

Mirosław Grochowski, Magdalena Fuhrmann, Mikołaj Madurowicz,
Marek Pieniążek, Waldemar Wilk, Tomasz Zegar

Department of Socio-Economic Geography

E-mail: mgrochow@uw.edu.pl

WARSAW METROPOLITAN AREA IN AN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS NETWORK

Abstract: International relations of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area are presented in the paper. International relations, their extent (number and range), character and intensity reflect on the degree to which the metropolitan area (the central city and the remaining component units) has been included into an economic and socio-political relations network. Research was carried out, taking advantage of a broad base of available information sources, general economic, cultural, scientific, transport, tourist relations as well as cooperation of international self-government units¹.

Key words: metropolitan area, Warsaw, international relations, economy, culture, self-government.

INTRODUCTION

The presence of the region in widely understood relations networks and the position which the metropolitan area has in them, influences its functioning. Foreign relations open up new development possibilities thanks to economic and non-economic contacts, create favorable conditions for generation and absorption of innovations, assist in promoting the region, showing the availability of its values and resources and help in creating a picture of the metropolitan area as a potential partner for cooperation in various areas.

Due to the diversity of international relations the Warsaw Metropolitan Area different sets of data were used in the research. In the case of economic relations, information on European and global companies, as well as on companies with foreign capital, operating in the WMA, were used. Their

¹ Due to the size of the article, an attempt to present the WMA's international relations in tourism was relinquished. In the remaining cases only the most important research conclusions are mentioned. The following Warsaw University students from the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies: Marek Chmurski, Magdalena Fuhrmann, Sebastian Kołacz, Magdalena Mucha, Paulina Nowicka, Tomasz Podsiedzik and Adam Skarżyński participated in the research.

presence is a good indicator of the degree of internationalization and metropolisation of the economic sector. In the area of culture separate categories were used, dividing the entire range into thirteen thematic categories, for example, music, literature and history, supplementing the entire analysis on the type of contacts, e.g. their cyclical nature.

The characteristic of the transport systems in which the region functions, taking under consideration air and rail transport, helped determine the place of the WMA in transport networks, with the assumption that trains and airplanes remain the most important means of international transport. Information on direct train and plane connections from Warsaw were used. The issue of international cooperation of communities were presented, using results of questionnaire surveys made by the authors. Two kinds of international contacts were identified in the questionnaire used in the survey²: a) foreign cooperation within unions, associations, organizations, etc., b) participation in European Union programs.

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

In contemporary world, the network of transboundary connections created by global corporations, described as business networks, is growing. One of the ways of identifying the scale of this phenomenon in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area (WMA) is an analysis of the presence of companies from outside Poland in the WMA.

Comparing the list of Europe's largest companies with materials from the Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency (PAIiIZ) on foreign direct investments in Poland, an attempt was made to include the WMA in the sphere of international economic relations.

In the area of economy, the WMA is dominated by the capital city. An example of this is the distribution of representative offices of the largest European companies. In 2004, as many as 165 among 300 of the largest European companies operated in the WMA. Most of them had their headquarters in Warsaw and only a few had their office addresses outside the capital³, usually in direct neighborhood of Warsaw.

By the end of 2004, capital accumulation in Poland, as foreign direct investments (FDI), totaled over 80 bn USD. During the last decade, it is decidedly characterized by the greatest participation of the Mazowsze Voivodeship, where there are about 800 (30%) investment locations, each

² The term "foreign relations / with foreign countries " is understood in this paper as being overriding to the term "foreign cooperation " and "participation in the programs of the European Union".

³ This refers to the all-Poland headquarters of representatives of European companies. The presence of many of the examined companies may be observed in numerous towns and rural communities in the WMA but only as branches of sale networks , e.g. gas stations, stores belonging to a given network.

valued at over 1mln USD. Among the largest investors present in Mazowsze, with a representative office in Warsaw or the surrounding area, are France Telecom, Citibank, Vivendi Universal, UniCredito Italiano, or Nestle. The most active in the WMA are retail commercial enterprises, banking and financial institutions, entities oriented at servicing business entities as well as production companies. They are from the United States, Germany, Holland, South Korea, France, Italy and Russia.

