




Article

Assessing the Success of the Development Strategy of the Cittaslow Movement: An Analysis of Revitalisation Programs and Experts Insights on the Model for Small Towns' Sustainable Development

Agnieszka Jaszczak ^{1,2,*} , Ewelina Pochodyła-Ducka ¹  and Rasa Pranskuniene ² 

¹ Department of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Prawochenskiego 17, 10-719 Olsztyn, Poland; ewelina.pochodyla@uwm.edu.pl

² Bioeconomy Research Institute, Vytautas Magnus University Agriculture Academy, LT-53361 Kaunas, Lithuania; rasa.pranskuniene@vdu.lt

* Correspondence: agnieszka.jaszczak@uwm.edu.pl

Abstract: The revitalisation of small towns is an attempt to find multi-directional solutions to numerous social, economic, and spatial problems. Properly planned and coordinated actions aimed at the renewal and countering of social exclusion through corrective interventions. Although there is a wealth of research on the significance of revitalisation projects in improving the quality of life for residents in large cities, there is a visible gap regarding the development of models based on the principles of “slow” and “liveability” in small towns. This article presents the results of observations regarding the actual conditions for the development of Cittaslow cities and the possibilities for development based on the assumptions outlined in the strategic documents of these cities, as well as the benefits resulting from projects implemented within the Supralocal Revitalisation Program (SLRP). The study initially identifies the main strategic assumptions and then analyses their connections with the revitalisation effects carried out within the SLRP. The analysis encompassed all projects aimed at solving social problems in fourteen cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship (Poland). The research included an evaluation of the assumptions regarding the directions of development arising from the provisions in the strategic documents (first stage) and a qualitative assessment based on interviews with local experts (second stage). The results indicate that the experts’ opinions differ partly from the project effects assumed in the documents. This applies primarily to the possibility of basing on the project results when formulating development models of the analysed Cittaslow towns. The results of these studies can serve as a basis for verifying the goals set in the SLRP, and based on them, for future projects and recommendations concerning the revitalisation of other Cittaslow cities in the region, as well as small towns in Europe and around the world.

Keywords: revitalisation; small town networks; Cittaslow; models of small towns; regional development



Citation: Jaszczak, A.; Pochodyła-Ducka, E.; Pranskuniene, R. Assessing the Success of the Development Strategy of the Cittaslow Movement: An Analysis of Revitalisation Programs and Experts Insights on the Model for Small Towns' Sustainable Development. *Sustainability* **2024**, *16*, 4459. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16114459>

Academic Editor: Grigorios

L. Kyriakopoulos

Received: 21 March 2024

Revised: 13 May 2024

Accepted: 22 May 2024

Published: 24 May 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Revitalisation of small towns is a multifaceted endeavour that requires a strategic combination of infrastructural development, community engagement, local entrepreneurship support, and preservation of cultural heritage. Small towns need to have a clear vision of what they want to achieve and a plan for how to reach there. The vision and plan should involve input from all stakeholders and should address issues such as economic development, infrastructure improvement, and community building [1,2]. Small towns rely heavily on local businesses and supporting them is critical for the town’s economic success. This can involve providing incentives for businesses to locate or expand in the town, promoting local businesses through marketing and events, and providing training and support for entrepreneurs [3]. Infrastructure improvements, such as upgrading roads, sidewalks, and

public spaces, can make the town more attractive to residents and visitors. This can also involve investing in green infrastructure, such as green areas and trails, which can enhance the quality of life in the town [4]. Small towns thrive when residents are actively engaged in community life. Encouraging community involvement can lead to creating opportunities for residents to participate in local events and organisations, as well as providing forums for community discussion and decision-making. Especially Cittaslow towns often have a unique character and charm that can be leveraged to attract visitors and businesses. This can involve preserving historic buildings and landmarks, promoting local arts and culture, and celebrating the town's history and heritage [3,5]. Overall, revitalising small towns requires a collaborative effort that involves a range of stakeholders and addresses a variety of issues [6]. By developing a clear vision plan, supporting local businesses, investing in infrastructure, encouraging community involvement, and enhancing the town's unique character, small towns can thrive and become vibrant and prosperous communities. Modelling small towns using various tools and techniques to analyse and understand the dynamics of the town's systems, such as its economic, social, and physical systems [1,7].

The research presented in the article is a continuation of a broader look at the issue of the effectiveness of the implemented revitalisation activities and the benefits of Cittaslow city revitalisation programs. Our previous research focused on the issues of changes in public spaces [8,9] and sustainable transport [10]. The research aimed to define the role of the revitalisation program in comparison to the model of development of Cittaslow towns in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship (Poland).

Analyses were conducted to answer the main questions:

- Were the prepared and implemented projects under SLRP in the analysed Cittaslow towns linked to the development models outlined in the strategic documents of these towns?
- Did the implemented projects correspond to the main directions outlined in their development strategies, or did they pertain to completely different directions?
- Did the implemented projects under the SLRP bring about a change in the main development directions of these cities?
- Will the implemented projects under the SLRP help in creating development models based on their specificity and evolving functions?

The results can serve as a cornerstone for crafting strategies for revitalisation initiatives and projecting future sustainable developments. They offer examined instances and suggestions for reinvigorating not just other Cittaslow towns in the vicinity but also small communities across Europe and globally.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 includes a literature review; Section 3 describes the assumptions for implementation and management of SLRP; Section 4 describes methods that were applied in the research and the materials that were used to perform the analyses; Section 5 contains results of the research; the discussion and conclusions of the obtained results are presented in Sections 6 and 7.

2. Literature Review

Cittaslow is a movement that began in Italy in 1999 to promote a slower, more sustainable way of life in cities and towns. Cittaslow towns are those with a maximum population of up to 50,000 inhabitants. The movement emphasises the importance of quality of life, environmental sustainability, and preserving local culture and traditions [3,11]. To become a Cittaslow town, the first step is to join the Cittaslow network. This involves meeting the network's criteria, which include a commitment to promoting a slower way of life, protecting the environment, preserving local culture and traditions, and promoting healthy food and agriculture. Overall, developing Cittaslow towns involves a commitment to sustainability, quality of life, and preserving local culture and traditions [12,13]. By joining the network, conducting a self-assessment, developing an action plan, implementing strategies, monitoring progress, and sharing successes, towns can become vibrant, sustainable, and resilient communities [14–16]. By focusing on the town's unique strengths and character,

and by working collaboratively to create a more sustainable and liveable community, a Cittaslow town can become a model for sustainable development and a desirable place to live, work, and visit [17–21].

Revitalising Cittaslow towns involves taking steps to address challenges that may be hindering the town's sustainability and liveability and building on the town's strengths to create a more vibrant and prosperous community.

There are some common strategies for revitalising Cittaslow towns such as:

- Enhance public spaces: Public spaces are important for promoting social cohesion and community engagement. Revitalisation efforts can focus on enhancing public spaces, such as parks, plazas, and streets, to create attractive and welcoming spaces that encourage residents to gather and interact.
- Support local businesses: Local businesses are key to the town's economic vitality and can be supported through initiatives such as business incubators, small business grants, and the promotion of local products and services. Supporting local businesses can also help to retain the town's unique character and sense of place.
- Promote sustainable transportation: Sustainable transportation, such as cycling, walking, and public transit, can reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, and promote a healthier lifestyle. Revitalisation efforts can focus on creating safe and accessible infrastructure for sustainable transportation and on promoting its use through education and marketing campaigns.
- Preserve local culture and heritage: Local culture and heritage are important for creating a sense of place and community identity. Revitalisation efforts can focus on preserving and promoting local traditions, such as food, crafts, music, and festivals.
- Engage the community: Engaging the community is critical for the success of revitalisation efforts. Community engagement can involve public meetings, workshops, and surveys to gather input and feedback from residents and to encourage participation in revitalisation initiatives [13,22–25].

Revitalising Cittaslow towns involves the three pillars of sustainability, namely environmental, social, and economic [26]. Revitalisation is an extensive and complex undertaking that extends beyond merely renovating or modernising individual buildings or entire urban areas, although these efforts are crucial aspects of the revitalisation process. It should always involve the holistic "revival" of deteriorated city parts, including renovation, renewal, reconstruction, and modernisation of physical infrastructure, alongside addressing other dysfunctional elements across social, cultural, ecological, functional, and spatial dimensions [27]. By building on the town's strengths and engaging the community in revitalisation efforts, a Cittaslow town can become a more vibrant, sustainable, and liveable community [28]. The importance of the Cittaslow movement and related issues, including revitalisation [12], is of increasing interest to researchers. Researchers in various European countries and around the world analyse the relationship between the development of these small towns and the need to introduce diverse strategies, methods, and tools in spatial, environmental, social, and economic terms. Examples of such studies can be seen in Italy [29–32], Germany [20,33], Poland [5,8–11,28,34–37], the UK [38], Ireland [39], Spain [40] and Scandinavian countries [41,42], Turkey [43,44], USA [45], Australia [46,47], New Zealand [48], South Korea [49], etc.

