

## Model of Creative Businesses and Development of the Rural Municipality of Puszcza Mariańska

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*Creative businesses are one of the models of economic development and one of the main drivers of local and regional development. The core of this model is entrepreneurial activity. This article attempts to draw attention to the need for creating a model of the creative sector and the cultural sector for rural areas (suburban, intermediate, peripheral areas) in the light of an intensifying tendency of population migration from cities to the countryside and changes in the awareness about the quality of life and work. This model has its specific features, as opposed to the model preferred for cities. This is due, among others, to the spatial aspects (e.g. location in relation to urban centres), cultural distinction of villages and historically determined socio-economic situation. A case study of the rural municipality of Puszcza Mariańska as a representative of many similar national municipalities is an example of the need to undertake research into the potential of the creative sector. The article indicates the selected mechanisms and conditions to build in the rural areas the potential of human and social capital in the creative sector.*

**Keywords:** model of local development, creative industries, cultural industries, human and social capital.

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### Model kreatywnych biznesów a rozwój gminy wiejskiej Puszcza Mariańska

*Kreatywne biznesy to jeden z modeli rozwoju gospodarczego, a jednocześnie jeden z ważniejszych filarów rozwoju lokalnego i regionalnego. Podstawą tego modelu jest przedsiębiorczość. W artykule podjęto próbę zwrócenia uwagi na potrzebę tworzenia modelu sektora kreatywnego i sektora kultury dla terenów wiejskich (tereny podmiejskie, pośrednie, peryferyjne) w sytuacji nasilania się trendów migracji ludzi z miast na wieś oraz zmian świadomości odnośnie do jakości życia i pracy. Model ten ma swoją specyfikę, w odróżnieniu od modelu preferowanego dla miast. Wynika to m.in. z aspektów przestrzennych (np. lokalizacji w stosunku do ośrodków miejskich), odrębności kulturowej wsi, sytuacji społeczno-gospodarczej uwarunkowanej historycznie. Studium przypadku gminy wiejskiej Puszcza Mariańska, jako reprezentanta wielu podobnych krajowych gmin, jest przykładem podjęcia konieczności badania potencjału sektora kreatywnego. W artykule wskazano na wybrane mechanizmy i uwarunkowania budowania na wsi potencjału kapitału ludzkiego i społecznego w sektorze kreatywnym.*

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**Słowa kluczowe:** model rozwoju gminy, sektor kreatywny, sektor kultury, kapitał ludzki i społeczny.

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## 1. Introduction

The need for redefining the community and national objectives of the rural development policy, also in terms of spatial and socio-economic conditions, is pointed to, among others, in the course of consulting activities – undertaken for a number of years by the European Commission – related to the necessity to re-evaluate the status of rural areas in the EU and the contribution which rural areas make now and may make in the future to the welfare of the countries of the Community, e.g. the European Rural Parliament campaign in Austria in 2015, the European LEADER Association for Rural Development (ELARD) conference in Estonia, in which the author participated. A detailed European Rural Manifesto, developed by the 36 countries of the European Rural Parliament and forwarded to the European Commission, is an expression of concern and disagreement with maintaining the policy of a “second rate” for rural areas (Strzelecka, 2015). It was stressed in the Manifesto that rural areas, consisting of local and sub-regional economic systems (SME sector), which are the bloodstream of communities, make an important contribution to the broader economic system of European countries. It is therefore necessary to provide the conditions for development through appropriate legislation, regulations, administrative and financial decisions. This document calls for ensuring consistency between the different sectoral policies in all areas of management and for verifying all policies and programs in terms of their potential impact on rural areas.

The objectives adopted in the EU and in our country related to the role of rural development policies need to be changed. It is assumed in the National Spatial Development Concept 2030 that the cities will decide about the development, that rural areas are their supply base, and that: “The development of smaller urban centres

and rural areas with lower development potential depends on the degree of functional integration with the main cities of the region as well as the possibilities of using unique internal resources to create territorial specialization.” (Rada Ministrów, 2011 p. 84).

The research conducted in Poland in recent years on spatial disparities in the socio-economic development of rural areas (Rosner and Stanny, 2016) and Heffner’s research on the importance of regional centres in developing the regions (Strzelecka, 2016) point to a more complex nature of developmental changes and do not fully confirm this assumption. In the case of rural peripheral and indirect areas, the impact of a major city on their development decreases with distance. For example, in relation to the urban policy “Warsaw only slightly affects the potential for innovation in the rest of the region.” (Fundacja Kreatywne Mazowsze, 2016, p. 11). “The low level of social activity is recorded in the municipalities with the dominance of agriculture in the economic structure, both family farming (the so-called eastern wall) and large-area agriculture (post-state-owned-collective-farm areas). At the same time, there is an unfavourable dynamic of change. This indicates clearly that this is an area that requires public intervention, supporting the construction of social capital, which is necessary to trigger the activity for the benefit of local development.” (Rosner and Stanny, 2016, p. 230).

