

URBAN SPACE AS A HUB OF ACTIVE LEARNING AND THE PROMOTING OF CRAFT

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Purpose: The article presents the currently used forms of promoting urban crafts, emphasizing their importance and role in shaping the character and cultural landscape of the cities in the Greater Poland region (Poland). Examples of innovative revitalization and promotion projects create new ways to attract attention and interest in crafts in the urban context and contribute to the development of crafts, and the region.

Design/methodology/approach: The article presents the context of the issues studied, explaining in detail the motives for undertaking the subject and the reasons for concentrating the analyses on one region of Poland. The structure of the study covers the following areas: the development of contemporary crafts, their functioning in the urban space, and the importance of Greater Poland as a key center of crafts in Poland. To analyze contemporary methods of craft promotion in the Greater Poland region, a bibliographic study was conducted using the Web of Science and Scopus databases. Then, all available materials related to the topic, identified using the Google search engine, were reviewed. As a result, 148 of the most relevant results were obtained. This article aims to show the role of crafts in the urban space of this region and to present contemporary strategies for its promotion, which include elements that increase the involvement and interaction of the craft community with the environment.

Findings: The study highlights that contemporary crafts in this region are promoted primarily through a combination of city events with elements of education and games, which allows for greater community involvement and the popularization of craft articles and services not only among its recipients - consumers, but also the young generation deciding to educate themselves in crafts.

Originality/value: The article discusses five competitions organized in Greater Poland, of which LET'S PLAY CRAFT stands out with the largest number of references in the online space. Additionally, events, such as fairs and festivals, where craft was a central theme, were presented. The visibility of Greater Poland craft is strengthened not only by its presence on the Internet but also by investments in the urban space, especially in the context of material and social revitalization. In addition, the growing interest in craft is supported by film productions showing craftsmen shaping the cultural landscape of the region and various informational and educational campaigns.

Keywords: craft promotion, active learning, city events, craft culture, cultural economy.

Category of the paper: Literature review.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, crafts are seen as a passionate business with historical significance, playing a significant role in the urban space, while confronting market challenges. Crafts are associated with regional heritage, artistic and industry-oriented activities, and sentimental tourism, as well as being a significant element contributing to regional development - producing economic benefits and supporting cultural heritage. Crafts, like other types of production activities that generate income, create jobs, influence local and regional markets and support their development – all of which require applied promotion. It contributes to its visibility and recognition, stimulates demand for craft products and services, encourages education in craft professions and the cultivation of values related to regional tradition. The influence of crafts on the perception of the attractiveness of the region, and thus its role in regional development, has been emphasized in the results of research conducted, among others, in various Polish regions - Highlands/Podhale (Pakuła, 1994), Subcarpathia/Podkarpacie (Kosmac, 2011) and Opole Silesia/Opolszczyzna (Mazur-Włodarczyk, 2024).

Research conducted by R. Lissowska and D. Postaremczak (2011) indicates that a little over a decade ago, the craft environment and vocational education in Greater Poland/ Wielkopolska region required urgent promotion. Crafts were not promoted sufficiently in the media, and there was little information about students of vocational schools compared to students of general secondary schools and graduates of universities. The promotion of vocational education and craftsmen's work escaped the attention of the media and was limited to internal activities in the craft environment. Festivals and fairs devoted to craft were organized, but information about them did not appear in the media. On the other hand, information about craft educational paths was associated with places of education for students with lower academic results. These researchers also indicated the following elements that had a positive impact on improving the image of students of vocational schools and the craft environment (Lissowska, Postaremczak, 2011):

- promoting craftsmen running production or service establishments who have achieved significant economic success,
- rewarding the most talented students of vocational schools,
- indicating high-quality establishments where internships are worth taking up,
- organizing competitions within various crafts.

Nowadays, headlines of articles such as “City game, workshops, tastings – this is what the promotion of crafts looks like today” (TVP3 Poznań, 2023), “A great event promoting crafts is behind us” (Wielkopolska Izba Rzemieślnicza w Poznaniu, 2024), or "The promotion of tradition and creativity, or the 1st Craft Festival" (Wirtualna, 2024) may indicate that there have been major changes in the methods of promoting crafts in the Greater Poland. The above

inspired a search for an answer to the question of how crafts in the province of Greater Poland are promoted today.

Contemporary research on the promotion of crafts primarily focuses on the following areas: strategies for differentiating niche craft products, which are related to the promotion of export competitiveness (Traiyarach, Banjongprasert, 2022a, 2022b); crafts as a factor influencing tourism promotion (Nzei, 2024); destination marketing through crafts (Srivastav, 2017); as well as the promotion of crafts through national education policy (Kumar, Rohit, 2023). The conducted research focuses on the analysis of the relevant literature, both those indexed in scientific text databases – Web of Science and Scopus – as well as in a more "grey" but also more accessible for potential craft audiences, including all available materials related to the subject, identified using the Google search engine. Two research hypotheses were defined:

H1: Integration of city events with educational and entertainment elements in Greater Poland contribute to the involvement of the local community and interest in crafts among consumers and young people choosing an educational path in this area.

H2: Innovative promotion projects, including city games, contribute to greater visibility and development of the craft sector in Greater Poland.

The article aims to demonstrate the presence of crafts in the urban space of this region and to present its contemporary promotion, including elements that engage and increase the interaction of the craft community with its surroundings. The above provides valuable insights and also presents an original approach to examining the promotion of crafts not through traditional marketing tools but through an element from the field of education, which can also contribute to increasing recognition, attracting customers (both those interested in craft products/services and craft professions), and building engagement.

The article first presents the background of the issues chosen for the study, explaining the aspects of interest in the chosen topic and the reasons for focusing on this region of Poland. It includes the following arrangement: the flourishing of contemporary crafts → crafts in the framework of urban life → Greater Poland as a key region for Polish crafts. After presenting the research methodology, examples of activities promoting crafts in the cities of this region were presented.

