



Illustration:
The Effects of Good Government
by A. Lorenzetti - Sala dei Nove
Siena, Italy (1339)

STRATEGIC MUNICIPAL PLANNING

TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help direct the development policy of local government units over time and support external funding applications

Council of Europe

Centre of Expertise for Good Governance

Developed by:

Jerzy Regulski Foundation
in Support of Local Democracy



CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE





COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

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Fresco in the Hall of Nine of the Public Palace of Siena



CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Mission of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance (CEGG) is to promote respect for the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance by building capacities of governance actors at all levels and delivering legal and policy advice in line with European standards and best practice.

The Centre of Expertise is uniquely placed to support multilevel governance. It aims to support member states to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions based on inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

While maintaining an approach that focuses on understanding the needs of local governance actors, the close links between the Centre of Expertise and the Council of Europe's intergovernmental Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG), offers it ready access to high-level government officials from Council of Europe member States. This multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue, awareness-raising, and peer exchange serves as a reservoir of knowledge and expertise in governance reforms to support the Centre's activities.

The Centre's cooperation projects and targeted interventions are designed to promote Council of Europe standards; address issues and fill gaps that have emerged through monitoring; and support on-going processes of public administration and local government reforms and the modernisation of democratic institutions in member states.

The Centre of Expertise promotes and builds on a unique set of European standards such as the **European Charter of Local Self-Government**, Committee of Ministers' Recommendations in this field, and the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. Its programmes are designed around implementation of the specific toolkits whose templates are easily adapted to respond to local needs and deliver quality, impact-oriented projects based on benchmarks, evaluation instruments and innovative methodologies. These tools represent a practical crystallisation of the Council of Europe standards developed through multilateralism and intergovernmental cooperation, and are a compilation of exchange of experience and best European practice. Currently the Centre of Expertise has a repertoire of **24 capacity-building and training tools** which are grouped around **5 areas**:

- **democratic participation;**
- **modern and effective human resource management and leadership;**
- **institutional capacity and quality public services;**
- **sound financial management;**
- **territorial and cross-border cooperation.**

The Centre of Expertise can provide assistance in adapting and implementing the tools and training national experts.



THE FOUNDATION IN SUPPORT OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY

FSLD is the largest Polish non-governmental organization that supports the development of civil society and self-government in Poland. FSLD is a nonpartisan, independent, and non-commercial entity. FSLD was established in 1989, and over the years FSLD has grown to incorporate a network of local units and educational institutions, as well as numerous experts and collaborators. Today, FSLD with 14 Regional Centres with local branches is designed to provide training, consultancy, networking, and capacity building services on local level in voivodeships outside the capital of Warsaw. The Foundation has 130 permanent employees and cooperates with approximately 200 experts and trainers. The Foundation's programs and activities are carried out throughout Poland and in selected countries abroad. During its over 30-year history, the Foundation has trained over 1,800,000 people and implemented over 2,000 projects. In 80 forums of local government specialists, there are currently over 4,000 members who, thanks to the exchange of experiences, improve their qualifications on a daily basis.

The mission of FSLD is to promote the idea of civil self-governance as the fundamental form of democracy. To fulfil its mission, the Foundation supports the activity of local authorities and non-governmental organizations, thus contributing to the development and reinforcement of the civil society in the region.

FSLD's activities are aimed at beneficiaries representing 3 sectors, including all levels of public administration, CSOs, informal groups and individuals (vulnerable social groups), as well as the private sector (small and medium-sized companies and media).



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INTRODUCTION



The concept of local self-government, as it was outlined in the European Charter of Local Self-Government, denotes the right and the ability of local authorities to regulate and manage a substantial share of public affairs under their own responsibility and in the interests of the local population. Certainly, this right should be exercised primarily by bodies elected by residents in general elections. However, it also applies to **participation in consulting decisions made by the authorities, especially if they regard the future of the local community.**

It is important to emphasize that public consultations **do not intend to limit the decision-making power and responsibility of the local government for managing current affairs.** Instead, the idea is to make the residents feel more co-responsible for local development than before. Obviously, no one can be forced to accept this co-responsibility. Nevertheless, it is possible to take actions and look for ways that will teach COOPERATION, which in time will have a chance to develop into CO-RESPONSIBILITY, and only then, and as a consequence, will set the ground for CO-DETERMINATION (participation in actual decision-making). Indeed, there is no co-determination without co-responsibility.

Participation, Efficiency and effectiveness, Long-term orientation are among the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. CM/Rec(2007)12 - Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on capacity building at local and regional level (10 October 2007) stated that *effective democracy and good governance at all levels are essential for preventing conflicts, promoting stability, facilitating economic and social progress and hence for creating sustainable communities where people want to live and work, now and in the future*".

The approach to the strategic planning process presented in this toolkit is based on the belief that the **municipal development strategy is not only a document presenting the basic directions for the activities of local government institutions** (thus, in a way, an "internal" document of the local government office), but a **strategic development plan for the entire local community.** This means that it is necessary to achieve a local consensus around the vision of development of the local government unit (and other assumptions of the strategy) and to agree on the scope and rules of involving a wide range of stakeholders in the process of implementation of the strategy.

Thus, it is extremely important to provide adequate **composition of the Strategy Development Team** (Strategic Team) directly working on the document elaboration (it should resemble local configuration of diverse environments and stakeholders, including women, elderly people, youth, people with disabilities) and appropriate tools for public consultations that will enable the effective participation of a significant representation of local citizens.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PLAN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT?

Co-responsibility and co-determination of the local development are important in the context of effectiveness in local administration management and compliance with standard norms of a democratic country. But it also has significance in the context of permanent developmental limitations of every self-governmental community (financial, human, material, organisational). Usually, as a result of these limitations, it is impossible to activate all potentials and eliminate all development barriers at the same time - there are not enough resources to do so. This makes it impossible for us to satisfy a wide variety of social needs, and if we cannot meet them all in the short term, then we must select the most necessary ones. Therefore, local community management remains **a permanent process of making decisions and planning the future, and all decisions made for this purpose constitute the strategic approach to municipal development**. In this way, the local development strategy becomes the basic and most important document of the local government, providing guidelines for the provision of local services, infrastructure projects, the local budget, and spatial planning. The strategy understood in this way is supposed to diagnose the most important development conditions and potentials, describe the approach to securing sustainable growth, and define areas, goals, and activities of the socio-economic policy to be accomplished in the local government unit in the next few years.

NOTE: There is a tendency of political leaders to name almost any initiative as “strategic” or “a strategy” toward achieving an objective. Overuse of the term creates confusion regarding what strategic planning should mean: **a set of actions that would significantly change the community over a long period of time**¹.

The democratic process of designing a strategy creates a unique opportunity for local residents and other stakeholders to participate in the game of social and economic development.

At this point, it is also worth emphasizing that some of the issues discussed in this toolkit are elaborated, often in a more extensive form, in other publications prepared by the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance. In particular, the reader's attention should be paid to the following toolkits (all available at: www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/centre-of-expertise):

- ▶ Civil Participation in Decision-Making
- ▶ HRM – Human Resources Management
- ▶ PMP – Performance Management Programme
- ▶ LFB – Local Finance Benchmark: introduction and methodology

It is also worth noting that the actions proposed in this Toolkit will contribute to the achievement of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 10 on reduced inequalities (target 2, 3, 4), 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements (target 3) and 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions (targets 5, 6, 7, 10, B).

¹ Hințea C.E., Profiroiu M.C., Țiclău T.C., „Strategic Planning in Local Communities. A Cross-National Study of 7 Countries”; Palgrave Macmillan, 2019

MUNICIPAL STRATEGY AS A PROCESS AND AS A DOCUMENT

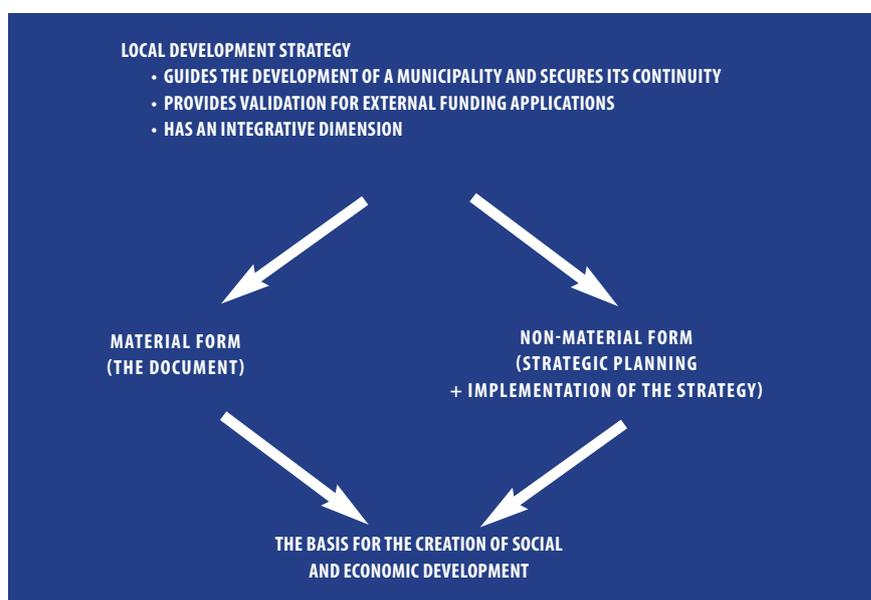
The municipal development strategy takes two forms in practice: non-material and material one.

The former is connected to the result (output) of strategic management, which consists of the processes of strategic planning and implementation of strategy assumptions. As a result of the planning process, the strategy specifies a vision for development and long-term goals, as well as an action plan and methods to achieve these goals. In the context of the implementation process, the strategy provides more than a framework for current decisions. As a reference point adopted by local authorities in managing the development of the local community, **it is a tool for continuous evaluation and monitoring of the quality of public services, the implementation of investment plans, the legitimacy of actions taken, and the validity of the environmental conditions determining the development opportunities of a local government unit.**

The strategy also takes the material form of a document. Due to its development, the arrangements take a uniform form and content, which reduces the risk of misinterpretations and gives credibility to development plans for residents and other stakeholders, including external entities (institutions, investors, etc.). Thus, it creates a predictable framework for local development on the basis of which inhabitants or investors may verify the convergence (or identify contradiction) of their own plans, initiatives, or investments against the plans adopted by the municipality. Writing the strategy in the form of a document also enables the promotion of its assumptions and proposed development solutions. Thanks to this, it is easier to create new activities, acquire implementation partners, and conclude appropriate agreements, as well as apply for external funds.

Development strategy understood in such a way (both as a product and subject matter of strategic management and as a tool for dissemination and implementation of activities) is the basis for creating and continuously strengthening the social and economic development of the local government unit, also in its spatial aspect. Therefore, it constitutes a truly strategic and creative role of local self-government authorities - unlike when they assume the attitude of only an efficient administrator, limiting themselves to the proper performance of legal obligations, managing local government resources, or running a well-organized office necessary to fulfil legally imposed tasks.

The recommended solution in strategic planning processes is the participatory-expert model, in which certain statistical and strategic analyses are the result of the work of external specialists, but together with other materials, they constitute the basis for the work of the social Strategic Team, appointed by the municipal authorities (which are also part of this team). It is a difficult approach, requiring on the one hand the "art of choice" and, on the other hand, obliging the emergence of a consensual approach by various local stakeholder groups with simultaneous acceptance by local authorities. This approach allows for a greater probability of participation in the development processes of local partners and effective implementation of the strategy.



It should be emphasized that the development of the strategy document is only one of the elements of the strategic management process, which starts much earlier – from identifying the need to define strategic development goals and the practical necessity to plan related activities. This reflection on the development challenges facing the local community and the need for a systematic approach to mastering them is the beginning of a process that can be carried out in many different ways. In this toolkit, we propose a participatory perspective, that is, one that builds co-responsibility of the local society for the decisions made and their consequences.



Five overlapping phases of the strategic planning process²

² Developed by Tracy Meisterheim, Steven Cretney and Alison Cretney; „The Weave; Participatory Process Design Guide for Strategic Sustainable Development“, published June 2011; www.theforest.ca

The role of the strategy and the resulting functions

There is no single and complete answer to the question about the role and functions of development strategies in the process of managing the development of local government units. In general, however, there are three basic areas that determine the role of the strategy: **targeting the municipality development policy, obtaining external funding, and integrative aspect of the strategy.**

The first role is **to direct the development policy of local government units over a long period of time** and to ensure the continuity of the implementation of the development policy. Within this framework, the most important functions of the strategy include: prioritisation of goals, determining methods by which they will be achieved, and reduction of costs resulting from continuous decision-making without a formulated long-term plan.

The second important role of the strategy is **to use the document as the basis for an external funding application** for the implementation of specific investments or projects. As such, the document is a solid basis for indicating local government investments and activities in funding applications as those which are necessary or essential from the perspective of implementing long-term development policy.

The third fundamental role of the strategy is related to its **integration dimension**. The main functions resulting from it are, among others, integration of the local self-government community around the process of strategy formulation and its implementation, opening the field of public discussion and building a compromise among the local community around the direction of the development of the local government unit, creating a basis for monitoring compliance with joint arrangements, and finally creating opportunities for learning and joint improvement of the local development management process.

Do you already have a municipal development strategy?

Check if the following recommended elements have been included:

<p>Has your municipality development strategy (vision, goals, objectives and actions) been built based on the results of a comprehensive socio-economic analysis of your municipality, taking into account both internal characteristics (as well as intra-unit differentiation) and benchmarking?</p>	
<p><i>if not...</i></p>	<p>➔ go to Chapter 3, LOCAL DIAGNOSIS, where you will learn how to conduct a thorough analysis of the social and economic development conditions of your local government unit, including the use of benchmarking and the diagnosis of internal differences within your municipality.</p>
<p>Has the development strategy (vision, goals, objectives and actions) been built on the basis of conclusions from the analysis of the external environment of your municipality, including statistical data and other information from public sources, identification of legal conditions (ongoing legal changes), analysis of political and demographic processes, with consideration of interfering global factors (e.g. climate change)?</p>	
<p><i>if not...</i></p>	<p>➔ go to Chapter 3, LOCAL DIAGNOSIS ('benchmarking' section) and ➔ go to Chapter 4, PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY ('operational objectives' section), where you will learn how to perform a reliable diagnosis of the external situation for your local government unit.</p>
<p>Does your municipal development strategy consider the current and future needs of municipal residents, their expectations, demands, and the level of satisfaction with the quality of local government services?</p>	
<p><i>if not...</i></p>	<p>➔ go to Chapter 3, LOCAL DIAGNOSIS ('social survey' section) where you will learn how to conduct a social survey among residents that provides up-to-date information on the preferences of citizens regarding the vision of local development and priorities for concrete actions.</p>
<p>Has the process of building your municipal strategy considered the participation of residents and involvement of various stakeholders?</p>	
<p><i>if not...</i></p>	<p>➔ go to Chapter 1, THE LOGIC OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS ('participatory strategic planning model' section) where you will learn how to establish a Strategic Team and how to plan its work; ➔ go to Chapter 4, PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY ('methods of determining development vision') where you will learn how to engage residents in discussions on the vision of local development, and ➔ go to Chapter 5, PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN PRACTICE, where you will learn how to plan and carry out public consultations of a draft development strategy document.</p>

Does your municipal development strategy have a strategic analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats discussed in the participatory process?

if not... → go to Chapter 4, PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY ('operational objectives' section), where you will learn how to plan and conduct a SWOT / TOWS analysis and how to use it in the planning process.

Does your municipal development strategy include a specific development vision that was created as a result of public discussion about the future of your municipality?

if not... → go to Chapter 4, PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY ('development vision' section), where you will learn how to define the development vision of the local government unit in the participatory strategic planning process and how to apply specific work methods.

Does your municipal development strategy include specific long-term goals and short-term objectives, consistent with both the local development vision and national and European strategic documents?

if not... → go to Chapter 4, PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY ('strategic goals' and 'operational objectives' sections), where you will learn how to identify goals and objectives.

Does the development strategy action plan contain a detailed description of the necessary implementation parameters for each activity, such as, for example, output and outcome indicators and sources of information about these indicators, and define the responsibility for the implementation of individual activities / projects?

if not... → go to Chapter 4, PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY ('strategy action plan' section), where you will learn how to build a strategy action plan with the elements necessary for the subsequent monitoring of the implementation of the strategy.

Has your municipal development strategy been widely consulted with various local stakeholders?

if not... → go to Chapter 5, PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS IN PRACTICE, where you will learn how to properly conduct the public consultation process.

Does your local development strategy include a strategy management system, i.e. procedures for its monitoring and updating, as well as assignment of responsibility for document management?

if not... → go to Chapter 6, INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION, where you will learn how to establish development strategy management procedures to be able to control the effectiveness, efficiency, and progress of the implementation of the strategy.

PREMISES FOR THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The specific premises correspond to the different roles of the strategy. In the case of targeting the development policy, the premise is the need to ensure continuity of the development direction of a municipality in a specific period or to overcome certain barriers which shall be deemed as factors preventing permanent and sustainable municipal development in the following years. Among the basic premises for the development of the strategy, those concerning the updating process should be mentioned as well. They are related to the changes in development conditions (demographic, social, economic, technological, legal, institutional, political or environmental) within the municipality and in its neighbourhood, and to the need to reorganize the public services provided by the local government to adapt them to those new conditions.

In the case of the second role of the strategy - the instrument of obtaining external funding - the main premises for its development are the accessibility of external funds (e.g. another EU budget perspective for the EU members or countries associated with the EU entering into force, or participation in various aid schemes for countries outside the EU, etc.), and on the other hand most often insufficient amount of the municipality's own funds to implement all planned undertakings.

However, in the case of the third role, related to the integrative aspect of the strategy, the premises are varied and directly related to the motivations of local authorities. On the one hand, they are identical to the efforts of local authorities to obtain confirmation of the chosen development directions among the inhabitants. In this way, the continuity of implementation of the proposed policy is secured, including the case of changes in the management of the local government unit, and pushing through a new vision of development. On the other side, by involving the community in the process of strategic management, the authorities may seek to stimulate residents' responsibility for the development of the municipality (including civil, but also organisational, and financial responsibility).

”

The strategy is a coherent concept of action, based on a few essential and complementary choices³.

The Perspective of Sustainable Development

The basic criterium for assessing the activity of each local government unit should be the aspect of improving the quality of inhabitants' life. However, as ostensibly correct as this sounds, operationalising this perspective creates some difficulties, since **the concept of quality of life is unfortunately quite imprecise.**

It should be considered through the prism of:

- ▶ individual happiness (general personal well-being, satisfaction with life, subjective positive feelings)
- ▶ the accessibility of various goods (understood as the possibility of using different kinds of resources, not only material), or

³ K. Oblój „Pasja i dyscyplina strategii. Jak z marzeń i decyzji zbudować sukces firmy”; Warszawa: Poltext 2010

- ▶ the extent to which the individual needs are met (housing, work, food, health, education, and culture and leisure etc. depending on a specific life situation of the individual)

In addition, the quality of life of a particular social group (e.g., local community) may be assessed from the **objective** perspective, based on statistics and economic data, or analyse in psychological terms, considering the **subjective** beliefs of individuals (which in local management is, firstly, impossible and, secondly, does not seem reasonable).

Quality of life analyses consider different sets of indicators, only a few of which can be related to the consequences of actions taken by local governments (the areas most often distinguished are: overall experience of life, material living conditions, productivity or main activity, education, health, leisure and social interactions, economic and physical safety, governance and basic rights, natural and living environment⁴). Thus, by simply taking a quality-of-life perspective, it is difficult to synthetically operationalise development indicators.

Therefore, strategic management often takes a slightly different perspective, in which the **principle of sustainable development** is dominant. For many researchers, who assume that local development is something more than just economic growth, the sustainable development perspective is the most universal approach to assessing local development.

Here, **the distinction between the concepts of growth and development is important. Growth means a quantitative increase in physical or material resources, while development means a qualitative improvement** or at least a change. Quantitative growth and qualitative improvement follow different rules. **Economic growth itself does not guarantee the development of local community;** it does not necessarily cause, for example, the reduction of poverty or social exclusion. It does not always mean an improvement in living conditions (both infrastructural and environmental), and it does not necessarily lead to an improvement in the quality of public services, for example.

When considering the decision to start developing a municipal strategy, it is important to pay attention to the **Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at the local level** promoted by the Council of Europe and the accompanying **12 principles of good governance**. One of them, principle 9 – 'sustainability and long-term orientation' – contains important indications relevant for strategic management:

- ▶ The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies.
- ▶ The sustainability of the community is constantly taken into account.
- ▶ Decisions strive to internalise all costs and not to transfer problems and tensions, be they environmental, structural, financial, economic or social, to future generations.
- ▶ There is a broad and long-term perspective on the future of the local community along with a sense of what is needed for such development.
- ▶ There is an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which this perspective is grounded.

⁴ Compare: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/quality-of-life/overview>

It is worth remembering that the actions taken locally for the sustainable development of the community are associated with the need to reconcile often different, and sometimes even contradictory goals. This is because truly sustainable development should integrate three groups of goals: social, environmental, and economic. Maintaining sustainability in each of the three dimensions means that the specific resources associated with them will not be permanently diminished. Thus:

- ▶ **environmental sustainability** is a situation in which natural and ecological resources, while serving the current needs, are not depleted in an irreversible way;
- ▶ **social sustainability** refers to the relationship between the challenges of development and the recognition of social norms and expectations, which means that actions taken locally do not strain the social tolerance for the introduced changes, take into account the current needs of residents, and consequently avoid the emergence of negative social phenomena (e.g., emigration to other centres),
- ▶ **economic sustainability** requires that the value of the benefits from the investments undertaken by the local government exceeds (or in certain cases at least equals) the associated costs, and as a result that the broadly understood economic resources are not permanently reduced.

- the natural environment is an essential foundation for sustainable development,
- economy is a tool for achieving sustainable development,
- a good quality of life for all people (social aspect) is the goal of sustainable development.

At the same time, the concept of sustainable development emphasises permanent development (or at least permanent support) of different types of capital at the disposal of the community: economic (financial and infrastructural), natural, human (intellectual and cultural) and social. Taken as a whole, **the sustainability of development depends on a relation between certain resources which are at the government disposal and the specific natural and social environment.** And therefore, when adopting a sustainable development perspective in strategic planning, one should:

- ▶ carry out strategic analyses from three basic development perspectives (economy, society, environment),
- ▶ adopt an additional perspective on the quality of governance, based on the assumption that the creation of appropriate, effective mechanisms for the functioning of the administration increases the effectiveness of the use of available resources



According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, development means meeting the needs of current generations without limiting the ability to meet those needs in the future⁵.

⁵ World Commission on Environment and Development „Our common future“, Oxford: OUP 1987.



Planning the sustainable development of the local community and taking care of related challenges requires local authorities to make competent and informed decisions. The most important of them concern trade-offs between often contradictory goals and the means of achieving them. It is necessary to recognise many unknowns, coordinate the often-divergent aspirations of members of the local community, and reconcile different institutional interests. All this requires considering specific social needs, as well as local environmental and spatial conditions. Consequently, it becomes necessary to develop a system that helps, on the one hand, to control the resources and activities of local government that rely on them, and, on the other hand, to monitor social problems, needs, and expectations.

”

Sustainable development means integrating goals when opportunities allow it and making compromises when integration is impossible⁶.

⁶ B. Dalal-Clayton et al., National sustainable development strategies: experience and dilemmas, „Environmental Planning Issues” 1994, nr 6, s. 7.

SUMMARY [1]: MUNICIPALITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- ▶ Two forms of strategy, nonmaterial and material, form the basis of creating and strengthening the local community development.
- ▶ The strategy has three basic roles: to direct the development policy of local government units over a long period of time, to integrate the local self-government community around the process of strategy formulation and its implementation, and to provide a basis for external funding application.
- ▶ The basic premises for developing strategy: the need to adjust the development direction to changing conditions, the availability of external funds and insufficient own financial resources, securing medium- and long-term arrangements based on a compromise among the community, and mobilizing the community to co-implement the strategy.



THE LOGIC OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This chapter contains, among other things, answers to the following questions:

- ▶ *What is the participatory approach to planning municipal development?*
- ▶ *How to plan and carry out the process of building the municipal development strategy efficiently??*
- ▶ *Who should participate in the different stages of building the municipal development strategy?*
- ▶ *What elements does the development strategy document consist of?*
- ▶ *What organisational resources are necessary to carry out the development strategy building process?*

PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL

Adopting a participatory perspective in strategic local development planning means:

- ▶ involving a **wide representation of the local society** (representatives of the most relevant institutions, non-governmental organisations, local leaders) in the work on the strategic document
- ▶ adopting the **perspective of sustainable development**, analyses and decisions made while developing strategic solutions cover three areas: economic, social, and environmental. This means that the conditions related to each of these areas are considered in the decision-making process (which does not always mean that they are taken as equally important).
- ▶ preparing a **report on the state of the municipality** based on an analysis of the already existing data (analysis of financial data, infrastructure condition, demographic data, data on the labour market and the economy, as well as on the environmental conditions)
- ▶ conducting an in-depth **social diagnosis** (including both analysis of the already existing data and the implementation of a social survey on a representative sample of inhabitants - a survey on living conditions and quality of services in the municipality),
- ▶ verifying achieved solutions in the course of **real and effective public consultations**,
- ▶ taking into account the **opinions of all residents** in the selection of development priorities (social surveys and consultations),
- ▶ **close collaboration** between social and institutional stakeholders, office workers, and external consultants in the work on the document,
- ▶ ensuring opportunities for a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.

The strategic sessions within the participatory process of building municipal development strategy (devoted to working on the programming part of the strategy) and the expert and consulting work between them are the most logistically complex and the longest stage of work. There is no single pre-determined number of strategy sessions necessary to develop a community development strategy. Their number should result from a logically and precisely planned strategic planning process (plan for planning).



The right to participate in the affairs of a local authority denotes the right to seek to determine or to influence the exercise of a local authority's powers and responsibilities.

*Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government
on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority (Article 1.2.)*

Preparatory stage

The coordinator of strategy development (such function is by all means essential in the strategy building process, and the person(s) should have knowledge of logistics and process merits) plays a key role in the strategic planning process.

Role and person specification – Strategic Municipal Planning Project Manager

The Municipality should appoint a Project Manager at the start of the process to coordinate the Strategic Municipal Planning Process on behalf of the Municipality. The Project Manager could be recruited from within the Municipality (e.g., from the central administration or finance department). The appointment could be a permanent appointment or a temporary secondment. Alternatively, the Municipality could recruit the Project Manager externally. The key issue is that the Project Manager has the appropriate knowledge and skills to undertake the project.

Role

The role of the Project Manager is to:

- ▶ Coordinate the Strategic Municipal Planning process for the Municipality
- ▶ Lead in preparing the project plan for the planning process
- ▶ Support the Steering Group in overseeing the process
- ▶ Support the Themed Groups in making their contribution to the process
- ▶ Ensure that the key steps as set out in this Toolkit are fully addressed
- ▶ Oversee the development of the Community Profile
- ▶ Coordinate resident and stakeholder engagement
- ▶ Coordinate the development of the SWOT and Vision Statement
- ▶ Coordinate the development of the Action Plan
- ▶ Ensure effective communication with the Steering Group, Themed Groups, other Municipality officials, residents, and stakeholders throughout the process

The role may be supported by other staff and/or appointed facilitator/expert

Person specification

The following sets out the appropriate knowledge and skills required by the Project Leader (or Manager) to lead the Strategic Municipal Planning process:

Knowledge

- ▶ Good understanding of the Strategic Municipal Planning process (E)
- ▶ Strong understanding of techniques for community engagement and participation (A)
- ▶ Understanding of how to draw up a community profile (A)
- ▶ Good understanding of project planning processes (E)

Skills

- ▶ Ability to win trust and respect of the political leadership and senior management of the Municipality (E)
- ▶ Ability to build strong working relationships with residents and local stakeholders (E)
- ▶ Effective oral communicator, including speaking to large public audiences (E)
- ▶ Good report writer able to draw up project plan and draft of Strategic Municipal Plan (E)
- ▶ Ability to analyse data and information about the Municipality (A)

Key: (E) = essential; (A) = advisable, unless available from another member of the project team or external expert support, when it becomes essential

Before starting substantive activities on the programming part of the development strategy, the Coordinator should plan and check:

- ▶ whether he/she has all the necessary materials from the diagnostic part (diagnosis and social survey reports, conclusions from diagnosis and social survey, and other diagnostic materials),
- ▶ in agreement with the municipal leadership create a list of Strategic Team members (Strategy Development Team), which includes representatives of local society, institutions, and partners from the municipality's surroundings,
- ▶ plan a detailed schedule of work
- ▶ prepare invitations and confirm the participation of Strategic Team members in the work on the strategy,
- ▶ reserve appropriately equipped rooms to conduct individual strategy meetings – mainly strategy sessions,
- ▶ prepare an informative note on starting work on the municipal development strategy to post it in the local media

The example of the composition of the Strategic Team used in the implementation of the participatory development of municipal strategy.

The team should include representatives from the three main municipality communities (approx. 30-40 people) and, depending on the characteristics of the municipality, representatives of the local media.

1. Local government authorities

- Municipality head
- Councillors - for example, the representation of every political power in the Council or representatives of every Council's committee (the Chairmen of the Committees),
- Directors of selected units of Municipality Office - those that have an impact on the strategy
- Representatives of the organisational units or institutions of a municipality (for example, directors of selected schools and kindergartens, cultural institutions, health care institutions, social policy institutions, municipal enterprises, etc.).

2. Entrepreneurs

- Representatives of important local employers,
- Representatives of local business organisations,
- Representatives of institutions in the business environment carrying out activities for the benefit of local entrepreneurs.

3. Residents:

- Representatives of non-governmental organisations (working for local, social, cultural, sports, tourism development etc.),
- Community Leaders,
- Public figures,

4. Representatives of the local media

After the logistical planning of the work on the programming part of the strategy is completed, it is good practice to publish an announcement on local and social media about the start of the work by the Strategic Team. It should only contain general information explaining the nature of the work and pointing to the participants in this process. A sample note is included below.

INFORMATIVE NOTE ON THE WORK ON THE STRATEGY

The XXX Municipality is carrying out work related to the development strategy until 2030.

The first stage of work is to prepare a comprehensive social, economic, and spatial diagnosis which includes a dynamic and comparative analysis based on statistical data, and a diagnostic workshop with the participation of local stakeholders. The next tasks will be to identify goals and activities that ensure long-term development and realize our local community aspirations. Planning socio-economic goals will be related to spatial planning making the strategy document integrated and complex.

During work, a participatory-expert model for building strategic plans will be used, which fully reflects the expectations of national and EU institutions supporting territorial development in our country. According to this model, the strategy will be developed by a working group, which will include, inter alia, representatives of local government authorities, local government office workers, representatives of the education, cultural institution, social services, health care, business representatives and local leaders and representatives of non-governmental organisations. The work of the group will be moderated by external experts.

The work will take into account the procedural and substantive guidelines specified in state law.

The development strategy is basic and the most important document of the local government, defining areas, goals, and directions of the development policy intervention carried out in the municipality. It is also an instrument for obtaining external funds for investments and other development activities, which is particularly important in the context of the new budget perspective of the European Union for 2021-2027.

We invite you to actively participate and cooperate in the elaboration of the Development Strategy of our municipality until 2030.

Process of elaborating the development strategy

As noted above, there is no rule specifying the number of strategic sessions necessary to plan a development strategy. Their number must be adapted to the specificity of the municipality, the complexity of existing potentials and development barriers, local society needs, etc. However, the standard approach, which can be seen in many local government strategic planning processes, is to implement five strategic sessions and the number of tasks in between. This participatory strategic planning methodology is also recommended by the Council of Europe. The process of developing the programming part of the local development strategy according to this methodology is as follows:

? **The first strategic session** - is of organisational and diagnostic nature. The members of the Strategic Team are familiarised with the goals and process of the strategic planning process. During the meeting, the next steps in developing the strategy are discussed. Until the first strategic session, diagnostic work is performed and a social survey is conducted. The first meeting presents and discusses:

- conclusions from the local socio-economic diagnosis report,
- results of the social survey and the resulting recommendations from it for the strategy

On their basis, the SWOT analysis is carried out.

➤ *Between the first and second strategic sessions, members of the Strategy Development Team receive a draft SWOT analysis for final review and approval.*

? **The second strategic session** - during which a TOWS/SWOT analysis is carried out and then a preliminary vision of municipal development in the long-term perspective is defined and, along with it, strategic areas (thematic elements of the development vision) are identified, within which strategic goals are formulated.

