

Maciej W. Wierzchowski

Land management in Poland

Problemy Rozwoju Miast 5/1, 23-35

2008

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Maciej W. Wierzchowski

LAND MANAGEMENT IN POLAND

Abstract. Land management constitutes an integral component of planned spatial management that binds it with the entity, which is responsible for land management, charging it with particular obligations, including those specified in the Surveying and Mapping Law of 17 May 1989. The Law entails such issues as the national land information system, land and building registry (property cadastre), state survey and mapping resources and the infrastructure inventory. According to the Law, data included in the land and building registry constitute a basis for business planning and spatial planning, as well as of public statistics, taxation and benefits, with proper marking of properties in the Land Registers. Data included in the Land and Building Registers and Infrastructure Registers, together with other data collected in the state survey and mapping resources, constitute a basis for the national land information system.

The requirements of a good subjective and objective land division are met by the classification implemented by the Regulation of the Minister of Regional Development and Building of 29 March 2001 Concerning Land and Building Registry.

The capability to use resources allocated by the European Union will be of fundamental importance for the development of Poland in 2007-2013. That capability will depend on the practical application of institutional instruments and solutions. Therefore, it is necessary to recommend to the Polish communes the databases, as well as land and property information, which are essential for land management, including the metadata databases on the existing and projected **Spatial Databases** and **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)** maintained by the initiative of the Chief National Surveyor.

Key words: land management, land classification, land use, land and building registry, state survey resources, national land information system

Land management constitutes an integral component of planned spatial management, considered "in the scale of a single household or region, by one and many entities that are mutually independent from each other, ...in the scale of a single country and many countries"⁴. Such delimitation of space unambiguously relates its specific part with the entity, which is responsible for land management (this being a commune in the local scale). It also charges the said entity with specific obligations, including those resulting from land survey regulations. Land survey issues in Poland are regulated by the Surveying and Mapping Law of 17 May 1989⁵. The scope of the Law covers the following matters:

- national system of land information, i.e. spatial databases, concerning specific areas, as well as procedures and techniques used for the systematic data collecting, updating and providing;

⁴ W. Pietraszewski: *Podstawy informacyjne planowania przestrzennego*. PWN, Warszawa 1983, p. 15. As early as in 1983 the author noted "problems ... occurring in border zones."

⁵ Announcement by the Minister of Regional Development and Construction of 24 October 2000 on the Consolidated Text of the Land Surveying and Mapping Law (published in *Dziennik Ustaw*, No. 100, Item 1086).

- registry of land and buildings (real estate cadastral survey), i.e. a uniform, systematically updated set of data on land, buildings and flats, their owners, as well as other natural or legal persons who manage those properties;
- state surveying and mapping stock, i.e. collections of maps and photogrammetric materials, remote sensing materials, registers, lists, databases, survey data directories and other documents prepared as a result of completed land surveying and mapping operations;
- inventories and lists of utilities, i.e. all types of overground, ground-based and underground ducts and water pipelines, sewers, gas pipeworks, district heat networks, telecommunications, power engineering and other cabling (with the exclusion of detailed land melioration equipment), as well as registry of underground structures, such as tunnels, underground passes, parking yards, tanks, etc.

Data included in the registry of land and buildings, as well as in the registry of utilities, along with other data contained in the state land surveying and mapping stock are bases for the establishing of the national land information system. Costs related to the development of that system, as well as those related to the setting up of geodetic control networks, preparation of base maps and topographic maps are covered by the state budget, and from resources of the Fund for Management of Surveying and Mapping Stock. Also local governments or individual investors may participate in those costs in order to develop their own investment projects. According to the Law, data included in land and building registers constitute bases for:

- economic planning, spatial planning and public statistics,
- calculation of taxes and benefits,
- classification of real estates in Land and Mortgage Registers.

The Chief National Surveyor, operating under the supervision of the minister responsible for architecture and construction, is the central body of the state administration, which is competent in the matters of geodesy and cartography. The Chief National Surveyor performs its tasks with the assistance of the Main Geodesy and Cartography Office. As regards the scope of works under discussion, the Chief National Surveyor:

- maintains central land surveying and mapping stock,
- drafts rules of technical and organisational preparation of the cadastral survey, participates in the preparation thereof, as well as drafts guidelines related to general taxation of real estates, and supervises it,
- keeps state registers of borders and the surface area of the Republic of Poland, and its particular administrative units (the Regions),
- registers land information systems of nationwide significance, and cooperates with other government departments in establishing and maintaining geographical information systems,
- initiates scientific and research and development works, concerning organisational and technical standards, and the use of IT, photogrammetric and satellite-based methods in the fields of geodesy and cartography, as well as in the national land information system,

- works out rules concerning the approval and coordination as regards the location of designed utility networks.

