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The dissertation examines member cities of the Polish National Network of Cittaslow Cities, which function and develop following the tenets of the concept of a slow city. The author attempts to analyse the effects of the adoption and implementation of the concept of the slow city on urban development.

The paper defines the slow city concept and its underlying assumptions. Indicated were the factors influencing the adoption of the slow city concept, the local resources utilised to implement the slow city concept, and the development factors of utmost importance to the implementation of the slow city concept. Barriers at the stage of adopting the slow city concept, the concept's strengths and weaknesses, and the principal opportunities and threats posed by its implementation were identified.

The primary objective of this dissertation is to evaluate the viability and utility of the slow city concept in managing the development of small towns - from the perspective of towns implementing it that are members of the Polish National Network of Cittaslow Towns.

The research tasks were accomplished by testing the research hypotheses, both the main and specific ones. The fundamental premise is as follows: Implementing the concept of a slow city presents small towns with an opportunity for growth.

The research was conducted in three distinct phases. The first was theoretical and consisted of a review of national and international literature on small towns and Cittaslow networks. The purpose of this study was to confirm the existence of a research gap regarding the application of the slow city concept to small-town development management. As part of the second stage, the content of the strategic documents of small Polish towns and towns in the Polish Cittaslow network will be compared based on their respective development issues. In the third phase of the investigation, a survey was conducted. The objective of the survey was to determine the perceptions of local government representatives regarding the allure of the slow city concept for small towns.

Based on the empirical research findings, a recommendation was developed for local government officials of small towns regarding the adoption and implementation of the concept of a slow city.

**Keywords:** small towns, Cittaslow, slow city, cities of quality of life, development strategy, the concept of the slow city.