Unlike in the case of cities, there is no developed methodology that would be applicable to the study of intellectual capital in the countryside. According to the methodology proposed by Ernst & Young, the potential of the business environment in cities is described by two indicators with specified weight rates: innovation and development and human capital (80%) and R&D (20%). The assessment of human capital in the field of innovation and

development comprises the following sub-indicators: the number of companies in the creative and knowledge-based businesses (30%), the percentage of workers employed in the area of R&D (30%) and changes in the employment of people with higher education (Ernst & Young, 2008, p. 6).

It is expected that by 2030 approx. 2 million people will have moved to areas outside the cities, depending on the phase of professional development. The observed trend of people's migration from cities to suburban areas and the countryside results, among others, from the need to improve the quality of life, where the following values are important: nature and unpolluted environment, slower and healthier lifestyle and leisure, silence, privacy, freedom and living space, healthy food, strong interpersonal relations, safety and reduced cost of living. For 56% of the respondents, migration from the city to the countryside is synonymous with success and social advancement (Hipsz, 2014, pp. 12–14). In the case of areas outside Warsaw, positive net migration is reported in the rural suburbs of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area (WMA) as well as in regional and sub-regional towns. The above presented values determine the attractiveness of the environment of creative players in the countryside, but for entrepreneurs of importance are, among others, the availability of means of transport, access to a fast Internet network or social infrastructure, i.e. cultural institutions, sports facilities, entertainment, health care and social welfare, promotion opportunities, trainings, etc. Therefore, actions of local and regional authorities, sharing the concern for the quality of life and work in rural areas, are necessary in the policy of location of economic activity.

The creative sector is now one of the possible intelligent specializations of the regions of the European Union. This model is based on: entrepreneurship, creativity and innovativeness, which are an important indicator of human capital and contribute to building up social capital. Almost half of the rural population lives in villages, where most of the residents work in the cities. Still, the prevailing opinion among the rural population is that it is difficult to find a suitable job or any job (Kowalczyk, 2015, pp. 4, 11). Agriculture is currently the main source of income for only 7% of the rural

population (Fundacja na rzecz Rozwoju Polskiego Rolnictwa, 2014). Changes that take place in the countryside consist in the dynamic development of non-agricultural residential, recreational, production and service functions, in particular in the immediate vicinity of provincial and poviat towns. Therefore, entrepreneurship among villagers was and still is an important factor in local development. Entrepreneurship is manifested in the operation of a significant number of entities, including creative ones. The awareness of the fact that the entity belongs to the so-called creative industries or to the cultural sector is very low among both entrepreneurs and local authorities in the countryside.

Given this introduction, the aim of this publication is to present research results concerning the determination of the potential of the creative sector of a typical Mazovian rural municipality – Puszcza Mariańska (number and typology of entities according to PKD 2007), its structure and importance in the development of the municipality as well as the determinants of its further development. The research into the creative sector in the municipality was conducted in 2014. The map of spatial distribution of entrepreneurs in the creative sector, prepared on the basis of the research, forms part of building a model of the development of the creative sector in rural areas. The case study of Puszcza Mariańska was contrasted with another case – County Leitrim in Western Ireland. Both cases constitute a starting point for discussions on the needs and barriers in terms of access to the primary resources determining the development of creative enterprises. The following questions need to be answered: What role are rural areas to play in the region orientated towards a smart specialization: traditional living space (rusticity), resources, shelter (because of the quality of life), reproductive, reserves (hinterland), or “creative space”? Are rural (peripheral) areas in the Mazovian Voivodeship an active stakeholder in changes anticipated in the regional strategy and the strategy of the Central Poland Macroregion (CPM)? Will rural areas, with the lack of activity of local authorities, be only a passive beneficiary of the changes? Is it understood that there is a need for sensible planning services in rural areas and for creating a climate for

the formation of companies, in particular those of the creative sector and the cultural sector? How are rural areas supported by funds?

