



## IDENTITY OF PLACE IN THE BRANDING OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED COMMUNES

*Sylvia Dudek-Mańkowska*

Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies  
University of Warsaw

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7844-8644>

e-mail: [s.mankowska@uw.edu.pl](mailto:s.mankowska@uw.edu.pl)

JEL Classification: H31, R11, L83.

Key words: place identity, place brand, place brand power.

### Abstract

The place brand is an extremely complex and multidimensional concept. Creation of a strong territorial brand is largely dependent on identifying aspects which define the attractiveness of a given place. As the literature on the subject and studies prepared by experts tend to devote a lot of attention to large urban centres, I decided to analyse how small and middle-sized local government units deal with the brand building process. The aim of the study was to determine the aspect of attractiveness that build identities of small and medium-sized communes (gminas), the dimensions of identities of such communes, and the typological classes of communes defined on the basis of these dimensions. Local authorities tend to perceive place brands primarily through the prism of key attributes of individual places. Natural attributes and attractions, geographical location, events, and sport facilities are the building blocks of attractiveness for small and middle-sized local government units. The key dimensions of the communes' identities are the aspects of their attractiveness in terms of settlement, tourism and economic activity. The conducted analysis allowed also to distinguish communes with strong and distinctive identities, communes whose identities are defined primarily by their offer dedicated to the residents, ones defined most strongly by their business and cultural offers, communes whose identity is not very clear and requires intervention, as well as communes with a high level of tourist attractiveness and good recreational offerings.

## TOŻSAMOŚĆ MIEJSCA W KONTEKŚCIE KSZTAŁTOWANIA MARKI MAŁYCH I ŚREDNICH GMIN

*Sylvia Dudek-Mańkowska*

Wydział Geografii i Studiów Regionalnych  
Uniwersytet Warszawski

Słowa kluczowe: tożsamość miejsca, marka miejsca, siła marki miejsca.

### Abstrakt

Marka miejsca jest konstruktem niezwykle złożonym i wielowymiarowym. Bardzo ważnym etapem kształtowania silnej marki terytorialnej jest identyfikacja obszarów atrakcyjności budujących tożsamość miejsca. W literaturze przedmiotu oraz opracowaniach eksperckich wiele uwagi poświęca się przede wszystkim dużym ośrodkom miejskim, dlatego zdecydowano się przyjrzeć, w jaki sposób z procesem budowania marki mierzą się małe i średnie jednostki samorządu terytorialnego. Celem badania było określenie: obszarów atrakcyjności budujących tożsamość małych i średnich gmin, wymiarów tożsamości gmin oraz klas typologicznych gmin ze względu na wymiary ich tożsamości. Władze lokalne postrzegają markę przede wszystkim przez pryzmat najważniejszych atrybutów miejsca. Atrakcyjność małych i średnich JST tworzą walory i atrakcje przyrodnicze, położenie geograficzne, wydarzenia i imprezy organizowane w gminie, infrastruktura sportowa. Główne wymiary tożsamości gmin to atrakcyjność osadnicza, turystyczna i gospodarcza. Analiza pozwoliła również wyróżnić: gminy o silnej i wyrazistej tożsamości, jednostki, których główne atrybuty tożsamości są związane z ofertą przeznaczoną dla mieszkańców gminy, których najsilniejszymi wyróżnikami tożsamości są elementy związane z ofertą dla biznesu i ofertą kulturalną, jednostki, których tożsamość jest mało wyrazista i wymaga interwencji oraz gminy o dużej atrakcyjności turystycznej i dobrej ofercie rekreacyjnej.

### Introduction: theoretical background

The conceptualization and operationalization of research concerning territorial brands is not easy because it is difficult to define the conceptual scope of the term and its measurable attributes. The difficulties are connected with the following facts:

- there is no single universal definition of the territorial brand and no common agreement as to the components of this term;
- there exist a rich set of tools for measuring place brands, but the level of operationalization of the adopted indicators is low;
- there exist certain problems with research concerning identities and images of places.