2. Pragmatic Background

2.1. The ubiquitous presence of the contemporary crafts

Craftsmanship is described as "omnipresent" and as acting as a link between various fields (Groth et al., 2022). It is also a tool used to shape the cultural image and create a national cultural symbol (Hu, Abindinhazir, 2024). Research on crafts is conducted by representatives

of various scientific disciplines. The issue of crafts is primarily in the area of interest of cultural anthropology, ethnology and ethnography, design, as well as the technical sciences. However, interest in issues related to the formation and perception of crafts is slowly growing among representatives of the economic sciences.

Craftsmanship is currently experiencing a renaissance - it is fashionable, and visible within:

- tradition and innovation - restoring historical production methods (Sheppy, 2023) and combining new solutions with the experience of past generations (Ladekarl et al., 2023),
- the world of science (craft science) - in various areas of craft activity and various academic contexts (Almevik et al., 2022; Kokko, 2021, 2022),
- new technology environments (Benford et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2021; Li, Liu, 2022),
- urban space, including through the opening and renovation of studios (abandoned or destroyed craft premises are no longer perceived as outdated and re-appear in the urban landscape), and the presence of craftsmen and their products at fairs and festivals.

As regards the last aspect, research attention in the literature on the subject is mainly focused on the topic of craft breweries and adaptations of buildings that previously performed other roles, thus contributing to the revitalization of urban districts. By transforming abandoned buildings and deteriorating environments (where social problems, including poor economic condition and crime, are visible) into destinations for residents and tourists. However, this affects rising rents and moving in search of cheaper accommodation (Reid, 2018). Revitalized buildings include warehouses and industrial buildings, including those of great historical value while maintaining individual, local features supporting sustainable development (Feeney, 2017). These breweries are mainly located in cities, and their activities also affect other aspects of the lives of city residents. For example, based on the results of research by V. Mathews (2023), breweries located in close proximity to residential areas, where the main goal is consumption, cause or extend the phenomenon of gentrification - through modernization and reinvestment, causing displacement/rotation of people from more affluent social groups (i.e. middle and upper class). Mathews & Picton (2014) note that craft beers can be treated as tools in creating new spaces of cultural consumption – by building interest, they aestheticize the industrial past, soften resistance to the gentrification of city centers, make the location more attractive and alleviate concerns about the affordability of housing. This topic is also addressed by the research of the Nilsson & Reid (2019), who indicated the impact of craft breweries on the revitalization of economically affected urban districts, and consequently on increasing the value of real estate in this area. Places closely associated with craft production can therefore have an impact on the broader processes of transformation of urban spaces also in rural areas, in towns and small cities (Mathews, Picton, 2023).

Crafts, as one of the elements of the cultural sector, can be treated as a growing pool of jobs and a stimulator of the development of human-, social- and cultural capital. In the literature on the subject, crafts in this approach are not currently given much attention, however it can play a key role in developing ties with the local community, strengthening the sense of belonging

and promoting social interactions. Activities related to crafts also support communities in discovering and appreciating their own cultural heritage. Joint participation in events or involvement in their organization contributes to deepening interpersonal relationships, which leads to an increase in social capital. In addition, crafts play an important role in promoting the idea of lifelong learning and acquiring knowledge through experience (Sanetra-Szeliga, 2018). Cultural events and the public space they are associated with facilitate meetings of local communities and the development of bridging social capital, providing an opportunity for interaction between the local community, which is diverse in terms of demographic, ethnic and religious characteristics (Murzyn-Kupisz, Działek, 2013).

As Łukaniszyn-Domaszewska et al. (2024) note, despite the recognition of heritage as important by experts, the younger generation does not show the same interest in it, which may lead to the loss of traditional values. Beneficial links have also been observed between the development of a heritage-based economy and the achievement of social effects in a given area, such as an increase in the quality of life, the development of residents' social competences and local identity, and an increase in cultural awareness in connection with the implementation of educational activities. Soft factors related to culture, increasing the attractiveness and climate of a given place, also have an impact on attracting investors and new residents (Murzyn-Kupisz et al., 2022). Cultural events also contribute to the regeneration of urban areas and the formation of urban belonging (De Jong, Steadman, 2021). By enabling the learning and experiencing of crafts and the city in which they occur, it can attract residents of the region and tourists, leading to the fulfillment of social functions similar to tourism. Biegańska et al. (2014) lists among these functions building awareness of local and regional communities, strengthening social capital, activating local communities, creating care for spatial order and building intergenerational bonds. Crafts, similarly to tourism, create opportunities for meetings, entering into relationships, making spending free time more attractive, connecting in the framework of finding common interests and passions, providing experiences and emotions (Bieganska et al., 2014).

It is also worth mentioning that craftsmanship, despite the currently growing interest in it, also encounters challenges shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
The selected challenges of contemporary craftsmanship

Type of challenge	Context
Mass production	Competition in the form of products that are made faster, more standardized and involve less human work
Consumerist lifestyle	Consumer interest is focused on buying newer and newer products, without taking into account the possibility of repairing old ones
Traditional limitation of the craft industry	Relatively closed and conservative inheritance system
Replacement of generations	Lack of practitioners and successors of the master craftsmen - staff shortages and problems with knowledge transfer
Fully based on unchanging tradition	Most traditional handicrafts are based on old themes, techniques and aesthetic customs

Cont. table 1.

Fast consumption	Scarcity of resources and degradation of the intrinsic values of crafts
Rare occurrence of crafts within academic fields	Crafts dominate education at secondary and/or vocational level
The lack of perception of the craftsman as an entrepreneur and not just a creator	Lack of marketing and e-commerce skills
Market challenges	High costs of doing business, difficulties in acquiring customers, meeting local, national and/or international competition

Source: own elaboration based on Mazur-Włodarczyk, Drosik (2022).

