

International Conference

# Challenges and Opportunities of Structurally Weak Rural Regions in Europe

Social Innovations and Social Enterprises Acting  
Under Adverse Conditions

4-6 December 2017 |

Adam Mickiewicz University | Poznań | Poland



Social Entrepreneurship in Structurally Weak Rural Regions:  
Analysing Innovative Troubleshooters in Action

[ruraction.eu](http://ruraction.eu)

This project has received funding  
from the European Union's  
Horizon 2020 ITN programme  
under the Marie Skłodowska-  
Curie grant agreement  
No. 721999



Organiser:





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## Regular conference fee

35 EUR/150 PLN

for more information

see page 9

## Venue

Adam Mickiewicz University

Poznań, Poland

see pages 10-14

## RurAction project

> [ruraction.eu](http://ruraction.eu)

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Structurally weak rural regions in Europe face multiple challenges. They have a below-average economic productivity because only a few enterprises from the fields of industrial production or commercial services offer jobs. If any, then mainly very small and medium-sized businesses are active in these regions. Furthermore, the regions are insufficiently supplied with physical or social infrastructure, also public transport is limited. Inhabitants lament reduced communication in village life, even more as the small shops, the baker's, the doctor's surgery, the post office and the village pub, that once were important meeting places, have long gone. The assumption that investors would come and open up economic welfare, that they create new jobs and promote regional development were abandoned. As a result of the bad economic situation and the infrastructural deficits in many rural regions, a downward spiral has started with ever more people moving to the cities, thus further reducing the economic opportunities of rural regions. These trends are increased by public discourses referring to a lack of future prospects and raise out-migration as a topic of discussion.

The question of how such downward spirals can be stopped cannot be answered easily. Typically, rural development happened by way of more or less top-down approaches in the form of EU as well as national development programmes that include bottom-up elements. However, there is an imbalance in the range of support activities due to funding agricultural rather than community-related development. The EU and Member States are aware of such problems. Furthermore, awareness has grown that in rural regions novel approaches to the solutions strengthening their socio-economic potentials are needed.

Against this background, hopes are turned not least towards social enterprises. They are seen as a factor which can help to cope with the multifaceted problems. Social enterprises or social entrepreneurs are actors who, through an entrepreneurial approach, develop and implement social innovations, empowering regional actors in doing the same. Their focus is not profit, but the production of social added-value for a region. Social innovations offer novel ways of proceeding in order to meet existing problems more satisfactorily than previous ones.

The concept of social innovation in terms of significant changes in social, cultural, and political practices – apart from economic and technical innovation – has become accepted in most scientific disciplines. It is considered as an important complement to innovation research, not least in the context of social-science based spatial research. However, whereas the innovative capacity of cities typically is estimated to be high, it is said that rural regions are remote from (social) innovation since they consist of homogeneous and traditionally minded groups





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inclined to preserve, not to change, existing assets. This would mean that social enterprises in rural regions have to act in very different ways under adverse conditions.

The conference focuses on both the challenges and the potentials for social innovations in the countryside. In particular, the specific economic, political and cultural framework conditions of structurally weak rural regions in Europe will be discussed. These conditions are considered as the socio-spatial contexts of social entrepreneurial acting.

To be more specific, the following issues will be highlighted:

- > socio-economic dynamics of structurally weak rural regions (Session 1)
- > rural development strategies and policies (Session 2)
- > changes of rural life and culture (Session 3)

In the conference we will welcome a number of internationally renowned researchers from different disciplines such as sociology, human and economic geography, political sciences, and business studies. Together with practitioners from award-winning social enterprises they will give insights into the current debates on rural regions. The sessions will be complemented by poster presentations.

The conference marks the beginning of the research network “Social Entrepreneurship in Structurally Weak Rural Regions: Analysing Innovative Troubleshooters in Action (RurAction)” funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska Curie Programme “Innovative Training Networks”. From 2017 to 2020, ten early-stage researchers will conduct research on different aspects of social enterprises and social innovations in structurally weak rural regions. They will be trained for a career both in the academic field and in the field of social entrepreneurship.

We invite researchers, PhD students, actors from social enterprises, and policy makers from the local, regional, national and European level to discuss challenges and opportunities of structurally weak rural regions in Europe and to elucidate the specific potentials of social entrepreneurship for the development of innovative solutions.