Companies, communes and people all carry out activities related to building strong brands, but in each case the meaning of this concept is different. Different authors, depending on the field they represent, define the brand by emphasising different components, distinguishing features and functions. For economists,

a brand is one of the key competitive advantages of an enterprise, lawyers often focus on a brand as a trademark, linguists pay attention to the message that the brand expresses, tourism experts focus on branded tourism products, while geographers try to determine the role of branding in the management of a local government unit (LGU). The multitude of approaches translates into a number of brand concepts and measurement methods. The literature of the subject most often adopts the definition proposed by the American Marketing Association (*Marketing Definitions...*, 1960) according to which the brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from competitors.

This definition is often criticised for being too manufacturer-oriented, too focused on the brand's owner, and by putting too much of an emphasis on the brand's visual aspects (Arnold, 1992; Crainer, 1995). Some of the researchers decided to adopt a different definition proposed by Bennett (1988) who claimed that a brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. According to Wood (2000), the phrase "any other feature" is of particular importance, as it expands the definition of the brand to include non-material elements, that is, the brand's image.

Some authors point to a much broader understanding of the brand, defining it as an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique, sustainable added values which match their needs most closely (de Chernatony, 2003).

The biggest challenge faced by researchers is figuring out how to translate the experience related to the research of brands of consumer goods into the context of territorial marketing. Despite the growing scientific interest in the branding of places, the idea of creating and managing territorial brands in a manner similar to the one used for brands of goods or services is still controversial. Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005), who treat places as extended products, are some of the proponents of this approach. Researches of urban spaces are more sceptical, emphasising that brands of cities are especially complex and multidimensional and that being able to identify the distinguishing features of the place identity is of utmost importance in the branding process (Dudek-Mańkowska & Balkiewicz-Żerek, 2015). It is all connected to the specific character of the place brand which is determined by the complexity of the territorial product, its lack of owner and multiple external factors influencing its identity and image. The territorial brand combines material elements that make up the reality of the city, such as its technical infrastructure, architecture, and tourism facilities, with more elusive aspects, such as values and beliefs (Korczyńska, 2006).

The identity and image of a given place are the key components of its brand. The place identity consists of a set of attributes determining the way the place is perceived by society and creating a specific context for the process of communication with society (Wiktor, 2001). It is a set of key attributes

of a given place – its attractive and competitive aspects. The components of the place identity include historical events, customs, monuments, local products, as well as its prominent inhabitants, or even animals and plants which are strongly associated with the area.

The perception of the place identity becomes the basis for the creation of its specific image, which is understood as a set of subjective feelings (affective components of the image) and opinions (cognitive components of the image) of an individual, and relationships between those elements which arose as a result of the inflow of information from various sources (Dudek-Mańkowska, 2011). A distinctive identity of a place has a great impact on the perception of that place (Stanowicka-Traczyk, 2008).

Operationalization of the above-described terms and selection of research methods and techniques are another challenge related to conducting research on the place brand. Any research concerning any place identity consists foremost of an evaluation of the place's current offer and its market position. The most frequently used research methods include: desk research, questionnaire surveys, focus studies, in-depth interviews, as well as content analysis of promotional materials and the results of previous research. Any research on the place's image involves attempts to determine how the given place is perceived by particular groups of recipients (internal and external), with the help of such tools as questionnaire surveys, focus studies, in-depth interviews, and analyses of the content of promotional materials.

Methods for measuring territorial brands are largely taken from the methodology for evaluating commercial brands, with both the identity of the place and its perception being evaluated. An overview of the most important models of brand measurement reveals how researchers and practitioners understand the concept of identity of place and how it can be evaluated.

One of the best-known models for measuring a city's brand is the city brand hexagon developed by Anholt (2006). According to the author, cities focus on brand-building activities in six different dimensions: the presence, the people, the basic prerequisite amenities, the pulse of the city and the potential. Based on this methodology, the City Brands Index™ (CBI) ranking, covering the world's 50 largest cities, is issued every year.

In the city brand study methodology developed by Anholt (2006), individual elements of a place identity are analysed. In contrast, in the territorial brand evaluation methodology developed by the Saffron company, analysis covers not only what the place has to offer, but also the strength of its brand. Saffron's European City Brand Barometer evaluates cities in two dimensions: the first is City Asset Strength, while the second is City Brand Strength. To evaluate the city in each of these dimensions, a proprietary set of indicators is used, with indicator values being determined using questionnaire survey data, qualitative desk research, and expert opinion and experience.

