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DOES THE WIELKOPOLSKA MENTALITY STILL EXIST? AN ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM THE SOCIAL DIAGNOSIS 2015

THE AMBIGUOUS INFLUENCE OF THE PRUSSIAN PARTITION

The points of departure for the present deliberations are academic findings, but also the common belief in the existence and functioning of a set of attitudes and norms that are specific to residents of the Wielkopolska (Greater Poland) region and which are usually referred to as the Wielkopolska ethos or especially – the Wielkopolska mentality. This question is, of course, not new. An exhaustive review of views and findings can be found, for example in the anthology edited by Witold Molik *Etos Wielkopolan* (“The Wielkopolska Ethos”) containing texts on the Wielkopolska mentality published from the mid-19th to the beginning of the 21st century. There are also many works by Poznanian sociologists revealing a picture of Poznań and Poznansians both in terms of self-stereotyping as well views from outside.¹ As regards the deliberations of historians, it is worth pointing out, for example, the work of Dariusz Łukasiewicz² and comparing it with the findings of Janusz T. Hryniewicz,³ while in reference to the area of attitudes, one of the essential sources is the text by Marek Ziółkowski⁴ which related the results of his research. This is a case of processes that have lasted over several centuries as the basis of the Wielkopolska mentality points to a differentiation that reaches back to the period before the partitions. Wielkopolska even before 1795 was a region with a higher level of economic development than other areas of Poland. From the Middle Ages on, it had a denser network of towns

¹ F. Znaniński, *Miasto w świadomości jego obywateli. Z badań Polskiego Instytutu Socjologicznego nad miastem Poznaniem*, Poznań 1931; F. Znaniński, J. Ziółkowski, *Czym jest dla Ciebie miasto Poznań? Dwa konkursy: 1928/1964*, Warszawa-Poznań 1984; R. Cichoński, K. Podemski, *Miasto w świadomości swoich mieszkańców*, Poznań 1999. A critical overview of this research is included in the text by S. Lisiecki, *Florian Znaniński i Janusz Ziółkowski. O tradycji i kontynuacjach badań nad wartościowaniem przestrzeni miasta*, Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny, 2015, z. 1.

² D. Łukasiewicz, *Mentalność pruska, mieszczańska, protestancka czy kapitalistyczna? Prusy 1806-1871*, Przegład Zachodni, no. 2, 2014.

³ J.T. Hryniewicz, *Polityczne i gospodarcze następstwa zaboru pruskiego*, Studia Regionalne i Lokalne, no. 3(13), 2003.

⁴ M. Ziółkowski, *Mentalność Wielkopolan. Rzeczywistość, stereotyp czy perswazyjne argumenty?* Przegład Zachodni, 1999, no. 4.

and roads, less social inequality and the ability for more rapid adaptation of Western European solutions.⁵ In the period 1772 to 1793, it was clearly headed in the direction of greater development of towns and industry.⁶ Essential therefore was the development of towns and trade which supported the strengthening of a middle class, which was also educated and maintained contacts with the “West”⁷ which was after all quite near. As Gwidon Zalejko noted, *Poznanian-ness* or the Wielkopolska mentality is perceived as being made up by those cultural characteristics which are in essence those characteristic of economic activity.⁸ But these attitudes, characterized by economic efficiency, also emerge from a clear ideological foundation,⁹ that of organic work and pragmatism which was a “specific understanding of national duties”.¹⁰

If one were to invoke structural foundations for these attitudes, and thus to their carriers, then it should be noted that even before the partitions the percentage of the population in Wielkopolska living in towns had reached 27%.¹¹ Different too was the way of farming in villages, which were smaller, being comprised of one or two noble estates and required “personal engagement in economic affairs”.¹² However, an analysis of the consequences of the Prussian partition for the economic development of Wielkopolska and the formation of the Wielkopolska mentality are fundamentally not in agreement or unambiguous. J. T. Hryniewicz indicates that the annexation of Wielkopolska by the Prussians hampered the economic development of the region, sending it back toward agriculture and halting the development of industry. Doubtless the influence of the Prussian state and its administration, above all the organisation and strong enforcement of the letter of the law, impersonal administration and the spreading of education, were essential.

To the degree then that an analysis of the influence of the Prussian partition on the people of Wielkopolska is tied to their assimilation of specifically capitalistic rules and attitudes (work ethic) and their forging them into a weapon of Polishness in an organic way,¹³ then J. T. Hryniewicz perceives the influence of the Prussians as debilitating because an unavoidable element of confrontation between Polish and Prussian culture (including ways of farming) in the area of Wielkopolska leads to the “nationalistically motivated cultural shutdown”,¹⁴ without which the acceptance of Western European economic culture would have occurred significantly more rapidly.

Independently of detailed analyses, the 19th century and the annexation by Prussia are key to the formation of the Wielkopolska mentality. Ziółkowski writes of this

⁵ W. Molik, *Trzeba uczyć*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *Etos Wielkopolan. Antologia tekstów o społeczeństwie Wielkopolski z drugiej połowy XIX i XX wieku*, Poznań 2005, p. 257.

⁶ J.T. Hryniewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁷ D. Łukasiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

⁸ G. Zalejko, *Rynek stworzył, rynek zmienia*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 249.

⁹ P. Matusik, *Ukryte działanie mitu*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 264.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 265.

¹¹ J.T. Hryniewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹² D. Łukasiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

¹³ M. Ziółkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 17; Molik, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

¹⁴ J.T. Hryniewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

period that “The ethos of the people of Wielkopolska most closely approached the classic ethos of early capitalism; it was in both town and country a local equivalent of the (petite) bourgeois ethos, decidedly different from the gentry tradition of the rest of Poland”.¹⁵ D. Łukasiewicz, in turn describes “a type of Pole, who struggling against Prussian Germanisation took on during the process of acculturation a German bourgeois and capitalistic mentality”,¹⁶ although it should be noted that taking on models of farming was not so much taking on a German mentality as a capitalistic one – the models were as English, Scotch or Irish as German (Lech Trzeciakowski cites the strategies of the landowner Kazimierz Chłapowski and the industrialist Hipolit Cegielski in this context).¹⁷ Andrzej Kwilecki notes that since “an ethos comprises a combination of ideas and practice”,¹⁸ then key for its formation are relatively stable conditions, such as those of the 19th century. As the struggle, both economic and cultural, took place not only in Poznań but in all of Wielkopolska, it is possible to speak of a Wielkopolska, and not just a Poznanian, mentality.

