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## **The Cultural Heritage as a part of urban policy. Tbilisi 15-16 November 2012**

Town centre management and urban regeneration as multifaceted and multidisciplinary activities have enjoyed a growing level of interest in the city over the last decades.

Each town in the world possesses some magic sites which create its identity. Urban revitalization of the cultural heritage areas has been a key to urban planning and the management of cities in Poland since the rebuilding of the country after World War II. It is only relatively recently, however, that strategic interpretations and practical applications of this concept have embraced its multifaceted nature beyond purely physical regeneration. Similarly, town center management has evolved over the last years from a reactive approach to the re-invigoration of urban areas increasingly under threat from global socio-economic trends to a strategic proposition with partnership working, competitiveness and sustainability at the forefront of its agenda.

There are opportunities as well as challenges for various stakeholders, including local residents, visitors, local and national businesses, city councils or local authorities, urban development agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and housing management companies.

### **A. LEGAL INSTRUMENTS**

Poland is a parliamentary republic of unitary territorial organisation with a growing role for self-governments. **Public Administration Structure in Poland** consists of 4 levels:

- national,
- regional –16 regions in Poland (voivodships),
- county - 373 counties (poviats), including 68 cities with the power of independent municipal counties
- local - the basic, traditional self-governmental entities, called gmina (commune), comprise urban communes (towns, cities), urban-rural communes and rural communes.

The state government operates on national and regional levels. Beside the government administration (Voivodeship Offices), there is also self-governing voivodship (Marshal Office) on the regional level. Self-Governments are eligible to taking decisions in the field of spatial planning on the regional, county and local levels.

In the early nineties of the last century, having followed some fifty years of the centralised planning, Poland has rejected the ideological paradigm of top-bottom steering and introduced bottom-up approach, which gives the local self-governments rights to manage a spatial policy.

Administration Unit	Self-Governments	State Government
COUNTRY		National GOVERNMENT
REGION	SELF-GOVERNING VOIVODSHIP	VOIVODSHIP government administration
COUNTY	County - POWIAT	
Commune CITY	Commune (Municipality) - GMINA	

Fig.1 Public administration structure in Poland

These three levels in spatial planning have got a complementary character in relation to one another, creating together the hierarchical scheme without mutual and arbitrary subordination. Fundamental assumption of the spatial planning system is the coherence of plans with development strategies, treated as social and economic assumptions and the obligation of spatial planning to be in duty on every level of territorial self-government and governmental administration on the central level.

