

# Bogumiła Ropińska

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## Farming of Chojnice district after Poland's integration with EU

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BOGUMIŁA ROPIŃSKA

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TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KOSZALIN

## FARMING OF CHOJNICE DISTRICT AFTER POLAND'S INTEGRATION WITH EU

**ABSTRACT.** The presented publication talks about farming of Chojnice district in context of Poland's integration with EU, it focuses on its strong and weak sides, as well as on possible ways of development on the base of resources offered by EU.

Article also talks about direct land reimbursements and how many, Chojnice district, farmers were interested with the program.

**KEY WORDS:** environmental and tourist advantages, structure of farm's areas, direct reimbursement.

### INTRODUCTION

The way in which a farm is managed depends on many factors: environment, political management of local authorities, farmer's wealth and farm's economical conditions (Wielewska, Sikorska, 2004: 191).

The purpose of this publication is presentation of Chojnice district in context of Poland's integration with European Union, defining its character and proving that it is necessary to direct it, so that it could take the best possible advantage of resources offered by EU.

The article presents early information concerning "Farmland direct reimbursement" in Chojnice district. This shows how polish farmers assemble to gain access to EU funds.

## LOCATION, ECONOMY AND TOURISTICAL ADVANTAGES OF CHOJNICE DISTRICT

Chojnice district is a part of Pomorskie Voivodeship and it comprises of: city Chojnice and; Chojnice, Brusy, Czersk and Konarzyny parishes.

Many locations around Chojnice belong to some of the most precious and best preserved natural landscape areas in Poland. The land is rich with beautiful lakes, rivers and streams, and it is composed of pasture, forest, meadow and peat-bog environments all mixed together. Priceless and diverse nature is protected by „Bory Tucholskie” National Park and Zaborski Landscape Park.

Chojnice district has also many environment sanctuaries, such as „Jezioro Laska”, „Jezioro Nowinek”, „Małe Łowne”, „Bór Chrobotkowy” as well as many natural monuments. Pine forests rich with moss and lichen grow on poor soils, while more fertile areas are covered with leafy and mixed forests full of oak, beech, linden and hornbeam. Dump lake and river sides are covered with birch, alder and aspen. Thanks to clean environment many rare and protected species of lichen grow in this region. Areas of wilderness are inhabited by 43 species of mammals, 122 species of birds and several species of reptiles and amphibians.

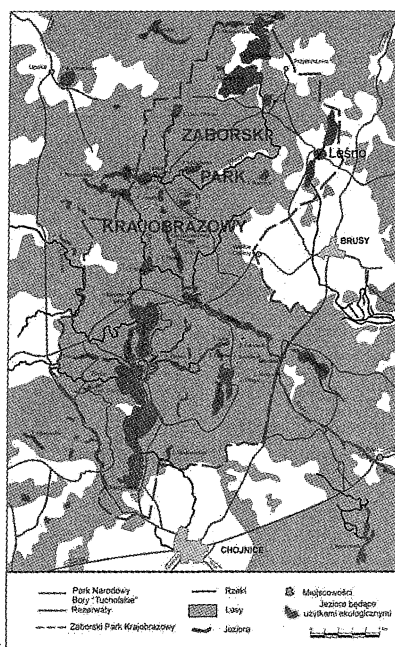


Fig. 1. Map of Zaborski Landscape Park

Source: <http://www.zaborypark.eco.pl>

Numerous volatile oils and phytocides (bacteria killing substances) produced by forests have a very good influence on people and their health.

Chojnice district is very interesting for tourists, and it provides many attractions associated with nature, such as hiking, biking or water sports. It is a great place for fishing and collecting mushrooms. Historical monuments associated with turbulent past of this area and its people, as well as their culture, also provide many attractions. People come here to see mysterious stone circles in Lešno and Odry as well as medieval churches, city walls and gates of Chojnice erected as early as year 1340. There are also many interesting examples of architecture associated with water: old grain and lumber-mills as well as Mylof dam which as the only one in Poland has a water passage in the shape of a flight of steps. It is also at this dam that the Great Brda Channel begins.

Chojnice district is 1,364 km<sup>2</sup> in size, and on average there are 66 inhabitants per 1 km<sup>2</sup> (In Pomorskie Voivodeship the average is 119 inhabitants per 1 km<sup>2</sup>).

