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SERVICE FUNCTION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN SMALL TOWNS OF THE LODZ REGION

Small towns with urbanistic historical simple layout and preserved medieval spatial arrangements represent an integral part of town network of the Lodz voivodeship (just under 16% of all towns and 33% of all small towns of up to 10 thousand inhabitants). In these towns there are numerous historic buildings which form cultural value not only on a local but also regional scale. There are different forms of protection of cultural heritage they shape. One form of direct protection of their value includes planning provisions which define functions of these buildings. It should be defined as part of spatial policy which forms of use of buildings are best for preserving and increasing the quality of monuments. In the course of research the following areas have been investigated: age, state of preservation, protection type, ownership relations and, above all, forms of use in relation to historic buildings. This research is aimed at identifying optimal, from the point of view of preservation of these buildings, planning provisions shaping the areas of their location. The research has established that services contribute the most to preservation of historic buildings. The effect is a more detailed analysis of types of services and the impact they have on the state of monument preservation.

Key words: *small towns, monuments, services*

1. Introduction

Preservation of national heritage in spatial planning and development is effected through a number of different instruments. They have both a direct effect, imposing relatively specified functions and forms of development, and an indirect one, determining directions of spatial development. They help preserve and enhance beneficial effects coming from cultural landscape understood as “space shaped historically as a result of human activity including products of civilization as well as nature elements” (*Act of July 23, 2003 on the protection of monuments and the guardianship of monuments*). The abovementioned implications result from the fact that the role of space (cultural landscape) treated as a carrier of the feeling of continuity among local societies evoked by *genius loci* affects the standard of living of the community (and consequently,

due to appropriate management, also its innovation) and influences formation of the civil society (Bloemers, van der Valk 2010). High values of urban landscape historical features additionally have an impact on increasing its tourist attractiveness and they facilitate creation of a place's brand (van Assche, Chien Lo 2010).

The cultural landscape is largely created by fixed monuments defined as items "which are man-made or connected with human activity and constitute a testimony of a past epoch or event the preservation of which is in the interest of the society due to its historic, artistic or scientific value" (*Act of July 23, 2003 on the protection of monuments and the guardianship of monuments*). Fixed monuments (from a limited perspective including only buildings) represent significant part of the housing potential, particularly in small and historically formed towns. Presently these buildings have different functions, including important housing resources as well as establishments for services or, less frequently, industry.

The building's age, ownership, forms of protection and use are important determinants shaping the culture-making quality of the monument as well as its technical condition. The aim of this work is to determine the relationship among the abovementioned determinants, especially between the location of services in historic buildings and the degree of their preservation. The research focuses on all buildings which can be found in local registers of historic monuments in small towns (up to 5 thousand inhabitants) of the Lodz voivodeship which have been identified as centres with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements¹ (*Regional Programme for the Protection of Monuments in the Lodz Voivodeship for the years 2008–2011*, 2008) (Fig. 1). This type of layout is characterized by regular plan of the market square together with streets and clearly outlined borders of plots adjacent to the market square arranged in an urbanistic block (Kulesza 2001). The choice of this morphogenetic town form for the purposes of the research may be accounted for by the fact that its monument location is largely transparent due to preservation in the town's structure of predominantly Gothic planning forms distinguished by clear concentricity of the layout.

¹ Towns: Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta.