Regional land surveying and mapping supervision authority is the Regional Inspector of Land Surveying and Mapping Supervision, who acts on behalf of the Region's Governor, and who:

- registers local land information systems and keeps copies of data to secure databases, including in particular databases of land and building registry,
- keeps the register of borders and surface areas of basic territorial division units.

Regional land surveying and mapping administration bodies include Chairmen of Regional Assemblies and Chief County Executives. The responsibilities of the Chairman of Regional Assembly include, in particular, the following:

- to maintain the land surveying and mapping stock in the Region, and to manage the resources of the regional Fund for Management of Surveying and Mapping Stock,
- to order the preparation of topographic and subject maps for the Region, and to make them available,
- to keep Regional databases that form part of the national land information system,
- to analyse changes in the agricultural structure, to programme and to coordinate development and agricultural works, as well as to monitor changes in the land use and soil valuation.

The responsibilities of the Chief County Executive in the scope under discussion include, in particular, the following:

- to maintain county land surveying and mapping stock, including the land and building register, soil quality classification and surveying register of utilities,
- to coordinate the location of designed utility networks,
- to establish and update base maps,
- to perform general valuation of properties, to prepare and keep property valuation maps and charts,
- to keep county databases that form part of the national land information system.

As far as land is concerned, Land and Building Registers include information on location, boundaries, surface areas, types of arable land as well as their valuation classes, while as regards those land properties that are made of land plots, for which properties Land and Mortgage Registers are kept, also information on those Registers or sets of relevant documents. The Land and Building Register should also identify:

- the land owner and, in the case land owned by the State Treasury or local governments, also other natural or legal persons that manage the land, buildings, or parts thereof,
- place of residence or legal address of the land owner or manager,
- information on entry in the register of historical monuments, if any,
- the property value.

Arable and forest land is covered by the class valuation scheme, performed nationwide in a uniform way, on the basis of an official table of soil classes. The land and building registry, in its part concerning forests, is maintained in consideration of regulations concerning forests.

According to the Surveying and Mapping Law, data included in the Land and Building Register provide a basis for:

- business planning and spatial planning, as well as public statistics,
- taxation and benefits,
- marking of properties in Land Registers.

Land and Building Registers are kept by Chief County Executives, who are also responsible for land capability taxation. Land owners and managers are obligated to notify the respective Chief County Executives, within 30 days from the date of occurrence, of any changes in data covered by the Land and Building Register. That obligation does not concern changes in data, resulting from decisions of the relevant authorities. Upon request, persons who report changes are obligated to provide land surveying documents, maps, as well as any other documents, necessary for the introduction of changes in the Land and Building Register. The relevant authorities, courts and notarial offices submit copies of valid decisions and rulings or Notarial Deeds, from which changes in data covered by the Land and Building Register result, within 30 days from the date on which a decision or ruling has finally become valid or a Notarial Deed has been concluded.

Information on land, buildings and flats is included in the land and building survey, composed of maps, registers and documents that justify entries in them. Information on land, buildings and flats included in the land and building survey is open and can be made available against payment. Extracts from the land and building survey are issued by the office of the Chief County Executive against payment, upon the request of owners or other natural and legal persons that manage the land, building or flat under consideration, natural and legal persons and other organisational units without a legal personality, who have legal interests in this regard, as well as upon the request of the involved bodies of state administration and local governments. Direct access to Land and Building Register databases, free of charge, is made available to communes; however, without a right to make those data further available to any other third persons.

Based on the Land and Building Register data, overall lists of data included in those Registers are prepared on local and national levels. Chief County Executives prepare such lists on the level of counties and communes, while Chairmen of Regional Assemblies prepare lists of such data on the level of the Regions. Based on regional lists, the Chief National Surveyor prepares overall, national lists of data covered by Land and Building Registers.

According to the provisions of the Law, the state land surveying and mapping stock serves the national economy, the country's defence, science, culture and citizens' needs. The stock is the property of the State Treasury and is collected in land surveying and mapping documentation centres. It comprises the central stock, as well as regional and county ones.

