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Problems and Challenges Involved in Using Integrated Urban Development Planning Tools. Example of a Development Strategy and Revitalisation Programmes

Problemy i wyzwania związane z wykorzystaniem narzędzi zintegrowanego planowania rozwoju miast. Przykład strategii rozwoju i programów rewitalizacji

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Abstract: Polish cities are changing constantly and, in the age of intense socio-economic, environmental and political transformation, they have to cope with many problems and challenges. In order to successfully solve the problems and challenges facing cities, local government units should apply integrated strategic management tools. Development processes (including revitalisation) can be directed using a range of tools. Local authorities responsible for the monitoring of development in territorial self-government units, such as cities, have at their disposal a wide range of development policy instruments and can actively shape development processes. Urban development strategies and revitalisation programmes are among the key tools of integrated management and planning used in Polish cities. They are integrated development programmes covering all aspects of city operations (social, economic, spatial-environmental, and technical). However, putting them in place faces a number of problems and challenges when they are drafted and implemented. Problems and challenges can be divided into three key groups of barriers: systemic barriers, social capital barriers, and information and communication barriers. The purpose of this article is to identify and characterize two key instruments of integrated urban development planning and management (namely, the city development strategy and revitalization program). This paper also attempts to identify the key issues and challenges involved in using tools such as the integrated development strategy and revitalisation programme in urban development management by local authorities.

Keywords: integrated planning, integrated management, development strategy, revitalization programme, territorial self-government units

Streszczenie: Polskie miasta ulegają ciągłym przemianom, a w dobie intensywnych przemian społeczno-gospodarczych, środowiskowych i politycznych borykają się z wieloma problemami i wyzwaniami. Aby skutecznie rozwiązywać pojawiające się w miastach problemy i sprostać wyzwaniom konieczne jest stosowanie narzędzi zintegrowanego zarządzania strategicznego w jednostkach samorządu terytorialnego. Procesami rozwoju (w tym rewitalizacji) sterować można wykorzystując szereg narzędzi. Władze samorządowe, odpowiedzialne za sterowanie rozwojem w jednostkach samorządu terytorialnego jakim są m.in. miasta dysponują szeroką paletą instrumentów w zakresie polityki rozwoju i mogą aktywnie kształtować procesy rozwojowe. Strategie rozwoju miast i programy rewitalizacji są jednymi z kluczowych narzędzi zintegrowanego zarządzania i planowania wykorzystywanymi w polskich miastach. Są to zintegrowane programy rozwoju obejmujące wszystkie sfery funkcjonowania miast (społeczną, gospodarczą, przestrzenno-środowiskową, i techniczną). Jednak ich wykorzystanie napotyka szereg problemów i wyzwań na etapie ich opracowania jak i wdrażania. Problemy i wyzwania

wskazać można w trzech kluczowych grupach: barier systemowych, barier dotyczących kapitału społecznego oraz barier informacyjno-komunikacyjnych. Celem artykułu jest identyfikacja i charakterystyka dwóch kluczowych instrumentów zintegrowanego planowania i zarządzania rozwojem miast (tj. strategii rozwoju miasta oraz programu rewitalizacji). Niniejszy artykuł stanowi również próbę identyfikacji kluczowych problemów i wyzwań wykorzystania przez jednostki samorządu terytorialnego narzędzi takich jak zintegrowana strategia rozwoju i program rewitalizacji w zarządzaniu rozwojem miast.

Słowa kluczowe: zintegrowane planowanie, zintegrowane zarządzanie, strategia rozwoju, program rewitalizacji, jednostki samorządu terytorialnego

Introduction

Cities are highly complex systems of complicated, multidimensional and multilayer structures. An urban system is made up of three crucial sub-systems: social, economic, and a broadly understood living environment (environmental and spatial subsystems). The multidimensionality of social, economic and spatial development processes, their interdependence, as well as the multiplicity and complexity of interests and stakeholders, require integrated development management and planning. In addition, in times of intense socio-economic, environmental, and political changes, city dwellers and local government authorities have to face many problems and challenges. In order to effectively address problems and challenges emerging in cities, local government units should avail themselves of tools designed for integrated planning. Today, the use of integrated planning and management tools for local development is seen as an indispensable prerequisite for successful development policies (Tölle 2014). Integrated urban development policy is one of the policy priorities of the European Union, so the application of principles or tools of integrated development planning of Polish cities is of great importance today.