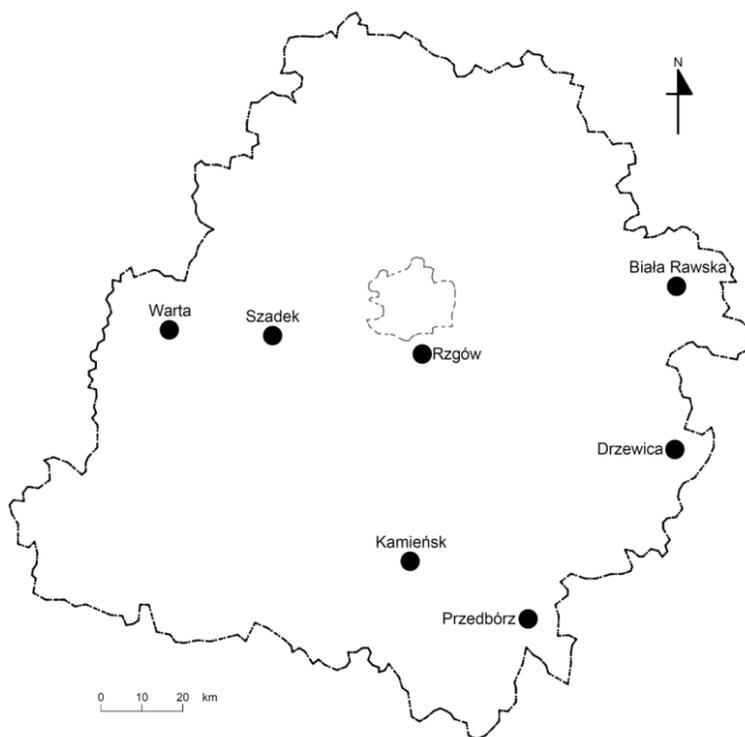


Fig. 1. Small towns in the Lodz voivodeship with historically developed simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements

S o u r c e: own work based on *Regional Programme for the Protection of Monuments in the Lodz Voivodeship for the years 2008–2011* (2008)

2. General characteristics of monuments

Most monuments in the analyzed towns are buildings from the 19th and 20th century (Fig. 2) which represent 41% and 40% of all registered buildings respectively. Almost every tenth monument dates back to the 18th century while monuments erected between the 16th and 17th centuries represent 6% of historic buildings. Buildings which belong to the category of “older” monuments are of medieval origin and constitute 4% of all recorded buildings.

The age structure of many historic buildings in the investigated settlement units is a result of impermanence of original development forms and insufficient interest in their preservation in the subsequent historical periods.

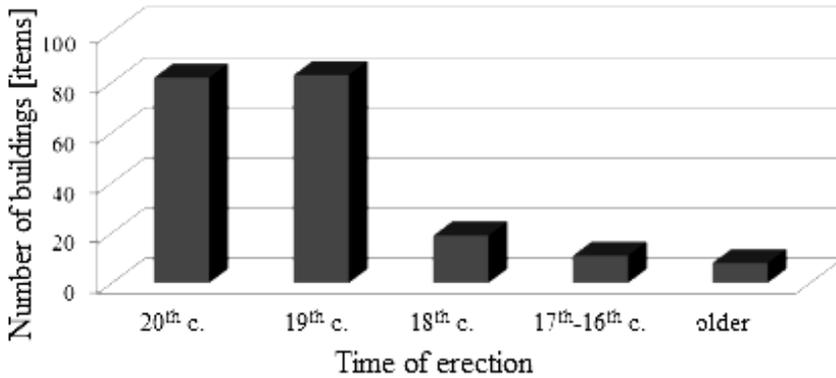


Fig. 2. Time of erection of historic buildings in small towns in the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements with (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on the data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

Almost half (48%) of monuments from the area of investigated towns is used exclusively as residential buildings (Fig. 3). About 7% of buildings is not exploited in any way (uninhabited buildings) while 2% of monuments has an industrial function. 42% of monuments in question is a seat to service companies, from which 67% comprises services connected with trading, 26% is connected with culture, entertainment and recreation, 6% with administration and finance and 1% with catering.

