

# PRACE NAUKOWE

Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu

# RESEARCH PAPERS

of Wrocław University of Economics

Nr 402

## Polityka ekonomiczna

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Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu  
Wrocław 2015

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Wrocław 2015

**ISSN 1899-3192**  
**e-ISSN 2392-0041**

**ISBN 978-83-7695-534-6**

Wersja pierwotna: publikacja drukowana

Zamówienia na opublikowane prace należy składać na adres:  
Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu  
ul. Komandorska 118/120 53-345 Wrocław  
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Druk i oprawa: TOTEM

## Spis treści

<b>Wstęp</b> .....	9
<b>Piotr Adamczewski:</b> Informatyczne wspomaganie organizacji sieciowych...	11
<b>Franciszek Adamczuk:</b> Górnoślązki Związek Sześciu Miast (GZSM) – sieciowy produkt regionalny na pograniczu polsko-niemieckim.....	20
<b>Grażyna Adamczyk-Łojewska, Adam Bujarkiewicz:</b> Wieloczynnikowa metoda oceny przekształceń w strukturze przestrzennej gospodarki Polski.....	30
<b>Wioletta Bieńkowska-Gołasa:</b> The ways of acquiring investors by self-government authorities exemplified by the Mazowieckie Voivodeship.....	40
<b>Małgorzata Bogusz, Marcin Tomaszewski:</b> Wykorzystanie środków pomocowych UE na rozwój przedsiębiorczości w ramach PROW 2007–2013..	50
<b>Magdalena Czulowska, Marcin Żekało:</b> Regionalne różnicowanie efektów produkcyjnych i ekonomicznych w wyspecjalizowanych gospodarstwach mlecznych.....	60
<b>Ireneusz Dąbrowski, Zbigniew Staniek:</b> Property rights in the process of privatization of the Polish energy sector.....	70
<b>Monika Fabińska:</b> Klastry w nowej perspektywie programowej 2014–2020	84
<b>Aleksander Grzelak:</b> Procesy reprodukcji majątku a poziom dopłat do działalności operacyjnej i inwestycyjnej w gospodarstwach rolnych prowadzących rachunkowość rolną (FADN).....	95
<b>Ewa Gwardzińska:</b> Zmiany w strukturze rynku usług pośrednictwa celnego w Polsce.....	104
<b>Tomasz Holecki, Karolina Sobczyk, Magdalena Syrkiewicz-Świtała, Michał Wróblewski, Katarzyna Lar:</b> Usługa zdrowotna jako narzędzie budowania przewagi konkurencyjnej.....	114
<b>Katarzyna Anna Jabłońska:</b> Klastry energetyczne jako narzędzie wspierania rozwoju nowoczesnych systemów elektroenergetycznych.....	123
<b>Ewa Jaska, Agnieszka Werenowska:</b> Wizerunek spółki giełdowej a jej notowania.....	133
<b>Urszula Kobylińska:</b> Innowacje w administracji publicznej w Polsce na poziomie samorządu lokalnego.....	142
<b>Aleksandra Koźlak:</b> Gospodarcze, społeczne i ekologiczne skutki kongestii transportowej.....	153
<b>Justyna Kujawska:</b> Analiza porównawcza dostępności do świadczeń opieki zdrowotnej w polskich województwach.....	165
<b>Renata Lisowska:</b> Współpraca małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw w regionie – stymulatory i bariery.....	175