Many large European companies participate in the Polish market in smaller degree than is given by the PAIILZ list because they have invested less than 1 mil USD. In order to describe in greater detail the scope of economic relations of the WMA with the world economy, the largest European companies in this area were also identified. Generally, from among 300 of the largest European companies present in the Polish market, as many as 190, i.e. 63.3%, are present here. In the WMA., mainly in Warsaw, there are 165 of the 300, e.g. 55%, of the largest European companies⁴. The smaller the company, the more rarely it is present in the MWA. As for the first "100" of European companies, as many as 70 are present in the WMA, 51% from the second "100" are present here and in the third group, companies decrease their share of presence to only 44%.

The sector and business structure of European companies present in the WMA, in comparison with the all-European structure, somewhat differs (Fig. 1). It may be observed that there is a somewhat higher participation of European industrial companies in the WMA. Whereas in Europe, the share of the industrial and service sectors is almost equal, the share of industrial companies totals over 56% in the WMA. Conducting a more detailed analysis, according to sectors, we observe a relatively small scale of internationalized activities related to the supply of energy, gas and water (network infrastructure). Significant, (about ¼), in the scale of Europe as well as Mazowsze, is the participation of companies from the financial sector (banks and insurance).

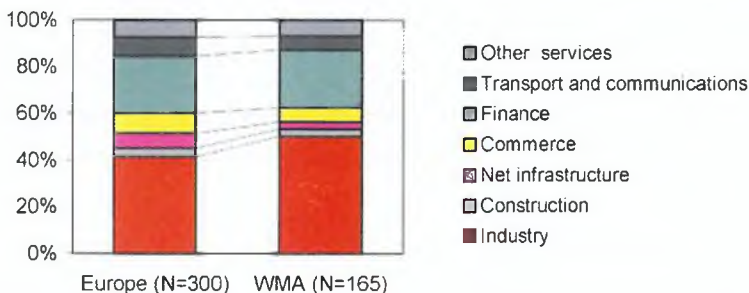


Fig. 1. Business structure of the largest European companies and their representatives in the WMA .

Europe, WMA, industry, construction, net infrastructure, commerce, finance, transport and communications, Other services.

Own elaboration

⁴ Die 500 größten Unternehmen Europas, <http://www.handelsblatt.com> [04.01.2005]

Due to geographic relations, the structure of the largest European companies and their representatives in Poland shows numerous similarities. Somewhat smaller is the participation of large companies from Spain in the WMA, there are neither representatives from Portugal nor Ireland. Similar to all of Europe, companies from the European Union countries dominate (Fig. 2). Among the 300 largest in Europe, as many as 173 (57%) come from three countries, i.e. Great Britain, France and Germany. Within the WMA the scale of their participation is close to one another (100 of the 165 companies, i.e. 60%). Only French companies (39) and German (35) are more numerous represented than those from Great Britain (only 26).

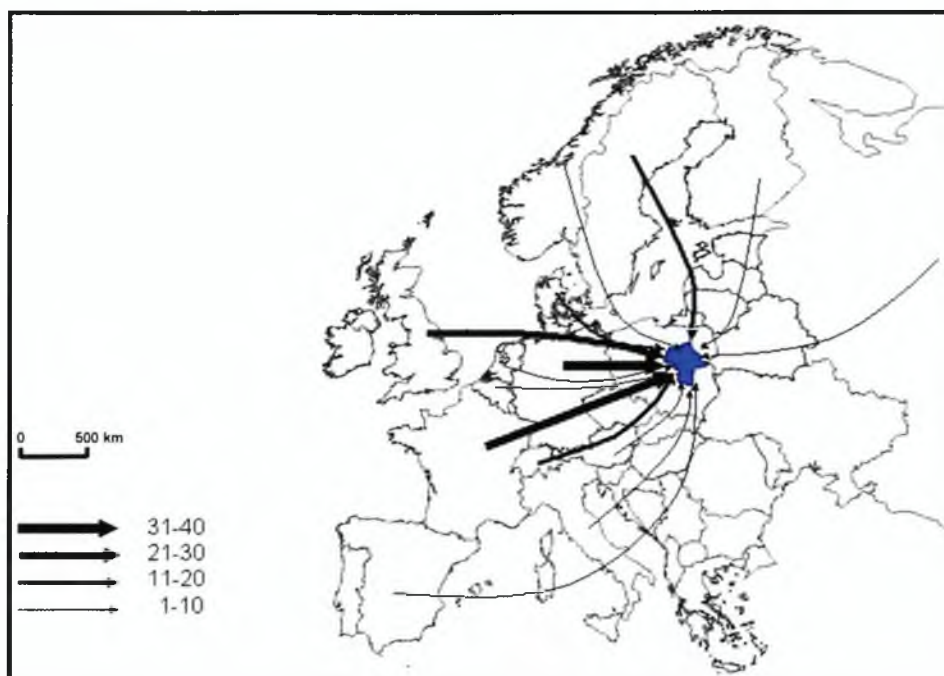


Fig. 2. Geographic origin of the largest European companies present in the WMA (Mazowsze). Own elaboration