2.2. Crafts as an element of urban life

The craft discussed in the article is performed in the urban space, i.e. within a settlement unit characterized as, among others: a) isolated from the surroundings, b) with a predominance of compact development and a formed center, c) performing non-agricultural functions, d) having city rights or the status of a city, e) with defined administrative features, f) individualized, g) with a concentration of economic entities, h) in which the process of changes in land use is discontinuous in time and space, i) encompassing a population center with diversified characteristics, within which secondary groups predominate over primary ones, and material contacts over personal ones (Sanetra-Szeliga, 2013). The urban environment provides people residing in it with various layers of information influencing aesthetic and semantic values (Kulczyńska, Matykowski, 2011).

Culture plays a key role in shaping creative capital, i.e. a pool of qualified employees characterized by a high level of creativity. These people prefer to settle in places that are conducive to innovation, diversity and openness. Therefore, long-term development of cities requires creating conditions that are conducive to attracting and retaining the creative class (Florida, 2010). Cultural activity plays an important role in the development of the city, influencing social involvement, a sense of pride and identity of residents and their bond with the place of residence. It also contributes to shaping an attractive living environment, increases the potential of the city as a tourist destination and investment location, supports the implementation of cultural projects and strengthens its image and promotion. The above influences the observation that aspects of culture have a significant impact on the urban model of sustainable development (Sanetra-Szeliga, 2013). L. Gulli and M. Zazzi (2011) note that the craft districts of Italian cities have changed their role, they are no longer located far from the historic city centers, but are closely linked to contemporary urban development zones, constituting their strategic orientation point. This is related to the emergence of conflicts between the interests of landowners and the protection of low-value production activities. The results of research conducted by K. Meyer (2023) among German craftsmen of the Ruhr area indicate, among other things, that shop crafts are oriented towards location in inexpensive and well-connected locations on the ground floor. Construction crafts in particular require location in facilities that allow for the easy loading/unloading of trucks, which is different from other craft groups. Regardless of the type of craft, craft groups are open to locating their

businesses in mixed-use buildings, i.e. including both office and workshop spaces as well as common spaces (garages, canteens, showrooms) (Meyer, 2023).

M. Zabłocka (2019, p. 6) notes that the city is synonymous with people whose crafts were and are its "backbone", while reflection on the city takes place on the physical plane (urban and architectural space) and the cultural and social plane (economics, law, religion, art). M. Herman (2019) indicates, however, that the presence of crafts in the urban space is necessary to maintain a balance between the human and technological aspects. Among the benefits of urban crafts, she lists the involvement of its residents (who have no previous experience, e.g. in design), the development of their creativity and manual skills, the activation of the community and the possibility of urban population learning under the supervision of specialists (Herman, 2019).

Engagement in craft activities and participation in events related to them, which are an integral part of the cultural sector, can significantly improve the quality of life in urban spaces. Of particular importance are the opportunities and potential offered by a given city, which can contribute to improving the subjective sense of well-being of residents (Sanetra-Szeliga, 2017).

The relationship between craftsmen and cities is described several ways in the literature, also including:

- Places that "attract" the rural population (including those involved in crafts), the development of cities resulting from the separation of crafts from agriculture, technical inventions introduced by craftsmen and influencing the connection of cities with the synonym of modernity, the settlement of craftsmen of other nationalities, the formation of craft guilds, associations, craft unions, and factories, and the development of regulations related to the requirements of education in a craft profession (Zabłocka, 2019),
- In the past, craftsmen gained political and economic privileges related to the exclusive right to produce a specific range of products within the city limits (De Munck, 2019),
- Creating a health and safety system for crafts (Musialik, 2019),
- Conditions of demand for crafts (Mazur-Włodarczyk, Drosik, 2020),
- Symbols of craft and professional activity (Starczewska-Wojnar, 2021),
- The UNESCO Creative Cities Initiative, established in 2024 (UNESCO, 2023),
- Adapting buildings, materials and products in the urban environment to new, originally unplanned uses. This involves, among other things, transforming entire urban zones (e.g. ports, industrial zones, districts), architectural objects (industrial objects - e.g. cranes, tracks) and products (e.g. tanks) into parks, housing complexes, external and internal equipment of public spaces (Montana-Hoyos, Scharoun, 2014),
- Clustering phenomena related to the settlement of craft groups in the city close to each other, e.g. in the form of markets, bazaars or craft districts including studios and craft inns. These groups prefer a location in the city center, and this is conditioned by easier

access to various sectors, a diversified workforce, infrastructural advantages and easy access to craft recipients. On the other hand, the outflow of craftsmen from these locations is associated with the implementation of neoliberal urban policy (Desticioğlu, Gökmen, 2023).

2.3. Crafts of Greater Poland

Greater Poland is an interesting case for analysis as a region that is compared to the "mainstay" of Polish crafts (Jagodziński, 2011), and the crafts of Greater Poland is described as a "real power" (Radio Poznań, 2017). According to K. Bondyra (2010), craftsmanship is a key element of the identity of this region. Greater Poland is characterized by the highest density of craft studios in the country, and the ethos of this region has historically been shaped by values related to craftsmanship, such as the cult of "good work", frugality and the pursuit of acquiring "a craft in hand" (Bondyra, 2010).

