

Linking a city and its universities:
a tour of the Wrocław experience in
university-city-business collaboration

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15 YEARS: THREE SPEEDS

The narrative builds on three phases (largely chronological) that have characterized many experiences of the last fifteen years:

- a strategic breakthrough,
- ensuing period of correction and adjustment,
- and present-day preparations for Poland's higher education reform.



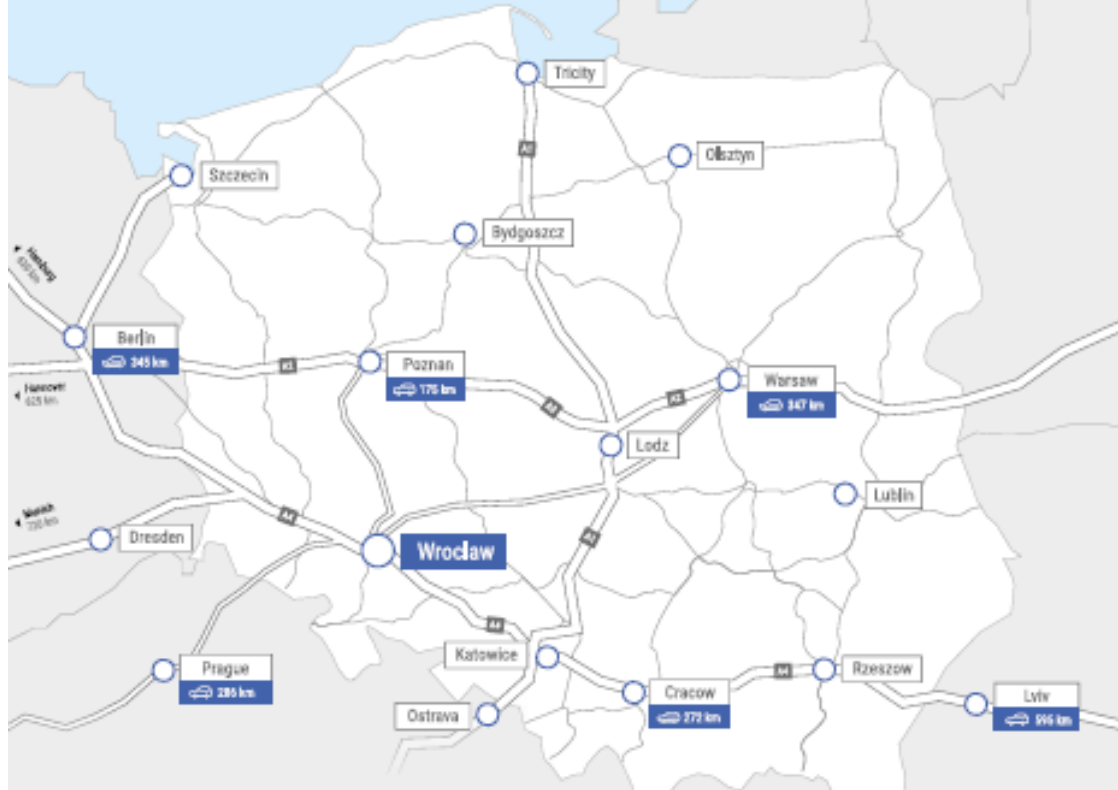
BREAKTHROUGH APPROACH

You know the story ...



Driving time & distance to selected ports:

- Brnoharhaven – 7 h, 760 km
- Tricity – 5 h, 550 km
- Hamburg – 6.5 h, 630 km
- Rotterdam – 9.5 h, 1000 km



Polish transportation infrastructure and its development plans

AND HIGHER EDUCATION?

Polish statutes: cities and HE

- Research and higher education are traditionally the preserve of the national government in Poland.
- The reforms of 1998 vested some powers (regional innovation strategies) in the 16 Polish provinces (*województwo*).
- But cities the size of Wrocław (630,000) are classified as special kinds of commune (*gmina*).

