

Inventory

Participatory Urban Planning

METROPOLIA KRAKOWSKA CURRENT LOCAL PRACTICE

What methods can we use for citizen-participation in urban planning?
How are citizens invited to participate? To what extent will their input be influential?
Questions such as these are at the core for the rest of the inventory.

Introduction

According to Poland's National Spatial Development Concept 2030 [KPZK 2030]¹, the principle of public participation (broad and active) is one of the three national spatial policy principles which guarantee the integrity of development. Public participation provides an assurance of legitimate and transparent space management and planning procedures. Public activity is necessary when formulating local strategies, policies and laws. An increased public participation means also the partnership and co-responsibility of entities implementing development policy (KPZK 2030, p. 68).

1. Who is the responsible authority (governmental level) for involving the citizens in participatory urban planning?

Public participation in Poland is required by planning legislation, but in practice it means – in the best case – debating about projects prepared by professionals at the final stages of decision-making when major changes are nearly impossible to make. Solutions are usually imposed on the local community without much understanding of its characteristic needs and expectations.

The obligation to more inclusive and earlier participation is devised in the National Urban Development Policy 2023 [KPM 2023]. Additional participatory consultations can and should be initiated by both the municipal constituting body (a council), as well as the executive local government (the head of a municipality {a mayor}, elected by the public – *wójt* in the countryside, *burmistrz* in the town, or *prezydent* in the city).

The scope of participation at the local level should be sanctioned in the municipal strategies. Some municipalities also adopt the Canon of Local Public Consultations [CLPC] (FISE, 2013) that was developed within the framework of the cross-sectoral project "Decydujemy Razem".²

According to CLPC, the possibility of submitting a request for consultations should be created for groups of residents, their representatives and advisory bodies. Such a possibility might be embedded in the *Rules of Local Community Consultation* – a local law, such as an ordinance of the mayor or, preferably, a resolution of the municipal council that gives shape to community consultations, translating the basic principles of public participation into the language of specific legal provisions.

¹KPZK 2030 (National Spatial Development Concept 2030) is the most important document concerning the spatial order of Poland. The English version of the document called NSDC 2030 (National Spatial Development Concept 2030) is accessible online: http://www.espon-usespon.eu/dane/web_usespon_library_files/682/national_spatial_development_concept_2030.pdf (Accessed: 4-03-2019)

²The Canon was created by a task force consisting of NGO representatives, municipalities, associations of local and county governments, academics, Ministry of Infrastructure and Development officers, and the Ministry of Administration and ICT officers). The document is an attempt to define basic standards, indicate key principles and specify the rules that should be implemented and respected by the hosts and organizers of community consultations at the local (municipal) level. The canon is not so much a textbook but rather a signpost and an attempt to convey a certain vision of work within local communities. It shows community consultations as a natural and logical form of dialogue, which, when properly conducted, brings understandable and tangible benefits. See: <https://kanonkonsultacji.fise.org.pl/jak-powstawal-kanon/> (Accessed: March 2, 2019)

We conducted a brief survey among Krakow Metropolis Association [SMK] stakeholders who contributed to the development of the participatory approach to urban planning in our region. Here are some of their opinions:

- Regarding the present regulations, there is no authority indicated as responsible for public involvement in the urban planning process, just as there is no normative way to measure that involvement. Legal regulations only indicate the authorities responsible for creating planning documents in local and regional governments, obliging them to: 1) allow interested parties to submit applications and comments; 2) present drafts of plans for public inspection; 3) consider comments submitted after the presentation. The organ that creates the plan should be responsible for involving the citizens in participation, but the need to act for increased involvement is not often noticed among the authorities (architect, academic).
- The legal regulations on public participation in urban planning are not precise. Therefore, they are not fully implemented in planning procedure. Perhaps this is also due to the lack of understanding and limited experience of the authorities on various levels on what is the value and role of participation. The belief that only experts can make accurate decisions and prepare good plans also plays a certain role (academic, transportation planner).
- Contrary to various declarations, spatial planning in Poland is not treated as an instrument supporting development processes. This applies to central, regional, and local authorities. Planning is treated as a limitation for free decision-making in economic matters. Hence, the lack of interest in the process of creating plans in general, and particularly the inclusion of citizens in spatial planning (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- A very important factor is the lack of awareness and knowledge in the field of urban design and planning. In participatory processes, a greater emphasis should be placed on providing information and convincing participants to create solutions beneficial for the public good instead of particularisms and short-term effects (urban management expert).
- The authorities who prepare the plan should exercise due diligence in involving citizens in participatory planning in the scope that goes beyond the provisions of the 2003 Planning and Spatial Development Act [UPZP]. They should do this by engaging the potential of non-governmental organizations (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).

2. Do external organizations (NGOs) or others play an important role in developing the tools for the involvement of citizens in urban planning?

After decades of dynamic but also chaotic development, planning systems in Poland require consistent and long-term remedial actions. However, without raising the awareness and involvement of residents in the activities of local and regional governments, the remedy will not bring the expected results.

NGOs and independent, external experts play a fundamental role in developing the tools for the involvement of citizens in urban planning in Poland, including our region. For decades, they animated local communities, undertook numerous local initiatives, and supported local authorities in establishing a dialogue around places and planning documents; developed and popularized placemaking, participatory methods and instruments for communication and constructive debate; and networked local authorities with experts in planning, urbanism, landscape, architecture, and social sciences. Some of the NGOs built enough capacity to export their knowledge and experience further to developing countries (Jeleński, 2019).

In 2016, an extensive governmental programme of spatial planning consultations in communes across Poland was started. Any commune which initiated a project of creation or amendment of a strategic spatial plan [SUIKZP] or a land use plan [MPZP] could participate in the programme. 177 communes have taken part until now (March 2019), including 11 from the region of Małopolska i.e.: Kościelisko, Liszki, Michałowice, Mucharz, Proszowice, Ryglice, Skala, Stryszów, Sułoszów, Szczucin, and Szczurowa; two of them: Liszki and Michałowice being parts of the Kraków Functional Area [KrOF]. Each of the communes was supported by two advisers in urban planning and participation, and provided with funds for the application of a package of chosen participatory techniques.

It was required that every participating commune would prepare an Individual Consultation Plan consisting of at least three public consultation techniques, including web-based and interactive ones. The communes received sufficient funds to finance the package of techniques, hire local experts and moderators as well as design, print, and distribute locally addressed educational and information materials.

The programme is financed by the European Social Fund (ESF POWER 2014–2020) and operated by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development. It is run by several commissioned NGOs (including FRDL, Stocznia, and the Centre of Strategic Consulting) who proved to be the education leaders for sustainable urban development and the facilitation of participatory planning in Poland. The second round of the programme started recently (February 2019). KPM 2023 states that in total 500 communes in Poland are going to be supported by the programme (KPM2023, p.32).

Have you collaborated with external organizations (NGOs or others) in creating participation methods for the region or municipalities?

Until now, the Kraków Metropolis Association [SMK] did not undertake activities in the field of urban planning as such. The only public consultations of planning documents that were carried out as a part of the Association's activity concerned the Integrated Territorial Investment [ZIT] Strategy. The participants of the consultations represented the three main local stakeholders' groups, i.e. the public, non-governmental and private sectors (the so-called "cooperation triangle"). Due to the thematic scope of the consulted Strategy, the majority of the participants were the communes' councillors and village headmen.

However, members of the SMK report the need to include the Association in the discussion on urban planning, noting that this topic raises many challenges and problems that cannot be solved only within the administrative boundaries of communes. The ongoing urban planning processes and effective spatial and investment planning require a broader perspective of the entire Kraków Functional Area [KrOF]. This is especially important in the border areas between the metropolitan city and the adjacent communes.

The SMK office suggests the form of its involvement, for example, by the initiation and coordination of cooperation between local governments, especially in the context of urban planning of the border areas; creating a database for decision-making; and moderating discussion on the localisation of investment of metropolitan character. Considering those areas of coordination, we think it would be needed to develop standards for public consultations for the entire KrOF.

Each of the municipalities constituting KrOF has different experience and practices in participatory planning. Particularly Kraków engages the local community quite strongly which is visible on the website of the Kraków Department of Spatial Planning (<https://www.bip.krakow.pl/?id=412>). We would like to base our activities on such experiences and use the potential of NGOs who have been the leaders of participatory techniques developed in Poland since the 1990s.

We also asked our stakeholders if they collaborated with NGOs in creating participation methods for the region or municipalities. Here are some of their answers:

- Non-governmental organizations (in cooperation with the authority elaborating the plan) are key partners in this process. Currently, only their involvement can ensure effective and credible social participation in urban planning (urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Since the authorities often fail to undertake such tasks on their own initiative, the activities of non-governmental organizations are particularly useful (landscape planner, academic).

3. Does the regional level have a territorial land-use / development plan?

The spatial planning system in Poland consists of three tiers of plans: National [KPZK 2030], Regional [PZPW] and Local [MPZP]. However, those tiers do not constitute a comprehensive and integrated mechanism.

One of the objectives of the country's spatial development policy is the restoration of spatial orderlies. KPZK 2030 emphasizes that spatial planning should be one of the most important instruments for building territorial cohesion. It is necessary to restore an efficient system of spatial planning on all its levels, as the basic instrument of spatial policy of public authorities, including regional planning covering the entire region, and its functional areas, in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and coordination. A new form of sub-regional Metropolitan Plan was also introduced recently as a part of a PZPW.

The progressive process of rapprochement between cities and neighbouring communes needs a more active cooperation with local governments and the need for a new approach to spatial planning. It is associated with a concept of functional areas and expressed in the new approach to development policy and particularly regional policy. This concept brings a shift from a number of sectoral policies to an integrated territorial policy.³

The Spatial Plan for the Małopolska Region [PZPWM], along with the Regional Development Strategy, should be the key management tool in the region. The PZPWM formulates requirements, limitations or recommendations in relation to the local governments (municipalities).

PZPWM has an important informational and promotional function – it synthetically gathers the whole range of conditions, development goals, area policies and key undertakings included in public investments. In this sense, it is an expression of the system of values (in such spheres as ecology or heritage protection) recognized by a democratically-elected representation of a regional government (Urząd Marszałkowski) and a record of the declared vision of development (PZPWM 2018, p.9-10).

In the Polish planning practice, the Regional Plan was often more a record of the desired state than the assessment of trends and formula for development policies. Thus, the static approach dominated. In integrated design, where the regional spatial plan is a part of the regional development strategy, such a static approach would be completely ineffective.