The objectives of the article are:

- identification and characterization of two key instruments of integrated planning and management of city development (i.e. city development strategy and revitalization program) – comparative analysis of case studies,

- identification of key problems and challenges regarding their use in local government units.

The text is based on a critical analysis of the subject matter literature, online and desk research, and a comparative analysis of case studies. On top of that, the publication includes considerations drawing on the author's experience as an expert working with local government units at different levels on drafting revitalisation programmes and development strategies. The city of Rawa Mazowiecka (Lodzkie Voivodeship) was selected for the analysis. It is a small (less than 20,000 inhabitants) city in Poland, which implements an integrated development policy based on strategic documents (development strategy and revitalization program).

1. The idea of planning in integrated urban development management

The idea of integrated development management and planning is slowly finding its way into Polish local government units as a solution that could stop problems from piling up. An integrated approach to urban and rural management stems from a new model of development policy, which is referred to as the territorial-functional approach. The territorial-functional approach to local, regional and national development management is considered a crucial and leading approach in the EU policy. A number of European Union programming documents highlight the need for an integrated approach to development policy and interventions targeting specific territories (Barca

2009; European Council 2010; European Union 2011; European Commission 2016, European Union 2019, Wojnicka-Sycz 2018).

The territorial-functional development paradigm emphasises the need to strengthen territorial capital, i.e. resources and assets that are specific and endogenous of a territory, together with internal socio-economic links and local identities (Nowakowska 2022). The new development paradigm highlights the need to integrate different types of activities, also those undertaken by different actors in various institutional arrangements, and the need to develop partnerships to stimulate social and economic development (Tölle 2014; Billert 2007; Markowski 2008; Leipzig Charter 2007). In practice, the territorial dimension of development policy helps to offer individually tailored public interventions. By definition, these interventions are intended to support areas affected by development problems, difficulties or having distinctive potentials arising from specific local and supra-local circumstances. In this approach, the focus is on functional areas and less on administrative-political systems, which means planning is oriented at selected urban areas (e.g. degraded areas) and units going beyond the designated administrative boundaries (e.g. agglomerations).

Being a component of the management process, planning is inextricably linked with integrated management. It is a holistic process, i.e. involving a holistic view of the area concerned. Planning is about setting goals and delineating paths leading to their achievement taking into account the most important interdependencies and relationships between the major components of the controlled system (social, economic, environmental and spatial subsystems) (Markowski 2015). In integrated management and planning it is necessary to integrate many levels, spheres and relationships, including, *inter alia*, spatial, functional (sectoral), temporal, stakeholder-related, and financial aspects.

Functional integration (also referred to as sectoral or problem-based integration) looks at the links between various spheres (be it social, economic, spatial, or environmental) of urban functioning. Assumptions underlying functional integration are also concerned with combining the activities of local authorities and other stakeholders active in diverse fields (social, economic, spatial, or environmental) that serve the accomplishment of shared urban development goals. Functional integration is central to the concept of sustainable development and integrated development management, which takes into account both the conditions and implications (especially the effects) associated with each of these functions in activities pursued by the local government. Functional integration also covers the integration of objectives featured in different strategic documents of local government units.

Spatial integration means activities are being implemented in a specific, selected area made up of different elements (including administrative units) linked with functional bonds. Spatial integration consists of the pooling of resources that belong to different territorial units and actors operating in the area with a view to carrying out actions beneficial to all of them.

Stakeholder integration means including multiple stakeholders in the management process (planning and implementation). Stakeholders can be public entities (local and supralocal self-government institutions, and their organisational units, public institutions), social organisations (associations, foundations, other NGOs), economic entities, as well as the inhabitants.