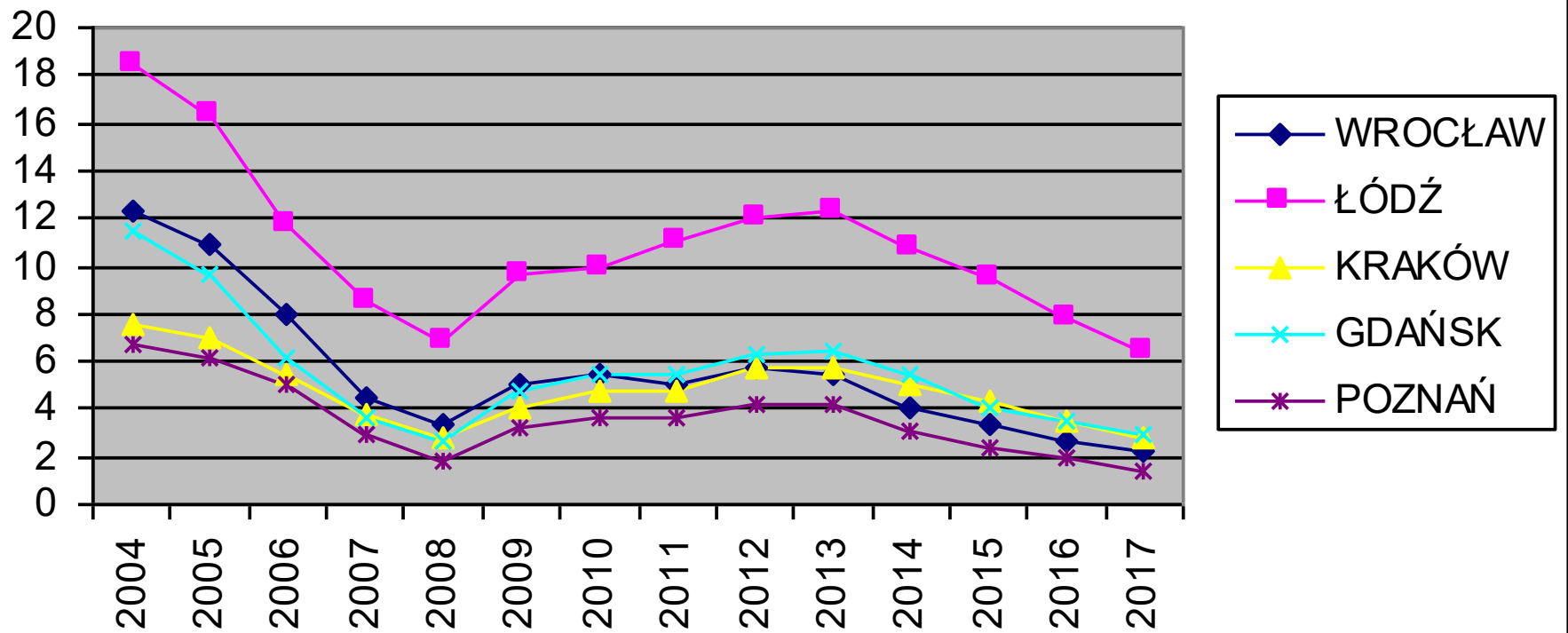
WHAT HAS HAPPENED

City-regions (formally no such thing) become a prominent socio-economic fact:

- foreign direct investment (services and manufacturing);
- intensive urban growth;
- explicit reliance on presence of university graduates in socio-economic policy.