The crafts of past generations are presented, among others, in the Greater Poland Ethnographic Park, showing the fulfillment of household needs, changing human needs and specializations resulting from the cultural and economic specificity of the region by means of: movable inventory, studios and craft workshops (Fryza, 1991). The District Museum in Konin presents a collection of objects related to crafts, which has been recognized as one of the most important and valuable in these collections. It contains seal dies, documents, guild accessories and craft souvenirs (Cech Rzemiosł Różnych w Koninie, n.d.). The popularity of crafts in this region is also evidenced by the opening of private museums. Examples of which are the Museum of Craft Tradition and the Greater Poland Private Museum of Bakery in Pleszew (RC, 2017). The album by B. and Z. Dolczewski (2011) is devoted to the subject of the artistic crafts of Greater Poland of past generations (from the 10th to the 20th century) kept not only in museums but also in churches in Greater Poland. From a historical perspective, the crafts of Greater Poland are also devoted to works focusing on: the southern part of the region (Moczyński, 2003), during the partition period 1793-1918 (Łuczak, 1962), the structure of crafts and urban industry in the second half of the 18th century (Szymański, 2015) and craft organizational activity in the years 1919-1968 (Barański, 1969). Important events in the history of crafts in Greater Poland include its relationship with the developing medieval towns (starting from the 13th century), the emergence of manufactories, the formation of economic self-government organizations associating craftsmen and its coexistence with industry (see: Table 2).

Table 2.*Important events in the history of crafts in Greater Poland*

Period	Characteristic
13th century	- Development of medieval cities - Separation of craft production - Establishment of municipal governments supervising craft guilds
15th century	- Intensive development of professional brotherhoods
18th century	- The emergence of cloth factories - Increased iron production - The development of industry pushing crafts out of the market
19th century	- Separation of crafts from industry - Integration of regional values, the positivist idea of organic work and traditional craft values (including diligence, reliability, honesty, entrepreneurship and respect for work) - Establishment of craft chambers - Privilege of German crafts and discrimination against Polish crafts - Organisation of lectures, courses, schools, exhibitions, conventions, professional magazines and brochures by Polish companies - Crafts constitute the main branch of the economy
20th century	- Regulation on social insurance for craftsmen - Establishment of the Central Craft Association (currently the Polish Craft Association) - Possibility of belonging to craft cooperatives - Exclusion from the scope of craft: commercial, catering, transport, hotel and medical services, activities of visual artists and photographers - Craft is an activity that partially supplements the shortages of large-scale industrial products and meets local demand for basic food goods
21st century	- Renaissance of crafts and vocational education

Source: own study based on: Jagodziński (2011); Górka (2013); Instytut Analizy Rynku Pracy (2020).

According to information published by the Guild of Various Crafts in Piła, in the years 1984-2020, outstanding craftsmen from greater Poland received three types of distinctions – badges: silver, gold, and honorary, awarded to them for their services in the development of Greater Poland crafts. Most of them were awarded in 2007 (27 badges), 2014 (29 badges), and 2018 (23 badges) (Cech Rzemiosł Różnych w Pile, n.d. a, b, c) – see Figure 1.

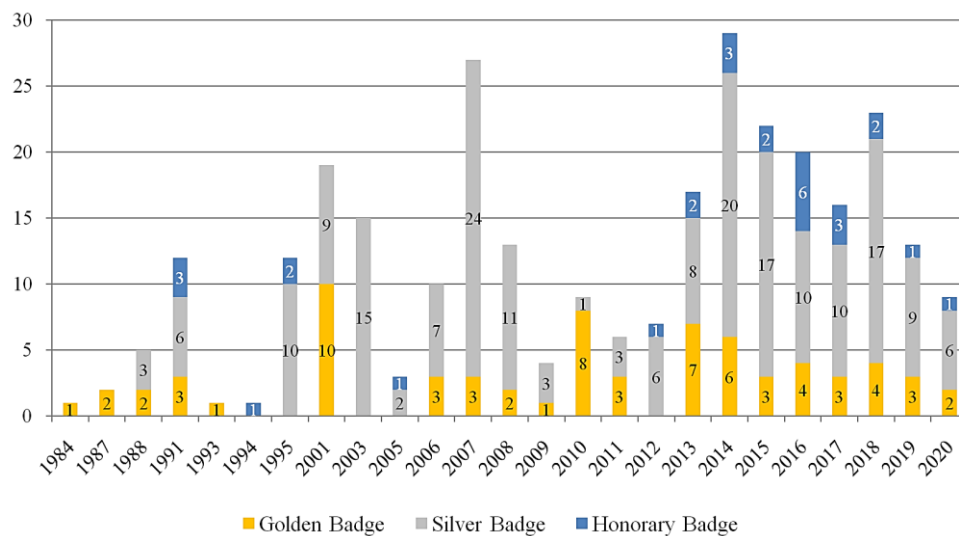


Figure 1. The number of craftsmen's distinctions in the form of: the Golden Badge for Merit in the Development of Greater Poland Crafts, the Silver Badge for Merit in the Development of Greater Poland Crafts and the Honorary Badge of Crafts.

Source: Cech Rzemiosł Różnych w Pile (n.d.; a; b; c).

Publications relating to the more contemporary crafts of the studied area emphasize, among others, aspects linking vocational education with the labor market (Bondyra, Sikora, 2008), including the importance of dual education in Greater Poland, which opens the way to stable employment (Bondyra et al., 2016).

3. Materials and methods

As part of the analysis of active methods for promoting craftsmanship in the Greater Poland region, a bibliographic study was designed utilizing the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases. The search employed key terms and their synonyms, combined with AND/OR operators, as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3.
Guidelines for keywords, operators and actions

AND →		AND →
OR ↓	OR ↓	OR ↓
<i>craft</i>	<i>promotion</i>	<i>"Greater Poland region"</i>
<i>artisanry</i>	<i>advertising</i>	<i>"Greater Poland province"</i>
	<i>marketing</i>	<i>„Greater Poland Voivodeship"</i>
	<i>campaign</i>	<i>"Wielkopolska region"</i>
		<i>"Wielkopolska province"</i>
		<i>"Wielkopolska Voivodeship"</i>

Source: own elaboration.