➤ *Between the second and the third strategic sessions, the Team's findings are written down and made available to all its members. Comments and additional information are collected. The first version of the municipal development vision, strategic areas and goals are edited.*

? **The 3rd strategic session** – includes work on operational objectives and assigned tasks / actions. Outcome indicators (related to operational goals) and output indicators (related to actions) are developed. The responsibility for the implementation of certain activities and the schedule of doing so are agreed upon.

➤ *Between the 3rd and 4th strategic sessions, the strategy document is merged, subject to editing and final substantive works. The chapters on correlation with strategies of higher tiers of local and central government, and administrative procedures for managing the strategy (monitoring, updating, etc.) are developed by experts. The result is a draft of the entire strategy, which is made available to the Team members for consultation.*

? **The fourth strategic session** – concerns agreement of the final version of the strategy action plan (before public consultations). The Strategy Development Team is also familiarised with the strategy management plan, which defines the methods of implementing strategy, coordinating works related to it, and the principles of monitoring the effects of implemented projects. The plan typically includes the identification of a coordinating entity (e.g., coordinator or team), an indication of reporting procedures, and rules of updating the document. During the meeting, the public consultation plan is also agreed. It includes assumed ways of conducting consultations and defines responsibility in this regard (indicates persons/entities and the scope of assigned tasks to them).

➤ *After the fourth strategic session, the development strategy document is prepared for public consultation, which is the most important activity between the fourth and fifth strategic sessions. They typically last approximately 3 weeks. It is assumed that public consultation includes various broad forms of disseminating the local government strategy: public meetings with residents, providing information by mail and using local mass media, sharing the document on websites, creating a special e-mail box for comments, etc. - due to its multiplicity and complexity, they must be prepared well in advance. Each time, depending on local conditions and specificity, it is necessary to provide such tools for public consultation (methods and time) that will enable the participation*

of a broad and properly represented local community, i.e., women, men, youth, elderly people, people requiring special support, displaced persons, and others.

? **The 5th strategic session** – during which the conclusions of the public consultation are discussed. The submitted proposals are analysed, and possible modifications to the content of the document are made.

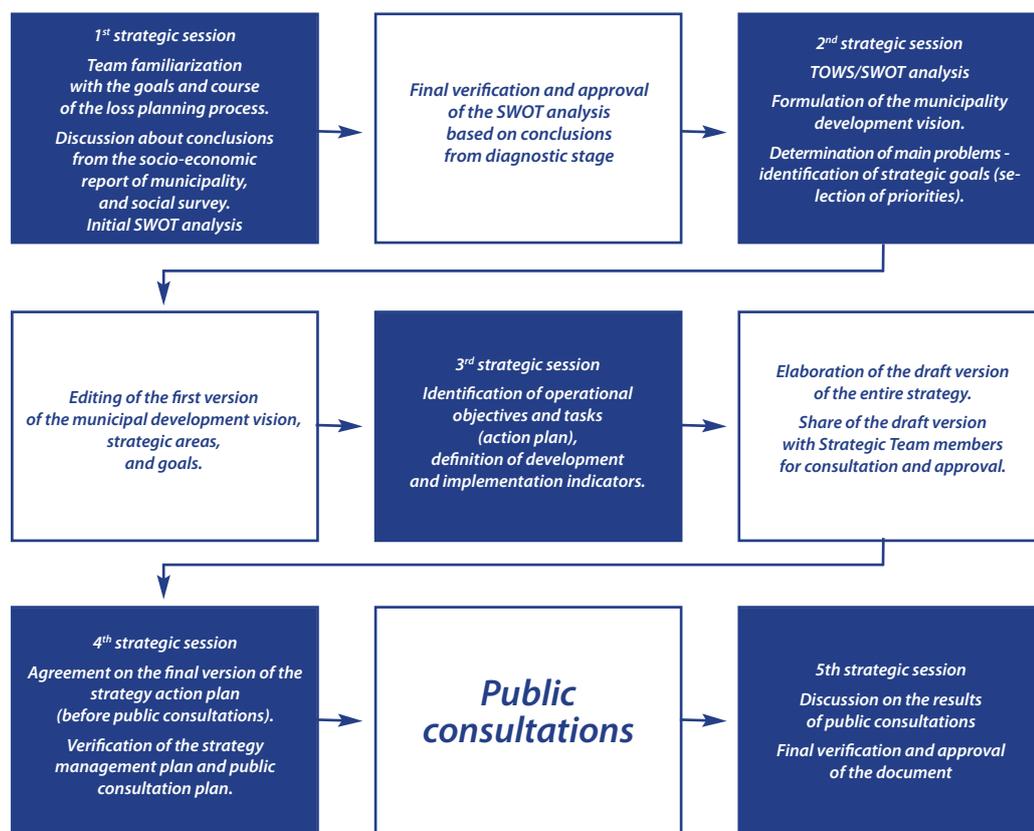
- *After the fifth strategic session, the final version of the document is sent (via local government unit executives) to the municipal council for adoption.*

NOTE: After each meeting, the findings of the Strategic Team are written down and shared by email with all members. Efforts should also be made to ensure that updated information about the strategic process and the status of work (at every stage) is made public, at least through the website of the local government unit and the office noticeboard.

The described model of works **on the programming part of municipal development strategy** during and between five strategic sessions has been proven via many implementations in various countries, although, depending on the needs and the situation of a given municipality, its modifications are of course possible. The logic of work described above can be illustrated by the diagram presented below (shaded boxes in the diagram are the meetings of the Strategic Team; white boxes indicate work undertaken between these meetings):

Strategic sessions can be led by people who have experience in this field and who are not members of the local community – this provides a sense of impartiality, but it also brings an outside voice into the discussion. A strategic session (sometimes more than one, if necessary) should result in a working formulation of the development vision, which can be subsequently consulted using other techniques in order to establish a final wording acceptable to all local stakeholders.

2. THE LOGIC OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



Good Practice Check List for the Strategy Coordinator:

- ❓ Verify the availability of conclusions and recommendations for the built strategy resulting from the developed local diagnostic and social survey reports. They should be prepared in the form to present at the strategy session (presentation, handouts, etc.).
- ❓ Prepare, in consultation with local authorities, the list of Strategic Team members – make sure that all social and institutional stakeholders are represented. Take a look at the conclusions of the diagnostic report and the social research – this way you can verify whether the Team does not lack people from some important social groups or from the municipality's neighbourhood who could competently comment on the development potentials or local problems identified in the diagnosis and research.
- ❓ When organising the Strategic Team, remember that not the number of its members, but its representativeness and creativity are the most important – this will make the work on the programming part of the strategy easier and will significantly enrich the content with interesting ideas and concepts of municipality development.
- ❓ Prepare a detailed schedule of work on the strategy - define the dates and places of strategic sessions and plan work between sessions. Clearly define tasks and responsibility for their implementation.
- ❓ Invite the members of the Strategic Team to work, present them the schedule, confirm their participation – remember that the composition of the Team working during the entire strategy building process should be constant (the question of availability of members of the strategy development process) – this will prevent "returning" to discussions on the topics in which new members did not participate, and will not disturb the adopted methodology of work. The development strategy in its draft version will be subject to public consultation anyway and anyone interested will be able to comment on it.

- ? *Remember that the whole process of creating the programming part of the development strategy can take approx. 5 months and its length is determined by the local needs, partners willingness to cooperate and certain possibilities of activating various resources (mainly human and material).*
- ? *Create a contact list, social media group, or other forms of contact with Strategic Team members – this will facilitate the transfer of organizational and substantive information, materials, etc.*
- ? *Prepare and post a note on local and social media about starting work on the municipal development strategy.*
- ? *Ensure opportunities for the balanced participation of women and men in the consultation process and promote gender mainstreaming in policies and measures..*
- ? *Throughout the process, you must remember to secure the needs of various social groups in the planned activities and make the Strategic Team and other groups and people with whom work is undertaken sensitive to these issues.*
- ? *Remember that the development strategy should consider the needs of the whole community, which should be reflected both in appropriate strategy provisions and in the use of gender-sensitive language (conceptualisation referring to representatives of different backgrounds and stakeholders, for example, women, elderly, youth, people with special needs, etc.)*

10 critical success factors in the preparation of the Strategic Development Plan

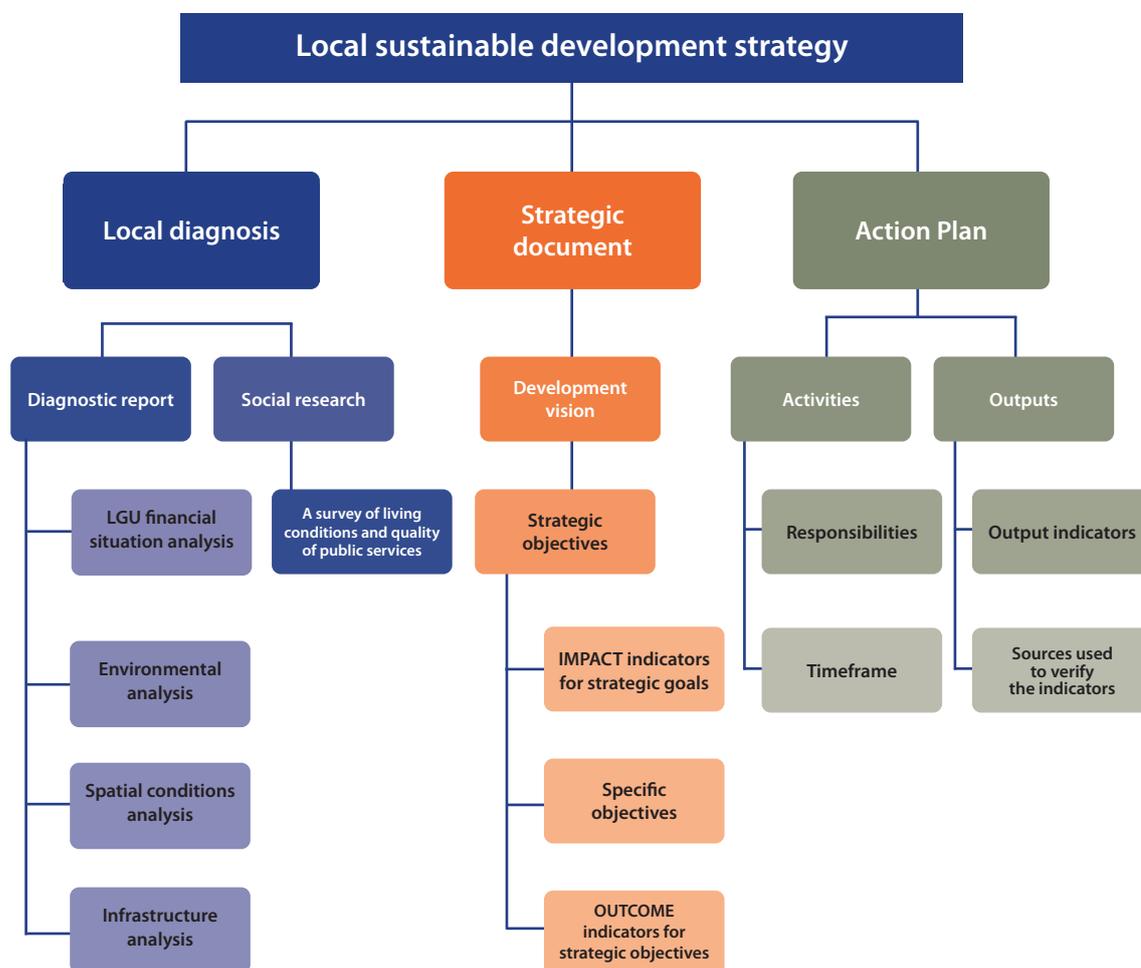
- ▶ The Mayor and leadership are fully committed to overseeing the Strategic Municipal Planning process.
- ▶ There is a realistic written plan for the Strategic Municipal Planning process approved by the Municipality Leadership.
- ▶ There are realistic expectations for the process..
- ▶ There is a clear timetable that includes the start and completion dates of the strategic municipal planning process.
- ▶ There is a Steering Group for the project, led by the Mayor or another senior political leader.
- ▶ A Project Leader with the appropriate skills is appointed to lead the project and is supported by appropriate staff resources..
- ▶ Senior officials within the municipality have been briefed on the Strategic Municipal Planning process and their contribution to it.
- ▶ The Municipality has a clear understanding of how it will involve residents and other stakeholders in developing the Strategic Municipal Plan.
- ▶ The Municipality has assessed whether it needs external expertise to help to facilitate the Strategic Municipal Planning process and where this expertise will be found.
- ▶ The Municipality has informed its neighbouring municipalities and other appropriate tiers of government of its intention of undertaking a Strategic Municipal Planning process.

STRUCTURE OF THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY DOCUMENT

A strategic document should consist of **three main parts: diagnostic, programming, and management system**. All together, they make up the universal structure of the municipal development strategy document, which can be represented by the following table of contents:

- ? **Introduction** – foreword to the local government unit development strategy
- ? **Diagnosis of local development** – key conclusions NOTE: the report "Diagnosis of the socio-economic situation" as a separate document should accompany the strategy
- ? **Summary of social survey results** ? NOTE: this part is normally accompanied by a separate document titled "Report on social survey" (if such was conducted)
- ? **SWOT analysis, TOWS/SWOT analysis**
- ? **Vision of municipal development**
- ? **Programming part of the strategy** – strategic areas, strategic goals, and operational objectives
- ? **Programming part of the strategy** – action plan – matrix of operational objectives, tasks, output and outcome indicators, responsibilities, sources of financing
- ? **Complementarity of the municipal strategy with the strategic documents of the higher-tier units**
- ? **System for implementation and monitoring of the strategy; rules for updating the document**

The above presented municipal development strategy structure is an example and depends on certain conditions (legal, customary). It may undergo changes, including the addition of new elements.



Introduction

The introduction to the development strategy should explain the approach used, the specifics of the strategy, or other relevant assumptions during the preparation of the document. There are two fundamentally different types of introduction to the municipal development strategy:

- ? in the form of a preface prepared by the municipal leadership,
- ? in the form of a substantive chapter explaining the fundamentals of the development strategy process.

Introduction in the form of a preface prepared by the leadership, most often a direct address of the municipality leader to all future users/recipients of the development strategy – inhabitants, entrepreneurs, investors, social organisations, etc. The introduction of this type usually includes a brief explanation of the chosen development strategy directions with their justification, indicating the priorities, inviting all interested parties to cooperate in the implementation of the strategy.

It should be remembered that this form of introduction to the document will always take the form of a more or less clear political manifesto of the authorities currently governing in the local government unit. Nevertheless, it is an important signal to the environment that local government authorities are seriously approaching strategic planning and management and are involved in this process.

The introduction in the form of a substantive chapter explaining the basic assumptions of the development strategy preparation process draws attention to the most important circumstances accompanying the preparation of the strategy and the solutions adopted. It is a substantive introduction to subsequent chapters/elements of the strategy. An introduction in this form usually includes brief information/descriptions of the following:

- ▶ the description of the method used to build the development strategy - e.g., participatory method, experts involvement, etc.,
- ▶ the description of the groups involved in the work on the development strategy at its stages – a list of the members of the Strategic Team appointed for this purpose may also be included,
- ▶ presentation of the development strategy work schedule,
- ▶ description of compliance with legal requirements applicable to local government unit development strategies (if applicable),
- ▶ drawing attention to correlations with other strategic documents – internal municipal documents, documents of other tiers of public administration or of international character,
- ▶ comments on the period for which the development strategy has been prepared.

The above scope of introduction in the form of a substantive chapter introducing the development strategy is an example and depends on the situation of each municipality and the needs in this regard.

Both forms of introduction can be included in the development strategy document.

Good Practice Check List for the Strategy Coordinator:

- ? Find out what form of introduction is preferred for your LGU development strategy.
- ? If you decided to have an introduction in the form of a preamble from the local government leader, prepare it in advance and agree on it with the local government.
- ? Check whether the legislation imposes specific requirements on LGU development strategies and whether they have been met.
- ? Prepare a detailed schedule of the work and a list of participants.

Local development diagnosis – key findings

This chapter of the development strategy is created on the basis of the "**local socio-economic diagnosis report**", a separate document prepared at the diagnostic stage. Substantial guidelines for performing the diagnostic part of the preparation of the local development strategy are included in Chapter 3 of this toolkit. From the point of view of the logistics of work on the development strategy document, it is important to remember to include a chapter summarising all analytical work carried out at the

stage of creating "local diagnosis". This chapter should be developed in the form of the most important conclusions and recommendations from the diagnostic part for the programming part of the strategy (i.e., for the development vision, strategic areas, strategic goals, and operational objectives).

Any form of presentation of diagnosis conclusions in the development strategy can be used. It is common, for example, to list in the strategy the most important tendencies, trends, indicators shown in the "Local Diagnosis" report that, in the opinion of the authors of the report, have the most significant impact on the municipal development in the forthcoming years. However, a better solution is to develop the conclusions of the diagnosis in the form of challenges for the municipality related to specific trends and tendencies shown in the diagnostic section. It is the challenges arising from the current and projected socio-economic situation that will provide a good starting point for discussion on the local government's development vision, strategic objectives, etc., at subsequent stages of the work.

Indicators	Consequences	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Low dynamics of entrepreneurship development; ▶ Moderate corporate tax revenues; ▶ Low share of large companies, but several significant investors; ▶ The dominant branches: trade, construction and industrial processing; ▶ Percentage of large business entities below the regional average; ▶ High percentage of population using municipal technical infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Lower competitiveness of the economy; ▶ Reduction in revenue for municipality and county budgets; ▶ Decline in the purchasing power of the population and the related quality of life; ▶ Increase in economic emigration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reindustrialisation – the shift from capital-intensive to intellectually intensive industrial branches; ▶ Creating economic activity zones for small and medium-sized businesses; ▶ Preparing a system of incentives for potential investors and improving the service; ▶ Support and promotion of vocational education (adjusting education to the needs of the labour market).

Example of the presentation of diagnostic section conclusions in a development strategy document.

Good Practice Check List for the Strategy Coordinator:

- ? Make sure that local diagnosis includes a chapter with conclusions and recommendations resulting from the diagnosis of the situation of the local government unit, which can constitute a chapter of the development strategy summarising the diagnostic part and being a link to the programming part (development vision, objectives).

- ? *Ensure that the conclusions of the diagnosis are presented in an appropriate form, e.g., as development challenges for the local government unit. This will facilitate the work on identifying the development vision and strategic objectives.*
- ? *Including the whole report from the Local Diagnosis in the development strategy as one of the chapters is not a practical solution and does not serve any purpose – often the report may significantly exceed the volume of the strategy itself, which would significantly reduce its transparency. Such a report, included in its entirety in the strategy document, may divert attention from the programming part, which is essential for any strategy. Remember that due to the possible obsolescence of statistic data, a chapter consisting of conclusions rather than a compilation of specific statistics will stand the test of time much longer in a development strategy document.*

If the process of building the strategy provides for the implementation of social research (which is the recommended approach), most often their results are presented in a separate document – the social research report. As in the case of "Socio-economic diagnosis", the research report should contain a description of the methodology used, present research tools, describe the group of research participants, and present analysis of the obtained data. The research report, similarly to the socio-economic diagnosis, should contain a summary - key findings and implementation recommendations for the programming part of the development strategy. This summary should be included in the development strategy document and constitute an important contribution to the formulation of the local development vision and strategic goals.

Good Practice Check List for the Strategy Coordinator:

- ? Make sure that the social research report includes a section that presents conclusions and recommendations for the strategy that is being developed, 'key findings' can constitute a chapter of the strategy,
- ? Remember that the conclusions from the social research constitute a direct and objective voice of the residents concerning the future of the local government unit, so they should have a special place in the work on the programming part of the municipal development strategy,
- ? To make social research an important argument in the formulation of the development vision and strategic goals, it should be carried out in accordance with the methodological rules applicable to such research. This concerns ensuring that they are systematic and representative.
- ? When implementing social research, you can use the services of professional companies, organisations, and institutions that implement similar activities,
- ? Including the entire social research report in the development strategy as one of its chapters is not a practical solution and does not serve any purpose – the report can be quite voluminous, which will make the strategy less clear.

Programming part: strategic analysis, development goals, and action plan

In the case of the Participatory Strategic Planning Model, strategic analyses and the whole programming part of the local development strategy should be worked out with the participation of local stakeholders. As it was explained in detail in chapters 4 and 5 of this toolkit, a good working technique in this case are strategy sessions (workshops) with the Strategic Team appointed by the local government and consisting of representatives of different local communities (local government, entrepreneurs, NGOs and informal groups of residents, representatives of various social groups). An important element of selecting members of the Strategic Team is **stakeholder analysis** – identification of the entities whose participation in the works on the development strategy is of potential importance for the proper composition of the document and its social legitimacy.

A stakeholder is an entity (a person, a group of people, or an institution) that is interested in a programme because it affects its interest, understood both as a benefit it may gain from its implementation as well as a threat of loss. Stakeholders include:

- ? **Direct beneficiaries of the programme** - persons or institutions for whom the programme is implemented (who will directly benefit from it)
- ? **Potential partners in the implementation of undertakings** - entities whose objectives are convergent with the objectives of the programme
- ? **Potential opponents of the programme** - entities for whom the implementation of the actions poses a threat to their interests

Issues related to the development of the programming part of the strategy, including information on how to conduct strategic analyses, define strategic goals and operational objectives, and create a strategy action plan, are discussed in detail in Chapters 3 and 4 of this toolkit. It is only worth mentioning here that the programming part of the strategy (in the minimum version) consists of the following elements:

- ▶ SWOT analysis, TOWS/SWOT analysis,
- ▶ the vision of municipal development,
- ▶ identification of strategic areas,
- ▶ strategic goals and operational objectives,
- ▶ action plan of the strategy

System of monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation

Monitoring of the implementation of the development strategy is carried out in order to ensure the continuity, correctness, and effectiveness of actions taken – it allows to detect threats and the possible need to modify plans or change entities responsible / cooperating in the implementation of tasks.

Detailed information on the monitoring system as a component of strategy implementation management is presented in Chapter 7. At this point, it is only worth mentioning that the description of the strategy monitoring and evaluation system should constitute an integral part of the strategic document. The annex contains an example of the procedure for appointing a Monitoring Team as well as an example of a report that can be used in strategy monitoring.

SUMMARY [2]: THE LOGIC OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

- ▶ The Participatory Strategic Planning Model is the recommended approach. **A wide representation of the local community** (representatives of the most relevant institutions, NGOs, local leaders) should be involved in the works on the strategic document.
- ▶ When formulating the long-term development strategy of the local government unit, the assumptions of sustainable development should be adopted.
- ▶ The standard approach, which can be seen in many local government strategic planning processes is to implement 5 strategic sessions and the number of tasks in between.
- ▶ A strategic document should consist of three main parts: diagnostic, programming, and management system.



(...)

Considering that the participation of citizens is at the very heart of the idea of democracy and that citizens who are committed to democratic values, mindful of their civic duties and active in public life, are the lifeblood of any democratic system;

(...)

Considering that the right of citizens to have their say in major decisions entailing long-term commitments or choices which are difficult to reverse and which concern them, is one of the democratic principles common to all member States of the Council of Europe Considering that this right can be most directly exercised at local level and that, accordingly, steps should be taken to involve citizens more directly in the management of local affairs, while safeguarding the effectiveness and efficiency of such management;

Considering that dialogue between citizens and local authorities and elected representatives is essential for local democracy, as it strengthens the legitimacy of local democratic institutions and the effectiveness of their action;

Considering that, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, local authorities have, and must assume, a leading role in promoting the participation of citizens, and that their commitment is critical to the success of any local democratic participation policy;

(...)

Recommends that the governments of member States undertake the tasks set out in paragraphs 1 to 5 below, or entrust these tasks to the competent public authorities, taking into account their respective constitutional or legislative arrangements.

1. Frame a policy, involving local and – where applicable – regional authorities, designed to promote the participation of citizens in local public life, (...)

2. Adopt measures within their power, (...) in particular with a view to improving the legal framework for participation and ensuring that national legislation and regulations enable local and regional authorities to employ a wide range of participation instruments;

(...)

*Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)4 of the Committee of Ministers
to member States on the participation
of citizens in local public life*



3 LOCAL DIAGNOSIS

This chapter contains, among other things, answers to the following questions:

- ▶ *What is the analytical approach to sustainable development planning?*
- ▶ *What is the role of local diagnosis in the process of preparing a development strategy?*
- ▶ *How is a local diagnosis developed? How to carry out the diagnostic process?*
- ▶ *How to approach the use of statistical data in preparing a local diagnosis?*
- ▶ *How to conduct benchmarking when preparing a diagnostic report?*
- ▶ *What is the importance of a social survey in the preparation of development strategies? How to conduct such research?*

The planning of measures aimed at satisfying social needs and improving the quality of life of residents is the main axis of any local development strategy. However, this seemingly simple statement contains many unknowns. What are social needs? By what factors are they determined? What determines the standard of living in a particular local government unit? What factors determine the living standards of residents? These are just some of the questions that local authorities face.

First, it is worth highlighting the direct **relationship between social problems and the needs of residents** of a given unit of local government. In the practice of local management, social problems concern groups of people and are usually objective in nature, i.e., they have specific, identifiable causes. These tend to be closely linked to social needs – a relationship in which problems generate needs is evident. This is because the latter are connected with some kind of deficiency or limitation resulting from the biological or psychological state of the human organism, personal experiences, position in the social structure, social relations, and environmental conditions.

It is also important to note that the needs understood in this way can be hierarchized, pointing to **the basic needs** (i.e., those which non-satisfaction will lead to the social and psychological disintegration of the individual) and **higher-level needs** (development needs related to life enrichment and realisation of one's inner potential, self-fulfilment). From a minimalist perspective, the satisfaction of basic needs, at least at a level that allows a dignified life, is the most important goal of any local government development policy.

Social needs as the foundation of strategic development planning



The diagnosis of social needs / evaluation of the self-government activity should take into account:

objective conditions

of the reality
in which the local community functions
(they include the scope
and condition of various resources /
goods at the disposal of the community
as a whole and their availability
for individual individuals and groups
of residents)

subjective attitudes

beliefs and expectations of residents,
which to a large extent are conditioned
by the individual utility
of the various goods that they can reach

However, the problem is that people's daily needs are diverse, and issues do not necessarily affect all social groups equally. To what extent should local leaders take into account the different needs and expectations of residents, and how should they deal with divergent demands that arise?

First, the local government, due to its commitment to the sustainable development of the whole community, must ensure a prudent distinction between social needs and related development challenges and the desires or expectations of the residents expressed in different ways. The **standard of living** of a local community will be determined by the satisfaction of basic needs (often material ones, which are generally measured by objective indicators). The **quality of life**, on the other hand, will be determined by satisfaction of higher-level needs (often non-material, of a spiritual and emotional nature) related to social expectations, the fulfilment of which will lead to a feeling of satisfaction with life in a particular local community.

The decisions and actions taken by the local government must be based on a skilful distinction between **social problems and needs**, on the one hand, and the **expectations or desires** of the residents, on the other. For such a distinction to be made, it is necessary to understand the sources of problems, the nature of the residents' expectations, and possible ways of their satisfaction.

Second, it should be remembered that social needs are the result of geographical conditions, the state of spatial development, access to public services, the state of infrastructure, but also cultural traditions, patterns of social behaviour, and political past. There are probably many other factors that could be identified that are relevant to specific economic, environmental, and social conditions. Creating development plans without considering these conditions, without conducting an in-depth analysis of their impact and related consequences, may lead to the loss of opportunities for sustainable development of the local government unit.

Moreover, a certain level of satisfaction of needs and aspirations of the local community can cause dissatisfaction of residents not only as a result of the impact of very diverse external factors (such as, for example, the characteristics of the natural environment, or the legal and institutional conditions for the functioning of local governments which limit development), but also as a result of internal conditions, for example, due to poor management of the local government unit.

The relationship between social needs and factors that affect them and the activities undertaken by the local government determine the development opportunities of the local community.

ANALYTICAL APPROACH IN PLANNING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Local diagnosis is part of the process of strategic planning for sustainable development. Activities undertaken within its framework by the local government must equally relate to:

- ▶ **objective conditions** in which the local community functions; they consist of the scope and state of various resources (goods) at the disposal of the community as a whole and their accessibility to particular individuals and groups of residents,
- ▶ residents' **attitudes, beliefs, and expectations**, which to a large extent are conditioned by the subjective utility of the various goods within their reach.

The two perspectives are inseparable. The concept of quality of life basically assumes that there are two fundamental groups of operational elements and processes: those related to the internal psychological mechanism that provides a sense of satisfaction or contentment with life, and those related to the external conditions that trigger this internal mechanism⁷.

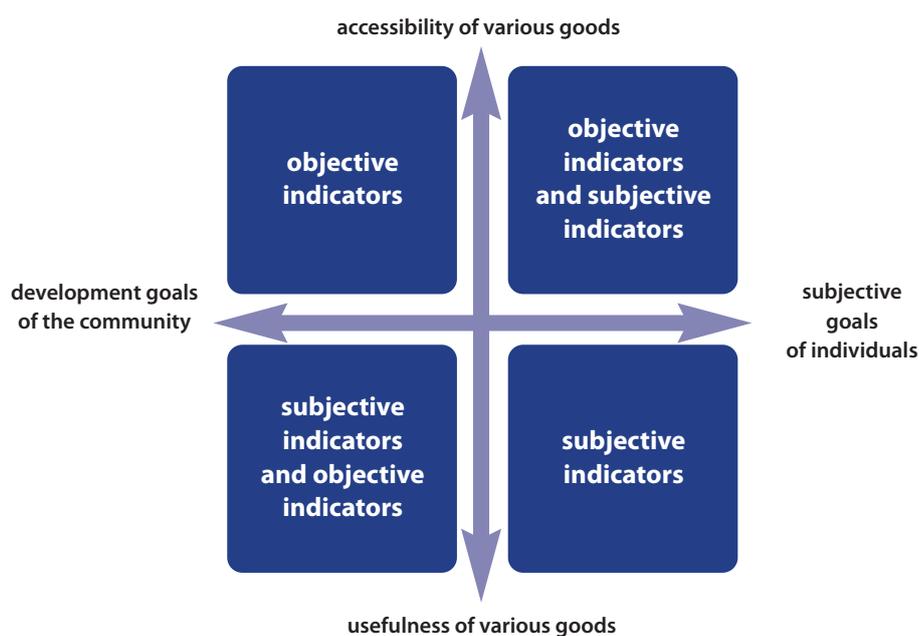
Therefore, a local diagnosis should be designed from both an objective and a subjective perspective. They can be defined, respectively, as a **quantitative perspective** (referring to such dimensions as economic well-being, living conditions, the level or standard of living, wealth, access to various types of services) and a **qualitative perspective** (referring to the subjective perception of the quality of life in a narrow sense – the way of life, satisfaction with life, the lifestyle of the residents). The former uses numerical methods and creates models, while the latter uses survey or polling methods and interviews. The former are **objective indicators** used to identify and analyse social problems on the basis of existing data, while the latter are **subjective indicators** resulting from surveys of the residents' expectations and satisfaction.

⁷ G. Masik, „Impact of local policies on living conditions and quality of life“; Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Scholar 2010, p. 40

Therefore, a local diagnosis consists of both objectified **identification and analysis of problems** occurring in the local environment and **surveys of social expectations and satisfaction of residents**.

On the one hand, such a diagnosis implies the need to recognise the state of affairs on the basis of data from various sources and an attempt to explain the results obtained by referring to the main economic, environmental, and socio-cultural conditions. On the other hand, it involves conducting social surveys to identify the priorities of members of the local community and assess their satisfaction with the actions taken by the local government.