2004-2012

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



HOUSING UNITS

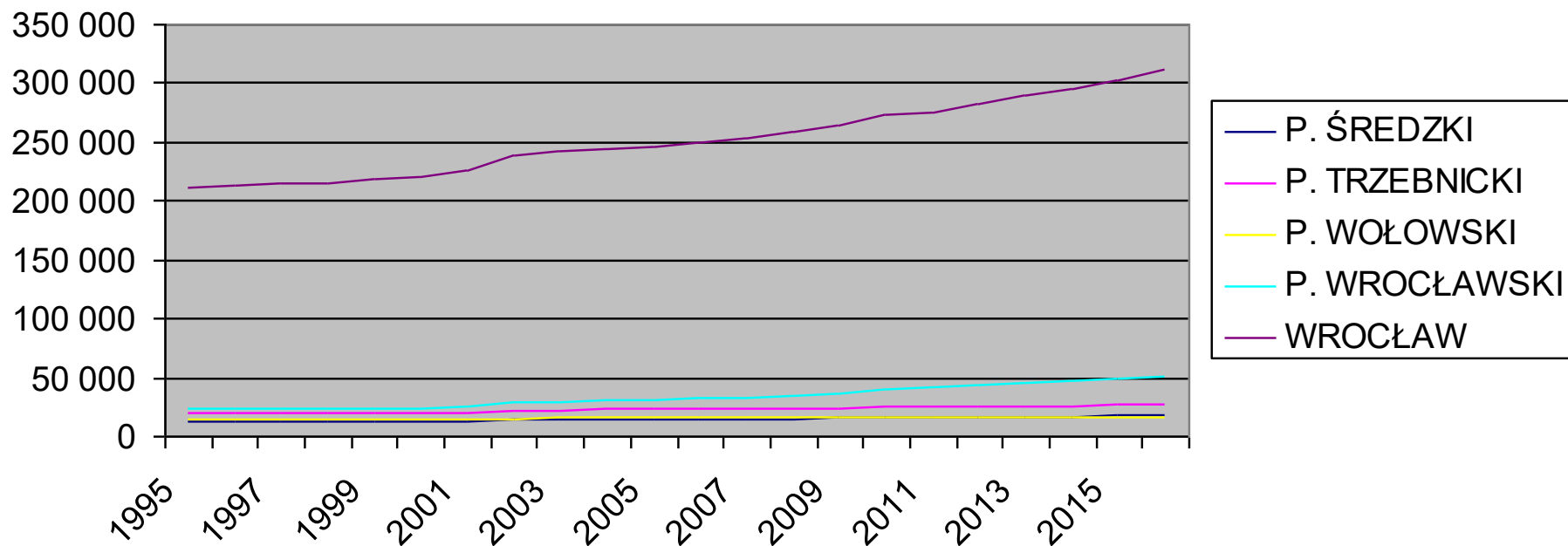
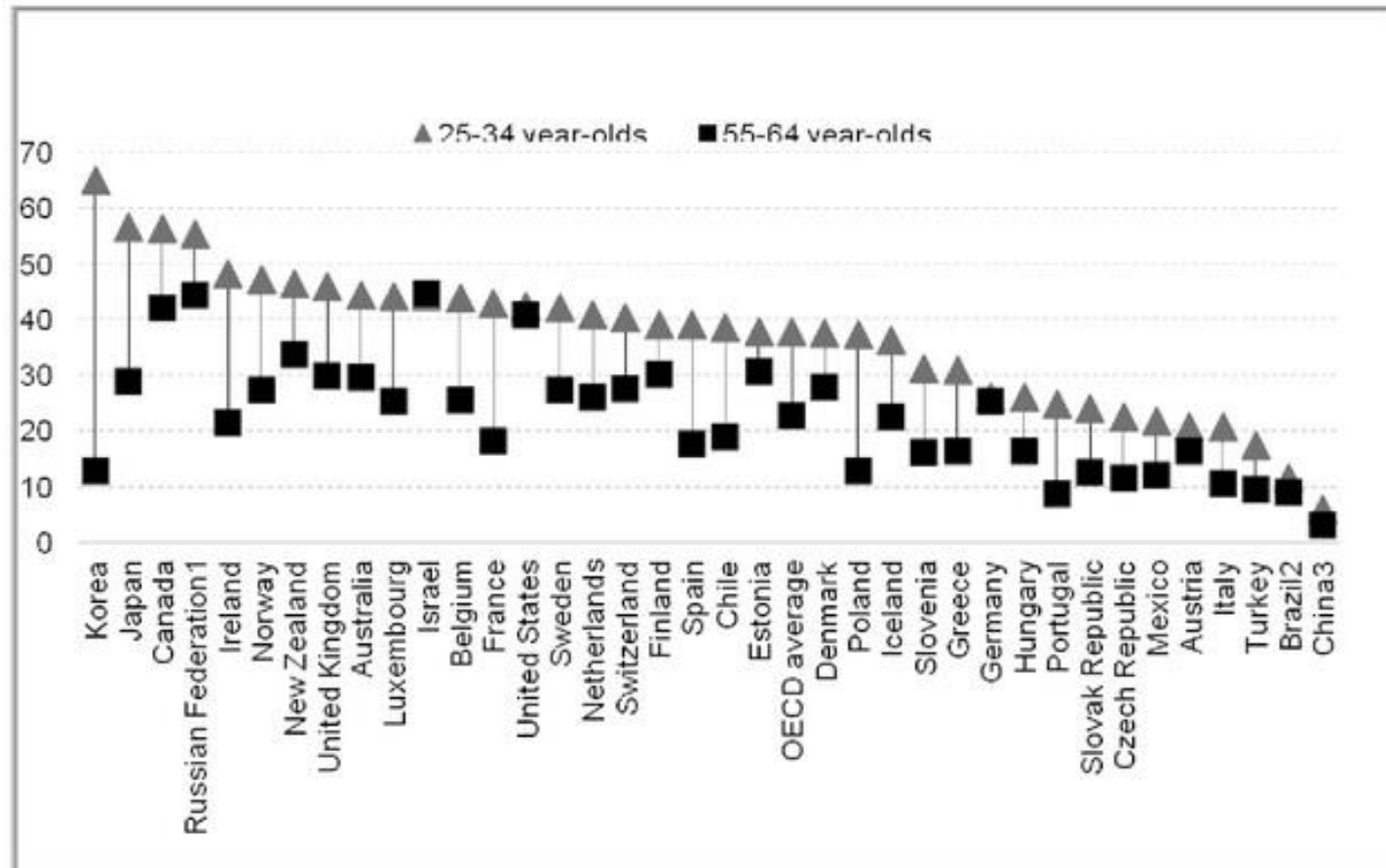