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## Monday, 4 December 2017

Venue: Lubranski Small Aula, Collegium Minus, Wieniawskiego 1

13:30 Registration

**14:00 Official Opening of the Conference – Welcome Addresses**

Prof. Dr. Ryszard Naskręcki | Vice-Rector of the Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU), Poznań, Poland

Prof. Dr. Heiderose Kilper | Director of the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space (IRS), Erkner, Germany

Representative of local authorities

Representatives of the AMU Faculties of Geography and Social Sciences

Representatives of the Institute of Socio-Economic Geography and Spatial

Management and the Institute of Sociology

Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann | IRS, Erkner, Germany

Prof. Dr. Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz | AMU, Poznań, Poland

15:30 Coffee break

### Session 1: Socio-Economic Dynamics of Rural Regions

Chair: Prof. Gabriela Christmann | IRS, Erkner, Germany

**16:00 Keynote Speech: Solidarity, Sustainability and the FairShares Model: Early Insights from the FairShares Labs Project**

Dr. Rory Ridley Duff | Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

**16:40 Inner Peripheries in Europe and Poland. Theory and Practice**

Dr. Karolina Dmochowska-Dudek, Dr. hab. Marcin Wójcik and

Dr. Paulina Tobiasz-Lis | University of Lodz, Poland

**17:00 Development of Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas – Diagnosis, Trends, Recommendations**

Prof. Dr. Jerzy Bański | Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland

**17:20 European Rural Regions Facing Problems and Challenges: Similarities and Differences**

Prof. Dr. Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz | AMU, Poland

**17:40 Final Discussion of Session 1**

19:00 Dinner

Venue: Wiejskie Jadło (eng. Rural Cuisine) Restaurant

Old Market Square 77 | entrance from Franciszkańska Street



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## Tuesday, 5 December 2017

Venue: Collegium Geographicum, B. Krygowskiego 10, room 4

### Session 2: Rural Development Strategies and Policies

Chair: Prof. Dr. Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz | AMU, Poznań, Poland

- 10:30 Keynote Speech: Fostering Leadership through Collaborative Governance in Rural Northwest America: (Re)building 21<sup>st</sup>-century Communities in the Columbia River Gorge**  
Darren J. Nichols | Portland State University's School of Urban Studies and Planning, Portland, USA
- 11:10 Recent Polish Initiatives Concerning the Social Economy**  
Prof. Dr. Ewa Leś | University of Warsaw, Poland
- 11:30 Knowledge-based Municipal Entrepreneurship Empowerment in Rural Regions**  
Prof. Dr. George Tsobanoglou | University of the Aegean, Mytilini, Greece
- 11:50 Rural Development Strategies for Innovation Cultures**  
Martin Hollinetz | OTELO eGen, Vorchdorf, Austria
- 12:10 Final Discussion of Session 2**
- 12:30 Lunch** – Venue: Collegium Geographicum
- 13:30 Poster session** – Venue: Collegium Geographicum

### Session 3: Changes of Rural Life and Culture

Chair: Prof. Dr. George Tsobanoglou | University of the Aegean, Mytilini, Greece

- 14:30 Keynote Speech: Some Notes on the Future of Rural and Rurban Places: Relations, Cultures, and Everyday Life**  
Prof. Dr. Marc Redepenning | Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg, Germany
- 15:10 Semantics of ‚Slow‘ as Social Innovation: German and Italian Cittaslow Towns in Comparison**  
Ariane Sept | Technische Universität Berlin, Germany
- 15:30 Social Economy – the Tactic of Resilience or Adaptation to the Crisis?**  
Dr. Przemysław Nosal | AMU, Poland
- 15:50 Rural Societies Between Tradition and Innovation**  
Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann | IRS, Germany
- 16:10 Final Discussion of Session 3**
- 16:30 Conclusions**  
Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz | AMU, Poland and Gabriela Christmann | IRS, Germany
- 16:40 Coffee break**
- 17:00 End of the conference**





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## Wednesday, 6 December 2017

### Possibility to participate in a bus excursion to Wągrowiec, including:

- > visit to the communal office
- > visit to the social cooperative "Common Success"
- > dinner with the representatives of local authorities and the leader of the cooperative

Wągrowiec is located in the Pilski subregion – a structurally weak rural region in north-eastern Wielkopolska, 55 km in the north of Poznań. The commune of Wągrowiec is a place of successful implementation of social innovations.