The way of formulating the new Spatial Plan for the Małopolska Region [PZPWM 2018] results from the belief that the integrated approach to regional development management is needed, such as the fusion of spatial planning regulations with the regional development strategy.

However, the PZPWM functions in a longer time span than the Regional Strategy. For the Strategy it is approximately 10 years, while the Spatial Plan should be at least 15-20 years. Thus, the Strategy concentrates on too short a time span to influence actual spatial development. The Plan focuses on processes of long cycles and generates long-term – often irreversible – spatial, environmental, social and economic effects. Thus, the Regional Plan needs to maintain a certain coherence and substantive autonomy, covering only those issues for which the spatial aspect is of key importance (PZPWM, 2018, p.10).

The Spatial Plan for the Małopolska Region [PZPWM] was updated in 2018. It includes several recommendations for Local Spatial Plans [MPZPs], such as:

- Adjusting the designation of new development areas to real demand and investment capabilities;
- Designation of new sites for development through intensifying the development of already urbanised areas, in the proximity of existing and planned stops of the Agglomeration Railway, with concern for accessibility to attractive public spaces and green areas;
- Establishing rules for maintaining the continuity of ecological corridors, when designating new investment sites, to maintain or ensure the continuity of those corridors;
- Protection of the valuable nature resources of the Kraków Metropolitan Area [KOM] and development of a coherent system of protection of green areas, in conjunction with protected areas outside KOM.

These recommendations cannot be practically implemented without a major revision of national legislation and close cooperation between the communes of KOM.

Working on this Inventory, we asked a number of experts and NGO activists about the current and future role of the regional spatial plan. Here are a few of their responses:

- Spatial plans operate in each Polish region. The institution of the plan is in principle just, as well as its statutory "extension" (introduced in 2015) of mandatory landscape audits. However, the regional plan is practically unknown for the general public and formally under-defined. The lack of effective coordination of spatial planning between the municipalities is a great weakness in

³This is one of the pillars of the development policy in Poland, introduced by the National Strategy for Regional Development: Regions, Cities, Rural Areas 2020 [KSRR] and, above all, the National Spatial Development Concept 2030 [KPZK 2030].

the system. In this context, the discussion on non-existing sub-regional plans in Poland rightly emphasizes the need to introduce such an instrument as an intermediate level between regional and local planning. However, considering the realities of the Polish planning system and its many weaknesses, thinking about sub-regional plans is currently a utopia (architect, academic).

- The current PZPW 2018 is more legible and clearly described when compared to the previous plan. The Kraków Metropolitan Area [KOM] is included in the regional plan, but only the external linkages between KOM and the rest of the region are described, and not so much the internal specificity of KOM (academic and planner).
- In my opinion, our region has a very good plan, at the highest level of expertise. But does it influence the local plans, except for some legally required arrangements? (international level urban management expert).

Participatory Urban Planning on the sub-regional, metropolitan level of KrOF

According to the 2003 Planning and Spatial Development Act [UPZP], the spatial plan for the functional area of the regional capital city should to be adopted as part of the spatial plan of the region [PZPW]. It means that the Krakow Functional Area should have its spatial plan. However, the Act [UPZP] specifies neither the scope of the spatial plan for a functional area nor the entity responsible for its resolution.

The delimitation of the Krakow Metropolitan Area [KOM] is included in the PZPWM 2018. It consists of 27 communes (PZPWM, p. 112). Thus, it is an area much larger than the actual Krakow Functional Area [KrOF] which consists of 15 communes that have formed the Krakow Metropolitan Association and currently implement the Integrated Territorial Investments [ITI].

KrOF communes report the need for real spatial integration. Currently, the planning documents [SUIKZP, MPZP] of neighbouring communes do not match. Such inconsistency destroys the spatial and infrastructural continuity of the Functional Area. The regional plan alone, even with KOM as its part, due to their scale of values and maps, thematic scope and overall generality, does not guarantee the spatial integrity of KrOF.

Krakow Metropolitan Association [SMK] does not currently have sufficient competence and capacity to formulate a coherent and integrated spatial plan for KrOF. However, SMK works on creating sectoral planning documents, starting particularly from the area of transportation and mobility:

- Public Transport Integration Concept [KIT] - based on bus lines
- KrOF Cycling Development Concept: integration of regional and local investments with bicycle infrastructure standards
- Recommendations for P&R in KrOF
- Standards for public transportation stops and their surroundings (in development)

as well as the KrOF Transportation Management Model (in development).

Working on those documents may be considered, in some respects, a laboratory of participatory cooperation where SMK initiates and facilitates the dialogue between 15 communes, provides expertise, moderates further discussion and elaborates final documents.

Working in its capacity as a facilitator of sub-regional participatory governance, SMK should continue its mission to implement the spatial policy formulated in PZPWM 2018, beyond the priorities of integrated public transport. Next challenges for KrOF are described in PZPWM 2018(p.112-113) and include:

- shaping the spatial structure of the metropolitan area based on key areas concentrating the metropolitan potential (Kraków, Airport City Balice, Kraków-Nowa Huta Przyszłości, Płaszów-Rybitwy, Łagiewniki)
- functional and spatial linkage of Kraków suburbia with the core of the system, based on the continuity of communication, infrastructure, and green infrastructure;
- limiting the unjustified expansion of investment areas and the dispersion of buildings by balancing the development of urbanised areas, and forecasting based on the systematic monitoring of the whole area of KrOF;
- shaping the network of green areas / blue-green infrastructure based on existing resources, including river valleys;
- use of green areas for shaping public space sequences.

Some other Urban Functional Areas [MOFs] in Poland might be mentioned, where similar or further-reaching initiatives have been undertaken. The sphere of planning and spatial management was indicated as a particular area of cooperation in 14 projects analysed by the Urban Policy Observatory (OPM). According to their report (OPM, 2017, p.152-153), there are two groups of instruments for the operationalization of cooperation in the sphere of urban planning in Poland:

- 1) Diagnostic instruments (documents), represented, for example, by:
 - Study of Conditions for Spatial Development of the Bydgoszcz-Toruń Functional Area⁴
 - Analyses of the spatial policy and coherence of the planning instruments in the communes of Urban Functional Areas of: Rzeszów, Puławy, Lębork, Kraina Wielkich Jezior Mazurskich (Giżycko)
- 2) MOF's conceptual master plans – documents containing, apart from the diagnostic component, an implementation section defining the goals and directions of spatial development with reference to the territory of the entire Functional Area – represented by e.g.:
 - Spatial Development Plan for Gdansk Metropolitan Area (Tricity) with Operational Programmes for the development plan of the Logistic Valley Functional Area, and the land-use plan for the Coastal Service Area [NORDA]
 - Spatial Development Conceptual Plan of Poznań Agglomeration⁵ (the agglomeration consists of 22 communes) followed up by the Master Plan for the Poznań Metropolitan Rail (in preparation)
 - Spatial Development Concepts for regional centres such as Elbląg
 - Spatial Development Concepts for sub-regional centres such as: Kędzierzyn-Koźle, Krosno, Jasło, Elk, Zduńska Wola
 - Spatial Development Concepts for local centres, e.g. Turek County

4. What is/was the local levels response to the territorial land-use / development plan? Has the relationship between the region level and the local level (edge cities) changed as a reaction to the regional strategies?

According to KPZK 2030, in shaping spatial policy, communes are required to follow the principles set out in the regional spatial plan [PZPW]. Increasingly expressed also is the need for an integrated approach, i.e. closer integration of regulations regarding spatial planning with provisions of the regional strategy, such as the Development Strategy of the Małopolska Region 2011-2020 [SRWM].

Every local government is legally obliged to prepare and regularly update a local strategic urban planning document called the Study of the Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development [SUiKZP]. The National Urban Policy [KPM 2023] indicated the need for active cooperation of local governments within the functional areas of cities to ensure the maximum coherence of their SUiKZP. Subsequently, the Local Spatial Plans [MPZP], which need to be consistent with SUiKZPs, should form a coherent spatial structure of a metropolitan area. It is especially important to ensure that the balance of demographic trends and demand for new development areas are realistically considered in the entire functional area. The KPM 2023 advocates that the communes located in the functional urban area should aim to plan a compact city structure.⁶

KPM 2023 does not make decisions regarding the relations between municipal and regional governments. A consequence of striving for the consistency of development and an integrated territorial

⁴ Deloitte, Studium Uwarunkowań Rozwoju Przestrzennego Bydgosko-Toruńskiego Obszaru Funkcjonalnego

⁵ Centrum Badań Metropolitalnych UAM (2016) *Koncepcja kierunków rozwoju przestrzennego Metropolii Poznań: podejście zintegrowane*, Poznań: Stowarzyszenie Metropolia Poznań.

⁶ KPM 2023 indicates that the minister responsible for regional development is to present solutions enabling effective and co-operative spatial planning in urban functional areas.

approach is the introduction of the category of urban functional area (MOF), covering the city and adjacent communes (such as Kraków, the edge cities of KrOF, and surrounding rural areas).

Despite the development of various forms of inter-communal cooperation in Poland (including inter-communal associations such as SMK, or territorial partnerships such as the Local Action Groups [LGDs]), any legal mechanisms supporting such cooperation on a larger scale have not been implemented. Before the introduction of ITI, only grants from European and EEA funds, announced in 2012-2013, supported local governments in planning cooperation and creating tools for its operationalization.

However, these projects were mainly viewed from the point of their thematic scope and results, not social processes that would accompany their implementation. Achieving greater social cohesion through the development of mechanisms for effective cooperation between local governments and representatives of civil society or entrepreneurs, was indicated as the main objective only in JUP programme (EEA Grants 2009-2014). That was also the only mechanism indicating community participation as one of the thematic areas of the projects. Additionally, community consultations were also financed in the MOF I and MOF II projects under the OP Technical Assistance 2007-2013 (OPM, 2017, p.135-137).

The marginality of issues related to the Participatory Urban Planning in projects implemented under the Urban Functional Areas is all the more surprising that among the co-financed projects, the planning documents and their updates constituted an important share (21%).

According to KPZK 2030, the integration of MOFs should primarily be provided by planning activities (functional planning). Inclination for inter-communal cooperation enabling joint problem-solving and the implementation of projects which exceed the capabilities of a single commune, is indicated as one of the most important endogenous factors of local development, allowing the meeting of the global competitive economy's challenges. According to the old development paradigm, the key actors were the central and regional governments. According to the new paradigm of regional policy, the key is the territorial approach (KSRR 2010-2010), and key roles (OPM, 2017, p.134) that should be played by:

- all levels of public administration;
- community representatives;
- business representatives.