## 2. Creative Businesses as a Model for Local and Regional Development

Researchers investigating the creative sector rely mostly on international and national studies on the problems of definition and methodology, e.g. on reports prepared by UK's Department for Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS) (1997), KEA European Affairs for the European Commission (2006), UNCTAD, UNESCO and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Singapore report, the Dutch and the Australian government reports as well as national reports – for the Ministry of Economy (2009), regional reports, etc. Due to the existence of many different definitions and classification models of the creative sector, attempts have been made in our country to organize terminology, among others, by Stachowiak (2015) and Tomaszewska (2013). In this article, the following proposals were adopted to unify the original terms with their Polish equivalents: *creative industries* = sektor kreatywny (creative activities), *cultural industries* = sektor kultury (cultural/culture-related activities) and *creative industry* (e.g. music industry) = branża kreatywna (e.g. music activities) (Stachowiak, 2015, p. 20).

The creative sector, according to the strategy document for the Central Poland Macroregion, stands for “actions that stem from individual creativity and talent and have also the potential to create wealth and jobs.” (Rada Ministrów, 2015, p. 14). The definition of the creative sector and the structure of the industries have been adopted after the UK's Department for Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS). It is assumed that the cultural sector refers to activities that “combine the creation, production and commercialization of a product of an intangible and cultural nature, and the product (its content) is usually protected by copyright” (Departament Kultury i Edukacji Urzędu Marszałkowskiego Województwa Łódzkiego, 2014, p. 38). Such an approach is consistent with the term proposed by UNESCO at the General Conference of the

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 2005.

The Concept of the Development Strategy for the Central Poland Macroregion 2030 adopted different definitions of human and social capitals. And so, “human capital is a characteristic of individuals or social groups, taking into account: education, work experience and the ability to use scientific and technical progress.” In turn, social capital is defined as “the ability of citizens – resulting from trust and norms and patterns of behaviour – to work together, to establish and maintain contacts, and to function in the various types of relationships” (Biuro Planowania Przestrzennego Województwa Łódzkiego, 2014, p. 63). Social capital is not just a combination of individual capitals (of individual persons), but this capital is also created by institutions and multiplied by their ability to interact.

In Poland, nearly 140,000 business entities were active in the creative sector, with 41,442 in the Mazovian Voivodeship alone. Consequently, one in three creative entities in the country is associated with Mazovia. The percentage of creative entities in the total number of enterprises amounted to approx. 7%. The creative sector in this country is made of 12 industries, which include 22 entity subclasses according to the National Business Registry Number – REGON (Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Mazowieckiego, 2012, p. 53).

The Mazovian creative sector is an urbanized sector. For the purposes of the research, the following division of the region was introduced: Warsaw, Warsaw Metropolitan Area (WMA), sub-regional towns, suburban areas of sub-regional centres and other areas. More than 70% of creative entities are located in Warsaw, approx. 12% – outside metropolitan areas, and only 10% of all the region's creative entities are in rural areas. In the Mazovian Voivodeship, 68% of creative companies are businesses connected with advertising, computer software, publishing and architecture, while 26% are entities engaged in creative activities of a cultural nature. More than 97% of the entities are micro-entities. In rural areas, there practically do not exist any creative entities with more than 10 employees (Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa

Mazowieckiego, 2012, pp. 59–60). Only in the radio and television, performing arts, and publishing sectors, the share of medium and large companies varies from 3% to about 1%. Other industries are dominated by micro-entities (0–9 persons), whose share in the given industry is 82% or more (Urząd Statystyczny w Warszawie, 2012).

Among the surveyed companies from the creative sector, 22% received support for the development of the company, including 15% of companies from WMA and 28% from the remaining sub-regions of Mazovia. Most forms of support came from the Operational Programme Innovative Economy (OPIE), from activities such as: Passport to Export, support for R&D investments in enterprises, support for the implementation of B2B e-business or business activity in the field of electronic commerce. The surveyed companies have very high expectations regarding support for the development of their business – at a level of 81% or more (Urząd Statystyczny w Warszawie, 2012, pp. 89–91).

A SWOT analysis for the Mazovian Voivodeship included important provisions for the development of the creative sector in Mazovia. An opportunity for the development of this sector in rural areas is seen, among others, in that the creative enterprises concentrated in sub-regional cities can be a sub-base for the development of the sector outside WMA (“growth poles”). It was also agreed that the location of creative businesses in rural areas (outside WMA) may be incited by their natural, clean environment, access to natural areas and peace. This is connected with the necessity to introduce new technologies which provide opportunities for: telework, which is an opportunity for the development of the creative sector, particularly in areas outside Warsaw; distribution and promotion of the creative sector products; access to e-commerce institutions, essential for creative entities in areas with poor transport accessibility and away from a potential market (Urząd Statystyczny w Warszawie, 2012, p. 113).