The Chief National Surveyor, Chairmen of Regional Assemblies and Chief County Executives are responsible for maintaining the state land surveying and mapping stock, checking documents submitted to be included in it, and making it available to all interested institutions, legal and natural persons, as regards the central, regional and county level

stocks, respectively.

Valuation information collected by Chief County Executives is subjected to systematisation by means of valuation maps and charts. They are prepared separately for each commune, within its particular section boundaries. On a valuation map, which is made on the cadastre map, valuation zones are determined, including the information on zone limits, zone identification, value of 1 m² of land plot in relation to representative properties, as well as features of those properties. This means that the value of land is determined taking into account those characteristic features of the property, which influence its cadastral value.

The requirements of a good – both subjective and objective – division of land are met by the classification introduced by the Regulation of the Minister of Regional Development of 29 March 2001 Concerning the Land and Building Registers (published in *Dziennik Ustaw*, No. 38, Item 454; Attachment No. 2. Classification of land, buildings and flats into register groups and subgroups; Attachment No. 6. Classification of land into particular cropland groups)⁶. That classification, *in the subjective arrangement*, covers the following land types.

1. Land owned by the State Treasury (ST), with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed on the basis of autonomous possession by state organisational units that do not have a legal personality.
2. Land owned by the State Treasury (ST), which was let on perpetual usufruct.
3. Land owned by one-man State Treasury partnerships, state enterprises, as well as other state legal persons (with the exclusion of Agricultural Property Agency, Military Property Agency and Military Housing Agency).
4. Land owned by communes and their associations, with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed on the basis of autonomous possession by village organisational units that do not have a legal personality, including:
 - 4.1. Land forming part of the commune property stock.
 - 4.2. Land owned by communes and their associations, transferred to municipal organisational units for a long-term management, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed on the basis of autonomous possession by commune organisational units that do not have a legal personality.
 - 4.3. Other land from among that classified under 4th register group.
5. Land owned by communes and their associations, let on perpetual usufruct.
6. Land owned by local-government legal persons, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed by those persons on the basis of autonomous possession.
7. Land owned by natural persons, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed one the basis of autonomous possession by those persons, including:
 - 7.1. Land, which in the understanding of tax regulations, forms part of farms.
 - 7.2. Land, which in the understanding of tax regulations does not form part of farms.

⁶ Cf.: M. Wierzchowski: *Gospodarka gruntami dla budownictwa mieszkaniowego. Ocena stanu istniejącego, wnioski i rekomendacje*, (typescript) Institute of Urban Development, December 2005.

8. Land owned by cooperatives and their associations, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed by those legal persons on the basis of autonomous possession, including:
 - 8.1. Land owned by housing cooperatives and their associations, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed by those legal persons on the basis of autonomous possession.
9. Land owned by churches and religious congregations, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed by those churches and religious congregations on the basis of autonomous possession.
10. Land recognized under the Law of 29 June 1963 Concerning the Development of Land Communities (published in *Dziennik Ustaw* 1963, No. 28, Item 169; 1982, No. 11, Item 80; 1990, No. 34, Item 198; 1998, No. 106, Item 668, and 2000, No. 120, Item 1268) to be land communities, as well as cropland and forest land whose owners are not known, managed jointly by village residents on the basis of autonomous possession.
11. Land owned by the counties, with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed, on the basis of autonomous possession, by county organisational units that do not have a legal personality.
12. Land owned by the counties, which was let on perpetual usufruct.
13. Land owned by the Regions, with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct, as well as land whose owners are not known, managed by Regional organisational units that do not have a legal personality, on the basis of autonomous possession.
14. Land owned by the Regions, let on perpetual usufruct.
15. Land owned and managed, on the basis of self-possession, by persons not listed above in Items 1-14. The group also includes land, whose owners and managers are not known.

