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Gentrified countryside and non-gentrified countryside: Spatial dimension of the rural gentrification process

Abstract

The subject of the paper is the process of rural gentrification in Poland. In Poland, this process has a special character. It began later than in the West and intensified in the last decade of the twentieth century. It resulted from two parallel processes endogenous and exogenous to the countryside. The rural middle class grew due to an increase in the level of education of the rural population (resulting from the “educational boom” after 1989) since a higher level of education entitles one to occupy a higher position in the social and professional structure. It was accompanied by the settlement of the urban middle class in rural areas. The paper identifies (based on literature and earlier own research) the features of rural gentrification in Poland. Based on them, the level of gentrification of rural communities was indicated, and in turn, the spatial extent of the rural gentrification process in Poland was defined.

Keywords: rural gentrification, gentrified countryside, Poland, rural areas, spatial dimension, middle class

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Introduction

Contemporary rural areas are a multifaceted phenomenon that can hardly be defined from a geographical, sociological, cultural, or economic perspective. Rural areas are becoming more and more complex and urban-like. As early as the mid-1980s, British sociologist Howard Newby pointed out that the only characteristic of the Western village is the size of the settlements where people live (Halamska 2009). This likening of the countryside to the city was once called rural urbanisation (cf. Czarnecki 2009). Today, one of its expressions is the process of rural gentrification. This process of change—whatever you call it—is leading to a change in the way we think about the countryside and to an approach to rural phenomena that exist not only in the countryside and make up its nature, but as rural variations of phenomena that occur throughout society. “Traditional rural sociology, however, was based on the assumption of a specific character of rural life—a specific syndrome consisting of a relatively low population density (demographic factor), dominant agriculture as a basic form of economic activity (economic factor) and a special kind of social bond based on personal and direct relationships (socio-cultural factor). A major change, however, is the fact that modernisation processes bring about the end of the system of rural life formulated in this way” (Gorlach 2005: 8).

The typical village, characterised by traditional agricultural occupations and separated from urban life, is now considered a “rural myth” (Kapferer 1990). Although agricultural production remains important, reference is made to the other characteristics of rural areas that comprise the “new rural paradigm” (OECD 2006). The landscape, which used to be a productive landscape, has become one for consumption and recreation (Zhang 2021; Mather et al. 2006). Rural areas are no longer a farmers’ monopoly (van der Ploeg et al. 2000). This change has a significant impact on rural development and restructuring. It creates new spatial relations, for example through the flow of people and finances, while simultaneously creating uneven and often unforeseen changes.

Studies of the rural social structure in Poland show that the most dynamic current process is the growth of the middle class: “in 1991, one in eight villagers was classified as middle class, in 2013 almost one in

four”¹ (Halamska 2015). A key process influencing this change is rural gentrification (Halamska 2016), understood as changes in the socio-professional structure of the population, consisting of an increase in the participation of various categories of the middle class (Hoggart 1991). The analysis of scientific literature in Poland on the subject of rural gentrification does not provide a comprehensive picture. However, rural gentrification is one of the key processes influencing the modern transformation of rural areas, thus fundamentally changing their morphology, leading to a transformation of rural settlements, which is characteristic of countries heavily affected by globalisation. This article aims to describe the process of rural gentrification and highlight its spatial dimension/extension. Describing the demographic, social, economic and spatial changes collected in the rural gentrification index, areas (counties) where the process is the strongest and the areas where the process does not happen were identified.