However, the prepared SWOT analysis does not take into account the existing differences between rural and urban areas in terms of access to the Internet – speeds offered to villages are often lower than 50 or 100 MB per second. Hence, running

a virtual company encounters difficulties, both nationally and internationally. The implementation of smart specialization strategies in the region should take into account the parallel implementation of the strategy of Internet infrastructure development adapted to the needs of business, regardless of its location, since this has an impact on local development. The threats to the creative sector included among others (Urząd Statystyczny w Warszawie, 2012, p. 114):

1. Reduction of demand as a consequence of an economic crisis, which may affect customers’ resignations from purchasing upscale products;
2. Lack of support for the sector in question, which is related to: the lack of a clear definition of importance of the creative sector to the economy by regional and local authorities; the lack of administrative and economic tools to support this sector as well as of scientific studies with recommendations for the authorities; a high degree of bureaucratization of the administration, which often has a disincentive impact on creators who consider starting their own (economic or social) business or applying for support.

Among other risks, the following were listed: a low level of intellectual property protection in our country, influencing the increase in the risk of unfair competition and displacement of a creative activity from the occupied space by an activity of higher profitability, both on the international and domestic scale.

The experience of Ireland shows that the success in building and developing the cultural and art sectors in rural areas depends on the adoption of three principles: building a “creative space”, building a capacity of “creative people” and “creative support”. Creative support from local and also regional authorities requires (White, 2013):

- Building networks and alliances – due to the low activity of entrepreneurs in building up networks in the sector and the wider economy, and isolation of rural creativity;
- Use of marketing, including promotion; need for a coherent marketing; priority is to build brands and create the possibility of presenting/showcasing (also online);

- Availability of financing, which requires the creation of legal criteria for funding, adjusting the financing to the needs of creative businesses e.g. to account for the risks and intellectual property;
- Creation of public procurement, taking into account the scale of needs, creativity in the preparation of tenders, balancing good plan/project.

In this country, the strong pillars of development are both the creative sector and knowledge services, with significant involvement of local authorities in creating a climate of development (promotional, informational activities, various kinds of domestic and EU funds, networking). A good example is County Leitrim (1,590 km<sup>2</sup>, approx. 32,000 inhabitants), which is one of the most agricultural regions in Western Ireland, but it can boast the highest employment rate in the creative sector. There are 97 creative entities registered in the county, which holds 20 major festivals and cultural events using the infrastructure of 33 “creative places” (White, 2015). The local county office is located in the village of Leitrim, with a population of approx. 500 inhabitants. For several years, Leitrim dwellers have been developing places of creative activities such as: The Dock (art gallery, space for performances), Leitrim Design House, Leitrim Sculpture Centre and Studio North West. As a result, the village is known as a “creative space” to promote the creative sector based on cultural heritage and the arts (Strzelecka, 2016). Under the new Creative Momentum project, whose main objective is to grow the creative and cultural economy, the following matrix of objectives was adopted, concerning also the rural areas: innovate new creative products/services through collaboration and increase creative and business skills, connect creative enterprises regionally and transnationally for new business opportunities, gather intelligence to increase understanding and support for the creative and cultural sector, bring creative products and services to domestic and international markets.

The research carried out for the Mazovian Voivodeship indicates that: “The effective functioning of the creative sector, which manifests itself in high productivity in the production of intellectual property, depends on the institutional and organi-

zational system allowing for the creation of added value. Elements of the added value chain indicate possible areas of public intervention. They also allow for the identification of critical fields from the point of view of the use of intellectual and social capital for the development of the creative sector.” (Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Mazowieckiego, 2012, p. 53). The adopted strategy of development of Mazovia and the Central Poland Macroregion takes into account these conclusions. The creative sector is one of the smart specializations in both regions. The aim of the recently set up Creative Mazovia Foundation [Fundacja Kreatywne Mazowsze] is to promote innovation in the Mazovian Voivodeship through the implementation of projects and programs that seek to ensure promotion of Mazovia to the group of 50 most innovative regions in the European Union by 2020. The question arises to what extent rural areas will be a stakeholder in this promotion.

### **3. The Potential of Creative Businesses in the Development of the Municipality of Puszcza Mariańska**

The municipality of Puszcza Mariańska is a rural municipality, located in the powiat of Żyrardów, in the Mazovian Voivodeship. Its location is peripheral, taking into account the division of the region into the aforementioned functional areas. As of 31 December 2014, the municipality consisted of 39 villages with the population of 8,272 inhabitants (municipal data). In the years 2002–2011, the municipality was creating its image of the “Entrepreneurial Municipality of Puszcza Mariańska that offers attractive conditions for residence, business development and recreation – “Z Warszawą ku Europie”, as evidenced in its development vision statement (Matusiak and Nowakowska, 2001, p. 6). In the current “Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Municipality of Puszcza Mariańska 2025”, this entry has been omitted. There is no information in this document about the fact that the municipality has the entrepreneurial potential related to the creative sector, although it transpired from the previously prepared reports for Mazovia that this sector is present in the

municipality (Rada Gminy w Puszczy Mariańskiej, 2015).