The combined perspectives discussed in this section give rise to at least one fundamental problem, the aforementioned issue of the relationship between the subjective goals of individuals (or the goals of particular social groups) and the developmental goals of the community as a whole. As mentioned earlier, individual aspirations are identical to the development needs of the whole community only in some cases. A properly performed local diagnosis allows us to identify any development problems and formulate recommendations on solutions to these problems, taking into account the consequences of this opposition. **Conditions for local development are diagnosed in order to introduce appropriate measures, which are then analysed and evaluated by the residents to assess the extent to which they improve the standard of living and quality of life of the entire local community.**



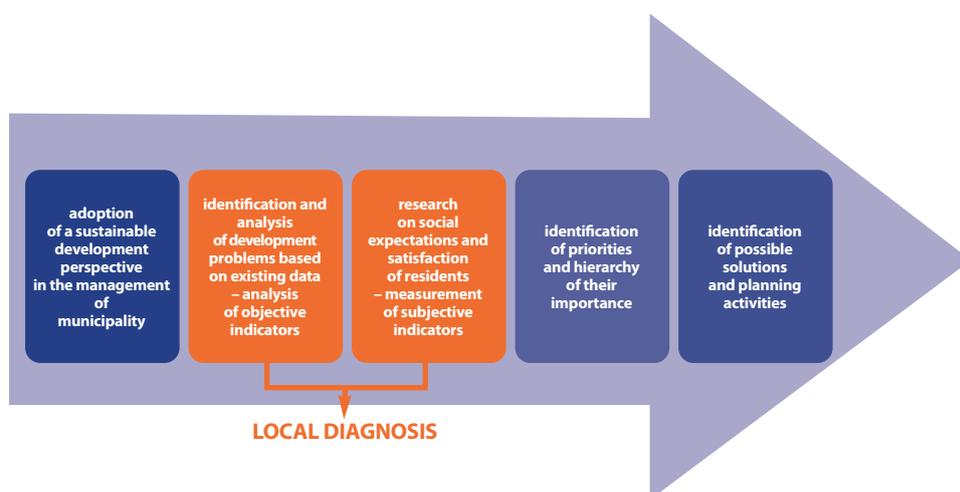
Objective and subjective indicators in local diagnosis

The local diagnosis is part of a process **that aims to determine what kind of measures can and should be taken and to whom they should be directed to improve the quality of life of the residents of the municipality**. It is used to identify discrepancies between the identified state of local community development (including the state of social development) and the state that is required or desired for some reason. However, although when describing the existing state of affairs, we always refer to the current life situation of the residents (within the adopted dimensions of description), while when defining the desired state, we indicate either the needs and the desire to satisfy them, or a state of necessity caused by something else (e.g., resulting from certain legal requirements, regulations, accepted

standards, experience, etc.). Therefore, the most important element of this process is to **relate the results of the local diagnosis to the community development goals and to the existing resources and feasible possibilities for action**. It is important that a properly conducted local diagnosis includes an analysis of the situation of the local government unit in natural, infrastructural, economic, legal, political and cultural conditions.

It follows that **a proper analytical approach in planning local sustainable development** takes into account the following:

- ▶ determination of the current nature and scope of economic, environmental, and social problems of the local government unit with an assessment of their causes and consequences (including their impact),
- ▶ identification of residents' opinions on the state of the local community development and social expectations in this respect, as well as assessment of the residents' level of satisfaction with actions undertaken by the local government,
- ▶ analysis of the relationship between the identified problems and residents' expectations and the community development goals,
- ▶ development of recommendations concerning the type and scope of necessary and possible actions leading to an improvement of the standard of living and quality of life of the residents (taking into account existing limitations related to available resources)



Local diagnosis in the planning process for sustainable local development

Identification and analysis of local problems

The results of the identification and analysis of local problems will be used to present the existing state of development of the local government unit. Such a presentation should include:

- ▶ identification of problem areas, including their nature, scale, social and spatial distribution,
- ▶ an indication of possible causes of existing problems – constructed, inter alia, in relation to resource constraints (financial, environmental, human, social, or infrastructural), adopted development assumptions, implemented institutional solutions, nature of social relations, cultural factors, etc.

This stage of the work on the diagnosis should conclude with the creation of a precise list of needs connected with stimulating the development of the local government unit (including raising the standard of living and the quality of life of the residents) and a set of initial recommendations concerning necessary actions.

Sample range of issues that should be considered in the process of identification and analysis of social problems⁸

- ▶ **Socio-demographic situation:** population, gender, age, national minority, fertility, number of marriages, migration,
- ▶ **Economic situation:** economic situation and trends; characteristics of companies, labour market (unemployment rate), investors, employment structure, infrastructure, transport, communication, housing situation, natural resources, location, state of the environment,
- ▶ **Strategic directions of the commune's development:** basic directions of development set out in the comprehensive Development Strategy in relation to the economic, infrastructural, social and environmental spheres,
- ▶ **Human resources:** level of education of residents, enrolment rate, educational base (types and size of schools, fields of study, teaching staff), competence of local administration representatives,
- ▶ **Accessibility of services:** health care, professional counselling, cultural life, public transport, utilities, sports and recreation, above-standard educational and development opportunities for children and young people,
- ▶ **Security:** state of security, crime, domestic violence; natural hazards,
- ▶ **Social exclusion and pathologies:** people with disabilities, addiction issues (alcohol, drugs), disorganisation of family life, helplessness in care and educational matters, unemployment, socially excluded groups,
- ▶ **Implementation of social policy:** status and possibilities of social welfare institutions, structure of expenses, beneficiaries (number, structure, reasons for granting aid), family benefits, prevention activities, activities of other institutions, resources of these institutions, specific forms of assistance, activities of non-governmental organisations, local parishes, level of social activity, non-material forms of resident assistance; procedures in crisis situations: fires, floods, roof loss; possibilities of intervention assistance (violence, bereavement, child neglect); palliative care; child and family care,
- ▶ **Social infrastructure:** environmental resources for prevention, intervention and support purposes, health and healthcare. At a later stage, quantitative data may also be complemented by quality indicators: feedback from residents, local experts, or representatives of local institutions,
- ▶ **Social relations:** characteristics of existing and active associations and social organisations (areas of activity, years of operation, number of members), local leaders, self-help movements, assistance institutions, cooperation between the local government and NGOs.

⁸ Own elaboration based on: N. Chojnowska-Ochnik et al, „Collecting data on the social situation”, in: „Methodology of supporting social development in the commune through participation. Communal strategy for solving social problems and social development”, Warsaw: MPiPS, Social Integration Program, Warsaw, February 2008, p. 43.

It is necessary to clearly emphasise the importance of decisions taken at this stage – inappropriate identification of the causes of negative phenomena may lead to ineffective and inadequate actions. This threat is reinforced by limitations related to the quality of statistical data that is collected in many different centres (e.g., offices, institutions, organisations), which are well known in research practice. The most important issues include⁹:

- ▶ **deficiencies, unfamiliarity, and unavailability of data** – not all information that we consider useful will be readily available or up-to-date. For instance, access to certain documents may be restricted by law (e.g., personal data, information on patient health, or data covered by state secret) or prevented by the protection of the interests of an institution or organisation (e.g., information protected by trade secrets). Data concerning the issues of interest hereto are not always collected (e.g., information on the income of the commune's residents or unemployment in various social groups), and it can also be outdated (e.g., data on the population).
- ▶ **official nature of data categorisation** – centres collecting different types of data use their own varied ways of categorisation. How data is obtained, processed, and collated very often depends on the needs of the collecting institution and may not suit our purposes. For example, they may relate to the whole community rather than to particular groups or national minorities within that community, or they may be annual statements rather than (for example, for some reason useful in our view) quarterly sets.
- ▶ **unfamiliarity with the circumstances of the recording** – the lack of control over the data collection process can be a factor that reduces the value of data representing various phenomena. This is particularly the case when we do not know whether the information we have is complete and whether it accurately reflects reality. This problem can be illustrated, for example, by the issue of the surface area of housing units, which is determined on the basis of statements made by residents. As these statements affect the amount of property tax, it is impossible for us to be certain that the reported figure is not understated in order to reduce the tax burden. Another example is the attempt to infer residents' civic attitudes on the basis of election turnout. The electoral registers include all persons domiciled in the commune (provided that they have not applied to be removed from the register). Meanwhile, some areas may be affected by economic emigration (e.g., to other countries) and the low turnout does not reflect the real civic attitudes of members of this local community, but rather is a consequence of the absence of some residents in the commune on election day.
- ▶ **selective nature of official data** – the fundamental question associated with this issue is whether the set of units described in the available data is representative of the wider community of interest? In other words, in order to properly interpret the data collected, we should know whether each entity (person, institution, household, kilometre of road, etc.) had an equal opportunity to be described, and whether each record had an equal chance to be preserved? The creation and survival of records is not governed by blind chance. Instead, it is governed by selective collection and selective retention. Some types of offences are less frequently recorded than others, and companies that survive in the market may have better bookkeeping than companies that fail; moreover, the records of a failed company are often lost with it,
- ▶ **limited comparability of official data** – during the work on sustainable development strategy, various data is often used to compare the state of local government units' development in defined areas, particular dimensions, or defined time periods. The relevance and legitimacy of such

⁹ Based on: A. Sułek, Sociologist and official documents, in: idem, Sociological Methodology Garden, Warsaw: Scholar, 2002.

comparisons must always be examined, as erroneous assumptions can lead to false conclusions. Inference about relationships, changes over time, or the impact of implemented measures must be based on well-considered analyses, accompanied by consideration of the origin and characteristics of the indicators used. Is it valid to compare the results achieved by students in schools within our commune before and after the educational reform? To what extent is it legitimate to collect data on road maintenance costs before and after the administrative reform? How can the selected development indicators in my commune be compared with those of other communes? These kinds of specific and practical questions show that there are many risks involved in collating different data to assess the situation of a commune. Therefore, any comparisons should be made with the following in mind:

- periods, areas, or groups compared may differ in the definitions and classification principles applied;
 - measures and indicators used may evolve over time – both the phenomena they cover, and their definition may change;
 - particular periods, areas, or groups may differ in the efficiency and reliability of the official recording of phenomena (e.g., the introduction of GPS measuring devices has influenced the precision of land area determination, while the use of computers has increased the possibilities for data collection and processing);
 - observation and measurement should be aligned with milestones of the processes under investigation. For example, road traffic should be measured on a daily, weekly, and annual basis. This is because traffic will be lower at night than during the daily rush hour, different on a weekday than during the weekend, and different during the holiday months than in the rest of the year.
- ▶ **aggregated nature of official data** – the data at our disposal is usually available in aggregated form, typically at the level of territorial units (communes, districts, parishes, dioceses, electoral districts) or in relation to specific entities (public institutions, economic operators). These then describe the properties of those units, rather than the characteristics of their constituent parts (e.g., the villages or the people who make up the organisation). We may face the problem of incompatibility of the manner of data aggregation with our needs. For example, when we need information on social groups, selected localities, or individual inhabitants. We must bear in mind that inferring unit dependencies from relationships between aggregate data is a frequent source of error.

Imagine that out of all the communes in our county, ours has the highest corporate tax revenue. Is it possible to conclude therefore that the residents of our commune are the most business-minded in the district? Is it possible to conclude that our commune has the largest number of workplaces? There is a high risk that such a conclusion would be unwarranted. After all, there might be only one company operating in our commune which, for example, sells diamonds on the Internet and generates a very high income. This does not translate into either the entrepreneurial activity of the residents or the number of economic entities,

- ▶ **reliability of official data** – limitations on the reliability of the existing data have several sources. First and foremost, they stem from the social nature of their collection. In many cases, the information gathered in a database comes from the statements made by different individuals (which are not always consistent with the reality), results from the process of recording observed phenomena (and observation can be fallible) or is part of the re-

porting of certain institutions (who sometimes try to 'improve' reality a little). It is therefore worth remembering a few basic rules when analysing the data, with which we have to work:

- when data is derived from people's statements, efforts should always be made to verify this data against information from other sources. When asked if they segregate their waste, what their monthly income is, how much alcohol they drink per week, or if they clean up their dog's droppings when out on a walk, people will not always answer truthfully. The behaviour of informers is influenced by the desire to gain (or avoid loss of) certain goods and the desire to present themselves in a good light, and consequently by the social values to which people relate their positioning and behaviour,
- information on the performance of the institution depends on the objectives and values of the informers. Data can generally be divided into two types:
 1. data that characterises the environment of the institution (its field of activity), constituting a record of external circumstances (e.g., for the municipal Labour Office, this would be the unemployment rate in the city in comparison to unemployment in cities with similar characteristics or cities within the same region). More reliance can be placed on data that does not form the basis of assessments of the collecting institution, and even more on data that does form the basis of assessments and yet fails to portray the institution in a good light.
 2. data characterising the activity of the institution and its results (e.g., the number of people trained under the assistance provided by the municipal Labour Office to the unemployed, or the amount of external funds obtained by the local government office for investments). Reporting data that is inconsistent with (or at least neutral towards) the interests of the authors can generally be treated as more reliable than data that is consistent with those interests. In general, data collected by units independent of the institution whose activities they represent will be more reliable than that produced by the institution itself.

When analysing data and considering its reliability, the likelihood of intentional modification (or even falsification) of the information collected must always be taken into account.

- More reliable will be those indicators and information that are clearly defined and cannot be interpreted in different ways.

Benchmarking

A properly conducted local diagnosis is not only an evaluation of the status of previous developmental trends and an analysis of problems occurring locally, but it is supposed to indicate the main trends occurring in our local government unit along with their location in relation to other units with similar developmental conditions. This provides an additional perspective for assessing phenomena occurring locally – through a comparison of the same data and trends with other local government units chosen as benchmarks. Such an approach is referred to as benchmarking.

In principle, benchmarking can be applied to all socio-economic phenomena that are interesting in terms of providing important information for the developed strategy. However, comparisons of indicators on the demographic, economic, and social situation prevail. The only limitation is the availability of data on the examined phenomena from a reliable and identical source for all compared local government units. Statistics provided by central statistical agencies are often helpful in such cases.

Examples of the extent and form of comparison of different phenomena within the examined local government unit and its benchmark units are presented below.

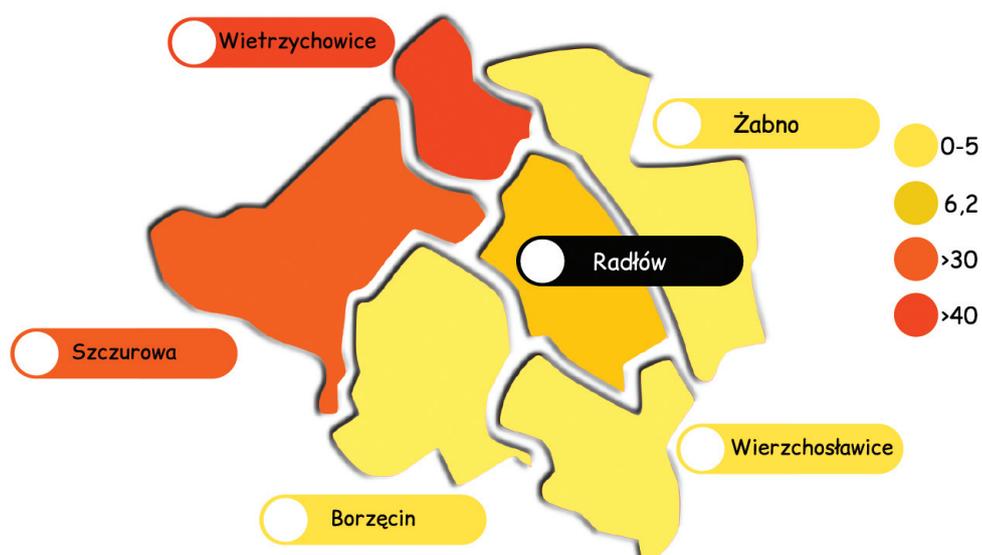
Example:

Comparison of students' average % scores in the post-primary school test (mother tongue, mathematics, foreign language) among benchmark local government units, sub-regional and regional average – Socio-Economic Report of Brzyska Commune, 2021, Podkarpackie voivodeship, Poland

	Polish language			mathematics			English language		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
Podkarpackie Voivodship	64%	61%	62%	46%	48%	49%	57%	53%	65%
Jasielsk district	64%	61%	62%	44%	45%	47%	57%	51%	62%
Brzyska	69%	59%	60%	41%	45%	47%	54%	44%	64%
Dębowiec	65%	57%	55%	39%	44%	41%	54%	46%	54%
Kołaczyce	57%	55%	57%	38%	39%	49%	51%	42%	55%
Nowy Żmigród	59%	63%	62%	43%	42%	42%	51%	43%	53%
Osiek Jasielski	55%	68%	53%	36%	44%	35%	40%	49%	57%
Skolyszyn	68%	64%	63%	48%	48%	48%	60%	53%	63%

Example:

Percentage [%] of the coverage of the commune of Radłów and the neighbouring communes by local spatial development plans in 2019 – Socio-economic Report of the Town and Commune of Radłów, 2020, Malopolskie Voivodeship, Poland



Example:

Population change per 1,000 residents in the Radłów commune and the benchmark communes in 2015-2019 - Socio-economic Report of the City and Commune of 2020, Małopolskie Voivodeship, Poland

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Radłów	2.6	-3.6	0.4	-1.9	-8.6
Ryglice	-1.3	-1.0	-1.0	0.9	-3.6
Szczucin	-6.6	-1.6	-1.7	1.0	-1.9
Wojnicz	5.6	3.1	2.7	0.7	-2.8
Zakliczyn	0.0	2.7	-5.3	6.6	2.3
Żabno	1.2	1.6	-2.3	-4.2	-2.0

The use of benchmarking in diagnosis allows the local government unit to be placed in a broader context and at the same time serves to assess the situation in specific areas of the local community's functioning against other local government units. The choice of benchmark communes is crucial in this case. The basic criteria that can be used to select reference points (i.e., benchmark units) could include the following:

- ▶ similarity – in terms of the characteristics of the local government unit (i.e., predominant development functions – e.g., tourist units, suburban units, agricultural units, etc.) and development conditions;
- ▶ model – based on measuring the development gap and learning from the best, e.g., district, sub-regional or regional leaders;
- ▶ vicinity – when benchmark units are located in the immediate or distant surroundings of our local government unit.

The similar nature of communes mentioned in the first subsection that allows for their comparison is usually determined by taking into account the key development factors, the most frequent of which are:

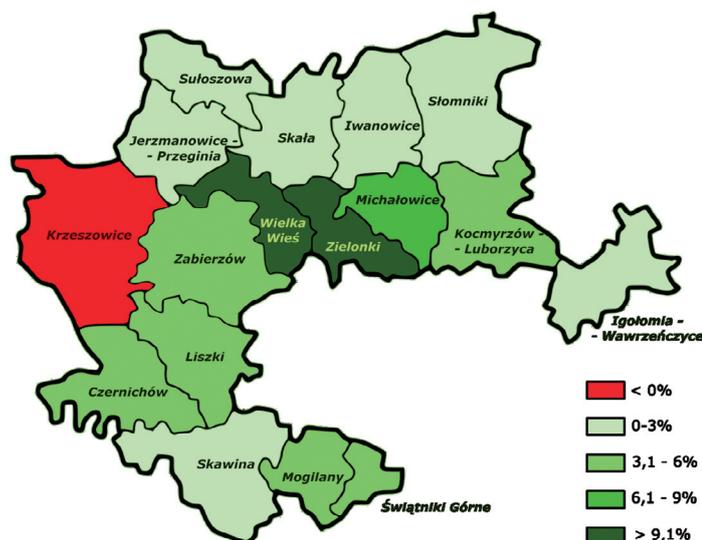
- ▶ location (e.g., within an urban area, at a national border or in a mountainous area);
- ▶ terrain (e.g., lowland, hilly or mountainous);
- ▶ similar settlement structure (e.g., rural or urban units);
- ▶ above-average potential in a given field (e.g., agriculture, tourism, industrial);
- ▶ similar nature and scale of existing problems (e.g., in terms of demography or structural unemployment).

These suggestions regarding the selection of local government units for comparison in the benchmarking diagnosis should be treated as guidelines. In practice, each local unit has its own specific characteristics that should be used to choose benchmark units.

Interesting results are also obtained by comparing local government units with neighbouring ones, provided that they are partly of a similar nature (e.g., location in relation to a large city) and taking advantage of the fact that neighbouring local governments compete with each other in the development process (for investors, new residents, etc.).

Example:

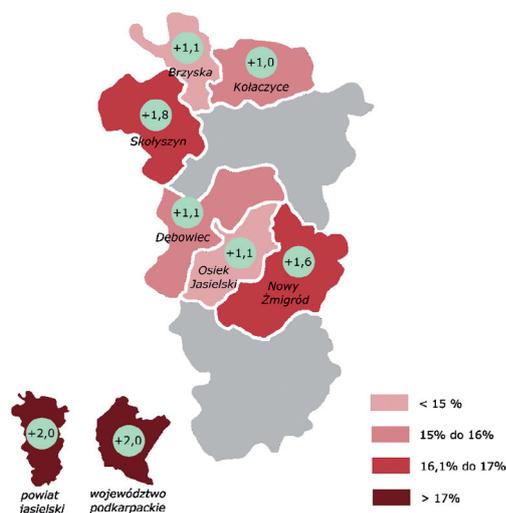
Change in the number of inhabitants in local government units surrounding the city of Kraków between 2014 and 2018 – effects of suburbanisation – Socio-Economic Report of Iwanowice Commune, 2020, Małopolskie Voivodeship, Poland



It is good practice to present the analysed commune in relation to the **sub-regional, regional** and, in justified cases, **national average**. It is also advisable to benchmark against selected leaders among local government units in order to identify and creatively adapt the best solutions and practices in subject areas of particular importance to local government units. In order to increase the reliability of information, it is necessary to apply conversion factors to the values of indices per one, one thousand, or ten thousand residents in all of these cases.

Example:

Ageing rate (% of people over 65 years of age in the total population) and its change between 2016 and 2020 in percentage points in the reference communes and in relation to district and regional rates – Socio-Economic Report of the Town and Commune of Kołaczyce, 2021, Podkarpackie Voivodeship, Poland



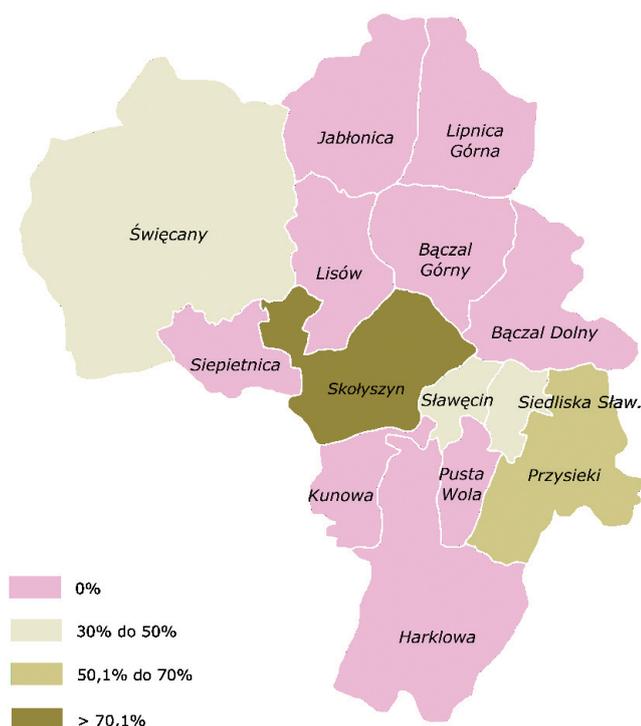
Intra-communal differences – internal benchmarking in the local government unit

When diagnosing local government units for the purposes of the development strategy using the comparative method, it is also advisable to conduct benchmarking within the local government unit – broken down into existing smaller, auxiliary territorial areas – quasi-administrative (e.g. village councils, housing estates or town districts in Poland, starosts' districts in Ukraine, parishes in England, etc.) or customary (hamlets, enclosed parts of towns and villages, etc.) – depending on the availability of such auxiliary structures in local government and on the availability of corresponding data.

Trends identified through internal benchmarking reveal spatial variations of specific phenomena within the analysed unit. They show, for example, in which areas of the local government unit the residents are more likely to settle and from which to emigrate, where is the best access to technical infrastructure, and where it is insufficient, what is the accessibility to various public services within the local government unit, etc.

Example:

Percentage of residential buildings in Skołyszyn commune with access to sewerage system in 2020. – Socio-Economic Report of Skołyszyn Commune, 2021, Podkarpackie voivodeship, Poland



Among the factors that most often influence the phenomenon of internal differentiation of development conditions in the local government unit, the most frequent include:

- ▶ topography and natural conditions,
- ▶ distance from communication routes and public transport,
- ▶ availability of technical infrastructure,

- ▶ existence of natural resources,
- ▶ historical background.

For example, a local government unit that is partly located on a flat land (e.g., a river valley) and partly in a sub-mountainous or mountainous land will most often be characterised by extremely different characteristics:

- ▶ levels of natural hazards – flood and landslide – and the risk of their occurrence,
- ▶ conditions for agricultural development,
- ▶ network infrastructure development capacities and the costs of such investments,
- ▶ road expansion possibilities,
- ▶ potential for creating investment zones,
- ▶ settlement attractiveness (residential construction),
- ▶ tourist and sightseeing attractiveness.

This is obviously not a closed catalogue. In each case, it results from the specificity of the analysed municipality.

However, almost any information about a local government unit can be presented in internal benchmarking, indicating that the diversity is important first of all in relation to such elements of the diagnosis as:

- ▶ demography and settlement (number and structure of the population and directions and dynamics of changes, development directions of the settlement network development directions),
- ▶ economy and labour market (number and type of business entities, economic and investment activity zones, unemployment),
- ▶ social concerns (individuals and families benefiting from social welfare services, reasons for support, deprived areas),
- ▶ accessibility of communication (road and rail system, transport system),
- ▶ technical infrastructure (accessibility of water and gas supply and sewage system),
- ▶ cultural heritage resources (monuments, places attractive to tourists),
- ▶ environment (natural and landscape values and related protection areas, hazards, natural resources),
- ▶ social infrastructure (schools and kindergartens, cultural institutions, recreation and sports areas, local government administration).

Diagnosis enhanced by internal benchmarking will allow better planning of interventions in the field of local government units, including focusing them on specific problems or development areas in specific locations.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DIAGNOSIS OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS

The main aim of a local diagnosis is **to map out the main dimensions – boundary conditions – within which local government units operate and local communities live.**

Local diagnosis should be focused on **assessing local problems, needs, and potentials.** It should identify the most important problems of the local community and development potentials (analysis to be deepened in the process of strategic planning), while relying in this respect on both the examination of existing data and the opinions of representatives of various local communities of the local government unit. When preparing the diagnosis, it should be remembered that its purpose is to provide a set of information necessary to carry out strategic analyses.

An outline of the local diagnosis report is presented in the Appendix to this toolkit. This outline sets out the **three main dimensions of the analysis: problems, needs, and potentials.** It does not set out specific lines of enquiry, rather the three most important, very general, areas: economy, society, ecology-spatial order.

Local diagnosis is based on the assumption that we cannot exclude any problem, need, or potential, even if they are loosely related to current or planned areas of local government activity. This is partly because we do not know the direction in which the local government will develop, and partly because a diagnosis is an opportunity to indicate which tasks are important at the local level and provide **an opportunity to articulate the needs, expectations, concerns, and hopes of the residents of the local government unit.**

In the area of reporting on interviews with local stakeholders, the information presented in the report should focus on **presenting a range of viewpoints and opinions and, where practicable, confronting these opinions with facts.** Therefore, this part of the diagnosis is based on the methodology of in-depth individual or group interviews.

Phases in the development of a local diagnosis

1. Secondary data analysis

Before conducting the field phase of the diagnosis, the available secondary (usually statistical) data on the local government unit should be collected. In particular, the following documents or sources of information should be considered:

- ▶ Official statistics available in public databases. In particular, it is important to consider data on the demographic situation, the state of infrastructure, the municipal services provided, the implemented projects, and social activity.
- ▶ Documents at the disposal of the local government unit: budget of the local government unit, list of ongoing projects, contracts for the provision of various services, selected minutes of local government unit's council meetings, information on the structure of the office. These documents provide a wealth of detailed information about the activities of the local government unit. In terms of diagnosis, the most relevant is the budget (planned expenditure, income and degree of its realisation), which should be analysed according to the guidelines set out in the report structure. In the absence of relevant documents, it is advisable to contact the local government unit directly to ask if it is available.

- ▶ Website of the local government unit. In many cases, the website can be the primary source of information about the local government. The website can often be an up-to-date source of information on the council of the local government unit (its composition and various structures), the clerical system of the municipality office (organisation chart, tasks of individual units) and other authorities.
- ▶ Local press and television. Local media can be an invaluable source of information about the social life of a local government unit, in particular about existing conflicts, tensions, and problems. This information is not concealed by local government officials, but neither is it given out spontaneously. Learning about existing tensions or conflicts can be crucial in analysing the local social situation. An analysis of the local press and television will also allow for the collection of information on people to be contacted and appointments to be made.
- ▶ Social media, especially Facebook and YouTube, can be an important source of information on the social life of a local government unit to the same extent as local media.
- ▶ Websites of regional or sub-regional authorities where the local government unit is located.

2. Selection of individuals for social research

Reaching as diverse group of respondents as possible is crucial to a successful diagnosis. Research should include representatives of the following groups:

- ▶ representatives of local government authorities;
- ▶ officials responsible for particular areas of activity of the local government unit;
- ▶ representatives of municipal companies responsible for the infrastructure;
- ▶ representatives of NGOs/associations/volunteers/social leaders;
- ▶ headmaster (teachers);
- ▶ leaders of other local institutions, e.g., cultural, medical institutions;
- ▶ representatives of the local press;
- ▶ local entrepreneurs or representatives of local business associations;
- ▶ representatives of sub-regional institutions whose activities concern the local government unit.

3. Field research

An example of a local diagnosis interview scenario is presented in the Appendix to this toolkit. This scenario is intended as a **guide** to the interviews, a set of questions to be used. The scenario should not be used question by question with each interviewee. Questions asked to the interviewee should be adapted to their competences – a headmaster should be asked mainly about education, while a member of an association should be asked about his association's social activities and area of work.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW in the context of development strategy work is an interview with a respondent conducted on the basis of a previously prepared guidelines or interview questionnaire (*an example of such a scenario is provided in the appendix*). The guidelines include questions or problem theses on both local problems and future directions of local development. This results in obtaining opinions from people who play an important role in shaping the future of the local government unit – representatives of local authorities, entrepreneurs who shape the local labour market and provide funds to the local government budget, representatives of various groups of residents or non-governmental organisations.

The interview should be conducted by a person who has been specially trained for this purpose. Face-to-face in-depth interview provides respondents with greater comfort, which is particularly important when the research topic relates to issues that cause local disputes or conflicts. It is also often a good technique when dealing with people who, for various reasons, are difficult to encourage to attend a strategy session (e.g., lack of time when it comes to entrepreneurs).

The in-depth interview can be used as an independent technique during the formulation of the development vision or as a supplementary technique. It can be used prior to the strategy session (in which case it provides input to the strategy session) or following the strategy session (as a review of the draft vision developed during the session).

Local government unit's office interviews:

- ▶ an interview with the local government authority (this interview generally takes the longest, up to 4 hours. In addition to the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and the Executive Secretary may attend). Group meetings should be avoided. In many ways, this is the most important interview that addresses all aspects of local government and community life;
- ▶ an interview with the official in charge of the budget (treasurer) who will be able to verify financial data, discuss prospects in this area (e.g., possibilities to improve tax collection, etc.);
- ▶ an interview with the official responsible for education. Education management is one of the biggest challenges for many local authorities. An interview with the official who is responsible for education will allow for the collection of data on education and for gaining an understanding of the state of the education facilities;
- ▶ an interview with other officials who are crucial to the diagnosis;
- ▶ an interview with the chairman of the local council, interviews with councillors.

Interviews in local government institutions

- ▶ an interview with the official(s) in charge of the operation of the municipal enterprise / the manager of the municipal enterprise. It is not always the case that such an enterprise operates within a local government unit. In such cases, it is important to identify the person responsible for, or with knowledge of, utilities such as water intake, water supply and sewage system, sewage treatment, pothole repair, snow clearing, waste collection and disposal, repair, and maintenance in local government buildings, etc.

- ▶ an interview with the manager/principal physician of a health care facility. There are several types of health care facilities operating in local government units. It is important to meet with the person who has the most extensive knowledge of the organisational side of the health service in the local government unit, and also the person who can provide information regarding the residents' health situation.
- ▶ an interview with the headmaster. It is recommended that this is the headmaster of the largest school or a group of headmasters from the local government unit area.
- ▶ an interview with the community centre manager. It is preferable that this is the manager(s) of the most active, largest community centre or a group of community centre directors from the local government unit area.

Experience shows that in smaller local government units the institutions where the above-mentioned interviewees work are most often located in one location, which is the seat of the authorities of the local government unit. The selection of people for the research should depend on the local context and an assessment of the kind of information lacking. For example, a group interview with teachers can be very informative.

Due to restrictions caused by the coronavirus outbreak, some interviews can be conducted remotely, e.g., as preparation for a visit in the unit.