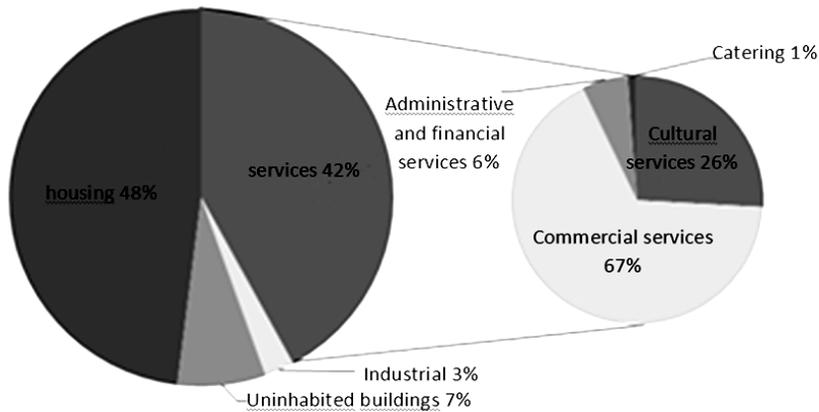


Fig. 3. Use of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

The use of individual historic buildings is largely a result of their location. An analysis of distribution of historic buildings points to their considerable concentration in the town centre where traditionally trade develops and which attracts town dwellers. Use of monuments which is not connected with their location results from their purpose determined at the moment of construction and invariability of this function which can be either sacral (services related to culture) or industrial (grain mills from the turn of the 19th and 20th century).

Historic buildings ownership structure is dominated by private owners (81%) (Fig. 4). Every tenth building belongs to public institutions (local government units and State Treasury), whereas 9% of buildings remains in the hands of religious associations (the Catholic Church).

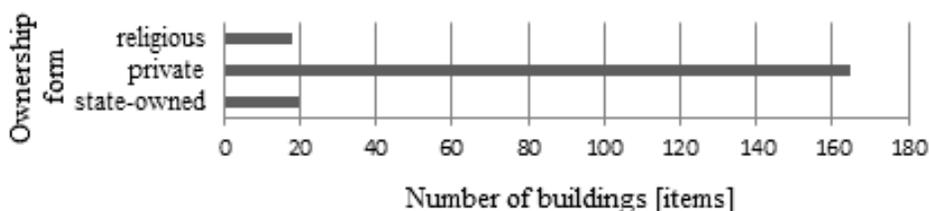


Fig. 4. Ownership of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

Most monuments have been recorded as buildings preserved in a favourable condition (9% in a very good and 65% in a good state of preservation) (Fig. 5). 7% and a mere 1% of monuments are in a bad and very bad technical condition respectively. 16% of building have been described as neglected and 3% are monuments classified as permanent ruin².

Part of recorded monuments (41%) can be also found in the register of historic monuments³, the result of which is that they additionally benefit from the statutory form of protection.

² The classification of the state of monument preservation in Local Registers of Historic Monuments is based on subjective evaluation of a person who enters a building into the register. In the investigated towns traditionally there is a 6-level division of buildings into those in a very good, good, bad, very bad (both technical and culture-forming) state of preservation, neglected ones (with usually satisfactory technical state and unsatisfactory culture-forming state of preservation) and permanent ruin.

³ This is caused by the fact that monuments located in Rzgów where the straight majority of registered buildings (60 out of 62) forms part of the register of historic monuments.

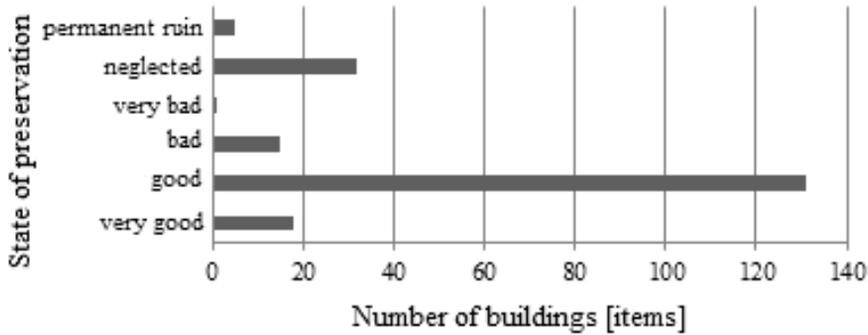


Fig. 5. State of preservation of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

3. State of monument preservation

In the relation between the time of monuments' erection, and thus their age, and their technical condition one can observe two significant groups of buildings aggregating 27.1% and 25.6% of monuments respectively. The first of them comprises buildings from the 19th century while the latter consists of monuments from the 20th century, both of which are in a good state of preservation. In this relation there is also quite a considerable share of neglected building groups from the 20th century (8.9%), well-preserved buildings from the 18th century and neglected monuments from the 19th century (Fig. 6).

