Portugal), and even to Germany and France. Hence the conclusion that these periodicals do not show the research on social processes occurring within the rural areas of Europe; therefore, it is difficult to consider them as “European”. The data presented above also justified the standpoint that these periodicals do not reflect the social processes of the most of rural areas of the world. Areas other than (whole) Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand constitute approximately 72 percent of the total populated land area of the globe; still SR dedicated only 5 percent of its article to it, and with JRS it was 8 percent. Thus, one cannot say that these periodicals popularize the “world’s” rural sociology; that is the knowledge of social phenomena occurring in the rural areas of the world.

Another sign of regional involvement of periodicals concerning rural sociology is connected with regional affiliation of the authors of the published articles. Almost exclusive authors of publications in RS, SR and JRS were those who were related to regions of the periodicals. Among over 140 articles published by RS, only one was written by the authors from outside the US.
author whose affiliation was not connected with the “Great Three”, and five of those had a co-author outside this area. Among over 130 articles published in SR there were six which authors were outside the “Great Three” and three with such co-authors. Among over 140 articles in JRS, two had authors outside the “Great Three”, and five had such co-authors.

If one omits the texts which co-author was someone outside the “Great Three”, then the articles written solely by persons from outside this area constituted only 1 percent of all the articles published in SR and JRS, and 5 percent of all publications in SR. Altogether, in these three periodicals, the persons outside the “Great Three” (thus, those “representing” regions inhabited by 89 percent of the world’s population) were the authors of 2 percent of articles. On the other hand, 94 percent of articles were written solely by the authors from the “Great Three”, that is, the area inhabited by approximately 11 percent of the world’s population.

A significantly high level of regional involvement of periodicals concerning rural sociology does not result from some “iron” principles of approaching rural sociology, neither this results from “iron” principles of creating and issuing good periodicals of this discipline. A periodical within this scope can considerably differently select authors of the articles published within its pages, and it is especially visible with the example of “Eastern European Countryside” annals, which has been issued in Poland for twenty years. Among the articles published in this periodical between 1995 and 2010, only a little bit over half (57 percent) had authors solely from the region of the periodical. Over ¼ authors were exclusively related to Western Europe (28 percent) or the USA (2 percent). The remaining 13 percent of articles from this periodical consisted of 6 percent of articles which co-authors were persons from Western, and Central or Eastern Europe, and 7 percent of articles which co-authors were from the USA, and Central or Eastern Europe (Zabłocki, 2013).

Simultaneously, one should notice that “regional involvement” does not solely concern periodicals within the scope of rural sociology. This is much broader phenomenon, visible in approaching social and humanistic sciences. A significant field; where their “regional involvement” shows itself, are the scientific information systems. With regard to popularisation of English as a language of scientific communication worldwide, in many countries, there are scientific databases and information systems popularised, in which research results published by some publishing houses and in some periodicals are strongly depreciated, and those published elsewhere – strongly appreciated. It has nothing to do with objectivity of cognition highly valued by science; still, creators of scientific information systems seem to disregard this fact. Serious scientific institutions (e.g. universities in Poland) use products of the scientific information systems and participate in depreciating certain effects of scientific study with simultaneous appreciation of some other results. For instance, in Journal Citation Reports, created by American concern Thomson-Reuters, scientific periodicals from Central and Eastern Europe, and from other regions of the world, are generally located in the lower sections of the hierarchy of “periodical’s scientific value”. Periodicals created in Great Britain and the USA are valued considerably higher. If a periodical’s title starts with “British” or “American”, than the average assessment is substantially higher than in case of periodicals which titles start with “German”, “Italian”, “Russian”, “Chinese”, “Spanish”, “Polish”, “Indian” or “Brazilian”. A similar situation is found with assessments of periodicals with “International” word in a title or those with the title’s first words as “Internationale” or “Internationales”. The same difference is found between periodicals of “Journal” as the first word of the title and those where this word is “Zeitschrift”. This form of regional and linguistic involvement of scientific periodicals and scientific activity can be referred to the statement of Jerzy Szacki concerning national diversity of sociology that often leads to; among others, using false criteria of scientific paper assessment; that is, “overestimating (or underestimating) those which are consistent with the supposed national tradition or; on the contrary, those which are free from any <provincialism> and perfectly fit any contemporary activity <in the world>” (Szacki, 2003; own translation from Polish)