THE MODERN WIELKOPOLSKA MENTALITY

The period after the annexation, especially during the time of the post WWII communist Polish People’s Republic (PRL) can be regarded as a period of change, which weakened rather than strengthened the Wielkopolska mentality.

During this period, Wielkopolska changed from an agricultural region to one that combined agriculture and industry. The foundations for individual entrepreneurship collapsed, the number and significance of the traditional bourgeoisie – the owners of small industrial enterprises, craft workshops and stores. Poznań became dominated by large scale industrial workers and the “budget intelligentsia”. Significant migrations and mixing of peoples also took place.¹⁹

The very logic of the socio-economic system of the PRL stood in opposition with the traditional values of people in Wielkopolska, which turned out to be unsuitable.²⁰ Even prosaic (as described by Filip Kaczmarek)²¹ characteristics such as systematization or punctuality (and it should be noted that G. Zalejko²² indicated that responsibility and ability to engage in coordinated efforts were of paramount importance; likewise economic activity and self-organizational abilities)²³ did not engender respect during the time of the PRL.

¹⁵ M. Ziółkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁶ D. Łukasiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

¹⁷ L. Trzeciakowski, *Uwarunkowania kulturowe oraz doświadczenia innych regionów i krajów a modernizacja Wielkopolski*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 230-231.

¹⁸ A. Kwilecki, *Tęsknota za etosem*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 237.

¹⁹ M. Ziółkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

²⁰ W. Molik, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

²¹ F. Kaczmarek, *Wolność i odpowiedzialność*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 241.

²² G. Zalejko, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

²³ M. Libicki, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

It is possible to decide that the change in form of government opened a new chapter in the development of the Wielkopolska mentality, allowing it to become more rooted in the attitudes and behaviour of the inhabitants of the region. Some processes, migration most of all, connected both with the influx of industrial workers and the intelligentsia could on the one hand weaken the assimilation of the ethos by following generations, but they could also lead to its adoption by those moving to the area from outside Wielkopolska in the process of acculturation or filling out with elements of the attitudes and values maintained and nurtured in the peripheral areas of Wielkopolska if the influx came from within the region. The explicit formulation of this by M. Ziółkowski²⁴ in the categories centre-periphery, where the centre is comprised of Poznań and surroundings annexed by Prussia (the old, that is 1975-1998 voivodeship of Poznań), seems to express the conviction that the centre maintained a sufficiently strong Wielkopolska ethos that migrants in the process of acculturation acquired it.

In its contemporary, 21st century version, the Wielkopolska mentality is described by such attitudes, values and behaviours of the people of Wielkopolska as “entrepreneurial, economical, thrifty, hard-working, practical, realistic, moderate, systematic, punctual, law-abiding, liking order”.²⁵ M. Ziółkowski adds “capable of exact and creative work, systematic, (...) controlled, restrained in showing feelings, cold, taciturn”.²⁶ A more detailed analysis such as the one presented by this author reveals, however, only small differences in indicators for those from Wielkopolska in comparison with the answers from respondents in the remaining regions of Poland. The residents of Wielkopolska (more narrowly – the older Poznań voivodeship):²⁷

- appreciated entrepreneurship more;
- appreciated the value of hard work more;
- were more prosocial;
- accepted the ideals of democracy and the political agency of society more eagerly;
- were more positive toward democracy and a system of government;
- to a greater degree accepted pluralism in lifestyles and indicated greater tolerance for behaviours and values that deviated from those of the majority.

A later (the research reported by M. Ziółkowski dates from 1998) description by Piotr Cichocki notes that the Wielkopolska mentality combines modernity and openness in the areas of economics and technology together with traditionalism in the sphere of values – both those concerning the economy (“old” capitalistic values, that is hard work rather than innovation, saving rather than consumerism) and in lifestyles. In summary he indicates: “the Wielkopolska mentality is characterized by an attach-

²⁴ M. Ziółkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

²⁵ W. Banach, *Etos Wielkopolan. Reaktywacja?* in: *Program rozwoju kultury w Wielkopolsce na lata 2012–2020. Załącznik do uchwały no. 1525/2012 Zarządu Województwa Wielkopolskiego z dnia 19 stycznia 2012 r.*, p. 9.

²⁶ M. Ziółkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

ment to rules as well as reluctance for changing them while simultaneously being ready to respond to new circumstances by external economic forces”.²⁸

On the basis of the descriptions cited, components were chosen that remain common to the Wielkopolska mentality, but which were not always directly expressed in the descriptions above as they signal a more general orientation. It seems that such an approach, particularly in the case of utilizing existing data, is more accurate. As noted by, for example, A. Kwilecki²⁹ or Wiesław Banach,³⁰ what is essential is not so much what is contained in declarations on the topic of important values but what manifests itself in behaviour. Therefore, in further analyses, the answers to questions concerning selected evaluations and behaviours will be made use of. From them it is possible to introduce such characteristics as prosocial behaviour, self-regulation and accepting responsibility, a task-oriented approach to challenges as well as being law-abiding and having respect for standards (in truth these are unavoidably declarations of behaviour or evaluations, but at least they refer to something that research subjects experienced and to their evaluations and not only to declared component values). In accordance with the indicated separateness of the people of Wielkopolska and their mentality, the research results of Wielkopolska residents when compared with the answers of residents of other areas of Poland should indicate a greater concentration of these characteristics; as noted by M. Banaszak, “the particular identity” of Wielkopolska inhabitants is not so much a question of “exclusive ownership” of certain characteristics, as a question of their “greater intensity in Wielkopolska than in other regions and perhaps a greater frequency as well”.³¹

THE DISCURSIVE HOMOGENIZATION OF THE REGION

Alongside separateness and the maintenance of their own Wielkopolska mentality, the second important thread running through the analysis conducted is the question of unauthorized homogenization. As P. Cichocki and Piotr Jabkowski note, “The discursive homogenization of Wielkopolska occurs when the researchers’ approach to the social situation in the region in an unauthorized manner downplays essential internal distinctions and inequalities”.³²

Questions of centre-periphery distinctions or simply distinctions within the region, were also addressed by M. Ziółkowski justifying in terms of centrality (both geographic and axiomatic as the greatest concentration and rootedness of values) his research including only respondents from central Wielkopolska. Cichocki and Jabkowski comment on this, indicating that

²⁸ P. Cichocki, *Jaka jest tożsamość wielkopolska?* Przegląd Zachodni, 2012, no. 1, p. 94.

