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## **MAIN ASSUMPTIONS OF SPATIAL MANAGEMENT IN MAZOWIECKIE VOIVODESHIP'S PERSPECTIVE\***

**Abstract:** Main aim of article is presentation crucial assumptions of spatial management in Mazowieckie Voivodeship's Perspective. These assumptions are based on conditions and problems of region's development. They are, partially, description of *status quo* and, mainly, a catalogue of recommendations, which are answer on regional development challenges.

Diagnose of spatial management problems is based on desk research of Polish spatial and regional development documents. Recommendations base on the solutions recommended in *Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship*, which entered into force in 2014.

**Keywords:** Mazowieckie Voivodeship, regional development, spatial economics, spatial planning.

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the study is to present main assumptions of spatial management in the perspective of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship. The assumptions result from the hitherto developed and recognized theoretical concepts of spatial economics and conditions and problems of the voivodeship development that determine addressing development challenges which impact the development and spatial policy of the region. The assumptions describe the present state of affairs and a non-exhaustive catalogue of recommendations – and constitute a proposed response to the selected problems of spatial management with particular regard to spatial development tools, development policy (including spatial policy), the objectives and values related to the specificity of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship.

The assumed strategic perspective is a long-term 15-year strategy – *i.e.* until 2030, set by *e.g.* the *Long-term National Development Strategy* and the *Concept of the National Spatial Planning*.

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## 1. The multidimensional character of spatial economics

There is still no concise study containing a recognized spatial economics theory in Polish and foreign language literature on the subject [*cf.* Domański 2006, p. 9]. However, a number of different concepts and empirical generalizations of smaller or greater theoretical importance have been elaborated. Their more detailed analysis is to be found in: [Stackelberg, Hahne 1998; Domański 2006; Strzelecki 2009]. It should also be noted that the interpretation, and more precisely, emphasis of the elements of spatial approach depending on the type of scientific discipline, varies. Majority of them make spatial economics more or less the subject matter of their studies, analyses and attempts to create theoretical concepts. Generally speaking – albeit there is no perfect consensus among researchers on the essence and subject matter of spatial economics<sup>1</sup> – when trying to define spatial economics, it must be defined in three dimensions: research, real spatial development and practical behaviours of individuals and legal persons (*cf.* Dębski 2001, p. 40). In research, this means looking for patterns in the past and present spatial planning of certain space fragments (at various level of their arrangement), their hidden and complex structures and links deciding on the functioning of the entire social and economic system. The structures include a broad spectrum of the social and economic system domains ranging from natural environment through population and settlement, technical and social infrastructure to manufacturing, distribution and consumption. The second dimension, *i.e.* real spatial arrangement, is the practical condition of the phenomena in the aforementioned areas. The condition is changing through practical behaviours, mostly of economic actors or individuals, within the framework set by the public administration authorities. Such framework should follow from the aspiration to improve the conditions and quality of life of inhabitants living in this fragment of space and the conditions of improving their regional, national and international competitiveness. The framework is expressed in creating certain spatial policy (activities aimed at setting objectives, orientations, tools and means of shaping the spatial structure and spatial behaviours of individuals and economic actors). This results in spatial plans of the defined fragment of space (in Poland these are local plans covering local, functional and regional areas) as coordination of different sectoral policies implemented in the particular fragment of space and regulating the land use as well as the implementation of sectoral policies within this space, and also provision of knowledge on the conditions for development of such space<sup>2</sup>.

As shown by this short analysis of conceptual issues, spatial development is multidimensional and multilateral. It comprises of elements including the activities of entities managing space and acting in the space, and a multitude of forms: devel-

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<sup>1</sup> The subject was discussed in more detail by Dębski [2001].

<sup>2</sup> Belof [2013] discusses this planning theory and practice in detail.

opment policy, including spatial policy, spatial planning, development programming, management and administration of space. This is also implemented through creating its tools, preparing documents, making spatial decisions on land use, land development, and ultimately investment activities. This is an approach to spatial development in the functional sense associated with human activities, predominantly of entities in charge of spatial policies in line with their competences.

In Poland, spatial policies in a broad sense operates (in practice) in pursuance of ca. 60 provisions of fundamental laws and twice the number of implementing acts with lack of many implementing acts to such laws. Legal framework for development policy of the voivodeship, incl. spatial policy consists mostly of: *Act on voivodeship local government*<sup>3</sup>, *Act on the principles of the development policy*<sup>4</sup>, *Act on spatial planning and management*<sup>5</sup>. It should be mentioned here that until recently the relations between the development and spatial policies were the subject matter of poorly interrelated laws: *on spatial planning and management and the principles of the development policy*.