Temporal integration refers to the coordination and appropriate sequencing of activities over time, according to an agreed schedule, which is intended to enhance development outcomes and facilitate the implementation of individual activities. A lack of temporal integration may hinder their implementation and may contribute not only to the disappearance or reduction

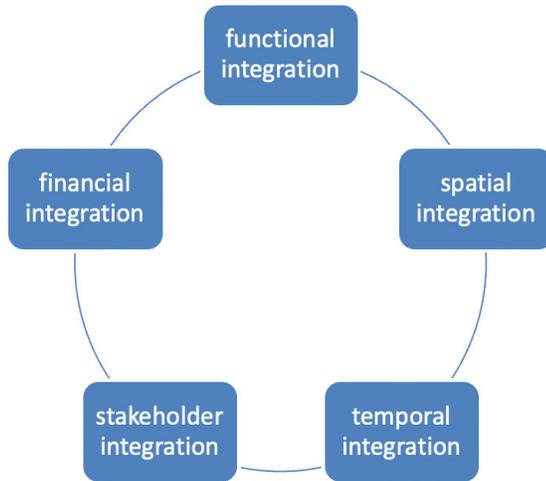


Figure 1: Types of integration involved in integrated management and planning

Source: author's own compilation.

of planned development effects but also to inefficient spending of financial resources.

Financial integration means financial engineering and the use of different sources of funding. It consists of the pooling of internal and external funding from national and international sources (including the EU). Financial integration can also mean the pooling of financial resources from different sectors (public, municipal, social, private).

Integrated management and strategic planning impact the effectiveness and efficiency of actions and the pursued development policy. Their absence is indicative of the irresponsibility and short-sightedness of local authorities which try to shape the development policy (Nowakowska and Przygodzki 2022).

2. Local development strategies and revitalisation programmes as tools of integrated planning

Regulations, guidelines and changes that are slowly being introduced in the Polish legislation put an ever-increasing emphasis on the adoption of an integrated approach in development planning and management in local government units. The entry

into force of the Act on Revitalisation (Act 2015) together with earlier introduced guidelines for drafting revitalisation programmes (Ministerstwo Rozwoju 2016) and the entry into force of the amended Act on the Principles of Development Policy (Act 2006) have created a new quality and new tools for integrated development planning and management in local government units. Requirements and principles of planning that have been put in place based on the above acts radically break with the sectoral approach and focus on integration and comprehensiveness, interdependencies and linkages occurring in development processes. They also strongly emphasise the need for cooperation and partnership.

Regulatory changes introduced in 2015 and 2020 stress the role played by two tools fundamental for integrated development management and planning: municipal and urban development strategies and revitalisation programmes, including municipal revitalisation programmes.¹ Unfortunately,

¹ Being one of the dimensions of local policy, revitalisation is a process of conscious and deliberate action undertaken by local authorities and other stakeholders to revitalise and improve the quality of life and

development strategies and revitalisation programmes are not mandatory tools for territorial local government units. While indicating that the local government unit may carry out and coordinate development processes (including revitalisation) as its own task, the legislator left the choice to the local government units as to the use of tools such as development strategies and revitalisation programmes.

Development strategies and revitalisation programmes perform a number of important functions in local government management. These functions include efficiency, coordination, ordering, motivation, control, information, education, promotion and financial functions.

- The efficiency function enables using the existing tangible, intangible, human, and natural resources of a local government unit in an optimum way.
- The coordination function enables stimulating and coordinating the actions of entities operating within a given local government unit (or in its surroundings) in accordance with the adopted objectives.
- The ordering function is related to the fact that these documents determine what decisions and actions should be currently taken.
- The motivation function is linked with motivating and stimulating the actions of the local government and other entities to accomplish the declared actions and jointly defined objectives. These documents and public access to them

the social, economic and spatial attractiveness of degraded urban areas. From this perspective, the creation of an integrated development policy focused on a selected area of the city and the co-management of the development processes of this area is crucial in the revitalisation process. (Nowakowska et al., 2019) It is also crucial to integrate the planned revitalisation activities and projects included in the provisions of the revitalisation programme with other strategic and operational documents at the local and supra-local levels (Fitzgerald and Leigh 2022; Parysek 2015; Sołowicz 2016; Nowakowska et al. 2019).

constitute a public declaration of their implementation.