The Bloom Consulting company also produces country, region and city rankings using a proprietary methodology called “Bloom Consulting’s CRC Brand Wheel”, which assumes that a location’s brand has six dimensions, i.e. Attraction of Investment; Attraction of Tourism; Attraction of Talent; Increase in Pride; Improvement of Public Diplomacy; and Increase in Exports. A specific target group is assigned to each of the dimensions (respectively: investors, tourists, employees, residents, public opinion and companies).

The process of building a strong brand for a place should therefore begin with identifying the areas of attractiveness that constitute its identity. The literature on the subject and expert studies devote a lot of attention to large urban centres, which on the one hand are very complex territorial megaproducts, directing their offer to many different recipient groups, and on the other hand have financial opportunities to include external experts in the branding process and apply extensive marketing tools. It is worth considering how the small and medium-sized local government units deal with the brand building process. This article focuses on presenting the results of an analysis of aspects of attractiveness of small and medium-sized communes as the key distinguishing factors that build their identities. The aim of this analysis is to determine:

- the aspects of attractiveness that build the identities of small and medium-sized communes;
- metafeatures (dimensions) of identities of such communes;
- basic typological classes of communes defined on the basis of these dimensions.

## Research methodology

The results of a survey conducted on a sample of 221 small and medium-sized communes in Poland constituted the basic source of data used for the study. In the Polish geographic literature, the concept of a small and a medium-sized settlement is not unambiguously defined. In most cases, small settlements are taken to be those of 20,000 or fewer inhabitants, while medium units range from 20,000 to 100,000 residents. The upper limit of this division is particularly controversial – according to some researchers, units exceeding as little as 50,000 are distinct from small and medium centres (Runge, 2012). In this study, it was decided to take the value of 50,000 inhabitants as the upper threshold for small and medium-sized communes. This statistical criterion has been used, among others, by Czarnecki (1965), Brol *et al.* (1990) and Bagiński (1988).

The survey was addressed directly to people responsible for conducting and managing marketing activities in communes. The survey was conducted between July and September of 2015 using postal surveys, and supplemented by computer-assisted web interviews. Communes of fewer than 50,000 inhabitants

took part in the survey, of which, rural communes accounted for 51% of surveyed settlements, while towns accounted for 29%. Small communes, i.e. those inhabited by 20,000 persons and fewer, accounted for 65%.

The identity of the place is understood to be the core or heart of its brand (Dudek-Mańkowska & Balkiewicz-Żerek, 2015); therefore, the analysis took into account various elements of the structure of this identity. On the basis of the definition constructed by Girard (1997), it was assumed that the place identity is determined by the following elements and their variables: organic elements (e.g. place legacy, natural conditions), economic elements (e.g. offers for businesses, and local products), geographical aspects (location, functions) and symbolic elements (architecture, heritage). The discussed territorial brand measurement methods also suggested creating a catalogue of elements defining a town's identity. It was decided that these elements reflect well the genotype of the place brand. The analysed communes were characterised with the help of a set of 13 selected variables. An analysis of the main components was used to determine the basic dimensions of the communes' identities, while a cluster analysis was used to determine typological classes of the communes.

## **Metafeatures of the commune identity**

The conducted study demonstrated that the authorities of small and medium-sized communes are aware of the importance of a strong brand for the development of a local government unit. The communes' awareness of their own brands was also analysed. For local authorities, brands are made of the key attributes of the relevant places. The respondents claimed that they associate the brand foremost with elements of their communes' identities, and only 13% of the respondents associate this concept with the perception and valorisation of the place's offer. It may be related to the fact that smaller local government units are less involved in conducting marketing activities. It is also important information regarding the approach of local authorities to branding in general. The brand is on the one hand identified with the specific attributes of a given place, such as its heritage, attractive location, landscapes or tourism, and, on the other hand, with certain intangible elements associated with the high-quality offer of the place, its reputation and prestige.