As far as the objective arrangement is concerned, land classification in Poland comprises the following:

1. Total arable land, including arable land, orchards, meadows and pastures, developed arable land, as well as land occupied by ponds and trenches.
2. Total forest land, understood in accordance with the provision of the Law of 28 September 1991 Concerning Forests (published in *Dziennik Ustaw* 2000, No. 56, Item 679; No. 86, Item 958, and No. 120, Item 126), as well as forest and shrub land.
3. Total developed and urbanised land, including:
 - 3.1. Housing areas – land not used for agricultural and forest production, occupied by residential buildings, facilities functionally related to those buildings (courtyards, driveways, passages, home playgrounds, etc.), as well as home gardens.
 - 3.2. Industrial areas – land occupied by buildings and facilities used for industrial production, as well as water intakes, sewage treatment plants, transformer stations, burrows and waste dumps, storage and warehousing structures, transport depots, etc.
 - 3.3. Other developed areas – land occupied by buildings and facilities pertaining to administration, health service, trade, worship, handicraft, education, culture, art, leisure, communications, etc., operating cemeteries, animal burial places, and other

developed land.

4. Urbanised non-developed areas – non-developed land, designated in spatial development plans to be developed, excluded from the agricultural and forest production.
5. Leisure and recreation areas – land not occupied by buildings, such as holiday centres, playgrounds, beaches, parks, squares and greens (beyond roadways), areas of historical value: ruins of castles, mounds, nature monuments, etc., sports areas: stadiums, sports fields, ski jumps, sledge runs, shooting ranges, bathing beaches, etc., entertainment areas: funfairs, zoological and botanical gardens, non-developed greenery areas, not classified under forests, forest land, or shrub land.
6. Total roads – land within the limits of roadways of public and inner roads in the understanding of the provisions of the Public Road Law of 21 March 1985 (published in *Dziennik Ustaw* 2000, No. 71, Item 838 and No. 86, Item 958), occupied by national, regional, county, and municipal roads, inner roads within housing estates, access roads to arable and forest land and to public use facilities, parking and turning yards at railway stations, bus terminals, airports, harbours, river ports, as well as generally accessible driveways to loading ramps and storage yards.
7. Other areas – land occupied by operating mining pits, railway areas, and other transport areas.
8. Total land beneath waters, including land beneath interior sea waters, under surface flowing waters and after surface stagnant waters.

When managing space in cities and towns, it is necessary to additionally take into account *other types of land*, included in the Register and comprising:

- *ecological land*, constituting legally protected remnants of ecosystems, such as natural water reservoirs, small field and forest ponds, tree and bush clumps, marshes, peat bogs, dunes, grassland patches, old river beds, scarps, rocky outcrops, etc. (the ecological land is determined on the basis of regulation issued by the relevant Governor, or a resolution adopted by the relevant municipal council, based on nature protection regulations);
- *wasteland*, which includes those elements that cannot be classified as ecological land: marshes (swamps, muds, bogs), sands (quicksands, wild beaches, dunes, coast sands), natural physiographic elements, such as cliffs, slopes, outcrops, rocks, screes, mining pits not to be reclaimed, as well as
- *various areas*, which include land to be reclaimed (degraded post-industrial areas, dumping yards, former military firing grounds, etc. for which the relevant authorities have approved land reclamation designs; previously non-developed reclaimed land, as well as dykes that cannot be used for vehicular traffic.

The article presents the condition of land management in Poland in 2004, as per the above-referenced subjective and objective arrangement, split into urban and rural areas. The indispensable information was obtained from the Chief Centre of Land Surveying and Mapping of the Main Geodesy and Cartography Office⁷. Information on that type of data and on the possibilities of obtaining them can be found in the *Metadata Database on the*

⁷ This is the *Overall Specification of Data Concerning Land Covered by Land and Building Register*, by GUS, ul. Żurawia 3/5, 00-926 Warszawa, www.codgik.waw.pl

Existing and Projected Spatial Databases and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) maintained by the initiative of the Chief National Surveyor. The database contains information on spatial management databases and systems established by various institutions all over Poland. It includes information collected as a result of questionnaire surveys, conducted by UNEP/GRID Centre in Warsaw⁸ in 2002-2003. The scope of information collected was based on the *Dublin Core Metadata Initiative* standard. The Internet version of that database refers to ISO 19115 Standard (*Geographic Information – Metadata*). The user of that database may browse its contents, using a set of search criteria, or may also upload own material, upon a permit from the system administrator to upload the description of own spatial database or own spatial information system.

Following the historical social and economic processes, the whole area of Poland has become appropriated long ago, and is now managed and used in different ways. Table 1 below shows the land ownership structure in Poland as at 2004. Table 2 shows the land structure as per use forms, while Table 3 shows land management in Poland in a subjective approach (in hectares).