In the relation there are three small groups of monuments from the 19th century in a bad state of preservation (3.9 %) and from the 20th century in a very good state of preservation (3.4%) and from the 17th and 16th century in a very good state of preservation. The remaining groups of buildings or individual monuments are of marginal importance, not exceeding 2% of all recorded buildings. Overall, there is a small correlation pointing to the fact that the older the building, the better state of preservation it is in⁴.

⁴ The correlation calculated on the basis of Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0.131.

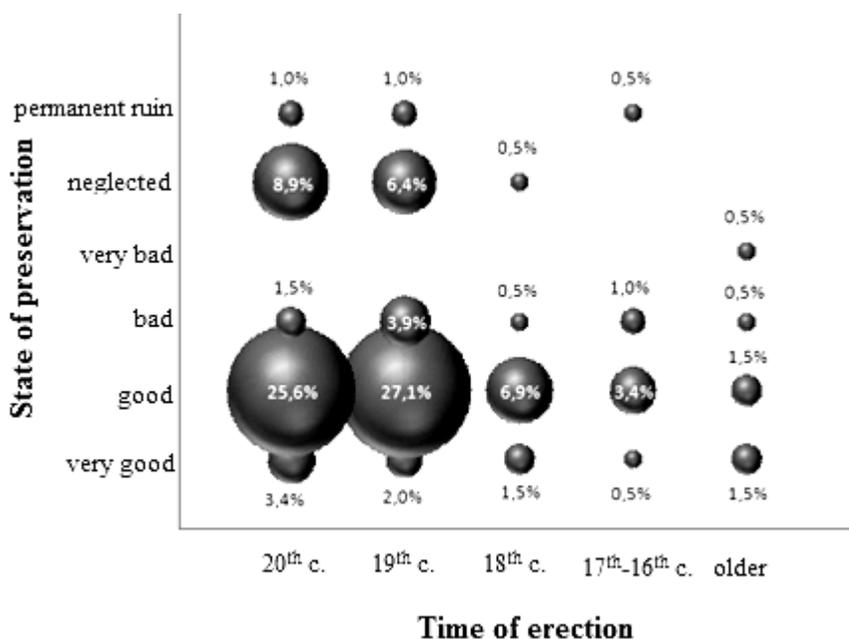


Fig. 6. Time of erection vs. preservation of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieński, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

Ownership type is an essential element largely determining the way in which the property is used and managed. It is not infrequent to observe cases of stagnation or even continual falling into the state of disrepair of buildings whose ownership form remains unclear. Considering the importance of historic buildings in creating local identity, it is necessary to monitor systematically the ownership situation for this group of buildings.

Analyzing the investigated property group, a comparison has been made between ownership form and technical condition of buildings belonging to private individuals, the state or a religious community. Overall, religious ownership has the most beneficial effect on technical condition of monuments since almost 90% of buildings entrusted to the Church remains in a good state of preservation (Fig. 7). These include, above all, sacred buildings (churches, chapels) which did not undergo not undergoing any negative transformation in the course of history. If plots belonging to private individuals were subject to repeated transformations aimed at adjusting their form to present-day architectural trends, then churches most often preserved a semblance of their original style. Besides, buildings belonging to the Church also include residential buildings for clergymen (presbyteries), and these are by nature

maintained in a good technical state due to uninterrupted use in an unchanged form. Additionally, this phenomenon is enhanced by the fact that these buildings have remained in hands of one owner for years and their users came from a social group represented by the intelligence. On the other hand, buildings remaining under control of religious associations comprise the biggest number of monuments in a very bad technical state. This is caused by the fact that these buildings ceased to be used due to construction of buildings performing a similar function (e.g. a new presbytery) or insufficient maintenance.

The technical condition of state-owned buildings comes as a surprise. Only three fourths of buildings in this category should be deemed as maintained in perfect technical condition. In this respect private property seems to leave the most to be desired (Fig. 7). Every third building remaining in private hands should undergo renovation. This situation can be accounted for by cutting to minimum costs connected with maintenance if it is not necessary for the type of activity performed in the building to preserve landscape-shaping monument values. It happens that due to lack of capital, privately-owned buildings entered into the records are in the state of permanent ruin (5% of all privately-owned monuments).