Most of the respondents perceived the brand they represented as strong (53.2%). The perceived power of the brand increases along with the size of the commune – the brands of communes inhabited by 20–50 thousand residents obtained the highest results in this category (33% of respondents rated the brand as strong), while the brands of communes inhabited by less than 5,000 people received the lowest results (21%). The perceived power of the commune's brand and its legal status were also linked. The brands were described as strong more

often by representatives of authorities from urban communes than by representatives of authorities from rural and urban-rural communes (respectively: 14%, 4%, and 0%).

Employees from commune offices who are responsible for the promotion of their communes were asked to assess aspects of attractiveness which build their communes' identities (Fig. 1). The opinions they provided indicate that attractiveness of small and middle-sized local government units is based foremost on their natural assets and attractions, geographical locations, events organised in the commune, as well as available sport facilities. It might be surprising that safety and order in the commune were ranked higher than its historical heritage, and tourist attributes and attractions, but it may be associated with functions performed by smaller government units. Elements related to the local economy, i.e. local products, companies and the offerings for business, were perceived as the least important.

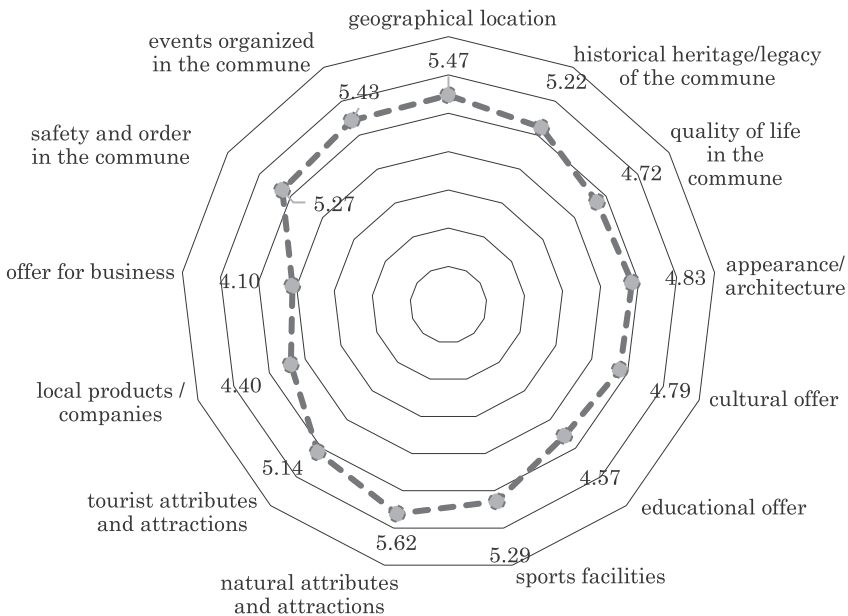


Fig. 1. Evaluation of the aspects of attractiveness of the commune's brand in the opinion of people responsible for the promotion of the commune (1–7 scale)

Source: own study.

Principal component analysis was used to determine the basic dimensions of the communes' identities. The first three main components were responsible for 63.1% of the total variance of output variables, and their significance was not highly differentiated in the context of shaping the attractiveness of commune brands (from 19.2% to 22.3%).

The first component was responsible for 22.3% of the variability of the set of original variables. It reflected the commune's attractiveness in the context of settlement, as it was most closely correlated with the following attributes: quality of life, safety and order, educational offer and social infrastructure. This dimension reflected the attributes of communes which determine the comfort of life of the commune's inhabitants.

The highest positive values were recorded for the first component in the communes which belong to the richest local governments in the country (*Wskaźniki dochodów podatkowych...*, 2018), such as Grodzisk Mazowiecki (2.2), Jerzmanowa (2.2), Suszec (2.0) and Stara Biała (2.0). Such communes (including their revenues and local job market) are influenced by the fact that they are located close to a large industrial plant or several significant investors.

The highest negative values were recorded for the first component in a varied set of communes, differing in their size and type. This group included, among others, the rural commune of Banie Mazurskie (-2.22), the urban-rural Szadek commune (-2.6) and the town of Krosno (-2.8). People responsible for the promotion of these communes have assigned particularly low marks to the elements of their communes' offer related to the quality of life.