²⁹ A. Kwilecki, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

³⁰ W. Banach, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

³¹ M. Banaszak, *Etos Wielkopolan dawniej*, in: W. Molik (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 223.

³² P. Cichocki, P. Jabkowski, *Wielkopolska - regionalny kontekst integracji europejskiej*, Poznań 2010, p. 24.

Such an understanding is based on the generally explicit assumption that even if Wielkopolska as a region remains significantly larger, that its nucleus in the form of the Poznań area comprises, in the minds of all those in Wielkopolska, a type of regulatory paradigm. This is because this mentality appears there in its purest form, something of an archetype, and in other sub-regions it possesses a profile that is significantly more contaminated by various types of disruptive factors.³³

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The data utilized for the analysis came from the Council for Social Monitoring (*Rada Monitoringu Społecznego*) and were obtained by them in the framework of a general all country representative and cyclical diagnostic survey comprised of research on the conditions and quality of life of Polish people known in short as the *Social Diagnosis (Diagnoza Społeczna)*.³⁴ The most recent survey was carried out in 2015 and covered 11.7 thousand households with a total of 35 thousand members and 22 thousand individual respondents.

Utilizing the data base made available, an analysis was carried out with the goal of verifying the four research hypotheses, concerning the separate nature of the Wielkopolska mentality as well as the question of its (possible) homogenization and so the unity among the residents of different sub-regions of Wielkopolska:

1. in intergroup comparisons (that is with respondents from other regions of Poland) respondents from Wielkopolska significantly more often declare being self-regulating, having a task-oriented approach to problems, engaging in prosocial behaviour and a normative sensitivity for the common good (lawfulness);

2. an analysis of the distribution of responses related to the indicated components of the Wielkopolska mentality among respondents from Wielkopolska, taking into account sub-regions, points to an internal differentiation in Wielkopolska in the area of degree of intensity of the “Wielkopolska mentality”;

3. a picture of the internal differentiation of the components of the Wielkopolska mentality at the sub-regional level corresponds to a centre-periphery model: the strongest Wielkopolska mentality occurs in the centre of the voivodeship, that is in the Poznań sub-region;

4. in reference to hypotheses 1 and 3, the most distinct difference in the distribution of responses is revealed between respondents in the centre of Wielkopolska (the Poznań sub-region) and respondents from the remaining voivodeships.

In order to verify whether the hypotheses posed are available in the framework of the questions formulated in the individual questionnaire “Social Diagnosis” the following variables were chosen:

- self-regulation that is an internal feeling of control, accepting responsibility for the consequences of one’s own decisions (a component of the capitalistic mentality and the model of the self-made man);

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 44.

³⁴ <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015)

Table 1
Dimensions of the Wielkopolska mentality and questions from the "Social Diagnosis"

Characteristic (component of the Wielkopolska mentality)	Question in the "Social Diagnosis"	Interpretation in the "Social Diagnosis"	Interpretation in the framework of the analysis of the Wielkopolska mentality
Self-regulation	On what or on who would depend, in your opinion, the last year being either a success or failure? (you can indicate more than one answer): - authorities - myself - other people - fate (providence)	The distribution of responses is interpreted in categories of style of causal attribution (in conjunction with the direction of evaluation of the past year), and after limiting the options to two "on myself" and "on fate" with a polar interpretation as self-determination vs. fatalism**	As an indicator, the percentage of the response "on myself" is the most important in recognizing one's own decisions as determining the assessment of the effects of activities in the previous year
Task orientation	Please indicate how you usually react to problems or difficult situations in your life (you can indicate more than one answer): - I turn to others for help and advice - I mobilize myself and get on with it - I drink more alcohol - I take comfort in the thought that it could be a lot worse or that others fare worse - I give up and I don't know what to do - I take tranquilizers - I pray to God for help - I distract myself with other things	The answers correspond to two strategies for dealing with problems: Task-oriented and emotionally-oriented, that is connected with changes in the way situations are experienced rather than solving them, the first two answers are regarded as task-oriented***	As an indicator, indicating task-oriented strategies connected to self-sufficiency is the most important so "I mobilize myself and get on with it" indicates an attitude connected with a self-sufficient and realistic approach to solving problems
Prosocial behaviour (1)	During the last two years, have you been involved in any actions for the benefit of your local community (county, housing estate, town or neighbourhood)? Answers: - yes - no	Analysed as an element of civic mindedness and social capital, treated as engagement that is less formal than membership in an organization****	The most important indicator of prosocial behaviour is positive answers that declare engagement in activities for the benefit of a local community

<p>Prosocial behaviour (2)</p>	<p>Have you in the last year done any voluntary work for people outside the family or for a social organization? Answers: -yes, often -yes, rarely -no</p>	<p>Similarly to the question on engagement on behalf of a local community this question serves as a diagnostic element for engagement in activities for the benefit of other people, it corresponds to the definition of volunteerism*****</p>	<p>The most important indicators of prosocial behaviour are positive answers that indicate intensity and frequency (systematic prosocial behaviour as opposed to occasional activities), in this case the answer “yes, often”</p>
<p>Lawfulness</p> <p>Below you will find a list of various behaviours. Some of them may concern you directly, others may concern only other people. Please specify your attitude towards the behaviours listed below. -someone pays lower taxes than he/she should -someone avoids paying the fares for the public transport (e.g. buses, trains) - someone unjustly draws unemployment benefits - someone unjustly receives disability benefits (on the grounds of being unable to work) - someone files an insurance claim under false pretences Answers - I do not care at all - I care little about it - I care about it to some extent - I care about it very much - it is hard to say</p>	<p>Attitudes toward infringements of the common good, together they create a scale measuring sensitivity to the common good, considered in the “Social Diagnosis” as an element of diagnosing the state of civic society*****</p>	<p>In the case of the Wielkopolska mentality these questions are treated as an indicator of respecting norms, a preference for that which puts societal norms ahead of personal interests, depicted by answers related to a declaration of relevance of such infringements (the answers “I care about it to some extent” and “I care about it very much”)</p>	

Source: Author's analysis.

