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## **Cittaslow - Alternative Idea of Urban Development of Small Cities** *Cittaslow - alternatywna koncepcja rozwoju małych miast*

### **Streszczenie**

Stowarzyszenie Slow Cities (CittaSlow) jest organizacją non-profit, której celem jest rozpowszechnianie kultury dobrego życia i ma swój początek w ruchu Slow Food promującym zdrową żywność. Główne założenie Slow Cities to stworzenie zdrowych, przyjaznych warunków życia z wykorzystaniem zasobów regionu, poprzez wytworzenie więzi emocjonalnej mieszkańców z danym miejscem, której przejawem jest ich aktywność na rzecz jego rozwoju. Działania, przez które realizowana jest idea Slow Cities, mają na celu wzmacnianie świadomości historycznej i pielęgnowanie tożsamości regionalnej mieszkańców oraz podnoszenie atrakcyjności turystycznej i inwestycyjnej miast. Ta powstała 1999 r. we Włoszech idea, pięć lat później dotarła do Polski, gdy Reszel zgłosił akces do stowarzyszenia. Warmińsko-mazurskie początki ruchu Slow Cities w Polsce, to dobra odpowiedź na postępującą globalizację, aby w jej zgiełku nie ucichło to, co stanowi o unikatowości naszych regionów.

### **Introduction**

“Cittaslow” is the short name of “Cittaslow - The International Network of Cities of the Good Life”. Its mission is to improve the living conditions of inhabitants. According to its statute, named “Cittaslow Internazionale Statut”, the association is a non-profit organization and its aim is the promotion and dissemination of culture of the good life through research, experimentation, and application of solutions for the organization of towns. Cittaslow has been linked to four Italian cities and Slow Food association. According to the statute of the association, the “Cittaslow” name is not translated into other languages, although names like “Slow Cities”, “Slow Towns” or “Citta lente” have appeared as its synonyms.

Currently, in 2011 there are 140 Cittaslow or “Slow cities” in 23 countries, including 6 cities from Poland.

### **Origins and Requirements of Cittaslow Movement**

Cittaslow movement has its origins in the Slow Food movement. “The Slow Food movement was founded in 1986 by an Italian food writer who was alarmed by the opening of a McDonald’s restaurant next to the Piazza di Spagna in the heart of Rome. The movement’s goal is to protect the “right to taste” by preserving almost-extinct traditional food products, raising awareness of the pleasures of eating (including the social aspects of sharing a meal), taste education, and paying attention to traditional agricultural methods and techniques among other initia-

tives” (Mayer and Knox, 2006, p. 326). Cittaslow movement started in Italy in 1999 with the idea of Paolo Saturnini, the mayor of Greve di Chianti (Tuscany) and the mayors of other small towns like Orvieto (Umbria), Bra (Piedmont) and Positano (Campania). They believed that the idea of food is not enough and extended the philosophy of Slow Food to the local communities, their lifestyle and the management of the city. Cittaslow is associated with Slow Food, which shares a common philosophy under an agreement signed in Plueba in November 2007.

Cittaslow was tied for an indefinite period and has its own trademark as the “orange snail carrying a crown of modern and historical buildings” (Fig.1). The integral part of the trademark is the phrase “Cittaslow - International Network of Cities of the Good Life”, whose use is regulated.



Fig. 1. Trademark of Cittaslow. Source: Annex D to the Cittaslow Internazionale Statut.

Cittaslow brings together cities from all over the world on five continents. The most are in Europe: Italy (68), Germany (10), Great Britain (9), Spain (6), Belgium (4), Austria (3), Denmark (1), France (1), Holland (3), Hungary (1), Norway (3), Poland (6), Portugal (4), Sweden (1), Switzerland (1); in Asia: South Korea (8), Turkey (1), China (1); in North America: United States (3), Canada (2); in Africa: South Africa (1) and in Australia: Australia (2), New Zealand (1).

Under the Cooperation Agreement concluded on 12 July 2004 between the local government of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship, Reszel Municipality and the Cultural Association “The Castle” in Reszel, parties of the agreement committed themselves to joint efforts in order to join the town of Reszel to Cittaslow, thus providing the foundation for the emergence of a national Polish network of Cittaslow. The resolutions on 29 July 2005 of municipal councils of Reszel, Biskupiec, Bisztynek and Lidzbark Warmiński expressing the wish to join The International Network of Cities of the Good Life were the next step in the process of creating a national network of Cittaslow. In 2010, the fifth and sixth cities respectively from the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship - Nowe Miasto Lubawskie and from Wielkopolskie Vovoidship - Murowana Goślina joined the Polish Cittaslow network.



Fig. 2. The old market in Reszel. Author: Kopeć K., 2007.

Over 50 conditions are required to obtain the status of Cittaslow. Some of the general requirements are the following: the number of inhabitants must be under 50.000, the streets of the city centre must be closed to motorized traffic, supermarkets and fast food restaurants are prohibited (Woźniczko-Czeczott, 2007).