The next five aspects which shape the identities of communes were attributes of their tourist offers. The second component proved to be responsible for 21.6% of the variability of the set of original variables. The strongest attributes which correlated with the second component were: tourist attributes and attractions,

Table 1

Main components of identities of small and middle-sized communes

Aspects of attractiveness of the commune (variables)	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
	component and variable correlation coefficients		
Geographical location	0.342	0.592	0.075
Historical heritage/legacy of the commune	0.060	0.672	0.199
Quality of life in the commune	0.831	0.151	0.130
Appearance/architecture	0.455	0.559	0.155
Cultural offer	0.322	0.382	0.667
Educational offer	0.710	0.128	0.322
Sports facilities	0.651	0.079	0.356
Natural attributes and attractions	0.101	0.825	0.102
Tourist attributes and attractions	0.013	0.827	0.301
Local products / companies	0.199	0.209	0.757
Offer for business	0.446	0.037	0.665
Safety and order in the commune	0.747	0.179	0.218
Events organized in the commune	0.197	0.254	0.753

Source: own study.



natural attributes and attractions, historical heritage, geographical location and appearance/architecture, that is – the elements related to the commune's attractiveness in the context of tourism or recreational offer.

The LGUs which received the highest positive values for this component included both rural communes with populations of up to 10,000 people, such as Zaręby Kościelne (1.8), Kroczyce (1.7), Radziejowice (1.6), and Stegna (1.5), urban-rural communes with populations between 10,000 and 20,000, such as Ilża (2.1), Żerków (1.8), and towns with over 10,000 inhabitants, such as Braniewo (1.5) and Sandomierz (1.7). All of them constitute communes known for their attractiveness for tourism, mostly due to their natural attributes. It is worth noting that high values were also recorded for the second component in the case of communes known for performing tourist functions, i.e. Hel (1.3), Karpacz (1.2) and Wieliszew (1.1).

The lowest values were recorded for the component in the case of middle-sized urban communes, that is, Świętochłowice (–2.2 m), Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski (–2.2 m) and Zambrów (–2.6 m), which are rather unlikely to be associated with a rich tourism offer.

The third component, referred to as economic attractiveness, was responsible for 19.2% of the variability of the set of original variables. The following attributes of communes were most strongly correlated with the third component: local products and companies, events organized in the commune, cultural offer and offer for business. This component is bipolar in its character – on the one hand, it includes elements contributing to the commune's attractiveness for investment, on the other hand, it focused on attributes related to culture. The co-existence of economic characteristics and features describing cultural activity may indicate that there is a strong link between the commune's financial situation and the frequency or quality of cultural events it organises.

The highest positive values of the component were recorded in the towns of: Lelów (2.3), Dzierżoniów (2.1) and Leżajsk (1.6). The communes which received high positive values in the context of this component also included towns associated with industry (e.g. Jasło, Puławy, Radzionków, Ozorków) and local products (Zambrów, Łowicz).

Local government units which received the lowest values for the component defined as economic attractiveness represented small rural communes, i.e. Jastrzębia (–2.5), Grodziec (–2.8), Suszec (–2.9) and Parysów (–3.1); as well as the town of Zielonka (–3.1), which is located on the outskirts of Warsaw. These are communes which, in the opinion of people responsible for their promotion, tend to focus on providing their residents with a high quality of life.

The analysis of the main components allowed the determination of the main dimensions of the identity of small and medium-sized communes and their relative importance in the eyes of employees of commune offices responsible for the promotion of their communes. The average number of points assigned by the respondents to the elements most strongly correlated with the given

identity component was calculated in order to determine the average (positive or negative) ratings for each of the chosen identity components. The average ratings of the attributes which are most strongly correlated with the components show that the attractiveness-related components of commune brands are only mildly distinctive, as their values range between 4.68 and 5.26 (4 corresponds to the average). Particular attention was paid to the settlement attractiveness (component 1), which was assessed rather positively (4.96). Tourist attractiveness was rated the highest (component 2) – 5.26. The third component was ranked as the lowest – the average: 4.68.

## Typological classes of communes

The identified metafeatures of communes' identities were used for the classification of LGUs according to the dimensions of their identities. Hierarchical cluster analysis was used, assuming the square of the Euclidean distance as a measure of similarity and applying the Ward linkage method. 5 typological classes were identified. They differ in the average values of individual components (Tab. 2). The number of communes in a class varies from 31 (class 4) to 54 (class 5) (Fig. 2). As the highest average value of the component in class 5 amounted to 0.755, the value was assumed to be the criterion for describing the content of typological classes of component values, assuming a value higher or equal to + 0.755 or lower or equal to –0.755. Such values were recorded for one component in the case of two classes (class 1 and 5) and two components in classes 2, 3 and 4.