* Translator's note: The questions and possible answers in this column are taken from the English version of the *Social Diagnosis 2015* available at: http://www.diagnoza.com/data/report/report_2015.pdf

** J. Czapiński, *Indywidualna jakość i styl życia*, in: J. Czapiński, T. Panek (eds.) *Diagnoza Społeczna 2015. Warunki i jakość życia Polaków. Raport*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 262-264. *Ibidem*, p. 251.

**** J. Czapiński, *Stan społeczeństwa obywatelskiego*, in: J. Czapiński, T. Panek (eds.) *op. cit.*, p. 326.

***** *Ibidem*.

***** *Ibidem*, p. 314.

- task orientation as a declaration of undertaking action which is intended to lead to the solution of a problem in place of avoiding it or allowing others to act;
- prosocial behaviour connected with (1) actions that benefit the local community and (2) caring for others and acting to benefit the needy (independently of the level of formalization);
- lawfulness understood as observing norms, in particular those essential for the common good; it also contains an element of legalism because these norms are of a formal, legal nature.

In Table 1 these are indicated together with the full questions in the *Social Diagnosis* questionnaire, related to the components of the Wielkopolska mentality and their interpretation.

THE INTENSITY OF THE WIELKOPOLSKA MENTALITY –
RESPONDENTS FROM WIELKOPOLSKA AND OTHER VOIVODESHIPS

The research carried out within the *Social Diagnosis* in 2015 comprised over 22,000 individual respondents (persons over 16 years of age) including a sample from the Wielkopolska voivodeship of 1,650 persons which made up 7.4 % of the total (Table 2). Analogically as in the research of M. Ziólkowski from 1998 (although without the necessity of increasing the size of the sample from the region, it is sufficiently large) an analysis of distinctness was carried out comparing the distribution of responses in the Wielkopolska sample with those of the other 15 voivodeships (taken together).³⁵ Each hypothesis on the independence of variables was tested (chi-square test, statistical significance of 0.01), and in the case of the basis for rejection, Cramer's V.

Table 2

Overall sample size and distribution by voivodeship

Voivodeship	Number	Share [in %]
Lower Silesia	1472	6.6
Kujawy-Pomerania	1130	5.1
Lublin	1610	7.3
Lubusz	672	3.0
Łódź	1633	7.4
Małopolska	1624	7.3
Mazovia	2753	12.4
Opole	694	3.1
Podkarpackie	1396	6.3

³⁵ Due to the focus of the analyses on the image of residents of Wielkopolska vis a vis the residents of other voivodeships and for the sake of clarity, results based on a detailed division into voivodeships will not be presented.

Podlasie	916	4.1
Pomerania	1248	5.6
Silesia	2244	10.1
Świętokrzyskie	1147	5.2
Warmia-Mazuria	1232	5.5
Wielkopolska	1650	7.4
Western Pomerania	782	3.5
Total	22203	100.0

Source: Author's calculation from the *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

In terms of self-regulation and a feeling of responsibility for one's own fate (Table 3) respondents from Wielkopolska significantly more frequently assert that responsibility lies within them so the previous year was evaluated in terms of the effects of their own decisions, somewhat more rarely than residents of other voivodeships; however, they indicated that responsibility is determined by outside factors. A little more rarely, though, on the edges of statistical significance, they indicated that responsibility also lies with the government, although differentiation of the responsibility of other people turned out to be statistically insignificant. However in both sub-groups the structure of relative importance of perceived responsibility was analogical. In terms of perceiving one's own responsibility, the feeling of influence and control over one's own life, those from Wielkopolska were characterized by greater self-determination and less fatalism than residents of other voivodeships. which confirms the presence of the Wielkopolska mentality.

Table 3

Self-regulation – distribution of responses from Wielkopolska and other voivodeships

On what or on who would depend, in your opinion, the last year being either a success or failure?		Wielkopolska	Rest of Poland	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V
Authorities	Number of responses	70	1131	p<0.010 V=0.017
	% in the region	4.5	5.7	
Myself	Number of responses	1206	14530	p<0.001 V=0.033
	% in the region	74.8	71.8	
Other people	Number of responses	333	5368	Not significant (n.s.)
	% in the region	21.2	26.8	
Fate (providence)	Number of responses	641	8640	p<0.001 V=0.041
	% in the region	40.3	42.9	

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

In the case of reacting to difficult situations, although the strategies are described in more detail, those in Wielkopolska do not differ from other Polish people (Table 4).

Equally often in both subgroups mobilisation and getting on with it is indicated (both in Wielkopolska and the rest of the country it is indicated by just over half of those surveyed), the second most important response is asking others for help and advice (about 43 % in both groups). Also the third most commonly indicated strategy is similar in both groups, that is taking comfort in the idea that things could be worse. While the first two strategies are active in nature and connected with finding solutions, this strategy does not solve the problem. It turns out that it is significantly more often indicated by residents of Wielkopolska. The second of the strategies in which a statistically significant difference occurred was connected with avoidance, that is taking tranquilizers; although this course of action is relatively rarely indicated it is, however, more common among those in Wielkopolska. Commenting on all eight strategies for dealing with problems it should then be noted that residents of Wielkopolska did not turn out to be more task-oriented and active so in this area there is no data that reveals any difference in terms of a Wielkopolska mentality. The two identified divergences do not concern active strategies and accepting responsibility but rather avoidance both in terms of solving problems and accepting responsibility.