<b>Piotr Lityński:</b> Degree and features of urban sprawl in selected largest Polish cities .....	184
<b>Aleksandra Majda:</b> Succession strategy in Polish family businesses – a comparative analysis.....	194
<b>Arkadiusz Malkowski:</b> Koncepcje rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego obszarów przygranicznych .....	210
<b>Aleksandra Nacewska-Twardowska:</b> Wpływ sankcji rosyjskich na wymianę towarową Polski.....	220
<b>Małgorzata Niklewicz-Pijaczyńska, Małgorzata Wachowska:</b> Stopień komercjalizacji polskich wynalazków. Patenty akademickie a patenty biznesu	231
<b>Karolina Olejniczak:</b> Funkcjonowanie i obszary wsparcia Szwajcarsko-Polskiego Programu Współpracy .....	240
<b>Iwona Oleniuch:</b> Rola facylitatorów sieci w rozwoju klastrów .....	251
<b>Dorota Pasińska:</b> Polski rynek wołowiny po wstąpieniu do Unii Europejskiej	261
<b>Katarzyna Peter-Bombik, Agnieszka Szczudlińska-Kanoś:</b> Family policy as a postulate in the Polish presidential election in 2015 .....	273
<b>Elżbieta Pohulak-Żołędowska:</b> Innowacyjność przedsiębiorstw w gospodarce rynkowej.....	284
<b>Halina Powęska:</b> Inwestycje w handlu w regionach przygranicznych Polski	297
<b>Marcin Ratajczak:</b> Wdrażanie kluczowych składowych koncepcji CSR w małych i średnich przedsiębiorstwach agrobiznesu z Małopolski.....	307
<b>Ewa Rollnik-Sadowska:</b> Bariery popytu na pracę w wymiarze regionalnym na przykładzie podlaskich producentów bielizny .....	318
<b>Jarosław Ropega:</b> Przetrawianie małych firm w Polsce a systemy ostrzegania przed niepowodzeniem .....	327
<b>Ewa Rosiak:</b> Zmiany na rynku rzepaku po integracji Polski z Unią Europejską	338
<b>Dariusz Eligiusz Staszczak:</b> Zmiany pozycji głównych uczestników handlu międzynarodowego.....	348
<b>Piotr Szajner:</b> Relacje cenowe na polskim rynku mleka po akcesji do Unii Europejskiej .....	359
<b>Maciej Szczepkowski:</b> Strefy wolnego handlu w Rumunii na tle rozwiązań światowych .....	368
<b>Karolina Szymaniec-Mlicka:</b> Wykorzystanie podejścia zasobowego do poprawy funkcjonowania organizacji publicznych .....	378
<b>Agnieszka Zalewska-Bochenko:</b> Białostocka Karta Miejska jako przykład innowacyjnego narzędzia zarządzania komunikacją miejską na terenie Białostockiego Obszaru Metropolitalnego .....	387
<b>Anna Zielińska-Chmielewska, Tomasz Strózik:</b> Ocena klasyfikacji pozycyjnej przedsiębiorstw przetwórstwa mięsnego według stanu ich kondycji finansowej w ujęciu dynamicznym.....	397
<b>Arkadiusz Żabiński:</b> Realizacja funkcji stymulacyjnej w uldze na zakup nowych technologii.....	409