Figure 1.7. Percentage of population, by age group, that has attained at least tertiary education in selected countries (2010)



OECD (2013) *Higher education in Regional and City Development: Wrocław, Poland*. OECD Publishing. p.58

The total number of passengers using buses and trams exceeded 197 M people in 2016. The comprehensive pre-paid ticket system, URBANCARD, allows easy travel around the city while single fare tickets can be bought in all vehicles using debit or credit cards. In 2017 Wrocław has become the first Polish city to have signed a contract for an electric car rental system.

117 bus lines
day and night buses
online real-time tracking system



Bikes

220 km of bike lanes
740 bikes and 74 stations in City Bike System
over 1 million of city bike rides in 2016

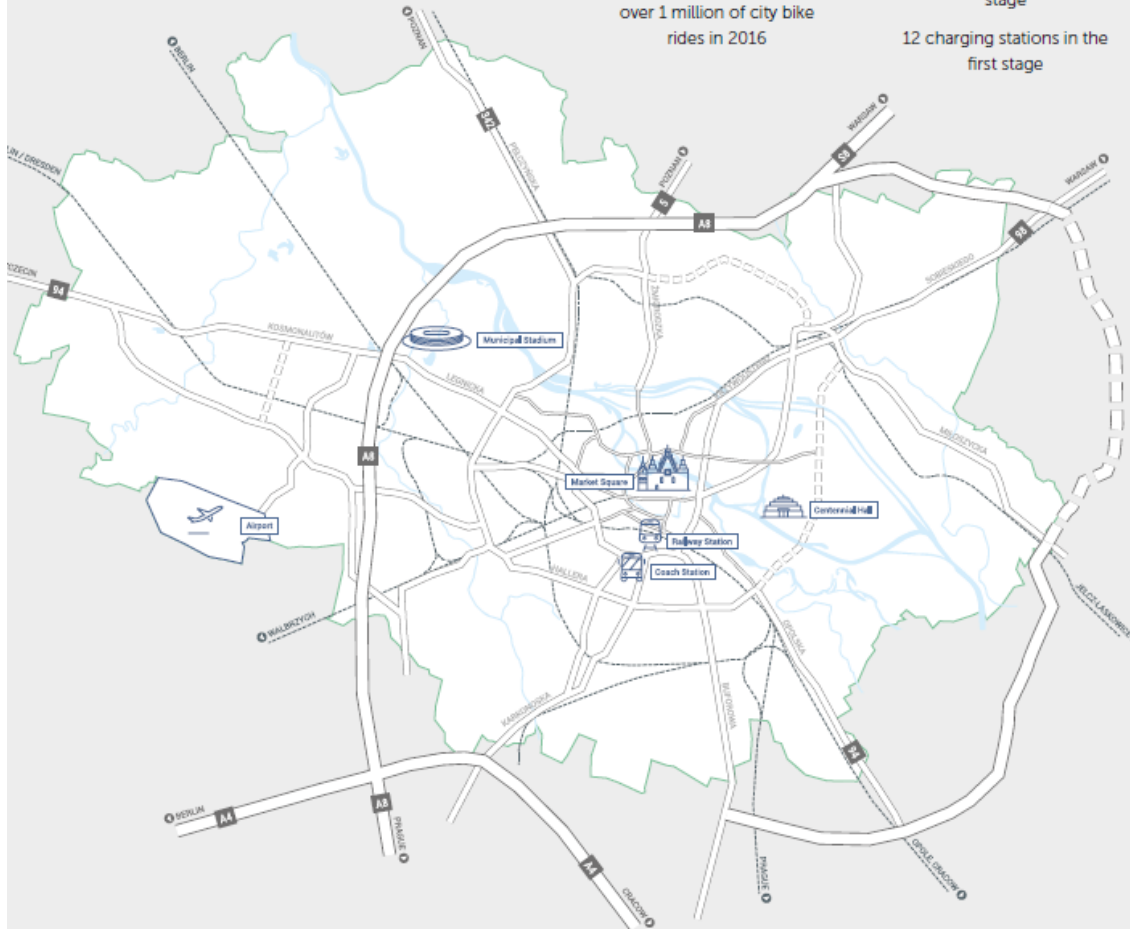
22 tram lines
56 new trams to be bought in 2016 and 2017
online schedule



Electric cars

first Polish city to launch electric car rental in 2018
200 electric cars in the first stage
12 charging stations in the first stage

Wrocław city plan



WHAT CITIES HAVE DONE

- Regime overhaul: city mayors directly elected since 2002. Strong democratic mandate; 'Job creation' as the top local government priority since 2002 elections (Wrocław).
- Poland's first development agency to offer one-stop service to investors (fully operational in 2005). Soft competitive advantage within a uniform national framework.
- Spectacular success: iconic investments; booming services and manufacturing sectors.
- Shifting strategic interest: from jobs to high end jobs.

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY?

Higher education and research in 2005:

- Highly fragmented;
- 'insufficient mission diversity' (OECD 2007);
- 'academic drift' (OECD 2007);
- strong centrifugal forces in governance.

A historic opportunity: 2007-2013 ERDF, ESF

UNEXPECTED LEVERAGE

- 2005-2006: Local stakeholder group led by the Mayor of Wrocław
- 2006-2007: Negotiations with the national government
 - Pledge to establish a dedicated limited liability company (new organisational models)
 - Government recognising the pioneer character.
- EURO 250m. The largest single item on the national innovation agenda 2007-2013.
- The agreement with the national government signed in 2007. The company established in 2008.



BREAK- -THROUGH APPROACH

Correction
and adjustment

REVERSE TREND

- New rectors take office in Autumn 2008.
- Irruption of criticism of the model adopted. Project in jeopardy.
- As a high-profile initiative that made it into city political mainstream the project becomes vulnerable to party politics.
- Conflict apogee: the City hands over shares (2009) to universities. But it retains the privilege of nominating the company CEO.
- The city responsible for a project that is ever more difficult to steer.