Chojnice district is very well communicated both with roads and railway. The E22 national highway, which goes through Chojnice and Czersk is the shortest route between Berlin and Kaliningrad. It is very important for the purpose of international tourism and transport of goods.

There are around 5,000 businesses working in the district. Large wooded areas give a strong base for woodworking, metal processing and food industries as well as for furniture production. A number of medical, cultural and educational institutions and establishments of a general scope are located in Chojnice.

### FARMING OF CHOJNICE DISTRICT

Chojnice district characterises with different kinds of soil and diverse land shape. In the south and partially in the west there are corrugated moraine highlands, covered with moderately rich soil. North of Chojnice spreads Charzykowska Plain covered with hungry sandy soils. Around 70% of the plain is occupied by Bory Tucholskie. The area is dominated by lake-land.

Most of the district's area is covered with acidic soil; therefore the arable land requires liming.

The problem is caused by an unregulated water-air relation resulting from inadequate melioration investments.

Chojnice area belongs to a cool climatic zone. Snow cover lasts for 75 days, growing season lasts 200 days it starts between 10-th and 20-eth of April and ends around 25 of November. The local climate characterises with low rainfall (around 560 mm per year), moderately warm July and considerably frosty February. Light frosts begin very early.

In the year 2003 in Chojnice district there were 4,605 farmsteads, 8 of which were rented, as well as an Institute of Plants' Culture and Acclimatization.

Table 1. Chojnice district's soil stand quality classification in year 2003

SOIL CLASS	AREA IN PHYSICAL HA	AREA IN SCALED HA	% SHARE OF PHYSICAL AREAS
Arable land	39,453.0	27,848.4	82.5 in total
I	0.0	0.0	
II	2.0	3.3	0.01
III a	802.0	1,200.3	2.03
III b	4,931.0	6,150.8	12.50
IV a	9,407.0	9,338.9	23.84
IV b	7,061.0	5,434.8	17.90
V	7,918.0	3,724.0	20.07
VI	7,487.0	1,996.4	19.97
VI z	1,845.0	0.0	4.68
Grass land	9,796.0	5,929.3	17.50 in total
I	0.0	0.0	
II	0.0	0.0	
III	182.0	204.8	3.45
IV	4,484.0	3,576.4	60.32
V	3,613.0	1,827.5	30.82
VI	1,475.0	320.7	5.41
VI z	42.0	0.0	
Together	49,249.0	33,777.7	

Source: author's elaboration on the base of ODR Chojnice data

Arable land makes up 36.9% of the districts area, woods 51.3%, 4.4% waters and 1.3% waste land.

Table 2. Chojnice district's land area, in ha, in the year 2003

CHOJNICE DISTRICT	PARISHES					TOTAL IN THE DISTRICT
	KONARZYNY	BRUSY	CHOJNICE	CITY CHOJNICE	CZERSK	
Arable land	3,150	8,917	19,673	1,011	6,556	39,307
- in this idle land	69	133		80	834	1,116
Meadows	638	2,548	1,399	95	2,406	7,086
Pastures	153	760	863	16	899	2,691
Orchards and gardens	15	19	80	11	40	165
Arable land in total	3,956	12,244	22,015	1,133	9,901	49,249
Woods and parks	5,604	22,871	17,660	90	24,040	70,265
Land under water	57	2,401	3,322	16	560	6,356
Roads and land under buildings	707	2,117	1,855	837	1,249	6,765
Waste land	103	441	982	29	908	2,463
Land unused in agriculture in total	6,471	27,830	23,819	972	26,757	85,849
Area in total	10,427	40,074	45,834	2,105	36,658	135,098

Source: ODR Chojnice

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In Chojnice district there are 70 farmers with finished higher education, yet only 27 of them have graduated a course related to agriculture. The largest group of farmers have finished basic technical education (1,635 man, which is 35% of all farmers, yet only 768 of those farmers have finished basic agricultural education). A very large group of farmers (28%) have only finished farming courses.

