

Czasopismo naukowe o problemach współczesnego zarządzania



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dr hab. prof. AHE Zenon Ślusarczyk

dr inż. Jerzy Janczewski

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Radosław Kamiński*, Anna Janus**

The process of creating the Revitalization Program as an example of management in local government in Poland

General assumptions

First it should be noted that strategic management in local government as a modern form of management has been implemented relatively recently. It is a modern organizational management system of an entity which can independently set itself long-term goals and has the ability to self-study and interact with the environment. Significant differences between the types of such organizations, in particular between their subsystems of goals and values, and the different nature of their interaction with their environment justify the distinction of strategic public management. According to legal regulations and legal restrictions, local government has a certain amount of freedom in deciding about itself and the course of its development. Taking into account the degree of economic advancement in building market relations and in socio-economic development, it can be said that local communities in Poland are very diverse. Beside developed areas, there are also poor, economically underdeveloped regions. New public management concepts set new goals for public administration. It no longer has to focus on routine 'administration' identified with current problem-solving, but is supposed to undertake activities aimed at the future. The managerial management model developed in the private sector should be adopted. In other words, local government administration should focus on management effectiveness and efficiency and above all on building a competitive advantage for a particular local government unit, which results in its development and improvement of living

* Dr Radosław Kamiński, adiunkt w Instytucie Ekonomii – Wydział Finansów i Zarządzania Wyższej Szkoły Bankowej we Wrocławiu.

** Dr Anna Janus, adiunkt w Instytucie Ekonomii – Wydział Finansów i Zarządzania Wyższej Szkoły Bankowej we Wrocławiu.

conditions for its inhabitants. Undoubtedly strategic management provides such effects (Fleszer, 2013: 161).

Strategy was originally associated with the art of warfare. The word is derived from Greek, meaning ‘command’, ‘chief command,’ ‘war art’, ‘preparing the war as a whole, and its major operations and campaigns.’ The word *strategos* was made up of two other words: *stratos* and *agein*, where *stratos* signified an army, while *agein* was the leadership. *Strategos* or *Strategus* was the person who led the army and created the plan of fighting. The Greeks believed that the strategist was a man who was given power, and citizens were entrusted to him. Due to their responsibilities strategists were chosen publicly. The strategy is actually a series of questions about the individual’s environment, state, vision, goals, and actions at the time. The strategy is the result of the free choice of decision makers or the intelligent consideration of constraints inherent in the environment. The strategy is created and implemented in a formal way using analytical techniques, or it is worked out through trial and error, subsequent approximations, constraints, conflict resolution, and a gradual search for the sense of organizational destiny. The strategy might be based on analysis of the environment, such as the assessment of the competitive situation in the organization’s environment, suppliers’ pressure, substitute products, or on the internal analysis of the organization, its strengths and weaknesses and the aspirations of its employees. Thus, strategic management is a conscious, fact-driven development of the organization that takes into account the prospect of taking opportunities and avoiding risks that may arise in the implementation process (Fleszer, 2013: 163–164). Strategic management in the lowest local government (*gmina* or local government unit in general) has many opponents but also supporters. It is certain that it introduces a certain order and systematization into the framework of goal implementation, while planning the acquisition of external funds. Strategies for the development of the higher or lower tier are often not implemented or their roles are not fully understood in the implementation of activities at the local level.

Revitalization as an element of strategic management in Polish local government (*gmina*)

A local self-government unit acts as an institution representing the local community. In the search for the roots of the formation of self-governmental mechanisms in local communities, many scholars referred to man’s natural pursuit for freedom. The naturalistic theory of self-government supplementation was a social theory, emphasizing the human herd instinct (Piasecki, 2009: 20). Relationships in local government are based on institutional bonds characterized by openness, flexibility, and a large diversity of the strength of these relationships, depending on:

- the degree of involvement in the functioning of the system;
- interest in the decision-making process and its results;

- significant relationships with other participants in the organization (Gawroński, 2010: 23).