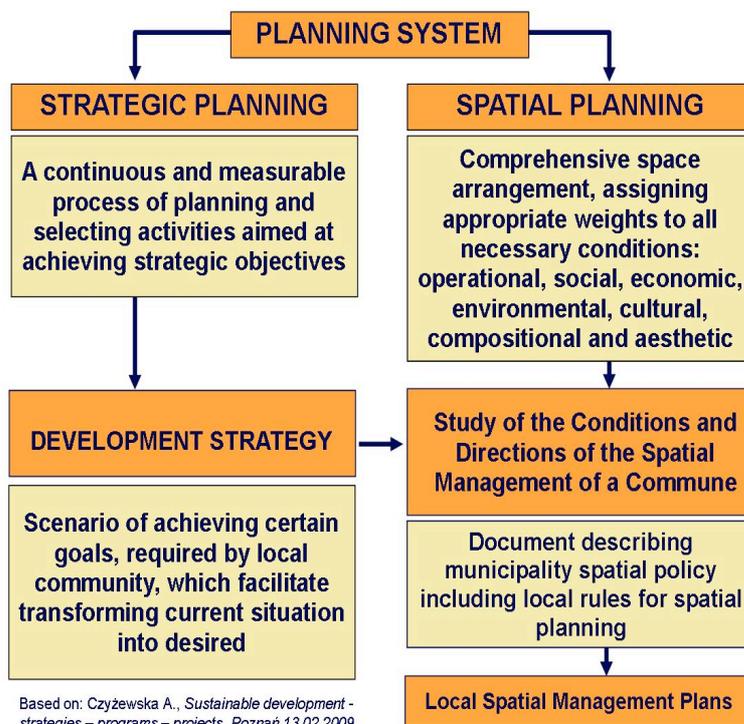


Fig.2 Spatial and strategic planning in Poland

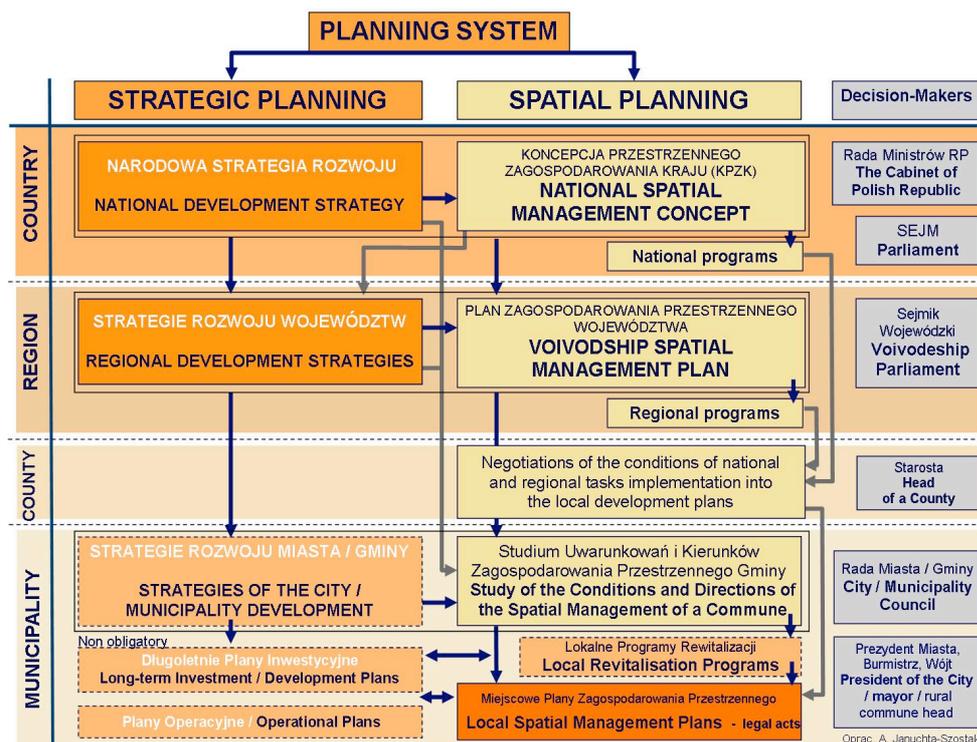


Fig.3 Types of formal plans relevant for revitalization projects by A. Januchta – Szostak.

### Study of the Conditions and Directions of the Spatial Management of a Commune ("Study")

According to the Spatial Development Planning Act of 27 March 2003, the "study" includes both a diagnosis of a municipality's spatial development and also a specification of the directions of its development in the area of spatial management. The conditions result especially from: original land use, existence of service infrastructure, protected objects and places, state of the natural and cultural environment, ground property right, life quality of inhabitants, tasks serving the execution of supra-local public purposes. The study defines especially: environmental values and threats, protective forms, built-up areas, areas excluded from building-up and designed for building-up with differentiation of their functional features and postulated transformational activities, condition and directions of development of service and technical infrastructure, areas for which local spatial management plans can be developed as well as the areas destined for execution of supra-local tasks and programs.

The study is prepared for the entire territory of a municipality and the municipal council is obligated to vote on its enactment. The study is an internally binding administrative act, although it is not an act of local law, i.e. it has no universally binding force. This means that it cannot constitute a basis for administrative decision-making (e.g. decisions on land development and management conditions). The study contains both a text and graphics part, takes into account the principles set down in the country's spatial management concept, the components of the voivodship's development strategy and spatial management plan as well as those of the development strategy of the municipality if the municipality has such document at its disposal.

**Local Spatial Management Plan** is a planning document – act of local law – establishing for the area covered the use of land separated by dividing lines, defining its functions, methods of management, ways of infrastructure use, and also, in case of necessity, local

requirements, rules and standards of building development, and other specific conditions requiring the spatial planning regulation.

## **B. MANAGEMENT TOOLS – the Revitalization Program.**

According to the definition proposed by the Minister of Regional Development: *"Revitalisation is a complex, coordinated, long-standing and performed in a particular area process of spatial, technical, social and economic changes, initiated by a local government in order to help the area recover from crisis by giving it new functional quality and creating conditions for its development on the basis of specific endogenic predetermination."*<sup>1</sup>

Since 1989 the Polish cities have been active to develop and implement the revitalisation programmes, as a part of local strategies development. These require constant civic education to build a local partnerships.

Revitalisation, that is restoring the vital powers and reviving, according to the Office for the Sustainable Urban Development stands for *"the process of spatial, social and economic changes, aiming to help an area recover from crisis and leading to the development, including the improvement of life quality of the local community". "[...] The main goal of revitalisation is restoring the previous functions of a socially, economically and environmentally degraded area, or changing its functions into new ones. [...] The goal of local revitalisation program is to revitalise the cities in the social and economic aspects, increase the tourist and cultural potential of the degraded, post-industrial or urban areas."* The quoted document constituted the basis for creating the definition included in The Guidelines of the Minister of Regional Development

Many definitions, mention four distinctive revitalisation features, which can constitute criteria for distinguishing revitalisation from other forms of spatial intervention, namely:

- revitalisation goals concern social and economic, as well as ecological and spatial spheres, while the architectural and urban as well as infrastructural activities serve the goals
- revitalisation is a reaction to a crisis situation in the particular area,
- the revitalisation program requires both private and public partners engagement,
- the revitalisation process is complex and multi-aspect, based on the synergic activities aiming to make the quality change in the whole selected area.