On the process of rural gentrification and the actors in the process

Rural gentrification is a process that changes the social and occupational structure of the rural population and increases the proportion of the heterogeneous middle class. This is a broad view of the process, without specifying the reasons for the increase. Many researchers (Guimond, Simard 2010; Nelson, Pistre et al. 2008) accept them and consider the consequences as an integral part of the characterisation of the process. Rural gentrification is generally described by the characteristics of population, socio-economic, spatial, psychosocial and cultural changes, which in practice involve a change in the social composition of the population, an emphasis on local heritage and resources, the aestheticisation of localities (and districts), the emergence of new institutions, the diversification of the available services and increase in property value (Phillips 1993; Smith, Phillips 2001; Solana-Solana 2010; Stockdale 2010). This understanding of the process was adopted in this study because, contrary

¹ The middle class was defined identically in both 1991 and 2013. The first four categories of the International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-88 and ISCO-08 were legislators, senior officials and managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals, clerical support workers and the self-employed.

to the common view in the literature that rural gentrification comes “from the city”, considering the peculiarities of the Polish rural areas, it would not reflect the nature of the phenomenon. The increase in the proportion of the rural middle class in Poland over the past 30 years was determined by two groups of reasons: (a) the education boom after 1989 and (b) external factors relative to gentrification areas, i.e. the migration of former urban dwellers to rural areas and that of highly educated youth from peripheral to metropolitan areas. In the last three decades, the size of the rural middle class, from which the gentrifiers (actors in the discussed process) are recruited, has increased significantly. In 1992, the percentage of this segment of the social structure in rural areas was about 13%, while in 2015, it reached almost a third (28%), which means more than a doubling of its share in the rural social structure in recent decades. This process coexists with the process of deagrarianisation. While at the beginning of the 1990s, 46% of the rural population comprised farmers, twenty years later, their share does not exceed 26%. Rural gentrification is the effect firstly of endogenous processes, whose manifestation is a huge increase in the level of education of the rural population resulting from the „educational boom”. According to the National Census data in 1988, 1.8% of rural residents had higher education, which rose in 2011 to 12%. Secondly, the emergence of a middle class in the countryside was greatly influenced by migration (exogenous to the countryside), including the reversal of migration trends. For the first time in the postwar history of Poland, at the beginning of the 2000s, there was a positive migration balance in rural areas.

The narrow sense of the process, according to Keith Hoggart (1997), focuses on the changes in the social structure. This approach clearly emphasises the class character of the process as an axis of analysis, dealing with changes in the class composition of the society. In both cases, however, it is assumed that the term refers to the process of forming a broadly understood rural middle class at the expense of the extreme groups in the social fabric, leading to diversification of rural lifestyles. This phenomenon was also defined as *moyennisation* (Mendras 1994), a series of processes leading to the emergence of middle-class society. In the literature, the process of rural gentrification is explained by two different theoretical concepts. The first focuses on structural change in the economy, followed by changes in the class structure of society. In developed market societies, the disappearance of sharp class divisions occurs through various forms of property distribution, which is called class extinction. These

changes take place gradually, but more and more people are becoming owners or co-owners of something crucial to determining their place in society. The transformation of the rural economy, including the increasing share of services (Halamska, Zwęglińska-Gałecka 2019), is also included in this explanatory approach. Often, in this context, the question arises whether gentrifiers, coming from the middle class, do not come into conflict with the existing users of space, taking their place. In the case of rural gentrification, it is also considered whether gentrifiers do not appropriate the space of farmers—still considered the main inhabitants of rural areas. The second concept of explaining the phenomenon focuses on its cultural aspects. Emerging gentrifiers bring with them a different system of values and needs from the indigenous ones (Brosz 2018). And they, by disseminating it in a given place, cause its changes. The rural gentrification process is due to the appearance of people who, because of their cultural resources, occupy higher social positions, have greater material resources and have a lifestyle different from the members of the host communities. Gentrifiers enrich human, social and cultural capital in rural areas, thus eliminating to some extent the gaps created by urban migration during industrialisation and the exodus of educated youth from rural areas (Halamska, Zwęglińska-Gałecka 2019). This leads to a recomposition of the rural social fabric.