**14:00**      **Departure of the bus**

**22:00**      **Expected time of return at Poznań**

### Meeting point for departure

parking in front of Collegium Geographicum,  
Ul. Krygowskiego 10, 61-680 Poznań

### Place of return at Poznań

Ul. Wieniawskiego 1 (city center)





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## Organisers

Local organisers' committee at Adam Mickiewicz University | AMU, Poznań, Poland



### Prof. Dr. Tadeusz Stryjakiewicz

Institute of Socio-Economic Geography and Spatial Management  
Head of the Research Unit of Regional Policy and European Integration  
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## Organisers



RurAction organisers' committee at Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space | IRS, Erkner, Germany



**Prof. Dr. Gabriela Christmann**

Coordinator of RurAction

Head of the Research Unit:

Dynamics of Communication, Knowledge and Spatial Development

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### The Consortium of the RurAction project

- > Lead Partner: Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space | IRS, Erkner, Germany
- > Adam-Mickiewicz-University | AMU, Poznan, Poland
- > ADCMoura | Moura, Portugal
- > Ballyhoura Development | Kilfinane, Ireland
- > Johannes Kepler University | Linz, Austria
- > Leibniz Institut für Länderkunde | IfL, Leipzig, Germany
- > Otelo eGen | Vorchdorf, Austria
- > Roskilde University | RUC, Roskilde, Denmark
- > Social Impact | Potsdam, Germany
- > Stevia Hellas | Lamia, Greece
- > Technische Universität Berlin | Berlin, Germany
- > University College Cork | UCC, Cork, Ireland
- > University Institute of Lisbon | ISTE-IUL, Lisbon, Portugal
- > University of Leipzig | Leipzig, Germany
- > University of The Aegean | UAE, Mytilini, Greece



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**Fees** – only for external guests, not members of the RurAction consortium

The mandatory **conference fee** for the **two days** (including two coffee breaks at 4 and 5 December 2017 as well as lunch at 5 December 2017) is **35 EUR/150 PLN**.

The optional fee for the **official dinner** on 4 December 2017 (including a three-course dinner with a glass of wine/water) is **35 EUR /150 PLN**, if you wish to attend the dinner. Please make also your choice, if you prefer a vegetarian dish.

The optional fee for the bus **excursion to Wągrowiec** on 6 December 2017 is **20 EUR/85 PLN**, if you wish to join the excursion. Please note that places are limited. We will work on a “first come, first served” basis. You will be notified soon after the registration whether you can join the excursion.

### Accommodation

- > See a variety of hotels at: > [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com)
- > Apartments as an alternative to hotels and hostels: > [www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com)
- > AMU Dormitory „Jowita” (for University guests)  
hostel standard, option cheaper than hotels: Zwierzyniecka 7  
> [dsjowita.home.amu.edu.pl/pokoje-goscinne/standard-podwyzszony](http://dsjowita.home.amu.edu.pl/pokoje-goscinne/standard-podwyzszony)  
Questions, reservations: > [dsjowita@amu.edu.pl](mailto:dsjowita@amu.edu.pl)





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## Venue

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## How to get to Poznan

### By plane

Ławica airport is located within the city borders, the access from the airport to the city centre is easy and possible by a public bus or taxi

> [www.airport-poznan.com.pl/en](http://www.airport-poznan.com.pl/en)

### By train or bus

Poznań is located half way between Warsaw and Berlin, there are several connections from there, train/bus station is located 15 minutes from the first day of the conference venue

> [www.poznan.pl/mim/turystyka/en/how-to-get-to-poznan,p,1065,1066.html](http://www.poznan.pl/mim/turystyka/en/how-to-get-to-poznan,p,1065,1066.html)