## Summaries

<b>Piotr Adamczewski:</b> Computer-aid in network organizations .....	11
<b>Franciszek Adamczuk:</b> The Upper Sorbian Six-City League – regional network product on the Polish-German borderland .....	20
<b>Grażyna Adamczyk-Łojewska, Adam Bujarkiewicz:</b> Multifactorial assessment method of transformation in the spatial structure of Polish economy .....	30
<b>Wioletta Bieńkowska-Gołasa:</b> Sposoby pozyskiwania inwestorów przez władze samorządowe na przykładzie województwa mazowieckiego .....	40
<b>Małgorzata Bogusz, Marcin Tomaszewski:</b> The use of the European Union aid funds for the development of entrepreneurship in the frame of Rural Development Program in 2007–2013 .....	50
<b>Magdalena Czulowska, Marcin Żekalo:</b> Regional diversity of production and economic effects in specialised dairy farms .....	60
<b>Ireneusz Dąbrowski, Zbigniew Staniek:</b> Prawa własności w procesie prywatyzacji polskiego sektora energetycznego .....	70
<b>Monika Fabińska:</b> Clusters in the new programming perspective 2014–2020 .....	84
<b>Aleksander Grzelak:</b> The processes of reproduction of assets vs. the level of operating and investing subsidies in agricultural holdings conducting agricultural accountancy (FADN).....	95
<b>Ewa Gwardzińska:</b> Changes in the structure of customs brokerage services market in Poland .....	104
<b>Tomasz Holecki, Karolina Sobczyk, Magdalena Syrkiewicz-Świtała, Michał Wróblewski, Katarzyna Lar:</b> Health service as an instrument of competitive advantage building .....	114
<b>Katarzyna Anna Jabłońska:</b> Energy clusters as a tool of support of development of modern electroenergy systems .....	123
<b>Ewa Jaska, Agnieszka Werenowska:</b> The image of a listed company and its quotes .....	133
<b>Urszula Kobylińska:</b> Innovation in the public sector at the local government in Poland .....	142
<b>Aleksandra Koźlak:</b> Economic, social and environmental effects of transport congestion .....	153
<b>Justyna Kujawska:</b> Comparative analysis of accessibility to the healthcare services in Polish voivodeships .....	165
<b>Renata Lisowska:</b> Cooperation of small and medium-sized enterprises in the region – stimulants and barriers.....	175
<b>Piotr Lityński:</b> Stopień i cechy zjawiska <i>urban sprawl</i> w wybranych największych polskich miastach.....	184
<b>Aleksandra Majda:</b> Strategia sukcesyjna w polskich firmach rodzinnych – analiza porównawcza.....	194

<b>Arkadiusz Malkowski:</b> Socio-economic development concepts for border regions.....	210
<b>Aleksandra Nacewska-Twardowska:</b> The influence of Russian sanctions on Polish trade .....	220
<b>Małgorzata Niklewicz-Pijaczyńska, Małgorzata Wachowska:</b> The degree of commercialisation of Polish inventions. Academic patents vs. business patents .....	231
<b>Karolina Olejniczak:</b> Functioning and support areas of the Swiss-Polish Co-operation Programme.....	240
<b>Iwona Oleniuch:</b> The role of network facilitators in the development of clusters.....	251
<b>Dorota Pasińska:</b> Polish beef market after the accession to the European Union .....	261
<b>Katarzyna Peter-Bombik, Agnieszka Szczudlińska-Kanoś:</b> Polityka rodzinna jako postulat w wyborach prezydenckich w 2015 roku.....	273
<b>Elżbieta Pohulak-Żołędowska:</b> Innovation in enterprises in the conditions of market economy .....	284
<b>Halina Powęska:</b> Investment in trade in border regions in Poland .....	297
<b>Marcin Ratajczak:</b> Implementation of key components of CSR concept in small and medium-sized enterprises of agribusiness from Lesser Poland .....	307
<b>Ewa Rollnik-Sadowska:</b> Barriers of labour demand in the regional dimension exemplified by the Podlasie lingerie manufacturers .....	318
<b>Jarosław Ropega:</b> Survival of small companies in Poland vs. failure warning systems.....	327
<b>Ewa Rosiak:</b> Changes on the Polish rapeseed market after the integration with the European Union .....	338
<b>Dariusz Eligiusz Staszczak:</b> Changes of major participants' positions in the international trade .....	348
<b>Piotr Szajner:</b> Price relationships on the Polish milk market after the accession to the European Union .....	359
<b>Maciej Szczepkowski:</b> Free trade zones in Romania in comparison to world solutions .....	368
<b>Karolina Szymaniec-Mlicka:</b> The use of resource-based view to improve the functioning of public organisations .....	378
<b>Agnieszka Zalewska-Bochenko:</b> The Białystok Urban Card as an example of an innovative tool of management of public transport within the territory of the Białystok Metropolitan Area .....	387
<b>Anna Zielińska-Chmielewska, Tomasz Strózik:</b> Assessment of the positional classification of chosen meat processing enterprises according to the state of their financial condition – a dynamic approach .....	397
<b>Arkadiusz Żabiński:</b> The function of stimulation in tax relief on the purchase of new technologies .....	409