Starting from the above, the middle class is characterised by high cultural and social capital. Operationally, I include in it (after Halamska 2016) the first four major² socio-professional groups according to the Classification of Occupations and Skills, corresponding to ISCO-08: 1- legislators, senior officials and managers, 2- professionals, 3- technicians and associate professionals, 4- clerical support workers. The middle class thus identified includes representatives

² Classification of occupations and specialities for the needs of the labour market is a five-level, hierarchically systematized set of occupations and specialities occurring on the labour market. All classification items have a numerical symbol. Similarly to the ISCO-08 standard, large groups are marked with a one-digit symbol (there are 10 of them), large groups- with two digits (there are 43 of them), medium groups- with three digits (there are 132 of them), elementary groups- with four digits (their number is 444). For example, the large group „Farmers, horticulturists, foresters, fishermen” is group number 6, it has 3 major groups (first two digits of the code, they are: farmers of commodity production (61), foresters and fishermen (62) and subsistence farmers and fishermen (63)), 9 medium groups (first three digits, e.g. 611- farmers of crop production) and 17 elementary groups (four digits of the code, e.g. 6111- farmers of field crops).

of socio-professional groups with a high level of education, which indicates formally higher cultural capital and is followed by a relatively high professional position and income. As the analysis conducted for the monographic research in the municipality of Prażmów showed (Śpiewak 2016; Zwęglińska-Gałecka 2019) the middle class is fed by two parallel sources: migration from the cities, and migration from the countryside and peripheral regions. It should also be emphasised that there are different concepts and different criteria for defining the middle class. In the same population, assuming the requisite characteristics exist in the data bank, the extent of the middle class would be different if the criteria of the Social Classification of Occupations³, EGP⁴, or Gdula and Sadura's⁵ were applied.

Other occupations, i. e., 5–service and sales workers, 6–farmers and agricultural workers, forestry and fishery workers; 7–foremen and skilled workers; 8–machine workers and assemblers and 9–elementary occupations, may be regarded as working class. Maciej Gdula, Mikołaj Lewicki and Przemysław Sadura (2015) include in the working class “especially those who perform

³ “For the first time, it was elaborated in 1978 by M. Pohoski and K.M. Słomczyński. Its second version was prepared by H. Domański, Z. Sawiński and K.M. Słomczyński in 2007, titled „Nowa klasyfikacja i skale zawodów. Sociological indices of social position in Poland (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN)” (Halamska 2016, p. 17).

⁴ EGP classification is (Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero), widely used in contemporary quantitative research on social structure. It refers to the occupation, ownership and position in occupational structures and distinguishes 11 classes. Henryk Domański and Zbigniew Sawiński (1995) adapted this classification for use in Poland. This version distinguishes 10 social categories (classes). The first three include white-collar workers, two include private entrepreneurs and the next three blue-collar workers, while the last two include occupations related to agriculture.

⁵ The definition of classes by Maciej Gdula and Przemysław Sadura (2012) were similar to that of Bourdieu, using different criteria. They consisted of three main types of capital: economic, social and cultural. „To the upper class they included presidents and directors of companies or institutions earning at least four times the national average wage, representatives of liberal professions, professors and assistant professors of universities, and independent workers in the cultural sector, such as directors and stage designers. (...) The middle class included professionals not holding managerial positions, employed both in private enterprises and in public administration, teachers and nurses, small entrepreneurs, craftsmen, and salesmen from more specialised stores (jewelry, gallery). They included in the working class skilled and unskilled workers, unskilled service workers, manual laborers, and farmers” (p. 9).

physical work: farmers, skilled and unskilled workers and some of the basic services” (p. 35).