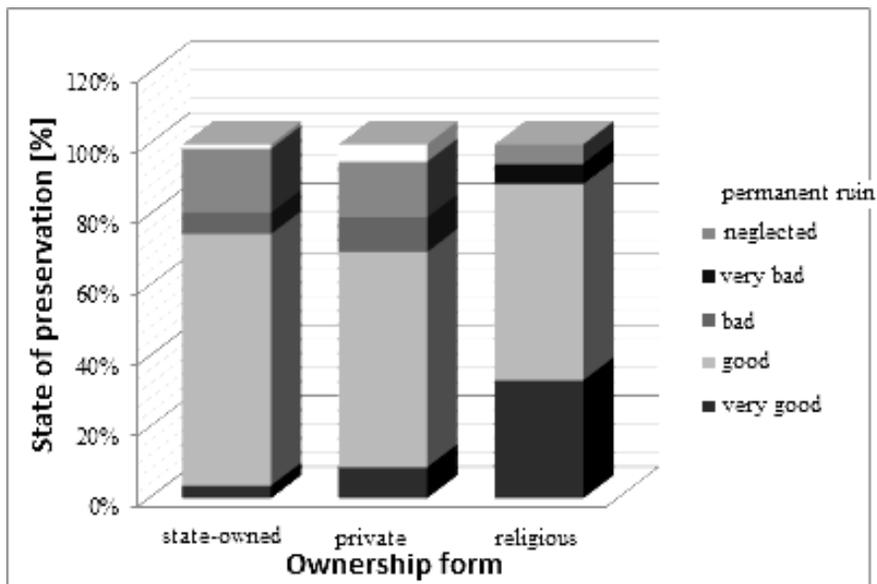


Fig. 7. Form of ownership vs. preservation of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

Leaving historic buildings solely under administration of their owners would be an act of gross irresponsibility. Hence it is necessary to use tools which enable to monitor the state of building preservation. Examples of this type of methods include putting buildings in registers and records of historic monuments. For the purposes of this analysis historic monuments present in regional records have been divided into those which have been included in registers of historic monuments and those which are protected only on the strength of records.

In the light of conducted research registers of historic monuments seem to be a more efficient tool if the technical condition is to be considered a measure of its effectiveness since almost 80% of buildings found only in records is characterized by satisfactory technical condition (Fig. 8). However, arriving at such far-reaching conclusions may be a sweeping generalization. Records of historic monuments as a less “powerful” tool than registers include buildings which do not represent particularly historically valuable testimonies of human activity. These are often buildings considered valuable only in the eyes of the local society and they have not yet fallen into disrepair due to their short, in many cases, history.

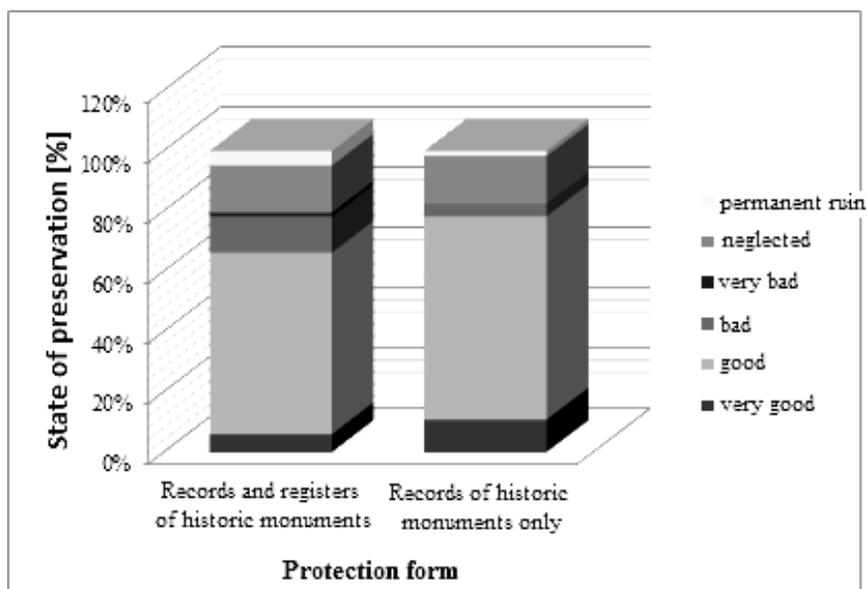


Fig. 8. Form of protection vs. preservation of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

Registers of historic monuments comprise buildings of considerably greater culture-forming values. To a large extent these are buildings with long history whose renovation requires appreciable financial and technical resources. As a result it comes as no surprise that in the group of buildings included in the register of historic monuments a bigger part (34%) represents buildings which require interference in order to improve their technical value.