**Wioletta Bieńkowska-Gołasa**

Warsaw University of Life Science – SGGW

e-mail: wioletta\_bienkowska@sggw.pl

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## THE WAYS OF ACQUIRING INVESTORS BY SELF-GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES EXEMPLIFIED BY THE MAZOWIECKIE VOIVODESHIP

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## SPOSOBY POZYSKIWANIA INWESTORÓW PRZEZ WŁADZE SAMORZĄDOWE NA PRZYKŁADZIE WOJEWÓDZTWA MAZOWIECKIEGO

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DOI: 10.15611/pn.2015.402.04

**Abstract:** The first part of the article explains the term and nature of local development theoretically. The aim of the empirical research was to describe the actions of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship rural districts towards acquiring investors in their area, depending on the social and economic level of the examined units (second part). The research was conducted in all the rural districts of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (229), and the main material consisted of the data obtained from the Local Data Bank (the Central Statistical Office) and the survey questionnaire. It was concluded that the vast majority of the examined districts, regardless of their local development level, considered a unit's website to be the best form of promotion. The construction and development of local infrastructure, which in turn contributes to raising the investment attractiveness of a district, was an equally significant incentive for potential external investors.

**Keywords:** local development, district, local government, Mazowieckie.

**Streszczenie:** W pierwszej części artykułu przybliżono pojęcie i istotę rozwoju lokalnego w ujęciu teoretycznym. Natomiast w drugiej, na podstawie badań empirycznych opisano działania samorządów gmin wiejskich województwa mazowieckiego w dążeniu do pozyskiwania inwestorów na ich terenie w zależności od poziomu społeczno-gospodarczego badanych jednostek. Badania przeprowadzono we wszystkich gminach wiejskich województwa mazowieckiego (229), a głównym materiałem były dane pozyskane z Banku Danych Lokalnych (GUS) oraz kwestionariusz ankiety. Stwierdzono, iż w większości badanych gmin, niezależnie od poziomu ich rozwoju lokalnego, uznano, że najskuteczniejszą formą promocji było posiadanie strony internetowej jednostki. Równie istotnym bodźcem przyciągającym potencjalnych inwestorów zewnętrznych była budowa i rozwój lokalnej infrastruktury, co z kolei przyczynia się do zwiększenia atrakcyjności inwestycyjnej w danej gminie.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rozwój lokalny, gmina, władze samorządowe, Mazowieckie.

## 1. Introduction

The territorial and administrative structure reform conducted in Poland considerably contributed to the introduction of changes in the management system of local and regional development. At present a significant role is attributed to both state authorities and territorial self-government units' representatives. Self-government authorities take an active, direct, and indirect part in stimulating the development of single units. Their task is to manage council property and financial resources (including those coming from the EU). Nowadays the management of territorial self-government units does not only consist in allocating resources, but it also involves accumulating them. It is thanks to a rational economic policy aimed at, i.a., infrastructural investments, service sector development, labour market, as well as promotion, and local and regional marketing.

The aim of the empirical research was to describe the actions of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship rural districts towards acquiring investors in their area, depending on the social and economic level of the examined units. The data resulting from the primary research was combined with the data coming from the Local Data Bank (the Central Statistical Office), which allowed to determine the social and economic level of the examined units.

## 2. The nature and term of the local development – the theoretical presentation

Local development is recognized in Poland as a social and economic category which does not have a long-lasting tradition in economic sciences. Despite the above, it cannot be claimed that this is a completely new category because the activity of self-government units concentrated on the improvement of local community livelihood, rational use of available local resources, and searching for modern and effective solutions for the economic sector [Szewczuk, Kogut-Jaworska, Ziolo 2011].

The literature on local and regional development does not provide a single, universal definition of this term. That is why for better understanding of the local development nature, it seems to be justified to mention such terms as: development, economic development, localness, local community.