Table 4

Task-orientation – distribution of responses from Wielkopolska and other voivodeships

Please indicate how you usually react to problems or difficult situations in your life		Wielkopolska	Rest of Poland	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V
I turn to others for help and advice for help	Number of responses	694	8687	n.s.
	% in region	43.5	43.0	
- I mobilize myself and get on with it	Number of responses	931	11218	n.s.
	% in region	57.7	55.4	
- I drink more alcohol	Number of responses	52	627	n.s.
	% in region	3.3	3.1	
- I take comfort in the thought it could be a lot worse or that others fare worse	Number of responses	558	6217	p<0.001 V=0.024
	% in region	35.2	30.9	
I give up and I don't know what to do	Number of responses	49	528	n.s.
	% in region	3.2	2.6	
I take tranquilizers	Number of responses	72	645	p<0.003 V=0.020
	% in region	4.6	3.2	
I pray to God for help	Number of responses	397	5254	n.s.
	% in region	25.2	26.2	
I distract myself with other things	Number of responses	358	4328	n.s.
	% in region	22.8	21.6	

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

Another component of the Wielkopolska mentality analysed here is prosocial behaviour included in two dimensions, engagement on behalf of a local community and voluntary work for the benefit of others. In both dimensions, it turned out that residents of Wielkopolska did not differ from residents of other voivodeships (Table 5). It is equally rare for them to engage in activities for a local community or undertake unpaid work for the benefit of others (however, as in Poland as a whole they more often support people and organizations through voluntary work than act for the benefit of a local community). This dimension of the Wielkopolska mentality is not revealed in the declarations of those surveyed on this aspect of their behaviour.

Table 5

Prosocial behaviour distribution of responses in Wielkopolska and other voivodeships

During the last two years, have you been involved in any actions for the benefit of your local community (county, housing estate, town or neighbourhood)?		Wielkopolska	Rest of Poland	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V
Yes	Number of responses	250	3022	n.s.
	% in region	15.3	14.8	
Have you in the last year done any voluntary work for people outside the family or for a social organization?				
Yes, often	Number of responses	92	1408	n.s.
	% in region	5.6	6.9	
Yes, rarely	Number of responses	290	3918	n.s.
	% in region	17.7	19.1	
All positive responses	Number of responses	382	5326	n.s.
	% in region	23.3	26.0	

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

Perhaps the most surprising result is revealed in the last of the dimensions of the Wielkopolska mentality analysed – in the area of lawfulness. The norms listed in the question on the one hand are of a formal nature, that is they are legal norms whose violation is subject to punishment, and on the other, they are norms of crucial importance for the common good and their violation not only harms specific people (for example an insurer) but also generally in that avoiding paying taxes, not paying for transport and filing false claims constitute undeserved use of common resources and generate additional costs for the community. The authors of the *Social Diagnosis* consider this question from a civil society viewpoint. In terms of the Wielkopolska mentality, the five violations described are on the one hand

a question of civic-mindedness, and on the other, lawfulness. The results (Table 6) are, however, devastating for Wielkopolska. It is true that the answers by the region's residents differ significantly from those of other regions but this difference is connected to a lower level of intensity regarding the essential nature of these norms – residents of Wielkopolska rather confirm that others violating the norms listed bothers them very little. The structure of importance of particular norms (if measured by the percentage of responses that are bothered to some extent or very much by their violation) is analogical among those surveyed from Wielkopolska and other voivodeships.

Table 6

Lawfulness – distribution of responses in Wielkopolska and other voivodeships

Below you will find a list of various behaviours. Some of them may concern you directly, others may concern only other people. Please specify your attitude towards the behaviours listed below	Responses “I care about it to some extent” and “I care about it very much” taken together	Wielkopolska	Rest of Poland	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V
Someone pays lower taxes than he/she should	Number of responses	616	9096	p<0.001 V=0.041
	% in region	40.2	47.5	
Someone avoids paying the fares for the public transport (e.g. buses, trains)	Number of responses	572	8587	p<0.001 V=0.040
	% in region	37.2	44.6	
Someone unjustly draws unemployment benefits	Number of responses	758	10727	p<0.001 V=0.038
	% in region	48.9	55.6	
Someone unjustly receives disability benefits (on the grounds of being unable to work)	Number of responses	755	10793	p<0.001 V=0.041
	% in region	49.3	56.5	
Someone files an insurance claim under false pretences	Number of responses	732	10189	p<0.001 V=0.040
	% in region	47.8	54.1	

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

DIFFERENT INTENSITY LEVELS OF THE WIELKOPOLSKA MENTALITY IN THE WIELKOPOLSKA VOIVODESHIP

Within the framework of internal variation, and so referring to questions of homogenisation and centralisation, the distribution of responses was analysed in an analogical manner as in the previous section. The division of Wielkopolska was the same as the NTS3 division, that is into sub-regions. The authors of the *Social Diagnosis* used and made available in their data base a division into sub-regions in which ag-

glomerations could be distinguished or not. In the first case, Wielkopolska is divided into six units (in the Poznanian sub-region the city of Poznań is distinguished), in the second it is analysed into five sub-regions. A division which does not distinguish the city of Poznań was utilised for the analysis of variation between sub-regions. On the one hand, this made it possible to maintain larger numbers of respondents for this sub-region while on the other, it is congruent with analyses in which Poznań and its surroundings are regarded as the centre of Wielkopolska, in terms of administration, economics as well as identity. The structure of the division of survey respondents into sub-regions is presented below in Table 7.

Table 7

The structure of survey respondents from Wielkopolska by sub-regions

Sub-region	Number of respondents	Percentage of total
Kalisz	426	25.9
Konin	393	23.9
Leszno	335	20.4
Poznań	396	24.1
Piła	95	5.8
Together	1645	100.0%

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

In terms of self-regulation and feeling of responsibility for one's own fate (Table 8) among the residents of Wielkopolska surveyed, there were significant differences in only two areas, indicating one's own responsibility and indicating other people. In the case of both, the highest percentages were from the sub-region of Poznań, over 80% of those from the centre of Wielkopolska indicated their own responsibility for whether the previous year had been successful or not. In comparison, the lowest percentage was found in the Kalisz sub-region, in which only two out of three of those surveyed declared their own responsibility. On the other hand, other people as agents that determined how the previous year should be evaluated were indicated by almost 30% of those from the Poznań sub-region while the lowest percentage came from the Piła sub-region and was half as much. In this sub-region, only 13.6 % indicated other people as being responsible for their previous year. Indicating the government as a cause was not significantly different between sub-regions. The collection of answers from Poznań and other sub-regions indicates that residents of the Poznań sub-region significantly more often indicate that their evaluation of the previous year depended on themselves and also on other people.

