

REVITALIZATION AS A PART OF THE EU COHESION POLICY

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Annotation

The aim of the paper is the general characterization of the process of the revitalization in Polish cities in the context of the EU cohesion policy on the example of Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship. The research has been conducted on the basis of data derived from the official websites of the Regional Operational Program of Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship 2007-2013 and data obtained from the website of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development where all projects co-financed from the UE have been currently upgraded and monitored. From database, which contained more than six thousand projects implemented under the Cohesion Policy in Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship, 222 projects related to the revitalization have been analyzed. In the paper we have demonstrated that the cohesion policy realized by the EU, has significantly affected the process of the revitalization in Polish cities. This impact can be considered in two ways. On the one hand, the cohesion policy caused the necessity of long-term and integrated planning of all actions required for the activation of problem areas in a city. On the other hand, it initiated instruments by which Polish cities had a real opportunity to start the thorough revitalization.

Key words

Poland, urban development, cohesion policy, revitalization, EU funds

JEL classification: H5, H7, O2, R1, R5

Introduction

The Cohesion Policy pursued by the European Union (EU) supports all actions, which tend to align economic and social conditions in all regions of the EU. The implementation of the Cohesion Policy

has been carried out through operational programs, i.e. financial support granted NUTS 3 regions where per capita income does not exceed 75% of the EU average. The main objectives supported within the Cohesion Policy are as follows: convergence (i.e. cohesion), improving the competitiveness of regions, and European territorial cooperation. The cohesion policy often understood as regional policy has played more and more important role in the successive programming periods of the EU. In the years 2007-2013, it was the first time when against the background of all supported fields the largest funds were allocated for the implementation of the cohesion policy and their value amounted to 44,2% of entire EU budget (Portal Funduszy Unijnych). In the programming period 2014-2020 the share of these funds for the support of the cohesion policy will be still significant (cf. Europa 2020).

In the successive programming periods, in the creation of the cohesion policy an important role is ascribed to the support for urban areas. A. Knape, the president of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), notes that „*Development and competitiveness of urban areas are the prerequisites not only for the growth and development of surrounding regions, but the entire country*“ (Polityka spójności na lata 2014-2020...: 14). In this approach cities are found as the centers of regional labor markets, main producers of goods and services, places of the creation of a knowledge and an information as well as the decision-making centers. The priority role of cities is also noticed by the European Union. Hence, the EU has perceived the improvement of an urban space as one of the strategic actions within the cohesion policy.

In Poland, similarly to other countries from Eastern-Central Europe, intensive socio-economic changes of an urban space started together with the system transition in 1989. As J.J. Parysek (2005) noted the real estate market had to function in new conditions, ground rent based on capitalist principles was introduced and land in cities became the subject of a commerce. The system transition and rapid socio-economic changes caused the decay of functions fulfilled in many parts of cities hitherto. This situation referred mainly to industrial, railway, military, port areas, and often to areas fulfilling residential functions (Uzupełnienie...). The decay of functions and lack of the implementation of new functions supporting the development of cities contributed to the progressive social, economic, and spatial degradation of these areas. A new phenomenon in urban space in Poland, well-recognized in Europe, was the degradation of areas of large cities (cf. Biegańska et al., 2014). This degradation refers mainly to *stricte* residential districts, as well as post-industrial and post-military areas. The scale of problems, especially when the development of a city based on industrial or military function, resulted in lower investors' interest in an entire city and in extreme cases, even in an entire region (Uzupełnienie...).

The revitalization, considered as a renewal, a cure or even the recycling of an urban space, seems to be the response to the problems of cities associated with progressive spatial and social degradation. The revitalization included *"a comprehensive process of the renewal of an urbanized area whose a space, functions, and a substance experience a structural degradation inducing the state of a crisis, making impossible or strongly hindering the proper social and economic development of an area as well as the sustainable development of an entire city. Therefore, the revitalization is a response to the state of the crisis of an urban area and includes the set of thorough actions, coordinated and managed by a public sector (mainly local governments), based on the active cooperation of political-administrative institutions and social entities."* (Billert, 2004: 6, cf. Rogatka, 2011a, 2011b).