Programs and projects involving the revitalisation of small towns, apart from diagnosing problems and proposing corrective changes in a short period, usually as soon as possible, should contain appropriate references to the development of these towns in a long-term context. For this purpose, studies and scenarios in the field of development vision are helpful. The most important benefits from the implementation of regional and local foresight projects, including small towns, should concern:

- creating conditions for sustainable development [50],
- building local networks of connections aimed at developing interactions between the main socio-economic factors,
- determining the direction of social integration and creating a responsible society,

- promoting the competitiveness of small towns,
- identification of priority investment goals that are socially acceptable,
- determination of challenges, opportunities, and threats for the region, thus providing specific knowledge for local and regional policy makers [51].

In 2019, the Polish Economic Institute conducted a foresight study. The aim of the study was to develop scenarios for the development of small towns in the perspective of 2035 [52]. Cities were divided into three groups due to selected features related to their socio-economic situation (Table 1).

Table 1. Characteristics of development scenarios.

Group	Number of Cities	Current Features	Development Scenario until 2035
Cities in need of a development impulse	54	Poor economic situation. Unfavourable demographic situation.	Highly active local leaders and elites. High level of investment expenditure. Cooperation and use of internal potentials and external opportunities.
Cities of missed opportunities	88	Relatively high self-esteem. Good economic situation with a high level of entrepreneurship in the local community. Stable demographic situation. Poor housing conditions.	High competitiveness compared to cities. Highly active local leaders and elites. Cooperation of the local government with local business, NPOs, cultural institutions, etc.
Cities of good life	63	High entrepreneurship and a good situation in the labour market. Good or very good housing conditions. Care for the environment, culture, and space.	High level of investment expenditure. Low outflow of residents. Good financial situation.

Source: own elaboration of authors based on the Polish Economic Institute [52].

3. Main Assumptions for the Implementation and Management of SLRP

SLRP is a framework document with operational elements, based on individual Local Revitalisation Programs (LRP), which have been individually developed for each city. The aim of the SLRP of the Cittaslow network of cities is still the parallel, coordinated, and targeted revitalisation of the cities included in the network in Warmia and Mazury. All these cities are to maintain their unique character and value, while ensuring a similar quality of life for their residents. It should be noted, however, that joint and parallel action in all 14 cities is intended to be much more visible and identifiable than individual LRP processes. Such coordination of activities will also allow for building a common image of the cities. Thanks to this, the Cittaslow chain can continue to build a coherent brand of small urban centres with sustainable development and special natural and historical values. Joint and consistent revitalisation activities of all centres are to improve the quality of life of residents further effectively within the SLRP of the Cittaslow city network.

The organisation implementing the SLRP of the Cittaslow network in 2014 is the “Polish Cittaslow Cities” Association, which is a member of the global network. The Association includes the cities included in this study, while in 2019 another SLRP was implemented for a total of 19 cities (including 5 new ones). Our study is based on SLRP 2014 due to the possibility of verifying the completed and implemented projects after 9 years, as 3 years seems to be insufficient to evaluate the program.

SLRP is a multi-term document, defining goals and action programs for several years, and therefore requires systematic work on the quality and consistency of the tasks performed. Implementation of the program covering 14 cities requires defining the rules for the implementation of projects and investment projects resulting from it.

The program implementation process is a complex task that requires crucial information preparation and constant communication with stakeholders. The implementation of SLRP is also automatically connected with evaluation, which will be based on obtaining objective information about its course, effects, and public perception.

The SLRP program prepared by the association is financed with a total budget of 51.1 million EUR from the Regional Program for the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship

(RPO WiM 2014–2020) [19]. The association Cittaslow Towns from Warmia and Mazury received from the Marshal Office a total of 51.1 million EUR from the “Regional Operational Program of the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship” for the years of 2014–2020 toward a comprehensive revitalisation of the towns belonging to this association under the “SLRP of Cittaslow network”. Under the assumptions regarding cooperation between the authorities of individual cities and the society, it can be read that revitalisation working groups are responsible for this cooperation. On the other hand, one representative from the working group of each city was elected to the working group at the level of the Cittaslow network. In the next stage, the working groups developed integrated investment projects.

The development of the SLRP document was based on documents of local strategic programs of these 14 cities (indicated in Section 4.2.1), and the role of the program coordinator is performed by the Association of Polish Cities of the Cittaslow Network. The coordinator is responsible for implementing the program. The coordinator’s tasks include approval of the SLRP after attaining approval of the components by the individual cities, signing an agreement with the managing authority for the implementation of the SLRP, collecting reports on project implementation and reporting to the managing authority, and monitoring the implementation of assumptions. Tasks related to the implementation of individual projects entered into the LRP, as well as social participation resulting from the provisions, preparation of application documents and supervision of the application process, as well as reporting the need to update the tasks provided for in the LRP and ongoing analysis of the degree of implementation of tasks are the responsibility of the mayors of the individual cities. Revitalisation committees are another unit managing the method of SLRP implementation. Their task is to accept periodic and final reports on the implementation of individual projects on a city scale, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of projects, consider proposals for changes to the program, update project proposals, including new ones or replace them, evaluate priority and less significant tasks, and submit them to the mayor for an update on the projects. At the city level, there is also a revitalisation working group consisting of employees of the office responsible for collecting information from project managers implementing revitalisation projects under LRP. Project managers, on the other hand, manage individual projects, develop and submit applications, and control formal issues, e.g., compliance with the LRP, commission project tasks, control the progress of project work, settle the project (Figure 1).

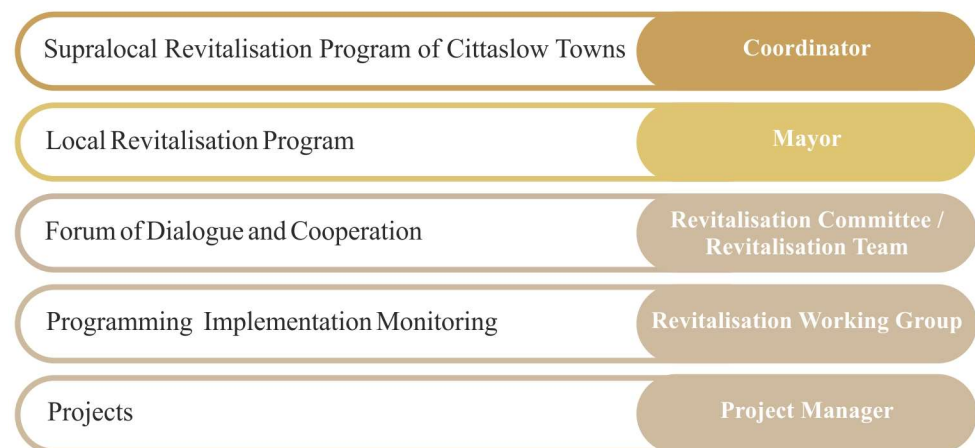


Figure 1. The management structure of the SLRP Network Cities.

4. Materials and Methods

4.1. Study Area

Fourteen towns from Northeastern Poland in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship were selected for the study (Figure 2). These cities were selected for the analysis because they are members of the Association of Cittaslow Towns in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship, they are located in one region, their spatial, economic, and social specificity are similar,

and they include a joint SRLP program from 2014 [53], based on which they could apply for joint financing of projects in individual cities. These include Barczewo, Biskupiec, Bisztynek, Dobre Miasto, Gołdap, Górowo Iławeckie, Lidzbark Warmiński, Lubawa, Nidzica, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Olsztynek, Pasym, Reszel, Ryn.



Figure 2. Location of fourteen selected Cittaslow Towns (Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship, Poland).

4.2. Research Stages and Methods

The research was divided into two stages (Figure 3). In the first, the literature on the subject, as well as monographic and cartographic documents concerning the towns of Cittaslow, were studied. In the second stage, the authors conducted a detailed experts interview according to a previously prepared protocol of questions and topics.



Figure 3. Main stages of the research.

4.2.1. Stage I—Analysis of Documents Related to Strategies of Development of Selected Towns

In the first stage, documents such as the Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship until 2025 [54], the Regional Operational Program for the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship for 2014–2020 [55], and the Spatial Development Plan for the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship [56] were analysed. Then, the Strategy for the Development of Towns and Municipalities of all 14 analysed cities was analysed (Table 2).