In 2017, the City Policy Observatory [OPM] published a report on Management and cooperation in urban functional areas (MOFs). As for the manner of setting objectives and tasks to be implemented under the MOF, OPM states that they are determined mainly on the basis of the knowledge of local authorities and officials, on the principle of "power knows better". The analysis of available data as a method for selecting goals and tasks was only in the next place. The knowledge of external experts was valued even less, as well as the knowledge gathered through public community consultations. The latter were considered important or very important only for a half of the respondents (OPM, 2017, p. 103-104).

Moreover, also at the stage of project implementation in some MOF partnerships, the dominance of leaders and disregarding the potential of community consultations and collegial bodies was found (OPM, 2017, p.107).

The involvement of community or business entities is primarily a reflection of the rules of grant bids. In the EEA bids, the applicant was required to establish a partnership with representatives of civil society or entrepreneurs, therefore in 59% of projects financed by the EEA Grants, community and business entities were involved in project management (OPM, 2017, p.108). As a result, 23% of respondents participating in projects implemented under the EEA Grants indicated establishing cooperation with community partners as an advantage – twice as much as the general average (OPM, 2017, p.112).

Asked about the relationship between the regional level and the local level in response to regional planning and regional strategies, our respondents say:

- Regional strategies are truly significant only when the conclusions from them are realistically translated into unambiguous arrangements of regional plans and, consequently, into the provisions of local plans. Each spatial strategy of the municipality [SUiKZP] and the local plan [MPZP] mandatorily has to apply the provisions of the regional plan, therefore the impact of the regional plan is theoretically significant. However, the relationship between these strategies and plans is usually formal and does not truly affect the spatial policy of municipalities.

The lack of coherence between neighbouring communes at the SUiKZP level results from a certain latitude of notation in graphics and text. The current spatial planning model provides significant flexibility in the notations and their interpretation. In particular, this applies to regional documents and SUiKZP. The scale of those documents is also imprecise and prevents clear

interpretation. In the case of local level of plans [MPZP], the lack of inter-communal spatial coherence is most likely the result of the lack of effective cooperation between neighbouring municipalities (academic, planner).

- The relationship between the regional level of planning and the local level can be strengthened provided that the regional development strategy and the regional plan are complementary, substantively coupled and coherently decisive (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- The need for compliance of local planning with regional plans or otherwise the principle of hierarchy in planning is, of course, the only sensible way to shape spatial integration and coherence. However, the need for compliance of local planning with regional plans is, similar to almost all other formal requirements for mayors in Poland, perceived usually by them as a source of potential formal and legal difficulties and restriction on the independence of local planning policy (local authority in general). Moreover, any non-specific legal provisions, including unclear regional planning notions, remain in practice ineffective. Therefore, the precision of planning at the supra-local level must be increased, to guarantee better coordination of planning activities of municipalities.

It is also worth noting that 90% of communes in Poland do not have their own planning units (Korbel, 2019), so the plans are commissioned by tender (public procurement), which does not promote quality of these documents (Architect, academic).

5. Do you have examples of situations where the consensus of the regional strategies was broken, or development accelerated and became chaotic? How was the situation handled? What methods did you use to fix the situation?

The basic aspect of regional strategies which has been frequently broken in numerous places is the call for compact development. The built environment in Poland is regulated by the Planning Act [UPZP] and at least 70 other legal acts, including "special acts" that regulate investment processes in specific sectors. This excessively large number of legal regulations affecting the planning process results in inconsistency which significantly hinders rational space management.

At the same time, the commune's spatial planning strategy [SUiKZP] is not a legal act and neither is its metropolitan equivalent [SUiKZPZM].⁷ Even if those strategies are consensually agreed, the administrative decisions on topical building conditions [WZ] can easily break any regulation they propose.

According to the UPZP assumptions, local plans [MPZP] should constitute the basis for issuing building permits, and decisions on building conditions [WZ] were to fulfil only a temporary, complementary function. Unfortunately, WZ became in fact the most usual instrument for space management, being used on up to 70% of the country's area.

The Supreme Audit Office [NIK] (2017), the Association of Polish Urbanists [TUP] (2012), as well as a number of other sources and interviews conducted for the needs of this Inventory among local planning officers, signal that there is neither a legal requirement for the compliance of the WZ with the spatial strategy of the commune, nor even the possibility of effective reference to the strategy expressed in municipal spatial strategy [SUiKZP]. Thus, WZ is issued in order to meet particular investment needs, without any correspondence with the strategic goals. As a result, the space disintegrates, the process of expansion to undeveloped areas is uncontrolled, which causes environmental damage and increases the costs of technical and social infrastructure.

NIK (2017) states that given the enormous impact of such administrative decisions [WZ], the local community is deprived of participation in determining the principles of spatial policy, managing and using space, as is guaranteed in the case of MPZP. WZ also do not have to refer to arrangements related to environmental protection, blue-green infrastructure, flood management, etc. On top of that, NIK indicates a high risk of speculative activities. A commonly observed effect of such disorderly space management

⁷ A new instrument of metropolitan strategic planning implemented on 1 January 2016 called Studium uwarunkowań i kierunków zagospodarowania przestrzennego związku metropolitalnego

in the Małopolska Region is the scattered development, particularly severe in the foothills. It also has an adverse effect of restricting access to recreational areas and biological supply areas for Kraków.

In the context of spatial integration, the most severely afflicted are the compositional aspects. In the Brief Assessment of the Implementation of the Regional Plan (PZPWM 2018, vol.1, p.10-13), it is assessed that both the progressive dispersion of buildings and designation of extensive development areas in local plans [MPZPs], significantly exceeding the possible consumption needs, as well as the lack of use of the Culture Park Zone as an instrument for the protection of valuable urban composition and substance, constitute problems with which the Małopolska Regional Plan 2003 could not cope.

Surprisingly, the comparison of the extent of the scattered development with the coverage of the MPZPs and WZs indicates that there is no real connection between the existence or lack of local plans and the phenomenon of chaotic scattering of buildings. The successive increase of the area covered by local plans does not ensure coordinated, rational land management and restraint of unfavourable spatial processes. Local planning does not fulfil the role of effective regulation of settlement, urbanization and investment processes. Excessive reserves of land designated for development also affect the disruption of the real estate market and overpricing the land being purchased for public investment.

The lack of effective spatial policy in the Małopolska Region causes growing environmental, social and economic losses. The effects of a badly shaped spatial structure remain a long-term burden. Negative phenomena include increased investment in areas of natural and landscape values and building barriers in ecological corridors (UMWM, 2014, p. 272-273).

In response to these destructive phenomena, it is postulated to develop a system of regional monitoring of quality of life, dynamics of spatial development, and a number of indicators regarding construction works and suburbanization processes. In order to reduce the chaos in urban development, it is postulated to support landscape protection, through landscape audits, and to support local governments in adopting regulations limiting visual pollution (UMWM, 2018, p.194).

However, it is a common belief among experts and planning officers that without a fundamental change in the planning legislation, the basic objectives of regional strategies, such as detaining the expansion into green fields, will not be achieved. Unfortunately, the series of attempts at legal reform, including many years of work on the new Urban and Building Code have not been completed.

Without a radical change in the statutory provisions, the only hope for the improvement of the situation is the education of the public and activation of the silent majority of residents who have so far unknowingly shouldered the costs of chaotic investment. Without the grassroots movements informing, alarming, and activating local communities and their representatives in the municipal councils, there is currently no chance for restraining the progressive spatial chaos.

Other problems resulting from the insubordination of local development to regional strategies concern the environmental issues, including air pollution and insufficient water retention.

Regarding the protection and use of water resources, the insufficient realization of retention-enhancing investments is a common problem (only 3 out of 65 of the planned small retention reservoirs have been implemented) (WPZPWM 2018, p.11). The protection of natural retention areas is not sufficiently considered in urban planning at the local level. Significant areas are threatened with groundwater deficit which requires increased water quantity and quality protection activities, such as the completion of the assessment of the main groundwater bodies and establishing protection areas. The series of reports on the spatial development in the Małopolska Region regularly draw attention to these needs (UMWM, 2014, p. 272-273).

The high level of air pollution has remained in the region too. Increasing bottom-up pressure, especially in Krakow, where a strong, nationwide grassroots movement called "Smog Alarm" was born several years ago, exacted active measures to improve the air quality at various levels of governance.

Problems also occur in the field of cultural heritage protection. The unique, unusually diverse cultural heritage of the region, quite well maintained as regards high-ranking facilities, is very poorly protected regarding traditional village layouts and buildings. The progressing decline and disappearance of e.g. traditional wooden buildings cause irreversible losses. As a result, in a significant part of the region, degradation of characteristic spatial arrangements, especially rural ones, is observed in effect of the poor local regulations protecting the cultural landscape. The Culture Park Zone as a form of protection against visual pollution and loss of cultural landscape values remains underused (PZPWM 2018, p.12-13).

The obligation to establish records of vernacular monuments has been completed by just over half of the Małopolska municipalities, which is largely due to the low position of issues related to the protection

of cultural heritage among the priorities of local governments. The number of communes that have complied with the program of vernacular monuments protection is even smaller (UMWM, 2014, p.273-274).

The defeat of the idea of a Culture Park Zone results from locating this form of protection in the competencies of local governments, which underestimate the importance of preserving the vernacular heritage and are not interested in introducing any restrictions (UMWM, 2014, p. 273-274). Out of the 62 potential Culture Park Zones indicated in the PZPWM, only three were created: in Krakow (Old Town) and Zakopane (Culture Parks of Krupówki Street and Zakopane Basin) (PZPWM 2018, p.12-13).

Our respondents say:

- For decades, regional strategies were quite often performed mainly to fulfil a legal obligation. The effectiveness of this and other forms of strategic planning depends on whether the authorities take these instruments seriously. If not, even the best strategies do not affect reality (Landscape planner, academic).
- Provisions of regional strategies are on a high level of generality, as much as provisions on care for spatial orderliness and quality of public space in the regional plan and in the local planning strategies, which conveys that these documents do not prevent the growing chaos in the built environment. Prevention of such situations could be possible at the level of local plans or administrative decisions [WZ], provided that they are formulated in an appropriate and unambiguous manner. Flexibility in the interpretation of these provisions is one of the causes of spatial chaos and social protests resulting from it (academic, transportation planner).
- In the current realities of local governments, the notion of consensus around regional strategies seems questionable. Regional strategies are assumed to be conducive to limiting spatial chaos and forming compact development. However, if approximately 40% of municipal revenues are tax revenues, municipalities, without adequate compensation, are not interested in limiting the quantitative development.⁸ Moreover, if the greatest planistic burden rests on the mayor, and the mayor is directly elected (not subject to any control regarding the rationality of the adopted planning decisions), then only the binding provisions of the regional plans and the planning obligation of municipalities could have a real impact on the re-shaping of the spatial orderliness (architect, academic).