Table 1

Total land in Poland as per ownership forms as at 1 January 2004

Land owned by	Surface area		Per capita in m ²
	in ha thousands	%	
State Treasury	12 134.5	38.8	3 145
Communes	1 037.3	3.3	270
Natural persons and cooperatives	17 258.4	55.3	4 475
Other entities	812.5	2.6	210
Total	31 242.7	100.0	8 100

Source: Overall account of data on land covered by the land and building registers, GUS 2005.

Table 2

Total land in Poland as per forms of use, shown as at 1 January 2004

Forms of use	Surface area		Per capita in m ²
	in ha thousands	%	
Arable land	19 189.9	61.4	4 970
Forest land	9 261.0	29.6	2 400
Developed and urbanised land	1 452.8	4.7	380
Land under water	646.5	2.1	170
Other forms of use ^{a)}	692.5	2.2	180
Total	31 242.7	100.0	8 100

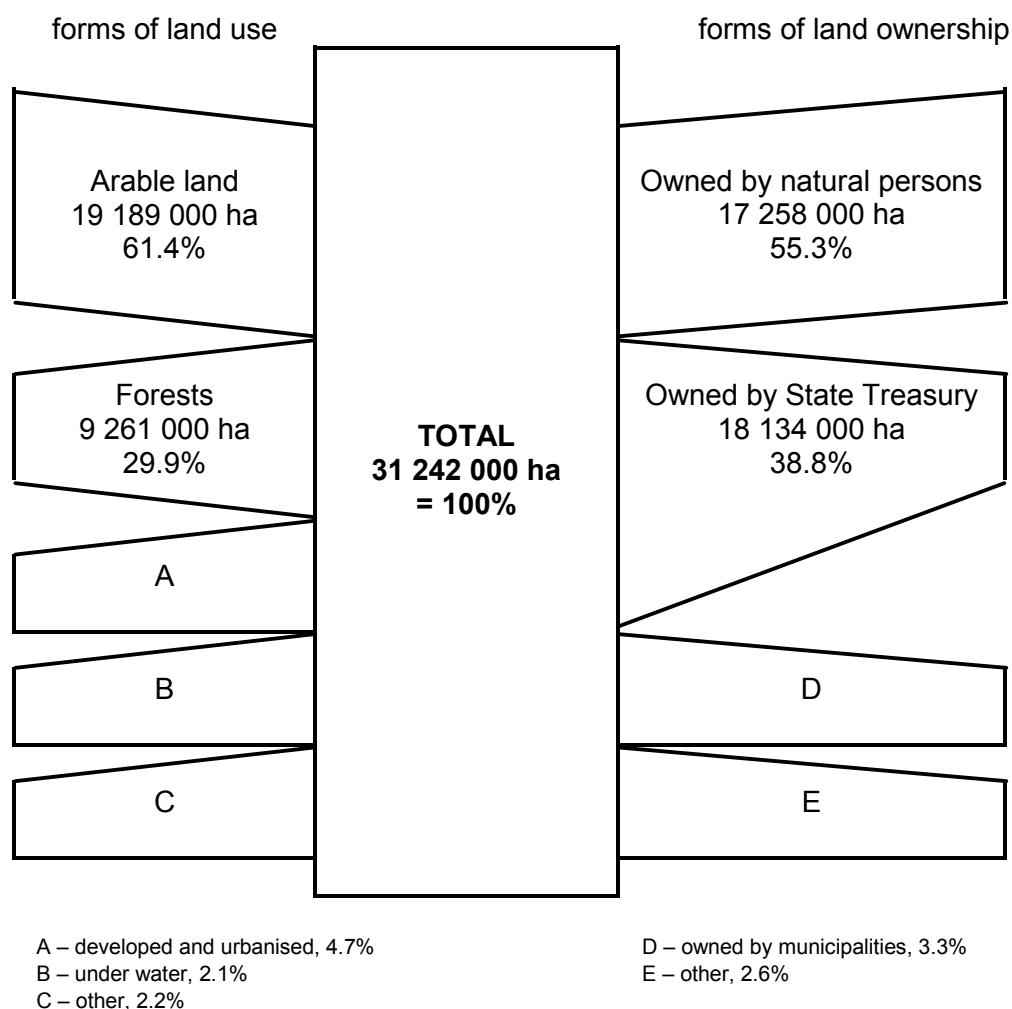
Source: see Table 1.

