



City of Piła with new energy!

Experiences and inspirations











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Dear residents of Piła,

In 2021, our city was among the winners of the Local Development Programme, financed by the so-called Norwegian Funds. Thanks to external support, we have implemented nearly 40 projects that have brought many benefits to Piła and our community. We gave them common, dynamic and modern slogan 'City of Piła with new energy!".

This is the first time that such large-scale activities have been implemented, aimed directly at you, the residents.

For nearly 3 years, you have had the opportunity to benefit from many initiatives and events that integrated and activated people of different ages, strengthened local and neighbourhood relations.

Thanks to Norwegian funding, we have managed to implement a number of interesting projects. The rehabilitation base for the disabled at Płotki Lake or the LunAres research station at the Piła airport are examples of such unique initiatives, which we can boast far beyond the borders of our region.

Another unique project is the construction of the Aviation Education Centre in the shelter-hangar at the Piła airport, which is being built primarily for the younger part of the local community.

We rebuilt and modernised the so-called 'Okraglak' building, where the Piła Institute for Integration and Education was created. The building was renovated and adapted for people with disabilities. It is supposed to be a meeting place for NGOs and active Piła residents of all ages. We also support the local labour market by helping young people to choose their career paths. So there could not miss activities that helped young people broaden their horizons in terms of developing entrepreneurship and equipping them with the competences and skills currently in demand on the labour market. I had the opportunity to hear more than once how important these activities were.

In implementing the project, we were keen to set out a New Development Path for the City of Piła, based above all on the pursuit of sustainable development, accessibility for all and energy self-sufficiency. The implemented projects used energy of people, energy of places and green energy. The strengths of our city related to city's research and developments centres, human resources, schools, universities and business helped us to achieve our aims. The previous experience of the entire project team and interesting ideas of our partners were also very important.

The project activities have taught the city administration a lot. The Institutional Development Programme has made it possible to improve the skills and IT competences of the employees of Piła City Hall. The purchased equipment has provided better and more effective ways of working, as well as helped us improve our communication of municipal events to the public.

The project, co-financed with funds from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021, has brought new energy to Piła. Thanks to this support, many activities will be continued in the future.

There are also ideas that we are keen to share with other cities at home and abroad.

Beata Dudzińska Mayor of the City of Piła





More than PLN 17 million to improve the quality of life of Piła residents

"City of Piła with new energy!"

This was a historic event. In December 2021, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy and the Municipality of Piła for the financing of the project "City of Piła with new energy!" under the Local Development Programme. For the implementation of this project, the city received EUR 3 770 303 or more than PLN 17 million in support from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 and the state budget.

Since then, many projects have been carried out in Piła, covering various spheres of life. Lots of fresh, original and interesting ideas have been implemented and a number of social and cultural events, which will stay long in our memories, have

been organized. Today we have a great final of these activities.

The Local Development Plan of the City of Piła - The City of Piła with new energy!" is a strategic programme covering the key dimensions of the city's development: social, economic, environmental, spatial, financing of the city's development and intelligent management of this development. The project therefore assumed:

• **Economic activation** - organising vocational education events to help young people adapt to the challenges of the labour market. Events such as "Piła na Start", Piła Academy of Skills were implemented. The city has created incentives for setting up one's own business or professional development.







- Social activation integrative, environmental, educational and cultural events, carried out in modernised or retrofitted centres, including the Senior Activation Centre, the newly opened Piła Institute for Integration and Education and the Regional Cultural Centre. These are now places that support the building of intergenerational relations as well as environmental and social awareness among residents. They also provide a form of support for excluded people and families, especially those with disabilities.
- Activating the potential of the post-military airport (Aviation Education Centre) combined with educational and research activities, protection of cultural heritage to accelerate the process of urban regeneration.
- Development of national and international partnerships (including those with representatives from donor countries), which enabled the exchange of experiences and good practices, building new bonds, teaching tolerance, openness, respect for otherness.
- Development of efficient public administration which is transparent, open to cooper-

ation with residents and which encourages them to participate in local affairs processes.

The project was designed to prevent all forms of discrimination. The resulting infrastructure was designed to be accessible to everyone, including children, people with reduced mobility and people with special needs. Has it been successful? The projects planned as part of the programme have been implemented, they still exist and are serving the people of Piła. So the answer is as follows: YES.