As any action aiming at putting some area out of impasse, the revitalization requires large expenditures. In this context, great chance for Poland was the integration with the European Union in 2004 and the implementation of the cohesion policy. The first action in this field included the preparation of a basis for the revitalization of Polish cities. According to the regulations of the Regional Operational Program of Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship 2007-2013, every city that wanted to apply for the EU funds had to obligatory prepare the Local Program of Revitalization (LPR). LPR is a strategic document in which, on the one hand, a crisis area with the highest concentration of social and spatial problems is pointed, on the other hand, the goals of the revitalization are precisely characterized. It, therefore, contains the description of necessary actions aiming at increasing the inhabitant's quality of life, restoring a spatial order, economic recovery, reconstruction of social ties,

and, consequently, at development and improvement of city image. LPR enables urban local governments (in Poland it is *gmina*. *Gmina* governs an administrative region of the 3rd order, NUTS 5, which is called the same), which in the first instance is obliged to implement the revitalization, as well as other entities, to apply for the EU funds for the investments in this field (*Rewitalizacja...*).

1. Aims and methods

The study covers the programming period 2007-2013, i.e., when the National Cohesion Policy has been implemented.

The research has been conducted in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship (WK-P) (administrative region of the 1st order in Poland, NUTS 2), which is located in the central part of Poland. The analyzed voivodship is inhabited by 2.1 mln persons (10th place among 16 voivodships in Poland), which represents 5.4% of total Polish population number. The area of analyzed voivodship comprises 18.0 thousand sq. km, which constitutes as much as 5.7% of the total area of Poland (10th place among 16 voivodships in Poland). According to the administrative division of Poland, the WK-P includes 92 rural, 35 urban-rural and 17 urban *gminas* (administrative regions of the 3rd order, NUTS 5) (state as of 2013). Among mentioned *gminas*, cities include urban *gminas* and urban parts of urban-rural *gminas*.

The research has been conducted on the basis of data derived from the official websites of the Regional Operational Program for Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodship 2007-2013 (ROP WK-P) (www.mojregion.eu/regionalny-program-operacyjny-województwa-kujawsko-pomorskiego/o-programie.html) and data obtained from the website of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development (Mapa Dotacji, www.mapadotacji.gov.pl). The information on applications (projects) approved by the European Commission in the 2007-2013 programming period available at the websites have been currently upgraded and monitored. The information has included as follows: full name of beneficiary, the title of application, area where the application has been implemented, value of financial support, and the total value of project.

The collected and verified data have been proper in the context of the research aiming at general characterization of the revitalization in Polish cities in the context of the impact of the EU funds on the example of Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship. In order to realize the aim, we have analyzed all investments related to the revitalization and co-financed from the EU funds. From database, which contained more than six thousand projects implemented under the Cohesion Policy in Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship, 222 projects related to the revitalization have been analyzed. All projects have been considered in two aspects, from which one has referred to the structure of beneficiaries, and the second one has been related to the size structure of cities in terms of their activity within the implementation of the revitalization. The analysis of projects related to the revitalization and implemented in the programming period 2007-2013 has been preceded by the characterization of cities in the context of their size, number of areas pointed to be revitalized, and the realization of LPR.

2. Results

In the context of the Cohesion Policy, it should be noted that Poland, as one of the countries which joined the EU relatively recently (2004), has tended to improve the socio-economic situation of cities, benefited firstly from the Instruments of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA). Anyhow, the first LPR in Poland was developed in 2004 (the city of Łódź), and the lack of proven strategic documents caused that most of Polish cities could not use any EU funds for the revitalization then. Only in the programming period 2007-2013 Poland has participated in the full implementation of the cohesion policy. In this programming period, when cities have gradually developed LPR it has been possible to plan the revitalization and to apply for the EU funds for the support for all desired actions. The necessity to prepare LPR should be viewed positively because this requirement has forced cities to organize undertaken actions, however, it slightly postponed them in time.