Interviews in surrounding localities, other groups

- ▶ Individual or group interviews with territorial unit leaders (if any).
- ▶ Group interview with active residents. This type of interview can be organized on the office premises; however, this would mean that the local government unit would be responsible for the organization of the interview and the selection and invitation of interviewees. It is also possible to organise such a meeting in advance in a chosen location (other than the seat of the local government authority). It is particularly advisable to hold such a meeting in communities that experience conflict or high intensity of a problem.
- ▶ Interviews with entrepreneur(s). A meeting with entrepreneurs can be organised as a group meeting, but this has the disadvantage of not everyone being able or willing to come to the local authority's premises (especially people who are busy or critical of the authorities). Furthermore, the group interview makes it difficult to discuss key industry-specific issues. It is not always necessary. However, if there is a large company that is crucial for the economic situation of the local community, it is advisable to conduct an individual interview with the owner / representative of this company.
- ▶ Interviews with NGO representatives. If there are several active organisations in the local government unit, it is advisable to organise a focus group interview. In many cases, people with other public functions who have already been interviewed are involved in the operation of the NGO, in which case a separate meeting with the NGO is not necessary.
- ▶ Interviews with people who are important in terms of the objectives of the diagnosis. The selection of such persons will depend on the local situation.
- ▶ Interviews with representatives of regional or sub-regional authorities.

Focus Group Interview (FGI):

A focus group enables a carefully planned discussion with selected participants in a comfortable environment to explore their perceptions of a specific area of interest. The aim of this research technique is to reconstruct, as closely as possible, the real processes of social communication and to confront the varying opinions of the participants through the discussion.

Participants are invited to a focus group because they have distinctive personal characteristics that correspond directly to the research objectives. This research technique is especially suitable for investigating opinion-forming processes and decision-making problems that are subject to peer influence and collective behaviour. Usually, a focus group interview has 6 to 10 participants.

4. SWOT Analysis

The hypothetical development of SWOT (the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats; detailed information about this analysis is presented in chapter 4) can look as follows: on the basis of research, experts prepare the results of SWOT analysis according to the dimensions presented in the report structure. During the meeting with the Strategy Team, the different elements of the analysis are discussed, completed, and prioritised. The results of the meeting should be the starting material for the next steps – a strategic planning process. Already at this stage, it is worth asking the representatives of the local community about the vision of development of their municipality, in the light of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats just identified. A good SWOT analysis and at least a rough idea of the vision of the development of the municipality in the eyes of its inhabitants makes it much easier to start the process of local strategic planning.

5. Report

The report should be prepared with the care of both the content and the language. Conclusions should be well justified, and neutral, objective language should be used throughout the text. The quintessential part of the report, from the point of view of the usefulness of the development strategy, are conclusions and recommendations.

Social survey

The additional step in the diagnosis of local development conditions is the **survey of social expectations and the satisfaction of the inhabitants**. In general, the purpose of this survey is as follows:

- ▶ getting to know subjective evaluations and opinions of representatives of the local community in relation to various factors influencing the quality of life and evaluation of services provided by the local government,
- ▶ evaluation of the impact of social problems, their subjective severity, and the effects of actions taken by local authorities,
- ▶ identification of the most important inhabitants' postulates regarding the functioning of the local community (getting to know their preferences regarding community development goals and requirements for current activities of local authorities),

- ▶ developing (and as a result) implementing recommendations for local government actions.

Thus, it is evident that this task can be defined by considering two main search areas:

- ▶ on the one hand, the areas concern the **expectations of the inhabitants with regard to local development** – that is, the things the inhabitants want (new roads, kindergartens, jobs, entertainment, improvement of the local government, better quality of services, etc.),
- ▶ on the other hand, they focus on **assessing the current situation from the perspective of community members**.

It seems that the former search area is basically unlimited – after all, one can dream about anything! However, we must remember that dreams generally stem from some kind of scarcity; usually the object of dreams is something we do not have. On the other hand, in the latter area, the research will focus on selected relevant aspects of reality assessment. At the same time, this relevance is not one-dimensional, it results both from the assumed development goals of the community and from the challenges and problems of everyday life.



Social survey in local development planning

When planning to conduct a social survey, it is worth paying attention to several issues that may determine the success of the project. Key issues related to random sample testing are discussed below. However, it should be remembered that the proper implementation of such research requires certain expertise, so it is worth considering the involvement of professionals in the process of preparation and implementation of such research.

Objective of the social survey

Valid research is always done for a purpose. This means that we should be aware of this purpose before starting any activity. We **need to know why we are taking the trouble to prepare and conduct the research** – correct formulation of the objectives is one of the most important determinants of the success of the research process. So, the most important and fundamental question we need to ask ourselves is: **what do we want to learn?** Only then, when we are able to clearly specify our purposes, we select the most useful sources of information and start planning the research. At this stage, before the implementation, we should also be aware of the benefits – when conducting a survey, it is useful to know how to employ the results.

The need to do research is generally due to ignorance. For example, we don't know how the inhabitants evaluate the quality of work of the library run by the local government; we don't know why many people move out of our city permanently; we don't know whether it will be more important for the inhabitants to build a new sports hall or a new community centre. This ignorance is the driving force behind all research. We study some fragments of the surrounding reality (some problem) in order to learn something and answer the questions we ask.

Conducting research is a multi-step process that requires many conscious decisions. The first basic step is to **clearly define the purpose of the research and formulate the research problems**. Only then do we decide who is to be surveyed, choose the methods, draw the sample or select the group to be surveyed, conduct the research, analyse the data, draw conclusions, write the report, and present the results.

Type of research carried out

A social survey can be quantitative or qualitative. Best results are achieved by combining quantitative and qualitative methods in a single diagnostic procedure.

Among the former, the most popular are questionnaire surveys conducted using the following techniques:

- ▶ a traditional paper survey distributed as needed – Paper And Pencil Interview (PAPI),
- ▶ Computer-Assisted Web Interview (CAWI),
- ▶ Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI).

Surveys provide knowledge about the frequency distribution of stated opinions, judgments, or characteristics and yield information about the prevalence of some events, experiences, or things in a given population. The unquestionable advantages of a questionnaire survey are: the relative clarity of its principles, the possibility of statistical analysis of collected data, the relative comparability of results, and the possibility of generalising data to a larger population (representativity of the results). The disadvantages of such surveys include the elimination of atypical facts (averaging of data), reliance on the declarations of respondents (often without the possibility of verification), the difficulty of generalising the results, and the threat of subjectivity in the analysis. It is important to remember that surveys give us a general picture. They create a reality that does not necessarily translate to individual cases (the desire to directly infer an individual can yield quite wrong results, as in the case of a man who drowned in a river that was about 30 cm deep).

Selection of respondents

The problem of generalising the results is extremely important. **The value of a survey depends to a great extent on the proper selection of respondents, i.e., on the validity of the choice of a particular group for the survey or on the proper construction and choosing of the sample.** A mistake made in this area can completely derail our research efforts, as the data we obtain will be useless. In many cases, the problems are also related to the form of the questionnaire. The responses given by the respondents may be affected mainly by the order in which the questions are asked, errors in the construction of the questions, or even the scale used¹⁰.

As already mentioned, **when starting the research, we must clearly define its purpose**, as the research effort is undertaken for specific reasons; the researchers must know what they want to achieve through the research. Although desirable, a positive attitude to a social survey – a belief that it is good to consult public opinion through a survey – is by no means sufficient. *"Successful research depends on a clearly and emphatically stated research question. It decides what is important (what data to collect, what aspects of the data to analyse, etc.) and even more so, what is unimportant and should be omitted (in the current research project)"*¹¹.

The objectives of the research can, of course, be varied – some of them are the following:

- ▶ **finding a solution to a particular arising problem** (e.g., getting to know the attitudes of the inhabitants towards the reorganisation of the school network or finding a solution to a specific social conflict),
- ▶ **periodic monitoring of residents' satisfaction with the services of local government institutions** aimed at taking action to improve the quality of life in the community (e.g., finding ways to make the city's public library more attractive, improving school functioning, or improving municipal services),
- ▶ **planning of municipal development** (and the related diagnosis of social needs and identification of residents' expectations).

All subsequent activities related to the implementation of a social survey are secondary to the formulation of its purpose. This is because the purpose and related research questions determine the research methods and the range of techniques used, identified sources of information, and determine the resources necessary for success.

When deciding how to conduct research, we must first decide **what the nature of the research will be** – whether it should result in data that are representative in the statistical sense of the term for a specific population (and thus whether the results **should** reflect the characteristics of the entire population), or whether we will dispense with the requirement of representativity.

Selecting and controlling a representative random sample involves many technical difficulties and requires specific knowledge. Meanwhile, **the representative nature of the research will not be necessary for the many problems we will face.** This is especially true for exploratory research, when we want to understand a problem, get an idea of its potential causes, and learn about the range of possible views of the subjects without determining to what part of the population (e.g., the inhabitants of our municipality) they refer to. Again, it is worth emphasising that the nature of the research is determined by

¹⁰ The terms "questionnaire" and "survey" are generally used interchangeably in research practice.

¹¹ U. Flick, "Designing qualitative research"; SAGE Publications, 2007.

the goals we set. **If we want to learn about readers' ideas for improving the functioning of a library or for parents' feelings about extracurricular activities for their children, we do not necessarily need to conduct research using a representative random sample.**

The basic question we need to answer is: who will we select to participate in our research and how? In social survey practice, we deal with **two main ways of selecting respondents, namely:** various types of **random sampling** and **non-random selection** (exhaustive, purposive and participatory/quota).

In the case of **random selection**, study participants are randomly drawn from members of a given population. The sample size is determined by the rules of statistics and, in a simplified manner, depends on the size of the population covered by the research and on the assumptions made by the researcher regarding the acceptable error that the results may be subject to.

The **size of the population** is normally known by the researcher as it is necessary to determine the appropriate sample size. In addition, the researcher must consider two other issues – the confidence interval and the confidence level of the results.

The confidence interval is commonly referred to as the "sampling error". In the results of press research, it is presented as a range of possible deviations from the presented result: e.g., +/- 3%. It is assumed that the real value of the tested parameter is, with a given probability, within the limits of the given confidence interval.

Confidence level, on the other hand, refers to the degree to which we can determine that the data we have obtained is true, that is, the degree of probability that the outcome of the research in the sample is consistent with the facts in the entire researched population. Theoretically, it is possible that the results we obtain in the sample will not correspond to the distribution of certain phenomena, beliefs, or practices among the population. Without going into the details, which are beyond the scope of this toolkit, suffice it to say that for the purposes of community-based research, it is perfectly acceptable to assume a 95% confidence level, i.e., a 5% risk that the results are completely unreliable. For example, if in the research representative of the entire population of the municipality one answer to a question is chosen by 60% of the respondents, then, assuming the sample values given here, we could say with 95% certainty that this answer would be chosen by 57%-63% of the inhabitants. The table presents the sample size for a given population size, assuming different confidence intervals and 95% confidence level¹².

Population	sample size	Confidence interval		
		+/- 3%	+/- 4%	+/- 5%
500		341	273	217
1,000		516	375	278
2,000		696	462	322
3,000		787	500	341
5,000		880	536	357
10,000		964	566	370
25,000		approx. 1,000	approx. 600	approx. 390

Sample size for different populations at a given confidence interval

¹² These quantities refer to a simple random sample.

The quantities shown in the table generally refer to simple random samples. Note that the assumed magnitude of the measurement error (confidence interval) is a matter of decision by the researcher and should correspond to the research questions posed by the researcher. More precision will be required in the investigation of the efficacy of a life-saving drug, and less precision will be required in the investigation of public opinion on current political events. A sampling error of +/- 5% is generally acceptable when conducting research in a local environment. **By agreeing to a lower precision of the results, we will avoid the need to increase the sample size significantly.**

The sample size is, of course, not the only factor that potentially affects the measurement error. For a sample to be a true representation of a particular group, additional conditions must be met. With respect to the population of a municipality, city, or county, we must make every effort for our sample to be adequately varied, i.e., so that its distribution reflects the spread of the researched units (e.g., individuals or companies) in localities or neighbourhoods. Therefore, when proceeding to draw units, it is important to determine in advance how many of them will be drawn from each component of the researched population (e.g., localities or neighbourhoods), in proportion to their internal size.

Due to the low cost of conducting research, the **online survey** format is particularly attractive to small local governments. Currently, there are many low-cost or free platforms available that support the implementation of online surveys and, at the same time, help in creating reports. However, when deciding to conduct such a survey, one should remember the requirements of an appropriate selection of respondents. In the case of lack of control over the participation of respondents in such surveys, their non-representative character should be considered, and thus the **limited possibility of generalising the results of such surveys to the entire population of the local government unit.**

Consequences of the social survey

The conducted research usually indicates various types of problem, needs, or expectations of the local society. Some of the problems can be solved in a relatively short period of time with a small number of resources, but solving others may involve the implementation of a long-term investment process or undertaking actions on a large scale. In addition, generally, every research involves people (who will plan and conduct it) and often considerable financial resources (needed to implement the research in the field). Therefore, it is important that we consider the following several important issues before taking any action.

- ▶ **Openness of local authorities to social judgment** – the results of the research we deal with here are to a large extent a set of generalised opinions of inhabitants on the condition and functioning of the local community. At least some of the opinions will be about the effects of the actions taken by the local government. **For such surveys to be useful and serve their pro-development function, they must in no way be treated as a contest on the popularity of the authorities.**

As we have already mentioned, the issues and problems that the inhabitants observe, as well as their attitudes to various issues, are the result of many factors including individual preferences, life situations, and subjective goals adopted by the individuals. The task of local government is to reconcile different perspectives and often different expectations, although not all priorities of the individuals or social groups can be not always fulfilled. Getting to know the opinions, and thus the evaluations, of inhabitants is a prerequisite for balancing **subjective expectations** and **objective opportunities related to the resources available**. The social opinions and preferences expressed in the research create the framework for setting development goals. Knowledge of the level of inhabitants' satisfaction with the living conditions (which indirectly result from the

activities of the local government) helps to consciously shape the development of the community in a sustainable way and to improve the functioning of the administration.

- ▶ **Public and political pressure** – as is clearly visible in the case of popularity polls for political parties or politicians, the results of surveys can be used in various ways and serve various purposes (not always in compliance with the intentions of the pollster). Therefore, in conducting community-based research, it is extremely important to be transparent about the research goals. It turns out to be a good solution to involve representatives of the local community both in planning the research and in formulating the resulting recommendations. It is important to remember that the proposed changes and actions may encounter stronger or weaker institutional or social resistance;
- ▶ **institutional readiness for change** – research is worth doing if the results are going to serve a purpose. What is the point of getting to know the opinions and expectations of the inhabitants if nothing comes out of this knowledge, i.e., they will not be considered in planning activities or no conclusions will be drawn about the functioning of local administration? A social survey is an element of supporting local development and improving the functioning of local government institutions. It is used to monitor existing problems and verify social expectations. They only make sense if they are treated as a tool to improve local government management. This means that the research findings should be presented to the community with an indication of the conclusions and action plans;
- ▶ **organisational (institutional) capacity** – social survey implementation generally requires expertise and specific organisational capacity. Before planning research, it is worth considering having a professional research company do it for you. Ordering research from such a company generally provides a fairly reasonable guarantee of getting reliable and credible results. **To carry out the research on your own, you must have appropriate human and organisational resources.** The supervision of self-conducted research by local government agencies requires specific knowledge and analytical skills – thus specific expertise. The implementation of the research itself requires appropriate resources: equipment (access to a computer, software such as a text editor and spreadsheet, duplicator, means of communication), human resources (interns can conduct interviews with respondents) and organisational resources (the need to coordinate the work of the team responsible for the implementation of the research; meetings with representatives of the local community).

Research on living conditions and quality of public services

The Appendix to this toolkit presents a sample social survey questionnaire that directly serves the needs of strategic planning and management, namely the survey on living conditions and quality of public services in a local government unit.

Conducting research according to the questionnaire presented should provide local authorities and other parties interested with the general but very important knowledge necessary in the process of planning sustainable development. **The purpose of such research is to look at local development from a broad and multifaceted perspective.** On the one hand, it focuses on factors related to the local infrastructure, economy, social development, and the state of the environment that affect the quality of inhabitants' life, although it does not address it comprehensively. This would require broadening the subject matter, integrating conclusions from subjective assessments with objective data, and using an indicator approach. On the other hand, the research addresses many of the services provided by local government institutions, but the research cannot be perceived as an in-depth evaluation of

the activities of these institutions. The research questions relate to general evaluations rather than to a detailed analysis of various aspects of institutions and their activities.

According to the assumptions, the proposed research is intended to enable periodic monitoring of the satisfaction of life of inhabitants in a specific local environment and identification of the most important factors affecting it. As a result of the research using the above-mentioned survey, local governments will be able to:

- ▶ identify the most important problems of the municipality, as perceived by the inhabitants,
- ▶ identify social problems and needs and their socio-demographic distribution,
- ▶ get to know the expectations of the inhabitants in relation to the directions of the municipality development and postulates concerning the activities of the local government.

The proposed approach is suitable for conducting a social survey in urban and rural communities.

The scope of research on living conditions and quality of public services

- ▶ Inhabitants' opinions about the activities of local authorities and factors influencing the opinions
- ▶ Interest in local affairs, involvement in community life, feeling of influence on local affairs
- ▶ The state of social capital
- ▶ Detailed assessment of:
 - The state of the environment and the local government care for the environment
 - Public transport, roads, bicycle routes
 - Quality of education
 - Implementation of social policy
 - Labour market and support for entrepreneurship
 - Activities of cultural institutions, recreation, and leisure opportunities
 - Public safety

SUMMARY [3]: LOCAL DIAGNOSIS

- ▶ Due to the commitment to the sustainable development of the entire community, local authorities must be careful to distinguish between social needs and wishes or expectations expressed in different ways by residents. The relationship between social needs and factors that affect them and the activities undertaken by the local government determine the development opportunities of the local community.
- ▶ The main objective of a local diagnosis is to map out the main dimensions – boundary conditions – within which the local government unit operates and the local community lives.
- ▶ Local diagnosis should be focused on assessing local problems, needs, and potentials.
- ▶ Therefore, a local diagnosis should be designed from both an objective and a subjective perspective. The perspectives can be defined as a quantitative perspective (referring to such dimensions as economic well-being, living conditions, the standard of living, wealth, access to various types of services) and a qualitative perspective (referring to the subjective perception of the quality of life in a narrow sense – the way of life, life satisfaction, the lifestyle of the inhabitants), respectively.
- ▶ The results of the identification and analysis of local problems will be used to present the current state of development of the local government unit.
- ▶ A local diagnosis should offer a comparative perspective for assessing local phenomena by verifying data and trends observed locally compared to data from units that are the reference group.
- ▶ The additional step in the diagnosis of local development conditions is research on social expectations and the satisfaction of the inhabitants.
- ▶ The proposed "research on living conditions and quality of public services" enables periodic monitoring of inhabitants' satisfaction with life in a specific local environment and identification of the most important factors influencing it.



4 PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY

This chapter contains, among other things, answers to the following questions:

- ▶ *What elements make up the programming part of the strategy?*
- ▶ *What role do the various elements of strategy play in the planning process?*
- ▶ *How to formulate a development vision and strategic goals? How to identify tasks and projects in relation to strategic goals?*
- ▶ *How to identify, formulate, and present the strategic and operational objectives, as well as activities specified in the strategy?*
- ▶ *How to prepare a development strategy action plan? What is the role of this plan?*

FIXED ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY

Development strategies of (not only) local government units usually have fixed, obligatory programming elements by which you can recognise that the document has a strategic perspective, i.e., it expresses a specific programme of action for a specific period, as a result of which you expect to achieve certain results. Such obligatory elements forming together the programming part of the development strategy of the local government unit are: development vision, objectives, tasks, expected results/outputs.

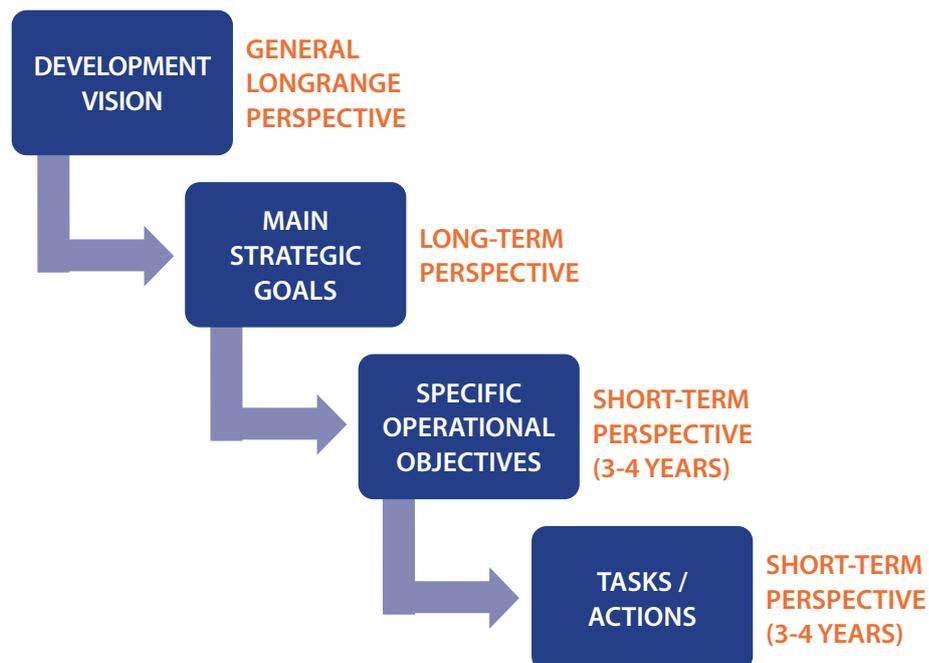
The basis for the preparation of the programming part of the development strategy of local government units are the conclusions of a reliable diagnosis (discussed in the previous chapter), based on as many sources of information as possible (statistical reports, surveys among the local community, thematic evaluation, etc.). Thanks to such information, the various elements of the programming part of the development strategy can be shaped/determined, starting with the most general and horizontal and ending with the relatively detailed. The most common model of the programming part of the development strategy consists of (arranged from the most general to the most detailed):

- ▶ development vision,
- ▶ strategic goals – long-term, horizontal,
- ▶ operational objectives – medium-term, thematic,
- ▶ the tasks/activities undertaken to achieve the objectives,
- ▶ expected results of planned tasks/activities and indicators for their achievement.



The programming part of the strategy, starting from the development vision and ending with tasks/activities, constitutes a logically connected sequence of implementation assumptions to be achieved in the short and long term. Inside this logic sequence, there should be no contradictions and mutually exclusive solutions (e.g., planning development based on an industrial zone with heavy industry as one objective, and at the same time based on local cultural and natural resources attractive for tourism as another objective).

The structure of the programming part of the strategy follows the top-down rule, that is, from the vision of development to the implementation of tasks/activities.



DEVELOPMENT VISION

Development vision is a forecast, projection (description) of the desired state of reality (social, economic, environmental, spatial, etc.) in a given local government unit in the long-range perspective. It is the formulation of a desired image of the local government unit to be achieved within a certain period of time. Thanks to the vision, we can find out what a given local government unit "bets" on, i.e., in what direction it wants to develop and what its priority is. These directions/priorities are reflected in the subsequent elements of the strategy – the goals.

The prelude to preparing a vision statement is to answer the following questions:

- ▶ What is important to us as a local community?
- ▶ What values will guide us in shaping the future?
- ▶ What kind of community would we like to be in the future?
- ▶ What would we like our local government unit to be the best at, what will others envy us for?

The work to formulate a development vision should be supported by the findings of the local diagnosis. The diagnosis provides information on both the development deficits related to the local government unit and the aspirations and demands of the people who participated in the diagnosis. The vision should be developed and accepted by all stakeholders. Expanding ownership of the vision gives it a social mandate to guide the strategy.

When building the vision, it is necessary to set it in the context of sustainable development: in the areas of local economy, infrastructure and space management, social needs, environment, and tourism (consistently with the Local Diagnosis conducted earlier). **Vision is a part of a continuum of the participatory strategic planning process that begins with a diagnosis and is complemented by structured implementations.** In practice, the vision of local development should be based on, on the one hand, on local values, traditions, and culture, and, on the other hand, on local conditions in the indicated areas, and, at the same time, be an incentive to precisely formulate strategic goals and operational objectives.

When working to develop a local development vision, ensure that it is realistic. It will be such when different groups of inhabitants can believe in it and become convinced that it can be made true.

Strategy is about outthinking your competition. It's about vision first and planning second. That's why it's so important that you think before you plan. And that the thinking part of what you do is given priority. Strategists who don't take time to think are just planners¹³.

We strive to achieve the development vision through the implementation of strategic (main, long-term) goals set out in individual areas (directions) of development, which, based on the results of the diagnosis, we have identified as priorities. In this way, all activities undertaken in the framework of the implementation of the development strategy (implementation of tasks, achievement of objectives) contribute to the implementation of the established vision development vision.

¹³ Max McKeown "The strategy book"; Pearson Education Ltd. 2012

A vision is a conception of the future of a municipality, the most fundamental aspiration that, in order to be effective, should be shared by both the municipality authorities and its inhabitants.

A Vision Statement sets out where the local government unit seeks to be 10, 15, or 20 years ahead – depending on the time period for the Strategic Municipal Strategy. In doing so, it should have three qualities:

- ▶ It should be **aspirational** – in raising expectations that improvements that are sought by the community and the Municipality may be secured over the time period for the Strategy
- ▶ It should be **realistic** – it should balance aspiration by being realistic having undertaken an assessment about what is likely to be achievable based on its strengths and opportunities
- ▶ It should reflect what makes it **distinctive** – it should be informed by an understanding of what makes the Municipality stand out, what makes it distinctive, and therefore what its core strengths and opportunities are, taking into account its weaknesses and the threats that it faces.

Examples of development visions:

Development vision of Wielka Wieś municipality in the 2030 perspective – Poland, rural municipality neighbouring a large voivodeship city of Kraków; 2020-2030 Development Strategy for the Wielka Wieś municipality:

In 2030, Wielka Wieś Commune will take full advantage of its vicinity of Cracow, the transport accessibility, and the natural and landscape values of the Cracow-Częstochowa Upland, which make it an attractive place to live, work and spend leisure time. Economic activity zones are developing in the vicinity of the voivodeship capital, along with small local entrepreneurship. The development of municipal infrastructure and the increase in the availability and quality of services strengthens the human and social capital of the local government community, bringing benefits in the form of a higher living standard for residents, including many new ones. Wielka Wieś Commune – modern, hospitable, open to the needs of inhabitants.

Development vision of the city of Przemyśl – a city in south-eastern Poland, in the border area with Ukraine.

Przemyśl is a dynamic city of great significance for the country.

Due to its location, it is a "Gate to the East" and a place of European economic contacts, as well as a thriving tourist centre.

Inhabitants have developed a multicultural dialogue in the spirit of openness and tolerance, making Przemyśl a cultural, religious, and academic centre. Unique cultural, architectural, and artistic monuments are restored and are the pride of the inhabitants. The city is created by people who are aware of the natural and landscape values, which makes it attractive to the inhabitants and tourists.

Development vision of Ust-Putyla local government unit by 2028 – Ukraine, rural municipality, far from big urban centres, located in a mountainous area; Development Strategy of Ust-Putyla local government unit by 2028 project:

UST-PUTYLSKA TERRITORIAL COMMUNE is a cosy place in the Hutsul Carpathians, the centre of Hutsul culture and art, where everyone can feel the beauty of unspoiled nature, homely comfort, openness and friendliness of the inhabitants, who are successful and happy, modern, showing initiative, and are worthy heirs of the traditions of their ancestors. The municipality is a real tourist magnet and a territory of developed entrepreneurship.

Development vision, as the desired state of reality in a local government unit, should be the result of discussion among as many local groups as possible, which constitute the community of a given local government unit. A shared vision of the development of the entire local community is the basis for a participatory approach to the management of strategic local development.

Methods of determining development vision

As it was already said, the vision included in the development strategy most frequently takes the form of a concise description presenting an idealised reality in the municipality after a certain period of time. However, this description is the final result of a certain working process. In order to elaborate a development vision, it is necessary to conduct many analyses and consultations. The vision should be influenced by many factors, which involve different local communities that primarily include the local government (leadership), representatives of the economic sector, various social groups, etc. Several techniques can be used to obtain binding information from these communities to formulate a vision of local development. They include:



Meetings with various community groups

The first step in the process of formulating a development vision may be meetings with representatives of various groups in the local community (NGOs, different age groups of inhabitants, professional groups, groups from the economic sector, parishioners, informal groups, etc.). Such meetings should be organized in the natural environment of activities / functioning of these groups. They should focus on local problems and ideas to overcome them. This discussion should oscillate around expectations, postulates, aspirations, but also dreams related to local development. Each of the groups should have a space to freely express their views and needs in the area of local development directions.

Social research

In cases justified by the characteristics of the local government unit, the strategic session devoted to the development vision can also be preceded by other techniques – social survey, focus workshops, and interviews. In this approach, previously conducted meetings to identify a development vision will provide starting materials for the development of research tools.

More information about the implementation of social research is presented in Chapter 2, devoted to local diagnosis. At this point, it is worth mentioning that social research is a participatory diagnosis method of the needs, problems, and expectations of the inhabitants (and thus can constitute an important element of the identification of objectives and activities of the strategy).

A social survey is a major undertaking that should be used to obtain information about the opinion of inhabitants on many issues – from diagnostic issues, through the vision of development, objectives of the strategy and activities, to the assessment of the implemented public services and living conditions. The implementation of a social survey solely to obtain answers to questions concerning only the vision of the municipality development will prove to be ineffective in most cases.

With regard to work on the development vision, the questionnaire typically includes:

- ▶ question about the most promising, according to the respondents, directions of municipal development for the next 10 years,
- ▶ selection of a limited number of areas in which, in the opinion of the respondents, the municipality should develop (e.g., tourism, development of investment areas, culture and cultural heritage, recreation and sports, housing, etc.),
- ▶ the most important development potentials of the municipality for the next years and crucial development barriers.

Strategic Team session devoted to the formulation of a development vision

The purpose of this session is to discuss the long-term future of the local community in the context of its current state (information on the potentials owned and the occurring barriers to development indicated in the diagnostic part) as well as the expected local and global trends.

It is necessary to ensure that participants of the strategic process representing various groups and layers of the local community are present during this session – it is a condition for achieving local consensus and transferring co-responsibility for implementation of the strategy and strategic programmes to the local community. **Without the involvement of the residents, the unifying, community-building vision of development does not exist.**

That is why, when working on the vision in the Strategic Team, it is necessary to base such work on the results of previously conducted meetings and social research findings.

It is recommended to initiate a substantive discussion with a question that may be controversial but will certainly stimulate the Strategic Team, i.e.: "*What would we like our municipality to be the best at, what will make others envy us?*". This is a proven starting point for discussing the real future of the local community together with the real potential of the local government unit.

The ideas and postulates conveyed by the participants in the meeting should be recorded in a way that allows the members of the Strategic Team to observe the changes introduced in these suggestions. The discussion should lead to attempts to formulate the provisions of the development vision.



Photo: *Defining the vision – involvement of various groups of inhabitants – Ukraine*



Photo: *Defining the vision – involvement of various groups of inhabitants – Ukraine*



The participation of citizens is at the very heart of the idea of democracy. Effective democracy depends on citizens having a say and being heard.

(...)

Why is participation an important policy option?

Firstly, participation is crucial to sustaining the legitimacy of decisions and delivering accountability. Local authorities are not able to act as effective community leaders if they lack a base of popular support. More generally, there is a need to strengthen public confidence in political institutions and the most powerful way to do so is by seeking active citizen endorsement of policies and practices. Deliberative elements of democracy give citizens a voice, creating indispensable long-term loyalty to the political system. It is not necessary for citizens' individual voices to be decisive. It is part of democracy that the majority decides. But what counts is that each person's voice has been taken into account.

A second key argument for finding new ways to engage with people is that governments need to listen and learn in order to design better policies and services. How does one know if public services are meeting people's needs unless they have been asked in a co-ordinated and sustained way? Democracy is largely a question of aggregating various interests and opinions, of deliberation and of negotiating between different interests and opinions so that deals and compromises can be struck. Effective channels of communication are essential to achieving the wider social and economic outcomes that local authorities seek to achieve. Participation enables more effective learning and better decisions.

Finally, participation has an intrinsic value. It is good that people are actively involved in decision making in their communities. Being a full citizen means having a say in decisions that affect everyone. Good governance is not just a matter of delivering good outcomes. The manner in which they are achieved is at least as important. Public authorities at all levels should seek citizens' active endorsement of, rather than tacit acquiescence to, their policies and programmes.

**Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)2
of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the evaluation,
auditing and monitoring of participation and participation policies
at local and regional level**

It should be remembered that the formulation of a development vision should be carried out in relation to the essential areas of sustainable local development. This means that, as far as possible, the vision formulated should consider issues related to social, economic, and environmental order. The technique of using colours for each predefined area (as in the table below) can be helpful. It allows members of the Strategic Team to quickly identify different elements of the vision and make sure (by highlighting relevant elements with various colours) that they cover each sustainable development area.