Respondents also pointed that the regulation on Eco-physiographic Study does not fulfil its function, even if it is a fundamental document that should obligatorily define the standards for describing the environment in spatial plans.

To change matters, the following actions would be necessary:

1. educate planners and officials in strategic planning;
2. teach planners and officials of the principles of managing the environment and landscape;
3. develop standards of:
 - a. inventory and description of the protection of the natural environment and landscape for the purpose of spatial planning;
 - b. protecting and shaping the environment and landscape in strategies and spatial planning.

6. Does the hypothesis below fit with the current situation in your region:

“In the urban planning processes, a private owner takes the initiative and presents a development idea to the city administration. After that, the city officials assess whether the idea fits with the master plan or the city districts’ comprehensive plan.”

- *If yes, does the regional level have a role in facilitating participation or securing the rights of certain interests in urban planning?*

⁸In 2013, taxes and fees accounted for an average of 39.7% of the communes' own revenues in Poland, of which the real estate tax accounted for the highest share, accounting for 29.3%. See: (KRRIO, 2014, p.241-242).

- *If the hypothesis does not fit your situation in your region, give a short explanation (a couple of sentences) of the practice for urban planning in your region.*

Many observations appear to support the hypothesis that *a private owner takes the initiative and the city officials assess whether the idea fits with the MPZP*. However, it does not sufficiently explain the current situation in Małopolska.

The Local Plan [MPZP] constitutes a direct basis for issuing building permits and land expropriation for public purposes. The provisions of MPZP define the development conditions and regulate the types of developments in the area covered by the plan, which should ensure the transparency and stability of the local policies and serve to preserve spatial coherence and landscape qualities. The control carried out by NIK (2017) indicates, however, the lack of effective financial instruments to conduct spatial policy in municipalities, which increases the risk of irregularities in the process of MPZP preparation. It is about drawing up planning documents "on the order" of investors who are interested in particular provisions. This can lead to a conflict of interest and negatively affect the transparency of procedures.

NIK (2017) indicates that it was common for investors to finance the process of preparing planning documents, and even to provide the municipalities with MPZP projects prepared at the request of investors.

NIK also indicates that communes do not make sufficient use of planning fees as a financing instrument for MPZP (in 1/3 of the surveyed communes, the transaction verification system was not sealed, and some communes did not specify the planning fee at all). The feasibility of the planning fee is 5% and does not balance the costs borne by municipalities for planning.

NIK also points to irregularities in the method of financing the SUIKZPs. Some communes do not treat SUIKZP as the strategic document of local spatial policy. NIK gives examples when private investors financed "updates" in SUIKZP.

We asked the stakeholders if they accept the hypothesis in question. Here are some of their answers:

- This hypothesis is probably correct. Commune officials do not create development investments. They can only create a framework for proper development (urban management expert).
- The above hypothesis corresponds to the current situation in the whole country. It is caused by the pursuit of rapid quantitative development. This is one of the consequences of the insignificant role of spatial planning and the inconsistency of development strategies with plans (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Of course, it looks like this neither everywhere nor always, but if the authorities are weak or consider the growth that brings commercial profits as their only goal, then the investors take over the government's helm. Other goals of urban policy are then neglected (landscape planner, academic).
- Not only private investors but also influential participants in the planning processes, such as representatives of the local authorities contribute to accelerating the pace and chaos of development (academic, planner).

According to some respondents, the second part of this hypothesis should be formulated even more emphatically:

- "Then the municipal officials allow the implementation of the idea by providing a planning permission even against SUIKZP, indicating defective legal regulations " (academic, urbanist)

or:

- "Then the municipal officials assess how the spatial strategy [SUIKZP] and the local plan [MPZP] can be interpreted to allow for implementation of the idea, or if SUIKZP and MPZP will have to be changed for this purpose" (academic, environmental activist).
- Private investors look after their interests by influencing local plans. Usually, it is about the change of use (from non-building sites to building sites) and increasing the building intensity. Developers' applications also concern the provision of extensive transport and technical infrastructure. This has nothing to do with a rational, holistic planning vision or the idea of urbanism (academic, transportation planner).

Then we asked if the regional level has a role in facilitating participation or securing the rights of certain interests in urban planning.

According to our respondents:

- The regional (Voivodship) level is probably not the most appropriate for public participation. The involvement of citizens should be implemented on the local level, unless there is a concept of a city-region where urban design would be significantly applied on the sub-regional/metropolitan level (urban management expert).
- The regional level has a role in facilitating participation but it is a long-term process, requiring reaching out to a wider range of people potentially interested in participation and increasing their awareness (architect, academic).
- The most needed is the training of municipal leaders and planners in the areas of public communication and methods of participation. The initiative of organizing such education can come from any level of governance. Without increasing the knowledge and skills in these areas, even the best-formulated legal provisions requiring participation will not be properly applied (landscape planner, academic).
- Of course, the regional level could play this role by putting forward resolutions and establishing procedures for more sophisticated forms of public participation than those which are currently used (academic, transportation planner).
- Urban planning is the competence of the commune, and until the law changes, no municipality will renounce its competence in this area. Therefore, without the change of the Spatial Planning Act [UPZP], there is no possibility of transferring power or co-deciding. There are also doubts whether this would be a good solution. More feasible would be a coordination course where metropolitan procedures could be worked out, but it would also need an amendment of the Spatial Planning Act (local government strategic planning officer).
- In the present state of affairs, an interference by the regional level in the local planning procedure would not have a legal basis, and in extreme cases could even be considered as a violation of Art. 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (Architect, academic).
- It is currently impossible to implement a legal mechanism or other practical solution thanks to which the regional level could take over from the commune the introduction of necessary but unpopular restrictions. Under today's legislation, this can only be done by introducing on the regional level a procedure of obligatory reviewing of projects of local plans by a regional institution (local government strategic planning officer).
- Through the involvement of the regional level, it might be easier for the municipality to introduce unpopular but necessary solutions adequate for public interest, such as the reduction of suburban expansion. Besides, the regional level can always educate the public and particularly the municipal officers (local government strategic planning officer).
- The regional level does not have the legal instruments to improve participation, but it can take care of securing the public interest by using legal instruments in the reconciliation process. The improvement of participation can be realized only through educational activities, raising awareness and promoting good practices. Sometimes, however, the promotion of public participation might be perceived as "political correctness". Thus, public participation should not be imposed as a universally appropriate approach; as a rule, not subject to discussion. No one (also in the municipality) likes it when needs to comply with top-down rules or doctrines (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).

We asked for a short explanation of the practice of participatory urban planning in the region.

Our respondents say:

- The practice of urban planning in the region was for a long time standardized according to the severely insufficient procedures enshrined in the Planning Act (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Regional and local authorities probably believe that the social interest is ensured by participation of councillors as representatives of the society. Widely accepted in those circles is a view that the greater, especially the direct involvement of organized communities may paralyze the process of decision-making (Academic, transportation planner).

According to the Association of Polish Urbanists [TUP], the conflicts between the interests of individual stakeholders of investment processes cannot be completely eliminated. However, it is necessary to define clearly the priorities and hierarchies of importance and the rules of the state-controlled market game. First of all, the spatial policy needs to be made public matter. Current principles and forms of public participation in this area are of a sham or incidental nature. Public participation must be more active and authentic, which requires, above all, to raise the level of public awareness through appropriate educational activities (TUP, 2012).

The prospect is to raise social capital and to develop civic attitude towards responsibility for the commune, city, metropolis, region; their shape, functions, quality and development. Knowledge dissemination, development of civic involvement around places of residence, development of a participatory democracy, promotion of dialogue, a culture of listening to fellow citizens and business organizations, sharing knowledge and responsibility, transparency of decision-making processes, presenting and explaining social benefits and costs of investments are necessary. The role of the media, NGOs, and less formal urban movements cannot be overestimated.

Local governments and bodies responsible for infrastructure management at the level of the commune and the region should order and disseminate data and analyses regarding spatial economy, and stimulate social mobilization for responsible city management, while showing challenges and agreeing on directions of development with each responsible actor of the urban scene (TUP, 2012).

Integrated and responsible management of the city requires changing the rules of governance, good laws, efficient public institutions, publicising the sphere of decision-making and increasing the share of responsibility to all stakeholders. It requires the preparation of a new generation of specialists, experts in urban issues, including planners, urban designers, sociologists, economists and urban managers who will support the processes of participatory management.

However, the conviction repeatedly expressed by our respondents is that without a significant change in the social system of values and development of human capital, the mere technocratic change of the regulatory system, unaddressed in the system of values and not built on complex socio-economic relations, would not lead to fair improvement in the efficiency of management of the city and region.

7. Do you have an authority that monitors the involvement of citizens in urban planning?

According to KPM 2023, local governments should monitor and evaluate activities related to the involvement of citizens in urban planning and implement appropriate measures to enhance the participation. It is important that the evaluation process itself is also participatory. KPM2023 indicates that it is good practice to set up a special team for assessing the participation process, consisting of representatives of the local government and residents.

The permanent monitoring of public participation at the regional level should be part of the tasks of Territorial Observatories [ROT] (KPM 2023, p.34). This function is performed in our region by the Małopolska Observatory of Regional Development [MORR].

This topic has recently been taken up by the IRMiR Observatory of Urban Policy [OPM]. In preparation (March 2019) is their Report on Public Participation covering nationwide surveys of social capital in cities, the condition and quality of participatory practices and system solutions strengthening participatory governance and civic initiatives. In the IRMiR OPM research, the level of activity of the non-governmental sector focused on urban development in various thematic areas is also analysed. The report will gather good practices and social innovations in the area of civic participation.

According to our respondents:

- The greatest challenge for most municipalities is to change the perception of the role of spatial planning, and thus to treat it as a tool supporting management and development processes. Inclusion of NGOs as key partners in the processes of public participation on various levels of planning is bound up with this integrally. (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Residents are most interested in the situation here and now. Often it is difficult for them to understand the local plan, which may start to affect the urban space only in, say, 10 years (local government strategic planning officer).