CULTURAL RELATIONS

Almost all contacts and international relations of the WMA concentrate on the line Warsaw – the world. The majority of them include European nations, followed by Asia and North America. The WMA, taking under consideration all the proposed categories of cultural relations, is in contact with practically the entire world.

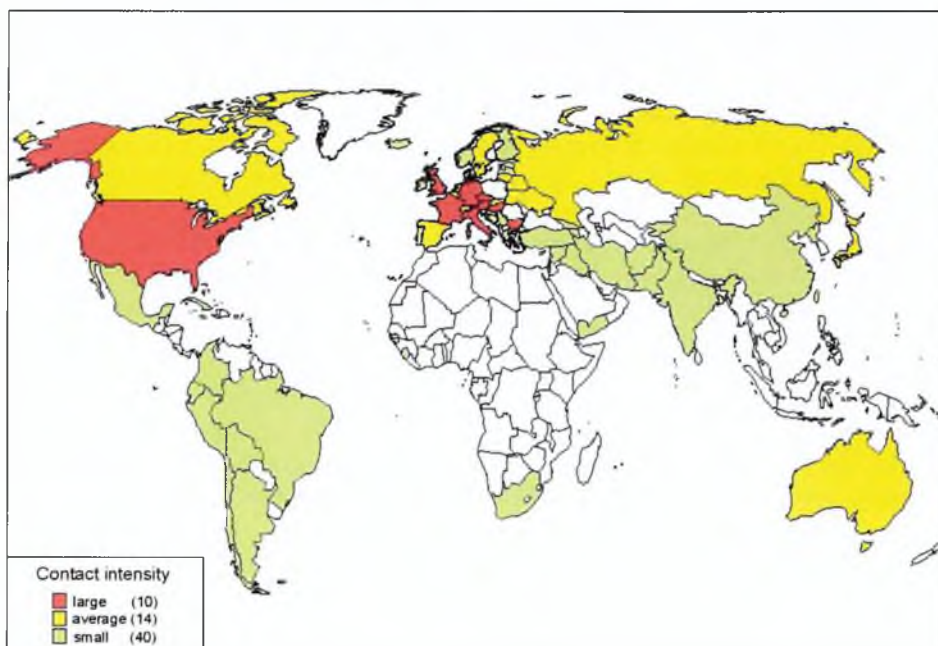


Fig. 3. Contacts of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area in the realm of culture (in total, without division by categories).

Contact intensity: large, average, small.

Own elaboration

With greatest intensity, the WMA cooperates with Germany and individual activeness has the greatest significance in cultural relations between the WMA and foreign countries. Among cultural events which are the result of cooperation between the WMA and a foreign partner (within the WMA area), one-time events predominate. Often, the personal and organizational participation of foreigners is greater than their financial contribution, which may be understood as the specificity of the issue. It should also be stated that, despite the participation of international parties, events usually are of local importance.

Two Warsaw institutions, Teatr Wielki – Polish National Opera and the Warsaw Philharmonic, are the main pillars of international cooperation and contacts.

RELATIONS IN THE AREA OF SCIENCE AND RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

In the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, are located about 30% of the research and development units. They are mostly in Warsaw and in several WMA

communities. In the WMA there are also 78 institutions of higher learning, 14 of which are state owned. Alone in Warsaw, there are 70 universities and colleges.

Above all, research and development institutions cooperate with European partners. Such is also the case with foreign contacts of institutions of higher learning which especially actively cooperate with the following countries: Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, Great Britain. Among countries which are outside Europe, it is necessary to mention the following: Brazil, Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, USA. Relations and connections in the area of higher education and science take place, so to speak, on two tracks, i.e. by means of student exchanges and science and research cooperation in various areas. Foreigners studying in the WMA mainly come from: Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Russia, the Czech Republic. Fewer students come from Germany, USA, Canada and France. A significant number of foreign students (over 50% in WMA) is of Polish origin.