The type of building use is connected with a certain number of housing requirements. For some people the body of the building understood as a form to improve space appearance is of tertiary importance while for others its attractiveness is one of the keys to success.

Complete disuse is the least advantageous solution from the perspective of building preservation. Buildings in a very bad state of preservation dominate among uninhabited buildings (Fig. 9). Disuse and lack of running maintenance of these buildings are the reasons why in the category of uninhabited buildings as many as 43% of historic monuments in the towns in question is recorded as neglected, 21% in a very bad condition and 21% permanent ruin. Only 14% of all historic buildings in which no activity is conducted is a good and very good state of preservation.

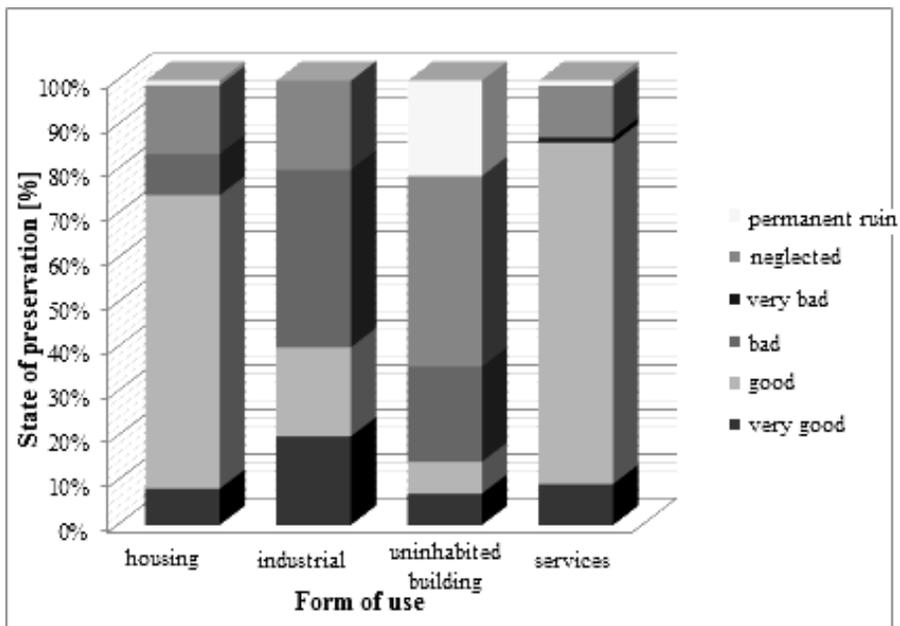


Fig. 9. Form of use vs. preservation of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with developed simple layout with preserved only medieval spatial layouts (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

Using historic monuments for industrial activity has a decidedly negative impact on them. In the study the industrial sector is represented by mills. This type of use does not generate sufficient economic potential which could translate itself into preservation and improvement of the quality of buildings while intensive exploitation of historic buildings leads to their further degradation (as many as 20% of monuments used in this way is classified as neglected and 40% as in a bad state of preservation).

Monuments used only for housing purposes tend to be in a good condition (74%). Most of them (66%) is in a good state of preservation or less frequently in a very good state of preservation (8%). Unfortunately, still a considerable percentage of historic buildings is classified as neglected (15%) or in a very bad state of preservation (9%). A still large percentage of badly preserved historic buildings used for housing purposes only clearly shows financial limitations of their owners, which points to the fact that this form of use cannot bring enough profits to cover maintenance costs.