GOVERNANCE: SHOWDOWN

- The hopes for a new metropolitan law vanish (2010). An 'overstretch' moment (major strategic projects in parallel).
- The new company (Wroclaw Research Centre EIT+) is still a 'beneficiary', but not really an 'actor' of national research and innovation agenda.
- The company finds itself in a strategic limbo at the time where its business model is at its most vulnerable. Absence of national government intervention: survival tactics have to take precedence.
- The State Treasury steps in (2017).
- The future regional dimension of the initiative yet to be determined.

- City government may provide leverage for new quality in R&I.
- A strong regional dimension to an initiative may help its launch and development.
- All parties will be genuinely willing to engage with each other.

- But the municipal reach may not be enough to deal with the fallout from inevitable crises.
- But one has to remember academia's exterritorial loyalties and national government's defining role in the field.
- But in the long term their commitment will be only as strong as their governance model.



BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

PLAYING BALL

- 2006-2008: a university desk set up at City Hall.
- 2008: Mayor Rafal Dutkiewicz and prof. Tadeusz Luty decide to carry on the strategic collaboration.
- In October 2008 Wrocław Academic Hub was launched.
- A Polish city is opening its 'ERA' portfolio.



<http://acadeuro.wroclaw.pl/>

PORTFOLIO OF PROJECTS

- Wrocław Academic Hub is a municipal platform engaging universities, business and local government.
- Targeted activities EURO 1m + per year. Municipal budget. 13 people.
- Strong network. Liaison and outreach role.
- Expertise in third mission capacity. Ability to design pilot actions and scale up positive experience.



'LABOUR MARKET'

- The 'Mozart' platform: Over 160 partnerships funded by the City since 2012.
- A Wrocław-based company and an academic working on a new product or service. 12 months, one day per week.
- Academics working as effective liaison with their home institutions.

MYDA

millennium yacht design award

RAT 120 - winner of
MILLENNIUM YACHT DESIGN AWARD 2018
in professional category



**NAVI
SHIPPROJECT** S.C.

10 lat
WCA

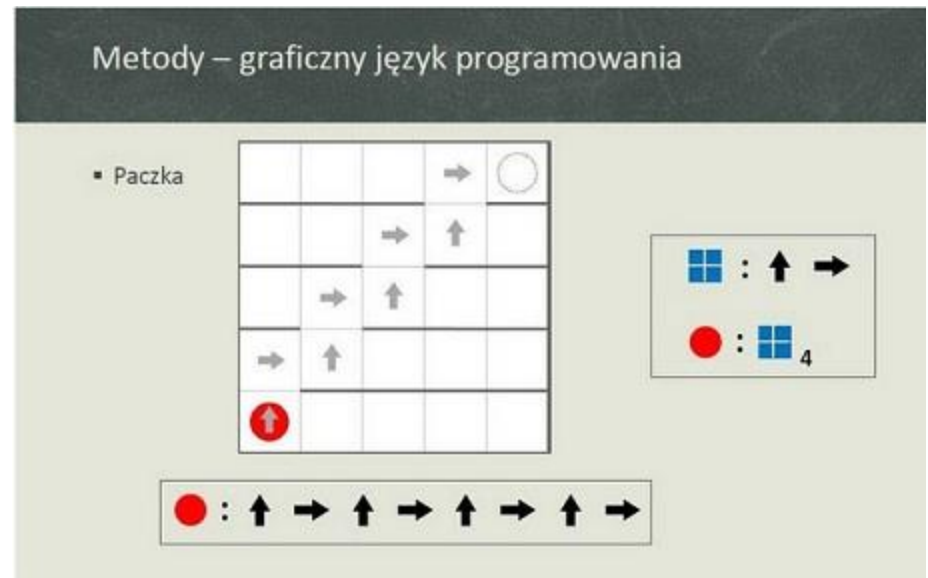
Wrocławskie Centrum
Akademickie



'ACADEMIC TALENTS'

Academy of Young Scientists and Artists (est. 2010)

- A network of young high-profile scientists and artists.
- Meeting space in a highly fragmented community.
- Visible 'third mission' strand:
 - An original coding tool for children
 - Workshops for talented high school students
- Stakeholder and an ad hoc expert group.



http://akademia.wroc.pl/pl/?page_id=478

'CAPACITY BUILDING'

OECD review of Higher Education in Regional and City Development.