The research into the potential of creative businesses in the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska was conducted as of 31 December 2014 (Mazgajska, 2015). For the purposes of classification of creative industries, the Irish model was used with the activities related to the creative industries divided into three categories (Western Development Commission, 2013, pp. 28–31): *Creative Application* (comprising: art/antiques trade, architecture, publishing, advertising, crafts and fashion), *Creative Expression* (comprising the following industries: film, video and photography, music, visual and performing arts, radio and TV broadcasting) and *Creative Technology* (including: Internet and software, digital media, design – graphic design, web design). The study also included financial services, as activities supporting the creative sector in the municipality. This is consistent with the division of the creative sector into two groups adopted in Poland (Zarząd Województwa Łódzkiego, 2013, p. 78):

1) Creative industries, such as: advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design and fashion design, video, movie, musical

and photographic activities, artistic and entertainment activities, publishing, software activities; and

2) Knowledge-intensive industries, including manufacturing and services in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT), financial services, legal services and other business services (e.g. consulting, market research, research and development – R&D and higher education).

For the purposes of determining the structure and size of particular categories of creative businesses in this municipality, CEIDG [Central Registration and Information on Business] data were used. They allow for the assignment of selected types of businesses and entrepreneurs – as listed in PKD [Polish Classification of Economic Activities] – to individual categories (industries) of creative industries (Table 1).

According to the CEIDG database, at the end of 2014 there were 463 registered entrepreneurs (approx. 5.6% of the total population) in the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska. They represent an important human capital, and thus the development of the municipality. Among them, 91 ran the so-called creative businesses (19.7% of

Table 1. Summary of categories of creative businesses and their corresponding PKD codes (31.12.2014)

Category of creative industries (according to the Irish model)	PKD code (classification as of 2007)
Art, art and antique market	90.03.Z; 90.04.Z; 91.01.A; 91.01.B; 91.02.Z
Architecture	71.11.Z; 81.30.Z
Design and fashion design	74.10.Z
Publishing market	58.11.Z; 58.13.Z; 58.14.Z; 58.19.Z; 58.21.Z; 58.29.Z
Advertising	73.11.Z; 73.12.A; 73.12.B; 73.12.C; 73.12.D; 63.91.Z
Craft	16.29.Z; 23.41.Z; 32.12.Z; 32.13.Z; 32.40.Z
Music and performing arts	59.20.Z; 90.01.Z; 90.02.Z
Film, video and photography	59.11.Z; 59.12.Z; 59.14.Z; 74.20.Z
Radio and television	60.10.Z; 60.20.Z
Software	62.01.Z; 62.02.Z; 62.03.Z; 62.09.Z; 62.11.Z; 62.12.Z
Computer and video games	47.41.Z; 74.10.Z
Specialist design	74.10.Z
Financial services	64.19.Z; 64.30.Z; 64.91.Z; 64.92.Z; 64.99.Z; 65.11.Z; 65.12.Z; 65.20.Z; 65.30.Z; 66.11.Z; 66.12.Z; 66.19.Z; 66.21.Z; 66.22.Z; 66.29.Z; 66.30.Z; 68.10.Z; 68.20.Z; 68.31.Z; 68.32.Z; 69.20.Z; 70.22.Z; 82.19.Z

Source: S. Mazgajska (2015, pp. 69–71).

all entrepreneurs), but 80 companies, i.e. approx. 17.3% of all entities, were active. Creative entrepreneurs accounted for approx. 1.7% of the population of working age (5,254 people in 2014). They conducted operations in 12 categories, including financial services (Table 2). That table also shows the problems of comparability of databases in case of using different classification models of the creative sector and the cultural sector. Similarly to the CPM, creative sector industries most represented in the community were: architecture, advertising, and software. The number of creative businesses in particular industries in the municipality is represented as follows: architecture – 34, advertising – 33, software – 22, music and performing arts – 13, film, video and photography – 13, publishing market – 12, computer and video games – 12, crafts – 11, and art, art and antiques market – 11 entrepreneurs.

Financial services were provided by 68 entrepreneurs.

