



WILCO

Welfare innovations
at the local level
in favour of cohesion

MURALS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

“Together for Revitalization”

Social Innovation in Plock

Renata Siemieńska, Ilona Matysiak, Anna Domaradzka
Robert B. Zajonc Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw, Poland



Project “Together for revitalization” was implemented by the City Social Assistance Center in cooperation with the Professional Development Institution and the Association “Innovation Center for Information Society”. The project lasted for almost 15 months (2012/2013). It had a budget of 380.000 euro and was co-financed from the European Social Fund.

It was **one of 20 pilot projects** implemented in the country, with aim to develop a general model of social revitalization to be transferred to other cities.

Each partner was responsible for different activities in the project using their specific expertise and resources.

Social Assistance Center organized social support activities for marginalized families and coordinated the whole project.

Professional Development Center offered vocational training for unemployed community members.

ICIS Association conducted the series of community activities including the revitalization of neglected backyards, and inviting artists to work on murals projects with young members of the community.

Płock Art Gallery was responsible of artistic supervision of the project.



Main goal of the project was to carry out social revitalization of neglected and problem-ridden areas of Płock’s old town. It’s the area characterized by low quality communal housing localized in run-down old buildings, inhabited by many poor families, living on social benefits. These interventions included partial renovation of old buildings, squares and streets, but also **“bringing back to life” the local community**. All together the project involved at least 100 residents of old city neighborhood – all social assistance beneficiaries, half of them aged 15 to 25.

Nowadays, **muralism** is gaining strength in many parts of the world. Those initiatives use the **collective production of mural art to empower socio-economically vulnerable communities**. Based on residents’ own ideas, a collective mural art process gives the community a feeling that local residents can be a real force behind the social change.

As a **result of the project**, several backyards have been renovated, small gardens established, with sand-pits and playgrounds for the children. The residents themselves care about renovated backyards and added new features like swings or flowerbeds. Several participants found a job after professional courses organized in the project.