Partners and implementers of the project include: municipal units and entities for which the municipality of Piła is the founding body, nongovernmental organisations, universities, business institutions, as well as neighbouring municipalities of the Piła Urban Functional Area.

All of the projects implemented as a part of the project are local products that can be replicated by others. The energy of people, the energy of places and green energy were used to achieve them. And these tasks were numerous.

Meet a few that we are particularly proud of!







The Institute for Integration and Education in Piła

has the ambition to be a leader in activities connecting generations



The building has been refurbished and adapted for people with disabilities. There is a lift, a ramp at the entrance and separate parking spaces A modern language and computer room has been created, and the area around the building has been adapted into an educational garden, The Piła Institute for In-



There is a growing number of seniors in Piła, and thus a growing number of people with spare time. They need support to spend the autumn of their lives imaginatively and actively. We have decided to make it easier for them by giving them the opportunity to acquire the skills they need to remain professionally and socially active, with a particular focus on interand intra-generational integration. 21 November 2023 in the renovated building of the so-called "Okrąglak" on Okólna Street 32 A we opened the Piła Institute for Integration and Education.

oto by City Hall in

photo by City Hall in Pila





tegration and Education - as the name suggests - will help to integrate the community and activate groups at risk of exclusion. Inclusive, environmental, educational and cultural events will build intergenerational relations, environmental and social awareness among residents.

From October 2023 to April 2024, the facility hosted activities involving both young people and seniors. There were refresher classes for seniors in English and French, as well as a series of environmental workshops in which children from Piła's public elementary schools and seniors created an organic garden.

In School European Clubs in nine primary schools in Piła, we promoted the idea of the European community. We also organised an International Miting at the POW cemetery in Leszków. Participants paid tribute to the thousands of victims of the camp and learned about its history. They also called on the peoples of Europe to mutual respect, cooperation and unity. We did not forget the present days in our activities. During the 'e-Senior' training, senior residents from Piła learned how to use a computer, the Internet, a tablet, a mobile phone and e-government (trusted profile, ePuap services). They already know how to search for information, communicate via social media and safely pay online for services or goods. E-prescription, e-patient, e- referral are no longer a mystery to them either. As part of the training course "Senior caregiver for older people", the senior residents gained practical skills in caring for older people and providing them with assistance in everyday life. The project culminated in the "European Integration Festival".

The 'Okraglak' building will house, among others: Nadnotecki University of the Third Age and the Association of Civic European Initiatives.

photo by City Hall in Pila





ohoto by City Hall in Pila

The Piła Institute for Integration and Education will help integrate the urban community and activate groups at risk of exclusion. Intergrative, environmental, educational and cultural events will build intergenerational relations, environmental and social awareness.









Energy to go outside one's own place of living

 rehabilitation of people with disabilities at the diving base at Płotki Lake







"Energy to go outside one's own place of living" is an action, dedicated to people in a particularly difficult situation - the limitation of disability. Our assumption was to enable active participation in social life for those residents of Piła and its surroundings who cannot move independently. We "threw" them literally "into deep water". We bought diving equipment for rehabilitation and prepared people with disabilities for diving. The classes were carried out from March to December 2023 by trainers from the KROK PO KROKU HSA Foundation, which has extensive experience and conducts rehabilitation on a daily basis, using the Piła swimming pool and the diving Platform situated on Płotki Lake. People with various types of disabilities - both motor and intellectual - but also with progressive diseases and autism attended the classes. HSA Piła instructors provided them not only with rehabilitation, but also with a great adventure.

After the training, 20 participants were able to take exams and gain a diving certificate (according to the standards of the international organisation HSA).

With this project, we opened a door through which people with disabilities could enter a new, previously unknown space.

This is because the state of disability is no longer an important obstacle. Because I have taken on a unique challenge. I am a diver and that changes everything. I'm coming out of four walls. I'm starting to live - boldly and courageously!



photo by K. Trawiński













Aviation Education Centre

- research and education workshops and analogue international space missions

The airport and the investment areas developing around it have the potential to attract investors and create new jobs. The Piła airport is also associated with the development of innovative aviation, space and energy technologies. It is here where the LunAres research station, which has been simulating manned space flights for many years, operates. In cooperation between Piła local government and the LunAres Association, an Aviation Education Centre is being established.