- The control function refers to the control exercised by the local community over the implementation of what has been laid down in the documents.
- The financial function relates to the need to engage financial resources from various sources.
- The information function of the documents means that they contain information on the development status of an area, its problems and development potentials, the needs of the inhabitants and, above all, information on its future, the intentions of the local authorities and activities planned by them.
- The educational function consists in involving the local community and various entities in the drafting of the strategy and revitalisation programme and their subsequent implementation. Involving the local community in these processes is a key element of social education.
- The promotional function is concerned with highlighting, especially in the development strategy, the assets of the local government unit, development objectives and thus the potential opportunities for investment and development (Nowakowska 2022; Chądzyński et al. 2008; Hefner 2008; Nowakowska et al. 2019).

In these documents, the integrated territorial approach consists, *inter alia*, of taking into account the territorial specificities at each stage of programming (diagnosing the situation of the local government unit, identifying inhabitants' needs, setting objectives, developing directions and projects for specific actions, designing the implementation and monitoring system) strategic actions and projects, in order to make efficient use of available financial resources and best match the interventions.

The tools of integrated planning, when the principles and features of integrated planning are adhered to and there is the motivation for action, yield success in achieving the intended objectives. The table

Table 1. Integrated planning features with regard to development strategies and revitalisation programmes

No.	Integrated planning quality/feature	Development strategies	Revitalisation programmes
1.	Planning for homogenous, internally linked territories	✓ Addressing associations of cities, municipalities, functional areas	✓ For a delineated degraded area and a revitalisation area
2.	Using the endogenous nature and specificity of resources and development mechanisms	✓	✓
3.	Links and inter-dependencies between components that make up a territory (functional approach)	✓	✓
4.	Actions adequate for the development level and problems occurring in individual territories	✓ Intended for the identification of local and supra-local strategic intervention areas	✓
5.	Integration of socio-economic and development planning	✓	✓
6.	Integration of implementation processes: multisectoral, multilevel, and multi-stakeholder development management	✓	✓
7.	Integrated activities of many stakeholders	✓	✓
8.	Involving local community into decision-making processes (good governance)	✓	✓

Source: author's own compilation based on (Nowakowska 2022).

below identifies eight key features of integrated planning and how they relate to development strategies and revitalisation programmes.

Guidelines on the principles, procedures, and requirements for development strategies and revitalisation programmes are contained in the acts of law. The key components of integrated programmes are outlined in Table 2 together with the elements specific of each of these documents.

Where a municipal revitalization programme is drafted, the Act on Revitalisation additionally opens the way for the application of special tools supporting the revitalisation process (e.g., Special Revitalisation Zone, Local Revitalisation Plan, discount on the sale of municipal property for revitalisation purposes, Revitalisation Committee, etc.).

Development strategies and revitalisation programmes are tools for integrated management, however, we need to bear in mind that the statutory obligation to consult these

documents does not meet the requirements of integrated planning. Integrated planning requires an active involvement of stakeholders in the drafting of plans, programmes and strategies so that they can actively implement them. Hence, the process of stakeholder involvement should start as early as possible at the stage of planning (e.g., already from the diagnosis stage). The statutory obligation of holding consultations relates mainly to the final draft of the strategy or the revitalisation programme (in the municipal revitalisation programme consultations cover also the identification of the degraded area and the revitalisation area). However, good integrated planning practice suggests that social involvement should take place already at the very beginning of the process when these documents are being drafted. The entire process of public participation (from drafting documents until the development of mechanisms for involving stakeholders in their implementation) should be carefully described, as it is one

Table 2. Components typical of integrated development strategies and revitalisation programmes