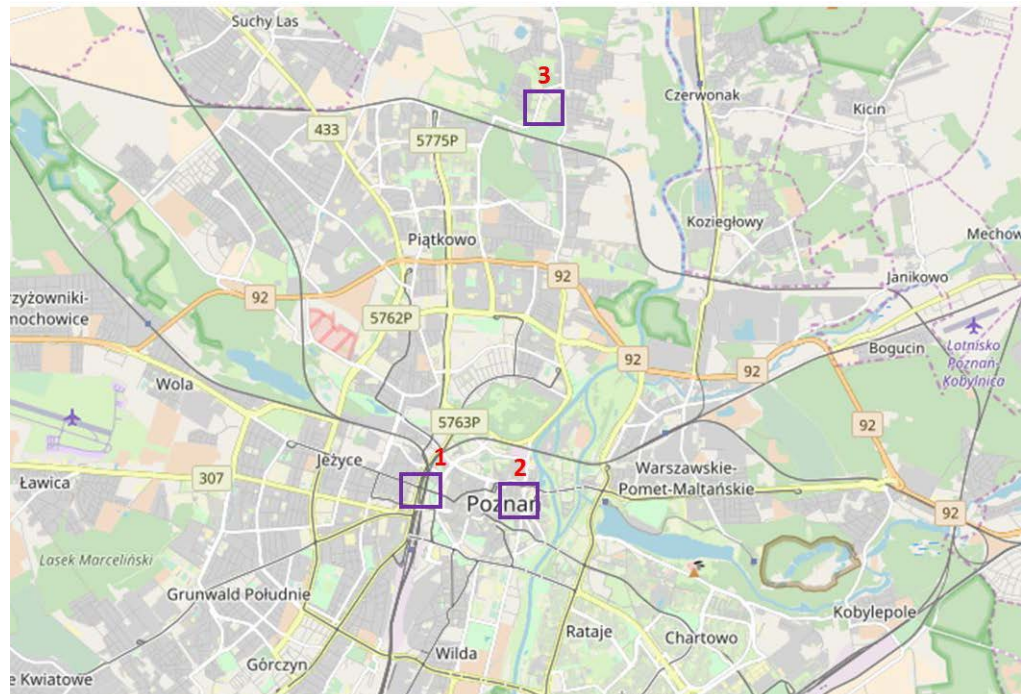


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## Conference venues



### City transport connection searcher and timetable:

> [www.jakdojade.pl/poznan](http://www.jakdojade.pl/poznan) + write "A" – start place, "B" – end place





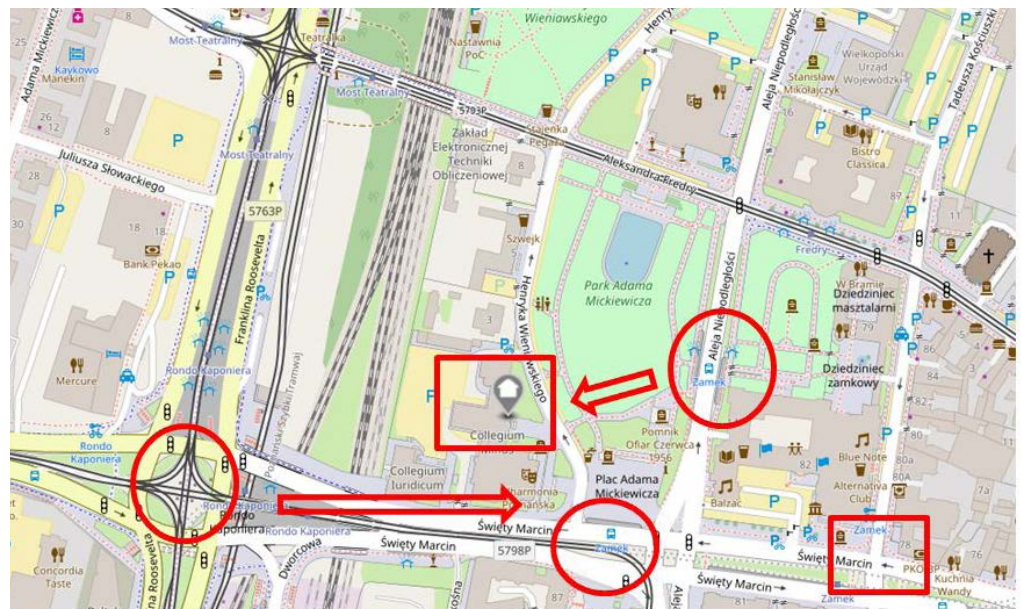


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## Conference venues and public transport to the venues



### Venue of the 1st day of the conference (conference opening) at 4 December 2017:

Lubranski Small Aula, Collegium Minus, Wieniawskiego 1  
District: City Centre – Old Town (“Stare Miasto”)

#### Tram/bus stops:

- > Rondo Kaponiera (exit – direction św. Marcin)  
tram lines: 2,8,10,11, 12,13,14,15,18  
bus lines: 48,59,68,69;
- > Zamek – bus lines: 51,63,68,69,71