In the second half of 2023, four analogue space



photo by City Hall in Pila

missions (Nike II, Selene, ICA- res-2 M01, ICAres-2 M02) took place at the LunAres base, in a hangar at the Piła airport, with 26 scientists and space enthusiasts from around the world. There were plenty of Poles in the astronaut team, and among the daredevils was the woman from Piła - Maria Malanowska.

"Analogue" astronauts had limited supplies of water, food and energy. They were subjected to tests and training and their activities were watched by a team of scientists from international institu-



photo by J. Borkowicz







photo by LunAres Research Station

tions, dealing with space medicine, psychology and sociology. The data collected will be used by researchers from around the world.

The residents of Piła had the opportunity to hear about what was happening at the base during meetings with participants in the mission. Everyone could see with their own eyes what the interior of LunAres looked like.

We also organised a series of scientific workshops, which aim was to popularize knowledge of physics, chemistry, robotics, programming, space, renewable energy sources and environmental protection. Workshop participants were particularly fond of the new-age humanoid robots.

At the beginning of 2024, we began the adaptation of an aircraft hangar into an Aviation Education Centre, equipped with interactive toys for children and young people and accessories for young astronauts. The area around the converted shelter-hangar will be turned into an educational garden.

Last year, four analogue space missions took place at the base at Piła Airport, involving 26 scientists and space enthusiasts from around the world. In the team of astronauts there was also one woman from Piła.



photo by City Hall in Pila



photo by LunAres Research Statior



photo by City Hall in Pila



photo by LunAres Research Station







Activities at the Senior Activation Centre

in the four spheres of life of older people and people with disabilities

With the demographic ageing of the population in the city of Piła, there is a growing need for care services and family support services for dependent people. To meet these needs, we have equipped the Senior Activation Centre with equipment for relaxation and sports activities.

As if that was not enough, we held lectures on health promotion and workshops on the "Secrets of Health and Beauty". Seniors participated in sports and recreational activities (gym exercises, relaxation classes, facial gymnastics, stretching and pelvic floor training) and integration and relaxation trips to Wrocław, Łódź, Frombork and Elbląg. "Safe Senior on the Road", "Pharmacological Safety for Senior Residents", "Safe Senior on the Web"

and self-defence workshops are our activities to improve broadly understood safety. For seniors and people with disabilities, we held classes to stimulate the nervous system and support memory and concentration: interactive senior (SI therapy) and the Senior Academy of the Mind. There were also innovative classes to improve sensorimotor skills, i.e. the interconnection between perceiving and feeling the reality around us. There were also exercises in sensoplastics, i.e. sensing textures, colours, consistencies and even tastes.

We have employed three personal assistants to support people with disabilities. The assistants help people with disabilities to become independent.

photo by MOPS Piła





























The ,4 Elements' Festival of Light Theatres is a unique cultural event, attracting theatre, art and light effects enthusiasts not only from the region. The event's programme consists of performances that use light and colour to tell stories inspired by the four elements: earth, water, air and fire, with laser shows as one of the highlights. Modern light technology combined with music leaves an unforgettable impression.

The ,4 Elements' festival is not only a show, but also a place for meetings and cultural exchange.

It is an opportunity to see how different art forms can interact with each other and how art can enliven an urban space and community. The event is an example of a local initiative influencing the social and cultural life of the city. Thanks to such events, the city of Piła is becoming a place where culture is accessible to everyone.

The first edition of the festival took place in September 2022. The programme included laser shows an open-air theatre performance entitled "Tarzan" performed by the Ocelot Theatre, and the Meta-

photo by Z. Komorowski



















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photo by Z. Komorowski

physical Artistic Night i.e. video-art, performance, live music.

The second edition of the ,4 Elements' Festival, organised in September 2023, featured performances and open-air presentations: a sky-high performance by the French group Gratte Ciel entitled ,Tawa', a performance entitled "Rzeka Zapomnienia" by the TAK! and Virtual Theatre, a performance by the Dyemotion Dance Theatre entitled ,Materia'. During the Festival, at 11 Listopada Street and Domańskiego Square, we admired the light installations "Deszczowa Piosenka" and "Baśniowy Ogród". There was also a "Two Worlds of Light" research town.