Table 2

Classification of communes according to the metafeatures of their identities

Typological classes of communes	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Class 1	0.724	0.707	<b>0.795</b>
Class 2	<b>0.936</b>	–0.101	<b>–1.086</b>
Class 3	0.301	<b>–0.756</b>	<b>0.757</b>
Class 4	<b>–1.133</b>	<b>–1.130</b>	–0.347
Class 5	<b>–0.755</b>	0.729	–0.109

Source: own study.

As previously noted, the commune classes differ due to differences in assessments of the individual attributes of given LGUs. Communes in class 1 are distinguished by their strong and attractive identities and their key attributes are linked to economic attractiveness, however, they are also characterized by a high quality of life and a high level of tourist attractiveness (high positive values for all components). The local government units which belong to this class are

recognizable, have already established brands in the public awareness, and are known either due to their tourist offer or local products, e.g. Karpacz, Kudowa-Zdrój, Puławy, Wejherowo, Darłowo, Koszalin, and Krasnystaw. This class is made of predominantly urban communes (towns) – 43%. People responsible for the promotion of the vast majority of class 1 communes assessed the power of the brands of their communes as strong or very strong (77%).

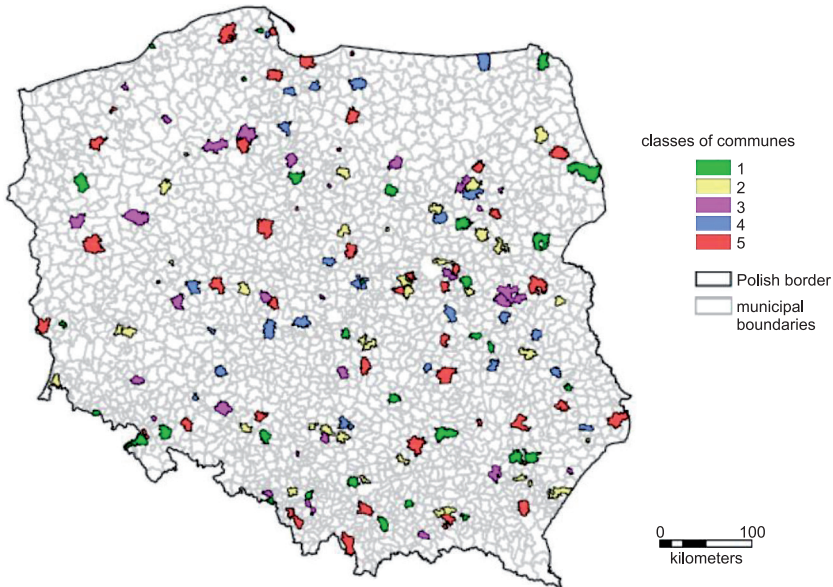


Fig. 2. The distribution of typological classes of communes according to the dimensions of their identities

Source: own study.

The communes whose key attributes of identities are associated with the offer dedicated to residents are primarily LGUs located in the vicinity of larger urban centres, such as Ząbki, Zielonka, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Stara Biała (located near Płock) or Puszczykowo (located in Poznań powiat) (class 2). In the case of communes included in this class, the power of their brands was assessed by half of the respondents as being strong and by the other half as being poor.

Another group is made up of communes whose strongest distinguishing features are elements related to their offers for business, as well as cultural offers (class 3). This class includes such towns as Ostrów Mazowiecka, Dzierżoniów, Ozorków, Zambrów, and, less frequently, also rural communes. The power of brands of the communes which belong to this class has been positively assessed (65%).

The communes grouped in class 4 have identities which are perceived as fairly unattractive. According to the opinions of people responsible for promotion, these

communes are characterised by a poor quality of life, poor tourist offerings and a rather uninspiring economic offer. The power of brands of the communes included in class 4 was rated as poor or very poor (64%). This class included mainly rural communes (61%) and mostly little-known units, such as Błaszki, Trawniki, and Subkowy, but it was also made up of such places as Łowicz, Krosno and Rumia, i.e. communes associated with local enterprises, products or tourist attractions. In the case of LGUs included in this class, it is recommended to define the values of identities of these places and to display them in the image message.