The next step was to refer to the provisions of the LRP of the analysed cities and the SLRP, in the context of the analysis of the selection of priority directions in development by these cities after the revitalisation.

Table 2. Analysed documents from selected towns.

Town	The Title of the Document	Years
Barczewo	LRP of the Municipality of Barczewo as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Barczewo for the years 2015–2025	2015–2025
Biskupiec	LRP of the Municipality of Biskupiec as part of the SLRP	2007–2015
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Biskupiec for the years 2014–2020	2014–2020
Bisztynek	LRP of the Municipality of Bisztynek as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Program of the Municipality and Town of Bisztynek until 2025	2020–2025
Dobre Miasto	LRP of the Municipality of Dobre Miasto as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Dobre Miasto until the year 2020	2016–2020
Gołdap	Revitalisation Program for the area in the Municipality of Gołdap	2016–2023
	Social-Economic Development Strategy of the Municipality of Gołdap until the year 2025	2013–2025
	Development Strategy of the Gołdap County	2009–2018
Górowo Iławeckie	LRP of the Municipality of Górowo Iławeckie as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Górowo Iławeckie for the years 2014–2021	2014–2021
Lidzbark Warmiński	LRP of the Municipality of Lidzbark Warmiński as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Local Development Plan of the city of Lidzbark Warmiński for the years 2014–2020	2014–2020
Lubawa	LRP of the Municipality of Lubawa as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Lubawa for the years 2016–2025	2016–2025
	Social-Economic Development Strategy of Lubawa until the year 2025	2014–2025
Nidzica	LRP of the Municipality of Nidzica as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Nidzica for the years 2014–2022	2014–2022
Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	LRP of the Municipality of Nowe Miasto Lubawskie as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Urban Municipality of Nowe Miasto Lubawskie for the years 2022–2030.	2022–2030
Olsztynek	LRP of the Municipality of Olsztynek as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Olsztynek for the years 2016–2020	2016–2020
Pasym	LRP of the Municipality of Pasym as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Social-Economic Development Strategy of the town and municipality of Pasym	2014–2020
Reszel	LRP of the Municipality of Barczewo as part of the SLRP	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Municipality of Reszel for the years 2022–2030	2022–2030
Ryn	LRP for the degraded areas of the Municipality of Ryn	2016–2023
	Development Strategy of the Town and Municipality of Ryn for the years 2021–2031	2021–2031

Document content analysis constitutes a foundational aspect of our research in its initial phase. The method of document analysis entails gathering, selecting, describing, and scientifically interpreting pertinent facts pertaining to the trajectories of sustainable development within the context of small towns and the concept of revitalisation in the region. This analysis encompasses the interpretation of specific elements within the framework of particular actions. Our approach commenced with the compilation of various document definitions, followed by their organisation, identification of distinct types, and the compilation of a document origins list (as detailed above and in Table 2). The selection of documents was guided by formal criteria and the assessment of their utility.

In the process of selecting issues for analysis during document scrutiny, our primary consideration was the potential correlation between priority development directions of regions, municipalities, and small towns, and the actual selection of development pathways based on projects conceived and subsequently implemented under the SLRP. The chosen issues encompassed society, tourism and recreation, entrepreneurship, spatial planning, education, environment, culture, infrastructure, transportation and communication,

healthcare, and public services. Subsequently, these issues were ranked according to their frequency of mention in the documents, with reference to the 14 cities under analysis.

4.2.2. Stage II—Expert Evaluation

The expert evaluation aimed to find out the opinions of 20 experts (14 women, 6 men), who professionally represent various fields related to spatial planning and management, administration of small towns, education, and social animation. The interviewers' ages ranged from 25 to 55 years. When selecting experts, the authors paid attention to their knowledge of the revitalisation process in the small towns of the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship. One respondent was actively engaged in this issue for more than 2 years, while eighteen interviewers for more than 4 years, and one respondent, for more than 8 years (Table 3).

Table 3. Experts characterisation.

Variables	Number of Interviewers
Gender	
Female	14
Male	6
Age	
25–35 years	4
36–45 years	12
46–55 years	4
Group of workers	
Government institutions	8
Scientific institutions	4
Social organisation	3
Regional development organisation	5
Actively engaged in the revitalisation process in the small towns of the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship	
More than 2 years	1
More than 4 years	18
More than 8 years	1

Experts expressed their opinions on the revitalisation projects and their impact on program and functional changes in the analysed cities. The interview protocol included 11 issues (Table A1). The experts were asked the following questions:

1. How did the possibility of implementing revitalisation projects influence the direction of development in cities belonging to the Cittaslow network in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship?
2. To what extent did revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities influence the economic, social, cultural, and spatial development of the city?
3. To what extent can revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities influence the creation of a tourism development model in the future?
4. To what extent can revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities influence the creation of a housing model in the future?
5. To what extent can revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities, in your opinion, influence the creation of a model of environmental protection in the future?
6. To what extent did revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities influence the creation of a service accessibility model in the future?
7. To what extent can revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities, in your opinion, influence the creation of a healthcare model in the future?

8. What quality issues, in your opinion, should be paid attention to when selecting and implementing new revitalisation projects under the new Program “Cities of Good Life 2030 Program for the development of Cittaslow towns in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodship?”

Respondents were acquainted with the purpose of the interview and were informed about the research assumptions. Most of the interviews were conducted personally.

We commenced the interview by structuring a semi-structured format, organising questions into two distinct sets. The initial set addressed the influence of implemented projects on the trajectory of development within Cittaslow municipalities and, by extension, their impact on regional development trends. Questions 2 to 5 focused on the experts’ evaluations of the projects’ effects on economic, social, cultural, and spatial dimensions. Following this, questions 6 to 10 delved into the experts’ assessments of the projects’ implications for future tourism, housing, environmental conservation, pro-ecological initiatives, accessibility of services, and healthcare. The experts were tasked with gauging the potential for Cittaslow cities to model sustainable development practices effectively. Lastly, an additional question (11) aimed to define the core pillars underpinning the future development of Cittaslow municipalities.

Subsequently, we meticulously gathered and categorised the comprehensive responses provided by the experts. Leveraging this data, we employed the content analysis method, utilising computer software, specifically VOSviewer (version 1.6.20), to conduct keyword-in-context counts on the datasets. This analytical approach facilitated the systematic examination and interpretation of the gathered information.

5. Results

5.1. Selection of Priority Directions for Urban Development and the Results of the Analysis of Strategic Documents

The results of the analysis of strategic documents, including the strategy for the development of communes of provisions relating to the strategy for SLRP 2020, indicate that in the analysed cities the most common direction of development (development priority) is society as well as tourism and recreation (in 12 and 11 cities, respectively). Such development priorities are referenced both in the strategies of individual communes and in the Social and Economic Development Strategy, as well as in the spatial development plans of the Warmian–Masurian Voivodship. Another significant direction of urban development, based on the conducted analysis, is entrepreneurship (in the case of 9 cities), followed by space (6), education and the environment (5) and, to the same extent, culture, infrastructure, transport, and communication (4). The smallest role is played by priority directions related to health and public services (Figure 4).

The priority directions of the first choice are society and tourism and recreation, the second choice is society, and the third is tourism.

Based on the analysis of strategic documents, it can be noted that the revitalisation projects that have been carried out in the analysed cities concern two main groups of activities. The first group are projects related to spatial development, renovation of architectural objects, and renovation of space around architectural objects. The second group are project related to social issues. The authors thoroughly analysed this issue, and their research shows that in the cities of the Cittaslow network in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship, 64% of projects concern spatial development, and 36% concern social issues. Selected projects from both these fields are presented in Table A2.