Rural gentrification is a process richly described in Anglo-American literature. To a large extent, these studies are regarded by many researchers as models of the process and methodological patterns of their research. However, it turned out that the concept of rural gentrification is more complex than originally considered, and with the development of studies on the subject, new and often critical themes and interpretations have emerged. Peter Marcuse (1985) rightly argues that the evaluation of gentrification depends largely on how it is defined. In Central and Eastern Europe, the analysis of this process still faces many challenges, including local and regional political conditions, population, economic and spatial processes and the state of the national statistics needed to describe the process. The gentrification of rural areas is a relatively new phenomenon: the “improvement” of rural areas due to the influx of migrants from the middle class, which is made up of many social categories, legitimised by a good education, occupying higher positions in the social stratification and having a particular lifestyle (Halamska 2016). This process is associated with the repeated/recurring interest of the population in rural areas (Phillips 2002), leading to a series of changes of different kinds in the host communities.

Method and data sources

Contrary to the long-standing interest in rural gentrification in British studies (and subsequently also in American, Canadian and French studies), Polish researchers began to analyse this process only after 2000 (Halamska 2013; Wójcik 2013; Śpiewak 2016). To some extent, it coincided with an intensive study of the processes of suburbanisation and counterurbanisation, and was related to the development of urban peripheries, which became a typical element of the urbanised landscape of most developed countries worldwide. Rural areas, previously associated mainly with agriculture and considered not very dynamic, gradually became attractive as carriers of new dynamics. „Moving to the suburbs was an attractive model of living, responding to the need for contact with nature (or ideas about it), having your

own garden, or the desire to raise children in a more friendly environment” (Drozda 2017: 34).

The literature on gentrification usually focuses on case studies that characterise the process by setting it in a narrow local context without being linked to other, larger urban and rural processes (cf. Marcuse 1985). To this end, some scholars working on the process and the accompanying changes are working to develop an integrated approach to rural gentrification (Nelson, Pistre et al. 2008; Hamnett 1991), that would use demographic and social, spatial and economic indicators. Such analyses are consistent with Peter Marcuse’s (1986) appeal to consider gentrification in a broader social and spatial context. The work⁶ of Peter B. Nelson, Pierre Pistre, Julien Dellier and Frederic Richard is among the few attempts to analyse some aspects of the process based on mass statistical studies. In 2008, they designed a study to map rural gentrification in France, Great Britain and the United States. An important step of the analysis was the identification of comparable indicators for rural gentrification in three national contexts. The indicators used by the researchers were population density, the proportion of the university population, the proportion of socio-professional stratification, the proportion of childless households, the proportion of 45-64 year-olds, the degree of urbanisation of rural areas expressed as a proportion of the total area of the units studied, average property value, and the proportion of buildings built in the last decade. The most important result of the analysis was the formulation of a “catalogue of gentrification indicators”; the researchers believed that if a unit has high values of at least half the indicators, the process of rural gentrification occurs there.

Following this work, indicators were constructed based on a set of distinguished features-correlates of gentrification, used to develop an index of gentrification. The features of the process were identified based on Polish and foreign case studies, using the extended case method. It involves “extracting the general from the unique, moving from the ,micro’ to the ,macro’, linking the present to the past in anticipation of the future, all done by applying pre-existing theory” (Burawoy 1998: 5). This method was developed by the Manchester school of social anthropology (Epstein 1958, Gluckman 1958) and subsequently used by sociologists and ethnographers. The essence of the

⁶ http://www.i-rgent.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2015/05/AAG2015_nelson.pdf [4.12.2021].

extended case method is the causal combination and comparison of cases, where, instead of limiting the number of cases to general law cases, each case is analysed in conjunction with others and certain generalisations are made on that basis (see Burawoy 1998). Using the findings of this methodological concept, it was possible to identify a bundle of phenomena (correlates) associated with gentrification, based on monographic studies conducted in the municipality of Prażmów⁷ (Śpiewak 2016; Zwęglińska-Gałecka 2019) and other such studies described in the literature (Guimond, Simard 2010; Nelson, Pistre, Dellier, Richard 2008; Boscoboinik 2018; Başaran, Sakarya 2018).