- One needs to take up the challenge of organizing a common platform of formulation of development concepts and the awareness building of consequences of those concepts for concrete solutions and provisions in the plan (academic, transportation planner).
- There is a lack of urban managers, planners and social communication trainers educated for this purpose (researching, moderating, mediating, negotiating, etc.) (landscape planner, academic).
- The key is education and time necessary for educational activities. The fundamental need for orderliness and landscape protection is a need of a higher order. At the present stage of social and economic development in Poland, such values are commonly marginalized, undervalued or even perceived as a threat to addressing the lower-order needs, such as faster economic development. As a result, the higher need has been losing with the particular expectations of people, business and municipal authorities (architect, academic).
- The biggest challenge is to change the way of thinking of people who lead and direct municipalities. In the last twenty years, the approach to programming of regional development has changed completely. A new paradigm of territorial development policy was introduced, distinguishing three main areas: geographical, relational and institutional. In the relational area, an important role is attributed to cooperation with NGOs, considering it as the essence of local development.

Local governance is a way of cooperation of local stakeholders in order to achieve effects in the implementation of public policy, which takes place within formal and informal linkages between public and non-public institutions. Such relations serve residents and their associations to express their own needs, as well as mediating in contentious matters. This should lead to cooperation based not only on formal but also informal relationships, resulting in better solutions for local communities.

This should be done through:

1. the participation of NGOs in municipal Committees of Architecture and Urbanism;
 2. multiple meetings with residents during the planning actions, and not only on the beginning and at the end of the planning process (academic, environmental activist).
- In the transformation of social attitudes, the media must play a larger role. However, this requires significant financial expenditures and interdisciplinary cooperation to conduct appropriately interesting educational campaigns (architect, academic).

The challenge is to change the mentality in the urban planning approach to an authentic and valuable involvement of the public, going beyond information and consultation, and reaching the third level – co-creation. Unfortunately, many municipal officers are convinced that the participatory process makes it difficult to obtain satisfactory solutions and the necessity of its implementation is only a formal requirement. This is a belief resulting from negative experiences of improper, however compliant with regulations, participation processes.

Such processes usually take place too late, not at the pre-design or diagnostic stage but when the design concept is ready. Diagnosis often considers only voices of an active and loud minority, and the process remains "hidden" until social conflict breaks out.

Another aspect is the asymmetry in relations between the municipality and citizens. This relationship is characterized by mutual distrust and lack of faith in the specific competence of the residents as partners in the process and final recipients of the plan. On the other hand, the planning office is perceived not as a partner in a dialogue but as a dominating party imposing its will, because it holds an asymmetric "causative power".

Asymmetries also occur in the relations between the local government and the planner, and between the planner and the citizens. The standard relation between the client and the contractor is disrupted here. The government is under pressure imposed by the time limit and technical framework of the project and abandons deep analysis, waives the proper relationship with the contractor, and even withdraws from solutions desired by itself. This is also due to insufficient competences among municipal officers and the lack of "ownership" of the project.

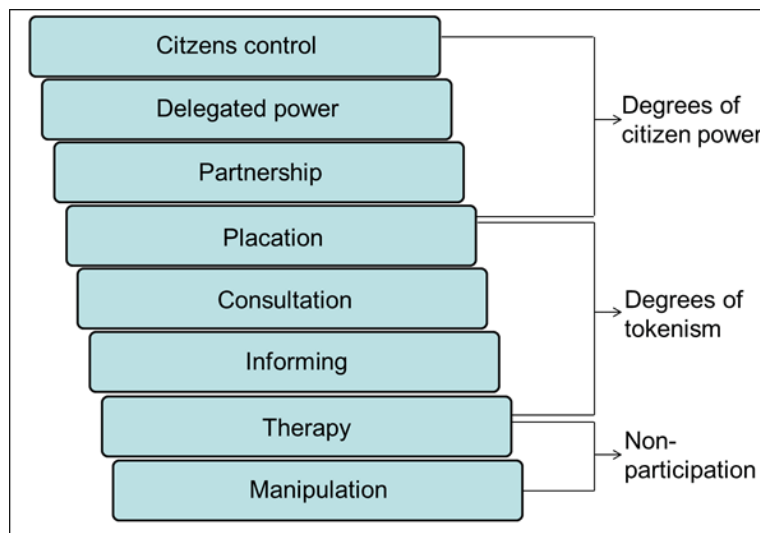
On the other hand, planners are bound by the provisions of the contract and are hesitant about any amendments. They are also aware of the way the office functions and its limitations. Such a situation significantly affects the conduct of the participatory process – especially when it is limited to the necessary minimum resulting from the regulations, is not carried out by competent

persons, and its goal from the beginning is dubious (or intentions are disingenuous) (local level strategic planning officer).

- Often the legal structure of bids (public procurements) essentially excels the effective conduct of public consultations, or undermines their meaning. This applies, for example, to the elements of the bids for co-financing revitalization activities carried out under the Regional Operational Program [RPO] where extensive community participation is planned at the stage of task implementation; and when the residents themselves are to decide on the amenities they need, but already at the stage of applying for funds, the exact number and type of amenities should be indicated (local level strategic planning officer).
- Experience shows that participative processes can be carried out properly, but they must be carefully planned and implemented well in advance of the planning diagnosis. In addition, appropriate instruments and qualifications are required to conduct the dialogue (local level strategic planning officer).

8. Look at the figure below. To what extent will the input from the public be utilized?

Please indicate the participation category for urban planning by utilizing the levels outlined below:



According to the respondents, participation strongly depends on authorities and institutions, and the will to organise participation and provide additional resources. Thus, it looks different in different places.

Larger resources of knowledge and skills can be noticed in larger cities, which, however, differ greatly because the attitude of the authorities to the very idea of participation is very diverse. In small communes there is generally a shortage of knowledge, but there are mayors who have a sense of mission and innate communication talents. In such situations, they sometimes achieve excellent results (landscape planner, academic).

According to the aforementioned survey by Korbel (2019), only 32% of communes believe that insufficient public participation is truly a problem in urban planning. However, the difficult and incomprehensible form of planning documents submitted to the public makes the real state of affairs closer to “therapy” or “informing” and “consulting” than any kind of “citizen power”.

Most of our respondents agree that we are currently at the stage between the lack of participation and degrees of tokenism:

- The highest level of “citizen power” basically does not occur in urban planning processes. Symbolic participation dominates, which could be called “ritual participation”. No one would dare for the total lack of participation, i.e. bypassing public consultations, but this is not due to the need to learn other opinions but only for procedural reasons. The regulations require consultations, so they consult (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).

- To achieve citizen power, the public still needs to learn a lot, and officials too. Although I do not judge, but I think the officials are readier for this than the residents (Local government strategic planning officer).
- The citizen power level without additional external motivations or grants enabling extended public involvement is limited to the tokenism (academic, planner).

There are even more pessimistic opinions:

- We are currently on the verge of a lack of participation and symbolic participation (academic, environmental activist).
- From my own design practice, mainly in Krakow, I usually notice the lack of any knowledge residents have about urban planning (with all subsequent consequences of this state of affairs) or strong friction between investors and residents unwilling to allow for new developments (architect).
- Citizens control appears sporadically, usually through protest, with the support of mass-media. Partnership as a form of citizen power currently has no organizational basis. Consultation is currently the basic form of public participation because it results directly from the provisions of the Planning Act [UPZP]. This is accompanied by information and placation.

The level of "Therapy" and "Manipulation" is quite common and is the result of, on the one hand, lack of active public participation and, on the other hand, failure to provide full information to potential stakeholders / residents. The expression of the local community's activity takes place only as an objection to the plan already approved or its preparation procedure (academic, transportation planner).

- Regarding the "Citizens power", probably the only form can be a local referendum. Lack of general awareness that the residents may truly decide in this way results in a very low turnout, for which many referenda are not binding. The activities of mass media, interest groups and some specialists have the nature of lobbying for particular solutions without showing their conditions and effects with any attempt at objectivity.

An example could be one of the questions of the referendum held in Kraków in 2014. Respondents to the question "Are you in favour of building the underground metro?" gave a positive result ("yes" - 55%, "no" - 45%) and because of the turnout exceeding 30%, the referendum was binding. That was the consequence of formulating the question in a very simplified way, without showing the financial consequences (e.g. increasing local taxes, necessity of radical redistribution of the commune's budget and the further effects of such a decision), without realizing the risks related to the construction of the underground metro, and without discussion on optional solutions (academic, transportation planner).

Authorities are not prepared to properly formulate a referendum question, and the awareness of the "give and take" principle does not prevail in the community. The effect of the referendum is introduction of the subway in the urban planning strategy [SUiKZP] of Kraków, however, in an undefined manner as per the requirements of such document. The Krakow authorities currently have a problem how to meet the task of building a metro without guaranteeing its financing (academic, transportation planner).

9. Can you specify and explain the category? Is there a historic reason behind the involvement/non-involvement? (Office culture, top-down planning, etc.)

Planning tradition or planning culture is influenced by many factors including historical and cultural conditions, geographical and land use patterns, the constitutional, administrative and legal framework, levels of urban and economic development, and political and ideological aspirations. Däne and van den Brink (2007) focus on four factors which they think particularly influence the possibilities for participation in spatial planning practice at the local level:

- central–local government relations;
- the tradition of democracy;
- the approach to spatial planning;
- legal requirements concerning participation.

An everyday citizen participation in political issues is only starting to become part of the culture in Poland. Although the current state of planning is more locally directed than under the communist regime, its focus is embedded within a technocratic context of outmoded physical and functional planning rather than an intrinsic understanding of the value of citizen participation. Like in most conventional / technocratic urban planning systems, the focus is clearly on producing a plan, and public involvement is mainly end-of-the-line (Däne & van den Brink, 2007).

The lack of established tradition or custom to look after the common space certainly has its origins in history (a long period without the national sovereignty, and communism). Top-down pressure has developed social skills and habits as to how to cope against oppressive authorities and not to follow the imposed legal order.

The collapse of the communist system in 1989 did not bring, by itself, a culture of democratic participation. The transition to a democratic system is very much influenced by the complexity of Poland's political past. As Graham (2001) states, 'Poland's forty-five years of totalitarian rule, its brief modern history of independence from foreign control (between the two world wars and since 1989), and its 120 years of domination by Austrian, Russian, and Prussian partitions strongly influence its development of democracy.' The lack of trust in those who hold the power (e.g. local and regional authorities), particularly in rural areas, explains the hesitancy to participate in political decision-making. The insufficiency of experiences of democracy leaves only a few guidelines and reference points for governments and citizens to develop a more participative attitude.

Two recent trends might be indicated however: a growing participatory attitude among members of the public and the growing complexity of planning issues, which should lead to a legal basis for citizen participation, and the adoption of methods and techniques allowing people to become truly and efficiently involved in the planning process.