In the WoS, the search was conducted across the 'All Fields' category, whereas in the Scopus database, the focus was placed on 'Article Title, Abstract, and Keywords.' Despite these efforts, no materials meeting the specified criteria were identified in either database. This outcome highlights a significant research gap concerning the promotion of craftsmanship in the Greater Poland. Given the absence of published studies on the selected topics in scientific text databases and industry reports, the decision was made to proceed with research employing the desk research method. This method is nonreactive, encompassing the analysis of every type of available data. It is compared to the 'essence' of content analysis, analysis of existing statistical data, and historical-comparative analysis (Bednarowska, 2015). This approach involved analyzing all available materials related to the subject, identified using the Google search engine. In this way, 148 of the most relevant results were obtained, i.e. not including results defined by Google as very similar. During the analysis, the content of all websites was reviewed. However, the analysis did not include advertisements for handicrafts and accessories, as well as photo reports.

Another reason for undertaking the analysis of texts published on the Internet was to focus on the currently most popular mass medium informing consumers about available offers within a given administrative unit. For example, Dudek-Mańkowska (2011) draws attention to the fact

that the intangible resources that may constitute a competitive advantage of a city include the subjective feelings and opinions of individuals residing in it and using city offers, information about which often comes from the mass media.

In the context of active learning methods, selected research results were published in a post-conference monograph (see: Mazur-Włodarczyk, 2024a), which formed the basis for further analyses presented below.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Promoting crafts through activities in the cities of Greater Poland

As noted by B. Namyślak (2015), it is extremely important within the strategic activities of the city to highlight specific cultural values, including the achievements of the local culture, influencing its development and increasing competitiveness. On the other hand, the power of attraction is the greatest within the activities of an entertainment nature. Among the activities promoting the crafts of Greater Poland, one should mention the Revitalization of Garbary in Poznań, encompassing the "revival" of this part of the city in the material dimension (including narrowing the traffic, creating a bus lane, planting and introducing elements of small architecture) and in the social dimension, which is expressed by the program of promotion and support of crafts *Craftsmanship Alley* [in Polish: *Zaulek Rzemiosła*], launched in 2017. Its aim was the economic, social and the cultural revitalization of Poznań, with the promotion and professional activation of unemployed people related to craft professions. (Poznań, 2022a). The programme participants – craft enterprises – are listed with brief characteristics in Table 4.

Table 4.
Craftsmen involved in the program Zaulek Rzemiosła

Participant	Description
Studio Artystyczne Małachowscy	Dealing with artistic bookbinding, renovation and repairing of old prints,
Pracownia Fotograficzna Dark, Szymidło	A studio and shop offering styling made of linen, jewellery, natural leather handbags and tapestry
Pracownia OYCA form artystycznych	Jewellery, small sculptures, statuettes and personalised works
Ceramika Kopiczko	Produces vessels turned on a potter's wheel and fired
Klinika Starych Zegarów	Specializing in the reconstruction, renovation, maintenance, repair and sale of antique clocks and wristwatches
Greenowacja	In which green paintings and decorations with reindeer moss are created,
Wytwórca Bakcył	Ceramic studio
Krawiectwo Miarowe Krupa i Rzeszutko	Suits and other tailor-made clothing
Reklama NEONY Piotr Heinze	Produces the most recognizable neon signs in Poland
Pracownia lutnicza Niewczyk & Synowie	The oldest violin making studio in Poland dealing with the construction, repair and maintenance of violin-making instruments
HELLO Calligraphy	Calligraphy studio

Cont. table 4.

Introligatornia Lewandowscy	A studio where old books are repaired and preserved, and modern bindings are made
Sir. B Fancy Buttons	Specializing in the design and hand-making of buttons
Cukiernia Weber	Which produces baked goods with tradition
Pracownia szycia kołder i czyszczenia pierza	Processing of fabric into quilts, feather cleaning, sewing of quilts to order and sale of finished products
Pracownia szewska Bernarda Jakubowskiego	Shoemaker's workshop
ARTISAN	Watchmaker's studio
Piórko	Czyszczenie pierza, specializing in the production and sale of pillows, cushions and duvets
Pracownia Retro & Folk	Dealing with applied arts
Dr Shoes	A service company operating in the footwear industry, specializing in shoe customization
Etazerką	A furniture and wooden products renovation studio
Pracownia kaletnicza Geccobag	Which produces bags, backpacks, covers, and in the spirit of slow fashion
Pracownia PGiP	Graphic and spatial design studio

Source: own elaboration based on: Poznań (2022b-d; 2023a-d; 2024a-h; n.d. a-k).

The specific objectives of the programme include locating groups of craft studios representing rare specialties in the city, supporting forms of cooperation between craftsmen (including in the form of mini-clusters), increasing the attractiveness of the district areas and attracting customers from other districts, as well as developing municipal commercial premises, conducting educational campaigns and cooperation with vocational and technical schools in order to promote craft professions (Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy w Poznaniu, n.d.)

Another important initiative popularizing crafts is the Poznań Craftsmen program, which involved creating films about Poznań craft studios. The program was initiated in 2021 by the Made in Art Foundation. Its goal was to promote crafts as one of the unique elements shaping the cultural landscape of Poznań and urban identity, as well as to build a narrative about the city. The series of the films presents, among other things, craft studios, the realities of work, the tools and techniques used, as well as the course of the creative process (Poznań, 2023e).