No.	Characteristic components	Development strategy	Revitalisation programme
1.	A comprehensive diagnosis (social, economic, spatial, and environmental)	✓ A diagnosis for all the areas covered by the strategy, identifies differences within the area. The diagnosis is a separate document that precedes the preparation of the draft development strategy. The development strategy document itself contains only the conclusions of the diagnosis.	✓ A diagnosis for the entire local government unit identifies intra-municipal divergencies and delineates the degraded area and revitalised area. Additional in-depth analysis for the revitalisation area
2.	Intervention area	Local government unit or a broader area covered by the strategy OSI – Polish abbr. for strategic intervention areas at local and supra-local levels ^A	Revitalisation area. Actions outside the area are allowed but they must exert a significant impact upon the revitalised area.
3.	Identification of the vision, objectives, and directions of actions	✓	✓ In addition: Basic projects decisive for the overcoming of crisis situation in revitalisation area. Complementary projects
4.	Comprehensive goals and actions (integration of social, economic, spatial and also environmental spheres)	✓	✓
5.	The territorial dimension of development policy	✓ Functional-spatial structure model Identification of specific features and development potentials of a local government unit or a bigger area	✓ Identification of how a municipal revitalisation project will be implemented with regard to spatial planning and development Directions of functional and spatial changes in the revitalisation area Identification of specific features and development potentials of the revitalization area
6.	Financial framework and sources of funding for activities and projects	✓	✓
7.	Monitoring and evaluation system	✓ Additional mandatory ex-ante evaluation	✓
8.	Implementation and management system	✓	✓
9.	Public consultations	✓ Mandatory consultations of the draft document	✓ Mandatory consultations at the stage when the revitalisation area is delineated. ^B Mandatory consultations of the draft document
10.	The engaging local community in decision-making (good governance) – description of the process	✓	✓

Cont. table 2.

11.	Links with other documents	✓	✓
12.	Implications of the provisions included in the document for other strategic and operational documents	-	There is an obligation and a duty to update the documents. ^C A duty to specify amendments to be made in other documents in the revitalisation programme.
13.	Legal implications	-	Resolution on the identification of the area and resolution on the drafting of a revitalisation programme entails, inter alia, a series of legal implications for the revitalised area and enables the deployment of tools provided for by the act of law (e.g., the right of pre-emption, etc.). ^D

A Strategic intervention areas are areas identified in the development strategy representing specific social, economic or spatial conditions and characteristics, determining the existence within their territories of structural barriers to development or sustainable development potentials which can be mobilized (public intervention).

B Mandatory consultations are conducted for the Municipal Revitalisation Programme drafted in line with the Act on Revitalisation.

C These effects relate to the Municipal Revitalisation Programme drafted in line with the Act on Revitalisation.

D Legal implications for the Municipal Revitalisation Programme drafted in line with the Act on Revitalisation.

Source: author's own compilation.

of the fundamental elements of development strategies and revitalisation programmes. Apparently, this is how the legislator has left the possibility to define the scope and methods used in participatory processes to the territorial self-government units, which are the best placed to apply them properly duly considering local specificities.

3. New tools in urban development management: a comparative analysis of case studies

In 2015, following the publication of guidelines for the drafting of revitalisation programmes and the adoption of the Act on Revitalisation, local authorities launched intensive works on drafting revitalisation programmes in accordance with the introduced principles of integrated planning for the upcoming European Union financial perspective. The drafting of relatively highly complex revitalisation programmes was a major challenge for local government units, especially those whose experience in integrated planning and management was limited. It was a revolution of sorts in

the approach to planning. It was followed in 2020 by the introduction of guidelines and principles for the drafting of integrated development strategies, which today combine socio-economic and spatial planning. The Act on the Principles of Development Policy specified the principles, procedures, and obligatory components of development strategies, which became foundations based on which local government units drafted these documents.

Many local authorities are quick to adapt to changing circumstances, learn and build integrated programmes and strategies and then try to implement them. The Table below gives examples of the revitalisation programme and development strategies developed for Rawa Mazowiecka in 2016-2022 in relation to the features of integrated planning (Nowakowska et al. 2016).