The ,4 Elements' festival is not only a show, but also a place for meetings and cultural exchange. You can see how different art forms interact with each other and how art enlivens the space and the urban community. Thanks to such events, Piła is becoming a place where culture is accessible to everyone.



photo by City Hall in Pila







Active Piła residents do not waste resources



The people of Piła know how to manage their kitchen wisely so as not to waste food. They know what can be created from things that seemingly only have waste value. And we support them in this. We bought a mobile workshop kitchen so that they can make real culinary magic. The Piła Food Bank turned out to be a fantastic partner in this culinary activity. We cooked together with our guests from Norway.

It has turned out that cooking is not only about learning, but also a great way to talk, integrate internationally and even make friends.







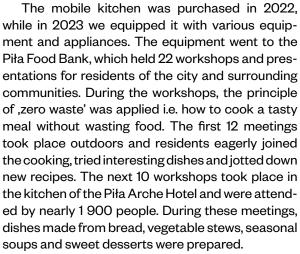




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Working together for a green, competitive and inclusive Europe











PIŁA SKATE FESTIVAL

- new energy on the island and in Piła planty

There are 7 lakes within the administrative boundaries of Piła, the Gwda River flows through the city and more than half of the area is green space.

To make use of the potential of Płotki Lake, we bought equipment and facilities for the Tourism and



photo by City Hall in Pila

Leisure Centre there. We created a water obstacle course on Płotki Lake which in a short time became an attraction not only for the residents of Piła, but also for people from the entire region. The water obstacle course is a set of 26 inflatables that provide a variety of fun and challenges. These include jumping pillows, a trampoline, a moving balance beam and a slide. It's ideal for people of all ages who want an active outdoor experience.

At the Piła Skateplaza, we organised sports activities for residents, demonstrations by professionals, sports shows and tournaments, but also an educational and recreational festivities. These activities were received with enthusiasm and initiated the PIŁA SKATE FESTIVAL, which has already had two editions.

Local residents could try their hand at street and lifestyle sports. They learned how to ride roller skates, inline skates, skateboards, scooters and BMX bikes. These activities helped to promote the skate plaza on social media related to street and lifestyle sports.

The Skateplaza has quickly become a favourite















with extreme sports enthusiasts. It is one of the most modern and largest facilities of its kind in Poland. It covers an area of 3,500 square meters and offers a wide range of obstacles, including a bowl that allows you to perform high jumps and advanced tricks. It is a place created with skateboarders, inline skaters, BMX riders and scooter users in mind. In addition to the track itself, the complex has a roller-skating track, pitches for team games, and a calisthenics area.

Piła Skateplaza was awarded the title of Ruby Hit and Grand Prix 2022 for the model sports, recreation and tourism project on a European scale.









Entrepreneurship for young people

Piła Academy of Skills, "Piła na start"

Teaching business to young people is a great investment in the future of the city. Why do we think so? Because activities activating the local labour market and supporting the development of entrepreneurship - especially among young people - are a key element of Piła's New Development Path. Hence, the idea of organising events concerning vocational education, such as "Piła na start", "Piła Academy of Skills". Their task is to stimulate entrepreneurial attitudes among young people and we must admit that they fulfil their role excellently. They encourage primary and secondary school students to develop professionally and set up their own businesses.

In organising those events we cooperated with the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, the Stanisław Staszic Academy of Applied Sciences in Piła and the North Wielkopolska Chamber of Commerce. Under the common slogan "Piła na start", we carried out a number of activities aimed at preparing young people to embark on a professional path, building awareness of the economic potential of Piła and the specifics of the local labour market. The programme of these activities included, among others, the Global Entrepreneurship Week with a job and career fair, the Youth Job Fair.











photo by City Hall in Pila



photo by City Hall in Pila











photo by City Hall in Pila



Two editions of Entrepreneurship Lessons were also organised - open workshops for young people, developing entrepreneurship and preparing them to run their own business. In turn, pupils in grades 7-8 from Piła's elementary schools and students from partner universities made one-day visits to local businesses as part of the "Przystanek Praca".