ECONOMY: infrastructure, labour market, local economic development	
ENVIRONMENT: Natural resources, spatial development, tourism	
SOCIETY: moral / intangible values / human capital	

After elaborating the development vision, one cannot forget to present it, within the framework of separate working consultations, to the representatives of the legislative body of the local government unit, regardless of whether some councillors participated in the work of the Strategic Team. It allows avoiding unforeseen situations in the process of adopting strategic documents by eliminating the argument of lack of knowledge about the subject matter of development directions.

A proven method of disseminating the elaborated vision is to assign the fact of its development a proper status of a social event. This is the moment when the inhabitants learn how to co-decide by undertaking a joint venture, such as planting a tree or displaying the content of the vision in places where the inhabitants reside, using this content in local media, social media, etc. Identification of the local community with the established development vision constitutes a significant element of building its common ownership and increases the legitimacy of the entire strategic planning process.



Photo: Verification of areas affected by the vision using colours – Ukraine

STRATEGIC GOALS

A goal is defined as a state/effect/situation/solution to a problem that is being pursued, which is intended to be a place to go. A goal describes the transition from the existing situation (diagnosed by diagnosis) to the desired situation. Therefore, the goals describe the target state which should be created by the implementation of the development strategy.

In the strategies of sustainable local development, it is recommended to adopt a three-level structure of strategic goals (superior vision, main goals, detailed objectives in relation to the following orders: social, economic, environmental) with the clear placement of the concept of sustainable development in this structure.

The highest level of goals in the hierarchy of strategic planning are **strategic goals**. They are characterised by a long implementation period – almost as equal as the development vision. That is why they are often called general, major, or long-term goals. The strategic goals result from the development vision and together with it constitute the least variable elements of the programming part of the development strategy (long-term perspective). The strategic goals should remain in close relation to the conclusions of the diagnosis and even more with the adopted vision of development.

Goals vs. objectives

Both terms imply the target that one's efforts is desired to accomplish.

- ▶ Goals are generically defined as an achievement or accomplishment for which certain efforts are made.
- ▶ Objectives are specific targets within the general goal. Objectives are time-related to achieve a certain task.



Correct formulation of strategic goals is often difficult. These are long-term goals, so on the one hand they are at a fairly high level of generality. On the other hand, they should be formulated precisely enough to be understood without any doubt by the public (residents, NGOs, stakeholders, investors etc.)

When making strategic goals, the subsidiary question should be asked:

What do we want to achieve?

Strategic goals can be arranged according to strategic areas resulting from the vision of development. Strategic areas (also called development directions, strategic domains) are, in fact, operationalisation of the thematic parts of development vision and facilitate understanding of the logic of the development strategy.

Example of vision:

called "main goal"), strategic areas and goals – „Małopolska 2030" Development Strategy of the Voivodeship, Poland:

MAIN GOAL: Małopolska as a region of sustainable development in social, economic, environmental, and territorial terms				
THE INHABITANTS OF MAŁOPOLSKA	ECONOMY	ENVIRONMENT	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF THE VOIVODESHIP DEVELOPMENT	TERRITORIALLY BALANCED DEVELOPMENT
<i>Strategic goal:</i>	<i>Strategic goal:</i>	<i>Strategic goal:</i>	<i>Strategic goal:</i>	<i>Strategic goal:</i>
Socially sensible and family-friendly development	Innovative and competitive economy of Małopolska	High quality of the natural environment, landscape and living space as well as environmentally aware Małopolska inhabitants	The strategic development management system in the region was adapted to the challenges of the 2020-2030 decade	Sustainable and balanced development of the region based on the endogenous potential of particular areas of Małopolska
<i>Lines for action:</i>	<i>Lines for action:</i>	<i>Lines for action:</i>	<i>Lines for action:</i>	<i>Lines for action:</i>
1. Families of Małopolska 2. Health care 3. Education 4. Heritage preservation and cultural participation 5. Professional activity support 6. Inhabitants' safety	1. Innovative Małopolska 2. Competitiveness and entrepreneurship 3. Tourism, sport, and leisure industries 4. Integrated and sustainable transport 5. Digital Małopolska 6. Circular economy	1. Air quality improvement 2. Sustainable water management and mitigation of extreme natural events 3. Renewable energy and energy efficiency 4. Efficient waste management 5. Protection and shaping of biodiversity and the landscape of Małopolska	1. Strategic development management system 2. Cooperation and partnership 3. Promotion of Małopolska	1. Spatial development of the Voivodeship 2. Support for the cities of Małopolska 3. Development of rural areas 4. Intra-regional cohesion and accessibility

It is important that the strategic objectives correspond to the development needs of the local community and indicate the ways of:

- ▶ solving major problems,
- ▶ eliminating barriers,
- ▶ activating local potentials,
- ▶ using own resources and opportunities emerging in the environment,
- ▶ integrating activities of different disciplines.

As it has already been mentioned, depending on the barriers identified and local potentials (identifying them was the purpose of the previously made diagnosis), the objectives should relate to the social, economic, and spatial-environmental areas. Such an approach ensures the **sustainable development** of local government units.

Translating a Vision Statement into Goals - example from Berat (Albania)¹⁴

Berat Vision Statement:

"Berat, the white town with its splendid people, will be a prosperous Municipality with sustained economic development, with a solid agro-business and handicraft sector, and a hub of family tourism centred on its history and unique cultural heritage".

It is then developed into three goals, which clearly reflect the vision, for the purpose of identifying the objectives, programs, and projects which will deliver the vision:

- ▶ Focus on agro-business and business development

Goal 1 - Development of the agro-business and small and medium enterprises in the region of Berat through the revitalisation of its production, processing, and trading potential

- ▶ Focus on tourism development

Goal 2 - Rapid tourism development based on the unique cultural and historical heritage of Berat

- ▶ Focus on the development of Berat as a city

Goal 3 - Urban development in Berat in compliance with modern standards and in harmony with the specific features of Berat

¹⁴ Revised Social and Economic Development Community Plan 2005-2015 Berat.

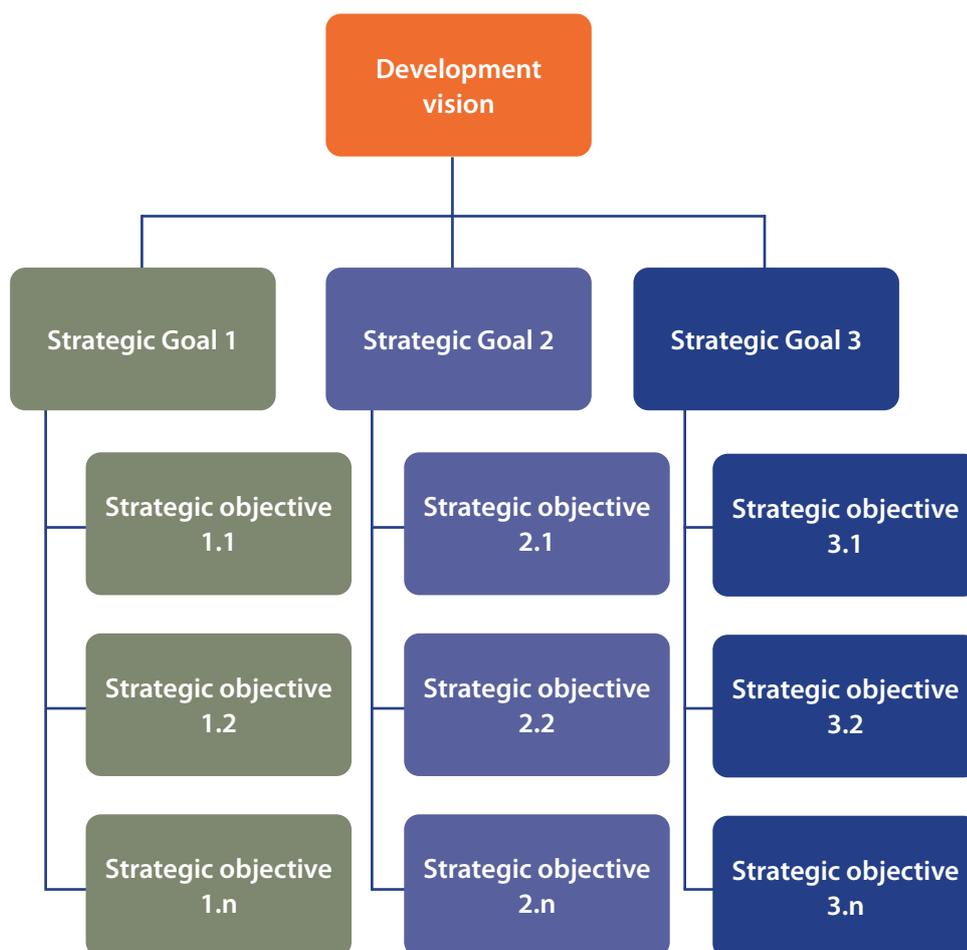
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Operational objectives (also called specific objectives) refer to the medium and short term, they are tools and methods for achieving the strategic goals – each strategic goal may have several operational objectives assigned to it, which, when taken together, lead to the achievement of the strategic goal.

When formulating operational objectives,
ask yourself the following questions:

How to achieve the strategic goal? How do we want to achieve it?

Operational objectives are the next level in the goals-objectives tree. Each operational objective should be in direct relation to the main strategic goal.



Translating Goals into Objectives - example from Berat, Albania

Goal 1

Development of the agro-business and small and medium enterprises in the region of Berat through the revitalisation of its production, processing, and trading potential

It is then developed into Objectives, which address the achievement of the goal of agro-business and SME development, for example:

- ▶ Objective: Transformation of Berat into the main regional hub for the concentration and processing of agricultural products
- ▶ Objective: Promotion of local agricultural products at the regional level

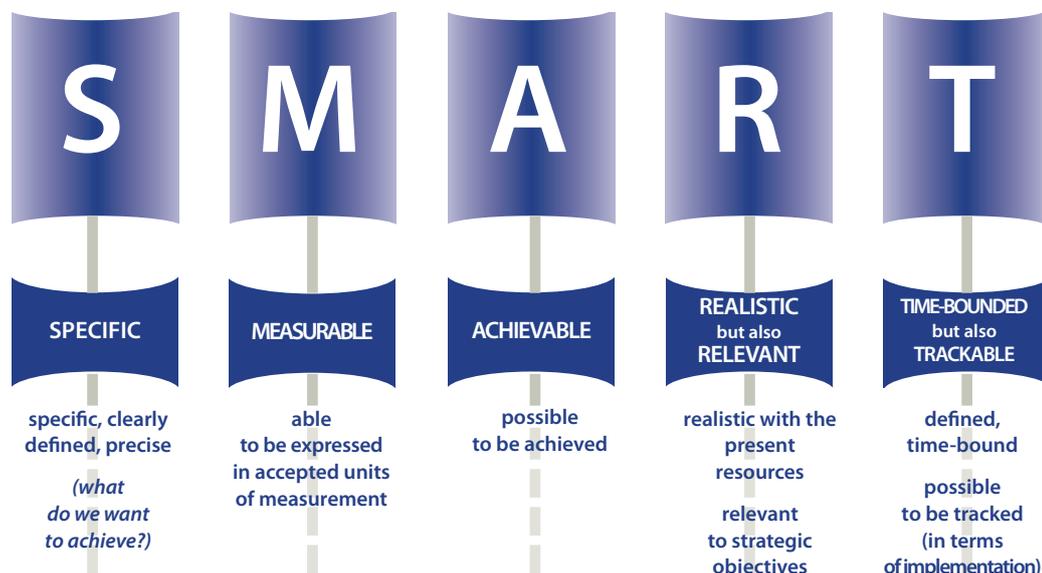
Goal 2

Rapid tourism development based on the unique cultural and historical heritage of Berat

Is developed into objectives to promote the goal of tourism development distinctive to Berat's distinctive assets:

- ▶ Objective: Tourism promotion through provision of detailed and up to date information
- ▶ Objective: Reconstruction, protection, and preservation of the cultural and historical heritage of the town of Berat

Operational objectives should be as specific as possible. The so-called SMART principle will be helpful here. According to the principle, every objective should be:



Methods of determining development objectives

Conclusions drawn from the diagnostic stage provide an information base for the formulation of the development vision, as well as the identification and selection of strategic goals and objectives. In practice, objectives are defined using a variety of work methods, including, but not limited to, social survey, SWOT analysis (and TOWS/SWOT analysis), and/or problem (and objective) tree. The applied methods should not be treated interchangeably but complementarily – as support for setting relevant strategic objectives.

SWOT analysis

This widely, yet vaguely known, analysis used in strategic planning is a form of a summary of assessment of resources (development potentials and barriers) of the local government unit and conditions occurring in its environment. It is a photographic picture that shows the current **development assets** that the local government unit has at its disposal, as well as the **barriers** that hinder this development.

	HELPFUL IN ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES	DETRIMENTAL IN ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES
INTERNAL (features of the unit)	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
EXTERNAL (features of the environment)	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

SWOT analysis is the most popular method used in strategic planning in local government units. It consists of identifying **strengths** and **weaknesses** of a given local government unit (i.e., its positive and negative features, specific resources, potentials, and deficiencies affecting its future development), as well as **opportunities** and **threats** occurring in the environment of the local government unit (i.e., positive and negative processes or phenomena that involve the unit or will involve it in the future and will have an impact on its future development). The opportunities and threats mentioned above are primarily related to the environment, but it is also necessary to consider those attributed to the local government unit. Examples of such internal threats may include facts such as the migration of young people from the territory of the municipality to large cities or abroad and the rapid increase in the number of elderly people in the local government unit.

	+ (advantages) helpful in achieving objectives	- (disadvantages) interfering with the achievement of objectives
INTERNAL (features of the municipality) – HERE –	<p>Strengths Features that distinguish the analysed local government unit from other units and constitute its competitive advantage.</p>	<p>Weaknesses Negative features of a given local government unit that generally result from restrictions on broadly defined resources or negligence regarding development.</p>
EXTERNAL (features of the environment) – THERE –	<p>Opportunities Favourable trends in the external environment of the local government unit which, when properly used, may provide significant impetus for its development.</p>	<p>Threats Various adverse external phenomena that may constitute a serious barrier to development for the local government unit.</p>

SWOT analysis helps put in order the perception of problems and needs related to both the social and economic areas, as well as municipal services and the infrastructure necessary to provide these services. The key aspect is to be able to notice not only simple needs or problems, but first of all approach the issues systemically, i.e., take into account the necessary organisational, legal, and financial activities. For example: not only the fact that a sports facility exists, but also the way the management of the facility, its use, and the financing of its long-term operation are organised. A mistake that is frequently made while conducting the SWOT analysis is an overly optimistic assessment of particular features or resources of the local government unit - e.g., from the perspective of tourism development, a high degree of afforestation and any reservoirs and watercourses are often viewed as strengths. In reality, these development resources have fairly low potential, due to the investments they require and the fact that this type of feature may not be unique, so it is difficult to build a **competitive advantage** on their basis and create significant growth in the local economy.

Sample factors of SWOT analysis for a fictional local government unit:

STRENGTHS

Favourable and stable demographic situation:

- population growth,
- positive rate of natural increase,
- positive net migration,
- favourable demographic structure (high percentage of people in pre-productive age and low percentage of people in post-productive age).

Settlement potential resulting from, among other things:

- good location and accessibility to transport in relation to urban centres of regional importance,
- good access to network infrastructure and a high percentage of building permits granted relative to the average of neighbouring LGUs,
- availability of attractive social spaces (a variety of places to spend free time, playgrounds, sports fields, community centres).

High level of social integration in the local community, in such initiatives as:

- initiatives of a local Cultural Centre and school communities,
- volunteer work carried out in schools and social welfare institutions.

The above average natural and scenic qualities that create a space for residents and visitors to relax and be active serve as a strategic resource for the local recreation industry.

WEAKNESSES

Barriers to maintaining a high level of settlement attractiveness, such as:

- insufficiently developed network of schools and kindergartens in areas with a high rate of births and a positive migration balance,
- lack of places in nurseries,
- lack of a coherent public transport system,
- persistent problem of air pollution.

Limited availability of land for economic development. public finances in a condition that requires strong fiscal discipline:

- high share of subsidies and subventions in the revenue of a municipality,
- high levels of indebtedness

Obsolescence of spatial development plans, resulting from a high settlement pressure - risk of spatial chaos.

Insufficient remediation of a former public landfill within the territory of the local government unit.

Underdeveloped park-and-ride lots by local transportation and transfer nodes.

OPPORTUNITIES

Availability of external funding under the new EU budget perspective for the years 2021-2027.

Initiation of institutional cooperation with other local government units within the functional area to jointly solve public transportation and air pollution problems.

Establishment of cross-sectoral cooperation with local and regional NGOs and local artists in the area of caring for tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Upward trends in the development of the silver economy, dedicated to the care and activation of the elderly.

Development of training and grant programmes from the regional Agricultural Advisory Centre targeting local agricultural producers.

THREATS

Unstable situation in the labour market stemming from the global economic downturn:

- holds back business and plants within the LGU area.
- is a factor that contributes to an increase in the unemployment rate and the cost of supplying social welfare services,
- is a factor that contributes to a reduction in the income of municipality and an increase in the cost of public services.

Progressing climate changes and weather anomalies resulting therefrom:

- heavy rainfalls as a threat to municipal infra-structure and private properties,
- Precipitation deficits replenishing surface and deep-water resources - threat of drought and increase in water supply prices.

SWOT analysis should be detailed enough to identify and present all factors that are important for further planning of works (potential, problems, needs). However, it should not contain too many details (current affairs) as that would result in loss of clarity of description and mutual interaction of individual factors.

To ensure a sufficient level of specificity, SWOT analysis can be conducted taking into account certain general thematic spheres such as:

- ▶ **ECONOMIC AREA** – weaknesses and potentials of the local economy, operating economic sectors and their development opportunities, economic traditions, skills and quality of social capital, trends in the labour market, natural resources for the economy, availability of investment areas, communication and geographical location, availability of technical infrastructure, opportunities to create new economic potentials and resources, etc;
- ▶ **SOCIAL AREA** – meeting social needs, social processes and problems, public safety, social services (education, health care system, culture, sports, social assistance), activity and integration of society, housing resources, quality of life, and availability of services, including municipal services, etc;
- ▶ **ENVIRONMENTAL AND SPATIAL AREA** – the condition of the natural environment and threats to the environment, infrastructure for environmental protection, waste management, counteracting climate change and adaptation to the changes, environmental awareness of residents and education, renewable energy sources, availability of space for various social groups, spaces conducive to social integration, spatial order, revitalisation, etc;
- ▶ **THE AREA OF MANAGEMENT OF THE MUNICIPALITY** – improvement of services provided by the local government unit and its personnel, cooperation with institutional partners (administration of other levels, other municipalities, civic organisations, enterprises) and residents, foreign cooperation, etc.

The development of the final version of SWOT analysis may take place during a dedicated strategy session with the participation of representatives of the local community (similar to the strategy session on the formulation of the development vision). At that stage, the importance of individual factors is assessed and those that are of priority importance for the development process of the local government unit are selected. Representatives of the local community indicate key elements for the development of the municipality and prioritize them.

The use of the results of SWOT analysis to develop strategic objectives in line with the development vision is an important stage with respect to the work on the development strategy. It should be remembered that not all factors of SWOT analysis have to be "translated" into the strategic objectives – not all of them are of the same importance for the future of the municipality, some of them gain strength only after being compared to other indicators. Therefore, quite often after the development of SWOT analysis, various techniques of prioritisation (ranking) of particular factors of SWOT analysis are applied – e.g., assigning scores and weights and, as a result, selecting the most important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats – as the basis for the determination of strategic goals.

Another method is the so-called TOWS / SWOT analysis, which compares selected indicators of the SWOT in order to identify the logical consequences of their occurrence. TOWS/SWOT analysis examines the relationships between individual threats and strengths (strengths), opportunities and strengths, threats and weaknesses, opportunities and weaknesses (TOWS analysis), and the relationships between individual strengths and opportunities, weaknesses and opportunities, strengths and threats, weaknesses and threats (SWOT analysis). Such a structured analysis of the degree of influence of individual factors on each other and the prognostic effects of such relations are the starting point for the formulation

of development objectives of the local government unit, as it leads to the definition of possible development scenarios. Strategic goals formulated on the basis of such hypothetical scenarios relate to the expected positive consequences of the impact of specific factors while eliminating the expected negative consequences.

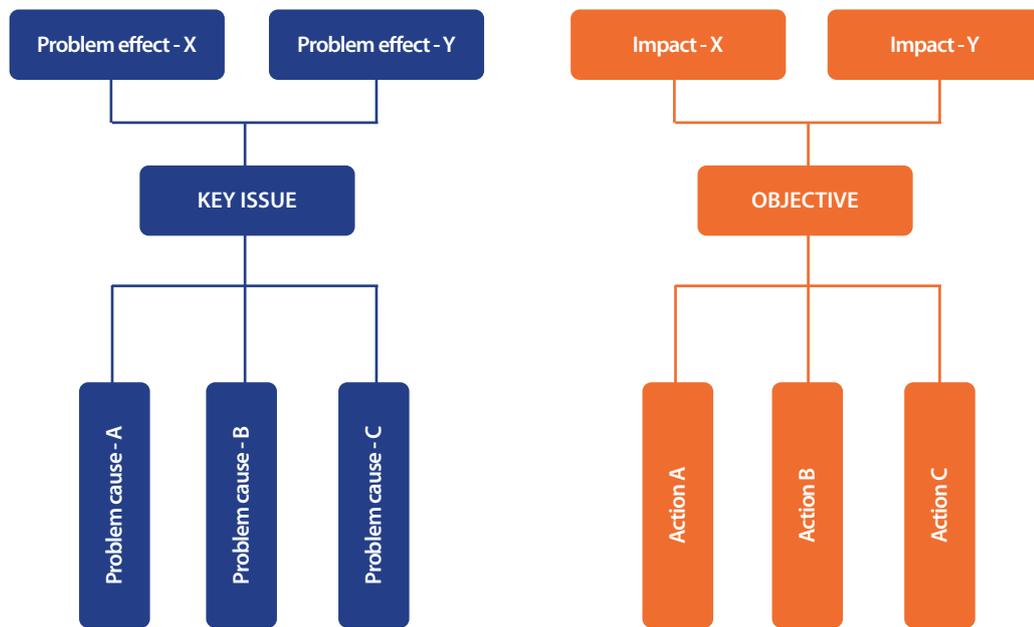
Development scenarios (strategic challenges)

The results of the SWOT analysis are also a good starting point for establishing development challenges or scenarios, which attempt to describe probable processes depending on which solutions will be applied or which external factors (threats, opportunities) will materialise. The consequence of choosing one of these scenarios will be a specific set of objectives. Scenarios can be developed separately for different subject areas.

Problems and objectives tree

An efficient way to define development goals is to analyse the relationship between the problems identified in the local government unit and the possible ways to overcome them. A simple departure from the problem analysis position allows us to properly structure development challenges. This technique is known as building a problem and objectives tree and works as follows:

1. Based on the conclusions of the conducted diagnosis (in various spheres, including social, economic, environmental-spatial, etc.), the most critical problems facing the local government unit should be identified.
2. Afterwards, a key problem should be selected from all the highlighted problems – one that has complex causes and is the source of the greatest number of other issues.
3. The next step is to create a structured cause-and-effect diagram that links the key problem identified with other issues diagnosed.
4. This will create a problem tree. The answer to the defined problems are objectives, the implementation of which is meant to enable a transition from the initial state to the expected state. Such objectives form the objective tree – a mirror image of the problem tree.



One should remember that the objectives should meet the following criteria:

- ▶ they should be formulated in a way that enables their quantification (assigning appropriate indicators to determine the implementation progress),
- ▶ they should be internally consistent and should override objectives set by other strategic documents of the local government unit,
- ▶ they should be correlated with the strategic objectives of other units with which the local government unit is bound by some relationship (e.g., our goals should be consistent with the goals of the supra-local or regional development strategy).

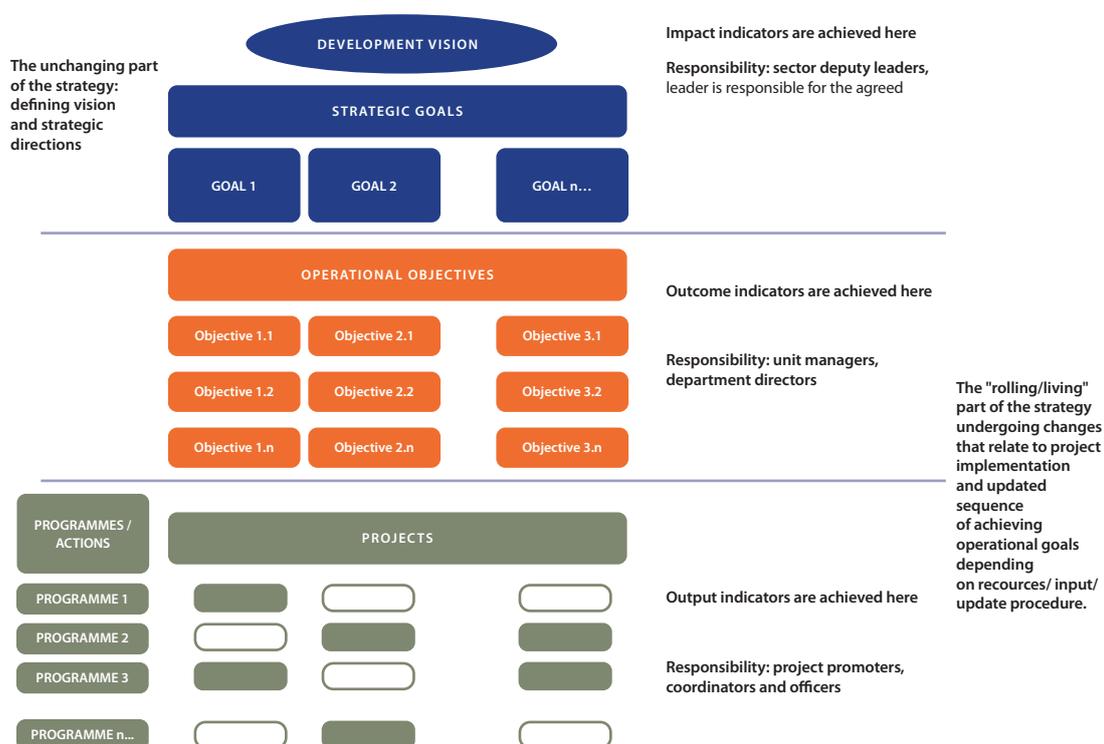
The structure of goals/objectives in the strategy document must form a logically connected system. The task implementation should guarantee the achievement of lower-level objectives – operational objectives, which in turn should contribute to the achievement of higher-level goals, i.e., strategic goals.

STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

As noted in earlier subsections, the programming part of the strategy is divided into the following:

- ▶ long-term, consisting of a development vision and strategic goals, which are rarely changed throughout the strategy implementation period; and
- ▶ short-term, created by operational objectives and tasks/activities, additionally characterised by desired results and indicators of their achievement and implementation framework (responsibility for implementation, sources of financing, implementation partners, implementation schedule, etc.).

The short-term elements (operational objectives, tasks/activities with results, and indicators of their achievement) are called the **strategy action plan**. This is the part that changes frequently as they become obsolete. There are many reasons for this, namely changes in development conditions and needs within local government unit and in its environment, the emergence of new tasks or outdated of existing ones, the completion of some tasks, etc. Therefore, the strategy action plan should be subject to periodic monitoring (and consequently to updating), which provides information on the status of implementation (progress) of individual tasks/activities, and thus the entire operational objectives. The monitoring of the action plan is made possible precisely by the adopted deliverables and the indicators defined for them.



Tasks / actions mean the directions of concentration of joint efforts (programme-based, financial and organisational activity) undertaken by local government units and its public, social and economic partners.

When formulating specific tasks / actions, the implementation of which should be included in the strategy, it is necessary to ask a subsidiary question:

What is there to do?

Tasks/actions (also called directions of activities, intervention directions, projects – depending on the level of detail and preparation for realisation) are used to implement set objectives of the strategy, and therefore, they are a basis for its implementation. Consequently, they should have a general **implemen-**

tation framework (responsibility for implementation, financial resources, implementation partners, implementation schedule, etc.) which helps with implementing and controlling them.

The strategy should define tasks/actions, or, where possible, specific implementation projects (if such are prepared by the municipality).

Examples:

Examples of operational objectives and tasks assigned to them – Iwanowice Municipality Development Strategy for the 2021-2030 period, Poland

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 1.1. Use of the potential of rural areas to strengthen the local economy

Key activities and projects

- 1.1.1.** Support of various partners in initiatives that economically use the agricultural potential of a given municipality, for example, the introduction of modern and innovative farming methods, development of processing, storage, cold stores, drying facilities.
- 1.1.2.** Initiation and support of projects focused on improving the area structure of farms.
- 1.1.3.** Development of ecological agriculture, agrotourism, and local products with marketing (e.g. creation of a local brand of regional products "made in Iwanowice", organisation of a "parsley fair" or a marketplace with an attractive offer of local products and catering including local products, involvement in the promotion of local goods among stores and catering establishments using organic products, e.g. through social media, organisation of the sale of agricultural products in urban areas based on the "buy directly from the farmer" model, recreation and promotion of old recipes and traditions, support for the revival of old varieties and breeds, as well as promotion, for example, through events organised in a municipality, etc.).
- 1.1.4.** Support and initiation of mergers of farmers into sales groups, producer groups, associations and cooperatives, as well as support of specialisation in agriculture.
- 1.1.5.** Promotion of entrepreneurship in farms, including information support in the field of acquiring external funds, land trading, improving qualifications, and professional consultancy.
- 1.1.6.** Identification, support of the development and promotion of products offered by specialised farms using natural values of rural areas – beekeeping, winemaking, fruit and vegetable production, cultivation of herbs, etc.

Expected results of planned tasks/activities and indicators for their achievement

In addition to the general implementation framework (responsibility for implementation, financing sources, implementation partners, implementation schedule, etc.), for each task / activity, the desired results that will occur because of the task implementation should be specified, as well as indicators that will make it possible to measure the achievement of the assumed objectives.

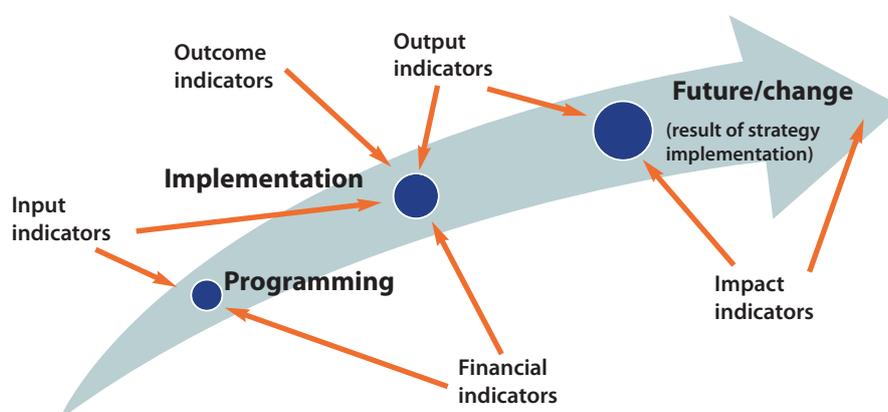
Activities envisaged in the development strategy can be analysed in relation to its key elements:

- ▶ inputs – incurred costs and used resources (direct and indirect; material and non-material; financial, social, and environmental),
- ▶ outputs – specific, measurable effects defined in the form of specific products of activities,
- ▶ outcomes – effects resulting from the developed products (outputs) defined in the form of objectives that were achieved in the target group,
- ▶ impact – effects defined in the form of general goals in relation to the wider environment / community.

Outputs are the specific results achieved from the implementation of the activities provided in the action plan. For example, the output of the trainings are the trained participants, the products of the construction activities are buildings put into use, built objects of communal infrastructure, or kilometres of the road.