Funds aiming at the revitalization have been spent within the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund and have been obtained within the Integrated Regional Operational Program. Important part of the European Regional Development Fund contains the Regional Operational Programs (RPO) related to the implementation of the cohesion policy in particular regions, including Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodship (WK-P). The main objective of the RPO WK-P in the programming period 2007-2013 has been defined as the provision of conditions necessary to improve the competitiveness of the region (voivodship) and strengthen the social, economic, spatial cohesion of the area. Among the specific objectives the special attention has been paid mainly to: (a) improving the attractiveness of the region as the place worth investing, living and visiting, hence, generally, a place friendly to inhabitants and tourists; (b) improving the economic competitiveness of the region in the national and international arena; (c) increasing the quality of life. The above-mentioned objectives have been realized by particular actions described in priority axes. One of them, the axis no. 7, refers to the support of changes in cities and areas requiring a renewal, i.e. to the revitalization *sensu stricto*. This axis has aimed at social and economic revival, infrastructural and architectural renewal of the degraded parts of cities, post-military, post-industrial, post-railway areas and objects. These areas have lost their functions, have been degraded and according to proper regulations could have been revitalized. The aim of the axis no. 7 has been also a part of the Strategy of the Development of WK-P until the year 2020, in which two of the four priorities refers directly to revitalization (priorities: modernization of cities and rural areas, strong metropolis), and two ones indirectly (priorities: competitive economy, modern society).

In the administrative borders of WK-P 52 cities are located and 57,1% of all inhabitants of the region live there (the state as of the end 2013). The capital functions in the region are fulfilled by two cities: Bydgoszcz (app. 360 thousand inhabitants) and Toruń (app. 203 thousand inhabitants). Three cities serve as sub-regional centers: Włocławek (115 thousand), Grudziądz (98 thousand), and Inowrocław (75 thousand). Moreover, three cities have 20-30 thousand inhabitants, 24 cities have 5-20 thousand inhabitants. In turn, 20 cities does not reach 5 thousand inhabitants and in the context of legal regulations they are considered as rural areas. Hence, they cannot apply for the EU funds for the revitalization but they have an opportunity to implement similar actions within the third axis of Rural Development (EU Program for the years 2007-2013), related to the rural renewal (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1: Characterization of cities* in WK-P entitled to benefit from EU support for the revitalization

Lp.	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Bydgoszcz	Typ VI (capital city)	359,428	4	993.0	5.6
2	Toruń	Typ VI (capital city)	203,447	2	621.0	5.4
3	Włocławek	Typ V (sub-regional city)	114,885	1	274.0	3.3
4	Grudziądz	Typ V (sub-regional city)	97,676	1	123.7	2.1
5	Inowrocław	Typ V (sub-regional city)	75,001	3	134.5	4.5
6	Brodnica	Typ IV (20,000-30,000)	28,579	1	114.5	5.0
7	Świecie	Typ IV (20,000-30,000)	26,395	3	158.1	13.2
8	Chelmno	Typ IV (20,000-30,000)	20,622	4	134.7	9.6
9	Nakło nad Notecią	Typ III (15,000-20,000)	19,193	3	94.0	8.5
10	Rypin	Typ III (15,000-20,000)	16,834	2	33.7	3.4
11	Solec Kujawski	Typ III (15,000-20,000)	15,642	1	227.0	11.9
12	Lipno	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	14,968	1	74.6	6.8
13	Chelmża	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	14,967	1	35.0	5.0
14	Żnin	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	14,181	1	14.2	1.8
15	Wąbrzeźno	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	14,040	1	4.0	0.4
16	Tuchola	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	13,949	1	104.6	5.8
17	Golub-Dobrzyń	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	12,945	1	16.2	2.0
18	Aleksandrów Kuj.	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	12,515	1	45.5	6.5
19	Mogilno	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	12,369	1	15.3	17.0

Lp.	A	B	C	D	E	F
20	Koronowo	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	11,384	4	334.7	12.0
21	Ciechocinek	Typ II (10,000-15,000)	10,791	4	81.4	5.4
22	Szubin	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	9,580	1	20.0	2.5
23	Sępólno Krajeńskie	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	9,368	1	21.8	3.1
24	Kruszwica	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	9,128	2	87.6	12.5
25	Janikowo	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	9,079	1	74.4	7.4
26	Barcin	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	7,752	1	28.0	7.0
27	Gniewkowo	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	7,293	1	15.0	1.7
28	Nowe	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	6,190	1	39.0	13.0
29	Więcbork	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	5,970	1	4.5	1.1
30	Radziejów	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	5,817	2	15.0	2.5
31	Strzelno	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	5,812	1	70.0	17.5
32	Pakość	Typ I (5,000-10,000)	5,756	1	49.7	16.6

*Explanation: *types of cities by the population number and the role in the settlement system (according to the classification of RPO WK-P); A - a city; B – type of a city; C - population number (state as of 2013); D - number of problem areas (implemented LPR); E – problem areas (implemented LPR) in ha; F - share of revitalized area in total area of a city (%)*

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of: Local Data Bank from the Central Statistical Office, RPO WK-P for the years 2007-2013. LPR requirements, "Ewaluacja wpływu projektów rewitalizacyjnych..."