Table 1. Indicators used by researchers in quantitative studies of the rural gentrification process

Social and demographic indicators	Change in: population, migration balance, population density, percentage of households belonging to incoming residents, percentage of residents classified as service class, percentage of working-age residents, percentage of post-working-age residents, number of economically active residents, the median age of residents, and percentage of the population with the highest level of education
Economic indicators	Change in: the value of the real estate, the number of farms, the average purchase price (by recent owners), the average income earned by residents, and the number of people working in the service sector
Spatial indicators	Change in: traffic density, percentage of renovated and inherited houses <i>vis-a-vis</i> the total number of houses, number of buildings, number of houses used seasonally, and land use

Source: own study based on Başaran, Sakarya 2018, s. 108-118; Boscoboinik 2018, s. 526-531; Foryś 2013, s. 5-14; González 2016, s. 4-6; Guimond, Simard 2010, s. 451-455; Phillips 2005, s. 482; Pistre 2010, s. 7-10; Solana-Solana 2010, s. 510-511.

These include: a) a significant increase in the number of residents during the period analysed, b) occurring mainly due to a positive migration balance, c) urban residents represent a significant percentage of the migrants, but

⁷ In a word of explanation, it should be added that the research (an extended case study) in the Prażmów municipality was conducted in 2016. The specifics of the process of rural gentrification were sought there and found in the double feeding of the process- the Prażmow municipality is fed, to a rather limited extent, by residents of the metropolis. But it is also settled by professionally metropolis-oriented residents of other cities, towns and villages- primarily from the surrounding region.

there are many rural migrants too, who, combining a career in the city, choose to settle in a suburban area; d) these are mainly young and well-educated people: the “new middle class”; e) there are changes in land use: the share of agricultural land decreases and the share of urbanised land increases; f) it causes an increase in land prices, including agricultural land; g) the structure of the local economy changes radically, which is reflected in the increase in the share of non-agricultural entities, mainly in the third sector (services); h) the budgets of households and territorial units undergo significant changes. These correlates were operationalised in the form of eight indicators subjected to analysis. The following were determined to describe the social aspects: the population density, the migration balance and the number of registrations from cities in the total number of registrations. These indicators correspond to the first three mentioned correlates of the process. Another indicator is the number of people with at least secondary education in the total number of residents, which will indirectly indicate the endogenous correlates of rural gentrification, i.e. the increase in the educational level of the population. Next, an indicator of the ratio of urbanised land to agricultural land in counties was included in the analysis. This indicator, following the assumptions of Nelson and others (2008), was included in the analysis to show the spatial dimension of the process and to draw attention to the phenomenon of rural areas in Poland losing their predominantly agricultural function to residential and service functions. The last three indicators are the amount of personal income tax (PIT) in the total amount of own income *per capita*, the number of business entities per 1000 residents and the price per hectare of agricultural land in counties. These indicators complement those describing social transformations, as observed migration trends to rural areas result in increased capital in the form of personal income tax⁸ revenues and improved financial condition of

⁸ Though the share of income from PIT provides information similar to the migration balance, it is not a duplication, but a supplement. The data on the size of PIT income tell us who settles in a given unit: whether a worker’s family of five with a non-working wife and three children, or two families: a couple of two educated working people from the upper middle class, and a family of three with a child and two working parents from the middle class. It can be assumed that the former (a family of five) is responsible for the statistics seen in the changes in the migration balance, while the latter (two families) have a clear impact on both the migration balance and the PIT share. Thus, the share of PIT in total income is a stronger indicator of rural gentrification, especially if one relates it to the

units where the balance of migration is high (Kotlińska 2015). Above that, the location of the land is an important determinant of agricultural land prices, which is directly related to the discussed gentrification process. Researchers representing the production theory of rural gentrification maintain that this process increases real estate prices, primarily of houses and land, including agricultural land (Darling 2005; Shucksmith 1991). The demand for typical urban functions, such as housing, services and consumption, is enormous and is reflected in the land prices. Arbitrarily, the indicators are assumed to be equally important.