- 2011-2013
- The only city in Poland to enter a similar process.
- Learning moment and the first comprehensive overview of status quo.
- City hall entering the domain of national policy (major symptom of metropolitan dynamics).

Higher Education in Regional and City Development

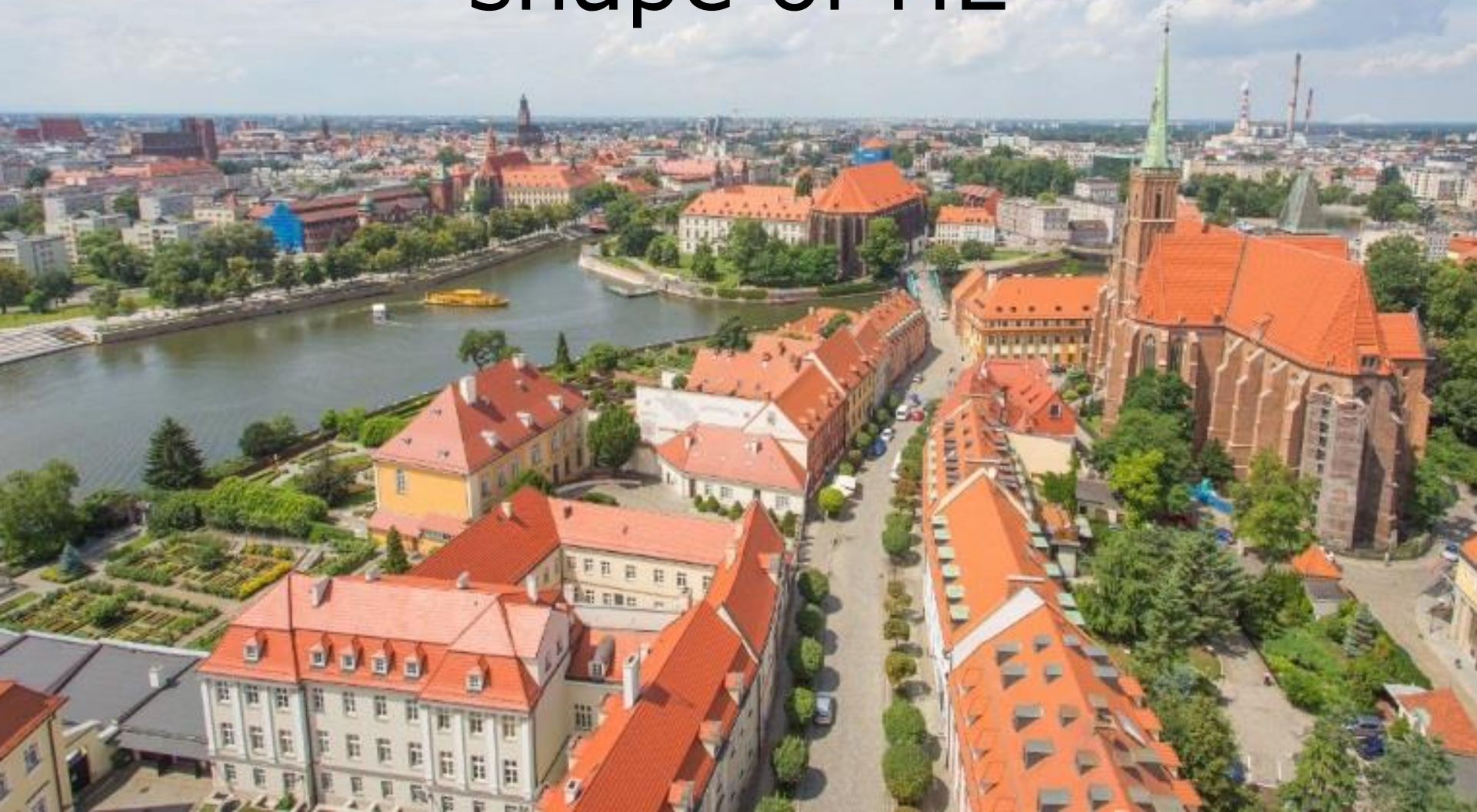
**Wroclaw,
Poland**

Jaana Puukka, Patrick Dubarle, John Goddard
Ellen Hazelkorn, Małgorzata Kuczera



- Metropolitan governments can do more than assist HE in a shift towards 3M.
- Engaged local government can act as leverage for reformers at HE institutions.
- A collaboration agenda needs to be concrete and well-defined to ensure momentum.
- It's important that you realize the risks and remain realistic: a city's 'competitive edge' is still 'thin'.
- But the local government's interest is to sustain a broad rather than selective platform of collaboration.
- But the parties must never lose sight of how their deliverables add up in the long term.

Readying for the new shape of HE



HE REFORM 2016-2018

- Major overhaul of higher education and research.
- Game-changing provisions (though given a delayed-fuse, possibly to give the academia time to digest the scope of change).
- New governance mechanisms, e.g. stronger rectors and external stakeholders drawn into Governing boards.
- New university statutes to be adopted within a year.

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF WROCLAW

- Provisional governing board
- Group of 7 external members. Voices of
 - Traditional industry
 - Global home-grown success story
 - Multinationals
 - SMEs
 - Regional development
 - Public education
 - ERA and city perspective



BOARD VOICE AT A SENSITIVE MOMENT

- 2018: Three statements on
 - Education
 - Research
 - Public mission
- Surprising breadth of discussions, including unorthodox distribution of 'utilitarian' and 'traditional' arguments.

- It's possible to move consultations with business from still and empty officialese to imaginative plain talking.
- Convergence and spirit of collaboration are possible among partners whose interests are diverse, if not disparate.
- It's possible to draw on knowledge and experience of home-grown business and government personalities.