TRANSPORT RELATIONS

Warsaw and its Metropolitan Area have a very convenient location in Europe. Some of Europe's most important railway routes cross here. Warsaw has airline connections with most European capitals. Much weaker is its connection network with countries outside Europe (Fig. 4). Lack of a large and functional airport, with a capacity to receive at least 10 million passengers, is the essential barrier in the development of air transport in Warsaw, i.e. the growth of its significance as the principal Central European metropolis. Currently, the Okęcie airport is slowly reaching its maximum capacity.

Warsaw has the most numerous railway connections with Berlin, Minsk, Prague and Vienna. Every week, trains depart for these cities at least 21 times. A important connection, allowing traveling toward the East is the connection with Moscow. Additionally, there are direct connections from Warsaw to chosen cities in Asia, for example Astana. The quickest train ride lasts about 6 hours (to Berlin). The longest, however, is the trip to Novosibirsk which lasts three days. It is worth noting that, travel time toward the East is usually longer. Travel to nearby located Minsk or Lwów is usually longer than to Vienna or Prague.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE WARSAW METROPOLITAN AREA. COMMUNITY SELF-GOVERNMENTS

Cooperation of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area self-governments includes, above all, activities benefiting either local communities or chosen population groups, for example young people. In the case of Warsaw, foreign cooperation

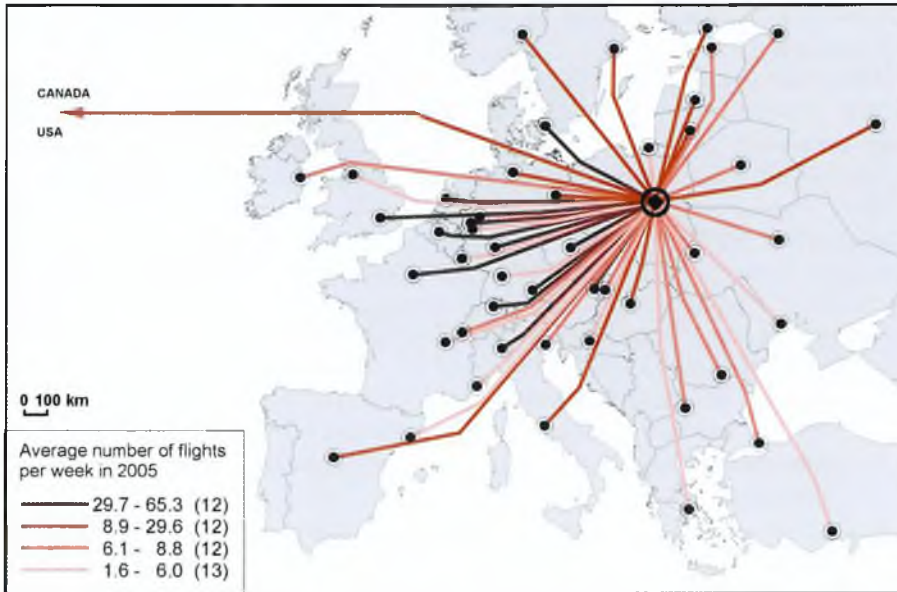


Fig. 4. International air connections of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area (without connections serviced by the so-called low cost airlines).
Average number of flights per week in 2005.
Own elaboration