New legal regulations and guidelines concerning the drafting of development strategies and revitalisation programmes and a large pool of financial resources underlying them, provide new opportunities for the implementation of projects that are

Table 3. Features of integrated planning and examples of development strategies and revitalization programmes

No.	Features of integrated planning	Development strategy of Rawa Mazowiecka	Local Revitalisation Programme for Rawa Mazowiecka 2016-2025
1.	Planning for homogenous internally linked territories	Urban development strategy (within administrative limits).	For a delineated degraded area and revitalisation area. The revitalisation area covers 3.13% (44.7 ha) of the city and is inhabited by 6.19% (1098) of the population.
2.	Using endogenous and specific resources and development mechanisms	Identification of development issues Identification of residents' needs Identification of development potentials of the town	Identification of development issues and areas where negative phenomena get concentrated Identification of revitalisation needs Identification of development potentials within the revitalisation area
3.	Links and inter-dependencies between the components that make up the territory (functional approach)	The functional approach in strategic diagnosis and in development strategy.	The functional approach in delimitation diagnosis and in the revitalisation programme.
4.	Actions adequate to the development level and problems of individual territories	Intended to identify strategic intervention areas at local and supra-local levels	Identification of problems and needs of revitalisation: goals, directions of actions and projects.
5.	Socio-economic planning integrated with spatial planning		
6.	Integration of implementation: multisectoral, multilevel and multi-stakeholder development management	Task force for development strategy; a multi-task implementation team	Revitalisation team, a task force within the structure of town administration.
7.	Integration of actions performed by many stakeholders		Multiple stakeholders from the public and private sectors, and NGOs implementing basic projects.
8.	Involving the local community in decision-making processes (good governance)	The document drafted based on participation methodology. Social studies conducted in the stage of diagnosing the situation. Workshops with different stakeholder groups (entrepreneurs, senior citizens, youth, NGOs). Draft document subject to mandatory consultations.	The document drafted through workshops with different stakeholder groups, and broad consultations of the draft version. Advisory team for revitalisation.

Source: author's own compilation.

important from the point of view of urban development. Newly implemented legal regulations and available financial resources motivate local government units to develop integrated programmes and strategies. It should also be emphasised that based on revitalisation programmes local governments successfully obtain financial resources for

revitalisation, spend them and thus take revitalised areas out of the crisis. Rawa Mazowiecka can serve as a good example in this respect, as in six years it has carried out the planned projects and changed the image and shape of a degraded area.

4. Issues and challenges involved in the drafting and implementation of development strategies and revitalization programmes

Issues and challenges involved in the drafting and implementation of revitalisation programmes (Parysek 2015; Jadach-Sepioło and Płachecki 2015; Jadach-Sepioło 2017; Nowakowska 2015) and development strategies can be divided into several key categories: systemic barriers, social capital barriers, information, communication and methodological barriers.

Systemic barriers (administrative, legal and institutional) stem from the organisational culture of local governments and public institutions, which are still highly hierarchical and sectoral, as well as from the introduction of new legal solutions for integrated planning. Among them we can list:

1. Uncertainty as to the procedures relating to the changing legal regulations and new requirements for integrated planning; Differences in the interpretation of regulations by government and self-government institutions with regard to both assessment and evaluation of documents and the requirements concerning, among others, the necessity to carry out environmental impact assessments.
2. Difficulties in agreeing on the wording used in strategies and revitalisation programmes with respective institutions, as well as misunderstanding of the principles of integrated planning and the “preventive” approach of the institutions result in extra costs of carrying out additional studies and environmental impact assessment procedures.
3. Problems in obtaining statistical data illustrating the reluctance of public institutions to share source data due to personal data protection regulations (GDPR), which makes the identification of differences within a given unit even more difficult.
4. Sectoral and hierarchical management structure in the local government unit

and reluctance of its staff to embrace change and launch cooperation between different departments. An organisational change is needed to set up permanent task forces bringing together people employed in local government units who implement the provisions of strategies and revitalisation programmes in different areas of competence. An additional challenge is an increasing need for pursuing knowledge-based management using data indispensable to, e.g., monitor development processes.

5. Difficulties and lack of legal solutions that would facilitate the building of partnerships and cooperation for integrated planning going beyond the administrative borders of local government units, especially going beyond the territory of a county or voivodship (interregional partnerships).