As part of the activities combining the promotion of crafts with elements of active learning, it is also worth mentioning the city game *LET'S PLAY CRAFT* [in Polish: *ZaGRAjMY w RZEMIOSŁO*] taking place as part of the Craft Festival. The first edition took place in April 2023, and the second edition took place in April 2024 in the cities of Poznań, Leszno, Wągrowiec and Konin. The event was organized by the Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań, and the event partners were: the Guild of Various Crafts in Wągrowiec, the First Degree Trade School in Wągrowiec, the Guild of Various Crafts in Konin, the Craft Vocational School of the Guild of Various Crafts in Konin and the Guild of Various Crafts in Leszno. In addition to demonstrations of craft professions (presentations of industries and services), meetings with craftsmen, tastings of local products, the program also included a city game aimed at students of grades 7 and 8 of primary schools. The teams participating in the game consisted of four students and their guardian. The games consisted of walking around the city according to a map of designated stations (and tasks to be performed within them) and a game

card, based on which participants became acquainted with craft professions, visited craft companies and competed for points and time with other groups (Wielkopolska Izba Rzemieślnicza w Poznaniu, 2024).

As part of the promotion of Greater Poland crafts, 5 competitions are organized, addressed to three target groups: primary school students (2 competitions), vocational school students (2 competitions) and young craft workers who are pursuing education in craft professions (1 competition) - Table 5. Consumption of crafts during craft festivals can also, using an analogy to film festivals studied by W. Cudny and P. Ogórek (2014), play the role of developing social capital. They integrate people during shows, informal meetings and discussions. They provide an opportunity to establish new professional and social contacts and develop craft knowledge and skills.

Table 5.

Craft-themed competitions divided into groups to which they are addressed

Competitions for primary school students	Competitions for students of vocational schools	Competitions for young workers pursuing craft training
Professional festival game [in Polish: Zawodowa gra festiwalowa]. Organizer: Center for Support of Crafts, Dual and Vocational Education in Kalisz for students of grades 6-8 of primary schools.	Inter-school Mathematical Competition Specialist [in Polish: Międzyszkolny Konkurs Matematyczny Fachowiec]. One of the patrons was the Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań. The competition is intended for students of basic vocational schools.	Your profession [in Polish: Twój zawód]. Organizer: Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań. It is addressed to young workers pursuing education in craft professions in first-degree vocational schools or in the extracurricular system.
LET'S PLAY CRAFT [in Polish: ZaGRAjMY w RZEMIOSŁO]. Organizer: Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań. It is intended for students in grades 7 and 8 of primary schools.	Greater Poland Competition for Students of Hairdressing Craft [in Polish: Wielkopolski Konkurs Uczniów Rzemiosła Fryzjerskiego]. It is addressed to students of the third grade of the First Degree Vocational School, people with the title of journeyman, students of the 4th year of full-time technical school, students of part-time technical school, people who have previously participated in similar competitions.	

*The table is based on information available on the Internet, informing and advertising a given competition.

Source: own study.

In Greater Poland, fairs and events promoting crafts and, for the most part, the cultural urban landscape are also organised. Examples are organized at different times of the year: Targi Produktów Świątecznych i Okazjonalnych Special Days (February), Sakralia Fair (spring), Greater Poland Craft Festival (spring), Festival of Crafts in Poznań (spring), St. Bernard's Festival (Mai), St. John's Fair (June), "Magdalena's Braid" Festival (July), Windmill Days (summer/ autumn), Międzychód Craft Days (autumn), Rawicz Historical Fair (September),

Christmas Fair "Bethlehem Poznańskie" (November-January), Festival of Art and Artistic Objects (December), and Christmas Fair in Oborniki (December). Table 6 lists 13 events divided into the seasons in which they are organised.

Table 6.

Craft-themed events divided into seasons

Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Sakralia Fair [in Polish: Targi Sakralia] - vestments, liturgical clothing and objects, church equipment, bells, chimes, sacred art (icons, sculpture, stained glass), candles, incense	St. John's Fair [in Polish: Jarmark Świętojański] - handicrafts.	Międzychód Craft Days [in Polish: Międzychodzkie Dni Rzemiosła] - Traditional Craft Festival	Targi Produktów Świątecznych i Okazjonalnych SPECIAL DAYS [in Polish: Targi Produktów Świątecznych i Okazjonalnych SPECIAL DAYS] - Christmas items, seasonal decorations, candles and scented products Florist and decorative industry
Greater Poland Craft Festival [in Polish: Wielkopolski Festiwal Rzemiosła] - painting a wall yourself, hammering nails, making clay pots and paper decorations	"Magdalena's Braid" Festival [in Polish: Festyn „Warkocz Magdaleny”] - products from the Artistic Embroidery Workshop in Poznań	Rawicz Historical Fair [in Polish: Rawicki Jarmark Historyczny] - cultural heritage of Greater Poland	Christmas Fair "Bethlehem Poznańskie" [in Polish: Bożonarodzeniowy kiermasz „Betlejem Poznańskie”] - handicrafts
Festival of Crafts in Poznań [in Polish: Festiwal Rzemiosła w Poznaniu] - presentation of the potential and educational offer of crafts and promotion of vocational training	Windmill Days [in Polish: Dni wiatraka] - blacksmithing and pottery demonstrations and workshops for young people.		Festival of Art and Artistic Objects [in Polish: Festiwal Sztuki i Przedmiotów Artystycznych] - jewelry, Christmas decorations and beeswax products.
St. Bernard's Festival [in Polish: Festyn Św. Bernardyna] - w silverware, hand-painted pictures, crochet products, tatting, ecological toys, beekeeping products and upholstered furniture			Christmas Fair in Oborniki [in Polish: Jarmark Świąteczny w Obornikach] - hand-made, including by local craft companies

*The table is based on information available on the Internet, informing and advertising a given competition.

Source: own study.