Table 8
Self-regulation – distribution of responses in sub-regions of Wielkopolska

On what or on who would depend, in your opinion, the last year being either a success or failure? (you can indicate more than one answer)	Sub-region					Wielkopolska without Poznań sub-region	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V	
	Kalisz	Konin	Leszno	Poznań	Piła		Between sub-regions	Poznań sub-region and remaining sub-regions
Authorities	Number of responses	17	15	12	19	7	51	n.s.
	% in region	4.0	4.0	4.3	5.0	7.4	4.4	
Myself	Number of responses	276	295	236	325	74	881	p<0.001 V=0.143
	% in region	65.2	76.6	74.9	82.1	78.7	72.4	
Other people	Number of responses	79	61	65	115	13	218	p<0.001 V=0.133
	% in region	18.7	16.0	22.6	29.6	13.8	18.4	
Fate (providence)	Number of responses	175	149	122	160	35	481	n.s.
	% in region	41.4	39.2	39.7	41.3	37.2	40.0	

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

Table 9
Task orientation – distribution of responses in sub-regions of Wielkopolska

Please indicate how you usually react to problems or difficult situations in your life. (you can indicate more than one answer)	Sub-region					Wielkopolska without Poznań sub-region		Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V	
	Kalisz	Konin	Leszno	Poznań	Pila			Between sub-regions	Poznań and others
I turn to others for help and advice	Number of responses	199	165	133	156	41	538	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	47.2	42.9	43.8	40.0	43.2	44.6		
I mobilize myself and get on with it	Number of responses	227	226	176	246	56	685	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	53.9	58.4	55.2	62.9	58.9	56.1		
I drink more alcohol	Number of responses	10	20	11	11	0	41	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	2.4	5.3	3.9	2.9	0.0	3.5		

I take comfort in the thought it could be a lot worse or that others fare worse	Number of responses	130	130	129	141	28	417	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	30.9	34.2	42.7	36.4	29.5	34.8		
I give up and I don't know what to do	Number of responses	10	13	8	14	4	35	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	2.4	3.5	2.9	3.7	4.2	3.0		
I take tranquilizers	Number of responses	23	11	22	14	2	58	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	5.5	2.9	7.9	3.7	2.1	5.0		
I pray to God for help	Number of responses	119	81	86	93	18	304	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	28.3	21.3	29.4	24.0	18.9	25.6		
I distract myself with other things	Number of responses	67	104	69	102	16	256	p<0.001 V=0.115	n.s.
	% in region	15.9	27.4	23.9	26.3	16.8	21.6		

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

In the area of reacting to problematic and stressful situations, the strategies of particular sub-regions of Wielkopolska do not significantly differ from each other. The identifiable differences concern one of the avoidance strategies, that is distracting oneself with other things which in relative terms was indicated by residents of the Konin sub-region most frequently. In second place was the Poznań sub-region. Considering the results of all sub-regions taken together except for Poznań and comparing them with the Poznań sub-region reveals, however, that there are no significant differences concerning strategies for dealing with difficult situations.

With reference to prosocial behaviour, significant differences between sub-regions are only found for one of its dimensions, that is acting on others' behalf. In terms of engaging in activities for the benefit of a local community, the residents of the Wielkopolska sub-regions do not differ from each other, although in the area of directly undertaking activities in the form of unpaid work or services the most frequent affirmative responses were from the residents of the Poznań sub-region. Almost a quarter said they undertook such actions rarely and altogether (often and rarely) almost a third answered positively. By way of contrast, in the Piła sub-region only one in ten did so. Comparing responses from the Poznań sub-region and the remaining sub-regions confirms this difference.

Table 10

Prosocial behaviour distribution of responses in sub-regions of Wielkopolska

During the last two years, have you been involved in any actions for the benefit of your local community (county, housing estate, town or neighbourhood)?		Sub-region					Wielkopolska without Poznań sub-region	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V	
		Kalisz	Konin	Leszno	Poznań	Piła		between sub-regions	Poznań and remaining sub-regions
Yes	Number of responses	61	48	70	59	12	191	n.s.	n.s.
	% in region	14.4	12.4	21.0	14.9	12.6	15.4		
Have you in the last year done any voluntary work for people outside the family or for a social organization?									
Yes, often	Number of responses	20	14	26	29	3	63	p<0.001 V=0.101	p<0.001 V=0.104
	% in region	4.7	3.6	7.8	7.3	3.2	5.1		
Yes, rarely	Number of responses	66	66	54	97	7	193		
	% in region	15.5	17.0	16.2	24.4	7.4	15.5		
All positive answers	Number of responses	86	80	80	126	10	256		
	% in region	20.2	20.6	24.0	31.7	10.5	20.6		

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

Table 11
Lawfulness – distribution of responses in the sub-regions of Wielkopolska

	Responses “I care about it to some extent” and “I care about it very much” taken together	Sub-region					Wielkopolska without Poznań sub-region	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V	
		Kalisz	Końin	Leszno	Poznań	Piła		between sub-regions	Poznań and remaining sub-regions
Below you will find a list of various behaviours. Some of them may concern you directly, others may concern only other people. Please specify your attitude towards the behaviours listed below	Number of responses	124	131	139	187	35	429	p<0.001 V=0.152	p<0.001 V=0.140
	% in region	31.5	34.8	45.1	51.4	38.0	36.7		
Someone pays lower taxes than he/she should	Number of responses	110	127	135	168	32	404	p<0.001 V=0.152	p<0.001 V=0.114
	% in region	27.7	33.8	43.4	46.7	34.8	34.4		
Someone avoids paying the fares for the public transport (e.g. buses, trams)	Number of responses	162	155	173	220	48	538	p<0.001 V=0.159	p<0.001 V=0.148
	% in region	40.4	41.0	55.8	59.6	51.6	45.6		
Someone unjustly draws unemployment benefits	Number of responses	159	151	181	218	46	537	p<0.001 V=0.169	p<0.001 V=0.151
	% in region	40.1	40.9	58.2	59.9	50.5	46.0		
Someone unjustly receives disability benefits (on the grounds of being unable to work)	Number of responses	152	156	170	210	44	522	p<0.001 V=0.159	p<0.001 V=0.149
	% in region	38.6	41.8	54.8	58.2	47.8	44.7		

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

With reference to respecting norms and sensitivity to infringements against the common good, significant differences were found in all five areas. In each of them, the largest share of those answering that the infringements described bothered them somewhat or very much were from the Poznań sub-region and it reached almost 60 % in three of the examples given. The lowest percentage in each case was found in the Kalisz sub-region. Comparisons of the responses from the Poznań sub-region with those from the other areas in the voivodeship indicates that a higher percentage is bothered by infringements against each of the mentioned norms.