- The language of discussions requires a lot of time-consuming 'translation' before, in, and after meetings.
- Board members' genuine interest for academia is not necessarily shared by their organizations or groups.
- Personalities may turn out to be a bottle neck for committee work: they're very busy and hard to keep on orbit.

QUESTIONS AHEAD

Government, HE institutions, business



'PIONEERS': FROM 'MILITIA' TO 'REGULARS'

- How to frame innovation policies that actually foster the spirit of innovation? (the EU-wide paradox: bureaucracies 'preaching' what they can hardly 'practice').
- How lasting will the experience of the last 15 years be now that we are approaching what may be an epoch-making local elections (Autumn 2018)?
- ANALYTICAL [NOT PRACTICAL] COMMENT: Is there any single title on the political agenda today that university is believed *not* to be co-responsible for? Are we able to distinguish between what is true about the university in general and what is relevant for the universities in our city today?

HE INSTITUTIONS

- Moving from 'free-for-all' to 'managed freedom' in academic careers. Are current collaboration champions ready to fit within prospective governance/institutional structures? Are their home institutions ready to vest powers in them?
- How to consolidate HE institutions without driving their uninstitutional 'talent' to extinction? (fighting risk? tolerating risk? accepting risk?)
- How to strike the balance between tying up HE to the local economy and letting parts of it follow instincts to the contrary?
- Are the decision-making bodies ready to make bold bets in their work on new HE statutes (new university statutes to be ready by the spring 2019)?

BUSINESS

- Are business leaders ready for an evidence-based discussion that is not focused on the short term?
- While it's clear that this is a learning moment for HE, is it also a learning moment for business? In what sense?

WEB REFERENCES

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Wrocław Academic Hub

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Academy of Young Scientists and Artists

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