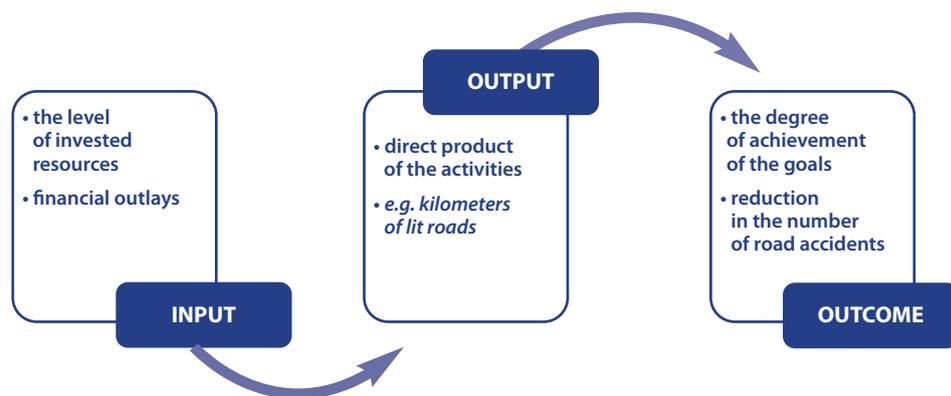
Outcomes should be understood as all expected and unforeseeable effects of the implementation of tasks / activities. The outcomes are described as the effect of planned tasks / activities, changes desired in the context of undertaken interventions. These may be, for example, changes of an organizational nature (institutional changes, changes in the manner and scope of operation of individual institutions, changes within the public service provision system) or changes in the scope of material and intangible resources (infrastructure, human resources, skills, etc.). The outcomes should be verifiable and measurable. In practice, this means defining the outcomes of planned tasks/activities in terms of indicators.

The indicator is an important element of the strategy which contributes to its effective implementation. Selected indicators can show the degree to which the adopted objectives, defined using measures, have been achieved.



According to its simplest definition, an indicator is a variable that can take on different values and remains in a fixed relationship with the characteristics of the analysed objects or states of affairs. An indicator can be defined as a measure of:

- ▶ the input made, the resources involved;
- ▶ the desired output;
- ▶ the outcome to be achieved, the achieved outcome, and
- ▶ the impact, a measure of quality or a contextual variable.



Output indicators represent the direct and immediate effects caused by the action implemented. These indicators usually are of physical nature or relational nature (number of people who have attended and completed the course, number of streetlamps installed, the above-mentioned number of kilometres of road built, number of road accidents, etc.)

The outcome indicators represent the change that was caused by the direct results (outputs) of actions. They provide information on changes that have occurred in the municipality as a direct consequence of the implemented activities (number of people who found a job because of improving their competences, reduction in the number of criminal acts or road accidents, etc.).

Impact indicators present the consequences of a strategy beyond the direct and immediate effects. The concept of impact can be defined as two phenomena, depending on whether it is about effects that appear after some time but are directly related to the actions taken (specific impact), or about effects in an even longer period that affect a wider population (general impact).

It is important to distinguish between measures and indicators: an indicator means some specific value of a measure.

Measure:

The name of the category to determine the value of measured phenomenon, situation, quantity, etc.

Indicator:

A numerical (value) representation of the examined phenomenon, situation, quantity, etc.

The difference between a measure and an indicator:



The following criteria should be considered when selecting the measures:

- ▶ relevance to objectives,
- ▶ measurability,
- ▶ ease of data acquisition,
- ▶ complementarity with measures adopted in national and regional documents.

It is desirable to define indicators while taking into account their development in time and space, which allows for ongoing monitoring of the planned tasks/activities implementing certain objectives of the strategy.

- ▶ Baseline indicators - already existing indicators, for example, for the year before starting to implement or updating the strategy (often the year before, due to data availability).
- ▶ Mid-term indicators - forecasted, specifying the desired values of phenomena, situations, amounts to be achieved after a specific stage of the strategy implementation (e.g., in the middle of its implementation period).
- ▶ Targeted indicators – forecasted, defining the desired values of phenomena, situations, values to be achieved as a result of the implementation of the strategy.



Objective: development of connecting bike lanes in the urban transport route system

• **Indicator:** length of connecting bike lanes provided in km

- Baseline value: 5.5 km
- Value in 5 years: 10.5 km
- Value in 10 years: 15 km

Objective: increasing the level of employment among young people

• **Indicator:** employment of people aged 18-25 provided in %

- Baseline value: 34%
- Value in 5 years: 38%
- Value in 10 years: 43%



Both the previously quoted framework for the implementation of tasks/measures and the results adopted for them, as well as the indicators for the achievement of these results, make it possible to monitor strategy implementation (by monitoring the implementation of individual tasks/measures) and, consequently, also make it possible to make appropriate decisions with regard to updates to the development strategy.

It is worth emphasising that the provisions of the strategy should not be limited only to activities under the exclusive competence of the local government unit and implemented directly by the local government office and organisational (subordinate) units. The strategy should primarily involve activities that challenge the whole local community and all entities operating within or in relation to the local government unit. In the local (development) management process, the strategy plays a key role as a general action plan of local government authorities (in cooperation with other local government authorities, the state administration, as well as social and private partners). It results in the necessity to define the main activities and responsibilities of various entities involved in its implementation.

Institutions and entities involved in the process of strategy implementation can be divided into three main groups (based on the "**triangle of cooperation**" principle):



The implementation of the development strategy should take place precisely in this triangle, with the use of resources and potentials specific to each of the sectors mentioned.

Model matrix for the development strategy action plan (such a table should be prepared for each operational objective)
 - the method of describing strategic and operational objectives, activities, and tasks as well as output and deliverables indicators

Strategic objective 1:
 Operational objective 1.1.

Activity/task	Activity/task implementation indicator (output)	Activity/task implementation result (definition of an outcome)	Activity result evaluation indicator (outcome indicator)	Indicators' verification sources	Responsibility for implementing the task or activity	Funding sources/funds from the local government unit's budget	Completion date (implementation period)

Operational objective 1.1.

Activity/task	Activity/task implementation indicator (output)	Activity/task implementation result (definition of an outcome)	Activity result evaluation indicator (outcome indicator)	Indicators' verification sources	Responsibility for implementing the task or activity	Funding sources/funds from the local government unit's budget	Completion date (implementation period)

Of course, the above action plan table template can be modified as needed. The action plan must include at least basic information on the outcomes of the planned activities and indicate the parties responsible for their implementation.

Example of an action plan for the development strategy - Development strategy of the Novoselitsk Local Government Unit until 2028, Ukraine:
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2. A local government with an extensive and energy-efficient infrastructure; a place for comfortable and safe living
Operational objective 2.1. Development and modernisation of transport infrastructure

Activity/task	Activity/task indicator (product)	Activity/task implementation result	Activity result evaluation indicator	Indicator verification sources	Responsibility for implementing the task or activity	Funding sources/funds from the local government unit's budget	Completion date
2.1.1 Development of a network of public transport stops along major roads (according to a single aesthetic design)	Number of bus stops built (according to the design developed)	Creating accessible facilities in the community public spaces, including ones with amenities for different resident groups (benches for the elderly, low ramps for wheelchairs and families with children, etc.)	Increased satisfaction of residents with the use of public transportation infrastructure. Increased level of road safety (decreased number of accidents)	Research on living conditions and quality of public services Police records	Department of Urban Planning, Architecture, and Capital Construction	Local budget, funding provided by sponsors	2022-2025
2.1.3 Repair of road surfaces in a municipality	Number of km of repaired roads	Improving transport communication Improving road safety Improving the level of pedestrian comfort	Increased level of satisfaction of residents with road infrastructure Increased level of road safety (decreased number of accidents)	Police records Local government unit data Research on living conditions and quality of public services	Mayor, city council, district governors	Local budget, state budget (including state investment fund)	2022-2027

2.1.4	Pedestrian crossing layout adapted for people with special needs, persons with limited mobility, and families with children	Number of reconstructed and newly constructed crossings	Increasing the level of mobility and independence of people with disabilities Improving road safety	Increased level of satisfaction of residents with the condition of local roads Improvement in the assessment of accessibility of public spaces for people with disabilities Improved social integration of people with disabilities	Report of project results Results of research on living conditions and quality of public services	Department of Urban Planning, Architecture, and Capital Construction	Local budget, state budget (including state investment fund)	2022-2024
2.1.5	Establishing pedestrian infrastructure accessible to all social groups of local government unit along the state road H03,	Length of pavements built/renovated	Increased level of mobility and independence for pedestrians, including persons with disabilities and families with children Improving road safety	Increased level of residents' satisfaction with the use of local road infrastructure	Results of research on living conditions and quality of public services	Department of Urban Planning, Architecture, and Capital Construction	Local budget, state budget (including state investment fund)	2022-2025
2.1.6	Construction of new and repair of existing roadside ditches in the villages of Novoselytsia, Marshintsi, and Zelenyi Hai	Length of roadside ditches constructed and repaired	Ensuring proper maintenance quality for road infrastructure	Extended asphalt road lifespan	Monitoring the current state of road infrastructure	Department of Urban Planning, Architecture, and Capital Construction	Local budget, state budget (including state investment fund)	2022-2025

Examples of operational objectives and tasks assigned to them – Iwanowice Municipality Development Strategy for the 2021–2030 period, Poland
 It should be noted that, in the case of this action plan, a different (simplified) table pattern was used than the one recommended above. **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE 1.1. Use of the potential of rural areas to strengthen the local economy.**

Key Activities and Projects	Expected results of the planned activities	Indicators for evaluating the achieved results	Primary responsibility attributable to the municipality	Entities/partners involved
1. Support of various partners in initiatives that economically use the agricultural potential of a given municipality, for example, the introduction of modern and innovative farming methods, development of processing, storage, cold stores, drying facilities.	Development of the agricultural sector in the municipality. Increase in competitiveness of agricultural activities.	The amount of municipality's CIT income of section A according to PKD2007 (agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing) - 01 unit and of section C according to PKD2007 (Manufacturing) - division 10 (expected increase)	The Iwanowice Commune Office, the Malopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Karniowice	Local farmers and entrepreneurs, investors, the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, the Marshal's Office of the Malopolskie Voivodeship, Local Action Group "Jurajska Kraina", neighbouring municipalities
2. Initiation and support of projects focused on improving the area structure of farms.	Improvement of the area structure of the farms. Increase in the competitiveness of farms.	The average size of the agricultural land in a farm (in hectares) (expected increase)	Department of Investments, Municipal Economy and Agriculture, District Governor's Office in Krakow	Agricultural landowners - farmers, investors, the Iwanowice Commune Office, village leaders
3. Development of ecological agriculture, agrotourism, and local products with marketing (e.g. creation of a local brand of regional products "made in Iwanowice", organisation of a "parsley fair" or a marketplace with an attractive offer of local products and catering including local products, involvement in the promotion of local goods among stores and catering establishments using organic products, e.g. through social media, organisation of the sale of agricultural products in urban areas based on the "buy directly from the farmer" model), recreation and promotion of old recipes and traditions, support for the revival of old varieties and breeds, as well as promotion, for example, through events organised in a municipality, etc.).	Creation of an outlet for regional and/or traditional products.	The number of temporary fairtype events (fairs, markets, presentations, participating in events) involving the promotion of regional and/or traditional products. The number of campaigns that promote agriculture combined with agritourism in the municipality (expected increase)	The Malopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Karniowice	Farmers, the Malopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Karniowice, non-governmental organisations, particularly the Farmer's Wives' Association, the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, the Marshal's Office of the Malopolskie Voivodeship, LAG "Jurajska Kraina", village leaders and village councils, social leaders, councillors

4. Support and initiation of mergers of farmers into sales groups, producer groups, associations and cooperatives, as well as support for specialisation in agriculture.	The emergence of sustainable cooperative activities: producer-trade - customer.	The number of cooperative groups in a municipality, as well as farmers and producers associated in these groups (expected increase)	The Malopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Karniowice	Farmers, the Iwanowice Community Office, the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, LAG "Jurajska Kraina", the Marshal's Office of the Malopolskie Voivodeship, neighbouring municipalities, village leaders and village councils, social leaders, councillors
5. Promotion of entrepreneurship in farms, including information support in the field of acquiring external funds, land trading, improving qualifications, and professional consultancy.	Identification, monitoring, and fulfilment of needs to improve professional skills and develop entrepreneurship (conduct business under market conditions). Increase in knowledge and level of absorption of available funds for rural development.	The amount of external funds obtained by farms (individual, producer groups, collectives, etc.). The number of farmers and producers who have benefited from the system for improving professional skills (expected increase)	The Malopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Karniowice	Farmers, the Iwanowice Community Office, the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, LAG "Jurajska Kraina", the Marshal's Office
6. Identification, support of the development and promotion of products offered by specialised farms using natural values of rural areas – beekeeping, winemaking, fruit and vegetable production, herbs cultivation, etc.	Development of specialised farms. Increase in commercial customers' interest in products of specialised farms.	The number of items within the product catalogue and the level of sales of regional products (expected increase)	Department of Investments, Municipal Economy and Agriculture	Farmers, the Malopolska Agricultural Advisory Centre in Karniowice, the Farmer's Wives' Associations, the Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture, the Marshal's Office of the Malopolskie Voivodeship LAG "Jurajska Kraina"

Financial framework as part of the action plan

Activities specified in the local development strategy must be supported by the ability and willingness to implement them, also in the context of securing the necessary funds. The document should indicate the amount of financial resources allocated to implement individual activities specified in the strategy, together with potential funding sources. **It is not necessary to present a detailed financial plan for particular objectives and activities** (it would be pointless in the long-term perspective of strategy implementation and the plan would quickly become outdated), but rather **indicate the scale of expenses and possibilities of obtaining funds to cover them**. Setting a financial framework is essential to assess the feasibility of the strategy.

When creating a financial framework, it is worth considering the following:

- ▶ analysis of income and expenditures of the municipality in recent years,
- ▶ analysis of investment opportunities and financial liquidity of the municipality,
- ▶ debt analysis of the municipality,
- ▶ analysis of activity and effectiveness of the municipality in acquiring extra-budgetary sources of funding,
- ▶ information on potential external sources of funding, the schedule of competitions, terms and conditions for participation and implementation of projects, including own contribution and the share of the subsidy,
- ▶ knowledge and experience resulting from the implementation of various types of investments in the municipality in recent years,
- ▶ information indicated in the already developed projects, feasibility studies, etc.

The necessity to integrate strategic analyses with financial plans is further discussed in Chapter 7 on the implementation of the strategy management system. It is worth mentioning that all available financial resources should be used to maintain an effective and efficient development policy of a local government unit. Taking into account the above, as well as the assumed implementation period of the strategy, it is necessary to specify the following potential sources of funding for the directions outlined in the strategy:

- ▶ budget of the municipality
- ▶ funds from the state budget (at the disposal of individual departments, dedicated funds, and programmes),
- ▶ special-purpose funds, e.g., allocated for environmental protection or housing, etc.,
- ▶ European funds – membership, pre-accession,
- ▶ other funds from aid sources,
- ▶ private sector resources, including public-private partnership formula and non-governmental sector funds,
- ▶ bank credits, loans, and other financial instruments,
- ▶ additional forms of support available through special budget programmes, such as anti-crisis shields.

According to the priorities of the 2021-2027 EU perspective and the Next Generation EU fund, investments in climate and digital transformation, among other things, and those intended directly to reduce negative social, economic, and environmental impact will be the most significant.

SUMMARY [4]: PROGRAMMING PART OF THE STRATEGY

- ▶ The development vision is a projection of the future of local government units, elaborated in a participatory process and based on conclusions from the diagnostic report
- ▶ The development vision is based on the conclusions of the diagnosis and the survey of the opinions of relevant strategic planning stakeholders at the local government unit. It is determined by both the leadership (local government) and the views and needs of various community groups.
- ▶ Vision, strategic goals and operational objectives, as well as activities and their expected results, measured with the use of indicators, constitute a logical sequence that presents the path of development from the implementation of activities to the achievement of the development vision. Individual elements are consistent with each other. There is no contradiction between them.
- ▶ Vision, strategic goals, operational objectives, tasks / activities, and their expected results, measured with indicators, are a logical sequence showing the development path from the implementation of tasks to the achievement of the development vision. The individual elements should be consistent with each other, and there should be no contradictions between them.
- ▶ Objectives should be defined using the SMART approach. At the same time, they should be internally coherent and correlated with the strategic objectives of other local government units with which the municipality maintains relations.
- ▶ The strategy should identify tasks/activities or, if possible, specific projects.
- ▶ To determine the expected results of the development policy, indicators should be established to facilitate monitoring of the progress of the strategy and its possible updates.
- ▶ The strategy must specify the financial framework and funding sources. Setting a financial framework is essential to assess the feasibility of the strategy. It is not necessary to present a detailed financial plan for particular objectives and activities, but rather to indicate the scale of expenses and possibilities of obtaining funds to cover them.
- ▶ Successful implementation of a development strategy requires the involvement of extensive local resources, which are usually beyond the immediate implementation capacity of the local government unit. This includes organisational, human, and financial resources. Important sources of funds necessary for the implementation of the strategy include external resources, such as state, EU, and various donor programmes.



5 PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS IN PRACTICE

This chapter contains, among other things, answers to the following questions:

- ▶ *Why is public consultation important in the process of creating a development strategy?*
- ▶ *How to conduct effective public consultation?*

The final stage of work on the development strategy, which precedes the formal closure of its elaboration process, is public consultation. Its primary purpose is to socially verify the solutions adopted in the strategic document. It should be emphasised that **consultations are not the final step of the strategy development stage. They should result in a debate on the appropriateness of the choices and arrangements adopted in the strategy.**

The idea of public consultation becomes even more relevant in light of the democratic backsliding resulting from the public's increasing feeling of inability to influence the surrounding reality. The declining percentage of citizens participating in both local and central elections shows that this is a real problem affecting many societies. Public consultation is often the first step towards rebuilding the public's belief that their voice matters.

Over the past 20 years, the idea of public consultation has become an extremely interesting topic of public debate. Its participants include officials representing various institutions and local government bodies of various levels, as well as representatives of social organisations, and local and regional community leaders. The spectrum of public debate participants is diverse, which is further reflected by differences in beliefs, experiences, and expectations related to the consultation processes.

The very fact that this topic is raised in the public debate should be considered an enormously positive circumstance. Indeed, this is a clear indication of a changing perception of the importance given to the voice of citizens in the process of making various decisions on public affairs.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS AS A MANIFESTATION OF DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY BUILDING

The main question regarding every stage of public consultations is what they actually are and how can they be effectively conducted? The answer to this question is only apparently simple. When public consultation is treated as a process and, at the same time, as an important tool that should be used in the management practice, it can be clearly stated that it is a multi-faceted concept that functions on different levels. Moreover, with increasing social awareness and the emergence of new tools and channels of communication with the public, the consultation process clearly changes. This may cause misunderstandings in the perception of the idea itself, as well as in the ways in which consultations are conducted in the living, evolving social fabric.

Incorrectly understood public consultations, implemented in a wrong way, are limited to informing the public about the adopted decisions instead of inviting people to real and active participation in the decision-making process.

In practice, the concept of social consultation is defined as **one of the forms of social dialogue between representatives of the authorities and citizens or social organisations that represent citizens** – a dialogue based on the conviction that residents need to be involved in the process of making decisions that affect them directly or indirectly.



Local self-government denotes the right and ability of local authorities, within the limits of the law, to regulate and manage a substantial share of public affairs under their own responsibility and in the interests of the local population.

- European Charter of Local Self-Government (Article 3)

The electoral mandate, which allows the exercise of power on behalf of the residents, is not synonymous with the full acceptance of all decisions made by those in power. In practice, consultations touch on the essence of local democracy, where by choosing our representatives we do not waive our rights but we give a mandate to manage a specific part of public affairs by elected representatives.

Residents expect that when the local government unit makes major decisions concerning, inter alia, the quality of life, the optimal options while making the decisions are considered. The tool for optimising the management process is the reference to the will, knowledge, and experience of residents who have a direct influence on the proposed direction of changes that will affect them in the future. Therefore, public consultation should be treated as a universal tool to optimise the decisions made by local authorities. Consultations allow residents to express their opinion on planned decisions or propose their own ideas for solving the issues under consultation. Consequently, consultations become a real manifestation of democratisation of social and political life and, above all, of building a sense of community and shared responsibility.

The key to a proper understanding of the meaning and nature of public consultation is to clearly define the difference between informing the public about adopted solutions and the process of socialisation of decision-making. It is important that public consultations are not considered a tool for approving or rejecting draft decisions pushed by local governments, but an element of a broader process of co-deciding on the directions of development of the local community.

The main assumption of properly planned and conducted public consultation is to ensure **the maximum possible participation of residents**, institutions, or organisations. Only with such an approach, it is possible to create grounds for constructive discussion of a problem that requires such consultation. It is not always an easy process. Involvement of residents in the decision-making requires knowledge and skills and, above all, the creation of **conditions for the development of communication between participants of the consultation process**. Socialization and consultation are in the simplest sense of the word a factual dialogue. Dialogue, not just informing about the decisions taken! In the process

of socialisation of decisions, there are no passive recipients of information. Consultation must be based on a partnership in which we discuss and not just communicate our views. Understanding the above is the key to start considering public consultation as an effective tool for involving citizens in actual decision-making and making them co-responsible for adopted solutions. Consultation must also be based on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.



The practice of socialising decisions is the path that leads to the implementation of the idea of civil society and its real impact on governance. **Public consultation in the process of decision-making socialisation is an effort that must be made to allow residents to participate in the management process, to create good solutions, and make difficult decisions that can often determine the strategic directions of a community.** Efforts made during the public consultation process help identify needs at the individual and group levels. Consequently, the interest of individual people can be considered when making decisions that may affect them. Consultation is an opportunity to recognise often contradictory positions of particular social groups, organisations, or institutions. Consultation allows active discussion and seeking solutions together as well as building consensus across divisions. Well-organized consultation is a forum for the exchange of views, experiences, knowledge and a way of real improvement of management processes.

At the local level of practice, it is recommended to implement the Seven Principles of Consultation developed jointly by social experts and representatives of local government administration. These include:

- ▶ good faith – consultations should be based on a partnership and openness to genuine dialogue (the parties listen to each other, show willingness to understand different points of view),
- ▶ universality – understood as a possibility for everyone to obtain information and participate in the process of consultation,
- ▶ transparency – clarity and universal availability of information about the purpose, rules, course, and outcome of consultation,
- ▶ responsiveness – every person who submits an opinion should receive a substantive response within a reasonable time, and a summary of the consultation should be in the form of a publicly available document that includes a list of submitted comments and opinions and substantive response to them,
- ▶ coordination – an efficiently and effectively conducted process of consultation requires a host who would be responsible for the consultation both politically and organisationally,

- ▶ predictability – clarity of the process, clear rules and action plan, consultation of assumptions rather than ready-made solutions,
- ▶ respect for the general interest - the right of individual persons to express their particular interests is secondary to the public interest and the general good¹⁵.

In practice, there are opinions (most often expressed by representatives of authorities) that consultation prolongs the decision-making process. The answer to that argument is that thanks to consultation the quality of the decisions is improved and the time of the implementation of solutions is shortened by a period in which residents, organisations or institutions could protest and oppose the implementation of the solutions that are not supported by the public.

It is also worth noting that a well-conducted process of consultations increases trust in local authorities by creating healthy relations between citizens and officials. Awareness of the possibility of participating in the decision-making process is correlated with accepting responsibility for joint decisions. In consequence, adopted solutions are no longer anonymous acts of law but become an expression of the will of residents who are aware of the consequences of the adopted solutions.

Example:

Public consultations of the development strategy – an example from the Czech Republic¹⁶

In 2016, the City of Ostrava (CZ) developed a Strategic Development Plan for 2017-2023. The uniqueness of this process lays in communication and involving citizens under a new, unified brand “fajnOVA”, meaning “fine Ostrava” in Czech. Having a plan made for and by the citizens, ensures that the city vision lives in people's minds, not just on paper. It also ensures a sustainable long-term vision that should be less exposed to political change. In addition to the 250 experts from various fields of urban development, 20,000 residents and visitors of Ostrava have been actively involved. This is by far a unique citizens’ involvement in public decision-making that the Czech Republic has ever seen.

The portfolio of participating stakeholders was very wide. The goal was to get together people from different fields of urban and sustainable development in working groups, a steering committee or in individual interviews on topics such as city development and infrastructure, growth and city government, people and communities, environment and resources, vision and image, architecture and urbanism, implementation, connected city or metropolitan city (e.g. representatives of National Heritage Institute, Confederation of Industry of Czech Republic, Zoo, Hospital, Library, Regional Development Agency, city clubs, SMEs, investors, Cultural and Education Centre, Agency for Social Inclusion, Science & Technology Park, Labour Office of Czech Republic, universities, high schools, basic schools, Institute for Community developer, Parish, IT companies, Automotive Cluster, Regional Employment Pact, architects, Czech Environmental Inspectorate, Health Institute, Institute for Global Change Research, NGOs, architects, environmental experts, industrial factories, city council and assembly members, city district mayors, mayor from cities in agglomeration, regional governor, Government Office, Member of European Parliament, etc.). All their thoughts and statements were written down during the sessions and used in the text of the Strategic document.

¹⁵ <https://kanonkonsultacji.fise.org.pl/siedem-zasad-konsultacji-spolecznych/>

¹⁶ For more details go to: <https://urbact.eu/participatory-approach-creating-city->

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS IT MADE?

Created as a communication tool for the preparation and implementation phases of the strategic plan, the "fajnOVA" brand combines two key elements: "fajn", a local dialect word meaning "fine" and pronounced like the English word "fine", and OVA, a commonly used abbreviation of the city name. Today, the "fajnOVA" brand has a positive image and is understood as a communication and participation tool informing about new projects and city plans, as well as a participation platform where citizens can get involved in public life and supporting communities. The brand helps changing the negative perception of public administration in the Czech Republic.

During the process Ostrava managed to involve 20 000 citizens, which is a remarkable achievement for a Czech city.

Another exception was the active participation of the mayor, who was not only formally head of the whole process, but personally and proactively led most of the working groups. The 2016 City Council partly reallocated the city budget for the realisation of future strategic projects. Nowadays, we are invited to many experts and public meetings to present our good practice. Our experience from the participative process is reproduced by other Czech cities, and we share it through regular departmental meetings on strategic development.

Planning the process of public consultations

Experience suggests that any co-decision-making process should be flexible, transparent, and clear to all participants.

This, of course, raises several problems. It also causes each consultation to be a separate process in which the current experience can and should be used, but that is never a carbon copy of the previous processes. Experience shows that regardless of the amount of work involved in the preparation and planning of the course of public consultations (from their initiation to the evaluation of adopted solutions), their actual course often brings many surprises. For example, we cannot always predict who the participants of the consultation will be. Their previous experience, the level of knowledge in the discussed problem, the ability to work in a group, and many other factors that must be considered when programming and conducting consultations.

The main principle that should guide the process of planning public consultation is "good faith".

Regardless of the inevitable variability of consultation processes, it is recommended that **any entity that wishes or has to conduct public consultation must adopt and implement an appropriate procedure for conducting such processes.** The entity should specify in what circumstances and in what way the consultation will be conducted, identify the participants of the consultation, determine how they will be selected and invited. In addition, the entity must specify and communicate the sequence of events to ensure the highest level of participation of the residents. The sequence of events is usually as follows:

1. Recognition of the problem;
2. Deciding on the need for consultations;
3. Planning and preparation of the consultation process;
4. Launching and conducting consultation;
5. Providing feedback on the scope of consultation;
6. Making a decision on the matter being consulted;
7. Evaluation of consultation activities related to the decision made;

Adopting an appropriate procedure ensures that all participants in the consultation process are informed in advance of the assumed organisational assumptions.



1. The Parties shall take all such measures as are necessary to give effect to the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority.
2. These measures for the exercise of the right to participate shall include:
 - I) empowering local authorities to enable, promote and facilitate the exercise of the right to participate set out in this Protocol;
 - II) securing the establishment of:
 - a) procedures for involving people which may include consultative processes, local referendums and petitions and, where the local authority has many inhabitants and/or covers a large geographical area, measures to involve people at a level close to them;
 - b) procedures for access, in accordance with the Party's constitutional order and international legal obligations, to official documents held by local authorities;
 - c) measures for meeting the needs of categories of persons who face particular obstacles in participating; and
 - d) mechanisms and procedures for dealing with and responding to complaints and suggestions regarding the functioning of local authorities and local public services;
 - III) encouraging the use of information and communication technologies for the promotion and exercise of the right to participate set out in this Protocol.

*Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government
on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority (Article 2)*

Techniques of conducting public consultations

The basic problem faced by all public consultation organizers is ensuring appropriate participation of the local community in the consultation processes and encouraging participants to openly share their opinions. The key to tackling this problem is, first of all, reaching the widest possible group of residents with information about the consultations. Here, the partners are primarily local media, which play an important role in the life of many local communities. Nowadays, one cannot forget about social networks, to which most political and social discussions are transferred. Facebook, Twitter, and, in the era of a pandemic, webinar platforms can be used to inform about consultations. One should also not forget about the information on the websites of the local government office and other local institutions. Posters and leaflets are still an important source of information for people who do not use electronic communication tools on a daily basis.

The basic catalogue of techniques that should be used during public consultation on development strategies includes the following:

- ▶ Information about social consultations through website (possibly also social media of local government units), notice board of the local government unit office.
- ▶ Publication of the document through a website, making it available at a point created for this purpose in the local government unit office.
- ▶ Organisation of meetings with respect to consultation at the local government unit office and outside.
- ▶ Creation of a special e-mail box for submitting comments.
- ▶ Involvement of councillors in the process of spreading information to all localities that are part of the local government unit.
- ▶ Involving various community groups and organisation of meetings of specific social groups, e.g., a meeting of students at school, a meeting of the elderly after a church service, engagement of families, e.g., through competitions.

1) Multiple forms of information transfer

Direct human interactions are the key to information transfer. Therefore, information about the consultation process and its objective should reach the opinion leaders of the local community during face-to-face meetings. They are the ones who will continue to pass this knowledge on to other interested stakeholders.

Consultation meetings are the basic form of informing and involving residents in the discussion on the adopted strategic decisions. Be sure to precede such meetings with an effective information campaign.

It is also important to make the consultation process more attractive and digitalise it. Experience shows that various local events, often involving whole families and different social groups, are a very good opportunity to spread awareness of the work on the development strategy. A choir concert, a children's

band performance, a local sports team's game – they are all a good method to start discussion, which, in subsequent stages, moves to places better suited for the exchange of ideas.

The consultations can also contribute to the implementation of many cultural, sporting, etc. projects. A family picnic, sports competitions, and a concert under the slogan "we decide on the future of our municipality" can be a great opportunity to discuss the considered directions of development.



2) Visuals using the potentials and talents of inhabitants

An art contest for a consultation logo for the youngest inhabitants can be an effective tool accompanying public consultations. Such a contest may also concern, e.g., a vision of the future of a locality which will be changed as a result of the consulted actions (e.g., "my municipality in 10 years" contest – as a result of the consulted development strategy)



An example of a logotype of a strategic document that is a part of the process of socialisation and consultation of strategic development directions (using children's artwork during the contest). The logotype for the participants of the process is an image of the adopted strategic objectives (development of infrastructure, port, agriculture, a new quality of life and recreation with the use of natural resources). (Ukraine)



Children and families' engagement: drawing contest for children: "My Hromada in the future"; Tsarychanka, Ukraine

3) Workshops

Workshops are a very popular form of consultation. They often take a more or less formal form. Field workshops and sports competitions work well. This mainly applies to the fact that their effects are visible to the public.

Apart from the substantive part, workshops can include, for example, the cleaning of a particular area, planting of flowers or bushes and trees, and creation of a "mural" with content important for the local community. Working together for the common good often brings the positions of recent opponents closer together. Even if this is not the case, it is still a success that residents are working together and talking to each other.



4) Informal activities involving local communities in the co-determination process:

Study walks are a frequently used tool. **An on-site visit to the place affected by the consulted decision often saves many hours of tedious discussions.** An on-site meeting often leads to the involvement of new people in the socialisation and consultation process who, while living in the area, often have a unique view of the situation. **Making the problem clear often leads to new ideas for their solution.**

The outdoors is also great for debates. They provide an opportunity to hear from all parties involved in the consultation process. Such debates, when conducted properly, often lead to reducing the heat of the discussion. Valuable voices can often be heard there by accident, so to speak. Random passers-by also become participants in such open-air debates. As long as the discussion moderator prepares for it properly, it can yield a number of interesting solutions to the problem being consulted.



Photo: Study walk, Cedyňa Town Hall, Poland

SUMMARY [5]: PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

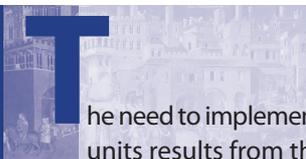
- ▶ Incorrectly understood public consultations, implemented in a wrong way, are limited to informing the public about the adopted decisions instead of inviting people to real and active participation in the decision-making process.
- ▶ The key to a proper understanding of the meaning and nature of public consultation is to clearly define the difference between informing the public about adopted solutions and the process of socialisation of decision-making.
- ▶ Any entity willing or required to conduct public consultations should adopt and implement an appropriate procedure for conducting such processes.
- ▶ Public consultations do not conclude the stage of work on the strategy. They should result in a debate on the appropriateness of the choices and arrangements adopted in the strategy.