Cittaslow movement also has a lot of specific requirements for improvement, which are categorized and described in Annex C to the Cittaslow Internazionale Statut. The 6 categories for improvement are: Environmental Policy, Infrastructure Policy, Technologies and equipment for the Quality of City, Local Products, Hospitality and Knowledge.

Requirements for improvement in the category of Environmental Policy are e.g.:

- control system of air quality and public consultation of air quality conditions,
- urban energy saving program, with an emphasis on alternative energy (renewable energy sources, hydrogen, small hydro) and the use of municipal waste combustion and biomass for energy production,
- programs for the promotion and dissemination of waste segregation,
- promotion of industrial and home composting,
- not recommending the use of agricultural genetically modified organisms (GMO),
- programs for governing placement of posters and advertisements,
- electromagnetic and light pollution control system.

Requirements for improvement in the category of Infrastructure Policy are e.g.:

- intervention programs for the renovation of historic centers and works of cultural value and history,
- city traffic safety programs,
- bicycle paths leading to schools and public buildings,
- existence of high quality landscaping in accordance with the minimum of equipment provided to the Ministerial Decree of 1444/'68 and infrastructure conducive to leisure space (lawns, playgrounds, etc.),
- repurposing unsightly urban areas and projects for re-use.

Requirements for improvement in the category of Technologies and equipment for the Quality of City are e.g.:

- aesthetically integrated trash bins in the city structure with set hours of draining,
- programs and awards for promotion of plants in public places, especially local plants having a positive impact on the environment, and according to the criteria of green architecture,
- programs to reduce noise in noisy areas of the city,
- programs for the use of colors.

Requirements for improvement in the category of Local Products are e.g.:

- programs for development of organic farming,
- programs to protect products and handicrafts, including artistic, endangered,
- use of natural products and local traditions and to maintain food traditions,
- programs on taste and nutrition education for primary and secondary schools in collaboration with Slow Food,
- inventory and promotion of local traditional products,
- inventory of trees in the city and the valorization of large trees and “trees of historical value”,
- support, preservation and promotion of local cultural events.

Requirements for improvement in the category of Hospitality are e.g.:

- programs for training and good tourist information,
- programs to place signs in the marking of international tourist centers and historical tourist routes,
- promotion of “slow” routes in the city (brochures, websites, etc.).

Requirements for improvement in the category of Knowledge are e.g.:

- information campaign among the inhabitants about the goals and methods of functioning of Cittaslow,
- programs for the involvement of inhabitants in the adoption of the philosophy of “slow” and Cittaslow projects, in particular: gardens and gardening education promotion and protection of books,
- programs for dissemination of activities in Slow Food and Cittaslow movements.

Cittaslow is a new model of urban development that is an alternative to globalization, or corporate-centered development. Table 1 shows the main characteristics of the two systems: corporate-centered and alternative.

Tab. 1. Comparing Corporate-Centered to Alternative Urban Development Agendas

Agendas	Corporate-centered/mainstream	Alternative
Characteristics	Homogenized Single imperative Inequitable Industrial Standardized Corporate Unsustainable Copied Low quality Replicable Insensitive to local history, culture Fast	Idiosyncratic/asset specific Multiple imperatives Equitable Craft Customized Grassroots Sustainable Authentic High quality Asset specific Sensitive to local history, culture Slow
Examples	Urban mega projects Smokestack chasing Industrial food systems	Community economic development Slow City Slow Food

Source: Mayer H., Knox P. L. 2006, pp. 325.

In Cittaslow movements, the traditional values that represent the uniqueness of the city are preferred. Cittaslow “aims to protect and enhance urban livability and quality of life. Slow Cities are places where citizens and local leaders pay attention to local history and utilize the distinct local context to develop in better and more sustainable ways” (Mayer and Knox, 2006, p. 322). Authenticity, high quality and sensitivity to local history and culture are the remarkable determinants of this new model of urban development of small cities.

### Summary

“Cittaslow - The International Network of Cities of the Good Life” is an alternative idea of urban development of small cities. It is a new system for the management of city through Environmental Policy, Infrastructure Policy, Technologies and Equipment for the Quality of City, Local Products, Hospitality and Knowledge. The mental results of Cittaslow are the maintenance of local traditions (food, craft, customs etc.) and creation of relationship between inhabitants and the place where they live.

The visible results are noticeable in public spaces as: less accidental advertising and unwanted graffiti, less destroyed or bad building conditions, more high quality public green areas and coherent color scheme of buildings and other structural elements of the city. All these results make Cittaslow, or our Cities a better place to live.

### References

Cittaslow International Status.

Mayer, H. and Knox, P. L. (2006) Slow Cities: Sustainable Places in a Fast World. *Journal of Urban Affairs*. 28 (4) pp. 321-334.

Woźniczko-Czeczott, J. (2007) Walka o Powolność. *Przekrój* 46 (3256), 15.11.2007, pp. 38-39. [www.cittaslowpolska.pl](http://www.cittaslowpolska.pl)