Notes: ^{a)} Ecological land, other land and wasteland.

Figures 1 and 2 show the state of land ownership and management in Poland. In 2004, private owners owned more than half (55.3%) of the area of the country. The State

⁸ UNEP/GRID Warszawa is one of the 14 main offices of GRIDS (*Global Resource Information Databases*), established by UNEP (*United Nations Environment Programme*). It is the centre of geographical information system application in environment protection and development. Its tasks include supporting the state environment monitoring system as regards creating, processing and providing spatial data on the environment. The centre's address: ULEP/GRID, Warszawa, ul. Sobieszyńska 8, 00-764 Warszawa, www.gridw.pl

Treasury continues to be a large owner of land (38.8%). When viewed against that background, the level of ownership of local governments is extremely modest. The whole acreage of land owned by local governments amounts to slightly more than 1 million hectares, or 3.3% of the surface area of the country. Poland is clearly an agricultural country, as arable land (mainly ploughland) constitutes 61% of its surface area. Private owners own the definite majority of arable land, while forests in the amount of more than 9 million



**Fig. 1. Structure of land in Poland as per land use and ownership forms
Stan na 01.01.2004**

Źródło: L. Kałkowski, *Narodowy zasób nieruchomości gruntów [w:] Rola gospodarki gruntami w strategiach mieszkaniowych gmin miejskich*. IRM, Kraków 2005.

hectares (the stock comparable to those in the European Union countries) are in their major part owned by the State Treasury institutions. The investment-active areas, which include developed and urbanised land, cover as little as 5% of the surface area of Poland. It should be mentioned that the developed and urbanised land includes housing, industrial, leisure and economic areas, and also roads and railways.

Poland has a clear ownership structure, in which private land ownership (natural and legal persons) has come to the fore during the transformation period. The second, major land owner in Poland, especially as regards forests, is the State Treasury.

Local governments have only small land assets. More than 2.5 thousand communes own a little more than 1 million hectares of land, that is only 3.3% of the overall territory of Poland. Because of their modest land assets, many of those communes approach the critical limits of rational land management, which is an important production agent.

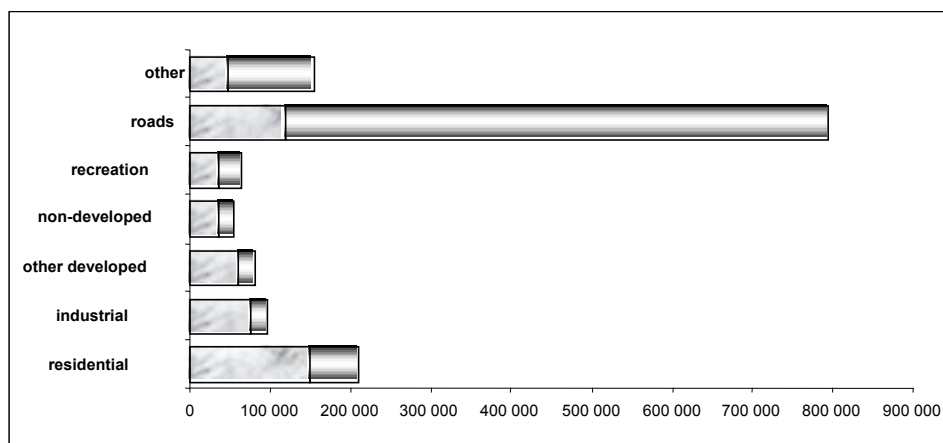


Fig. 2. Structure of developed and urbanised land in Poland as per management forms split into urban and rural areas as at 1 January 2004
 Source: Own data, based on *Overall Specification of Data Concerning Land Covered by Land and Building Register, GUS 2005*