Analyses were conducted for all 314 rural counties (NUTS 4 level), using public statistics available in the Local Data Bank of the Statistics Poland. The data used came from the same period: the middle of the second decade of the 21st century. An exception is the education data from 2011, which are used as no further data are available in publicly accessible databases. The database for determining the spatial extent of the process was developed using Excel. Subsequent data were placed in individual sheets for the indicated territorial units. The indicators listed below made up the rural gentrification index. In the literature, the index is defined as a set of indicators not linked by a common cause, but according to the assumptions of the researcher – as in this study – can be classified within a more general category (DeVellis 2011). Rural gentrification seen thus is defined broadly (Guimond, Simard 2010; Nelson, Pistre, Dellier, Richard 2008), which means that its correlates – social, economic and spatial – are an integral part of the characteristics of rural gentrification.

Table 2. Indicators used to develop the rural gentrification index

Current state (mid-2000s)		Minimum value	Maximum value	Limit value
1. Population density	2016	19	656	158
2. Migration balance	2016	-9.9	18.1	2.1
3. Number of urban registrations in the total number of registrations	2016	29.0	91.0	64.0

migration balance (the scale of the increase in the migration balance and the scale of the increase in the share of PIT).

Current state (mid-2000s)		Minimum value	Maximum value	Limit value
4. Number of people with at least secondary education in the total population	2011	20.0	65.0	40.0
5. Ratio of urbanised land to agricultural land in counties	2014	1.6	17.6	4.9
6. PIT revenues as a percentage of total own revenues <i>per capita</i>	2016	272.0	1 849.0	748.0
7. Number of business entities per 1000 inhabitants	2016	25.0	141.0	58.3
8. Price per hectare of agricultural land in counties	2014	6 407.0	563 536.0	26 751.0

Source: own study

A summary of the indicators, together with an indication of their minimum and maximum values in a given year or period is presented in Table 2. It also indicates the so-called limit values, i.e., the value of the indicator which allows classifying a given unit (district) to the community in which the process of gentrification occurs or not. It was assumed that the limit value is determined (a kind of 'cut-off point') by the lower value of the second highest class of indicators selected for analysis. Hence, the set of gentrified districts includes units that fall into these two highest classes of indicators, for which natural class ranges were used.⁹ The cut-off value is the value above which the units were qualified as those in which the process of village gentrification occurs. For example, the latest available data for the district of Aleksandrów (Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship) show that the population density (which is 117 person/km² against the limit value of 158 person/km²), the migration balance (0.0 against the limit value of 2.1), the number of registrations from cities in the total number of registrations (60,6 against the limit value of 64.0), the number of people with secondary and higher education (35.7 against the limit value of 40.0), the ratio of urbanised to agricultural land area (3,1 against the limit value of 4.9), the amount of PIT income in the total income (PLN 608.4 against the limit value of PLN 748,0) and the number of business entities per 1000 population (50.7 against the limit value of 58.3) remain below the

⁹ This is a method of creating intervals on cartograms, for example. If the feature is continuous, then the range of feature values is divided into class intervals.

adopted limit values. It is different only in the case of the price per hectare of agricultural land, which remains high (69614,5 PLN), higher than the adopted limit value (26751 PLN). On this basis, the county was awarded one point. The operation was carried out for all counties, which were awarded one point each time for the value of the index above the limit value. Their sum, constituting the index of gentrification of a given county, could range from zero to eight. It was assumed that the more points a county received, the greater the intensity of the rural gentrification process.