As part of developing entrepreneurship, we also ran two editions of the Piła Academy of Skills - a competition for young people with the participation of Piła entrepreneurs. During each edition, five student teams competed for cash prizes and a cup. The task of the young people participating in the competition was to prepare a marketing plan/business card for a given entrepreneur and record a promotional video. The effects of the young people's work were presented during a final gala event.

Thanks to the Piła Academy of Skills, young people were able to develop their horizons in the following areas: running a business, corporate social responsibility, marketing and contemporary forms of business promotion. They broadened key competences desired on the labour market, including creativity, teamwork, responsibility, flexibility, adaptability, resistance to stress, self-presentation, etc. And all this in cooperation with entrepreneurs from Piła, who were willing to share their knowledge and experience.

Thanks to the Piła Academy of Skills, young people were able to broaden their knowledge in the following areas: business management, corporate social responsibility and contemporary forms of business promotion.



photo by City Hall in Pila























photo by City Hall in Pila





photo by Z. Komorowski



The Culture Studio: Young Energy Television

- studio & workshops for young students of media arts







photo by Z. Komorowski







There was an idea, there is a finished work. Something just in time for those interested in con-

The great interest of young people, but also adults and seniors in modern technologies, gave rise to the need to create a media workshop called 'Television - Young Energy'.

temporary, dynamic media and journalism.

For this aim we renovated the premises in the building of the Regional Cultural Centre in Piła. We purchased professional equipment and conducted a series of workshops on filming techniques and the use of audio-video equipment, recording video material in various formats, creative approaches to filming, recording radio-quality sound, operating software, colour correction, film colour processing, etc.

Participants in the classes were given an interesting alternative way to spend their free time. Under the supervision of an instructor, they were able to develop their interests and build their competences. They are already producing film footage, podcasts, interviews or event reports. They have been given the chance to gain experience that can be used in the future, when working for a TV station, advertising agency or the press, but also when publishing material, for example on social media.

Youth is power, youth is originality and freshness of ideas, that is why the city, giving energetic impulse and tools for action, counts on interesting, creative presentation of events, investments and meetings. Already today, young adepts of media arts have proven themselves in their work for the city - they cover city events and public debates and produce film and photographic material documenting city events.



photo by Z. Komorowski



photo by Z. Komorowski



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photo by Z. Komorowski









Organisation of ECO events

in the municipalities of the Piła Urban Functional Area

One of the aims of the New Development Path is to improve communication between municipalities, stopping the outflow of young people. It is not without significance to increase the number of joint activities between municipalities and to learn about the needs and problems of neighbouring communities.

To this end, together with the communes of: Szydłowo, Ujście, Wysoka, Krajenka and Trzcianka, forming the Urban Functional Area of the City of Piła, we organised 6 ECO events. The idea was to shape pro-environmental patterns of behaviour, enable the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary for environmental protection and to inte-



photo by M. Sadowska



photo by D. Cichy

























Bilateral cooperation with the Norwegian twin city

Cooperation with the Norwegian city of Lørenskog has been an extremely interesting and inspiring experience for both Piła and Lørenskog. The exchange of good practices and study visits have shown that both municipalities have a lot in common.

The first joint workshops were held in September 2022. During them, we outlined common thematic areas and the framework of the partnership agreement. Less than six months later, during another study visit to Piła, we addressed culture and senior citizen policy with our partners. Social integration was the topic of the next meeting. We hosted our Norwegian partners at a Skateplaza, an EKO picnic, a science picnic and a zero waste cooking workshop.

In September 2023, we continued discussions concerning cooperation in the area of 'Culture and Senior Policy'. Together, we organised another edition of the '4 Elements' Festival, during which Piła residents could admire the Water Bear light installation brought straight from Lørenskog. Visitors from Norway visited also the Senior Activation Centre, the City Apiary run by the Bee Foundation and the LunAres Research Station - an analogue research station for simulating manned space missions.

The topic of the last visit in March 2024 was the education system in Poland.

The guests visited Piła's kindergartens and schools and learned about the "Piła Skills Academy" project.







An important part of the visit was also a meeting to the Piła Institute for Integration and Education, where we discussed the activities that had been carried out there and the plans for the future.