Craft-oriented competitions are not only held during them. A list of craft-related competitions held in Greater Poland include: Your profession, Professional festival game, Inter-school Mathematical Competition Specialist, Greater Poland Competition for Students of Hairdressing Craft, and LET'S PLAY CRAFT. The first one concerns an initiative aimed at young workers learning crafts in vocational schools of the first degree or outside the school

system. Its aim is to promote crafts and develop artistic interests of participants. The task of participants is to create a digital film presenting the craft they practice. The second competition is aimed at students of grades 6-8 of primary schools and aims to popularize dual and vocational education and to introduce the specificity of various professions. Participants are to visit 10 craft stands, solve thematic tasks competing against the clock. The mathematics competition aims to promote the skills of students of Basic Vocational Schools related to the "queen of sciences" and its practical applications. The fourth competition is aimed at students of grades III of the Vocational School of the first degree, journeymen, students of the 4th year of full-time and part-time technical school and people who have previously participated in similar competitions. Participants are to make creative hairstyles within the designated competitions in the women's and men's departments. The last of the mentioned competitions is dedicated to students of grades 7 and 8 of primary schools. Its main task is to popularize vocational education in crafts and vocational training based on an employment contract. As part of the competition, four-person teams with guardians visit craft companies, where they carry out assigned tasks according to the instructions included in the map.

4.2. The linking of teaching and gaming with craft promotion

Education and training in crafts are crucial for improving craft skills and preserving cultural heritage. Furthermore, as O.G. Berta notes, the development of crafts is possible through the existence of a market for this craft (Berta, 2023). Craft education affects the labor market and the economy, which in turn influences the introduction of changes to teaching programs and their adaptation to emerging needs, including creating interest in craft among its recipients – consumers and people starting their education – potential craftsmen.

Crafts are promoted in many ways, and the form of promotion depends on, among other things, the type of craft, which are the topics of research in the international scientific community (Borrus, 1988; Zbucha, 2014; Makhitha, 2016; Machowska, 2016, Czerska, Michalczyk, 2017; Pech, Kopova, 2022; Komen, Mijatović, 2024; The Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań, n.d. b).

As noted by M. Czajkowski (2011), the perception of crafts by society is influenced by building its image, among other things, by taking initiatives - organizations representing crafts and promoting their presence on the web, thus fulfilling a marketing role. In Poland, Łódź is an example of a city that is a production centre and has chosen a development direction focused on promotion through cultural activities. It organizes film festivals based on the specific heritage of this city, which is currently a tourist asset and a cultural product at the same time (Cudny, 2011). Particularly noteworthy are events visible in the urban space, such as fairs, festivals and accompanying competitions aimed at various craft groups. In Poland, there are 13 nationwide competitions dedicated to crafts and promoted on the Internet: Socially responsible craftsman, Construction Tournament "Golden Trowel", National Confectionery Tournament named after W. Kandulski, Anna Butka National Baking Tournament, National

Cooking Tournament, National Tournament for the Best Confectioner Student, National Tournament for the Best Student in the Baker's Profession, Skills Poland, National Occupational Health and Safety Knowledge Competition "Safely from the Start", National Goldsmiths' Competition - Gold and Silver in Crafts, "MAN-JEWELRY-WORLD" Photo Contest, and Master of Beauty – Polish Open Hairdressing Championships (Table 7). These competitions are mainly aimed at students of crafts (10 competitions). A few of them are addressed to young employees (3 competitions) and entrepreneurs (1 competition). Their goals include, among others, distinguishing young apprentices of crafts/craftsmen, promoting talents, raising the profile and quality of vocational education, promoting vocational education, popularizing knowledge about crafts and showing craft skills. The most common organizers include craft chambers, craft guilds, vocational school, the Polish Craft Association and the National Labor Inspectorate.

Table 7.

Craft-themed activities divided into groups to which they are addressed

Competitions for craft students	Competitions for craftsmen	Competitions for companies
Construction Tournament "Golden Trowel" [in Polish: Turniej Budowlany "Złota Kielnia"]. A three-stage construction tournament organized since 1972. Previously also known as the Construction Knowledge and Skills Olympiad.	Socially responsible craftsman [in Polish: Społecznie odpowiedzialny rzemieślnik]. Organizer: Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań in partnership with the company Doradztwo Społeczne i Gospodarcze	"Reliable in Craftsmanship" [in Polish: "Wiarygodni w Rzemiośle"]. Organizer: Creditreform Wywiadownia Gospodarcza Sp. z o.o.
SkillsPoland. Organizer: Foundation for the Development of the Education System		
Master of Beauty – Polish Open Hairdressing Championships [in Polish: Master of Beauty – Otwarte Mistrzostwa Fryzjerstwa Polskiego]. Organizer: National Hairdressing and Cosmetics Commission of the Polish Craft Association, Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań, Poznań International Fair.		
National Confectionery Tournament named after Wojciech Kandulski [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Turniej Cukierniczy im. Wojciecha Kandulskiego]. Organizer: Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań, Confectioners' and Bakers' Guild in Poznań, Food Industry School Complex in Poznań		
National Cooking Tournament [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Turniej Kucharski]. Organizer: Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań, Guild of Confectioners and Bakers in Poznań, Complex of Food Industry Schools in Poznań		
Anna Butka National Baking Tournament [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Turniej Piekarski im. Anny Butki]. Organizer: Greater Poland Chamber of Crafts in Poznań, Guild of Confectioners and Bakers in Poznań, Complex of Food Industry Schools in Poznań		

Cont. table 7.