The map presented in Figure 1 illustrates spatial distribution of creative businesses, including financial services, in the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska. It also reflects spatial distribution of human capital – entrepreneurs, which can be used to create social capital by building networks. Currently, in the municipality there are no forms of business networking, e.g. in the form of clusters, although the municipality already has the potential that could be used towards this end. This applies for example to entrepreneurs conducting their business in the following industries: architecture – in 15 towns; software industry – in 14 towns; advertising – in 13 towns; publishing market, music and computer games – in 8 towns. Creative businesses are present in 24 towns (61.5% of the total number of localities), and including financial services

Table 2. Industry structure of entities of the creative sector in the Central Poland Macroregion and in the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska

Item	Category of the creative sector	The share of the creative sector [%]	
		Central Poland Macroregion (2012)	Municipality of Puszcza Mariańska (2014)
1	Architecture	10.40	7.34
2	Art, art and antique market	–	2.38
3	Design and fashion design	5.07	0.43
4	Publishing market (publishing activities)	9.29	2.59
5	Advertising	22.94	4.97
6	Music and performing arts	–	2.81
7	Film, video and photography	–	2.81
8	Radio and television (media)	10.05%	–
9	Software	18.82	4.75
10	Computer and video games	–	2.59
11	Specialist design	–	1.51
12	Crafts	2.38	2.38
13	Financial services	–	14.68
14	Film and video	6.55	–
15	Photography	5.84	–
16	Performing arts	4.09%	–
17	Music activities	1.27%	–
18	Literature and visual arts	3.29%	–

Source: S. Mazgajska (2015) and *Koncepcja Strategii Rozwoju Makroregionu Polski Centralnej 2030*.



– in 29 towns (74.4% of the total). In 15 villages, there are no registered creative entities. The largest concentration of creative businesses is in the north-western and northern parts of the municipality, which includes the village with the largest number of entities. In the municipality, the following villages stand out in terms of the number of creative entities (excluding financial services): Bartniki – 25 entities, Grabina Radziwiłłowska – 19 entities, Budy Zaklasztorne – 16 entities, Mrozy – 13 entities and Puszcza Mariańska – 10 entities. In 22 towns, the number of creative entrepreneurs does not exceed five, while in 10 villages there are no creative businesses at all. This applies mainly to the central, southern and eastern parts of the municipality.

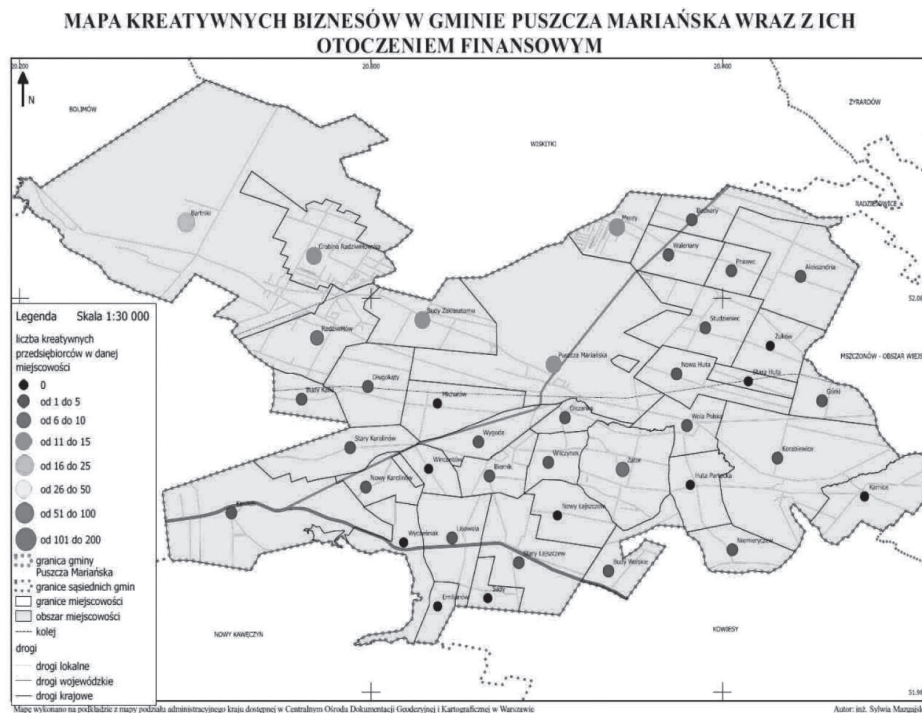
The factor conducive to the entrepreneurship of residents of certain municipalities is a network of railways – the route of the Warsaw-Vienna Railway,

Łowicz-Łuków via Skierniewice and Mszczonów – as well as a network of national and regional roads.