Conclusions

The above mentioned regional involvement of the analysed periodicals means that they do not disseminate sociological knowledge either of “world’s” or of “European” rural areas. Social processes in the rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe, and in other parts of the world, are hardly ever considered by these periodicals, as if the phenomena occurring in these regions might be as well investigated at Thames or Mississippi by local specialists, but they are the processes of little cognitive and practical significance.

Still, regional involvement of social and humanistic sciences does not bring only negative results, since it allows regional and national communities, including rural sociologists, to focus on their own region and country, and
gain knowledge in this scope even when these places are omitted by the “world’s” or seemingly regional scientific institutions. These twofold results of regional involvement of social and humanistic sciences should incline the researchers to develop well-considered standpoint in relation to this phenomenon. However, the actions of researchers themselves might be insufficient if political authorities of region do not see the importance of unfavourable results of regional involvement of scientific activity. Therefore, the proposal that the forms of scientific cooperation inside a certain region; for instance, Central and Eastern Europe, should be supported by local authorities seems to be reasonable; especially as using solutions and patterns developed in other regions mostly could lead to negative social, economic and cultural effects. Thus, one should devote great attention to the exchange of scientific achievements within own region or subregion and postulate – in case of Central and Eastern Europe – active participation of authorities of so-called Visegrád Group in this process. In relation to the European Union and the whole Europe, this should be the task of the Union’s institutions.

References
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V. Concluding Statement

The Editors

The transitions from state socialism that began around 1990 in Eastern and Central Europe are still affecting the well-being of people and communities in the region. While some scholars question the continuing relevance of examining the socialist legacy in contemporary European society (Stenning and Hörschelmann, 2008), participants at this conference agree that the macro structural changes of economy and society that accompanied the fall of communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe and the breakup of the USSR in the early 1990s still have profound impacts on many aspects of contemporary society.

Many of these post-socialist legacies have been examined at the societal level, but research on the local articulations of these transformations is much thinner²⁰. In particular, the causal pathways through which societal level transformations are transmitted to the local level are relatively lacking, especially the ways in which rural localities have been and continue to be affected.²¹ The papers presented at this conference examined many ways in which the transition from state socialism continues to affect life and livelihood in the region's rural areas. They explored ways in which socialist legacies and incomplete post-socialist reform policies shaped agricultural land use in Eastern Europe; how religion has been reimagined and re-asserted as a strong cultural force in local life; how uneven capitalist development has privileged some areas while leaving others behind; how socialist-era practices continue to compromise the natural environment, and how the demise of socialist-era family support policies has affected women's roles and diminished family economic security in towns and villages throughout the region.

The conference drew participants from throughout the region, and their work supports the conclusion that there is no single “post-socialism,” but rather post socialisms (see Stark and Bruszt, 1998). This is not to conclude that the post socialist experience in rural communities has no common attributes, but rather to assert that each country in the region has its own history which conditions the manner in which the socialist experience impacts contemporary rural life.

The conference substantiated the need for reinvigorating scholarly research on rural life in Eastern and Central Europe. Grzegorz Zablocki's analysis of articles published in The Eastern European Countryside, Rural Sociology, Sociologia Rurais, and The Journal of Rural Studies showed impressive research on a range of topics during recent decades, but many unresolved issues. The editors and conference organizers strongly recommend renewed effort in this area of scholarship. We encourage institutions of higher education in the region to train scholars for careers as teachers and researchers focusing on rural studies, and we strongly suggest that junior scholars commit to teaching and research careers that focus on the well-being of rural people and communities in post-socialist East Central Europe.

References


²¹ Research on urban legacies is more available. For example see, Stanilov 2007.