6 INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION

This chapter contains, among other things, answers to the following questions:

- ▶ *Why is the adoption of a strategy the beginning and not the culmination of strategic activities?*
- ▶ *How to build a strategic management system for a local government unit?*



he need to implement an integrated model of local development management in local government units results from the following.

- ▶ the dynamics of economic processes, which highlighted the weakness of local governments, often unable to find their way in the changing social and economic reality.
- ▶ the inability to manage resources strategically and focusing on immediate actions without a thorough analysis of their future consequences, which results in the deepening of differences in the level of socio-economic development both in the local and regional perspective.
- ▶ decades of changes that have not made the problems of local communities disappear.
- ▶ the demographic crisis, resulting in increased competition for human capital, and consequently in the polarisation of development in many areas.
- ▶ the increasingly visible negative effects of ongoing globalisation processes, where increasing competition between regions for capital, raw materials, and shrinking labour resources causes the migration of people, capital, and, consequently, local dystrophies.

All of this forces local governments to take actions that were previously reserved for large corporations and transnational companies. This is primarily about an integrated approach to strategic management.

The new paradigm of local development management requires the use of state-of-the-art management solutions to create a basis for competitiveness at the local level.

Increasingly, the term glocalization appears alongside the concept of globalisation in public discourse. It is about creating a global economy based on local potentials. It boils down to emphasizing the importance of building competitive local economies that will be able to take advantage of accessing a broad global market.

Contemporary concepts of local development management confirm the necessity of integrated strategic management as a factor building supra-local competitiveness. They emphasise the role of human capital, entrepreneurship, and innovation in laying the foundations for sustainable socio-economic development and taking advantage of the development opportunities created by the deepening of globalisation and glocalization processes.

Contemporary development factors include the following.

- ▶ modern business structure,
- ▶ intensity of activity in the innovation zone,
- ▶ quality of technical infrastructure,
- ▶ human capital accumulated in the region,
- ▶ institutions in the business environment,
- ▶ scientific and innovative potential,
- ▶ social and economic activity of residents.

Contemporary local governments are forced to compete. This competition also applies to the search for and best use of the development factors identified. To secure a competitive advantage, it is necessary to integrate development management based, in essence, on a long-term development perspective that is continuously verified in terms of feasibility.

Local governments do not operate in a vacuum. They are affected by the processes of global competition and accelerating economic change. This gives rise to the need to develop appropriate systemic instruments that enable modern programming, modification, and management of local development.

In order to function effectively under the new conditions, the local development management system should be improved. In many cases, it is directly related to the change of approach to local development management. This change consists of:

- ▶ full involvement of the local community in the process of creating strategic programs,
- ▶ the widest possible involvement of external partners / experts in the creation of strategic documents,
- ▶ introduction of a monitoring system covering the implementation of the strategy as well as changing external conditions,
- ▶ introduction of mechanisms of regular updating of strategic documents.

The essence of strategic management in a local government unit is as follows.

- ▶ identification of the community vision and strategic goals for the long term,
- ▶ the creation of a functional management tool, that is, a development strategy based on a thorough analysis of local potentials as well as external opportunities and threats,
- ▶ the definition of an efficient monitoring system allowing to update the strategic actions taken.

It becomes necessary to consistently implement **the principles of integrated management based** on management concepts similar to those used in the most competitive companies. Only in that way is it possible to overcome problems related to the outflow of human capital or lack of financial resources in a local government or local economy.

	INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR A LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT				IMPLEMENTATION METHODS	IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS
Strategic PLANNING zone	EUROPEAN UNION REGULATIONS NATIONAL STRATEGY REGIONAL/SUPRA-LOCAL STRATEGY LOCAL STRATEGY				Principles of participatory strategic PLANNING / 5 steps	Economic development planning Regional development planning Sub-regional/supra-local strategies Local strategies Sectoral strategies
	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	RESOURCE MANAGEMEN	SERVICE MANAGEMENT	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Principles of strategic management	Activity-based budgeting Long-term financial planning Long-term investment planning Public-private partnerships Contracting of services Management information system Geographical information system Reports / Analyses Web portals Grants, subsidies for the execution of local government tasks Open procedures and law Co-financing of local initiatives Co-financing of infrastructure
Strategic MANAGEMENT area	Budgeting Long-term financial and investment planning	Property Information Human resources	Management of administrative procedures Management of social services Management of municipal services	Stimulation of economic development Land and space management	Partnership Public-PRIVATE partnerships Public-PUBLIC partnerships / cooperation of local governments Citizen participation Ethics and anticorruption Contracting of services Organisation of work within the office	
Area of services/products provided	Activity-based budget Long-term financial plan Long-term investment plan	Information Reports Web portal Resident service centre Specification of tasks, jobs, and organisational units	Administrative services Social services Municipal services	Financial training Instruments to support enterprises Industrial parks Incubators Local projects	Project management	Project management: - infrastructural and environmental projects - private sector support projects - labour market projects - active employment policy - management in education - institutional development of local government units

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SYSTEM

Previous direct experiences related to cooperation with local governments show that these entities actively create subsequent development plans. However, the implementation of the assumed goals remains a weaker part of the strategic management process, which means that in subsequent implementation periods, strategic programs with essentially similar content are created. Most often, the reason for the lack of effective implementation of previously adopted development plans is the insufficient availability of financial resources necessary for the implementation of operational assumptions. To a lesser extent, the reasons for the limited implementation of the provisions of the strategy are seen in insufficiently developed human capital, and demographic or political conditions. Of course, the indicated deficits have an impact on the implementation of strategic plans, but they are not the only source of the problem. The reason for failures often lies in the wrong approach to development management and treating the strategy as a kind of panacea for all problems, as if the document itself was a sufficient answer to the problems related to promoting local development.

Meanwhile, the basic challenge in local management is to **build an effective management system dedicated to achieving the strategic development objectives of the local government unit**. The implementation of such a system is a prerequisite for the effective use of local resources to achieve the assumed development objectives. The organisation of strategy implementation processes must be determined not by the strategy itself but by the entire strategic management system, which in relation to the master development plan can be referred to as the strategy implementation system. In particular, such a comprehensive system:

- ▶ identifies the entities involved in the implementation of the strategy, taking into account their roles, competencies, and the relationships between them,
- ▶ defines the rules of cooperation,
- ▶ proposes mechanisms and tools to implement the strategy,
- ▶ sets forth guidelines for the preparation of other implementing documents, if any,
- ▶ defines the method of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategy and its updating.

Step 1: Introduction of the strategy implementation system

Once the strategy has been approved and the projects have been selected, the planning of their implementation begins. In the short term, the implementation of the strategy is carried out according to the Action Plan, which is an integral element of the programming part of the strategy. The above-mentioned strategy implementation system, which is more general, but also more comprehensive, and which should combine budgetary, human, institutional, and procedural capabilities for the overall implementation of the local development strategy, is another thing.

Since the strategy essentially is a list of intentions and not a work plan, it is necessary to identify the instruments for its implementation. Such instruments must ensure that they are consistent with the adopted model of the functional and spatial structure, presenting the concept of municipality's development in terms of building institutional, social, economic, and spatial order, and that the objectives of the strategy will be achieved. There are various types of instruments, e.g.:

- ▶ implementation instruments (e.g., sector/branch strategies for a municipality, plans, models, procedures, projects, detailing priorities and management strategies in specific development areas);
- ▶ organisational and management instruments (e.g., regulations of departments and units, strategy management department, or team);
- ▶ financial instruments (e.g., budget resolutions and other financial documents specifying short-term and long-term directions of concentration of financial resources, activity-based budget, gender-responsive budgeting social projects implemented within the framework of European funds, open calls for tenders for NGOs, system of small grants for NGOs, citizens' budget, local initiative, directed funds: e.g., senior fund, youth fund, taxes, and fees);
- ▶ legal instruments resulting from statutory provisions (e.g., applicable resolutions of the council, regulations in the form of local laws, administrative decisions);
- ▶ spatial planning instruments (e.g., spatial development plans, procedures to ensure the involvement of residents in spatial planning);
- ▶ social instruments (e.g., educational activities, public and information campaigns, promotional activities, internal consultations, public consultations, websites, social media profiles, spatial information systems);
- ▶ human resources instruments (e.g., managers, programme and project coordinators, local leaders, staff development system, exchange of experience, good practices);
- ▶ social economy instruments (e.g., social clauses in competitions and tender procedures, system of delivery of residential premises from municipality's resources for social purposes);
- ▶ coordination instruments (e.g., consultative, and advisory bodies – like council of public benefit activity council, enterprise board, senior council; local, regional, national, and international partnerships in various configurations, including intergovernmental, intersectoral and inter-organisational ones, including public-private partnerships, task forces and implementation teams);
- ▶ control instruments (e.g., update of records and registers, monitoring of spatial development status, environmental quality control);

The selection of particular implementation instruments should be based on the assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the solutions used so far or on the experience of other units.

**The municipality's development strategy is not a standalone document.
Combining the strategy document with other programme, planning, procedural
and organisational documents is the key to successful strategic management.**

Step 2: Development of the institutional framework for the implementation and monitoring of the strategy

It is difficult to strictly define the framework for the implementation of the strategy, just as one might define the assumptions for the development of the strategy itself. This process takes more time and requires continuous operation under different institutional models and continuous monitoring of the effects of implemented solutions in relation to rapidly changing external conditions.

The institutional structure of the implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and update system of the strategy consists of the following elements.

- ▶ **leader of a local government unit** as an executive body whose strategic role is to stimulate and coordinate activities undertaken by various entities and environments, as well as to mobilize and integrate resources at their disposal to achieve the goals and directions of intervention;
- ▶ **local council** as the legislative body, providing substantive support in the scope of ensuring the achievement of the goals set in the strategy, evaluating it, and making strategic decisions for the implementation of the provisions of the strategy (such as updating the strategy);
- ▶ **entity managing the strategy implementation** (which is a person, a team, or a unit in the local government office) responsible for coordinating the implementation of activities, including: searching for partners for implementing strategic activities, searching for new sources of financing, monitoring, and evaluation, preparing changes to the action plan, and information and promotion of the adopted development vision of a local government unit (a good practice in this regard is the preparation of a short information and promotion brochure presenting the key assumptions and content of the strategy, and its wide distribution). Sometimes it is a practice to appoint an independent Strategy Implementation Monitoring Team - in such cases, the tasks related to the evaluation of the strategy implementation results, as well as independent monitoring of the progress of the implementation of works, are taken over by this team;
- ▶ organizational units within the local government office;
- ▶ contractors and partners identified in the development strategy.

In practice, as already mentioned in Chapter 3, for each of the tasks specified in the Action Plan, it is worth defining an implementation and organizational framework, including at least the following:

- ▶ the main contractor of the task,
- ▶ the entity responsible for monitoring the implementation of the task (if different from the task implementer),
- ▶ potential implementation partners.

Example of a table of objectives and tasks with the implementation and organisation framework

Strategic objective 1.:			
Operational objective 1.1.:			
Action	Main implementer	Monitoring entity in the municipality	Implementation partners
1.1.1.			

Step 3: Launch of the strategy implementation plan (action plan)

The Action Plan (implementation plan), developed during the strategic planning process, is a document that integrates all the projects that will be implemented as part of the development strategy. The implementation plan mediates between different projects and their individual implementation plans to ensure that they do not compete with each other for limited resources. Its task is also to provide management information (related to the monitoring and evaluation of actions taken) to the leader of the local government unit.

Key questions concerning strategy implementation:

- ▶ What actions must be taken to achieve the objectives adopted?
- ▶ Who is responsible for the strategic, operational and project objectives?
- ▶ What expertise is key to implementing the strategy?
- ▶ What are the assumptions for the participation of the municipality's budget and human resources to ensure long-term achievement of strategic and operational goals?
- ▶ What institutional changes are anticipated or implied by the implementation of the strategy?
- ▶ What are the assumptions about outcomes, lead time, and funding?
- ▶ What will be the mechanisms for reporting and communicating the results achieved?
- ▶ On what principles will the process of monitoring and evaluation of actions taken be carried out? What evaluation methodology will be adopted?

The effectiveness of the implemented activities will depend on the level of understanding of the strategy contents, the activity scale, and integration of many environments. Therefore, the implementation of the document should be based on previously defined principles and mechanisms. Sample policy catalogue:

- ▶ **participation and partnership** (i.e., cooperation and equal treatment of representatives of various environments and institutions, while preserving their sovereignty and making constant efforts to understand each other);
- ▶ **openness**, allowing as many people and organisations as possible to take part in the partnership, ensuring its diverse composition (one of the key conditions for creativity and innovation);
- ▶ integrated activity resulting from **sharing a common vision** of the development of the local government unit;
- ▶ **transparency** (i.e., clarity of activities, establishment of dialogue, informing, and consulting on decisions, and development solutions);
- ▶ **determination** understood as consistency and responsibility in the implementation of the adopted priorities and actions;
- ▶ **flexibility** of response, assuming the possibility of modification and adjustment of the strategy depending on changes occurring in the municipality and its environment;
- ▶ **effectiveness**, which means making such choices of how to use resources that will ensure expediency and economy of implementation of the action, while obtaining the best results from the expenditures incurred;
- ▶ **priority of financing** for programs and projects included directly in the strategy and those that directly result from it, concerning both the municipality's budget and external sources.

Strategies are generally implemented through various partnerships with strong local government involvement and the inclusion of the private and social sectors. The private sector is generally keen to manage projects aimed at building or renovating infrastructure, revitalising degraded areas, or stimulating entrepreneurship. The social sector, on the other hand, is interested in projects aimed at individuals or socially marginalised groups, improving the quality of life of residents in the domain of broadly defined social services.

It is important to remember that maintaining the contacts, formal and informal, made during the development of the strategy with key stakeholders is helpful in implementing and monitoring the strategy. Building trust between partners helps in the process of managing the implementation of the strategy.

Step 4: Ensuring public support and implementation resources

When starting the process of implementing a development strategy, resources and political support must be secured. An important element of success is to strengthen them in view of the adoption and implementation of the development plan.

Acquiring and maintaining **the support of leaders and local politicians** is important to the success of strategy implementation. Leaders can use their competencies, social capital, and influence to initiate or create various partnerships, coalitions, and networking potentials. They are also often the decision-makers in accessing and using local resources for strategy implementation. Indeed, their involvement increases the chances of the success and sustainability of the strategy.

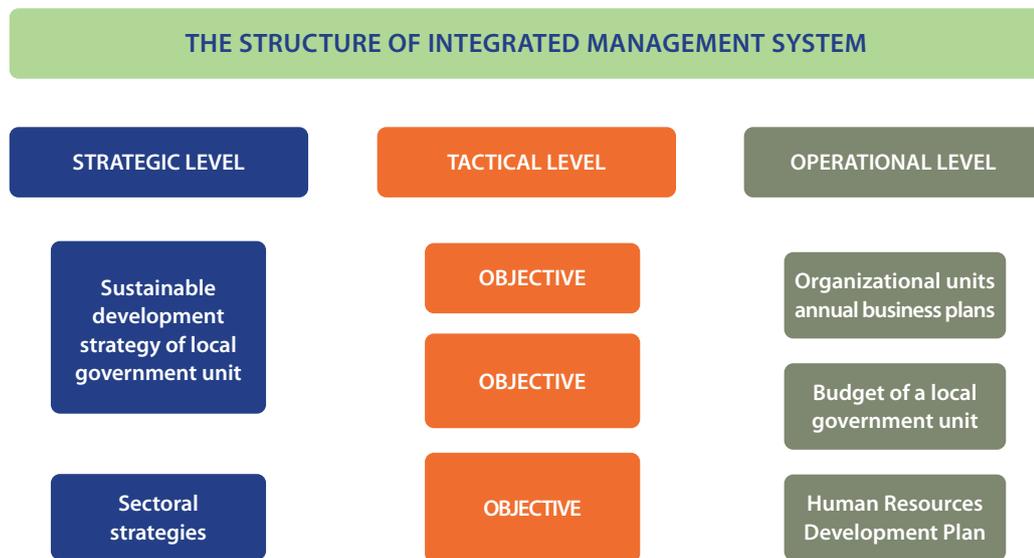
The creation of political support in the case of international institutions, the private sector, or NGOs has an impact on their mobilisation for action and direct support. Building a wide range of partners early in the strategic planning process helps to access sources of funding for the strategy during the implementation phase.

Access to stable funding for strategy implementation is a challenge. This is because **each strategy** is in **competition for limited resources**. It can be difficult for local government unit leaders to justify development spending when funding for current tasks may be considered more important by many stakeholders. Hence, it is crucial to **build public support and involve residents** in the process of co-determining the future. Public awareness of the fact that the implementation of the strategy will lead to increased development opportunities and, in a certain perspective, also to increased revenues for the municipality's budget will result in increased public support for financing the strategy implementation.

An important element of the strategy is to define its financial framework. The resources of the local government unit included in the budget for the implementation of strategic tasks do not have to be significant, but the strategy must contain information on the sources of financing for the assumed tasks.

Organisation of the strategy management system structure

These instruments should facilitate the linkage of strategic objectives with medium-term development priorities and annual action plans of organisational units, operational budgets, and the training improvement program of staff. In such a system, the development directions set at the strategic level should be automatically transferred to the tactical level, and the implementation of all activities should be aligned with the established development vision and strategic goals and objectives. In other words, the management system should ensure the integration of all development management tools in strategic, tactical, and operational dimensions.



An important premise for the implementation of the strategy management system is to avoid the situation of implementation of actions, the purposefulness of which has become obsolete by changes in the environment.

Implementing an effective development strategy management system will be possible when:

- ▶ the development planning process is guided by the needs and preferences of community partners, providers, and service recipients,
- ▶ the development vision and strategic development goals are identified,
- ▶ the management system is based on translating the vision and objectives of the strategy into implementation plans while determining the desired results of the implemented projects,
- ▶ the tasks are precisely distributed among politicians, professionals, and social partners,
- ▶ implementation indicators are based on strategic goals and community expectations,
- ▶ a system of project management and work of cross-sector teams is implemented,
- ▶ there is a full integration of the preparation of the annual budget and the strategy implementation plan,
- ▶ an effective system for monitoring and updating the strategy is implemented, based on a repeatable process,
- ▶ personal responsibility is defined, and a system of employee competence development is implemented
- ▶ institutional development is based on a rolling implementation process and implementation plans are updated annually,

The process of implementing the development strategy based on an integrated strategy management system (on an annual basis)			
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4
Evaluation of the municipality's socioeconomic development and development strategy implementation.	Identifying key issues and priorities	Collecting implementation project proposals; selecting and qualifying strategic projects	Preparation of strategic project applications.
<p>Preparing a report describing the current economic and social situation in all aspects of municipal life.</p> <p>Marking changes from the previous edition of the report (previous year's report).</p> <p>Information on the status of implementation of the local government unit development strategy.</p>	<p>Evaluating the implementation of the Strategy in the previous year.</p> <p>Evaluating the data resulting from the report: highlighting trends and deviations. SWOT analysis.</p> <p>Identifying key issues, defining priorities for action. Verification of the implementation indicators of the strategy.</p> <p>Priority recommendations; consultations and approval.</p>	<p>Collecting proposals for Strategy implementation projects – to be submitted using dedicated forms.</p> <p>Evaluation, selection, and qualification of project compliance with strategic priorities.</p> <p>Selecting project proposals of the greatest significance – establishing a set of strategic projects.</p> <p>Announcing the list of such projects</p>	<p>Developing a list of strategic projects using a unified form template.</p> <p>Verifying and updating the Action Plan; submitting it for consultation and evaluation to the selected bodies; introducing possible modifications; approval.</p> <p>Submitting the Development Strategy Action Plan to the Council for resolution.</p>

System of strategy monitoring, evaluation, and updating

The basis for the effective implementation of the strategy is the knowledge of progress in the implementation of instruments and actions indicated in it, as well as the ability to respond to any emerging divergences between the assumptions adopted and the results achieved.

The strategy should indicate the following:

- ▶ the entity responsible for process coordination (a person, team, or unit at the local government unit office),
- ▶ the way of implementing reporting for monitoring and evaluation purposes,
- ▶ mechanisms that allow the introduction of changes resulting from the ongoing evaluation of instrument and action implementation (strategy updates).

Reporting should be carried out particularly on the basis of indicator analysis. Such analysis should be prepared, e.g., by the designated coordinating body, based on its own data and information, public statistics, as well as statistics of implementers and partners. The analysis should consider the indicators specified in the document and be carried out for each of them using a single data source and in a dynamic way, indicating the change, its scope and direction (including in relation to the base year) – and in case of undesirable trends – also recommendations aimed at improving the functioning of the implementation system. Indicator analysis should be performed at least once a year.

If possible, the reporting should also be based on a report on the implementation of particular activities, prepared, for example, by the indicated coordinating entity, based on its own information and

the information received from the implementing partners and entities involved. In such a case, they will be asked to provide periodic reports on the implementation of their own activities, as identified in the strategy, preferably using a standardised reporting form. An example development strategy monitoring report is included in the appendix.

In addition, it makes sense to plan an evaluation of the strategy, for example, in the middle and at the end of the implementation period. Evaluation aims to improve the quality of activities by increasing their relevance, effectiveness, usefulness, effectiveness, and sustainability. It is recommended to use, among others, a form of workshop with the participation of local government authorities and the most important local stakeholders. On the basis of conclusions from monitoring and evaluation, decisions can be made regarding supplements and modifications to the strategy document.

Incorporating a spatial aspect into the monitoring processes is also worth considering. By comparing maps reporting on the implementation of public investment projects with previous studies on the given areas and lines of intervention, it is possible to monitor the direct results of strategy implementation. Additionally, as a result of the observation of indirect variables, which are the expected benefits from the implementation of investment programs, it will be possible to fully assess the effectiveness of the strategy. The observation, analysis, and presentation of information could include, for example:

- ▶ changes in the services and infrastructure available in the given areas,
- ▶ changes in the settlement network,
- ▶ the impact of investments in transport infrastructure, public transport systems, and continuity of public spaces on the mobility of residents and other users.

SUMMARY [6]: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION SYSTEM

- ▶ Responsibility for the strategy's implementation – as well as its evaluation, updating and monitoring its execution – shall rest with the following: the local government leader (as the executive body), unit council (the legislative body), a designated unit managing strategy implementation and activity coordination, units of the office and the municipality, as well as contractors and implementation partners identified in the development strategy.
- ▶ The reporting system should examine the results of the actions taken, explain any deviations from the assumptions made at the planning stage, and provide a basis for possible changes.
- ▶ Each line of action constituting the implementation of the operational objectives should be specified in terms of indicating the following: the main implementer (e.g., a specific unit at the office), the entity monitoring the degree of implementation, as well as implementation partners.
- ▶ An important element of the strategy are the instruments of its implementation, which give it the character of an overriding and causative document, rather than just another one of many official documents. The selection of instruments should be based on the evaluation of their effectiveness in relation to the diagnosed needs and the experience of their use (including by other units).



7 ANNEX

LOCAL DIAGNOSIS: REPORT TEMPLATE

The socio-economic diagnosis report template presented below should be regarded as a general, initial proposal. The report template should be adapted to national specificities by limiting or extending the scope of information necessary.

Table of Contents:

- 1) Methodological notes - research implementation
- 2) Introduction - characterisation of a local government unit
- 3) Characterisation of the structure of local administration unit - the office and its subordinate units
- 4) Problems and needs of the local government unit
- 5) Local potentials
- 6) SWOT analysis
- 7) Conclusions and recommendations for strategic planning
- 8) ANNEX - Appendices

Key conclusions from the survey (executive summary)

Key conclusions – summary, key findings. Finally, information on whether the local government unit has previously formulated a development strategy (Was the strategy implemented/is it being implemented? What are its effects?)

Methodological notes - research implementation

Information on research implementation (information on completed interviews, characteristics of respondents). Observations, relevant comments, problems encountered, and important implementation details.

Introduction – characterisation of a local government unit

Key data on the local government unit (situation on the day of the implementation of the planned diagnosis implementation)

*Please provide the year and source of information (e.g., local government unit data/regional data/publicly available statistical data). **If a category of information is missing, please indicate: no data** in local government unit/region/central statistical data as appropriate.*

No.	The scope of information	Provide the source and year of the information	COMMENTS AND REMARKS (e.g., on the validity and correctness of the data obtained)
	Geographic location and the position in the country's local administration structure		
	Distance in km: to important economic centres, to the capital of the region		
	Area in km ²		
	Localities that are currently part of the local government unit		
	Population of the local government unit in total and by locality (most recent official data together with source and date)		
	Structure of the population of the entire local government unit - breakdown by age group, gender, and, if such information is available, data on persons belonging to national minorities, vulnerable groups, e.g., people with disabilities, internally displaced, etc.		
	Migration balance (the difference between population inflow/immigration and outflow/emigration) – most recent data together with source and date		
	Gender disaggregated data including estimated ratio of women/men among the unemployed and/or among the legally employed (if such data exist)		
	Official or, in the absence of such data, estimated unemployment rate in the local government unit and the region		
	Profile of the local government unit and its constituent localities according to general economic categories (e.g., agricultural, industrial)		
	Number of economic operators registered in the local government unit		
	Number and specialisation of state-owned enterprises operating in the local government unit, and of those registered in the unit		
	Number and specialisation of privately owned enterprises operating in the local government unit and of those registered in the unit		
	Number and specialisation of municipal enterprises owned by the local government unit		
	Number and type of cultural institutions		
	Number and type of health care facilities		

	Number and type of social welfare institutions funded by the local government unit		
	Number and type of educational institutions		
	Number and type of sports institutions		
	Budget of the local government unit in the base year (plan; % of implementation in the base year; plan for the subsequent year or years)		
	Budget per capita (in the base year, plan for the subsequent year or years):		
	Total own income of the local government unit (plan; % of implementation in the base year; plan for the subsequent year or years)		
	Total own income of the local government unit per capita (plan; % of implementation in the base year; plan for the subsequent year or years)		
	Transfers from the state budget (subsidies and grants) (education subsidy (in the base year); additional subsidy (in the base year); compensatory subsidy (in the base year); Total expenditure of the local government unit (plan; % of implementation in the base year; plan for the subsequent year or years)		
	Education expenditure of the local government unit as a % of total expenditure (plan; % of implementation in the base year; plan for the subsequent year or years)		
	Local administration expenditure of the local government unit as a % of total expenditure (plan; % of implementation in the base year; plan for the subsequent year or years)		
	Investment funding from domestic sources (characterisation of fund sources, number of projects, amount of funding in the base year)		
	Existing programme documents (strategies, programmes of local economic development programs, sector programs, the date of their adoption by the local government unit and the areas they concern)		
	Participation of the local government unit in projects financed by foreign contributors in the base year and the previous years (contributor and project name)		
	Website address of the local government unit		

Preliminary information about the place of diagnostic research: location, area, what localities constitute the local government unit, characteristics of these localities – spatial layout, distances between them, basic social data – number of residents, profile – agricultural, industrial, urban-rural, etc.).

Include a map of the local government unit

Factors determining the quality of life in the local government unit.

This section can use the results of the SWOT analysis and present the most important factors in a table.

	Positive factors	Negative factors
Infrastructure and spatial development		
Economy		
Environment and tourism		
Community, human capital		
Local government administration		

Economic situation of the local government unit

- ▶ Sources of income for residents of the local government unit (working in agriculture, industry, services, business, administration; economic migration, etc.).
- ▶ Major employers (e.g., administration, private companies – specify, what is the field of activity, number of jobs)
- ▶ Information on agriculture - number of farms and their specificity
- ▶ In the case of large local government units, present the main industries and selected major companies; in the case of small local government units, present the most important companies operating within the unit area. *A list of companies can be requested from the authorities of a local government unit prior to the visit.*
- ▶ Major directions of economic activity of residents.
- ▶ Labour market – unemployment rate (if official statistics are insufficient, provide estimates that show the scale of the phenomenon and explain its causes), prevailing professions, main employers in the local government unit area, but also in its vicinity (where the residents of the local government unit work)
- ▶ Women in the labour market - Level of occupational activity of women. Volume of labour emigration (*if no official data are available, provide estimates*) labour emigration directions.

Budget of the local government unit – sources of income, income structure, amounts of transfers from the state budget, major items of expenditure, expenditure payment level.

Note! The following tables are for reference only. Their final form may vary due to the specific socio-economic characteristics of a local government unit and particular organisation of financial data.

Income of the local government unit

Income of the local government unit in the base year:

Income categories	Amount	Notes (i.a. data sources)
Own income		
State budget transfers: - education subsidy - additional subsidy - compensatory subsidy - infrastructure subsidy - others		
Total income		
Share of own income		

Structure of the own income of the local government unit in the base year

Categories	Aggregate amount	Share in own income structure
Excise tax		
Personal income tax		
Flat-rate tax		
Land lease payments from natural persons		
Land lease payments from legal persons		
Land tax from natural persons		
Other		
Total		

Expenditure of the local government unit

Expenditure of the local government unit in the base year:

Categories	Expenses in categories aggregate amount	Share in expenditure structure
Kindergartens		
Schools		
Non-school centres		
Social sphere		
Physical culture and sport		
Medical institutions		
Administration of the local government unit (council and executive bodies)		
Cultural centres		
Road works		
Infrastructure		
Total		

Budget prospect for the following years

This part of the report should be prepared with reference to the available data. Efforts should be made to present a long-term perspective.

The following tables are similar to those in the previous section, they should be filled with prospective budget data for the next year or years.

Income of the local government unit

Income of the local government unit in the following years:

Income categories	Amount - base year +:			Notes:
	+1	+2	+3	
Own income				
State budget transfers:				
- education subsidy				
- additional subsidy				
- compensatory subsidy				
- infrastructure subsidy				
- others				
Total income				
Share of own income				

Structure of the own income of the local government unit in the following years:

Income categories	Aggregate amount - base year +			Share in own income structure		
	+1	+2	+3	Y1	Y2	Y3
Excise tax						
Personal income tax						
Flat-rate tax						
Land lease payments from natural persons						
Land lease payments from legal persons						
Land tax from natural persons						
Other						
Total						

Expenditure of the local government unit in the following years:

Income categories	Aggregate amount - base year +			Share in expenditure structure: - base year +:		
	+1	+2	+3	+1	+2	+3
Kindergartens						
Schools						
Non-school centres						
Social sphere						
Physical culture and sport						
Medical institutions						
Administration of the local government unit (council and executive bodies)						
Cultural centres						
Road works						
Infrastructure						
Total						

State of the natural environment, ecology, spatial order

- ▶ What environmental resources are there in the local government unit, what are the problems in this area and ways to deal with them?
- ▶ State of the natural environment.
- ▶ Measures taken by the local government unit for environmental protection.
- ▶ Does the local government unit have a spatial development plan?
- ▶ Cultural monuments (e.g., historical, architectural) and natural attractions located in the municipality.

Characterisation of the local community

- ▶ Population structure (age, education), cultural or social factors determining social integration, factors dividing the local community.
- ▶ Women's place in the community, gender equality issues.
- ▶ Social inequalities and counteracting their effects.

Forms of community engagement

- ▶ Activity of NGOs and social groups – number of organisations, scope of activities, engagement level.
- ▶ Local traditions, social cultural activities, importance of culture to the local community.

Communication of the local government unit with residents

- ▶ Does the local government unit have a website, newsletter, etc.?
- ▶ Where can a resident find information about the local government unit?
- ▶ How does the local government unit release budget information to the public?
- ▶ How are the village assemblies organized?

Local government unit – characteristics of the office and public services performed

General characteristics of public services performed in the local government unit

– scope of the public services provided, sources of funding for service performance, organisation of the services provided, methods of analysis and management of the quality of the public services.

Detailed characteristics of the public services performed:

The list of types of public services presented below is illustrative and may change depending on individual local government units. In particular, it is necessary to describe the situation in education, the expenses for which are usually the largest item in the budget of a local government unit. In this part, describe the services provided, in the next, analyse major problems/barriers to the provision of the services.

Education (schools and kindergartens)

When describing education, use the table below to gather the most important information.

Schol	Year of construction or major renovation	Capacity	Number of pupils + children in preschool education	Number of teachers	Budget amount/pupil

- ▶ Assessment of the functioning of education and the condition of educational institutions and their equipment. Possible plans for change/optimisation in education. Information about educational institutions that are located in the local government unit, but are not under its jurisdiction.

Culture (cultural institutions, ongoing activities)

Institution	Year of construction or major renovation	Description of tasks performed	Number of employees	Budget aggregate amount for each institution

- ▶ General characteristics and assessment of the functioning of the cultural sphere and the condition of cultural institutions and their equipment. Possible plans for change/optimisation. Information about institutions that are located in the local government unit, but are not under its jurisdiction. Major cultural events in the community.