In pursuance of the *Act on the principles of the development policy - the principles of the development policy* was defined as: a set of interrelated actions undertaken and implemented to ensure balanced sustainable development of the country and social, economic, regional and spatial cohesion, boosting competitiveness and creating new jobs nationally, regionally and locally. *The Act on spatial planning and management does not define the "spatial policy", however it should be emphasized – based on its application, that it is an informed activity of public authorities aimed at using different space features (physical, social and economic) in a way enabling attainment of strategic development objectives and shaping the corresponding of spatial management structures.*

## 2. Main competences of the voivodeship local government in spatial economics

The systemic act *on voivodeship local government* established the voivodeship local government as an entity running the voivodeship development policy across many areas (*cf. the Competence Act: JL of 2013 item 596 as amended*). The voivodeship local government performs voivodeship tasks in spatial development, *e.g.* in particular in:

- spatial management,

<sup>3</sup> JL of 2013 item 596 as amended.

<sup>4</sup> JL of 2006 No. 227, item 1658 as amended.

<sup>5</sup> JL of 2012 item 647 as amended.

- environment protection,
- water management,
- public transport and roads;
- upgrade of rural areas,
- public security and defense.

Such tasks include:

- preparation of draft voivodeship development strategies,
- spatial development plan  
and
- their implementation.

### **3. Mazowieckie voivodeship local government as an entity arranging spatial policy in the voivodeship**

#### **Characteristics of the Mazowieckie voivodeship space.**

When shaping spatial development through implementation of the spatial policy, the specificity of the Mazowieckie voivodeship, its physical characteristics, conditions for development and social and economic potential are predominantly taken into account. The *Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship*<sup>6</sup>:

- **Beneficial characteristics of space – development potential, good starting position for further development – i.e.**
  - *has high economic growth and the highest portion in GDP among voivodeships; it overcomes the development distance to the developed European countries the fastest, and the catalyst is Warsaw metropolis;*
  - *social and economic growth and development, the benefits of the location and economies of scale are used by investors concentrating its activities on Warsaw and its surroundings;*
  - *location in the crossroads of European transport corridors from north to south and from east to west, and a dense network of roads with connections to polycentric national network of growth poles and European regions and poles;*
  - *polycentric character of historically shaped settlement grid;*
  - *unique cultural environment and cultural diversity of inheritance of its historical cities, ethnographic regions and natural and cultural areas;*

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<sup>6</sup> *Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship* (JL of Mazowieckie Voivod of 2014 item 6868).

- valuable resources and characteristics of the natural environment including the Kampinoski National Park – the only one in Europe biosphere reserve in the vicinity of the metropolis;
- developed agricultural specialties of national significance and relatively high commodity character of agricultural production of the Mazowieckie voivodeship with functioning host areas of supraregional importance.
- **but also large spatial diversity**
  - clear intra-regional diversity where there are mostly two types of space: Warsaw metropolis occupying 1% of the voivodeship, where every third inhabitant lives, generating ca. 61% of GDP and agricultural areas covering 2/3 of the voivodeship inhabited by 1/3 of the voivodeship population generating 3% GDP, such spatial structure petrifies the development dichotomy and strengthens the core–peripherals system;
  - **polarization**, being largely an effect of the development dichotomy which is seen across many dimensions as: **demographic, social, economic, transport and infrastructure polarization** – spatial polarization being an effect of economic, transport and infrastructure polarization, also related to the increasing significance of metropolization;
  - convergence with Warsaw is hardly seen (a relative distance to the capital has lessened only in the Warsaw West subregion);
  - dual but natural character of the settlement pattern, typical for areas with dominant supraregional, metropolitan centre, performing national and international functions, where besides the polycentric character of the settlement network, the Warsaw Metropolitan Area was developed, which is a type of an urban region with strong domination of the main center over the poorly developed other towns or cities without developed hierarchical structure of urban centers.
- **and strong barriers to development**
  - poor external and internal transport availability of the Mazowieckie voivodeship;
  - dispersion and spread of buildings, high cost of transport, technical and environmental infrastructure, no spatial order – especially in strongly urbanized areas around Warsaw metropolis and cities;
  - suburbanization, especially on the peripherals of Warsaw features deurbanization, develops outside of cities and has no impact on enhancing the value of urban centers in the metropolitan area [Chmielewski 2011];
  - no spatial continuity of protected areas taking account of the system of ecological corridors and strong urban pressure on those areas;
  - endangering the energy safety of the region;