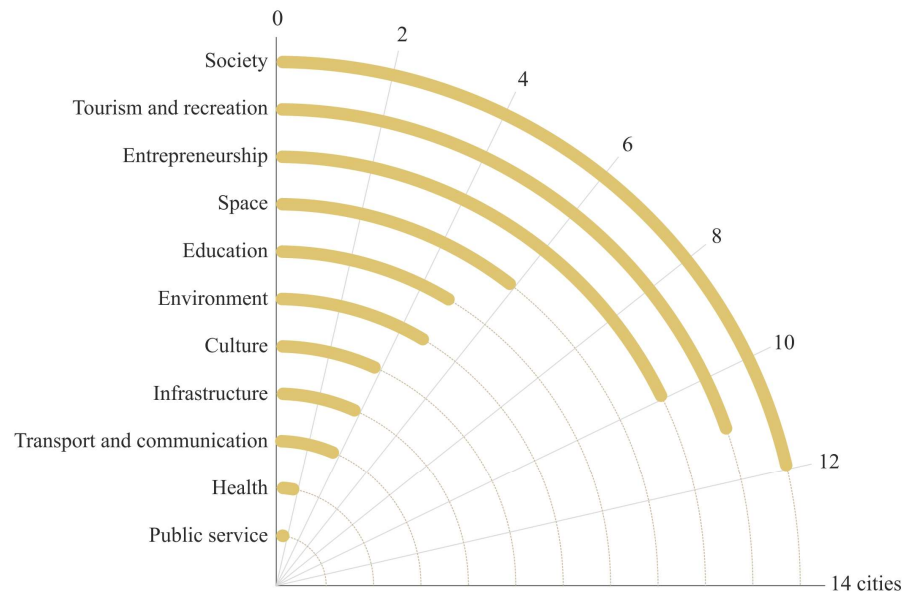


Figure 4. Priority directions of development in selected Cittaslow cities according to strategic documents.

5.2. The Results of Experts Interviews

The results of the experts' interviews show that they definitely see the benefits of implementing projects within the SLRP program. All of them point out the positive aspect of preparing such a program, which is one of the few revitalisation programs in Europe that encompasses not only a single project or projects in one city but multiple projects in many cities with similar social, economic, and environmental characteristics. Introducing such a program to serve the revitalisation of Cittaslow cities is an undeniable success, as these cities can accomplish more together. However, when attempting to assess the value of projects implemented within the SLRP, the opinions of the experts are divided. They emphasise that these projects were clearly related to improving social and cultural values, but to a lesser extent to spatial development. They state that the projects did not have such a significant impact on economic benefits (Figure 5).

In the detailed interview, the experts provided some elaboration. In question number 1, experts were asked about the possibility of implementing revitalisation projects from the Subregional Revitalisation Program of Cittaslow Network of Cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship that have influenced the development direction in cities belonging to the Cittaslow network in the same region. In the experts' view, by undertaking revitalisation projects, Cittaslow cities have brought about enhancements that directly enhance residents' quality of life. These projects encompass the restoration of historical buildings, the establishment of fresh green spaces, the enhancement of transportation networks, and endeavours aimed at fostering local culture and traditions. These efforts collectively bolster the appeal of these cities as desirable places to reside in and explore.

In questions number 2 to 5, the experts were asked for their opinions on how the revitalisation projects have influenced the development of the cities, focusing on different aspects, including economic, social, spatial, and cultural development. Key words appeared in their responses, which were presented in a network graph (Figure 6). SLRP promotes sustainable tourism by emphasizing the distinctive natural, cultural, and historical values of cities. The implementation of revitalisation initiatives, such as renovating historical zones, creating new recreational areas, or promoting local culture and traditions, will certainly increase the number of tourists, according to experts. As a result, they suggest that there will be an increase in demand for tourist amenities, shopping opportunities, accommodation, and culinary experiences, which will support the growth of the local economy (Figure 6).



Figure 5. The range of experts' responses.

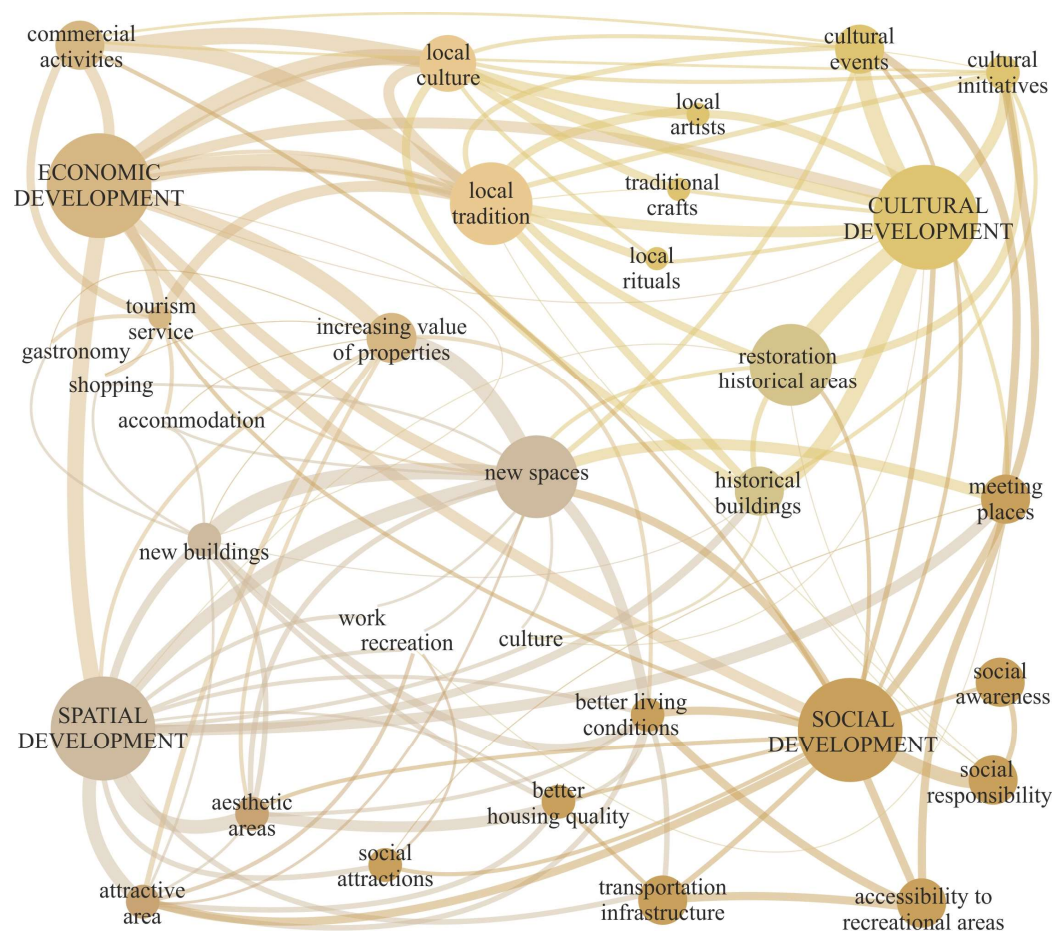


Figure 6. The range of experts' responses for questions 2–5.

Experts' statements show that the implementation of revitalisation projects related to the improvement of urban infrastructure, public spaces, and services has improved social development, although, of course, further improvement in this aspect is necessary. As a result, residents benefit from a higher standard of living, including better quality housing, access to recreation, socialising, and transport infrastructure. Experts say that this has ultimately led to an increase in residents' happiness and contentment, creating a more friendly and attractive social atmosphere (Figure 6).

Respondents believe that, in general terms, the aim of the program is to protect cultural heritage and cultivate local traditions. Revitalisation activities often include restoring historical structures, revitalising traditional crafts, and promoting local rituals and festivals. According to experts, these efforts have played a role in protecting the cultural essence of the city and perpetuating the customs of the local community (Figure 6).

In the experts' perspective, the projects seem to prioritise the renovation of historical buildings and spaces over neglected areas of lesser value, despite the revitalisation program and city strategies outlining their inclusion. Consequently, there are still evident pockets of devastation and discord within the Cittaslow cities. Nonetheless, the projects undertaken have given precedence to restoring and reconstructing historical sections of the city. The refurbishment and revitalisation of these historical zones have significantly influenced the city's aesthetics and character, drawing the interest of both residents and tourists. However, the matter of neglected areas of lesser value persists.

In addition, the experts were asked about the future of Cittaslow towns in which revitalisation projects would be implemented. Responses compiled in the context of a model of environmental protection, tourism, health, services, and culture are as shown in Figure 7. The experts believe that the development of Cittaslow cities will be possible thanks to the availability of services, which may partly relate to the tourism development. However,

they note that changes should currently be made in terms of service accessibility to allow this model to develop in the future. Interestingly, the strategic documents mention the development of services and their accessibility less frequently than the experts' statements suggest. The experts also emphasise that the implemented revitalisation projects can contribute to the future development of improving and protecting health. On the other hand, they observe that while changes, such as the use and accessibility of recreational spaces by city residents, are noticeable, access to health-improvement services has not improved. However, in the strategic documents that formed the basis of the revitalisation projects, health improvement issues were treated marginally. Conversely, when asked about the development of the social and cultural functions, the respondents believe that they see a significant improvement in integration and cooperation opportunities among city residents as a result of revitalisation project implementation. They also anticipate that these cities can develop a model based on improving social conditions. This aligns completely with the provisions in the strategic documents, where social development takes precedence. The experts also see the potential for developing an environmental protection model, but only based on sustainable development, whereas this issue was not a priority in the strategic documents.