Among 52 cities, which are located in the WK-P, 32 have been eligible to apply for the EU funds for the revitalization within the cohesion policy in the context of a size criterion. These all cities have prepared required LPR (understood as a strategic document). Most of them, i.e. 65.6% of them, have delimited one compact problem area (called also LPR) intended to be revitalized (Tab. 1). Almost every third city has decided to delimit more than one problem area (LPR). The highest number of problem areas (4 LPR) has been developed by a capital city of Bydgoszcz and by two cities of a small size (10-15 thousand population) (Tab. 1). The number of LPR has not affected the share of the area intended to be revitalized (Tab. 1). The average size of one problem area (LPR) has amounted to 130 ha. The largest LPR has been delimited in a city of Bydgoszcz (993.0 ha), the smallest one in a city of Wąbrzeźno (4.0 ha). Total area of all LPR in all cities of WK-P has totaled to 4,196.2 ha. The highest share of an area intended to be revitalized has been included in the LPR proposed by a city of Strzelno (17.0% of the total area of a city), the lowest one – by a city of Wąbrzeźno (0.4%).

Within the RPO WK-P it has been planned to spent the EU funds accounted for app. 4 bln PLN. As of the state of 2014, the support for the revitalization has amounted to app. 454 mln PLN, i.e. 1/10 of all funds within the RPO WK-P. In this RPO, in eligible cities 222 projects have been accepted and implemented. Their value has totaled to 831 mln PLN.

Tab. 2: Structure of projects related to the revitalization in WK-P in years 2007-2013 by beneficiary and additional characteristics

Type of a beneficiary	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
gmina	111	688.5	392.1	82.9	86.4	6.2	3.5	50.7
housing community/association	80	40.6	16.7	4.9	3.7	0.5	0.2	40.0
church/religion association	9	13.4	6.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	0.7	49.3
institution	8	23.7	11.8	2.9	2.6	3.0	1.5	50.0
company with a public capital	6	51.4	18.9	6.2	4.2	8.5	3.1	36.7
ngo	5	11.6	7.2	1.4	1.6	2.3	1.5	62.7
firm with a private capital	3	1.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.2	32.1
	222	830.7	453.8	100.0	100.0	3.7	2.0	54.6

Explanation: A – number of projects; B – value of projects in mln PLN; C – value of financial support from the EU in mln PLN; D – % of the total value of all projects; E - % of the total value of all financial support from the EU; F – average value per 1 project in mln PLN; G – average value of financial support per 1 project in mln PLN; H – average percentage of financial support for 1 project

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of data derived from the RPO WK-P in the programming period 2007-2013 and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development