- *unfavorable demographic trends in extra-metropolitan areas, depopulation and aging of population in consequence of the polarization of the region;*
- *no adaptation of the structural labor resources and labor demand and spatial mismatch of workplaces and residences especially between the Warsaw Metropolitan Area and the external zone;*
- *insufficient opportunities for development of institutions forming social capital and social infrastructure and commercial services in extra-metropolitan areas where development of those institutions depends on the size and value of the settlement center;*
- *insufficient share of deconcentration factors (increased income in extra-metropolitan areas, reducing the commuting time or significant regeneration of settlement centers);*
- *development diffusion from Warsaw metropolis reaches only the areas within 30-40 km from the city center;*
- *regional and subregional centers lose their significance through polarization and metropolization; this also concerns areas already in the immediate vicinity of Warsaw and areas calling for the smallest external intervention;*
- *the impact of regional and subregional centers even if they are still “hubs” within the voivodeship and development balance centers.*

#### **4. Key development dilemma for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship**

Against the general favorable situation of the region, a serious problem is however strong spatial diversity of the social and economic situation and development processes within the voivodeship. In reality, the Mazowieckie Voivodeship forms two different social, economic and functional spaces, namely:

- **Warsaw and the Warsaw Metropolitan Area** – developmentally strong areas with multifunctional structures.
- **extra-metropolitan areas**, including problem areas in the peripherals within the region (making up ca. 60% of the voivodeship area), with the weakness of own, endogenous development factors, which require national and regional intervention.

In the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, we face two basic challenges (regional policy dilemmas) in the *Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship*, hidden in the following questions:

*How to use and boost competitiveness of the region in the national, European and global system?*

*How to reconcile the need to maintain high development rate of Warsaw and the metropolitan area with the need to improve the cohesion of the region and reduce development disparities while maintaining the principles of sustainable development?*

Largely, the dilemma is political, as an alternative to: neoliberalism vs. pro-social option. The former signifies views close to the growth pole theory and a network of metropolitan cities [Strzelecki 2009], and the economic development of regions based on the neoclassical models. According to such concepts, regional development is determined by automatic mechanisms of development and mobility of factors of production and goods and services from the metropolis to peripherals; therefore external intervention in regional development is not necessary, and even undesirable. According to this concept, regional policy should be oriented towards the most effective links of the regional structure and eliminate the mobility barriers of factors of production and goods and services.

The pro-social option is in opposition to neoliberal concepts. Its underlying principles is undermining the automation of development – in particular with respect to mobility mechanisms – and is identified with state interventionism and the welfare state. Therefore it assumes far more active forms of public intervention of regional and spatial policy makers in the development processes. This involves investment in education and infrastructure in lagging areas and creation of incentives for strategic investors and promotion of local activities, in particular conditions for the development of SME.

The Mazowieckie Voivodeship Local Government resolves the dilemma by trying to reconcile both concepts in reliance on “**sustainable development**”. It implements activities addressing both “strong areas” in terms of social and economic development, with multifunctional structures – and extra-metropolitan, peripheral areas, deprived of own endogenous development factors, in which marginalization and social exclusion prevail.

Therefore, the development policy addressed two fundamental objectives: reducing development disparities – involving prevention of marginalization of problem areas and pro-efﬁcacious – involving support of competitiveness and development of regions. Assuming that, in essence, development is always uneven, and the location of social and economic activity benefits from the economies of scale of the already existing development and from the clear concentration trends, **the objective of the development policy, including spatial policy of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, is the effort to reduce intraregional disparities and boost competitiveness of the region, while balancing the efficiency and equality criteria.**

## **5. The development of spatial management – problematic and functional areas of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship**

The concept of minimizing differences within the regions imposes, so to speak, correct determination of problematic and functional areas. In the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, by adopting an integrated approach to the policy of development and

development management, problematic areas were outlined in the *Plan*. The areas are also functional areas and are included in the areas of strategic intervention, outlined in the *Strategy*. Those areas should receive financial support from the regional and national level, and from EU funds.

The areas were delimited on the basis of an analysis of the conditions of development, spatial barriers and conflicts, objectives and possibilities of development, which make the given area “specific”. It was also assumed that a problematic and functional area is a multi-purpose area (having common features), which is specific, but not because of only one feature or element, but because of the specific features and structure of different spatial elements.