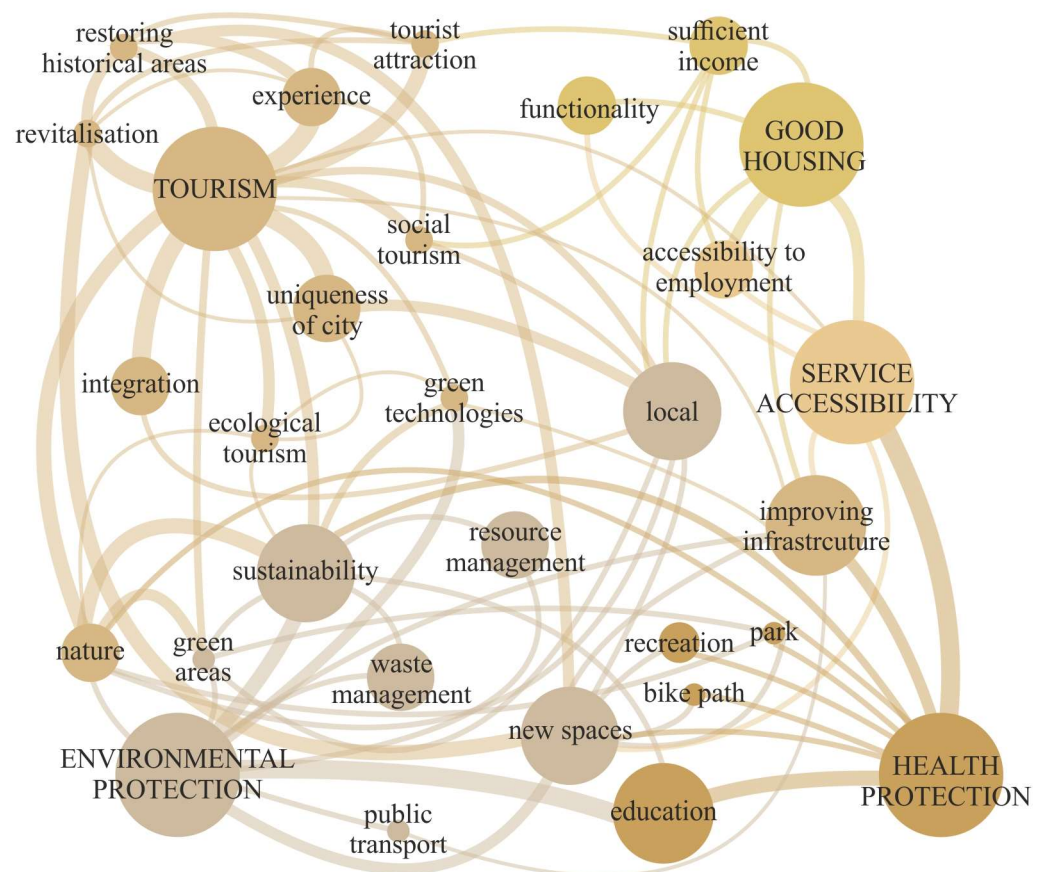


Figure 7. The range of experts' responses to questions 6–10.

Each respondent was asked to pick three main functions which planned revitalisation projects should focus on. The experts' opinions indicate that in the analysed cities, the most expected direction for development would be society (10 experts). Experts also point out the necessity of developing functions related to health and space (9 and 8 experts, respectively). Another significant priority of urban development is transport and communication (7), followed by tourism and recreation (6), the public service and education (5). The smaller roles are played by entrepreneurship, infrastructure, culture, and environment (Figure 8).

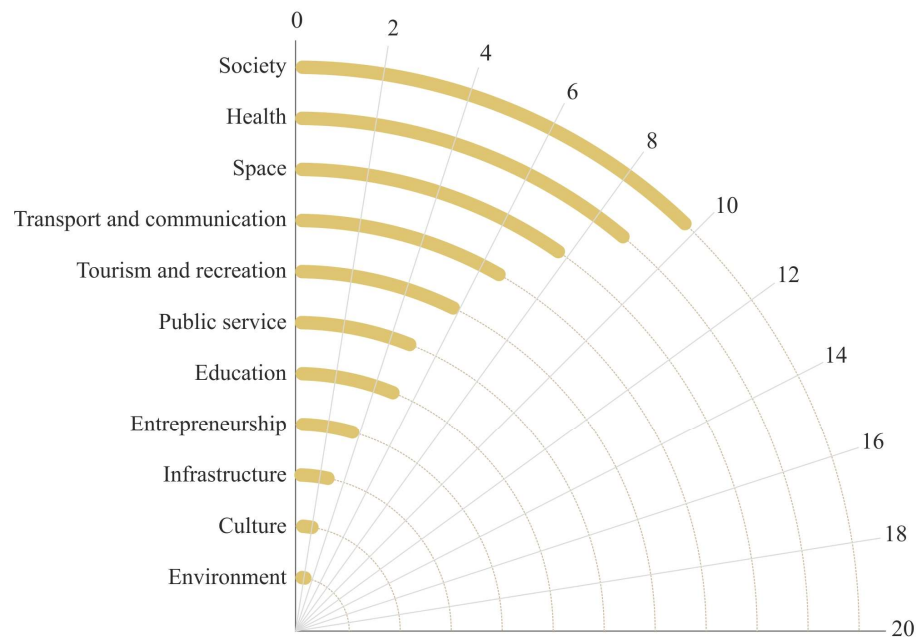


Figure 8. Priority directions of development in Cittaslow cities according to experts' opinion.

Additionally, regarding future improvements within the framework of the new “Cities of Good Life 2030 Program—Development Program for Cittaslow Network Cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship”, experts pointed out the following aspects in relation to the quality of projects and their alignment with the assumptions outlined in the strategic documents: revitalisation of public spaces, the socio-economic specificity of cities, guidelines enabling long-term effect control and verification of projects, as well as relevance to current trends (Figure 9).

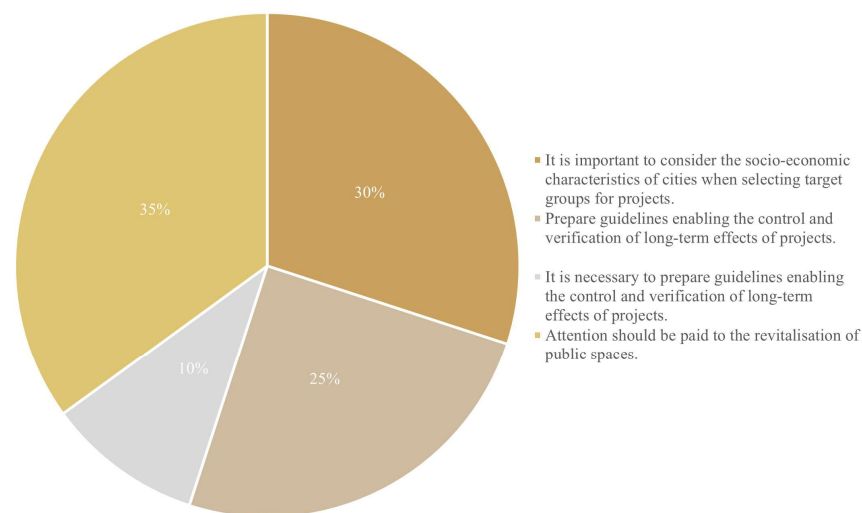


Figure 9. The range of experts' responses on valuable quality issues (according to question 11).

6. Discussion

Studies on models of urban development belonging to the Cittaslow network are a subject of international consideration. Sept [33] conducted research based on field analyses in four cities in Germany and Italy, and the results allow us to state that the discourse and communication regarding deceleration, as well as the local projects characterised as slow and new forms of cooperation, can go hand in hand. Researchers from Turkey, on the other hand, draw attention to the directions of development by analysing the socio-economic changes in Seferihisar following its joining of the movement [57]. Meanwhile, Fareltnik [18]

compares two models of Cittaslow urban development—Polish and Chinese—and states that the Polish model is closer to the European “slow city” model, while the Chinese model is still in the stage of seeking individual solutions.