Class 5 brings together communes whose representatives value highly the tourist attractiveness of their respective local government units. This group included Hel, Stegna, Iłża, and Sandomierz. In the case of some of the class 5 communes, the key elements of their identity are geographical location, heritage or natural attributes, and thus elements of the offer related to the way the residents of said places or neighbouring areas spend their free time (e.g. Dębe Wielkie, Gałbin). The power of most brands of the class 5 communes was assessed positively (59%), however, every third respondent perceived the brand of the commune he or she represented as weak.

## Summary

Studies focusing on place identities employ many varied research methods and tools. This article discusses the results of a survey conducted among people responsible for the promotion of communes, so it constitutes part of the studies on the self-assessment of places in terms of their brands. The applied approach allows a definition to be made for the strongest and most distinctive aspects of communes' identities. Subsequently, this defines the identity profiles of individual communes.

The conducted analysis indicates that local authorities tend to perceive the brand primarily through the prism of key attributes of given places. For small and medium-sized communes, the brand of a given place is understood as its heritage, characteristics, quality, attractions, and good name and tradition. The territorial brand is much less often associated with such terms as the place's image, high level of recognisability, and good ranking. Natural attributes and attractions, geographical location, events, and sport facilities are the building blocks of the attractiveness of small and middle-sized local government units. Local products and companies, as well as offers for business are in comparison relatively rarely considered to be the key attributes of any such communes.

The conducted analysis proved that that the aspects of place identity which are often indicated in the literature on the subject (cf. Dudek-Mańkowska & Balkiewicz-Żerek, 2015), such as the place's attractiveness for settlement,

tourism and economic activity, are still useful. The identities of small and medium-sized communes are very diverse, as evidenced by weak representation of the total volatility by the first metafeature – only 22%, and all three – 63%. It is also confirmed by the complex hierarchical classification of communes, which allowed the distinction between 5 typological classes of communes divided on the basis of the dimensions of their respective place identities.

The people responsible for the promotion of small and medium-sized communes paid special attention to the aspect of identity dedicated to residents of the analysed places, and this component was assigned a good rating. Elements related to tourist offerings constituted another important component of the brand identity. The analysis showed that it was ranked very highly. Respondents were less positive when assessing the features linked to the economic aspects which turned out to constitute the least important component of communes' identities.

The hierarchical cluster analysis also allowed to distinguish communes with strong and distinctive identities (class 1), communes for which the defining attributes of their identities are linked to their offer dedicated to the residents (class 2), ones defined most strongly by their business-related and cultural offers (class 3), communes whose identity is not very clear and requires intervention (class 4), as well as communes with a high level of tourist attractiveness and good recreational offerings (class 5).

It was established that there is a dependency between the typological class to which a given commune belongs, its legal status, and the assessed power of the relevant commune brand. The power of the brand was assessed as the highest by the authorities of the communes belonging to class 1, i.e. the group of communes with distinctive identities. Towns are most numerous in class 1. The power of the brands of the communes included in class 4 was rated as poor or very poor. The class is made up primarily of rural communes. It can be concluded that a strong and distinctive identity translates into a high level of the place brand power, as in the case of small and medium-sized communes, the first stage of branding, that is, the identification of aspects of attractiveness which build their identities, plays a very important role in the process of shaping the territorial brand. Due to organizational and financial possibilities, local governments assign much less importance to promotional activities.

Translated by Wordlink Usługi Językowe Sp. z o.o.  
Proofreading by Michael Thoene

## References

- Anholt, S. (2006). The Anholt-GMI City Brand Index. How the World Sees the World's Cities. *Place Branding*, 2(1), 18-31.
- Marketing Definitions: A Glossary of Marketing Terms*. (1960). Chicago: AMA, American Marketing Association.