In the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, the problematic and functional areas which require strategic intervention are the following: *The areas of the lowest level of social and economic development and with the most limited access to goods and services, with a poor ability to use their own, endogenous developmental factors; where negative phenomena in their social and economic development have accumulated, and with low social and economic potential*. They make up over 60% of the Voivodeship, where over a half of the inhabitants live (*Płocki, Ciechanowski, Ostrołęcki, Siedlecki and Radomski Poviats*).

Taking into account analysis of this specific spatial structure phenomenon and the existence of spatial conflicts, the following areas have been found to *problem and functional areas: Warsaw and the metropolitan area, the area of Plock, the area of the Central Vistula Valley, the area around the Warszawa - Modlin Airport* – “strong” in terms of their social and economic potential with multi-purpose and complex spatial structures, where there is a collision between the individual spatial functions, and the key problem is the disturbed balance in spatial structure.

## **6. From the concept to implementation – a policy of improving the spatial and functional structure of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship**

Pursuant to the *Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, the improvement of the spatial and functional structure of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship* is the direction of the spatial policy. Its objective is to increase the effectiveness of spatial structures (Fig. 1) and to prevent spreading and fragmentation of urbanisation . It will be about introduction of zoning with different types of buildings, as well as functional zones in the settlement nodes of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship.



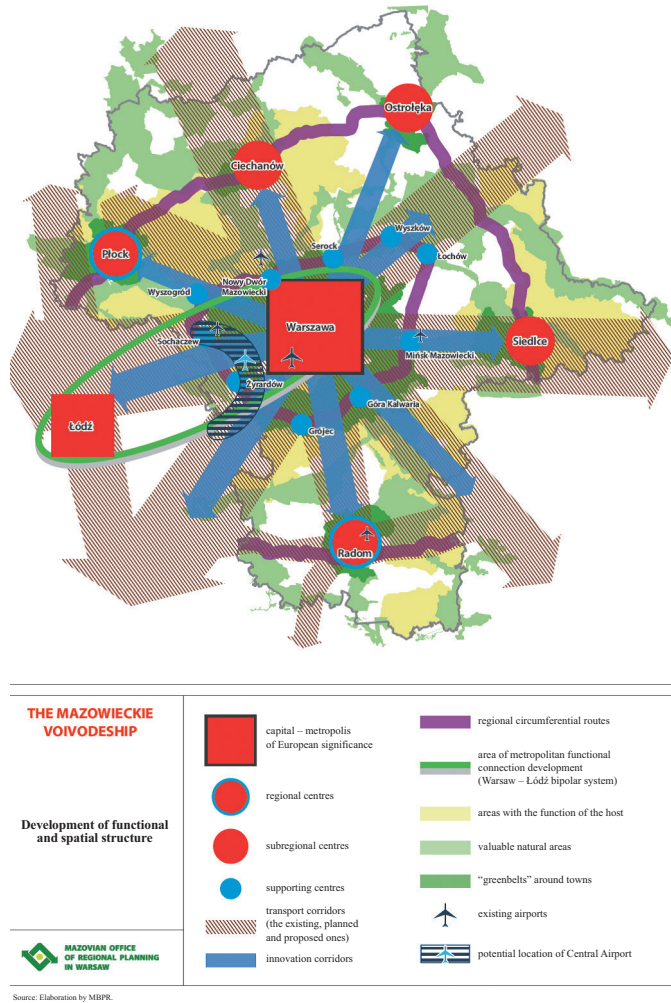


Figure 1. The development of the functional structure of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship

Source: [Plan ... 2014]

This policy includes the measures which are also included in other space related policies, e.g. measures to create a system of protected areas with verification of the spatial development principles which clearly set forth the conditions of permissible investment, measures for the landscape policy which harmoniously arranges and preserves the cultural identity and landscape assets, as well as measures concerning the transport system. This policy was presented in the aggregated manner, in the structure of spatial areas, nodes and links. The development axes include both historical urban

areas delimited along railways and newly developed areas along roads, where rail transport is to be introduced:

- *it is proposed that areas of extensive use between developed axes be preserved as natural areas which should enter city centres in the form of wedges;*
- *in areas with a particularly high risk of flooding, performance of works or activities which make flood protection difficult or which increase the risk of flooding were considered forbidden;*
- *The connection of radial sequence of development axes with an encircling transport system, which would connect the individual connections without a necessity to go to the centre of the area, was indicated as important;*
- *It was pointed out that the entire urban area should be encircled with a green belt which is directly connected to the extensive use areas in the cities (parks, squares, greens, valleys of watercourses);*
- *Preservation of spatial corridors, which are common, if possible (so-called infrastructural corridors) was proposed for linear facilities of transport and energy infrastructure;*
- *It was assumed that the location of energy production facilities should not collide with other functions of the areas; in particular the location of wind farms must not be too bothersome for permanent residential housing, facilities vulnerable to electromagnetic interference, as well as to areas with valuable natural and landscape features.*

Moreover, it was stated that the policy will also be implemented by planning the space of the voivodeship in the following development zones:

- *Filling in gaps in the developed area where planning should be subordinated to functions of residential, commercial, industrial or technical high-density developments and where investments should be first made;*
- *Development of areas, where planning should be subordinated to functions of residential, commercial, industrial or technical medium-density developments and where investments should be made in the second place, after the reserves in the zone, where gaps in the area development are filled in. have been used up;*
- *Preservation of developed areas, where conversion of the existing development is assumed, and new development is limited to environmental protection and flood protection objectives; in this zone, agricultural and forest areas must not be designated to be developed or for any other investment activities;*
- *Exclusions from development, where the expansion of the existing development is minimized and forms of land use limited to environmental protection and flood protection functions (i.a. polders) are preferred; in this zone, it is recommended to introduce a prohibition of erecting new buildings, except for reconstruction of damages caused by fortuitous events.*

*The Plan* also includes introduction of functional restructuring, i.e. creation of functional zones:

- **Central** - multi-purpose administration, service and residential development;
- **Residential**;
- **Natural, climatic and recreational** back areas, creation of green rings and ecological corridors;
- **Industrial and economic development** and areas of high concentration of transport services;
- **Sites of investments** which comply, above other, with the key functions, but sites of other functions than those preferred may also be acceptable – if they do not collide with the key functions;
- **Mandatory mapping out of zones in the Studies of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development (SCDSDs) of communes** including it when granting permits for the change of the function of agricultural areas and forests to non-agricultural and non-forest purposes;
- **Improvement of the quality of transport connections** between Warsaw and other European metropolises, major economic centres in Poland, regional centres, sub-regional centres of the Mazovia region, by using the unifying location of transport corridors; they offer an opportunity to create a strong multi-modal transport hub in the Mazovia region;
- **Creation of a concentric and encircling system**, where the encircling roads should be used to relieve the Warsaw hub, but also to enable effective communication between the major national, regional and sub-regional centres, activating them and creating the cohesion of the voivodship by the construction of: *The Great Mazovia Ring Road*” in the belt of sub-regional centres, the *“Great Warsaw Ring Road”* and Warsaw’s internal ring roads.

## **7. Implementation conditions for the spatial planning system. Planning practice in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship**

The principles of the Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship are transferred to Studies of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development (SCDSDs) of communes through the institutions of applications and agreements. The study of the commune shall be agreed with the Voivodeship, as regards the compliance with the voivodeship’s spatial development plan, in particular in the context of the public purpose investment. Compliance with the Studies of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development (SCDSDs) of communes with the *Spatial Development Plan for the Mazowieckie Voivodeship* was obtained in the majority of the cases and without many problems. It should be noted that, when the Plan came into force, the majority of

the communes in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship had already adopted studies, and no regulation requires the communes to update their studies because of their non-compliance with the voivodeship's plan which was adopted *ex post*. Therefore, the instrument had limited effectiveness, as it is applicable only in the situation, where the communes update their studies on their own initiative (and for different reasons) and only to the extent of changes made, which are very often fragmentary. However, there should be a mechanism which allows the provisions of a new spatial development plan of the Mazowieckie voivodeship or new provisions of an updated plan to be automatically transferred (as part of statutory regulations) to the studies of communes (SCDSDs); the studies of communes should be updated independently of the update of the voivodeship's plan.

Since the adoption of the Plan, the Board of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship challenged drafts of Studies of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development (SCDSDs) of communes with the Spatial Development only a few times, due to:

- A failure to include the provisions of the voivodeship's plan to implement the Route of Olszynka Grochowska as the suggested high-class corridor;
- A failure to include the provisions of the policy of improvement of the effectiveness of spatial structures in the Warsaw conurbation and of the policy of improvement of the natural environment.

Therefore, these failures pertained not only to public purpose investments of supra-regional importance, which lead to the inclusion of the land reserve and triggering the compensation obligation, but also other provisions of the *Plan*, as regards spatial policies that delimit functional zones which should be included in the communes' studies (SCDSDs). The position of the Board of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship on these matters was upheld by the Local Self-Government Board of Appeals (SKO).