Table 3

Land management in Poland as at 1 January 2004

No.	Specification	Total land surface area [ha]	including:					
			arable land [ha]	forest land [ha]	developed and urbanized land [ha]	land under waters [ha]	total other land [ha]	
1.	Land owned by the State Treasury (ST), with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	671 428	112 707	343 995	94 657	79 581	40 489
		Rural	11 100 583	2 764 587	7 121 852	362 517	510 068	341 559
		Total	11 772 011	2 877 293	7 465 847	457 173	589 649	382 048
2.	Land owned by the State Treasury (ST), let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	131 882	17 539	8 754	96 425	2 226	6 938
		Rural	185 242	79 935	25 877	62 889	7 904	8 637
		Total	317 124	97 474	34 631	159 314	10 130	15 576
3.	Land owned by the State Treasury partnerships, state enterprises and other state legal persons	Urban	5 373	1 649	275	2 876	288	285
		Rural	40 056	19 228	2 472	8 288	3 821	6 248
		Total	45 429	20 876	2 747	11 164	4 109	6 533
4.1	Land making part of the commune property stock	Urban	222 096	91 330	22 834	93 064	2 162	12 706
		Rural	497 856	181 607	46 513	247 157	4 752	17 827
		Total	719 952	272 937	69 347	340 221	6 914	30 533
4.2	Land owned by communes and their associations, transferred to commune organisational units for permanent management	Urban	23 829	3 442	2 155	17 264	376	592
		Rural	46 783	13 300	6 983	25 650	201	649
		Total	70 612	16 741	9 138	42 914	577	1 241
4.3	Other land from among land classified under Group 4	Urban	51 504	15 866	9 878	22 764	1 304	1 693
		Rural	95 649	25 527	8 090	57 189	2 085	2 758
		Total	147 153	41 393	17 967	79 953	3 389	4 451
4.	Land owned by communes and their associations, with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	297 430	110 638	34 866	133 092	3 842	14 991
		Rural	640 287	220 433	61 586	329 996	7 038	21 234
		Total	937 717	331 071	96 453	463 088	10 880	36 225

No.	Specification		Total land surface area [ha]	including:				
				arable land [ha]	forest land [ha]	developed and urbanized land [ha]	land under waters [ha]	total other land [ha]
5.	Land owned by communes and their associations, let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	78 946	23 298	525	53 378	107	1 638
		Rural	16 236	10 144	879	3 857	49	1 307
		Total	95 182	33 443	1 404	57 234	156	2 945
6.	Land owned by local-government legal persons, as well as land whose owners are not known	Urban	2 024	418	125	1 278	125	78
		Rural	2 380	499	273	1 008	419	181
		Total	4 404	917	398	2 286	544	259
7.1	Land owned by natural persons and included in farms	Urban	508 266	447 059	46 300	7 920	987	5 999
		Rural	14 864 161	13 307 769	1 322 137	25 405	17 587	191 263
		Total	15 372 427	13 754 828	1 368 437	33 325	18 574	197 262
7.2	Land owned by natural persons and not included in farms	Urban	337 299	216 698	20 800	96 237	347	3 217
		Rural	1 305 754	1 081 312	152 009	55 340	2 007	15 087
		Total	1 643 053	1 298 010	172 809	151 577	2 354	18 303
7.	Land owned by natural persons	Urban	845 564	663 757	67 100	104 157	1 334	9 216
		Rural	16 169 916	14 389 081	1 474 146	80 744	19 594	206 350
		Total	17 015 480	15 052 838	1 541 246	184 902	20 929	215 566
8.2	Land owned by housing co-operatives and their associations, as well as land whose owners are not known	Urban	1 688	400	50	1 223	0	15
		Rural	1 113	732	12	345	0	25
		Total	2 802	1 132	62	1 568	0	40
8.	Land owned by co-operatives	Urban	11 942	8 438	439	2 826	106	132
		Rural	230 912	214 750	8 637	2 382	1 709	3 434
		Total	242 854	223 189	9 076	5 209	1 815	3 566
9.	Land owned by churches and religious congregations	Urban	16 826	8 940	1 359	6 014	41	470
		Rural	113 424	92 589	10 896	6 720	212	3 006
		Total	130 249	101 530	12 256	12 734	253	3 476
10.	Land Wspólnoty	Urban	13 739	5 670	7 435	146	36	452
		Rural	111 652	45 956	57 575	467	725	6 929
		Total	125 391	51 626	65 010	613	761	7 381
11.	Land owned by the counties, with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	13 342	4 190	359	8 644	18	130
		Rural	71 451	18 098	1 942	49 982	779	650
		Total	84 792	22 288	2 301	58 626	797	780
12.	Land owned by the counties, let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	159	5	0	154	0	0
		Rural	175	57	47	69	1	1
		Total	334	62	47	223	1	1
13.	Land owned by the Regions, with the exclusion of land let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	4 430	543	229	3 264	133	262
		Rural	19 324	3 266	787	11 972	1 863	1 436
		Total	23 754	3 809	1 016	15 236	1 996	1 698
14.	Land owned by the Regions, let on perpetual usufruct	Urban	394	101	44	232	0	17
		Rural	350	83	85	139	4	39
		Total	744	184	129	371	4	56
15.	Land owned and managed by persons not listed in items 1-14 above	Urban	35 087	14 837	2 604	13 974	318	3 352
		Rural	412 138	358 518	26 310	10 615	4 189	12 505
		Total	447 225	373 355	28 914	24 590	4 507	15 858
16.	Total land surface area as per registers	Urban	2 128 566	972 731	468 111	521 117	88 156	78 451
		Rural	29 114 125	18 217 224	8 793 363	931 646	558 376	613 517
		Total	31 242 691	19 189 955	9 261 474	1 452 762	646 532	691 968