Popularly, development is understood as a process of targeted changes and the consecutive stages of changes in a particular object or system. Development, also at a local level, shows the complex character of this phenomenon because of the rising significance of non-economic elements. This term is difficult to define as it covers social, economic, and environmental issues [Bonarska-Treit 2013, p. 65].

In economic sciences, the term of development is sometimes used interchangeably with the term of economic growth. However, economic development is a wider term because it is the effect of positive changes in quantitative growth and qualitative

progress in economic, social, and natural systems. On the other hand, growth is a quantitative category which means the increase of the scale of an enterprise activity.

In his review of this term definitions, G. Gorzelak articulates four theses. The first one indicates that development is a multi-dimensional category. This means that it combines numerous interdependent processes and phenomena (social, political, economic, technical, psychological, and cultural ones). The second thesis states that development is a wider category than growth. Development consists in increasing the number of elements of a system and its complexity while the growth of a system means increasing these elements. The third thesis indicates that development is a dynamic category, which means that the mutual relations of its particular elements are not fixed. They undergo slow changes. The last thesis claims that development is spatially diverse [Gorzelak (ed.)1989, p. 15].

Undoubtedly, the term “local development” is related to the terms “localness” and “local community”. The expression “local” describes “an entity connected to a specific location in space, belonging to this location and because of this belonging, possessing specific characteristics. On the other hand, localness as a noun formed from the adjective local, in its basic understanding, means a limitation to a given location” [Chądzyński, Nowakowski, Przygodzki 2007].

The subject literature does not provide a single, recognized by all the researchers that deal with this category, definition of local development.

According to L. Wojtasiewicz, local development should be defined as a process of positive qualitative changes in a given area which concern the living standard of its inhabitants [Wojtasiewicz 1997, p. 9]. B. Gruchman understands local development as development of productive forces, which mainly include industry, economic and social infrastructure of a given town. He thinks that development may take place only due to technological progress, which influences local development to a bigger or smaller extent. The lack of progress means stagnation [Gruchman 1990, p. 117].

R. Brol defines local development as “a harmonized and consistent action of a local community, local authorities and other entities operating in a district, which aims at creating new and improving the existing functional values of the district, creating favourable conditions for the local economy, and ensuring the spatial and environmental order” [Brol 1998, p. 11]. This approach indicates collaboration and actions of numerous entities whose aim is to improve the living and managing conditions. At the same time the actions improve the competitiveness of a given territorial unit.

W. Kłosowski defines local development in an interesting way. He states that it is “a sum of such local changes that result in the increase of the sum of individual development chances of single inhabitants.” He concludes that local development does not mean kilometres of roads, which are just a means to an end, but it is expressed by the smiling faces and proudly straight backs of inhabitants, who are satisfied with the changes in their lives [Feltynowski 2009, p. 140].

S.L. Bagdziński includes the terms of territory, local system, and local resources in his definition of development. Thus local development means “constant, combined, positive changes in the territory of a local system, which result from the local natural and material resources and from the local community’s characteristics supporting the development.” On the other hand, the results of these changes make inhabitants more satisfied and affluent [Bagdziński 1994, p. 17].

Summing up the discussion on the term and nature of local development, it can be concluded that local development is an autonomic process, which means that it goes in line with the market principles and rules. Moreover, local development is empowered, which is indicated by the fact that it is a specific process bringing benefits to the entities which take part in it. Local development is a long-lasting process. Its roots can be seen in historical factors, production, political, and cultural traditions of people, and what is more, it considerably depends on a local community attitudes [Kot 2003].