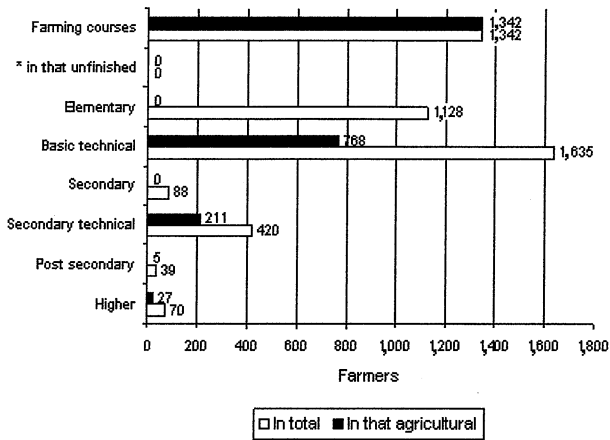


Fig. 2. Education level of farmers from the Chojnice district  
Source: ODR Chojnice

Farming in Chojnice district is very much spread between farmers, 60% of farmsteads are under 10 ha in size, there are only 5 big (over 100 ha) farmsteads and they only make 0.1% of all farms. In Chojnice district there are no farmsteads over 300 ha in size.

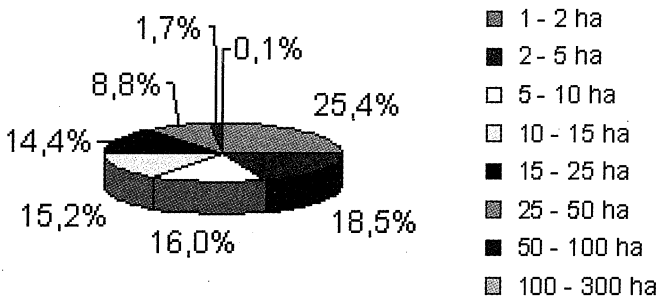


Fig. 3. Area structure of farmstead in Chojnice district  
Source: author's elaboration on the base of ODR Chojnice data

In the investigated district grown crops are dominated by grain, which make up 67.6% of sowings. Rye takes 20.3% of sown area (in Czersk parish rye takes 30.1% of sown area). Such situation is not very favourable; it is caused by low soil class, climatic conditions advantageous for those and root crops. Roots also make up a considerable part of farmed area (10.2%). Utilisation of unqualified sowing and planting material is the main problem.

Table 3. Chojnice district's sowing structure in year 2003

SPECIFIED	AREA IN HA	% OF SOWN MATERIAL	SPECIFIED	AREA IN HA	% OF SOWN MATERIAL
Rye	7,963	20.3%	Papilionaceous small seed	372	0.9%
Winter wheat	2,290	5.8%	Legumes green fodder	185	0.5%
Spring wheat	2,008	5.1%	Corn	1,092	2.8%
Winter barley	210	0.5%	Fodder plants in total	1,649	4.2%
Spring barley	3,340	8.5%	Rape	1,402	3.6%
Oat	1,660	4.2%	Flax	0	0.0%
Winter wheat-rye	2,540	6.5%	Tobacco	0	0.0%
Spring wheat-rye	1,555	4.0%	Economic plants in total	1,402	3.6%
Mixed grain	4,928	12.5%	Strawberries	102	0.3%
Buckwheat	80	0.2%	Field grasses	960	2.4%
Grain in total	26,574	67.6%	Seed grasses	75	0.2%
Potatoes	2,870	7.3%	Ground vegetables	206	0.5%
Sugar beets	80	0.2%	Resting land	2,524	6.4%
Fodder beets	662	1.7%	Remaining plants in total	3,867	9.8%
Rutabaga	390	1.0%	Total sown area of arable land	39,307	100.0%
Roots in total	4,002	10.2%	Meadows	7,086	x
Pease	325	0.8%	Pastures	2,691	x
Lupine	750	1.9%	Orchards	165	x
Horse bean	0	0.0%	Arable land in total	49,249	x
Pease	260	0.7%			
Mixed legumes	460	1.2%			
Legumes in Total	1,795	4.6%			

Source: ODR Chojnice

Output of plant production in Chojnice district is below average of Pomorskie Voivodeship, where in year 2002 3.44 ton of grain was collected from 1 ha. The main reason for this is low soil class of most areas in the district. Potato harvest in Pomorskie Voivodeship are also higher and in year 2002 they amounted to 24.6 ton from 1 ha.