The revisit began with our stay in Norway in October 2022. We got to know the twin city and signed a letter of intent concerning cooperation.

Climate, environment, mobility and innovative learning processes in schools were the themes of

Cooperation with the Norwegian city of Lørenskog has been an extremely interesting and inspiring experience for both Piła and Lørenskog. The exchange of good practices and study visits have shown that both municipalities have a lot to offer each other.



photo by City Hall in Pila









our study visit in May 2023. The delegation from Piła had the opportunity to visit Kjennskole - a school in Lørenskog, Skårer Gårdfarm - a place for social integration, Løkenåsveien - a care home and kindergarten, Igloo Innovation and SNO - a centre for knowledge and innovation in areas such as the sports industry, business and health.

During the study visit in January/February 2024, we again dealt with culture and senior policy, while at the same time discussed the continuation of our cooperation after the end of the project. An important part of the visit was also a meeting with the new deputy mayor of Lørenskog - in the city hall building.



photo by City Hall in Pila





There are reasons to be proud

How did we succeed in such a complex and interdisciplinary project? First of all, we set ourselves a few 'golden' rules:

Firstly - to involve residents in the process of generating ideas, co-determining about the city. The project caused social engagement and interest among Piła residents in what the city was doing and demonstrated the energy and potential that lied within the local community and local NGOs.

Secondly – to ensure good coordination of activities. It was crucial to create a team and divide the tasks properly. Therefore, a regulation of the Head of the Piła City Hall formally established task teams for the implementation of the Institutional Development Plan (IDP) and the Local Development Plan (LDP).

Thirdly - to improve the quality and accessibility of the services provided by the city. The project created an opportunity to purchase much-needed IT equipment. IT training was provided for city administration staff as well. Drones were purchased for city events and staff were trained. This has given independence and the opportunity to show residents the changes taken place, investments finished and various events organised in the city.

Finally- to involve partners in project implementation. Their experience, creativity and willingness to act has significantly supported the achievement of our objectives.

What made it difficult and most challenging for us?

Factors beyond our control – i.e. pandemic, war, inflation. The COVID pandemic kept us all at home for a while. But we did not let it defeat us. What worked then was the online collaboration which we were learning. Because of the outbreak of war in Ukraine, which involved much of the public in war and humanitarian aid to our neighbours, we needed to learn flexibility and response to changes.

Project deadline. It was not easy for us to coordinate all the activities properly and to meet the deadlines set in the schedule. We were sometimes over-optimistic about the progress of projects. Sometimes we had to discipline team members to act more quickly. Sometimes the results of tenders delayed the implementation of certain tasks. For example, the Aviation Education Centre, for the reconstruction of which the contractor was only selected in the fourth tender. The task is still in progress.

Final result?

Despite the difficulties we have encountered along the way, we are pleased with the results of our efforts. It would not have been possible without many inspiring, creative people, always eager to take initiatives - representatives of local communities, NGOs, social activists. Thanks to our work together, today we can say that there are reasons to be proud of!

List of partners and project participants in the project "City of Piła with new energy!"

Regional Cultural Centre - Factory of Emotions * GWDA Ltd.. * KROK PO KROKU HSA Association * Piła Food Bank Association * Pro-Senior Association * Nadnotecki University of the Third Age in Piła * Civic Association European Initiatives * LunAres Association * Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań * Stanisław Staszic University in Piła (currently Stanisław Staszic Academy of Applied Sciences in Piła) * Economic Chamber of Northern Wielkopolska, * Rozwojowi.pl Association, * Humanitarian Aid Association, * Piła Polish-French Friendship Society * Polish

Association of Pensioners, Pensioners and Invalids, * Polish Scouting and Guiding Association, Wielkopolska Scouting Troop in Piła, * Commune and Town of Krajenka, * Commune of Szydłowo * Commune of Trzcianka * Commune of Ujście * Town and Commune of Wysoka * Departments of Piła City Hall * Social Welfare Centre in Piła * City Sports and Recreation Centre in Piła * City Housing Management Company in Piła.

Editorial team: "City of Piła with new energy!" project team

Graphic design, typesetting, printing: ART-WENA Graphic Design Studio www.art-wena.pl

Piła, April 2024