In the Polish context, and on a smaller regional scale, it is evident that the direction of “slow” development is perceived as one that could be competitive with the direction of rapid development in large cities in the future. However, after 19 years since the first Polish city, Reszel, was included in the Cittaslow network, this model has not significantly solidified and is not a distinguishing feature that can be successfully adapted in other regions. Based on her research, Wierzbicka [36] states that such a model could be implemented, taking into account the specificity of cities or a group of cities. However, as revealed by our conducted research and expert opinions, the possibility of implementing revitalisation projects within the SLRP program is perceived positively, mainly due to the guarantee of obtaining funds for the renewal of small towns and increasing the city’s prestige and affiliation with the Cittaslow network. According to them, however, there is not a complete connection between the future directions of development (development models) that could result from implemented projects and the expected effects outlined in strategic documents. Similar conclusions from research conducted in Cittaslow cities, regarding the lack of correlation between the benefits of belonging to the Cittaslow network and the provisions in strategic documents, were presented by Batyk [58]. However, she focused on residents of the cities as the group of respondents.

An example of research and development scenarios for small towns in Poland, including selected cities belonging to Cittaslow, was presented by Brzostowski et al. [52]. Based on their model prepared in 2019 on behalf of the Polish Economic Institute, the second group includes cities with a relatively stable demographic and economic situations but weak housing development potential, such as the city of Barczewo, which was one of the cities analysed in our study. On the other hand, the third group of development models for small towns, developed by the Polish Economic Institute, includes six Cittaslow cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship as follows: Lidzbark Warmiński, Bisztynek, Reszel, Gołdap, Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, and Nidzica [58]. These cities are characterised in the report as having dominant multifunctional local centres. They exhibit high entrepreneurship and a favourable labour market situation. The housing conditions in these cities are either good or very good. They prioritise environmental, cultural, and spatial preservation. Comparing the responses of the respondents based on the assessment of project implementation in our research, it can be concluded that the issue of developing the Cittaslow model as potential places to live is inadequate compared to the model presented in the studies conducted by the Polish Economic Institute. According to the opinions of experts participating in our research, the development of housing will not be as significant. However, based on our analysis of the strategic documents of cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship and regional strategies, Cittaslow cities are presented in these documents as attractive to potential new residents, indicating that housing-related issues will continue to develop.

According to the experts’ interviews, they foresee that planned and implemented revitalisation projects may primarily influence the development of a model based on the tourism function, which aligns with the analysed strategic documents in which all provisions focus on this function as the leading one in the region and small towns. The research results conducted by Zadecka [37], Maćkiewicz, and Konecka-Szydłowska [21] confirm this direction of development.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, the projects prepared and implemented under the SLRP in the examined Cittaslow towns have shown both promise and limitations in their alignment with the development models outlined in the strategic documents of these towns. Undoubtedly, the SLRP has played a significant role in fostering sustainable local development and revitalisation initiatives within these communities. The program’s emphasis on ecological, social, and economic sustainability has contributed to positive changes in the towns’ infras-

structures, public spaces, and local economies. This has undoubtedly enhanced the overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Despite the positive impact of the SLRP initiatives on various aspects of these towns, such as infrastructure improvement, environmental preservation, and economic stimulation, there remains a noticeable mismatch between the projects' outcomes and the primary objectives laid out in the development strategies. This disconnect may be attributed to several factors, including inadequate project selection processes, resource limitations, and challenges in execution.

It is essential for local authorities and policymakers to closely scrutinise the projects' alignment with the towns' development strategies to ensure that future initiatives more effectively address the key areas of concern. Regular evaluations and feedback mechanisms can aid in identifying discrepancies and realigning the SLRP projects with the towns' specificities and evolving functions.

Furthermore, the towns must strive to develop a more comprehensive and integrated approach to sustainable development. By fostering greater collaboration between all stakeholders and promoting a deeper understanding of the towns' unique characteristics, the SLRP projects can be more tailored to address the evolving needs and functions of these communities. In essence, while the SLRP has brought valuable contributions to the Cittaslow towns, it is crucial to acknowledge and rectify the gaps between the implemented projects and the towns' development strategies. Only through a more focused, inclusive, and adaptable approach can the towns fully harness the potential of the SLRP to create truly sustainable and resilient development models that reflect their distinct identities and ever-changing roles in the modern world.

Author Contributions: Conceptualisation A.J.; methodology A.J. and E.P.-D.; software E.P.-D.; validation, A.J., E.P.-D. and R.P.; formal analysis A.J. and E.P.-D.; investigation, A.J.; resources, A.J. and E.P.-D.; data curation, A.J.; writing—original draft preparation, A.J. and E.P.-D.; writing—review and editing A.J., E.P.-D. and R.P.; visualisation, E.P.-D.; supervision A.J.; project administration, A.J., E.P.-D. and R.P. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: The results presented in this paper were obtained from a comprehensive study financed by the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (grants No. 30.610.017-110).

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: The participants received information at the beginning of the interview about the purpose of the survey. The participation was voluntary and anonymous, and the personal data of the respondents were not stored in order to respect anonymity and confidentiality. The informed written consents of the participants have not been distinctly conducted and given since the privacy and personal identity information of all participants were protected. The participation in the interview was optional.

Data Availability Statement: The analyses were performed based on the information contained in the Supralocal Revitalisation Program of the Network of Cittaslow Towns for 2014–2020 (SLRP) (2015) available on www.cittaslowpolska.pl (accessed on 10 March 2021). The initial data on the interview method presented in this study, collected separately from experts, are available on request from the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments: The authors would like to thank the experts who agreed to participate in the interviews.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Appendix A

Table A1. Selected revitalisation projects.

Town	Project	Aim of the Project	Realisation
Barczewo	Development of the banks of the Pisa River	Use of the natural resources of Barczewo; creating an attractive leisure destination for both residents and tourists.	2018–2019
Barczewo	Social services for people at risk of exclusion and socially excluded individuals	Improvement of the situation of unemployed, impoverished, and poverty-threatened individuals; reduction of the number of crimes in the revitalised area.	2020–2022
Biskupiec	Establishment of an Educational Center	Creating an education base for individuals at risk of social exclusion.	2017–2018
Biskupiec	Improving the cultural and recreational offer in the revitalised area of the city of Biskupiec	Ensuring access to the cultural and recreational offerings of the city for residents from disadvantaged groups; creating recreational infrastructure	2017–2019
Bisztynek	Improvement of the accessibility of social services	Modernisation and adaptation of an existing facility	2019–2020
Bisztynek	Adaptation of the Lidzbark Gate along with the development of its surroundings	Adapting a historic object for a new social function; enhancing its functional and aesthetic values	2017–2018
Dobre Miasto	Modernisation of the building	Adapting the building for organising and conducting vocational training, workshops, and providing support in the field of career counselling	2017–2018
Dobre Miasto	Development of public space for social integration	Creating a place for socio-economic activation; developing infrastructure for space users.	2017–2018
Gołdap	Professionalism and tactics for employment skills	Reducing the number of unemployed individuals at risk of social exclusion.	2017–2019
Gołdap	Arranging the shores of Lake Gołdap	Construction of a playground and bleachers at the beach volleyball courts; renovation of the building; adaptation of the building for the needs of people with disabilities.	2017–2018
Górowo Iławeckie	Revitalisation of the area of the Młynówka River valley in Górowo Iławeckie	Giving the area the function of a pedestrian and cycling path; connecting it to similar infrastructure nearby; improving the tourist offer.	2017–2018
Górowo Iławeckie	Górowo Iławeckie acquires new qualifications—individuals aged 26–50 years old	Active inclusion of individuals aged 26–50 at risk of poverty and/or social exclusion; improving their socio-occupational situation; increasing access to employment.	2018–2020
Lidzbark Warmiński	Energy modernisation of multi-family buildings in the revitalised area	Renovation of the historic fabric in the most representative part of the city; boosting economic potential.	2017–2020
Lidzbark Warmiński	Development of the banks of the Łyna River	Use of the local valuable natural resource; creating an attractive leisure destination; strengthening the recreational and tourist functions of the city; improving the landscape values of the Łyna River section	2016–2017
Lubawa	Revitalisation of the city centre	Reconstruction and modernisation of public spaces that are in poor technical condition	2017–2018
Lubawa	Social Integration Club in Lubawa	Restoring or strengthening social competencies, resourcefulness, independence, and activity; increasing the chances of socially excluded individuals in the open job market	2018–2020
Nidzica	Reconstruction of the park by the lake—landscaping green areas adjacent to the park	Intensifying social revitalisation of residents in the degraded area; construction and reconstruction of infrastructure.	2018
Nidzica	Renovation of the castle and castle hill in Nidzica.	Preservation, protection, promotion, and development of natural and cultural heritage; increasing tourism potential	2019–2020
Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Revitalisation of the Market Square in Nowe Miasto Lubawskie.	enhancing social attractiveness; adding new functional and aesthetic values while preserving the regional identity	2018–2019