Roads and road infrastructure

- ▶ Characteristics and general assessment of road infrastructure.
- ▶ Information on the needs in the road infrastructure and its development plans.

Public transport

- ▶ General characteristics and assessment of the functioning of public transport in the unit. Possible plans for change/optimisation.
- ▶ Information about the rolling stock at the disposal of the local government unit. Needs and plans in this respect.

Sports and recreation

Sports/recreation facility	Year of construction or major renovation	Description of tasks performed	Number of employees	Budget aggregate amount for each institution

- ▶ Characteristics and general assessment of measures taken in the area of sports and recreation. Sports activity among residents.
- ▶ Characteristics and assessment of the condition of existing sports and recreation facilities.

Health care

Institution	Year of construction or major renovation	Description of tasks performed	Number of employees	Budget aggregate amount for each institution

- ▶ Evaluation of the functioning of the health care sphere and the condition of health care institutions and their equipment.
- ▶ Possible plans for change/optimisation.
- ▶ Information about institutions that are located in the local government unit, but are not under its jurisdiction.
- ▶ Information on the general health of residents, whether there are specific illnesses, and what is the situation of alcohol / drug addiction.

Social welfare

Institution	Year of construction or major renovation	Description of tasks performed	Number of employees	Budget aggregate amount for each institution

- ▶ Evaluation of the functioning of the social welfare sphere and the condition of health care institutions and their equipment.
- ▶ Possible plans for change/optimisation.
- ▶ Information about institutions that are located in the local government unit, but are not under
- ▶ Characteristics of the needs of social welfare of residents.

Public safety

- ▶ Characteristics of the implementation of tasks related to public safety by the local government unit.
- ▶ Assessment of the functioning of the public safety sphere and the condition of infrastructure related to the provision of this type of public service. General assessment of the public safety situation in the local government unit; characteristics of the main types of crimes and offences.

Municipal infrastructure (waste, sewage system, gas, etc.)

- ▶ Characteristics and general assessment of municipal infrastructure and related services.
- ▶ Information on the needs in the municipal infrastructure and its development plans.

Organisation of the local government office

- ▶ Does the local government unit have its statute/document defining its organisational structure and its tasks? Characteristics of the organisational solutions adopted.
- ▶ Structure of the office, number of officials, competencies, responsibilities.
- ▶ Modes of implementation of human resources management policy.

Local government council

- ▶ Who sits on the Council, political and social division?
- ▶ Specifically, how many women are the members of the Council and how is their role perceived?
- ▶ Is the Council representative and to what extent?
- ▶ Evaluation of the effectiveness of the work of the council of the local government unit.

Administrative problems of the office

- ▶ In which areas, belonging to the scope of its activities, administration has the biggest problems: prioritising, characteristics, and meaning of organisational, financial, and other local administration problems. Ways of dealing with / solving existing problems.

Relations with other local administration units

- ▶ Characteristics of the scope and tasks of inter-municipal cooperation, in which the local government unit participates.
- ▶ Participation of government unit in works of government unions and associations.
- ▶ Cooperation with regional authorities.
- ▶ International cooperation.

Social assessment of local government activities

- ▶ The most important factors creating satisfaction / dissatisfaction of residents. (based on information from interviewees who do not exercise public powers or work in office).

Problems and needs of the local government unit

Economy and infrastructure

- ▶ Economic, business, and infrastructural problems and needs – barriers to economic development, the economic activity of residents and private entrepreneurship. Problems in the labour market. Distinguishing the following problem categories: structural – characteristic for the whole country, as well as local – characteristics of local economic problems.
- ▶ Problem origin. Hierarchisation of economic problems. What issues exist and for whom are they most important?
- ▶ What factors are changing the residents' economic activity and the labour market?
- ▶ Key economic and infrastructure needs. What should be done to fulfil them?

Environment

- ▶ **Ecology** – ecological problems/needs. Key environmental hazards. Environmental problems against the background of other issues. Attitudes towards environmental problems.
- ▶ Problem origin. Hierarchisation of environmental problems. What issues exist and for whom are they most important?
- ▶ Key environmental protection needs. What should be done to fulfil them?
- ▶ Development of space in the territory of the local government unit: is it environmentally friendly? Are there any common spaces fostering social integration that utilise natural values?, etc.

Social development

- ▶ **Problems and needs of the residents** – characteristics of the local community's problems; the problems should be divided into categories concerning the following:
 - labour market
 - education
 - health care

- other areas, e.g.: demographic problems, emigration, social and ethnic tensions, economic stratification (poverty), existence of socially marginalised groups, housing conditions, leisure time, etc.
- ▶ It is necessary to identify the root cause of each problem. It is worth creating a hierarchy of the identified problems, i.e., determining which problems are most important to what groups, among others. Which problems facing residents may be the most difficult to resolve? Why?
- ▶ Characteristics and hierarchy of social needs. What does the fulfilment of needs depend on? What should be done to fulfil them?

Other

- ▶ **Other problems** – characteristics of other identified problems. For whom are the identified problems important? Why? Impact on the socio-economic situation in the local government unit.
- ▶ **Other needs** – characteristics of the other identified needs. For whom are the identified needs important? Why?

Local potentials

Characteristics of economic potential – economic development factors. Economic resources available for use in the short term. Long-term economic resources.

- ▶ Local government unit's economic plans. Planned economic activities (including those concerning the labour market). What do local government unit authorities consider important in this area?

Characteristics of social potential characteristics (residents' potential) - factors of social development (in relation to things such as demographics, education, entrepreneurship, and others). What can social development be based on in the short term? What can serve as the foundation for long-term plans?

- ▶ Local government unit plans in the social area. What areas and actions does the local government unit plan to support? What areas and actions will it be investing in? What do the local government unit authorities consider important in this area?

Characteristics of ecological potential - regarding the environmental resources available to the unit. Local government unit plans related to environmental capacity.

Other potentials – characteristics of other potentials identified. How can they be used in the development of the local government unit?

SWOT analysis

Preliminary, simplified SWOT analysis in tabular form (to be used in the strategic planning stage)

Local government administration

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Municipal infrastructure and spatial development

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Local economy

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Environment and tourism

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Community, human capital

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats

Conclusions and recommendations for strategic planning

- ▶ Identification of key stakeholders who should be involved in the strategic planning process. Information on the individuals selected to be part of the Strategic Team.
- ▶ Guidance on strategic planning. The factors that should be considered in the case of each local government unit – area, interest groups, specific individuals, social phenomena, economic phenomena, etc.
- ▶ Identifying knowledge gaps – what areas, topics and issues need to be examined more closely in the strategic planning stage?
- ▶ Other recommendations for the planning stage.

ANNEX: Appendices

LOCAL DIAGNOSIS: INTERVIEW SCENARIO

Methodology note: this scenario is intended as a **guide** to the interviews, a set of possible questions to be used in their course. The scenario should not be used as a mandatory list of questions to ask each respondent. Questions asked to the interviewee should be adapted to their competencies – a headmaster should be asked mainly about education, while a member of an association should be asked about his association's social activities and area of work. Issues that had been clarified during earlier interviews conducted in the given municipality should be omitted.

Introductory question (if required to overcome the respondent's distrust or familiarise them with the interview process)

* How is life here in? How does this locality compare to other around it? Where can one live a better or worse life? Why?

1. Characteristics of the local community

- Local government unit as a community: Is it fitting to speak of a local community existing in the local government unit's territory? Do the residents of the localities comprising the newly formed local government unit feel that they are a community?

If not – why, what determines this? What is the community of the local government unit like? How can it be described?

If yes – how can the local community be described? What kind of people are they? Can you distinguish any particular groups?

- Entrepreneurs, economic life

Which local businesses have the greatest impact on the life of the local government unit? What is the reason behind this influence? Who owns these companies? What kind of impact do entrepreneurs (companies) have on the life of the local government unit?

What are the most common occupations among the residents of the local government unit?

What do residents do primarily for a living? What establishments in the local government unit's vicinity do they work at?

How many home building permits are issued in the local government unit?

- Social ties, leaders, associations

Are there any local leaders among the residents? Who are they and what makes them leaders? How significant are they?

Do people trust each other? What are interpersonal and neighbourhood relationships like? Are people willing to cooperate with each other? Do they work together? What is the level of public trust?

Is there cooperation or conflict between them?

To what extent are residents involved in local government affairs? Are residents interested in the affairs of the local government unit? How does this interest manifest itself?

What real influence do residents have on local government decisions? What kind of influence is it? How would you assess it? What do you think about resident participation in decision making?

Are there any associations in the local government unit's territory? What do they do?

- Other entities of social life

Are places of worship "noticeable" in the local government unit's life? What role does the priest/rabbi/imam play in the life of the local government unit?

Is any local press published on the territory of the local government unit? How often do new issues appear? What is its reader base? How often do they read it?

2. Local government unit – characteristics of the office and services provided

- What is the composition of the local government unit Council? How many people serve on the Council? What is the scope of the Council's authority? How is the cooperation between the Council and the head of the local government unit? Are there clear divisions (social, political, or other) among Council members? How many women serve on the Council?
- Does the Council have any vision for the local government unit and does it strive to attain it? Does it have a plan of action? What about a strategy? If it does exist, ask how it came to be and how they rate its usefulness, as well as what use they have had of it so far and how they plan to use it in the future.
- How is the office organised today? How many people does it employ? What are the responsibilities of specific individuals? Are there any documents outlining the work organisation in the office and regulating the scope of authority of officials?
- *(If no budget exists)* What are the local government unit's sources of funding? What are the most important expenses? What services consume the most of the local government's budget?
- What is the role of the local government (local government authorities) in the community?
- What services does the local government provide to residents? In what areas? How is the provision of such services organised? (it is particularly the officials that should be asked for details)
- What are the problems with the provision of public services by the local government?
- Are any services provided by the local government also used by residents living outside of the local government unit's territory (e.g., schools, kindergartens, art schools, healthcare centres, cultural institutions, etc.)? Has the local government unit concluded agreements in this respect with the neighbouring local governments?

3. Problems and challenges faced by the community and the local government unit

(proceed smoothly from the discussion on services to questions about problems). Ask separately about each indicated service: What does the provision of a given service consist of? What does the service provision process look like?)) Who does it and what does it involve?)) What are the problems faced by the local government unit when providing a given service?

- Which of the identified problems are the biggest? Why? Can they be solved? What would need to be done to resolve them? Are any actions being taken to resolve them?
- Are there any problems in the way the local government unit office operates? What are they about – organisation, officials, finances, technical aspects (office equipment)?
- Economic problems
 - What economic problems exist in the local government unit's territory?
 - If the respondent does not mention them spontaneously, ask the following:
 - Are the residents entrepreneurial? What are the most important problems facing companies operating in the local government unit's territory?
 - What problems exist in the labour market? Does everyone who wants to work have a job?
 - Is there an unemployment problem? How do people deal with unemployment? Is unemployment more likely to affect women or are there no differences in this regard? Are there other identifiable groups that struggle most often with unemployment?
 - Is there any site available to start a business investment project? Is there a land area that could be used for the development of investment projects - is it possible to connect the utilities to this area?
- Social problems
 - What are the most important social problems facing residents?
 - If the respondent does not mention this spontaneously, ask the following:*
 - Is the population increasing or decreasing? If so, what are the reasons behind this?
 - How do residents evaluate the quality of health care? Are there any problems in health care? What do they consist of?
 - What is community housing like in the local government unit's territory? What is the condition of state and municipal buildings?
 - Are there any problems in education? What kind, what are they about? How many schools are there on the territory of the local government unit? What kind?
 - Is there a poverty problem? Does poverty transmission occur? Are there any marginalised groups, those living alongside the main community? If so, which ones? What is their marginalisation based on?
 - Are there any persons belonging to a national or religious minority in the community? Are they able to enjoy their rights to free expression and freedom from discrimination? Are they able to influence public decision-making and participate in the cultural, social and economic life of the community??
 - What is the state of public safety on the territory of the local government unit?
- Environmental problems
 - Are there any environmental problems in the local government unit's territory? If so, what do they consist of? Are any attempts being made to resolve them? What are the results of such attempts?

Is there a waste collection and storage system in place? Who handles waste collection, where is the waste dumped and are there any problems in this regard? Are there plans to introduce waste separation at the source in the future?

What does wastewater management look like? Is a sewerage system available and, if so, what is its condition? Is the wastewater being treated? Are there any problems in this regard?

Is there a problem of air or water pollution?

- *Other problems – inquire about them if they have been mentioned by the respondents*

Does the local government have a plan to deal with these problems? What does this plan involve?

4. The community and local government unit needs

- Which of all the problems listed are the most important? Why are they so important?
- Which are the most troublesome for the local government and which are for the residents?
- What can be done to solve the problems faced by the local government unit? What are the needs at the office? What do local government authorities expect – what kind of support or assistance?
- What can be done to solve the economic problems faced by the local government unit? What are the needs in the economic sphere? What do local government authorities expect – what kind of support or assistance?
- What can be done to solve the social problems faced by the local government unit? What are the needs in the social sphere? What do local government authorities expect – what kind of support or assistance?
- What can be done to solve environmental problems? What are the needs in this area? What do local government authorities expect – what kind of support or assistance?
- Does the local government already have any action plans or vision for the development of the local government unit? If so, what is this vision/plan? Is it necessary to plan to resolve all these issues at all?

5. Potential of the local government unit

- What is a resource, a potential of a local government unit? What makes this local government unit, or its residents positively stand out? What resources that can contribute to its economic or social development are available in the local government unit's territory?
- What is the economic potential of the local government unit? What can be leveraged as the foundation for development as of today? And what could be the driver of economic development in the future?
- What is the potential of residents? What differentiates them from residents living in other nearby locations?
- Do they have any valuable natural resources at their disposal? Can these resources be used as a tourist attraction or just a purely economic resource?
- Is there anything else crucial to understanding the situation of the local government unit?

QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDY LIVING CONDITIONS AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT

Dear Sir or Madam,

The questionnaire we would like to address to you will help us **learn your views and opinions on issues important to the residents of our city**. We believe that the knowledge gained in this way will help to improve the services provided by the city institutions and enable planning for the development of our community!

The questionnaire should be completed collectively by the members of your household – please discuss the answers and each time indicate the one which is closest to the prevailing views in your household.

The questionnaire is completely anonymous – your answers to the questions are confidential. Any information collected will only be used to compile **aggregate statements**. In no way will your completed questionnaire be made publicly available.

Thank you for participating in this study!

FOR MOST QUESTIONS, PLEASE MARK ONLY ONE ANSWER (except questions 7, 21a, 26, 31)

1. Are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the fact that you LIVE in our municipality?

	-2	-1	average	1	2	
We are very dissatisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are very satisfied				

2. If you had the opportunity, would you like to MOVE somewhere else - to live in another place, outside of our municipality?

	-2	-1	average	1	2	
Definitely not	<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely yes				

3. Some municipalities in our country are considered to be RICH - having a lot of money with which they can develop and meet the needs of their residents, while others are said to be POOR and barely have enough to cover their current expenses.

What do you think our municipality is like?

- very rich - rather rich - moderate - rather poor - very poor

- hard to say / don't know

4. Are you interested in WHAT IS GOING ON IN OUR MUNICIPALITY?

	-2	-1	average	1	2	
We are not interested in that at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	We are very interested				

5. In the past three months, has any member of the household:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|------|
| - checked the information on the municipal website | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |
| - checked information on municipality's Facebook page | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |
| - talked to neighbours or others about issues of the municipality | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |
| - talked to a city councillor about an issue that affected the municipality | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |
| - reviewed plans, resolutions, minutes, or other municipal documents | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |
| - participated in a meeting with representatives of the municipality / councillors | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |
| - search for information on the actions taken by the municipality's authorities | <input type="checkbox"/> | - yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | - no |

6. In your opinion do the municipality authorities INFORM or DON'T INFORM residents about their activities?

- | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| | -2 | -1 | average | 1 | 2 | |
| They do not inform
at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | They inform very well |

7. Which of the following methods of informing residents about the ACTIVITIES of the MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES do you think is the most convenient (best) for residents? (In this question, several answers can be chosen)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> - meetings of representatives of the office /
councillors with residents
of the municipality | <input type="checkbox"/> - local press |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - notice boards in staircases | <input type="checkbox"/> - official website of the municipality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - urban billboards (large information boards) | <input type="checkbox"/> - local information portals
(not official government website) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - electronic local media (TV, radio) | <input type="checkbox"/> - official municipality's Facebook page |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> - other ways |

8. Do you think that the residents of our municipality have REAL INFLUENCE on important decisions made by the LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN OUR MUNICIPALITY or are they deprived of such influence?

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | -2 | -1 | average | 1 | 2 | |
| They have no influence
at all | <input type="checkbox"/> | They have a significant
influence |

9. Please specify whether, in your opinion, MUNICIPALITY AUTHORITIES generally:

- foster social activity of the residents and support their initiatives (ideas for action), or rather
- do not show interest in ideas and initiatives submitted by residents
- hard to say

10. Is anyone in the household active in any social/non-governmental organisations? - yes - no

If so, does (or do) this organisation(s) undertake any activities IN OUR MUNICIPALITY? - yes - no

11. How would you generally evaluate the cooperation of the municipality's local government with social/ non-governmental organisations? Is this cooperation:

- very good
 - good
 - average
 - poor
 - very poor
 - we don't know

12. During the past year, did any member of your household run errands at the municipality office?

- yes, several times
 - yes, once
 - no
 - we don't remember

13. How would you generally rate the WORK of the officials employed at the municipality's office?

(officials are the employees of the office excluding the city authorities - i.e., the Mayor and Municipal Council)

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| | -2 | -1 | average | 1 | 2 | |
| Very low | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very high |

14. How would you generally rate the ATTITUDE of city officials TOWARDS THE RESIDENTS who run errands at the Municipal Office?

- | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| | -2 | -1 | average | 1 | 2 | |
| Very poor,
they are not helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very good,
they are very helpful |

15. How would you rate the following IN OUR MUNICIPALITY: *(please choose only one answer in each row)*

	very poor -2	-1	average 0	1	very good 2	we don't know
1. the cleanliness of the NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. the cleanliness of the AIR	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. the quality of DRINKING WATER (e.g., taste, smell, purity)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. presence of NATURE in the human environment (parks, green areas, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. the care of public institutions for the state of the ENVIRONMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. aesthetics of PUBLIC BUILDINGS (their appearance)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. cleanliness of PUBLIC PLACES (e.g., cleaning yards, parks, streets, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8. WASTE COLLECTION from households	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9. possibility of WASTE SORTING	<input type="checkbox"/>					

16a. During the past three months, has anyone in the household driven a car or motorcycle on the roads that run through our municipality?

- yes
 - no
 - we don't remember

16b. During the past three months, has anyone in the household driven a bicycle on the roads that run through our municipality?

- yes
 - no
 - we don't remember

17. During the past three months, how often did the household member who uses public transportation most frequently use public transportation within our municipality?

- every day or almost every day
 - not every day, but at least once a week
 - hard to say
 - occasionally, less than once a week
 - not at all

18. How would you rate the following IN OUR MUNICIPALITY: *(please choose only one answer in each row)*

	very poor	average			very good	we don't know
	-2	-1	0	1	2	
1. the accessibility of COLLECTIVE TRANSPORT within the municipality (e.g., public transport, buses, railroads...)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. the quality of public transport in the municipality	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. the quality / condition of roads / streets paving	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. the capacity of the main traffic routes in the municipality during rush hours (traffic obstructions)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. the accessibility of CYCLE PATHS	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. road safety	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. the maintenance works of public roads IN WINTER (e.g., removal of snow)	<input type="checkbox"/>					

19. In general, how would you rate safety in public places in our municipality? Is there generally:

- very dangerous
 -2
 -1
 average
 1
 2
 completely safe
-

20. Are there any preschool children in your household?

- yes → Does/do your child/children attend preschool?
 - yes, a public one
 - yes, a public and private one
 - no
 - yes, a private one
 - no, they don't

21. Is/are there a school-age child/children in the household? - yes - no

21a. If so, please indicate the type of school(s) attended by your child(ren): *(multiple answers possible)*

Elementary school:

- public school in our municipality
 - private school in our municipality
 - public school in another municipality
 - private school in another municipality

Secondary school:

- public school in our municipality
 - private school in our municipality
 - public school in another municipality
 - private school in another municipality

22. How would you rate the following IN OUR MUNICIPALITY: (please choose only one answer in each row)

	very poor -2	-1	average 0	1	very good 2	we don't know
1. the quality of teaching in PRIMARY SCHOOLS	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. the quality of teaching in POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. the availability of PRE-SCHOOLS	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. the availability of DAY CARE CENTRES	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. the availability of PLACEGROUNDS FOR CHILDREN	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. the availability of year-round neighbourhood clubs and community centres	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. the availability of EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES for children and youth	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8. availability of VARIOUS FORMS of interesting leisure activities for children and teenagers	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9. activities of youth clubs	<input type="checkbox"/>					

23. How would you rate the financial situation of your household?

- very bad - we live in poverty
 - mediocre - we have enough to "get by"
 - rather well - we live quite comfortably
 - hard to say
 rather bad - just about enough for basic needs
 - very good - we can't really complain

24. How would you rate the following IN OUR MUNICIPALITY: (please choose only one answer in each row)

	very poor -2	-1	average 0	1	very good 2	we don't know
1. the operation of the Municipal Social Welfare Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. the adaptation of public buildings to the needs of persons with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. the possibility for those in need to use CARE SERVICES financed by the municipality	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. THE ASSISTANCE provided by the MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS to disadvantaged persons	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. THE ASSISTANCE provided by SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS to disadvantaged persons	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. interest of MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS in the problems of SENIOR CITIZENS	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. the access to SPECIALISED HEALTH CARE	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8. hospital operations	<input type="checkbox"/>					

25. How would you rate the participation of household members in the life of the municipality (participation in public events, parties, festivals, communal activities among residents, etc.)? Please mark only one answer:

- all household members GENERALLY actively participate in municipality's life
- some household members GENERALLY actively participate in municipality's life - hard to say
- none of the household members GENERALLY actively participate in municipality's life

26. What is (are) the SOURCE(s) OF INCOME of the family member with the highest salary? Please indicate the main sources of income of this person – multiple answers possible

- has a job (full or part-time) - makes a living on agriculture - student / pupil
- owns a business - works on a contract(s) of mandate - retired/pensioner
- work casually in different places - does not work, takes care of home - unemployed

27. How would you rate the following IN OUR MUNICIPALITY: (please choose only one answer in each row)

	very poor -2	-1	average 0	1	very good 2	we don't know
1. JOB opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. opportunity to start YOUR OWN BUSINESS	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. support provided to ENTERPRISES by the city	<input type="checkbox"/>					

28. What, in your opinion, generally prevails in RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PEOPLE in our city: distrust, caution, and PRIVATE INTEREST, or a sense of solidarity and CARE FOR COMMON GOOD?

- predominantly distrust, caution, and PRIVATE INTEREST
- predominantly a sense of solidarity and care for the common good - hard to say

29. How would you rate the following IN OUR MUNICIPALITY: *(please choose only one answer in each row)*

	very poor -2	-1	average 0	1	very good 2	we don't know
1. the operation of the COMMUNITY CENTRE (e.g., offer, activity)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
2. operations OF THE CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY and its branches	<input type="checkbox"/>					
3. activities of the Municipal Museum	<input type="checkbox"/>					
4. operations of the Sports and Recreation Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>					
5. opportunity to participate in sporting events AS A SPECTATOR	<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. opportunity to actively PARTICIPATE in sports	<input type="checkbox"/>					
7. opportunity to participate AS A SPECTATOR/ LISTENER in cultural life (e.g., watching plays, performances, listening to concerts, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8. opportunities to engage in ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES (e.g., singing in a choir, playing in a band, participating in a painting workshop, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9. opportunities to actively PARTICIPATE in various municipal activities (e.g., in community organisations)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
10. THE AVAILABILITY (existence) of PLACES where adults can spend their free time outside the house (e.g., clubs, cafes, restaurants, pubs, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
11. access to recreation areas (resting in nature) in the neighbourhood closest to you place of residence	<input type="checkbox"/>					
12. the state of pedestrian roads in your neighbourhood (e.g., availability of sidewalks, their condition, lighting at night)	<input type="checkbox"/>					

30. Please tell us how generally would you rate our municipality in terms of being A PLACE TO LIVE?

	-2	-1	average	1	2	
very bad	<input type="checkbox"/>	very good				

31. The law requires that LOCAL GOVERNMENTS perform multiple tasks simultaneously. None of them can be ignored, but some of them can be prioritized when planning the budget. Which areas do you think should be particularly SUPPORTED in our municipality? Please check NO MORE THAN THREE of the most important items on the list presented:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> - public security | <input type="checkbox"/> - social welfare and municipal housing | <input type="checkbox"/> - road infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - education and pre-school care | <input type="checkbox"/> professional sport | <input type="checkbox"/> - water supply and sewerage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - extracurricular activities for children | <input type="checkbox"/> - health protection and prevention | <input type="checkbox"/> - investments in recreational offerings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - activities of cultural institutions | <input type="checkbox"/> - city park, green areas, recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> - activation practices for seniors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> - support of community organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> - cleanliness of streets and public areas | |

32. What grade would you give the MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY for his ACTIVITY DURING THIS TERM OF OFFICE?

Please grade on the school grading scale (1 to 6).

Grade: 

33. What grade would you give to THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL for its ACTIVITY DURING THIS TERM OF OFFICE?

Please grade on the school grading scale (1 to 6).

Grade: 

At the end of the questionnaire, we ask you to provide some information about the members of your household. As a reminder, the survey is ANONIMOUS - we will only use the information on an aggregated basis.

a) PERMANENT household members (immediate family living together under one roof, including all persons)

Number of children under 6:  children

Number of children aged 6 to 18: children

Number of women aged between 18 and 60: women

Number of women aged 60 and over: women

Number of men aged between 18 and 65: men

Number of men aged 65 and over: men

b) Education of permanent adult household members

Please tick all the appropriate categories

- primary - junior high school - post-secondary /college - higher

- vocational - secondary - incomplete higher

c) What is the status of the house / apartment where you live?

- rented apartment - own apartment - rented house, or a part of it - own house or a part of it

- other - please specify 

d) Which of the following sentences best represents the situation of permanent household members?

- we all live (work or study and live) in our municipality on a daily basis

- we all divide our daily lives between our municipality and other place(s) outside our municipality (we live here BUT work or study somewhere else)

- some household members live in our municipality, and some divide their lives between this city and another place

- hard to say



Thank you for completing the survey. Please return the survey to the person who gave it to you.

Is there any issue you would like to bring to the attention of the local government that was not addressed in this survey?



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PROCEDURE FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

As stated in of the Municipal Development Strategy for the years, current monitoring of the implementation of individual indicators included in the document should be an inseparable element of the continuous process of observing the undertaken activities and projects.

It is therefore desirable to create a consistent and constructive system for monitoring of the provisions of the document, which will be helpful in the analysis and evaluation of the achieved results. Systematic monitoring will also allow responding and the introduction of necessary supplements and corrections, the most appropriate solutions, and methods of achieving the assumed objectives.

Monitoring, as well as its results, is a tool (not an aim in itself) for the implementation and updating of the development strategy.

I. Document management procedure

1. The Monitoring Team appointed by the ordinance of the Mayor will be responsible for systematic monitoring of the Municipality Development Strategy.
2. The Team's primary tasks will include:
 - a. ongoing assessment of the implementation status of tasks planned in the development strategy for a given year (in relation to the indicators adopted in the Strategy)
 - b. evaluation of the effectiveness of the implemented projects
 - c. impact analysis of the implementation of the Municipality Development Strategy
 - d. preparation of annual reports on the implementation of the municipal development strategy
 - e. depending on the results of monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy, developing recommendations for changes that will prove necessary in the perspective of further implementation of the Strategy (e.g., due to emerging opportunities or, for example, funding limitations) and submitting them to the Municipality Mayor.
 - f. depending on emerging needs or/and initiatives, creating new solutions or working out activities eligible for inclusion in the Development Strategy Action Plan
3. The team monitoring the implementation of the Municipality Development Strategy will consist of at least 5 people.
4. The work of the Monitoring Team will be directed by its chairman - elected by the members from its composition.
5. Team members will meet at least 2 times a year to review the implemented tasks and develop recommendations regarding the implementation of the Municipality Development Strategy.
6. The work of the Monitoring Team will be technically coordinated by the institutional leader – (*define organisational unit of the local government office*). Technical coordination will be conducted in consultation with the Chair of the Monitoring Team.

II. Procedure for the document implementation reporting

1. According to the provisions of the Municipality Development Strategy, the effects of the activities implemented and the status information of the task (implementation indicators) should be submitted annually to the Mayor and the Community Council by the Monitoring Team in the form of a report.
2. The report will be prepared by the Monitoring Team based on, among other things, the annual reports prepared by various stakeholders of the activities. Its provisions will be consulted among the Team members and presented to the Municipality Mayor in their final form.
3. An annual monitoring report should be prepared and submitted to the Mayor no later than at the end of March each year. Once it has been favourably reviewed by the Mayor, the report will be presented to the Municipality Council (*the annual report form is attached to this plan*).
4. Annual reports from stakeholders on the implementation of activities in accordance with the development strategy should be submitted in paper and electronic versions to the Municipality Office no later than the end of December each year.
5. Reporters should make direct reference to the results indicators developed and to the operational objectives.
6. The stakeholders are all entities included in the Municipality Development Strategy Action Plan.

III. Procedure for updating the document

1. In addition to the scope of activities related to the ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy, the work of the Monitoring Team will also focus on recommending necessary changes with regard to the provisions of the Development Strategy Action Plan (e.g., in terms of the schedule, responsible stakeholders, budgetary means, indicators, etc.) and presenting the developed recommendations to the Municipality Mayor.
2. Review elements and the requested changes to the Development Strategy will be included in the Annual Monitoring Report.
3. A positive opinion on the recommendation of changes by the Mayor will result in the initiation of a public consultation process regarding the update of the development strategy action plan. Suggestions for modifications to the Action Plan, together with the results of public consultations, will be submitted to the Municipality Council each time within two months from the date of completion of consultations.
4. At the end of the period covered by the Action Plan for the Development Strategy, the Monitoring Team will prepare a comprehensive report on the implementation of activities and indicators included in the document and submit it to the Mayor of the Municipality for his opinion. The report will include elements of the evaluation of the implementation of the strategy.

IV. Evaluation activities

1. The document will be evaluated using the participatory method by the members of the Monitoring Team.
2. The actions undertaken or implemented included in the Action Plan for the Development Strategy will be evaluated each year according to the following criteria:
 - a. effectiveness (i.e., to what extent the objectives and actions defined at the programming stage have been achieved)
 - b. impact (i.e., what has changed, whether the changes brought about by the implementation of the planned actions are beneficial from the perspective of their recipients and in terms of development opportunities of the commune)
 - c. efficiency (i.e., "cost-effectiveness" of activities, i.e., the ratio of the expenditures incurred (financial resources, human resources, time spent) to the output, results and impacts achieved.
3. Opinions on the actions taken and indications on their effectiveness will be included in the annual monitoring report of the Development Strategy.
4. By the decision of the Mayor of the Municipality, the evaluation may be conducted according to other or additional criteria.
5. The overall evaluation of the execution and implementation of the Development Strategy provisions will be based on the evaluation of objectives and tasks provided for in the Action Plan, the effects of the implemented projects and the analysis of socio-economic changes taking place in the municipality.

Report on the implementation of the Development Strategy of the Municipality

Status as on:

1. Review the actions to be implemented in the Strategy (all items included in the Strategy's detailed action plan):

Operational objective:				
	Action/project	Action status: Implemented in full/partially; in progress; not implemented / not implemented	Problems encountered and ways of solving them	Additional information and notes
1.				
2.				
n...				

2. Status of key projects (developed in the form of strategic/key project charters):

Operational objective:				
	Action/project	Action status: Implemented in full/partially; in progress; not implemented / not implemented	Problems encountered and ways of solving them	Additional information and notes
1.				
2.				
n...				

3. Actions planned for the current year:

<i>Operational objective:</i>							
	<i>Action/project</i>	<i>Planned implementation date (in strategy)</i>	<i>Implementation status: Implemented in full/partially; in progress; not implemented/ not implemented</i>	<i>Budgeted (yes/no)</i>	<i>Source of funding</i>	<i>Expected or encountered problems and ways of solving them</i>	<i>Additional information and notes</i>
<i>1.</i>							
<i>2.</i>							
<i>n...</i>							

4. Conclusions on changes to the provisions of the municipal development strategy together with the justification of the need for their update:

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5. Other comments:

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