Spatial extent of rural gentrification

The results obtained were transferred into maps, which were the basic tools for analysing the spatial regimes of the phenomenon. The developed rural gentrification index indicated that gentrification in rural areas is not a widespread process (Fig. 1). Guided by the index values, it was found that rural gentrification of varying intensity occurs in 98 units (i.e., 31.2% of counties). A high degree of rural gentrification occurs in units located near large cities, especially those located in central, northern, western and south western Poland, i.e. in areas that could be described as the city's countryside (Bryant et al. 1982), urban village (Wu, Wang 2017) or metropolitan village (Wójcik 2009). The higher the level and pace of development of the agglomeration core, the more dynamic the changes occurring in the areas surrounding it. It is reflected in a higher level of urbanisation, which is manifested, *inter alia*, in the emergence of new functions and services there (Parysek 2008). The agricultural functions weaken there or disappear, while the urban functions develop; "quasi-urban" and "quasi-rural" units are created, i.e. they are not yet fully developed urban spaces, but are no longer rural spaces. This confirms the theory of Hyun Shin, Loretta Lees, and Ernesto López-Morales (2015) about the spatial extent of rural gentrification in the non-Western world. In their view, the most conducive conditions for the process are found primarily in the suburban areas of rapidly growing metropolitan regions, surrounded by economically stronger communal and tourist villages.

Notably, in more than half of the counties, rural gentrification does not occur at all, as evidenced by the low and very low values of the rural gentrification index. The analysed process is almost absent in the east of the country,

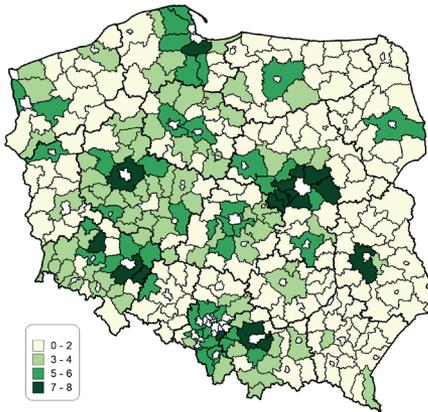


Figure 1. County classification by level of rural gentrification in 2016

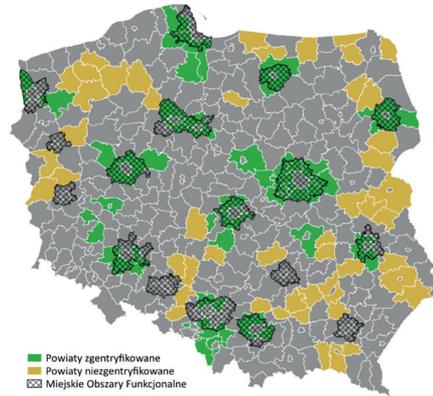


Figure 2. Gentrified and non-gentrified counties with an indication of the boundaries of the Urban Functional Areas

Source: own study

and in units where it can be identified, its scope is limited. This is certainly due to Eastern Poland being subject to intense processes of depopulation caused by the relocation of young, educated residents to other parts of the country, especially large urban centers, for many years.

Based on the procedure discussed above for determining gentrified counties, they were ranked (according to the number of points awarded as per a certain limit value of indicators) from the one with the highest number of points to the one with the lowest. Narrowing the number of units under study thus, a matrix of 50 gentrified counties (the first 50 in the matrix) with the highest values of the rural gentrification index and 50 (the last in the matrix) counties with the lowest level of gentrification was developed. They, along with an indication of the boundaries of the Urban Functional Areas, are shown in Figure 2. It is evident that the territorial range of rural gentrification goes beyond the boundaries of Urban Functional Areas – this process also includes municipalities distant from the central provincial centre. It is noteworthy that the borders of the functional areas are indicated quite sparingly *vis-a-vis* the potential range of gentrification, as indicated by the rather distant location of the municipalities gaining residents from the urban core.