Table A1. *Cont.*

Town	Project	Aim of the Project	Realisation
Nowe Miasto Lubawskie	Renovation and reconstruction of the former Evangelical church	Change of the building's function (establishment of a Tourist Information and Cultural Promotion Centre)	2017–2019
Olsztynek	Development of the city beach	Increase in the city's tourism potential; improvement in the municipality's competitiveness; utilisation of natural assets; support for the activities of the Youth Social Integration Club	2018
Olsztynek	Development of the natural and cultural heritage of the region through the renovation and modernisation of the historic water tower	Revitalisation of the building and landscaping of the surroundings; creating a tourist attraction for the municipality and the region	2018
Pasym	Establishment of a Social Integration Club	Providing assistance in rebuilding and maintaining the skills of participating in local community life, returning to social roles, and improving professional qualifications	2018–2021
Pasym	Revitalisation—reconstruction of the Old Town market square in Pasym	Adaptation of the market space to the needs of the integration and social activation zone	2017–2018
Reszel	Renovation and conservation work of the MOK building for the purpose of social and vocational activation	Social and vocational activation of individuals who are excluded or at risk of social exclusion	2017–2018
Reszel	Development of public spaces	Restoration of integrative and recreational functions; improvement of park accessibility, creating an attractive place for visitors	2017–2019
Ryn	Revitalisation along with the change of purpose of the water tower	Use of the potential of the revitalised tower; giving educational, historical, and recreational functions to the facility	2018
Ryn	"Tomorrow belongs to us in shared space"	Social, educational, and vocational activation of residents at risk of exclusion.	2017–2019

Appendix B

Table A2. Semi-structured interview plan.

Subject Area	Questions
Introduction	Prior to each interview, the experts were informed about the purpose of the interview and were informed about the research assumptions.
Social-demographic characteristics	The interviewees were asked about gender, age, type of institution where respondent works, how long participant are actively engaged in revitalisation process in the small towns of the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship.
The impact of the Supralocal Revitalisation Program on the local development of Cittaslow cities	To what extent did the possibility of implementing revitalisation projects from the Subregional Revitalisation Program of Cittaslow Network of Cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship influence the development direction in cities belonging to the Cittaslow network in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship?
The impact of revitalisation projects on the development of Cittaslow cities	To what extent do you think that the revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities have influenced the economic development of the city? To what extent do you think the revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities have influenced the social development of the city? To what extent do you think the revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities have influenced the cultural development of the city? To what extent do you think the revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities have influenced the spatial development of the city? To what extent do you think revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities have had an impact on creating a model of service accessibility?

Table A2. Cont.

Subject Area	Questions
The impact of revitalisation projects on the future development of Cittaslow cities	To what extent do you think the revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities can influence the future creation of a tourism development model? To what extent do you think that revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities can influence the creation of a model for good housing in the future? To what extent do you think the revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities can have an impact on creating a model for environmental protection in the future? To what extent do you believe that revitalisation projects implemented in Cittaslow cities can have an impact on creating a model for health protection in the future?
Future development priorities	Which qualitative aspects, in your opinion, should be taken into account in the future when selecting and implementing new revitalisation projects as part of the new “Cities of Good Life 2030 Program—Development Program of Cittaslow Cities in the Warmian–Masurian Voivodeship”?

References

- Gong, X.; Zhang, X.L.; Tao, J.Y.; Li, H.B.; Zhang, Y.R. An Evaluation of the Development Performance of Small County Towns and Its Influencing Factors: A Case Study of Small Towns in Jiangyin City in the Yangtze River Delta, China. *Land* **2022**, *11*, 1059. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Yin, X.; Wang, J.; Li, Y.R.; Feng, Z.M.; Wang, Q.Y. Are small towns really inefficient? A data envelopment analysis of sampled towns in Jiangsu province, China. *Land Use Policy* **2021**, *109*, 105590. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Horbliuk, S.; Dehtiarova, I. Approaches to Urban Revitalisation Policy in Light of The Latest Concepts of Sustainable Urban Development. *Balt. J. Econ. Stud.* **2021**, *7*, 46–55. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Zabielaitė-Skirmante, M.; Burinskiene, M.; Maliene, V. Influence of Revitalisation on the Social and Economic Well-Being of Residents: Case Study of Lithuania. *Sustainability* **2023**, *15*, 7304. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Zagroba, M. The role of old towns in small Warmian towns in shaping the region’s cultural landscape. *Acta Sci. Pol. Adm. Locorum* **2023**, *22*, 289–304. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Doroz-Turek, M. Revitalisation of Small Towns and the Adaptive Reuse of its Cultural Heritage. In Proceedings of the 3rd World Multidisciplinary Civil Engineering, Architecture, Urban Planning Symposium (WMCAUS), Prague, Czech Republic, 18–22 June 2018; Volume 471. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Horbliuk, S.; Stepanets, I. Public policy on city center revitalisation based on the Town Centre Management concept. *E-Mentor* **2021**, *5*, 36–44. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Jaszczak, A.; Kristianova, K.; Pochodyła, E.; Kazak, J.K.; Mlynarczyk, K. Revitalisation of Public Spaces in Cittaslow Towns: Recent Urban Redevelopment in Central Europe. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 2564. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Jaszczak, A.; Pochodyła, E.; Ploszaj-Witkowska, B. Transformation of Green Areas in Central Squares after Revitalisation: Evidence from Cittaslow Towns in Northeast Poland. *Land* **2022**, *11*, 470. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Jaszczak, A.; Morawiak, A.; Zukowska, J. Cycling as a Sustainable Transport Alternative in Polish Cittaslow Towns. *Sustainability* **2020**, *12*, 5049. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Senetra, A.; Szarek-Iwaniuk, P. Socio-economic development of small towns in the Polish Cittaslow Network—A case study. *Cities* **2020**, *103*, 102758. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Bernat, S.; Flaga, M. Cittaslow as An Alternative Path of Town Development and Revitalisation in Peripheral Areas: The Example of the Lublin Province. *Sustainability* **2022**, *14*, 14160. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Zawadzka, A.K. Architectural and Urban Attractiveness of Small Towns: A Case Study of Polish Coastal Cittaslow Towns on the Pomeranian Way of St. James. *Land* **2021**, *10*, 724. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Brodzinski, Z.; Kurowska, K. Cittaslow Idea as a New Proposition to Stimulate Sustainable Local Development. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 5039. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Batyk, I.M.; Farelnek, E.; Rakowska, J.; Maciejczak, M. Polish Cittaslow Local Governments’ Support for Renewable Energy Deployment vs. Slow City Concept. *Energies* **2022**, *15*, 201. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Ūnal, A.; Çelen, O. Past, Present and Future of the Cittaslow Movement: A National and International Content Analysis. *Int. J. Discip. Econ. Adm. Sci. Stud.* **2021**, *7*, 865–873. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Farelnek, E. Revitalisation as a Tool for the Development of Slow City (Cittaslow). *Entrep. Sustain. Issues* **2021**, *9*, 169–185. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
- Farelnek, E. Development of the Cittaslow Network in Poland and in China. *Stud. Miej.* **2022**, *43*, 67–82. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Zawadzka, A.K. Making Small Towns Visible in Europe: The Case of Cittaslow Network—The Strategy Based on Sustainable Development. *Transylv. Rev. Adm. Sci.* **2017**, 90–106. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Mayer, H.; Knox, P.L. Slow cities: Sustainable places in a fast world. *J. Urban Aff.* **2006**, *28*, 321–334. [\[CrossRef\]](#)