#### 4. Environment of the Creative Sector in the Municipality of Puszcza Mariańska

At the end of 2014, 19 associations were active in the community. They do not conduct business activity, but their actions contribute to building a climate of entrepreneurship in the municipality. Cultural and natural heritage is a major area or one of the areas of operation for 5 organizations (26% of the total). They use this potential in a creative way, i.e. as an inspiration and source material in their statutory activities. For example, “Echo Puszczy Bolimowskiej” Local Activity Group (LAG) uses natural and cultural resources for the purposes of promoting the municipality, organizing cultural events

Figure 1. Map of creative businesses, including financial services, in the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska



Source: S. Mazgajska (2015, app. 9, p. 166).

(e.g. festivals, picnics, fairs, exhibitions, sports rallies, etc.), and for information and printing purposes (brochures, leaflets, audio-visual materials, and creating websites). This association, acting for the sustainable development of rural areas, makes use of those resources for the development of tourism and regional products.

The Marian Movement of Socio-Economic Initiatives (MRIES) focuses on the activities supporting social and business development of local residents. The MRIES association provides advisory and training assistance to local leaders (including NGOs) from the poviát of Żyrardów and the municipality of Bolimów, consisting in professional legal and accounting consulting and assistance in obtaining EU funds. It also runs a base of services and products offered in the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska and an online database of tourist farms, organizes free computer courses and handicraft workshops. It is also involved in printing and in the creation of hiking trails. It is the initiator of the Marian Bike Rally. The result of MRIES activity is the provision of support to more than 70 organizations. In Puszcza Mariańska, there is a gallery, operating since the middle of 2014, which exhibits works by local artists and pursues cultural activities. More than 15 creators and artists live in the municipality. Together with other organizations, MRIES began publishing a free local newspaper, promoting NGOs and local activities (2011–2014).

Interviews with the leaders of the two most active non-governmental organizations, i.e. LAG (2008) and MRIES (1997), demonstrate that the available natural, cultural and business resources of the municipality are both factors conducive to the development of the community and barriers to its development. In particular, this is due to the low level of activity of the municipal authorities in developing these resources, using them for the purpose of creating a local product, as a unique identification of the municipality. According to the two leaders, the improvement of the quality of life in this municipality requires the following changes (Mazgajska, pp. 96–98): increased activity of municipal authorities focused on the development of entrepreneurship in the community; developing a local product

and tourism development; reactivating the community centre and greater accessibility of the cultural and sports offer as well as activities for children; a wider range of jobs and wage growth; increasing the frequency of public transport in the centre and south of the municipality; improving co-operation of the municipal office with NGOs and supporting them in their efforts on behalf of the community; improving communication and relations between the municipality office, residents and NGOs.

Thanks to the described human capital (members of non-governmental organizations), cultural and sports joint ventures are initiated in the municipality, strategic and planning municipality documents are assessed, and national and EU funds are obtained from the ESF, LIDER+ and the Norwegian Fund (LAG). Organizations also participate in the implementation of selected public tasks. The leader of MRIES estimates that the operations of this organization have contributed to the development of the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska in about 60%, and the leader of the LAG estimates this impact at the level of 30%. Both organizations see the need for changes in the quality of cooperation with the municipal authorities by acting as an animator of activities and a co-executor of projects. LAG, as the organisation, can play a leading role or can be co-manager of joint venture projects, projects financed with EU and national funds.

Local authorities of the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska are not so active in strengthening the local economy and entrepreneurs; they do not promote the benefits of the right to settle and to run creative businesses in the villages of unique natural and cultural values. In the municipality, the creative sector does not make a significant use of the rich natural and cultural heritage, there is no infrastructure for its development, e.g. there is no community centre, and the municipality lacks affordable commercial units and exhibition venues. The municipality has not participated in any important national and international projects conducive to the development of the creative sector. Unsatisfactory is the level of development of tourism in Puszcza Mariańska and neighbouring municipalities, and there are no cultural events, well-known in the

country/region, to support the development of the municipality. According to GUS [Central Statistical Office] data as at the end of 2014, the municipality did not have tourist accommodation facilities. Forwarding research findings on creative businesses to the municipal authorities and NGOs, MRIES evoked no interest in this matter. In the current development strategy of the municipality, there is no information on the structure and importance of the creative sector in the development of the municipality, although this strategy was prepared by a Warsaw consulting company which should be familiar with the reports drawn up by various government agencies.