### 3. The research material and methodology

Empirical studies were conducted in two stages in all the rural districts of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (229 units). The first one consisted in determining the social and economic level of the examined units (local level), and the data from the Local Data Bank of the Central Statistical Office were the statistical material. To determine the local level of the examined districts, Z. Hellwig’s taxonomic method of development pattern was applied [Hellwig 1968]. He was the first to use synthetic variables to order multi-dimensional social and economic objects as far as their development is concerned. The construction of a synthetic measure of local development ( $Z_j$ ) was done in several consecutive stages. It was preceded by a process of selecting diagnostic variables which describe the phenomenon of the social and economic development of districts. The variables were distinguished with the consideration of three types of criteria, such as: factual, formal and statistical ones [Obrębalski 2006, p. 33]. Moreover, these characteristics should not be mutually correlated, but they have to be strongly correlated with the variable or variables explained in the model. Considering the statistical criteria, the variables chosen for the studies underwent a selection according to the value of variation coefficient. For each variable  $j$ , the variation coefficient was computed. It is a relative measure of dispersion and it is determined as a relation of the standard deviation to the value of the arithmetic mean, according to the following formula:

$$V_j = \frac{S_j}{x_j}, j = 1, 2, 3, \dots, n,$$

where:  $V_j$  – the variation coefficient of the variable  $j$ ;  $S_j$  – the standard deviation of the variable  $j$ , computed by means of the formula:

$$S_j = \sqrt{m^{-1} \sum_{i=1}^m (x_{ij} - \bar{x}_j)^2},$$

where:  $\bar{x}$  – the arithmetic mean of the variable  $j$ , computed by means of the formula:

$$\bar{x}_j = m^{-1} \sum_{i=1}^n x_{ij}.$$

Next, quasi-variables – constants – were removed from the set of the selected research variables. Quasi-variables are variables that do not bring any significant information about an examined phenomenon. They satisfy the inequality  $|V_j| \leq V^*$  where  $V^*$  is the critical value of the variation coefficient and was assumed as 0.1.

Subsequently, the strength of the correlation between the variables was examined by means of Pearson's correlation coefficient, also known as linear correlation coefficient. This coefficient is a measure of the strength between the measurable characteristics (variables) [Sobczyk 2007] and is expressed by means of the formula:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x}) \cdot (y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \bar{y})^2}},$$

where:  $r_{xy}$  – Pearson's linear correlation coefficient;  $x, y$  – measurable statistical characteristics;  $\bar{x}, \bar{y}$  – arithmetic mean of characteristics  $x$  and  $y$ .

Finally, the research covered 15 variables describing various fields of the social and economic life of the examined districts, i.e.:

- $X_1$  – the share of a district's own income in the overall income in %,
- $X_2$  – a district's overall income per one inhabitant in PLN,
- $X_3$  – a district's investment expenses per one inhabitant in PLN,
- $X_4$  – the percentage of people using water supply system in the overall number of people in %,
- $X_5$  – the percentage of people using sewage system in the overall number of people in %,
- $X_6$  – the percentage of people using gas supply system in the overall number of people in %,
- $X_7$  – the percentage of flats equipped with a bathroom in %,
- $X_8$  – the percentage of flats equipped with central heating in %,
- $X_9$  – the average floor area of a flat per 1 person in  $m^2$ ,
- $X_{10}$  – the number of people at economically unproductive age per 100 people at economically productive age,
- $X_{11}$  – number of people per  $km^2$  (population density),

$X_{12}$  – commercial companies and partnerships with foreign capital registered in the REGON records in the overall number of entities,

$X_{13}$  – the number of registered associations and community organizations,

$X_{14}$  – the share of the registered unemployed in the number of economically productive people %,

$X_{15}$  – the number of district councillors with university education.

The computed values of the local development measure ( $Z_i$ ) for all rural districts of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship were the starting point for linear ordering of these objects, as well as distinguishing their typological groups. To classify the examined districts as far as their local (social and economic) development is concerned, the arithmetic mean  $\bar{z}$  was used, as well as the standard deviation  $S_z$  [Bieńkowska 2013]. The set of objects was divided into four classes, which are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The class division of districts according to their local development

Class	Criterion	Class description
I	$Z_i \geq \bar{Z} + S_z$	high level of local development
II	$\bar{Z} + S_z > Z_i \geq \bar{Z}$	medium level of local development
III	$\bar{Z} > Z_i \geq \bar{Z} - S_z$	low level of local development
IV	$Z_i < \bar{Z} - S_z$	very low level of local development

Source: author's own work based on [Nowak 1990, p. 93].