## **8. Instead of applications. Proposals of solutions - recommendations on the key challenges for spatial management of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship**

From the perspective of the Mazowieckie Voivodeship experience, the following conclusions concerning system changes in spatial management are recommended in the Plan:

- *To include a system of values based on sustainability and balanced development in spatial management;*
- *To include both the individual interest and the public interest in spatial development; this means that the ownership title should not mean the right to develop the*

*land and the freedom of construction in some locations must be restricted for the benefit of public purpose investments;*

- *To revoke special acts providing for determining the site by way of individual administrative decisions which are not connected with spatial planning acts; participation of other special policy entities is limited only to giving opinions and a very limited participation of the society which comes down to the participation of the parties; the special acts limit or even abolish the spatial planning system, strengthening chaos and spatial decomposition and weaken the powers of the local self-government for the benefit of the government administration;*
- *The effectiveness of spatial planning will depend on the fact, to what extent the possibilities to reserve land for investment undertakings to be completed in distant future will be created; it will be possible to meet this condition, if the provisions of the voivodship's plan will provide a sufficient basis for restricting the planning freedom of the commune, as regards transformation of the spatial structure; another condition for this effectiveness must be strict compliance with the principle, according to which building permits may be, as a rule, granted only on the basis of the provisions of local spatial development plans and that a lack of a local plan must not be treated by real estate owners as a ground for obtaining compensation for lost profits.*
- *The site of public purpose investments of supra-local nature requires adequate material and financial programming, which cannot be replaced with the provisions of the voivodship plan, while adhering to the principle of compliance of development programmes with spatial policy acts;*
- *To apply the hierarchy of the individual planning documents and it should be mandatory to move arrangements concerning public purpose investments and provisions on spatial policies of one level to lower levels; also, in order to ensure the effectiveness of coordination in vertical relations, the existing cohesion relationships between spatial policy acts at its levels should be maintained, and the principle, according to which, any change of the national concept will result in the need to change the voivodeship plan and any change of the voivodship's Plan – the need to change the commune study;*
- *The effectiveness of planning may be achieved through introduction of binding provisions from the voivodeship plan to the level of communes which should respect them in their planning and decision-making processes;*
- *To introduce use zones to voivodeship plans, i.e. filling in gaps in the developed land, development of buildings, maintenance of buildings, exclusion from development, restricting and ordering uncontrolled growth of land for construction purposes;*
- *To introduce mechanisms and tools for the implementation of the urban policy and, as regards institutional solutions, to create the self-government of the voivodeship*

*as an entity responsible for the implementation of the urban and metropolitan policy in its area;*

- *To restore problem areas which were replaced with functional areas; these are two different categories both in the cognitive meaning and the context of implementation of the development policy, including the spatial policy; functional areas have diagnostic and descriptive features, while problem areas are places where an active regional policy is carried out; of course, selected functional areas may be problem areas for certain processes and phenomena and, therefore, both categories should be kept;*
- *To limit preparation of plans for selected functional areas which already have relevant documents that determine the manner of their development and management;*
- *To implement the Landscape Convention through valorisation of landscapes at all planning levels;*
- *To introduce prohibition of development in communes' studies (SCDSDs) and local spatial management plans on floodlands of rivers on the basis of flood risk maps;*
- *Spatial management also requires construction of rational economic mechanisms; this applies to reconstruction of the tax system as regards real property; it must be based on market mechanisms related to the value of the real property and not its surface area; without an ad valorem tax system, the game of real property developers and users of the space for adopting collectively or speculatively generated building rent will "blast out" any planning system;*
- *To create an economic system that ensures smooth operation of the technical infrastructure which must take place on in line with feedback principles; to refrain from introducing market mechanisms with a growing urbanization pressure will upset spatial management even more; spatial management must introduce rationality of allocation of investment and land use and this means that location rent that results from public investment and collective developmental effort of all entities, which are active in the space, must be applied.*

This is the list of fundamental actions which must be taken in order to rationally shape spatial management, spatial development and creation of spatial structures. These activities are absolutely feasible but they must be based on values the society understands and accepts, and they cannot be only the game of real property developers and benefits of locations "outside the plan", which are greater for an individual investor than for the public purpose in the short-term. The spatial development should not resemble the Argentinian loan system: the first ones win – the next less and less and finally, the whole system goes bankrupt.

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