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Table 4. Chojnice district harvest in year 2003

SPECIFIED	HARVEST TON/HA	SPECIFIED	HARVEST TON/HA
Rye	2.28	Lupine	1.03
Winter wheat	3.88	Pease	2.69
Spring wheat	3.03	Mixed legumes	2.21
Winter barley	3.50	Papilionaceous small seed	33.28
Spring barley	3.06	Legumes green fodder	36.38
Oat	2.45	Corn	45.42
Winter wheat-rye	3.28	Rape	2.50
Spring wheat-rye	3.00	Strawberries	8.45
Mixed grain	2.54	Field grasses	17.40
Buckwheat	0.91	Seed grasses	0.69
Grain in total	2.77	Ground vegetables	12.44
Potatoes	16.86	Meadows	30.67
Fodder beets	41.04	Pastures	27.58
Rutabaga	36.82	Orchards	2.02
Pease	2.17		

Source: ODR Chojnice

Table 5. Chojnice district's livestock inventory

SPECIFIED	LARGE CALCULATION UNIT FACTOR	PHYSICAL NUMBER OF ANIMALS	LARGE CALCULATION UNIT NUMBER	NUMBER OF ANIMALS PER 100 HA OF FARMED LAND
Milk cows	1.200	8,294	9,952.80	16.8
Big heifers	0.900	1,605	1,444.50	3.2
Heifers (0.5-1.5 year old)	0.800	5,496	4,396.80	11.2
Calfs (up to 0.5 year old)	0.200	3,480	696.00	7.1
Cattle in total		18,875	16,490.10	38.3
Boars	0.400	259	103.60	0.5
Sow	0.350	6,552	2,293.20	13.3
Piglets	0.070	40,080	2,805.60	81.3
Porkers up to 120 kg	0.140	25,170	3,523.80	51.1
Pigs in total		72,061	8,726.20	146.3
Rams	0.200	9	1.80	
Ewes	0.120	226	27.12	0.5
Goats	0.120	67	8.04	0.1
Chickens	0.004	60,554	242.22	123
Horses	1.200	294	352.80	0.6
Remaining animals in total		61,150	631.98	124
In total		152,086	25,848.28	308.8

Source: author's elaboration on the base of ODR Chojnice data



Chojnice district characterises with considerably quantities of produced cattle (38.3 animal per 100 ha UR) in comparison to voivodeship average (which was 23.1 animal per 100 ha UR in the year 2002). Similar difference can be also found in number of pigs, in Pomorskie Voivodeship there were 119.9 animals per 100 ha UR in the year 2002. Cattle and swine breeding is very popular in the district and it is a result of a long tradition.

### ARABLE LAND DIRECT REIMBURSEMENT IN CHOJNICE DISTRICT

Petitions concerning land reimbursement were accepted in the District Department of Farming Restructurization and Modernization Agency, between 15th of April and 15th of June 2004. But on the 14th of June 2004 the Minister of Agriculture has extended this period to the 30th of June and to the 26th of July 2004 with sanctions. The sanctions would cause the reimbursement to decrease 1% per each workday (of delay) between 1st and 26th of July 2004.

In order to submit a petition concerning land reimbursement or any other kind of help proposed by the EU, each farmer had to register in the record of agricultural producers and to acquire attestation of obtaining producer's number.

Table 6. Petitions for the registry to the record of agricultural producers, state on the 30th of July 2004

SPECIFIED	NUMBER OF ACCEPTED PETITIONS	NUMBER OF APPROVED ATTESTATIONS	% APPROVED AGAINST ACCEPTED	NUMBER OF EXPECTED PETITIONS	% OF ACCEPTED AGAINST EXPECTED
Chojnice district	3,234	3,232	99.94	3,283	98.51
Pomorskie Voivodeship	45,376	44,854	98.85	48,513	93.53

Source: Farming Restructurization and Modernization Agency Pomorski Regional Department

Table 7. Accepted petitions state on the 30th of July 2004

SPECIFIED	NUMBER OF ACCEPTED PETITIONS	% ACCEPTED PETITIONS AGAINST APPROVED FARMSTEADS	NUMBER OF CONTROLLED PETITIONS
Pomorskie Voivodeship	39,288	87.59	39,119
Chojnice district	2,859*	89.42	2,890

Source: Farming Restructurization and Modernization Agency Pomorski Regional Department

\*Amount does not include changes, corrections and withdrawals

## FARMING OF CHOJNICE DISTRICT AFTER POLAND'S INTEGRATION WITH EU

There are 4,605 farmsteads in Chojnice district, 3,232 of them were registered before the 30th July 2004, this amounts to 70.18%.