Barriers to social capital (mental, awareness-related, political) arise from lack of knowledge, awareness, existing political conditions and the specificity of the public sector. Among them, the following can be highlighted:

1. Fear of the new and lack of previous experience in drafting such documents. In addition, routine and stereotypical behaviour, established patterns of action and procedures, as well as human habits often prevail, making change difficult.
2. Little qualified and relatively small staff of local government units, especially in small municipalities, produces employee overload, lack of skills and abilities to take on new challenges, and an unwillingness to assume new tasks;
3. A small number and weakness of domestic good practices in integrated planning and management in local government units.
4. Unwillingness to cooperate stemming from low-quality social capital. Lack of previous good experiences in cooperation between different groups of stakeholders and local government, as well as the dominating individual, authoritarian

approach of the local government unit, perceiving cooperation as potential problems rather than benefits, lack of mutual trust among stakeholders, and inability to cooperate result in low involvement of stakeholders in the drafting of strategic documents.

5. Poor knowledge and skills of local government employees in the field of building integrated strategies and revitalization programmes trigger numerous problems in commissioning these studies and their subsequent proper approval (free of defects). Programmes developed by external experts without the participation of employees of local institutions expected to implement them often mismatch the needs, leading to misunderstanding, as well as institutional and organisational problems at the stage when they are put in place.
 6. Difficulties in choosing a good contractor, who would refrain from copying the already existing strategies and revitalization programmes and draft a document drawing on local specificities and addressing local problems together with the local government unit, i.e. a document tailored to local needs.
 7. Difficulties in cooperation between local government units – conflicts of a political nature between the municipality and the city. Lack of the will to cooperate also within the local government unit and domination of individualistic attitudes and interests, including political interests. A change of perspective and thinking about development processes in terms of the common good is necessary.
 8. Lack of trust, inability to operate in a partnership, and failure to see the benefits of cooperation.
 9. The dominance of actions planned based on the EU guidelines for financing. An integrated, territorial approach requires decision-makers to use development strategies and revitalisation programmes that respond to genuine, diagnosed needs.
- Information, communication and methodological barriers result from the lack of available data, the reluctance of institutions and organisations to share data, and difficulties in using the right communication tools. These problems are also caused by poor planning methods and procedures. Among them, the following can be pointed out:
1. Poor availability of statistical data at the level below the administrative unit which results in difficulties in capturing intra-municipal differences and in the delimitation of the degraded area and the revitalisation area. Lack of access to specialised software, experience, as well as local government employees qualified in this area.
 2. Various public and local government institutions having data that relate to the phenomena and processes taking place in the territorial self-government units use different methods and sections for obtaining and collecting statistical data, which makes it difficult or impossible to use or compare them.
 3. Difficulties in communication between the local government unit and the local community. The need to adapt procedures and schemes to the changing needs of the inhabitants, a clear change in the public discourse and the need to find and apply methods and techniques to mobilise the inhabitants. The challenge consists in how to reach out to the inhabitants with the right message, how to stir up their interest, mobilise and involve them in the planning and implementation of development activities.
 4. Difficulties in continuation of revitalisation activities, revitalisation relies on past experience (principle of inter-period complementarity).
 5. Difficulties in assessing and estimating the value of tangible and (often overlooked) intangible cultural heritage in revitalisation programmes.
 6. The challenge consists in including all stakeholder groups in decision-making by ensuring proper access to information.

The challenge is to guarantee access to excluded groups, including people with disabilities, for whom access to digital and ICT-based solutions should be ensured.

Conclusion

Multidimensional social, economic and spatial development processes, their interdependence as well as the multiplicity and complexity of interests and actors require integrated development management and planning. Local governments try to use available tools, including integrated planning tools such as development strategies and revitalisation programmes, involving the local community. In doing so, however, they face a number of barriers, problems and challenges, both systemic (administrative, legal and institutional), information, communication and methodological, as well as those related to social capital.

Despite the many problems and barriers, local governments are able to effectively and efficiently implement the planned activities, an example of which is the local revitalisation programme of Rawa Mazowiecka (Nowakowska et al. 2016, Boryczka and Legutko-Kobus, 2020). The town has managed not only to develop integrated documents over the years and engage stakeholders in the implementation of their own ideas and activities that fit in with the common development goals but also to effectively carry out planned activities, including obtaining external funding for their implementation. This example shows that a revitalisation programme responding to the identified problems and needs can, with the right dose of determination, involvement of local government staff and commitment of stakeholders, be implemented within the timeframe planned for it and produce the expected results.

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