Strategic planning is an important element of governance, and it has important functions, particularly in decision-making. Self-government is an organization – this otherwise obvious assertion produces a number of significant implications. The most important of these is the need to account for its functioning from the perspective of the science of management. With regard to this characteristic of local self-government, two different terms can be encountered: ‘self-government management’ and ‘management of self-government’. The term ‘management of self-government’ is more appropriate. That is because local government as an organization is governed by the process, while the concept of ‘local government’ may suggest that local government manages individual processes, but governance itself is not subject to what is seemingly at odds with superficial governance. I look at the complex social, legal and political reality of self-government because the essence of management is the process of creating decisive relationships with other participants in the organization (Kieżun, 1997: 228).

Revitalization as an element of strategic management in Polish self-government (*gmina*)

A system approach to revitalization has been implemented since 1992 when work commenced on ‘urban renewal’. There was enormous interest among local communities in the introduction of the revitalization law, and it was possible to talk about local communities as being involved in the project.

Since 1998 the Association of the Revitalization Forum has supported systemic methods of stimulating the regeneration of cities. In the pre-accession period urban revitalization projects used the URBAN Community Initiative. Since 2004, EU Structural Funds have been raised for the purpose of urban regeneration, and the financial support for the Local Revitalization Program (LPR) was possible thanks to the IROP program for the years 2004–2006 (see sub-section 3.3.2 ‘Revitalization of industrial and post-military areas’). The program has used the principle of sustainable development (Strzelecka, 2011: 661–668). What is revitalization? According to the definitions given in its related documents, the Latin word *re + vita* is referred to literally as ‘restoration’ or ‘revival.’ Its own concept and assumptions originated in the United States, where public authorities have been working together with the private sector. The purpose of such activities was to activate various areas of the city. In later years, revitalization was mainly concerned with the renovation and renewal of individual areas so that they would contribute to social and cultural activation. At present, revitalization is understood unambiguously as a process of bringing degraded areas out of a crisis state. It is conducted in a comprehensive way, through integrated actions for the local community, space and economy. It is also territorially concentrated and con-

ducted by revitalization stakeholders, based on the municipal revitalization program. Within this concept, a number of activities are undertaken, which result in broadly defined activation of the area, while giving it a strategic function. The concept of revitalization originates in the United States, where at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century the local authorities cooperated with the private sector. The evolution of the concept of revitalization, first and foremost in Europe, consists in a steady progress both in infrastructure and in society. This was reflected in such activities as the slow involvement in the revitalization of the private sector, the emphasis in revitalization of social objectives. The concept of revitalization has evolved, today to be defined as: "a comprehensive process of the renewal of an urbanized area whose space, functions, and a substance experience a structural degradation inducing the state of a crisis, making impossible or strongly hindering the proper social and economic development of an area as well as the sustainable development of an entire city. Therefore, the revitalization is a response to the state of the crisis of an urban area and includes the set of thorough actions, coordinated and managed by a public sector (mainly local governments), based on the active cooperation of political-administrative institutions and social entities." (Billert, 2004: 6, cf. Rogatka, 2011a, 2011b). Over time, the concept of revitalization has been evaluated. Today it refers, among other things, to cultural values, places or monuments. One of the definitions is: 'Revitalization is a complex process of social, economic, spatial and technical change to restore the most degraded areas.' It should be understood that this revitalization is not a typical refurbishment or modernization. This is a much broader concept. It is a set of actions that will give the area of your choice (e.g. district, post-industrial areas, military barracks, etc.) attributes and usage that will allow it to perform new functions. Of course, renovations, redevelopments, upgrades and various adaptations can be part of revitalization. In the first stage, revitalization was supported under the Integrated Regional Development Operational Program, support was directed to both rural and urban areas. In the subsequent periods (2007–2013 and 2014–2020) the possibility of revitalization was recorded in the Regional Operational Programs. The revitalization law (Ustawa z dnia 9 października 2015 r. o rewitalizacji) entered into force in 2015 and was a response to the long-standing expectations of revitalization supporters. The groups who waited for the most complex legal solutions were: active local self-governments, specialists in the processes of revitalization and urbanization experts and the experts of revitalization. Formally, it also set out the legal status in the area of activities undertaken to revitalize degraded areas. The statutory definition of revitalization is as follows: 'Revitalization is the process of restoring degraded areas, conducted in a comprehensive way, through integrated actions for the local community, space and economy. It is territorially focused, revitalized by the stakeholders on the basis of the municipal revitalization program [*Ustawa o rewitalizacji. Praktyczny komentarz*, 2016 (*Revitalization Law: Practical commentary*)].