Later the information on the ways of acquiring investors to place capital in the area of a given unit was gathered from the representatives of district authorities. It was done by means of the method of diagnostic survey with the use of the technique of a standardized questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to all rural districts of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (229 districts); nevertheless, the replies came from 137 districts, which accounted for almost 60% of the examined districts.

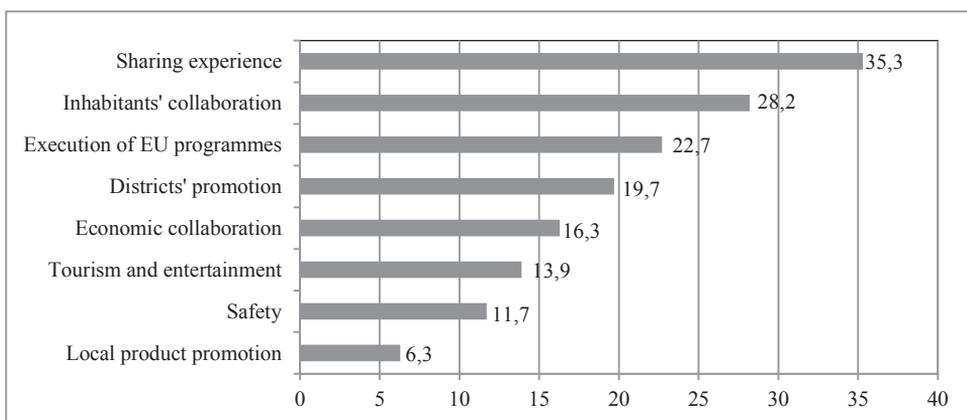
#### 4. Research outcomes

Nowadays the actions for local development should concentrate on the rules of marketing management, which is especially significant while operating in the free market economy. It should be executed as territorial marketing understood as market activities of regions' representatives aiming to attract both investors and potential inhabitants [Girard 1997, p. 70, 71].

The appropriate and effective at the same time promotion of a district outside is becoming a significant determinant of development, and it is also necessary for the delivery of a district's strategy which directly aims at attracting home and foreign capital to the area of a given district [Kłodziński 1997]. Gaining knowledge of the ways of contacting potential investors and of the forms of advertisement by local

authorities' representatives would significantly contribute to attracting external investors to the area of a given district. Local authorities can use various techniques to encourage investing in their area [Kłodziński 2006, p. 58].

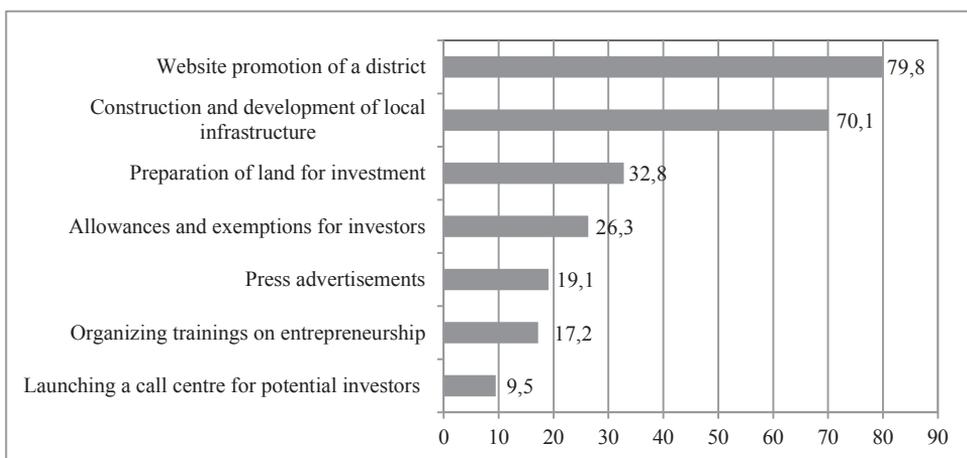
Collaboration with partner districts and taking joint actions to acquire investors belong to the forms of promoting a region, and thus disseminating the information on a given unit values. Detailed data are presented in Figure 1.