In the light of the conducted research services are the most advantageous function for building preservation. Regional registers of historic buildings classify as favourably maintained 88% buildings (over 9% in a very good and 77% in a good state of preservation) in which services are provided at least in their part. Only just under 12% of buildings where services are located may be described as neglected whereas 1% of all buildings used by the service sector is in a very bad state of preservation or in permanent ruin. A relatively good condition of recorded buildings used for providing services proves that companies conducting their business in them have sufficient economic potential and that conducting certain types of business forces investors to maintain (good and very good) housing standards.

Different service types in the researched group of small towns affect quality of historic monuments in different ways. For purposes of broader analysis services provided in buildings found in regional registers of historic monuments have been divided into those connected with broadly understood culture (places of worship, cinemas and museums), trading, administration and finances as well as catering (Fig. 10).

Services connected with culture are a type of activity that has a positive effect on the state of preservation of historic monuments. A large percentage of buildings in a very good (23%) and good (64%) state of preservation in the total number of buildings earmarked for this type of activity can be attributed to high expectations of their clients (the congregation, tourists, cinema-goers, etc.) on account of the function they perform. The fact that there are historic monuments in a bad and a very bad state of preservation in the category in question is a consequence of including into this category buildings which in reality are no

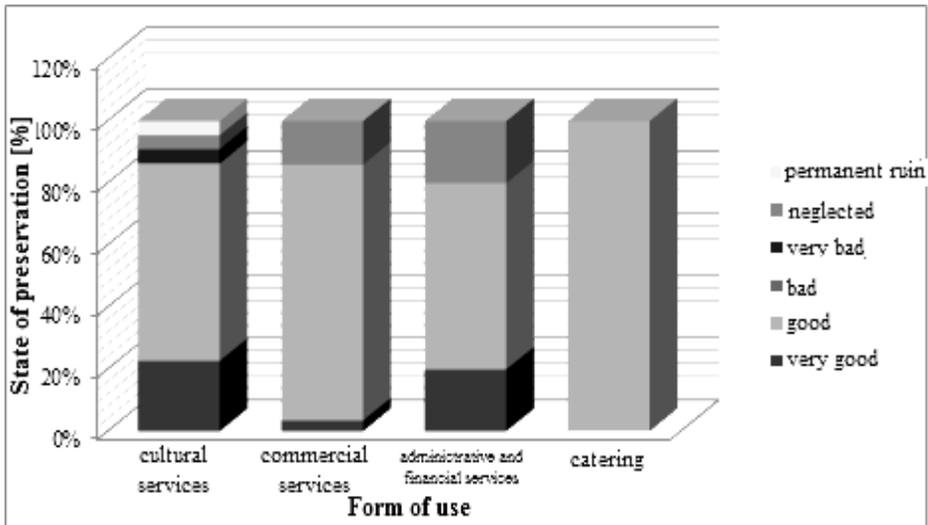


Fig. 10. Form of use in the service sector vs. preservation of historic buildings in small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements (state for the year 2011)

S o u r c e: own work based on data from local register of historic monuments of the towns of Biała Rawska, Drzewica, Kamieńsk, Przedbórz, Rzgów, Szadek and Warta

longer used⁵ (e.g. former vicar's house in Kamieńsk) or their age and limited resources prevent them from maintaining them properly (monasteries). In the analyzed group there are buildings in permanent ruin (castle ruins) which despite their condition may remain a tourist attraction as it does not disturb their proper use.

In the straight majority (86%) retail outlets located in historic monuments in analyzed small towns operate in buildings characterized by a beneficial state of preservation. Since such services tend to shape adequate image of their brand, they must provide, beside convenient location, suitable comfort to their clients. They reach this aim through, for instance, improving aesthetic qualities of the buildings in which they conduct their activity. Neglected buildings where commercial activity is conducted comprise outlets offering niche products. In case of these companies it can be noticed that:

1. Limited competition does not force their owners to go to great lengths to make their institutions more attractive,
2. Insufficient economic potential prevents them from increasing the standard of monuments which they make use of.

⁵ Notwithstanding actual disuse these buildings appear in records as facilities performing cultural functions.