It should be emphasized, however, that local governments have limited possibilities of supporting the cultural and creative sectors due to the state aid rules. From a business perspective, the difficulty for them lies in the unavailability of grants for projects (which are available to non-governmental organizations). Other restrictions apply to EU funding: some projects involving the creation of infrastructure should not generate profit for a grace period of several years, which discourages the business sector from co-operating.

The Mazovian Voivodeship seeks to identify, strengthen and develop the potential of the creative sector in an active and targeted way, so that Mazovia could qualify for one of the most innovative regions in the European Union in 2020. In the context of the regional strategy for Mazovia and the CPM strategy, it can be said that rural areas are the hinterland for major cities but not always a partner for regional development. This also applies to the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska. The activities undertaken in Mazovia are oriented towards the existing and well-established industries, operating mainly in urban areas, where the infrastructure accompanying creative entities has already been to a large extent developed. The creation by the Mazovia Development Agency of a system of regional clusters, as an essential element of the innovation policy, is currently targeted at selecting and supporting clusters with high economic potential, which will affect the socio-economic development and competitive position of the region. At the moment, the entrepreneurs in the discussed municipality

are not a real target of this initiative. A competition for innovation vouchers directed to microbusinesses could represent an opportunity for some of them, including companies from the creative sector. The competition is run by the Mazovian EU Programmes Implementation Unit under the initiative "Smart Specializations, i.e. Investing in the Strengths of the Region" (Fundacja Kreatywne Mazowsze, 2016, p. 24).

## 5. Conclusion

In rural areas, we are dealing with a different scale of development phenomena, their intensity, other challenges and activities than in the city. This also applies to the creative sector and the cultural sector. This does not mean the absence of these sectors from rural municipalities, including Puszcza Mariańska. Both sectors are represented in this municipality by 80 active entrepreneurs, accounting for approx. 17.3% of all registered entities. They operate in 12 categories associated with these sectors.

Programming documents of the Mazovian Voivodeship and undertaken initiatives emphasize the peripheral character of development resources owned by the municipality of Puszcza Mariańska. Creative entities in this rural community are not essential to the region's development potential, but also they have no relevance to the municipal authorities, taking into account the provisions of the new strategy for the municipality until 2025. The diffusion of knowledge and technology occurs, but this is thanks to the activity of the entrepreneurs of this municipality. Neither entrepreneurs nor local authorities fully utilize the great potential of cultural and natural heritage for the development of creative businesses. Capacity building of creative human and social capital, involving mainly NGOs, takes place without sufficient support of local authorities.

An important aspect is the skilful management of the potential of the creative sector. The creative potential of the village is not studied, analysed and supported in the development to such an extent as in the cities. Local authorities are not aware enough of the attractiveness of the potential of rural areas as a "healthy" development

alternative, based on the model of creative businesses. Municipal authorities lack measures aimed at the integration of creative societies at the local level; they do not organize networking meetings; do not conduct training projects for the creative industries; do not have a system of recommendations for products, services, partners in these industries; do not promote a given municipality/town as friendly to the cultural sector, or also the creative sector; nor do they create incentives to transfer the representatives of the creative class, e.g. artists, designers, architects, etc., from the city to the countryside.

Prior experience connected with the development of the municipalities shows that improvement of their infrastructure without linking it to the economic activity undertaken in the countryside will not protect the municipalities e.g. from the migration of young people. Therefore, it would be beneficial if this infrastructure was conducive to the development of rural entrepreneurship and networking of the companies e.g. by launching cluster initiatives, pursuing creative business globally (broadband, fast Internet network, comparable to the urban network), ensuring transport accessibility, building the infrastructure of creative places and culture, and infrastructure of management, consulting, promotion and financial support. Building the potential of creative business in rural areas requires the use of the following approach: Creative Place, Creative People and Creative Management.

One of the basic tools for modelling the development of the creative sector of municipalities, including rural communities, should be a map of the creative sector. This tool assists with decision-making processes associated with the directions of the economic development of the municipality and allows the rural communities to enjoy the benefits of the scale effect, as is the case in small towns of the Cittaslow network (Strzelecka, 2016a). Puszcza Mariańska does not use this tool.

Further research is needed, aimed at identifying the potential of the creative sector in rural areas and the possibility of incorporating it into local and regional development (management and financing systems, etc.) and at working out the methodology for assessing intellectual capital and creative activities in the

countryside. What is obvious in building up the creative sector in cities requires – in rural (peripheral, intermediate and suburban) areas – a conscious political involvement of decision-makers in the creation of mechanisms supporting the development of this sector in the country. Copying urban patterns is not advisable.

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