- Arnold, D. (1992). *The Handbook of Brand Management*. The Economist Books. New York: Century Business.
- Bagiński, E. (1998). *Małe miasta w strukturze sieci osiedleńczej Polski*. Wrocław: Politechnika Wrocławska.
- Bennett, P.D. (1988). *Dictionary of Marketing Terms*. Chicago: The American Marketing Association.
- Brol, R., Maj, M., & Strahl, D. (1990). *Metody typologii miast*. Wrocław: Skrypty Akademii Ekonomicznej im. Oskara Langego.
- Craimer, S. (1995). *The Real Power of Brands: Making Brands Work for Competitive Advantage*. London: Pitman Publishing.
- Czarnecki, W. (1965). *Planowanie miast i osiedli*. Warszawa: PWN.
- Chernatony, L. de (2003). *Marka. Wizja i tworzenie marki*. Gdańsk: Gdańskie Wydawnictwo Psychologiczne.
- Dudek-Mańkowska, S. (2011). *Wizerunek Warszawy w działaniach promocyjnych władz lokalnych i świadomości społecznej*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo UW.
- Dudek-Mańkowska, S., & Balkiewicz-Żerek, A. (2015). Siła marki miejsca. *Marketing i Rynek*, 6, 14-23.
- Girard, V. (1997). *Marketing terytorialny i planowanie strategiczne*. In T. Domański (Ed.). *Marketing terytorialny: strategiczne wyzwania dla miast i regionów*. Łódź: Uniwersytet Łódzki.
- Kavaratzis, M., & Ashworth, G.J. (2005). City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? *Journal of Economic & Social Geography*, 96(5), 506-514. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9663.2005.00482.x>.
- Korczyńska, M. (2006). Marka miasta. *Marketing i Rynek*, 12, 2-10.
- Runge, A. (2012). Metodologiczne problemy badania miast średnich w Polsce. *Prace Geograficzne*, 129, 83-101.
- Stanowicka-Traczyk, A. (2008). *Kształtowanie wizerunku miasta na przykładzie miast polskich*. Bydgoszcz-Olsztyn: Oficyna Wydawnicza Branta.
- Wiktor, J. (2001). *Tożsamość i wizerunek – wyznacznik roli przedsiębiorstwa w procesie komunikacji marketingowej*. In A. Czubała, J. Wiktor (Eds.). *Marketing u progu XXI wieku. Księga jubileuszowa dla uczczenia 70. urodzin prof. J. Altkorna*. Kraków: Akademia Ekonomiczna.
- Wood, L. (2000). Brands and brand equity: definition and management. *Management Decision*, 38(9), 662-669. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740010379100>.
- Wskaźniki dochodów podatkowych dla poszczególnych gmin, powiatów i województw na 2018 r.* (2018). Ministerstwo Finansów. Retrieved from [http://www.mf.gov.pl/ministerstwo-finansow/dzialalnosc/finanse-publiczne/budzety-jednostek-samorzadu-terytorialnego/kwoty-i-wskazniki/-/asset\\_publisher/RJc8/content/wskazniki-dochodow-podatkowych-dla-poszczegolnych-gmin-powiatow-i-wojewodztw-na-2018-r?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mf.gov.pl%2Fministerstwo-finansow%2Fdzialalnosc%2Ffinanse-publiczne%2Fbudzety-jednostek-samorzadu-terytorialnego%2Fkwoty-i-wskazniki%3Fp\\_p\\_id%3D101\\_INSTANCE\\_RJc8%26p\\_p\\_lifecycle%3D0%26p\\_p\\_state%3Dnormal%26p\\_p\\_mode%3Dview%26p\\_p\\_col\\_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p\\_p\\_col\\_count%3D1](http://www.mf.gov.pl/ministerstwo-finansow/dzialalnosc/finanse-publiczne/budzety-jednostek-samorzadu-terytorialnego/kwoty-i-wskazniki/-/asset_publisher/RJc8/content/wskazniki-dochodow-podatkowych-dla-poszczegolnych-gmin-powiatow-i-wojewodztw-na-2018-r?redirect=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mf.gov.pl%2Fministerstwo-finansow%2Fdzialalnosc%2Ffinanse-publiczne%2Fbudzety-jednostek-samorzadu-terytorialnego%2Fkwoty-i-wskazniki%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_RJc8%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p_p_col_count%3D1) (25.02.2018).