Analyzing the revitalization in the context of the implementation of the cohesion policy, we have considered first of all beneficiaries applying for the EU funds (Tab. 2). In the programming period 2007-2013, against the background of all beneficiaries, the largest number of projects have been undoubtedly implemented by gminas. In the total number of 222 projects approved within the RPO WK-P, 50% have been realized by these units of local government. High activity of gminas in this field is the result of regulations described in the Act on local government (Act on Local Development, 8 March 1990). According to the Act, legal duties of gminas include the provision of the needs of a commune within among others spatial order and the management of areas, which are connected with the revitalization. A gmina, which wants to use the EU funds for the revitalization, has to develop LPR. Hence, the gmina is the main creator of the vision and the directions of the revitalization, main contractor of LPR and the coordinator of all actions realized by other beneficiaries. It is mainly the result of the specificity of the revitalization. Therefore, the projects implemented by gminas have been large, the average value of 1 project has mounted to 6.2 mln PLN, and achieved financial support from the EU has been higher than 50% of the total value of an average project. Besides gminas, among all beneficiaries, high activity has been presented by housing communities and associations, which have implemented 36.0% of all approved projects within RPO WK-P in the programming period 2007-2013. Projects realized by housing communities and associations have been relatively small and with average support from the EU (generally 40% of the total value of 1 project), focused mainly on the modernization and thermo modernization of buildings (average value of 1 project has totaled to 0.5 mln PLN). Other beneficiaries, i.e. institutions, churches and religion associations, companies with a public capital, firms with a private capital, ngo, have implemented much less projects, these projects have resulted from their needs and referred to them strictly. Trying to find some tendencies, we should note that for example companies with a public capital have realized projects with the largest value on average (8.5 mln PLN). In turn, firms with a private capital have had projects with the lowest value (0.5 mln PLN). Both of them have obtained the lowest financial support from the EU measured as a percentage of the total value of average project (app. 1/3 of the total value of average project). Anyhow, the participation of firms, companies, ngo (which has obtained the largest financial support per average project, i.e. 2/3 of the total value of 1 project), housing communities and associations, is the manifestation of the growing interest of local business and local communities in the creation of the revitalization related to the places of their living and acting.

Tab. 3: Structure of projects related to the revitalization in WK-P in programming period 2007-2013 by the type of cities and additional characteristics

Type of a city	A	B	C	E	F	G	H
Type VI (capital city)	2	5.5	58	42.8	41.0	52.3	0.2
Type V (sub-regional city)	3	3.3	14	28.0	30.8	60.1	0.4
Type IV (20,000-30,000)	3	9.3	4	7.2	8.1	61.0	0.1
Type III (15,000-20,000)	3	8.0	3	8.1	8.3	56.0	0.2
Type II (10,000-15,000)	10	6.3	2	7.9	7.0	48.6	0.08
Type I (5,000-10,000)	11	7.7	1	6.1	4.9	44.3	0.02
	52	6.9	7	100.0	100.0	55.6	0.3

Explanation: A - number of cities; B - average % of revitalized area in the total area of cities; C - number of projects implemented on average by 1 city; D - % of the total value of all projects for the revitalization; E - % of financial support of all projects for the revitalization; F - average % of the financial support for 1 projects; G - financial support in PLN per 1 ha of revitalized area in mln PLN

Source: Own elaboration on the basis of data derived from the RPO WK-P in the programming period 2007-2013 and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development

Considering the support for the revitalization in the context of the types of cities in WK-P, we should emphasize that great impact on the activity of a city within applying for the EU funds has had a city size measured by population number. For example every capital city, i.e. Toruń and Bydgoszcz, in the

programming period 2007-2013 have achieved an acceptance for average 60 projects, sub-regional cities – for 15 projects. Average number of projects implemented by smaller cities has not exceeded 5 (Tab. 3). Moreover, capital cities have had 40% of the total value of all projects and of total financial support from the EU for the revitalization in all cities in WK-P. The values of mentioned indicators in sub-regional cities have amounted to 30% and in smaller cities – only to 10% (Tab. 3). These tendencies should be associated with relatively large - against the background of all cities – areas delimited to be revitalized by capital and sub-regional cities. The larger city the larger area which requires the revitalization. We should also add that in large cities there is often more complicated socio-economic, functional, spatial, and ecological situation. Hence, the larger city the higher is its activity in the application and implementation of projects co-financed from the EU.

Conclusions

In the paper we have demonstrated that the cohesion policy realized by the EU among others in Polish cities, has significantly affected the revitalization understood as the comprehensive, multi-aspect process of an urban renewal. This impact can be considered in two ways. On the one hand, the cohesion policy have caused the necessity of long-term and integrated planning of all actions required for the activation of problem areas in a city. Moreover, this planning aims at improving quality of life and spatial order, reconstructing social ties, and finally at the development and the improvement of urban image. On the other hand, for cities in Poland, which similarly to the cities in the other countries from Eastern-Central Europe fight with the effects of system transition, including among others extinction of functions fulfilled hitherto, successive social, economic, and spatial degradation, the implemented EU cohesion policy and its instruments (e.g. RPO) have been usually the only real opportunity to stop these disadvantageous phenomena and to start reasonable planning of cities perceived often as driving forces of entire regions.

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