The total number of buildings which house activity connected with administration and finances is rather small (5 buildings). Consequently, interpretation of the data should be based on detailed analysis. In this category there is only one building (which housed the police station in Szadek) whose condition the regional register of historic monuments describes as neglected. The remaining buildings have been earmarked for local administration institutions and banks. Such institutions are located in historic buildings in a good and very good state of preservation due to the public nature of their activity and significant representative character which has a big impact on brand perception.

Historic monuments where catering services are provided are represented only by one building which is in a very good state of preservation. The condition of the building is a clear consequence of the fact that this type of activity requires implementation of adequate aesthetic and sanitary standards.

4. Conclusions

In small towns of the Lodz voivodeship with simple layout and preserved only medieval spatial arrangements one should use instruments of direct influence on space in a way which regulates monument development forms. Beside tools connected with establishing protection forms of cultural heritage in development plans, one should favour service or housing and service development as the one that contributes more to preservation of these buildings in a good condition. Apart from direct instruments action should be taken in order to pass a strategy of town development which takes into consideration defined areas with monuments. This will form the basis for orientation of layout development of these areas in order to allow not only preservation of monuments but also making use of their full potential.

The issue of adequate management of monuments which constitute public or more precisely municipal wealth is still an important problem in analyzed towns. Local governments have not yet developed an efficient system of land management including structures in their centres which represent high cultural value. There are many methods used especially in countries of Western Europe, from Public Land Use Companies in France (Kaszyński 2000) to the British system known as “urban renaissance” (Walton 2000) which could contribute to revival of historic substance in towns once implemented in the Polish realities.

A big problem of small towns is their low endogenic capital translating itself into low earnings which are reflected in the expenditure structure where issues connected with revival of the local historical tissue are often passed over. Private owners of monuments often are not able to cover the costs of running maintenance of buildings from the obtained land rent. Inability to finance initiatives aimed at enhancing the local cultural landscape independently is not

sufficiently compensated by domestic instruments of financing private, housing cooperative and council housing resources (Litwińska 2011).

These problems related to monument management imply limited possibilities of acquiring external resources to revive even fragments of historic town centres. The abovementioned revitalization conducted on a slightly bigger scale (not limited to the boundaries of one plot) would allow to initiate diffusion processes of prosperity on monuments not subject to revitalization.

In the analyzed towns there is no coherent policy of gminas in relation to the tourism potential they possess (landscape dominants, i.e. castles, churches, etc.). Establishment of such a strategy would result in numerous beneficial external effects of both economic and spatial character. A coherent policy in this respect would form basis for increasing tourism attractiveness of the town as a whole rather than its individual monuments (synergy effect), enhancing the state of preservation of valuable buildings, boosting the endogenic economic potential as well as facilitating processes which shape the town's positive image (its brand).

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FUNKCJA USŁUGOWA OBIEKTÓW ZABYTKOWYCH W MAŁYCH MIASTACH REGIONU ŁÓDZKIEGO

Małe miasta o urbanistycznym historycznym układzie prostym z zachowanymi średniowiecznymi układami przestrzennymi stanowią istotną część sieci miast województwa łódzkiego (niepełna 16% wszystkich miast i 33% wszystkich małych miast do 10 tys. mieszkańców). Znajdują się w nich liczne budynki zabytkowe, które tworzą wartość kulturową nie tylko w skali lokalnej, ale także regionalnej. Istnieją różne formy ochrony kształtowanego przez nie dziedzictwa kulturowego. Jedną z form pośredniej ochrony ich wartości są zapisy planistyczne określających funkcje tych obiektów. W ramach prowadzenia polityki przestrzennej należy zdefiniować, jakie formy użytkowania obiektów najlepiej służą utrzymywaniu i podnoszeniu jakości zabytków. W podjętych badaniach przeanalizowano wiek, stan zachowania, formę ochrony, stosunki własnościowe oraz przede wszystkim formę użytkowania budynków zabytkowych. Badania te mają na celu identyfikację optymalnych, z punktu widzenia utrzymania tych obiektów, zapisów planistycznych kształtujących tereny, na których one występują. W wyniku badań ustalono, iż najbardziej do zachowania obiektów zabytkowych przyczyniają się funkcje usługowe. Efektem tego była dokładniejsza analiza rodzajów usług i ich wpływu na stan zachowania zabytków.

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