DIFFERENCES IN THE INTENSITY OF THE WIELKOPOLSKA MENTALITY AMONG RESPONDENTS FROM THE POZNAŃ SUB-REGION AND OTHER VOIVODESHIPS

The last of the analyses conducted is a comparison of the distribution of responses between the Poznań sub-region and the remaining 15 voivodeships (taken together). An analysis of significant differences was conducted comparing the distribution of responses from the sub-region of Poznań and the rest of the country. In terms of evaluating the previous year, respondents from the centre of Wielkopolska significantly more frequently indicated their own responsibility and that is the only significant difference identified. In dealing with difficulties and task orientation one significant difference was also identified related to a more frequent indication by respondents from the Poznań sub-region of mobilising themselves as a way of solving the problem. Significantly more often in Wielkopolska in comparison with the rest of the country, avoidance strategies are not declared in the Poznań sub-region more often than in other regions. Residents of the Poznań sub-region do not differ in activity levels for the benefit of local communities but significantly more often undertake work or services for others so they are more prosocial. In the area of lawfulness, being concerned with infringements against norms, respondents from the Poznań sub-region significantly more often declare that they are concerned (to some extent or very much).

Table 12

The Wielkopolska mentality – distribution of responses between the Poznań sub-region and other voivodeships

		Poznań sub-region	Poland, excluding Wielkopolska	Significance of variation and correlation coefficient of Cramer's V
On what or on who would depend, in your opinion, the last year being either a success or failure? (you can indicate more than one answer):				
Authorities	% in region	5.0	5.7	n.s.
Myself	% in region	82.1	71.8	p<0.001 V=0.031
Other people	% in region	30.0	26.8	n.s.
Fate (providence)	% in region	40.8	42.9	n.s.

Please indicate how you usually react to problems or difficult situations in your life (you can indicate more than one answer):				
I turn to others for help and advice	% in region	40.0	43.1	n.s.
I mobilize myself and get on with it	% in region	63.2	55.4	p<0.002 V=0
I drink more alcohol	% in region	2.9	3.1	n.s.
I take comfort in the thought it could be a lot worse or that others fare worse.	% in region	36.1	30.9	n.s.
I give up and I don't know what to do	% in region	3.7	2.6	n.s.
I take tranquilizers	% in region	3.7	3.2	n.s.
I pray to God for help	% in region	24.3	26.2	n.s.
I distract myself with other things	% in region	26.4	21.6	n.s.
During the last two years, have you been involved in any actions for the benefit of your local community (county, housing estate, town or neighbourhood)?				
Yes	% in region	14.6	14.8	n.s.
Have you in the last year done any voluntary work for people outside the family or for a social organization?				
Yes, often	% in region	7.1	6.9	n.s.
Yes, rarely	% in region	23.7	19.1	
All positive responses	% in region	30.8	26.0	
Below you will find a list of various behaviours. Some of them may concern you directly, others may concern only other people. Please specify your attitude towards the behaviours listed below (responses "I care about it to some extent" and "I care about it very much" taken together)				
Someone pays lower taxes than he/she should	% in region	50.9	47.5	n.s.
Someone avoids paying the fares for the public transport (e.g. buses, trains)	% in region	46.2	44.6	n.s.
Someone unjustly draws unemployment benefits	% in region	59.3	55.7	p<0.004 V=0.026
Someone unjustly receives disability benefits (on the grounds of being unable to work)	% in region	59.6	56.4	p<0.003 V=0.027
Someone files an insurance claim under false pretences	% in region	57.9	54.0	p=0.001 V=0.028

Source: Author's calculation on the basis of data in *Social Diagnosis* <http://www.diagnoza.com> (accessed 20.12.2015).

SUMMARY

Comparing the data obtained to the hypotheses proposed allows for the following summary.

1. With reference to the first hypothesis, indicating differences among residents of Wielkopolska in the area of particular components of the Wielkopolska mentality significant differences were identified in three of the dimensions analysed. Residents of Wielkopolska significantly more frequently declared that evaluations of the course and effect of the previous year depended on their own decisions, more rarely on other people or government authorities. This confirms a greater degree of self-regulation. In terms of task orientation, the frequency of particular strategies indicated for dealing with problems was not significantly different between residents of Wielkopolska and the remaining voivodeships. The two strategies cited significantly more frequently by residents of Wielkopolska were avoidant in nature (being happy that the situation could be worse and using tranquilisers). In both areas of the dimension of prosocial behaviour, no significant differences were found in the distribution of responses. However, in the area of lawfulness, the frequency of declaring that the respondent "was concerned" by their infringement was significantly lower among residents of Wielkopolska for all five norms referenced. In inter-group comparison (Wielkopolska vis a vis respondents from the remaining regions in Poland), it was only in the area of self-regulation that respondents from Wielkopolska indicated a greater intensity and therefore demonstrated the presence of the Wielkopolska mentality. The results of the remaining dimensions did not confirm its presence and rather denied it.

2. An analysis of the distribution of responses concerning the indicated components of the Wielkopolska mentality among respondents from Wielkopolska taking sub-regions into consideration confirms the internal differentiation of Wielkopolska in the area of intensity of characteristics of the mentality with reference to self-regulation, prosocial behaviour in undertaking work or service for others as well as normative sensitivity to the common good. In the area of problem solving strategies, however, no differentiation was observed in the dimension of strategies in task orientation (mobilising oneself). For prosocial behaviour, understood as engagement in activities for the benefit of a local community, there was no significant difference. Wielkopolska is revealed in light of these results as only selectively distinct in terms of the intensity or general presence of the attitudes making up the Wielkopolska mentality.