The revitalization program should cover the most degraded areas. The municipality has three possibilities for revitalization. The first based on the laws and ministerial

guidelines through the Local Revitalization Program (LRP). The second based on ministerial guidelines through Local Revitalization Programs (LPR). The third way is the Revitalization Program (PR) (*Ustawa o rewitalizacji. Praktyczny komentarz*, 2016) under the Local Government Act. The latter method enables the financing of the implementation of the project from the community budget and private means. There is no possibility of obtaining external funds, e.g. from the EU and national. The tools that have been proposed for the revitalization also do not exclude subsequent implementation. The implementation of the revitalization processes mentioned for the first time by the law provides the opportunity to launch integrated actions to stop the negative phenomena that occur in the area designated for revitalization. These activities are very broad in the realm of economics, space, society and nature. The law provides the basic tools needed for revitalization by the municipality, whose task is to prepare, coordinate and create conditions for revitalization. Municipalities, using the provisions of the Act, can use efficient revitalization tools and a ready scenario to ensure that all the key factors needed to succeed, such as territorial concentration, social, spatial, etc. aspects are taken into account. Revitalization, as the local government's own action, provides many opportunities for the creation of the Program itself, nevertheless it indicates that they should always address crisis areas – those affected by the highest levels of social, economic, technical, functional and natural problems. The Act considers degraded areas those areas where there is a concentration of negative social phenomena such as unemployment, poverty, crime, low levels of education, and additionally negative economic, environmental, spatial-functional or technical phenomena. A revitalization area is an area which, in part or as a whole, is characterized by a special concentration of negative phenomena and is prepared for revitalization or being revitalized due to its importance for the development of the municipality. The law restricts the scope of the revitalization area, assuming that it cannot cover more than 20% of the municipality area and be inhabited by more than 30% of the municipality population, however it can be subdivided into sub areas. For the revitalization area it is necessary to develop a municipal revitalization program, which is the basis for applying the revitalization special legal solutions in the area – Special Zone of Revitalization and local revitalization plan. The municipal revitalization program is adopted by the council of the municipality in the form of a resolution binding the community authorities. It contains a detailed analysis of the revitalization area, the revitalization objectives and the corresponding course of action, the list of planned major revitalization projects and the financial framework of the program, together with an indication for the revitalization funding sources under a non-GPR program. It includes resolutions on the degraded area and revitalization area, special revitalization zone, local revitalization plan (*Ustawa o rewitalizacji. Praktyczny komentarz*, 2016).

Social participation in management and implementation of revitalization

Participation is a concept which, due to its intrinsic link with the notion of democratic rule of law, social dialogue and civil society, has come within the notions of modern administrative law and science. According to art. 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, dated April 2, 1997, the Republic of Poland is a democratic legal state that implements the principles of social justice (Niznik-Dobosz, 2014: 21). Revitalization, which is essentially a public task, is carried out not only by public entities, but by stakeholders. Stakeholders should be understood as inhabitants of the revitalization area, owners and users of real estate, housing cooperatives, housing communities, entities conducting and intending to conduct economic activity, non-governmental organizations, informal groups, local government units and their organizational units, public authorities and entities other than those mentioned, and acting in the revitalization area of the State Treasury. An open list of stakeholders indicates that they are in particular:

- inhabitants of the revitalization area as well as owners, users of real estate agents and property managers located in the area, including housing cooperatives, housing societies and social housing societies;
- other inhabitants of the municipality, not living in the revitalization area;
- entities carrying out or intending to carry on business in the municipality area;
- entities conducting or intending to conduct social activities in the municipality area, including non-governmental organizations and informal groups;
- local government units and their organizational units;
- public authorities;
- entities other than public authorities the Treasury acting in the area of revitalization (e.g. Treasury companies performing infrastructure investments, Military Property Agency) (*Ustawa o rewitalizacji. Praktyczny komentarz*, 2016).