National Tournament for the Best Confectioner Student [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Turniej na Najlepszego Ucznia w Zawodzie Cukiernik]. Organizer: Lower Silesian Chamber of Crafts in Wrocław, Complex of Vocational Schools in Wrocław		
National Tournament for the Best Student in the Baker's Profession [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Turniej na Najlepszego Ucznia w Zawodzie Piekarz]. Organizer: Lower Silesian Chamber of Crafts in Wrocław, Complex of Vocational Schools in Wrocław		
National Occupational Health and Safety Knowledge Competition "Safely from the Start" [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Konkurs Wiedzy o Zasadach BHP „Bezpiecznie od startu”]. Organizer: Polish Craft Association and State Labor Inspectorate Two-stage competition on labor law and health and safety issues.		
National Goldsmiths' Competition - Gold and Silver in Crafts [in Polish: Ogólnopolski Konkurs Złotników – Złoto i srebro w rzemiośle]. Organizer: National Goldsmithing and Jewellery Commission of the Polish Craft Association		
“MAN-JEWELRY-WORLD” Photo Contest [in Polish: Konkurs fotograficzny „CZŁOWIEK-BIZUTERIA-ŚWIAT”]. Organizer: Foundation for the Development of the Polish Jewellery Industry – organizer of the Polish Goldsmithing and Jewellery Fair GOLD EXPO, Polish Goldsmithing and Jewellery Commission ZRP, Phototechnical School Complex in Warsaw		

*The table is based on information available on the Internet, informing and advertising a given competition.

Source: own study.

Research conducted by P. Brännkärr and M. Porko-Hudd (2023) exploring Erasmus students' expectations regarding craft courses in Finland show that these courses are expected to be fun, interesting and challenging, giving the opportunity to try, experience and learn new things. Participation in competitions dedicated to crafts meets these expectations. Moreover, apart from the promotional aspect, it plays an educational role. It allows students to develop skills and deepen knowledge, stimulate, among others, creativity and problem-solving skills, as well as influence their observers. Competitions also help to build a community around a given craft – people with similar interests or experiences. Competitions that engage the learning process, similar to simulations and educational games, case studies, team-based assignments, interactive quizzes and tests, mind mapping, role-playing, etc., belong to active learning methods. They support an understanding of the issues being learned and consolidation of knowledge. They focus on the learner, influence increasing the effectiveness of learning and interest in the topic being explored (Andrews et al., 2022). As noted by Greaves et al. (2023),

active learning connects with the inhabited space and engages both local and incoming communities – immigrants. This learning method enables learners to create meanings and understand heritage based on their framework of understanding (Greaves et al., 2023).

It is worth mentioning that beyond the promotional aspect, active learning in the field of crafts has the potential and already fulfills its classically assigned roles, such as learning through practice, problem-solving tasks, collaboration, etc. These methods are applied in the dual system, vocational schools, institutions providing occupational training, as well as directly under the guidance of master craftsmen.

5. Summary

The promotion of urban crafts in Greater Poland is currently carried out primarily through the integration of city events with educational and entertainment elements, which increases community involvement and popularizes crafts both among consumers and young people choosing the path of education in this field. Innovative revitalization and promotional projects introduce new ways of arousing interest in crafts, emphasizing the experience gained and the sensations felt. This is important, among others, due to the fact that around 541,000 companies from the SME sector are involved in crafts nationwide (WARP, 2024) constituting endogenous potential, part of which is not fully utilized (Gałązka, 2017).

The article indicates five competitions organized in Greater Poland, of which the game LET'S PLAY CRAFT has the most links on the Internet. In addition, it describes several events (fairs and festivals) in which crafts were the main thematic axis. The visibility of the crafts of Greater Poland is increased visually not only in the Internet space. Crafts are more noticeable through investments in the urban space related to revitalization in the material and social dimension, in creating films about craftsmen practicing and enriching the cultural landscape of cities in this region (an example of the *Poznań craftsmen program*) and through other informational and educational campaigns (an examples of the program *Craftsmanship Alley*, the competition *Professional festival game*, and the city game *LET'S PLAY CRAFT*).

The suggestion resulting from the conducted study, addressed to entities developing programs intended for craftsmen or aimed at promoting craft (including local government authorities and craft organizations), is to take into account the active learning potential in their creation. Among others, by introducing subsidies/grants for craftsmen who “actively” promote craft, encouraging participation in training in the use of active learning methods in craft, creating programs for sharing good practices and activating the population in activities related to craft through dedicated competitions and games on craft topics.

Focusing on the development and involvement of the local community through crafts does not fully guarantee success, because much also depends on the craftsmen themselves, as well as on continuous market analysis, the adaptation of products and services and the further adjustment of promotional tools to developing possibilities (including technical ones) and adjusting to market expectations. These activities are worth undertaking to take care of the functioning of crafts. Thanks to it - in addition to the economic aspect - it becomes possible to: return to the history and traditions of ancestors, develop the region, stimulate creativity and creative inspiration of those interested, provide products and services, acquire a profession for young people, and finally, maintain balance within the dynamically developing reality.

The study is not without its limitations, including the fact that it is based solely on the analysis of the content of articles obtained from a single Internet browser based on a selection algorithm unique to it. Another limitation is the use of the desk research method alone. In this case, this method allows for gaining insight into the issues being studied. It is the basis for future research, such as a questionnaire survey, the aim of which may be to more precisely analyze the relationship between the local community and the functioning of craft activities in the urban space. As well as to expand the territorial scope to other regions of Poland. Another limitation of the article is the focus on pro-craft initiatives organized in the main administrative center of the region - Poznań. This phenomenon results from the concentration of available information on the area of this specific administrative unit, which, however, leads to the marginalization of various urban initiatives implemented in other parts of the Greater Poland region. Such a perspective may contribute to a narrow perception of the role of crafts in the entire region, while omitting the wealth of activities and projects implemented in other cities that were not included in the analysis. It is also worth emphasizing that the article did not aim at the examination of long-term effects on craft enterprises or vocational education, which, due to their significance, should constitute a further research direction.

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