3. An analogous picture of internal differentiation of the components of the Wielkopolska mentality is given by an analysis in centre-periphery terms. The strongest manifestations of the Wielkopolska mentality in the centre of the voivodeship, that is in the Poznań sub-region, again concern self-regulation, prosocial behaviour in activities for the sake of others (but not local communities) as well as lawfulness. As much as a comparison of the responses from the Wielkopolska voivodeship and the rest of Poland revealed a difference that is at odds with the idea of the Wielkopolska mentality (a lower percentage of respondents being concerned with infringement against norms in Wielkopolska). A centre-periphery comparison within Wielkopolska reveals that respondents from the Poznań sub-region significantly more often de-

clare concern regarding infringements against norms that are harmful for the common good. The hypothesis that a stronger sense of the Wielkopolska mentality exists in the centre of the region than in the periphery is supported in three of the four dimensions.

4. The comparison of a set of responses from the Poznań sub-region with other voivodeships introduced to “sharpen” the contrast makes it possible to show clearer differences that occur when the entire Wielkopolska voivodeship is compared with others. Three components of the Wielkopolska mentality turn out to be significantly stronger in the Poznań sub-region.

- in the area of self-regulation, responses from the Poznań sub-region significantly more often (10 percentage points) declare that the evaluation of the previous year depended on themselves – this is the single largest and statistically most significant difference of all those identified;

- in the area of task orientation, they significantly more often indicated that they “mobilise [themselves] and get on with it” although the frequency of other responses is not significantly different;

- in the area of prosocial behaviour in both of its dimensions, there are no significant differences in frequency of declared activity for the sake of a local community or for other people, it is possible to state that respondents from the Poznań sub-region are a little more active than those from other sub-regions within Wielkopolska, but the level is similar to that found in other voivodeships;

- in the area of lawfulness, residents of Wielkopolska indicated a lower level of concern for infringements of norms while respondents from the Poznań sub-region expressed significantly more concern regarding three of the five norms, namely unjustly drawing unemployment or disability benefits and insurance fraud. For the two remaining norms, indications of concern are somewhat more frequent but the difference is not statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

The shortest diagnosis would lead to the observation that the identified differences are in essence relatively weak. It is not then possible to use them to indicate that residents of Wielkopolska are somehow radically different from other Polish people, although certain differences remain. This is similar to the conclusion of M. Ziółkowski.³⁶ What are potential explanations? It is possible to imagine that a good quarter of a century of the market economy should support the rebirth and strengthening of the Wielkopolska mentality, having as the cited analyses indicate, a market and efficient character. It seems that a significant explanation might be a trace of the fact that the ideological bases of the Wielkopolska mentality were strong in the 19th century and weak during the post-transformation period. P. Matusik holds that to the extent that in the 20th century “the picture of society as an organic community dominated, now the emphasis has been placed on an anarchisti-

³⁶ M. Ziółkowski, *op. cit.*

cally understood individuality”.³⁷ Perhaps this is an exaggerated diagnosis, nonetheless it is exactly shortcomings in terms of community, capability (and perception of purpose) of self-organization that could be a sign of a lack of clarity regarding the existence of the Wielkopolska mentality. This is confirmed, for example, by the results concerning prosocial behaviour.

Another explanation could be the structural difference of Wielkopolska society. The old “average condition” consisted of merchants, craftsmen and small scale entrepreneurs. Although they still exist and work, it is with different motivations and methods that they carry on with their activities. In the 19th century “Polish craftsmen and merchants, competing economically with German and Jewish counterparts wanting to develop their workshops, stores or warehouses had to be not only just as polite and cultured to their customers but rather more so”.³⁸ At present in a local market competing only with each other, and in the global market with transnational corporations, patriotism is no longer an integral part of the economic attitudes or a signal of economic competence. It now has more a purely marketing significance.

A third factor might be the decidedly different tempo of economic, technological and political change. In comparison with the 21st, the 19th century was stable, calm and slow... the industrialist Cegielski was able to devote several years to learn the rules of capitalism, and Chłapowski a similar time to learn about farming. Contemporary start-ups must establish their economic position in a year or two and only every third business entity survives five years. According to data from the Central Statistical Office (GUS) of business entities that were created in 2009 only 31.4 % were still functioning in 2014.³⁹ A lack of stability means that values, attitudes and even pragmatic factors have no time to become rooted, show their usefulness, not to mention being passed on to following generations.

These possible factors cannot therefore be ruled out and may in fact reinforce each other in bringing about an even stronger erosion of the Wielkopolska mentality. P. Matusik, 15 years ago, stated that when people longing for the virtue of their ancestors it fills him with optimism because if people long for something then they may bring about its existence.⁴⁰ From the perspective of the research described, it may be difficult to maintain this optimism. Doubtless answering the question posed in the title and alluding to the discussion from 2000, it should be indicated that the Wielkopolska mentality is in crisis, although it is somewhat stronger in the centre of the region than in the periphery. Perhaps gradually it is becoming then a Poznanian mentality?

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Keywords: Wielkopolska mentality, *Social Diagnosis*, self-regulation, task orientation, prosocial behaviour, lawfulness

³⁷ P. Matusik, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

³⁸ W. Molik, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

³⁹ GUS, *Warunki powstania i działania oraz perspektywy rozwojowe polskich przedsiębiorstw powstałych w latach 2009–2013*, Warszawa 2015, p. 35.

⁴⁰ P. Matusik, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

ABSTRACT

The starting point for the present analysis is the academic and common belief in the existence of specific set of beliefs and norms, typical for the inhabitants of Wielkopolska, which can be referred to as the Wielkopolska mentality. The basis of its formation was the experiences of Prussian occupation and the transformation of methods of management motivated by patriotism and as a result the development of a mentality that was both nationalist and capitalist. While the communist period did not promote its cultivation, in the period after 1989, the presence of such components of the Wielkopolska mentality as thrift, economy, respect for the law and prosocial attitudes were still felt to be present. Using data from the 2015 "Social Diagnosis", an analysis was carried out making it possible to verify the hypothesis of a higher intensity among the inhabitants of Wielkopolska of selected features corresponding to the Wielkopolska mentality such as self-regulation, task orientation, prosocial behaviour and lawfulness. Differences in their intensity was also analysed in the sub-regions of Wielkopolska and a comparison of the centre of Wielkopolska, Poznań to the rest of the country was made as well. The results make it possible to conclude that clear differences are revealed primarily between the Poznań sub-region and the rest of the country, which leads to the conclusion that at present the Wielkopolska mentality is weaker than the Poznań mentality.