21. Maćkiewicz, B.; Konecka-Szydłowska, B. Green Tourism: Attractions and Initiatives of Polish Cittaslow Cities. In *Tourism in the City: Towards an Integrative Agenda on Urban Tourism*; Bellini, N., Pasquinelli, C., Eds.; Springer International Publishing: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2017; pp. 297–309.
22. Hospers, G.J. People, place and partnership: Exploring strategies to revitalise town centres. *Eur. Spat. Res. Policy* **2017**, *24*, 65–79. [CrossRef]
23. Jadach-Sepiolo, A.; Kułaczowska, A.; Mróz, A. Rewitalizacja w Praktyce. Modele Rozwiązań Jako Rezultaty Konkursu Modelowa Rewitalizacja Miast i Pilotaży w Zakresie Rewitalizacji [Revitalisation in Practice. Model Solutions as the Results of the Model Urban Revitalisation Competition and Pilot Projects in the Field of Revitalisation]. 2018. Available online: https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/media/68196/Rewitalizacja_w_praktyce.pdf (accessed on 4 August 2023).
24. Bartosiewicz, B. Małe Miasta—Wybrane Zagadnienia Społeczno-Przestrzenne [Small Towns—Selected Socio-Spatial Issues]. 2017. Available online: <https://czasopisma.uni.lodz.pl/space/issue/view/201> (accessed on 4 August 2023).
25. Przywojska, J. Polish Local Government’s Perspective on Revitalisation: A Framework for Future Socially Sustainable Solutions. *Energies* **2021**, *14*, 4888. [CrossRef]
26. Majewska, A.; Denis, M.; Krzysztofik, S.; Maria, C.P.M. The development of small towns and towns of well-being: Current trends, 30 years after the change in the political system, based on the Warsaw suburban area. *Land Use Policy* **2022**, *115*, 105998. [CrossRef]
27. Parysek, J.J. Rewitalizacja miast w Polsce: Wczoraj, dziś i być może jutro. *Stud. Miej.* **2015**, *17*, 9–25.
28. Mazur-Belzyt, K. ‘Slow’ Revitalisation on Regional Scale, the Example of an Integrated Investment Project. In Proceedings of the World Multidisciplinary Civil Engineering-Architecture-Urban Planning Symposium (WMCAUS), Prague, Czech Republic, 12–16 June 2017; Volume 245. [CrossRef]
29. Manella, G.; de Salvo, P.; Calzati, V. Verso modelli di governo urbano sostenibile e solidale: Il caso Cittaslow in Emilia-Romagna [Towards sustainable urban governance models: The Cittaslow case in Emilia-Romagna]. *Sociol. Urbana Rural.* **2017**, *112*, 127–139. [CrossRef]
30. Presenza, A.; Abbate, T.; Perano, M. The Cittaslow Certification and Its Effects on Sustainable Tourism Governance. *Enlightening Tourism. Pathmaking J.* **2015**, *5*, 40–64. [CrossRef]
31. Radstrom, S. A Place-Sustaining Framework for Local Urban Identity: An Introduction and History of Cittaslow. *Ital. J. Plan. Pract.* **2011**, *1*, 90–113.
32. Zagroba, M.; Pawlewicz, K.; Senetra, A. Analysis and Evaluation of the Spatial Structure of Cittaslow Towns on the Example of Selected Regions in Central Italy and North-Eastern Poland. *Land* **2021**, *10*, 780. [CrossRef]
33. Sept, A. ‘Slowing down’ in small and medium-sized towns: Cittaslow in Germany and Italy from a social innovation perspective. *Reg. Stud. Reg. Sci.* **2021**, *8*, 259–268. [CrossRef]
34. Strzelecka, E. Network Model of Revitalisation in the Cittaslow Cities of the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship. *Barom. Regionalny. Anal. Prognozy* **2018**, *16*, 53–62. [CrossRef]
35. Szczepańska, A.; Pietrzyk, K. Prospects for the Development of Cittaslow Towns in the Region of Warmia and Mazury—The Example of Morąg. *Acta Sci. Pol. Adm. Locorum* **2018**, *17*, 259–272. [CrossRef]
36. Wierzbicka, W. Socio-economic potential of cities belonging to the Polish National Cittaslow Network. *Oeconomia Copernic.* **2020**, *11*, 203–224. [CrossRef]
37. Ządęcka, E. Cittaslow—Koncepcja dobrego życia w małym mieście [Cittaslow—The concept of the good life in a small town]. *Stud. Ekon.* **2018**, *348*, 129–143.
38. Milutinovic, S. Citta Slow Movement: Ludlow, UK. 2010. Available online: <https://upenn-envs667660.webs.com/Case%20studies/CittaSlow.pdf> (accessed on 31 July 2023).
39. Broadway, M. Implementing The Slow Life in Southwest Ireland: A Case Study of Clonakilty and Local Food. *Geogr. Rev.* **2015**, *105*, 216–234. [CrossRef]
40. Pink, S.; Servon, L.J. Sensory global towns: An experiential approach to the growth of the Slow City movement. *Environ. Plan. a-Econ. Space* **2013**, *45*, 451–466. [CrossRef]
41. Zawadzka, A.K. Accessibility of Polish and Nordic Cittaslow Towns. *Barom. Regionalny. Anal. Prognozy* **2018**, *16*, 47–58. [CrossRef]
42. DeHarpporte, H. Sustainability and Connection to Place: Land Stewardship through Local Icelandic Women-Run Businesses. *Indep. Study Proj. (ISP) Collect.* **2022**, 3520. Available online: https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/3520/?utm_source=digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/3520&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages (accessed on 6 July 2023).
43. Ada, E.; Yener, D. Peyzaj Potansiyelinin Korunmasinda Cittaslow-Slow City Birliĝinin Deĝerlendirilmesi [Evaluation of Cittaslow-Slow City Association within the Conservation of Landscape Potential]. *İnönü Üniversitesi Sanat Ve Tasarım Derg.* **2017**, *7*, 66–78. [CrossRef]
44. Ekinci, M.B. The Cittaslow philosophy in the context of sustainable tourism development; the case of Turkey. *Tour. Manag.* **2014**, *41*, 178–189. [CrossRef]
45. Lowry, L.L.; Lee, M. CittaSlow, Slow Cities, Slow Food: Searching for a Model for the Development of Slow Tourism. In *Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally*; TTRA: Lapeer, MI, USA, 2016; Volume 40.
46. Pink, S.; Lewis, T. Making resilience: Everyday affect and global affiliation in Australian Slow Cities. *Cult. Geogr.* **2014**, *21*, 695–710. [CrossRef]
47. Park, E.; Kim, S. The potential of Cittaslow for sustainable tourism development: Enhancing local community’s empowerment. *Tour. Plan. Dev.* **2016**, *13*, 351–369. [CrossRef]

48. Semmens, J.; Freeman, C. The Value of Cittaslow as an Approach to Local Sustainable Development: A New Zealand Perspective. *Int. Plan. Stud.* **2012**, *17*, 353–375. [CrossRef]
49. Brown, A.; Jeong, B. International Comparison and Implementation of Slow City Success Determinants: The Case of Damyang Slow City, South Korea, and Seferihisar Slow City, Turkey: The Case of Damyang Slow City, South Korea, and Seferihisar Slow City, Turkey. *Dev. Soc.* **2018**, *47*, 613–631.
50. Farelnek, E. Cooperation of slow cities as an opportunity for the development: An example of Polish National Cittaslow Network. *Oeconomia Copernic.* **2020**, *11*, 267–287. [CrossRef]
51. Foresight. Prognozy Technologiczne. Decyzje Strategiczne. 2023. Available online: <https://www.foresight.pl/foresight-regionalny.html> (accessed on 27 March 2023).
52. Brzostowski, N.; Dębkowska, K.; Dmochowska-Dudek, K.; Glińska, E.; Kłosiewicz-Górecka, U.; Szymańska, A.; Ważniewski, P.; Wójcik, M.; Zybertowicz, K. *Scenariusze Rozwoju Małych Miast*; Polski Instytut Ekonomiczny: Warszawa, Poland, 2019.
53. Supralocal Revitalisation Program of Cittaslow Towns in Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship. 2015. Available online: https://www.wmarr.olsztyn.pl/s/images/stories/Pliki/2015_06_08_Ponadlokalny_program_rewitalizacji_sieci_miast_Cittaslow.pdf (accessed on 27 April 2023).
54. Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship until 2025. 2013. Available online: https://zit.olsztyn.eu/fileadmin/katalogi_wydzialowe/ZIT/dokumenty/srsgwmm_2025.pdf (accessed on 6 July 2023).
55. Regional Operational Program for the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship for 2014–2020. 2023. Available online: <https://rpo.warmia.mazury.pl/plik/3/regionalny-program-operacyjny-wojewodztwa-warminsko-mazurskiego-na-lata-2014-2020> (accessed on 6 July 2023).
56. Spatial Development Plan for the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship. 2018. Available online: http://edzienniki.olsztyn.uw.gov.pl/WDU_N/2018/4173/akt.pdf (accessed on 6 July 2023).
57. Üstündağlı, E.; Baybars, M.; Güzeloğluc, E.B. Collaborative Sustainability: Analyzing Economic and Social Outcomes in the Context of Cittaslow. *Bus. Econ. Res. J.* **2015**, *6*, 125–144.
58. Batyk, I.; Woźniak, M. Benefits of Belonging to the Cittaslow Network in the Opinion of Residents of Member Cities. *Econ. Reg. Stud.* **2019**, *12*, 56–67. [CrossRef]

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.