Revitalisation process scenario (fig. 4) consists of 5 stages: A. strategy creation, B. economical justification, C. financing, D. implementation, E. monitoring and evaluation. The process is connected with spatial planning on the stage A (strategy creation) by analysing existing situation, creating concepts of spatial management, evaluating different options (multi-criterion analysis), and finally preparation and approval of the Local Spatial Management Plan. The chosen, economically justified option of the plan is subjected to the further planning and designing process. On the stage D (implementation) urban, landscape and architectural projects are being prepared and realised. Social and economic projects managed by different partners (private and NGO sectors, citizen groups) are an added value aspect to investment projects focused on specific area (see Fig.4).

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<sup>1</sup> *Directions of the Minister of Regional Development concerning housing activities programming, Warsaw 13.08.2008*



Fig.4 Socio – economic aspect of revitalization programs.

The concept of community participation is not limited to experts, formally-organized groups, or government officials, but include all dimensions of the community.

Economic development is a key component of this approach since it is necessary to provide the resources for a healthy living environment, but all aspects of the total community's economic, social, and physical health must be addressed for successful development. The cities will do this through their local governments, NGOs, businesses, and private initiatives.

### **C. CONSTRAINS**

- Lack of the Revitalisation Program Act on the national level
- Lack the Spatial Planning and Spatial Management Act alteration;
- The governmental planning system level is still complicated and does not have sufficient enforcement possibilities for implementing strategic decisions. Nor are there effective procedures for coupling the system with bottom-up feedback;
- Also at the local level, the various issues are difficult to introduce properly. The communes have many opportunities to avoid the imposition of unwanted programmes and projects, i.e. through prolonging the procedures surrounding the preparation of local plans, sustaining social and judicial processes etc;
- Long and complicated procedures of Local Spatial Management Plans preparation and approval;
- Fragmentation of Local Spatial Management Plan. Some communes prefer to manage space through administrative decisions rather than local plans, through misunderstanding the advantages of flexibility. This naturally leads to space suffering damage and unbalanced development;
- Lack of connections between revitalisation programmes and Study of the Conditions and Directions of the Spatial Management of a Commune (lack of „support areas” determination);
- Lack of connections between town development strategies and the “Study” with plans of revitalization areas;
- Snatch character of social consultation, lack of comprehensive information and understanding of revitalisation significance;
- Long-term revitalisation process versus short-term results in populist political decisions and expectation of spectacular effects.

### **D. FINANCING.**

In order to perform all planned works, it is necessary to make a deep analysis of available over-budgetary financial sources for programme implementation and also methods of engaging local societies in monitoring current state of revitalized areas.

The Article 158 of The Maastricht Treaty<sup>2</sup> says that, in order to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the extended European Union, the Community aims at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least-favoured regions, including rural areas, promoting harmonious, stable and permanent development of the Community.

The Article 159 of the Treaty gives requirements of supporting these activities through the Structural Funds, the European Investment Bank and the other existing financial instruments.

The operational range of the Structural Funds (the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund) and the Coherence Fund are defined in Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999.

### **E. CASE STUDIES.**

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<sup>2</sup> also called the Treaty on European Union

After the analysis of the economic potential of the revitalized area, as well as available local human resources, economic analysis and cash flow analysis for selected sites should be prepared, justifying conversion of these sites into a living places.

By defining, promoting and investing in the unique aspects of our 'place' and through prudent exploitation of our economic, physical and people assets the Revitalization Strategy seeks to bring about a rejuvenation in the ambience of our place, restoring civic pride and spirit, and delivering a lasting renaissance of the site.

There are well-known examples ( Warsaw, Zamość, Gdańsk, Sopot, Bydgoszcz, Płock, Łódź, Żyrardów.) of consolidation of local non-governmental organizations and informal groups of inhabitants around common aims of revitalization of the given area, also including establishing permanent structures in the form of one street associations. They become potential beneficiaries of the European Union programmes, financed by the European Social Fund, through which the revitalized space can be filled with the programme content. In Poland, there are also well-known examples of creating Cultural Parks for managing the process of revitalization on given areas (in the form of budgetary units, city owned companies or local agencies).

## **F. SUMMARY**

The cultural heritage has to be treated as a priority for its development, as well as creating services that are complementary to tourist, which allow to use the tourist infrastructure all the year long. However, these elements need activation of individual and organized members of the urban society and their active participation in the process of development.