KPM 2023 notes that involvement of residents in various areas of the city life becomes an increasingly common phenomenon in Poland. It results from the needs of the residents themselves to be active entities involved in urban planning and management. Often, these needs are also revealed in a conflict or feeling that the city authorities do not consider the voice of the inhabitants. Congenial conditions for the development of public participation occur in smaller urban centres (such as Niepołomice, Skawina, and Wieliczka) where the slighter anonymity of residents, stronger neighbourly ties (than in large cities), as well as good recognition of the city and its problems are conducive to activities that are corresponding to the local problems, as well as the emergence of bottom-up community movements.

In spite of the clear activity of some circles, however, the civic activity of Poles in general is still at an unsatisfactory level. Town councils recognize some benefits from dialogue with residents, but in some municipalities, it is limited to unilateral information on the activities already carried out. The explanation of the decisions is often superficial and not much substantive. This is perceived by the inhabitants as a seeming activity and does not serve to build a real and permanent cooperation.

In the process of public consultations, attention is usually paid to the conventional forms of communication, resulting in placing information on the notice board and meetings with the most active residents. This situation often results from the lack of conviction of the municipal authorities as to the value of participation, but often it is only the result of the inadequacy of knowledge, skills and experience.

Nevertheless, such situations cause the residents to feel deprived of full information and omitted in important decisions. This creates a basis for creating mutual prejudices and a decrease in participation confidence as a beneficial element of city management.

Attitudes on the participatory way of decision-making should be anchored in strategic documents defining the tasks of the authorities and directions of the urban planning.

According to our respondents:

- There is a lack of awareness among residents that they may be able to influence decisions and a disbelief that they can make a change. There are also groups of protesters whose determination leads to power concessions. However, this all applies to pre-investment situations (phase of building permits). At the stage of planning procedures, there is generally no awareness of the effects of certain provisions in the plan, e.g. the course of a new road, the possibility of an intensification, or high-rise building among single-family housing, etc.
- There is a widespread lack of faith in the judicial system, and the dominant belief that it supports the interest groups (academic, Environmental activist).

- Another reason is lack of awareness, architectural educational deficiencies in a large part of the public, and limited to the minimum the activity of planning officers constrained by time and financial deficiencies (academic, planner).
- The society does not have specialist knowledge and people are primarily interested in their current individual situation. Attitudes are full of contradictions, e.g.: "I have an agricultural plot so I want to change the use of it for construction, but it is best to have agricultural plots around. Of course, I want to have an asphalt access road, but I will not give / sell a single square meter for road construction." The most common attitude is NIMBY (local government strategic planning officer).
- Citizens' requests regarding plans express almost exclusively their personal interest. The awareness of the common good is almost not existent. Society is in favour of public investments in general but the NIMBY syndrome prevails. Thinking about the common good is characteristic mostly to NGO activists (academic, transportation planner).
- On the other hand, there is a lack of proper regulation and almost complete disappearance of urban design in planning solutions. Urban design, clearly defining the planned development, could prevent conflict in advance by giving people anticipating knowledge of what can arise in their environment and how it will shape the nearest space (architect, academic).
- Lack of citizens' trust in the government, which is fundamental reason for participation failure, has its historic causes. Unfortunately, we often deal with contemporary activities that deepen this distrust. However, there is an increase in civic engagement, which often appears in unexpected moments. Also, an outstanding leader is able to draw people's faith in cooperation and citizen power (landscape planner, academic).
- The lowest levels of involvement result from the obligatory nature of public consultations and attempts to impose solutions (Therapy). Among the officials, there is a belief that participation causes problems. This also results from the construction of public procurements and subsequent contracts that do not provide enough time for analyses and consultations, and often are implemented as "design and build" project delivery. However, communes can follow good practices and attempts are being made to involve the widest possible representation of stakeholders in the design process. The good example is the interior design of the PKP railway station in Skawina, based on the "design thinking" method (local level strategic planning officer).

During the creation of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan [SUMP] and the Municipal Revitalization Program [GPR] in Skawina, we also reached a higher level of participation up to the "Delegated power" (see the good practice below). However, occasionally, due to the length of the process, it turned out that both the diagnosis and the proposed solutions lost their validity and it was necessary to "heal the conflicts" despite the previously reached agreement. That resulted sometimes from some legal uncertainty or constructions consistent with the letter but not the spirit of the plan. This indicates the need to monitor and regularly update records and to enforce the law more effectively. Planning processes should be continuous. Perhaps we could continue developing the methodology similar to that used to create the SUMP (local level strategic planning officer).

10. What are the methods you use for citizen participation in urban planning?

Which consultative or deliberative methods do you/your municipalities use in order to engage citizens in urban planning? Please check the box that is most frequently used. Please indicate in the final box which methods you or your stakeholders/municipalities want to know more about. For more information regarding the methods listed under, [follow the link](#).

According to the respondents, most of the methods described below are known to academics, consultants, and activists in our region. Alongside other participatory urban planning techniques, they have been tested in various places in Małopolska.

According to the leading experts in the field who practiced those techniques, it would not be appropriate to treat with them individually and indicate any of them in terms of their general suitability since each case and context are different. The method should always be adapted to the characteristics of specific project, stakeholders, and the stage of the undertaking.

<p>X Community Meetings</p>	<p>A chaired meeting held in a community, used to present proposals to a community.</p>
<p>x Workshop x Charette x Community-planning forum <input type="checkbox"/> Planning weekend x Idea workshop</p>	<p>A workshop that involves professional planners/architects/designers, the community and other key stakeholders that focus on generating ideas for development.</p>
<p>X Focus Group</p>	<p>A structured, small group meeting made up of stakeholders sharing common demographics (for example, young people) or stakeholder interests, who discuss a specific topic. Often used to test differences, degrees of consensus and deliberating opinions between groups.</p>
<p>X Interactive Display <input type="checkbox"/> Elevation montage</p>	<p>A display on urban issues or on a project that allows the community to make its views on the issue known by voting, putting post-it notes on the display, or physically altering the display. Normally used as part of a forum, design workshop, exhibition or other event.</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Interactive Model <input type="checkbox"/> Box city <input type="checkbox"/> Planning for real <input type="checkbox"/> Urban modelling <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable model</p>	<p>A model-building technique that uses a kit of simple blocks of various sizes and shapes representing typical urban building elements. The blocks are used to construct configurations built to scale as a way of exploring different three-dimensional options for a site.</p>
<p>X Participatory Appraisal x Interactive display x Speak out</p>	<p>A participation approach to gain a rapid, in-depth understanding of a community, or certain aspects of a community, using visual techniques, models, ranking, discussions, mapping or community inventory. Allowing people to share and record aspects of their own situation, conditions of life, knowledge, perceptions, aspirations and preferences. From this, action plans can be developed.</p>
<p>X Planning and Briefing Workshops x Community planning forum x Process planning workshop x Future search conference</p>	<p>A workshop held before beginning any work. Its intention is to gather information on stakeholder needs and expectations, foster constructive community involvement, and to help develop the brief for a project. Provides a forum for information-gathering and allows stakeholders and users a chance to put forward ideas and have a say in an interactive setting early on in the project's development.</p>
<p>X Reference Group x Community advisory group x Stakeholder reference group</p>	<p>A group of interested and affected parties that can be made up of informed community representatives known as a 'community advisory group', or key stakeholders known as a 'stakeholder reference group', brought together by designers or policy-makers. A reference group acts as a forum and an ongoing point of reference for consultation throughout the life of a project.</p>
<p>X Scenario Building <input type="checkbox"/> Participatory land-use mapping x Scenario planning</p>	<p>A means of developing ideas and systematically exploring design, growth or planning options for a town or city under a range of potential economic, social and development scenarios. Often uses computer simulation software to both describe and analyse scenarios.</p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Urban living lab</p>	<p>A form of 'experimental' governance. The term refers to a variety of local experimental projects of a</p>

	participatory nature. The aim is to develop, try out and test innovative urban solutions in a real-life context.
X Urban Design Games <input type="checkbox"/> Board games <input type="checkbox"/> Picture analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role play	A visual way of allowing people to explore physical design options for a site through acting, design puzzles, jigsaws, board games or other interactive gaming methods. Urban design games are mostly played in groups, usually with either clear instructions from someone who has already played the games or a facilitator. Game types include 'board games' that stimulate planning and design scenarios, 'picture analysis' to see what different people see in a photo or picture and comparing notes, 'role play' activities that allow people to act in someone else's shoes, 'storytelling' and 'theatre performance'.
11. Please indicate which methods you or your stakeholders would like to learn more about: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workshop <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Focus group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interactive display <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interactive model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participatory appraisal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning and briefing workshops <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reference group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scenario building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban living lab <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban design games	

Most of our respondents are interested in getting to know some or all of these techniques better. However, our questions seemed confusing to several respondents because participatory techniques are numerous and variously called, and sometimes difficult to distinguish, since the same or very similar techniques are known under different names or vice versa.

Practitioners of participation emphasize that the indication of optimal techniques is not necessary and may even be unfavourable, because techniques should be selected to a specific context. Moreover, a single method will be 'fit for purpose' only rarely (Petts and Leach, 2000). Integrating various techniques improves the chances of fully achieving the objectives of participants and decision-makers.

Instead of promoting certain participatory techniques, it would be more important and even necessary to promote a method based on the study of local conditions and the tailored selection of techniques that best suit local social and spatial context. The choice of the techniques may depend on the specific scale of the project, place, time, and number of people involved. In the network society, techniques are required to facilitate communication between a large number of actors and different communication protocols.

The method should consist of several phases. The most important of them are: programming, designing, decision making and implementation. Each phase should be accompanied by promotion, education and monitoring. Between the phases of designing and decision-making, feedback is needed, even in several loops, consisting of presentations, consensus-building debates and negotiations.

Various NGOs and experts who support and run or facilitate in-depth participatory processes for local governments, develop their own catalogues of participatory consultation techniques that they propose to municipalities. For example, FRDL and its Malpolska regional branch MISTiA, both have been using a catalogue consisting of the following techniques: *Surveys and questionnaires, Community meetings, Participatory Appraisal, Future search conference, Consultation point, Citizen's Café, World Café, Local forum, Democs, Working team, Reconnaissance trip, Participatory planning workshop, Planning for Real, Resident's council, On-line map, Web-based interactive map.*

Those techniques are not used separately but usually in sequences such as:

- Web-based Interactive map and On-line questionnaire, Community meetings, World Café, Consultation point (such a sequence was applied e.g. in Biecz)
- Web-based Interactive map, Community meetings, Survey and On-line questionnaire, Consultation point (e.g. in Kościelisko)
- Community meetings, Web-based interactive map, Survey and On-line questionnaire (e.g. in Sułoszowa)

When acquainting the citizens with the participatory techniques it is crucial to educate on the actual examples of projects leading to implementation. It happens too often that a certain workshop, display, or game in which a local community participates leads to no actual, physical change in their environment. It may result in burnout of the community engagement and lasting doubt in any virtue of participation.