It is estimated that in fact over 90% of agricultural producers farmsteads were registered. There is a group of farmers who didn't register in the record of agricultural producers, because they don't cultivate their arable land. They only use it for the purpose of gaining agricultural insurance.

Also it has to be remembered that the process of registration is still in progress, new farming businesses arise constantly and are required to register in the record of agricultural producers.

Table 8. Chojnice districts size of areas included in the direct land reimbursement program

NUMBER OF PETITIONS		DECLARED AREA IN HA	IN THAT		IN THAT ARE LFA IN HA
LAND REIMBURSEMENT	IN THAT LFA		UNITARY REIMBURSEMENTS + SUBSIDIARY OTHER PLANTS (NO HOP) IN HA	ONLY UNITARY REIMBURSEMENTS IN HA	
2,855	2,419	39,224.76	35,551.19	3,673.57	35,540.52

*Source:* Farming Restructurization and Modernization Agency

Decisive majority of arable land is located in areas of disadvantageous farming conditions (LFA).

A possibility of LFA support in Poland is a chance for the areas with bad farming conditions to develop. Reimbursement policy favours balanced development of agricultural areas by the way of preserving country society's vitality as well as landscape protection with consideration of environmental aspects (Klepacka, 2004: 72-73).

Of the 3,232 producers registered in the evidence 2,855 applied for the direct reimbursements to their arable land (this amounts to 88.3%). Such situation is caused by the fact that not all of the registered producers are entitled to land reimbursements.

As it appears from the ODR Chojnice information, there is a small group of farmers who are entitled to direct land reimbursements, who did not apply for it.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Great tourist attractiveness of the region, unpolluted natural environment and rich culture of the region give good potential for development of tourism and agro-tourism. EU supports this direction of country areas' development in a special way, through Structural Funds. This kind of develop-

ment can be supported from the funds of Agricultural Orientation and Guarantee Fund, Regional Development Fund as well as Social Fund. Individual beneficiaries, local authority institutions and societies can all gain access to the financial aid. This source of income has to be commonly accessible.

2. Poor soil quality causes low rate of plant production and a necessity to increase costs. Therefore the weakest soils should be forested. The existing EU programs which support such activities are not fully satisfactory for farmers. Such perennial and long-wave programs are not very interesting for farmers in present economical situation of their farmsteads. Because of this the programs are not attended by to many producers.
3. Farming in the district is very much spread between farmers; this can be partially overcome with the help of structural reimbursements offered by EU. But in the early period they will be mainly used to supplement low income of farmer families.
4. Chojnice district farming requires extensive investments; state of inventory buildings is bad, while the farmsteads equipment and mechanization is inadequately. There is a slight chance that the situation will improve after the first direct land reimbursements are paid out. But what percentage (if any) of this income will be invested in farmsteads depends from the farmers. It is certain that those first funds will not solve the problem.
5. Around 90% of entitled farmers applied for the land reimbursements. It can be assumed, that other farming and rural area help programs have met with similar interest. It is very important that the reimbursements should be paid out on time, as it can have an enormous influence on the number of petitions which will be applied the following year.

Summing-up, it has to be said that the development of Chojnice region farming depends of many agents of macro-economy (as it is in all other regions of Poland): economical development, reduction of unemployment, multi-functional development of rural areas and creation of new workplaces outside of agricultural economy in rural regions. The strength to develop rural areas can be given by non agricultural businesses combined with agricultural economy; this would enforce multifunctional development of the given region (Adamowicz, 2004: 24).

In Chojnice district, all this will give a base for the development of tourism and agro-tourism, encourage taking part in forestation program and to open non-food production in farming. A farmer with access to decent work will not continue to run a non profit farmstead on a low class soil. The farmers who have conditions to maintain strong competitive agro-businesses should be supported and directed by means of education in the ways of possibilities to access and utilise EU funds. This could greatly accelerate the slow development of Polish rural areas and concrete effects would be visible.

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CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Bogumiła Ropińska  
Technical University of Koszalin  
Department of Economics and Management Division of Social  
and Economic Politics and Regional Economics  
E. Kwiatkowskiego, 75-343 Koszalin, Poland  
[e-mail: ropinska@op.pl]