Source: Overall Specification of Data Concerning Land Covered by Land and Building Register, GUS. 2005.

The level of urbanisation of Poland, measured with urban land acreage, is not high, since 883 settlement units, considered to be cities and towns, manage as little as 6.8% of the whole country's surface area. In 2004, arable land constituted 45% of the surface area of our

cities and towns, which was the result of incorporating neighbouring rural areas into city and town limits. Those areas will gradually be used for investment purposes.

When implementing the EU's programme of the polycentric spatial development, which determines new, partnership relations between towns and villages (including those concerning urban and rural areas), one should remember that agriculture is the main form of land use in Poland. There are 14.6 million people (37.8%) in the country, who live on 61.4% of cultivation acreage (mainly ploughland).

Forests are an important part of land in Poland. They constitute ca. 29% of the total surface area and are in their major part owned by the State Treasury. They are covered by specific preservation schemes, and also rules of managing that stock are separate.

Instruments of strategic planning, considered on a national scale, will continue to be one of the basic elements of the space management system in Poland in 2007-2013 (especially in the context of integration with the EU, economic effects of that step and its influence on regional development). Those instruments take the forms of:

- National Development Plan,
- long-term Regional Development Strategy, and medium-term National Regional Development Strategy (directly referring to the issues of economic, social and spatial cohesion on national, regional and sub-regional levels),
- Concept of Spatial Development Policy of Poland,
- Plans of Spatial Development of the Regions, and
- Strategies of Development of the Regions.

Previous experience shows that our ability to use funds obtained from the European Union will have basic significance for the development of Poland in 2007-2013 (given the large scale of potential EU financial funds to be obtained). This will depend on the instruments, regulations and institutional solutions applied in practice and related to space management (including spatial planning). In that situation, one should recommend to local governments in Poland to use the available databases and information on *land and property management in Poland*, which are essential for land management, including the *metadata databases* on the existing and projected **Spatial** Databases and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maintained by the initiative of the Chief National Surveyor.

In 1989, there began changes in the economic order existing in Poland. Those changes have also covered the sphere of properties. Under new economic conditions, properties became goods constituting the subject of competitive struggles, where in addition to financial capacities, also political potentials became essential. The elected councillors from local government units, representatives of the local administration, as well as owners of building plots, investors and house builders are well aware of that. That is why, in the space management process, as well as in the course of works on the improvement of tools to be used in that process, two valuable statements need to be considered: "The struggle for the ownership of land, buildings or any other real estates is, at the same time, a struggle for a position in the new social structure, for entering the owners' class. (...) Since property owners' class constitutes the core of coalitions that govern the city, this is actually a struggle

for power over the city"⁹. "An excessive desire for planning everything leads directly to total ineffectiveness of the plan, not to speak of negative sociological outcomes, which are manifested by spoiling of the initiative and of the feeling of individuals' responsibility towards community for the effects of their planned actions"¹⁰.

Ph.D Maciej W. Wierzchowski
Institute of Urban Development
Kraków

⁹ I. Sagan: *Spoleczny i rynkowy wymiar miejsca w mieście socjalistycznym i postsocjalistycznym*. 13th urban knowledge conservatoire: Post-socialist City: Urban Space, its Arrangement and Transformations; Łódź, 13-15 April 2000.

¹⁰ W. Pietraszewski: *Podstawy informacyjne planowania przestrzennego*. PWN, Warszawa 1983, p. 18.