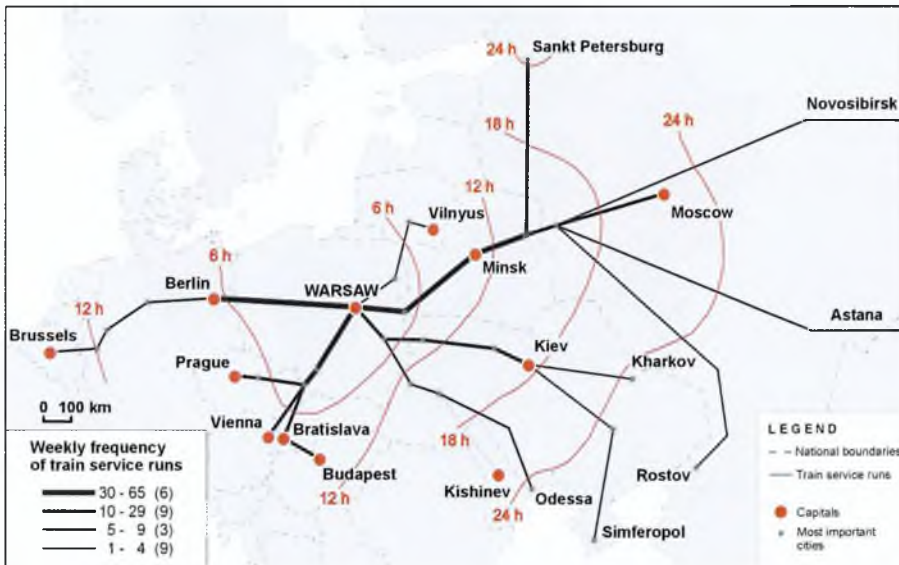


Fig. 5. Warsaw Metropolitan Area international train connections.
Weekly frequency of train service runs.
Legend: National boundaries, train service runs, capitals, most important cities.
Own elaboration

also includes issues related to the management of development and everyday city operations.

Both quantitatively as well as qualitatively, the Warsaw Metropolitan Area is characterized by a relatively low development degree of foreign relations networks. Initiation of foreign cooperation depends on the activeness of local community authorities. There is no essential correlation between foreign cooperation and participation in EU programs. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the communities having foreign partners also use programs offered by the European Union. Almost half of the local community governments participating in the EU programs declare other forms of foreign contacts. An analysis of self-government activeness in the area of foreign relations allows for the identification of four community types:

- type A – has no foreign contacts;
- type B – has foreign cooperation (participation in twin city associations, cooperation with associations, schools) as well as participation in EU programs;
- type C – has no foreign cooperation but participates in EU programs;
- type D – has foreign cooperation but does not participate in EU programs.

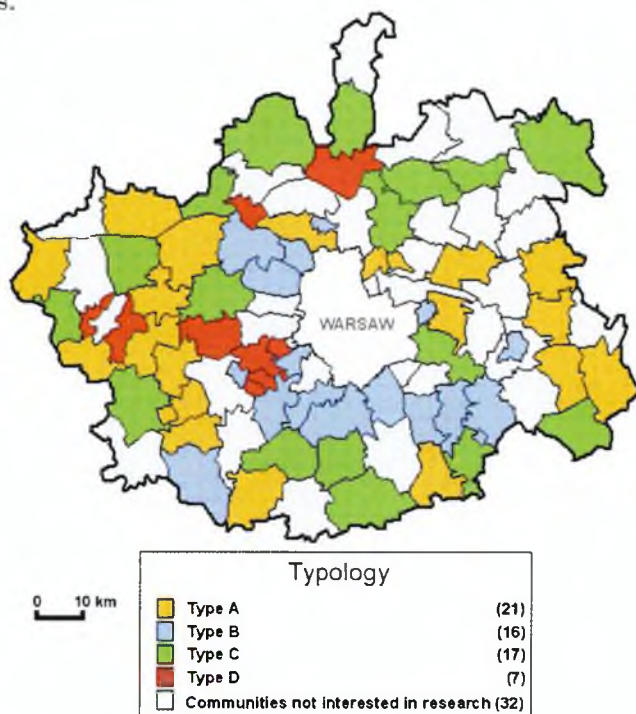


Fig. 6. Typology of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area international contacts Warsaw. Typology: type A, type B, type C, type D. Communities not interested in research. Own elaboration

Every third self-government is passive in the area of foreign relations (type A). These are communities mainly located to the east and west of Warsaw. However, every fourth self-government is significantly active (type B). For the most part, these communities are located near Warsaw, in the southern part of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area. Every tenth community cooperates with a foreign partner but at the same time, has no access EU programs (type D). These are communities located to the west and north of Warsaw. Almost every fourth community does not cooperate but uses EU programs (type C). Such community types have no spatial concentration in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area.

CONCLUSIONS

Research results presented briefly in this paper give testimony to the fact that the Warsaw Metropolitan Area has been included into different types of foreign relations networks. Warsaw's distinct domination is visible in these relations. The remaining components of the WMA are in a peculiar "shadow zone" which is the result of a lower saturation level by functions characteristic of a metropolis. Without any doubt, the position of the WMA in the international relations network depends on the position of Warsaw. This position, in comparison with other European metropolises, is evidently weaker because of among others, the underdevelopment of transport connections. To strengthen the position of the WMA in the area of international connections network, planned and coordinated spatial planning activities and decentralization of the metropolitan functions in the entire area, are necessary.

English translation: Małgorzata Mitaszewska