*N* = 137 districts (a respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer).

**Figure 1.** The examined districts' collaboration with partner districts (in %)

Source: the author's research.



*N* = 137 districts (a respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer).

**Figure 2.** Ways of acquiring new investors by local authorities (in %)

Source: the author's research.

Most often, the collaboration of partner districts consisted in sharing experience. The collaboration of local communities was in the second place. Partner collaboration also concerned the execution of the EU programmes and the promotion of a district. Yet the most seldom used forms of collaboration included co-working as regards promoting a local product and safety.

Acquiring new investors by district authorities is an important issue for local development. Self-government bodies' tasks include, i.a., promoting entrepreneurship, conducting information activity to encourage potential investors to invest their capital in the unit area. Figure 2 presents information concerning the ways of acquiring new investors by local authorities.

Almost 80% of respondents indicated that promoting a district on the website was the most effective method of acquiring investors. Slightly fewer respondents indicated the construction and development of local infrastructure. Next it was declared that preparing the land for investment was a significant factor. In every fourth district, allowances and exemptions for entrepreneurs were applied and advertisements were placed in the press. Almost 10% of districts launched a call centre for potential investors.

**Table 2.** The ways of acquiring new investors by district authorities according to the level of local development (in %)

List of items*	District classes according to the measure of local development			
	Class I N = 10	Class II N = 52	Class III N = 71	Class IV N = 4
Website promotion of a district	50.0	73.1	71.8	75.0
Improvement and development of local infrastructure	60.0	75.0	66.2	100.0
Preparation of land for investment	40.0	32.7	32.4	25.0
Press advertisements	20.0	19.2	35.2	0.0
Using allowances and exemptions for investors	40.0	23.1	29.6	25.0
Organizing trainings on entrepreneurship	20.0	23.1	21.1	0.0
Launching a call centre for potential investors	30.0	5.8	9.9	0.0

\*A respondent was allowed to indicate more than one answer.

Source: the author's research.

Regardless of the level of local development, self-government authorities' representatives considered promoting a district on the website and improvement and development of local infrastructure, especially road network, as the most effective way of acquiring new investors. That is why the actions of local authorities in all the examined districts should aim at updating websites of the districts to provide potential investors with the access to necessary information, and at improving tech-

nical infrastructure. The appropriate promotion of a district outside is a significant determinant of development, and it is also necessary for the delivery of a district's strategy. The latter, in turn, directly contributes to attracting new investors to the area of a given district.

## 5. Conclusions

The research on local authorities' actions towards acquiring investors enabled drawing the following conclusions.

1. The vast majority of the examined districts, regardless of their local development level, considered a unit's website to be the best form of promotion. This was indicated by 80% of the surveyed population.

2. The construction and development of local infrastructure, which in turn contributes to raising the investment attractiveness of a district, was an equally significant incentive for potential external investors. This response was declared by three quarters of respondents.

3. The districts with a lower level of local development (included in class IV) prepared the land for investment to a smaller extent and they did not launch a call centre for potential investors.

The modern economy issues to local authorities challenges that require from them a shift in the approach to district management towards business-like activities. Thus it can be claimed that the prerequisites for efficient management of local development include on the one hand the ability to recognize chances and opportunities, as well as the existing risks, and on the other – the actions taken by self-government authorities for the development of the community, economy, and space to create the appropriate conditions for potential investors.

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