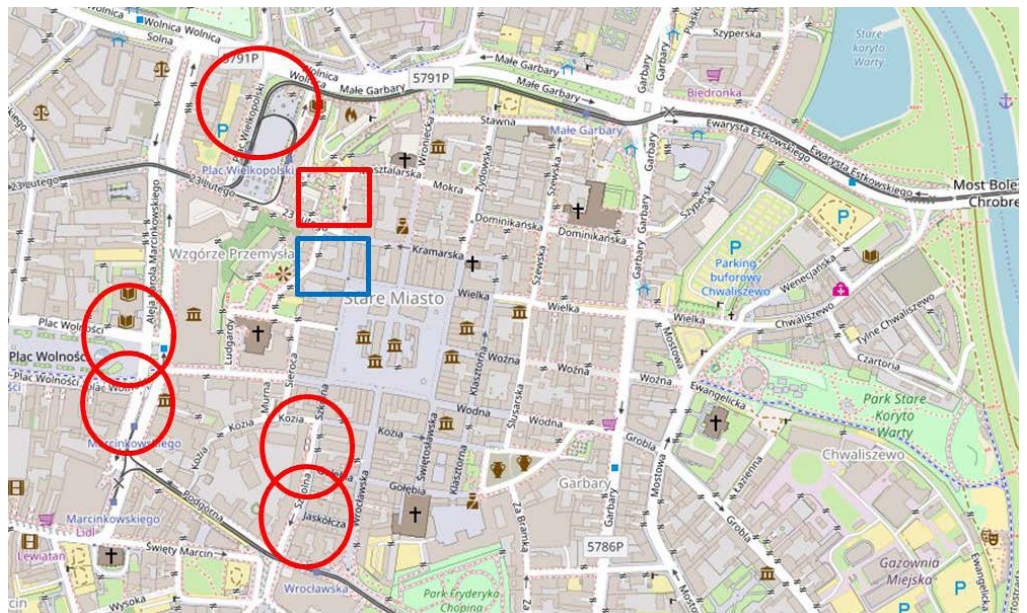




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## Venue of the optional dinner at 4 December 2017:

Wiejskie Jadło, Stary Rynek (Old Market Square) 77  
District: City Centre – Old Town (“Stare Miasto”)

## Tram stops:

- > Wrocławska – lines: 5, 16
- > Marcinkowskiego – lines: 5, 16
- > Plac Wielkopolski – lines: 3,4,8,17

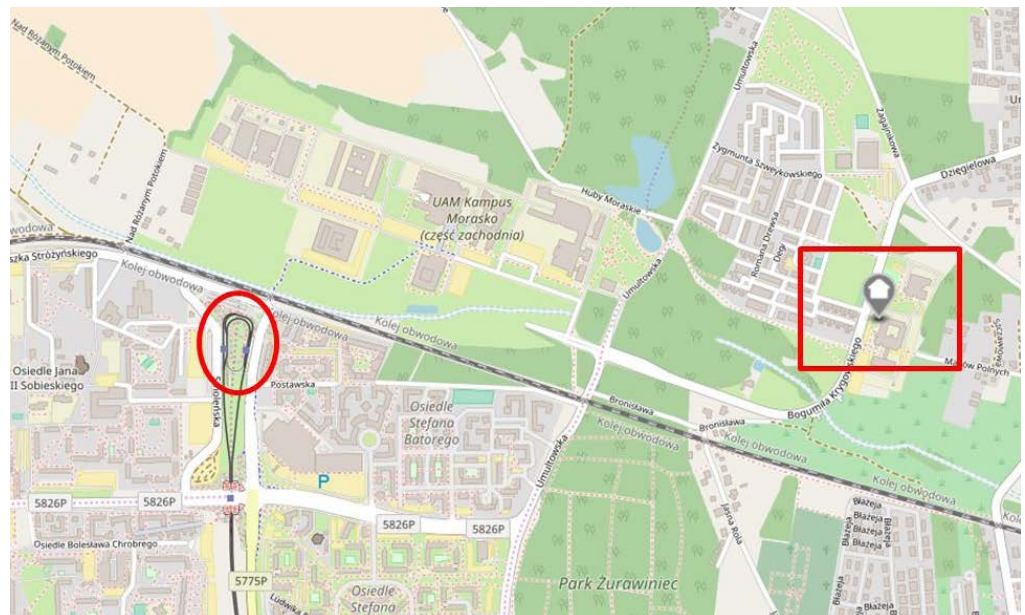




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## Venue of the 2nd day of the conference at 5 December:

Institute of Socio-Economic Geography and Spatial Management  
Collegium Geographicum  
ul. Krygowskiego 10  
District: AMU Campus Morasko, eastern part

## Tram stops:

- > 1 stage: Jana III Sobieskiego, trams 12,14,15,16 (trams are recommended, faster than buses); buses 51,74,85,90,91,93 + change
- > 2 stage (final destination): UAM Wydział Geografii, bus 98 or 348

## Alternative route:

- > 1 stage: Kurpińskiego, trams 12,14,15,16 + change into:
- > 2 stage: UAM Wydział Geografii, bus 87