The danger lays in separation of the learning experiences from the co-producing of ideas and designs, and co-deciding on actual plans. It is a case of many design and planning workshops and competitions organized in Poland. They imitate participation, being actually abstracted and separated from planning processes. If the learning process is not linked to the official discourse among decision-makers, the results become not only irrelevant, but they also even deepen the frustration and disaffection among the participating actors.

12. To what extent can the local authorities influence and improve participatory urban planning in your region?

The basic challenge is to connect official and informal discourses to make sure that the emerging local platforms and regional networks actually have an influence on official decision-making. The creative power of these networks can then be used effectively to find sustainable solutions for spatial development. Linked to this is the embedding of informal interactive participation practices into institutional frameworks (Van Den Brink, 2007).

Regional self-government in Poland celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. Hardly anyone remembers it because it is not too long in our consciousness. The regional level of government: regional parliament, its Speaker (*Marszałek*), and Speakers' office (*Urząd Marszałkowski*), is more associated with the distribution of EU funds or maintaining certain public services (transport, hospitals, culture) than with the mechanism of regional participatory democracy and the construction of communities and identities in the region. However, in the year of the 30th anniversary of regaining freedom, it is worth looking at our regions more holistically, just as the space for community building, the birth of new ethos that we need. Strong regional communities of common identity or collective goals and principles are needed to deal with the challenges of the future such as demographic change, migrations, climate change, needs of sustainable, zero-carbon development based on renewable energy and ecosystem services. These challenges require horizontal and long-term action. Neither the commune itself nor the central government are here enough (Szomburg, 2019).

Local governments should make the maximum efforts to ensure that the organization of the public participation process, and in particular the process of public consultations, is encouraging. Consultation should be carried out with the use of activating and attractive methods that promote the effectiveness of the process, e.g. by conducting discussions in the place it concerns, or presenting spatial visualizations of planned investments and their surroundings (interactive models, 3D virtual models).

It is important that after shaping and developing the ability to use the simple consultation of decisions, cities and sub-regions have passed into a model of more advanced cooperation.

On the regional or sub-regional level, the model could be based on a certain kind of Planning Consultation Platform – a multi-faceted umbrella initiative giving an opportunity for municipalities, organisations and individuals to play a more active role in civic life, bring the regional government and municipalities closer to the general public while helping to improve community cohesion and strengthen local NGOs. The Platform would be a means of helping residents get involved in decision-making processes in spatial planning on different scales, starting from the neighbourhood up to the voivodeship.

We asked the stakeholders in our region to what extent can the local authorities influence and improve participatory urban planning. According to the respondents:

- The participation of residents in the planning process depends on local authorities to a fundamental extent. They should educate, activate and even influence views of residents (academic, planner).
- At present, the most important is the trans-disciplinary education of specialists and a serious approach to the idea of civil society. Without those, participation will be ostensible or unsuccessful, or both (landscape planner, academic).
- First of all, local authority figures and other interested parties should be provided with basic knowledge on urban planning. The current lack of knowledge can be somewhat offset by establishing legal regulations and urban standards that will not allow incompetent people to destroy areas for which they are legally responsible for (academic, environmental activist).
- Local authorities should first of all change their attitudes towards the participatory process and design it with help from the experts. Then follow it from A to Z. Next step would be the development of competencies of municipality staff and local leaders in the area of creating spatial policy tools (local level strategic planning officer).
- The aforementioned techniques, to bring effects, would have to be directed to small groups and small areas, e.g. limited to one street. To carry out a large planning procedure, several officers should be delegated to deal only with public participation. But it is impossible in small municipalities, where a single person is often responsible for spatial planning (local government strategic planning officer).
- Local government can play a key role in organization of participation in urban planning by involving NGOs in its implementation. They should also ensure its continuity and proper cooperation between the project team, officials and local organizations (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Personally, I am a keen advocate of information through images. Visualizations of proposed urban and architectural solutions, as well as architectural and urban design contests the results of which are presented for approval during the consultation, is one of the important directions of changes that we need (architect, academic).
- Every inhabitant of the commune should have the possibility to provide his or her e-mail address or telephone number to the office, with an indication of the will to participate in planning work if the municipality takes the initiative, in relation to the district, selected streets, etc. Creating a system of information distribution (automatically sending e-mails or text messages to interested persons) is not difficult and would significantly reduce the scale of ignorance about planning activities (architect, academic).

13. Can you provide examples of municipalities in your region that have established routines for involving citizens in a greater extent than normal in the urban planning process?

Many current developments on the local level favour interactive participation in urban planning. The growing participatory attitude among the public and the various emerging informal participation practices show a clear trend towards bottom-up approaches. However, the bottlenecks arising from the planning system and planning culture restrain interactive citizen participation to become standard practice.

Our respondents say that despite a growing number of participatory actions in our region, it is still rare that a municipality introduces an official established procedure for participation in urban planning.

- One on the leaders of change is the city of Kraków. The city hall, before the obligatory display of projects for public discussion, organizes two consultation meetings. It gives better planning results (academic, environmental activist).
- Skawina Commune is also described as being on the forefront of the participatory agenda. An important step was made when the planning procedure that had been delayed due to changes in the legislation (this concerned e.g. landslides), has been presented with extensive and reliable information on the reasons for delays and probable completion dates. The information was given in a non-specialist language, which increased trust in the institution and activated the society to participate in further consultations.

- In addition, as part of the project "*Razem Blisko Krakowa: Integrated development of the functional area of Kraków*" (2014-2015), a program of elicitation of public interest and participation⁹ and monitoring of participation in municipalities in the entire functional area was run. This contributed to a more active approach of the local community (Academic, planner).

14. Can you identify some long-term effects generated by involving citizens in the decision-making process?

Citizen participation is a means to stimulate social learning processes in which people learn about each other's interests and learn to respect them. They are then able to formulate common goals and develop a strategy and plan to implement them.

Technocratic approaches to spatial planning are no longer legitimate as they fail to create the societal support necessary to implement the plans. If the various actors' interests are ignored, resistance and delays in the decision-making process need to be expected. As a consequence, there is a demand for new approaches which facilitate the involvement of citizens in the planning process from the very beginning.

While for a long time, spatial analysis has been based solely on expert knowledge, today there is a growing recognition that 'lay knowledge' or 'local expertise' is valuable and can generate new insights into design and planning issues. Citizens, having a different view on spatial problems, are able to feed specific knowledge about their environment into the planning. They provide a more complete survey of problems and also can provide possible solutions. Their participation makes it possible to positively improve the quality of a plan (Van Den Brink et al., 2007).

Early and interactive participation enables citizens to take part directly and actively in the development of goals and ideas for a plan, and in the design or co-producing / plan-making. Going further up the ladder of citizen participation, they also may be empowered to participate in the final decision-making process (co-decide).

We asked the question about long-term effects generated by involving citizens in the decision-making process to a number of stakeholders who contributed to the development of the participatory approach to urban planning in our region. Here are some of their opinions:

- Perhaps participation hinders and slows down the planning process itself, but it brings potential effects in the long term (urban management expert).
- The most important is the increase in a real concern for the public space, including understanding that the quality of common space increases the market value of individual real estate. Further, a greater understanding is built of the need for joint activities, not limited to individual care for one's own home and garden or the commercial success of a planned individual investment (architect, academic).

They also itemize:

- Improvement of the quality of public space and public care for the maintenance of that space; strengthening of neighbour relations; minimization of conflicts during the investment implementation phase (academic, transportation planner).
- Identification with place, responsibility for the quality of space, closer interpersonal relationships, understanding of administrative processes, building ability to reach a compromise (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Inoculation of the conviction about public co-authorship of plans; avoiding conflicts by their early locating and prevention before escalation; limitation of corruption, nepotism and manipulation through the application of the principle of transparency; gaining the long-term trust in the community (landscape planner, academic).

⁹ The program was facilitated by is a nationwide NGO, Foundation for Local Democracy Development [FRDL].

- Increased trust in public governance, increased awareness, a sense of identity and connection with the commune (academic, planner).
- Involvement of citizens in the decision-making process results in mutualisation of this process and a deeper, stronger relation to its final effects. It affects the sense of pride and builds the identity of local communities. It should also reduce potential social conflicts. The consequence of such a change is the effective shortening of the time of implementation of subsequent investments as well as their lower cost (local level strategic planning officer).

15. Can you provide examples of how municipalities have improved the cooperation between public and private actors, citizens and NGOs in urban planning?

According to our respondents, there are not many examples of successful intersectoral collaboration.

- Incidents / ephemeral phenomena occur – contacts, discussions or even dialogue, but I do not see the premises for cooperation (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- One of the rare successful examples is PPP Gdów – recreational Raba Valley (2013-2015) –a project of tourism activation in which public and private businesses, NGOs and residents were involved. Through working meetings, a concept was developed that responds to the needs of all parties. To work on such a broad topic, the commune of Gdów, as the leading partner, delegated an employee supervising activity related to the consortium. Therefore, time and additional processing capacity were addressed to operate outside the normal scope of duties of the office (academic, planner).

16. How can the regional level play a part in improving participatory urban planning in your region?

Although the organization of participation in urban planning was entrusted in most cases to local governments, the amount of necessary measures to be taken to improve the process, including those related to the introduction of new formal, organizational, educational, and technical solutions, constitutes a significant barrier (economic and administrative) to carry them out on the local level. This applies in the first place to smaller centres but in some issues also applies to cities, including edge cities and the Functional Area as a whole.

As stated in numerous places above, the role of public administration is to involve citizens in ongoing participation even at the stage of diagnosing the situation. In the case of shaping the urban space, the opportunity to express the opinions still at the stage of fundamental discussion reduces the threat of public resistance at the very end of the process (e.g. at the stage of construction works).

In the case of such complex challenges as the management of the Functional Area, the principle of subsidiarity requires activities at the regional level in order to provide the public with a high-quality service.

According to different respondents, the most obvious and most important task, is education of various forms:

- Capacity building of municipality planning offices,
- Enhancement of knowledge transfer and initiation of intersectoral partnerships,
- Providing guidance for local governments,
- Providing funds (grants) for participatory processes in municipalities,
- Providing opportunities for design workshops dedicated to involvement of various stakeholders in decision-making.

Some of respondents also mention:

- Promoting the importance of cooperation for harmonious urban development (Architect, academic).