Most of the gentrified counties are concentrated in the Mazowieckie and Śląskie voivodeships. These are mostly units located near big cities. Previous

research indicates that such areas are characterised by a declining role of agriculture, replacing which services are developing, which points to the dependence of these economies on nearby metropolitan cities (Halamska 2013). In these dynamically changing units, we can also observe their progressive transformation into residential areas; farms are disappearing and those still operational are no longer focused on livestock farming. Local businesses operating there are focused on serving the big city, and most residents work there. Unemployment is almost non-existent, and human capital, as measured by educational attainment, is high. Related to the economy is the social structure. The middle class is very important there. An important element supplementing the new shape of the social structure is the numerous service workers¹⁰ and laborers. Data from the Local Data Bank of the Central Statistical Office (GUS) indicate that, on average in Poland, the share of the employed in the total number of employed in the three main sectors of the economy is as follows: around 20% works in sector I (agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing), 26.9% are employed in sector II (industry and construction) and 52.6% in sector III (services). The situation is slightly different in the gentrified counties, where the share of the employed in the total number of employed in each sector is as follows: sector I – 21.3%; sector II – 35.8%; sector III 42.9%.

Non-gentrified counties are, so to speak, at the opposite pole of development. Such areas are characterised by low spatial accessibility, unfavourable demographic structure, inadequate housing conditions and a weak level of development in the non-agricultural economic sector (Stanny, Rosner, Komorowski 2018). The dominance of the agricultural function and the weakness of the non-agricultural sector mean that non-agricultural jobs are largely concentrated in local administration institutions and public service providers (health care, education, police, etc.). Hence, the state is still the most important employer for the non-agricultural sphere in these areas. The percentage of those employed in sector I in the total number of employed is 56.6 (BDL GUS data), while that of those employed in sector II (15.2) and sector III (28.2) is significantly lower. It should also be noted that despite the high level of development of the agricultural sector in such units, it is impossible to maintain a sufficiently high population- already, in most of them,

¹⁰ This indicates a marked difference in the process of depeasantisation in Poland, since unlike in the West (in the 1960s), peasants become not workers, but service workers.

the population is decreasing both as a result of negative natural growth and constant migration outflow.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the use of the extended case method enabled the determination of the extent to which the regularities indicated by the case studies (Polish and foreign) are repeated on a mass scale. As shown by Nelson, Pistre et al. (2008) the spatial range of the phenomenon can be determined (only) with the use of quantitative methods. To this end, it was necessary to develop “mappable” universal indicators of rural gentrification. The quantitative method, adopted to determine the spatial extent of rural gentrification in Poland, used (imperfect) data from public statistics. This meant low calculation costs, but also considerable simplification (especially considering the interregional differentiation of rural areas in Poland). Despite the flaws, it proved sufficient to determine the intensity of the process and to identify areas of gentrification in rural Poland. The developed gentrification index indicated that areas undergoing rural gentrification are located relatively close to large urban centers. These are the drivers of population growth and the influx of gentrifiers. This also indicates that the ranges of suburbanisation, counterurbanisation and rural gentrification processes partially overlap.¹¹

¹¹ The literature indicates that rural gentrification remains correlated with such processes as counterurbanisation and suburbanisation (Clove 1985, Weekley 1988, Phillips 1993, Phillips 2010), which, however, unlike gentrification, focus on population demographic and migration processes. Rural gentrification primarily emphasises class differences that exist in the subpopulation of indigenous and immigrant residents (Phillips 2010). These phenomena, on the other hand, are not described by the processes of rural urbanisation, suburbanisation and counterurbanisation, which may mean that these terms are no longer do justice in describing settlement transformations in rural communities resulting from the influx of people with a clearly defined class or socio-occupational profile. It should be noted here that the processes of suburbanisation, counterurbanisation and rural gentrification are not mutually exclusive. They explain different aspects of the changes taking place in rural areas due to the influx of new residents, the first two from the side of the overflowing city, the last from the side of the changing (also partly influenced by the influx of former urban residents) countryside.

It should also be emphasised that so far, in Central and Eastern Europe, none of the researchers dealing with rural gentrification has applied an integrated concept. The Polish analysis, to some extent due to the existing similarities resulting from the post-socialist historical and cultural context, as well as the similarity of the changes occurring so far within the process of rural gentrification, can be applied to further research in the countries of this part of Europe.

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