Most often, the process of participation is equated with social participation and includes social consultations and the eliciting of citizens' opinions. Consultations are not a transfer of power to citizens (Pudełko, 2015: 89–103). The law provides for the obligation to conduct the public consultations in the course of proceedings of acts adopted on the basis of its provisions, i.e. resolutions on the designation of the degraded area and the revitalization area and the municipal revitalization program. Social consultations are also preceded by the adoption of a resolution setting out the rules for the composition and principles for the Committee of Revitalization. At the same time, minimum requirements for notification have been introduced, stating that this should be done at least in the form of a notice, such as announcements customarily adopted in the municipality, announcements on the subject site or in the Public Information Bulletin. Notice is, in principle, the form of service used in administrative proceedings, governed by Art. 49 of the Code of Administrative Procedure. However, it is increasingly used also in the law-making process of local self-government. Essential

elements of the provision are regulations on how to conduct consultations (in other words: forms of their conduct). The collection of comments in paper or electronic form, including means of electronic communication, in particular electronic mail or forms posted on the municipality's website in the Public Information Bulletin, constitutes a basic form of conducting public consultations. Complementary forms that must be used for at least twice are: meetings, debates, workshops, study walks, surveys, interviews, the use of representative groups, or oral feedback. The law does not specify what constitutes public consultation in the aforementioned. Forms, methodological guidelines on how to conduct them can be found in numerous publications on social participation. In practice, implementation of GPR or LPR procedures is permanently inscribed in the implementation of each stage in some form of participation. In fact, the local government units that undertake the GPR or LPR process are very honest about this part of implementation. It is often accompanied by additional initiatives such as competitions for young people or children, specific topics (e.g. spatial planning, social projects). Everything is devoted to the widest possible range of stakeholders being introduced into the issue of revitalization, and as many people as possible have an active stake in it. Some communities are struggling with low attendance and show little interest in the local issues. The tools used to diagnose problems and their solutions are public consultations, whereby local government determines needs and local initiatives.

The revitalization law entered into force at a specific moment at which many municipalities have for years been carrying out activities, to a greater or lesser degree, within the definition of revitalization. Why is revitalization the responsibility of the municipality, not the government? The municipality, as the unit of local government, is the closest to the inhabitants and best informed of their problems. It benefits from the presumption of jurisdiction in public matters of local importance. In public policy management by public authorities, nowadays, the methods of governance fade away, promoting a strategy of governance with stakeholder involvement. This approach is laid down in the law as compulsory for the municipality. The decision was necessary because of the nature of the revitalization process that needs to be implemented in close consultation with stakeholders, by participatory methods rather than authoritarian methods. It is also worth noting the benefits of social participation such as the compensation of knowledge deficits by public authorities, or the ability of the municipality to coordinate the activities of many actors, instead of directing all processes. Each municipality carries out its basic purpose of development, which constitutes qualitative and quantitative transformations of the area. Local development is the process of change in a given local system, taking into account the specific needs, preferences and hierarchy of importance. Communities in Poland are very diverse, considering the degree of their economic advancement in building market relations or social and economic development. In addition to the highly developed areas, there are also poor, economically underdeveloped regions. Currently, the research on gov-

ernance, competitiveness and local development is increasingly important. The local government's management of the municipality is supposed to ensure the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of public sector organizations.

Conclusion

Polish self-government is constantly in the process of change. Decentralization has allowed for a management system that takes into account the needs of local communities. The idea of co-participation in decision-making imposes many legal and social responsibilities on government officials. This is why we can talk more and more about the emergence of civil society and the increasingly effective local self-government in Poland. The role of governmental and local government bodies in the management and implementation of public tasks and the interrelationships between them are constantly changing. Public management means a certain departure from impersonal procedures, and exchanges them for decentralization and decision autonomy. Community management is understood as the knowledge and ability to control resources (human, financial, spatial, technical and natural) and development processes in order to optimize their use to achieve their intended purpose. Including, at every stage of self-government, development opportunities given by strategic management allows for harmonious and successful development of Polish self-government.

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Summary

The process of creating the Revitalization Program as an example of management in local government in Poland

The revitalization program builds on a complex legal process, but also on the basis of a broad participatory process. Revitalization is an example of implementing management procedures at local government level. Public management includes the implementation of public services or the organization of their provision, combined with the administering and use of public resources. The category of public management is increasingly used by researchers in the field of administration and management, regional development and public finance management. The aim of this article is to characterize the process of creating a revitalization program as an example of management in local government in Poland.

Keywords: management, strategy, revitalization, local government, participation

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie, strategia, rewitalizacja, samorząd lokalny, partycypacja