- Developing the competencies of municipal officers, engage experts and external organizations, implement good practices and try new solutions (Local level strategic planning officer).
- Inclusion of local communities in discussion of the existing expert advisory groups (committees).
- Broader consideration of the needs of participation and promotion of methods of increasing the public participation in the education of architects, urbanists, and planners, including life-long learning opportunities (Academic, transportation planner).

The regional level could also help to increase the transparency of activities by enhancing the accessibility of public information, particularly the information concerning urban planning in the field of spatial information systems [GIS].

Revitalization programs constitute a specific area of urban planning which also needs more coordination activities from the regional level.

Regional actors should promote revitalization as an important element of urban development of the Functional Areas, ensuring stability of rules, comprehensiveness as well as transparent monitoring and evaluation system.

Revitalization, concerning degraded areas, should be focused on including various development activities and various entities in achieving urban renewal, improving territorial qualities, and increasing their social and economic potential. That means undertaking various activities on the regional level towards the promotion and enhancement of revitalization as an important element of urban development.

The regional government, with the resources of EU funds for revitalization under the Regional Operational Program, should influence the coordination of revitalization projects at the local and supra-local level, and formulate implementation documents allowing for a diversified territorial intervention at the local level. Finally, the regional actors could create a set of appropriate mechanisms to ensure concentration and synchronization as well as the complexity of the revitalization process (KPM 2023, p.62).

17. How can guidance from regional actors develop in your region?

Regional actors support local governments e.g. when planning a comprehensive and attractive public transport offer. Another area of support could be an influence on transport behaviours and culture of sustainable, multimodal mobility. This could be supported under the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment and Regional Operational Programme.

Regional actors could cooperate with municipalities in investigation of residents' preferences and behaviours, promote good practices and model methods, and develop mechanisms of cooperation between local governments and the Central Statistical Office [GUS] in order to provide access to necessary objective data. Those might be complemented by subjective data from the locality-based surveys gathered e.g. through SoftGIS platforms.¹⁰

Regional and sub-regional institutions, considering their competences and scope of activities, should promote innovative solutions in balancing land for development, low-carbon policies, water management, and – regarding organizational, economic and technical aspects – urban planning in particular. They should carry out these tasks by disseminating standards, good practices, exemplary tender documents and technical documentation.

They should participate in the dialogue with local governments, public service providers, administrators of infrastructural networks, in order to identify problems and barriers, overcoming which may require changes or supplementing existing regulations. In this regard, regional institutions should be intermediaries and facilitators in dealing with national institutions (KPM 2023, p. 47).

¹⁰ An access to such a platform is currently (March 2019) offered to municipalities by Sendzimir Foundation (a leading environmental NGO) as part of the project "Wspólna Przestrzeń: Partycypacyjne planowanie przestrzenne w gminach" POWER 2014-2020.

According to our respondents:

- Regional guidelines in the field of urban planning can be developed by designating problem areas within KrOF, with the necessity to specify them (locally) still at the metropolitan level or by direct supervision over entries in municipal planning documents (Academic, planner).
- One can probably refrain from extending the scope of the necessary regional guidelines. First of all, the current guidelines should be reflected in locally created plans for entire municipalities. Such a general local plan, being a form of land-use or form-based plan, could increase the protection of spatial orderliness. It would indicate the location of the areas of special significance, including key public spaces, economic zones and other projects strongly affecting the environment (e.g. commercial centres, investments that may significantly affect the environment etc.). For those spaces (and only for them) it would be necessary to create detailed plans (Architect, academic).
- Regional guidelines for urban planning should consider the best practices from around the world and be preceded by a "testing" phase that could be implemented within an EU project. Guidelines should place particular emphasis on the socio-cultural landscape of the region and be complementary to existing provisions of strategic documents or indicate the direction of changes to those documents. Municipalities should be encouraged to apply the guidelines, and the process of their perception should be monitored. The use of participatory methods should be rewarded when applying for external funds (Local level strategic planning officer).
- Existing dissertations, monographs, and popularizing publications in this field, e.g.: (Zastawnik, 2013), (MIR, 2018), should be treated as sources of knowledge and inspiration (Academic, transportation planner).

Using the potential of ICT networks

Since communication and education were in our survey constantly mentioned as crucial areas, it seems that network, cooperation, and using new technologies might be key elements to bringing continuous educational system on a higher level. Sharing experience and gathering information from all over the region would be important for a new generation of citizenship, which should prepare residents for functioning in both the urban and global village.

Recent fundamental changes in society have had an influence on the relationship between government and citizens. Government power has become increasingly fragmented, while the interconnections and interdependencies within society have multiplied. In the network society, citizens feel they should have a say in the planning and decision-making processes which affect their living space. Moreover, developments in ICT have made the provision of information and access to it, as well as the continuous exchange of information, a key element of public life.

Current developments in the network society and internet technologies provide promising opportunities for citizen participation in decision-making. Thus, they may speed up the integration of interactive citizen participation in spatial planning. The new technologies might empower people not only to resist unwanted developments but also to take the initiative and effectively propose spatial developments (Däne, van den Brink, 2007). They have potentially broad application. For instance, SoftGIS technology improves internet-based surveys which allow the studies of human experiences and everyday behaviour. SoftGIS platform enables the combination of "hard" objective GIS data with "soft" quantitative and qualitative subjective data from the locality-based surveys.

Geo-visualisation and SoftGIS technologies have both educational and decision-making value in stimulating dialogue between citizens and authorities on various levels of governance, and may act as a catalyst to new forms of participatory spatial planning. The adoption of SoftGIS and geo-visualisation approaches by governmental spatial planning bodies may have a spin-off effect of integrating interactive participation into official procedures.

Why do we think it is viable?

In 2016, over 80% of Małopolska households had at least one computer at home. The disproportion of this indicator between the low and high degree of urbanization (city and country) is gradually diminishing. The same factors influence the percentage of households with access to the Internet, whereas in 2016, the share of households with Internet access has also reached over 80%. The percentage of people using the Internet in public places increased significantly - in 2016 it amounted to 22.2% (UMWM, 2017, p.311).

In 2016, Poland was in the group of six countries in which the penetration of mobile network access services exceeded 100%. In the report of the Ministry of Development "Prospects for the development of the Polish ICT industry by 2025" the segments were indicated of the highest forecasted growth dynamics and in which Poland has a chance to achieve specialization. Among them are: intelligent transport, game industry, ICT cloud technologies, Big Data, Internet of Things and cyber security (UMWM, 2017, p.316).

People using public administration services via the Internet in Małopolska in 2016 accounted for 34.8% of the population aged 16-74 (3.6 percentage points more than in the previous year). 92.9% of enterprises in Małopolska used e-government in 2015 (UMWM, 2017, p.313).¹¹

18. What is the most common challenge today when involving the public?

Lacking a democratic tradition in urban planning, public participation in that field is most often limited to the legal consultation procedures which are experienced as very formal. As public hearings are not demanded by law, they are rarely organised. Traditional methods of participation used at the levels of 'inform' and 'consult' (e.g. newsletters, displays, public meetings) are insufficient to facilitate interactive participation. There is a lack of effective procedures for consensus building and for responding to objections.

Municipalities are dependent on the distribution of political responsibilities and power. The lower and middle level functionaries – even if well-educated and able to comprehend and employ sustainability principles – are dependent on municipal directorate and council which are politically motivated and compliant to strong interest groups.

Planners' work is significantly impacted by the planning system and institutional arrangements.

Citizens are influenced by the general attitude towards participation in political decision-making.

If local authorities are not willing to organise participation, if planners are not skilled in cooperation with citizens and if citizens are not motivated to participate, any technique will not be effective.

The most basic challenge today is the systemisation and professionalization of citizen participation:

- indication of persons responsible in the municipalities for participatory processes (participation officers) and providing them with appropriate competencies;
- continuous education and intensive exchange of experiences between participation officers for capacity building in the region;
- systematization of participatory processes and fostering regularity of the debate on consistent planning policies in place of erratic consultations of singular documents.

Asked about the most common challenge today when involving the public, our respondents mention:

- Improvement of legal provisions (landscape planner, academic).
- Lack of a sense of agency among citizens (academic, environmental activist).
- Activation of society, which, in the absence of adequate financial and time resources at the municipality, is an even greater challenge (academic, planner).
- Overcoming the distrust of the local community, fears of manipulation, and the burden of their co-responsibility for the bad outcomes of plans (academic, transportation planner).
- Eliminate the authorities' fear that increased public participation will add to workload and make it more difficult to draw up and adopt a plan. Taking the effort to become acquainted with

¹¹ The use of e-government services means the use of websites related to civic matters (e.g. tax revenues, place of residence), social services (e.g. social security), official documents (e.g. IDs, birth certificates), public education services (e.g. libraries, information and recruitment to schools or universities), public health services (e.g. hospitals), excluding emails (UMWM, 2017, p.314).

sophisticated participatory planning methods and organizing their implementation (academic, transportation planner).

- Broadly understood education including awareness-building of the potential negative effects of non-involvement (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Developing the rules of partner cooperation between the public, the government, the business and the NGOs (local level strategic planning officer).
- The challenge is the costs of participation itself, as well as possible costs of compensation necessary while implementing the agreed solutions (local government strategic planning officer).
- It is necessary to provide legal, financial and intellectual support for municipalities in creating a model activity for enhanced participation (architect, academic).

19. What are the main issues in participatory urban planning that citizens are mostly interested in?

We asked this question to a number of stakeholders. Here are some of their opinions:

- The main issues in participatory urban planning that citizens are mostly interested in are safety, and recreation facilities (Urban designer).
- The more active citizens are interested in public transportation opportunities and public space quality (urban designer, academic)
- People are interested mostly in their private property. It is again the problem of civic society and the lack of adequate education. The only enthusiasts interested in planning and placemaking are NGO people (academic, planner).
- Particular interests prevail, for example: I have an agricultural plot - I want to change it into a construction site; I have a detached house - I do not want anyone to build anything around; I have children - I want to have a playground close to my home, but not too close to make no noise; I want to have wide roads and pavements - but certainly not at the expense of my site, and why it costs so much (local government strategic planning officer).
- The lack of a broader and longer perspective causes many problems (local level strategic planning officer).
- In my work as a designer, the most frequent problem occurring within cities is the lack of adequately available recreation space (parks, other green spaces). In the countryside, the main issue is the expectation of building opportunities on any plot adjacent to the road (or even further in the fields) (architect, academic).
- Citizens are mostly interested in whether or not their participation in the planning process actually influence the content and quality of the plan (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- Information about plans should be expansive and more direct. I estimate that a significant part of the population (especially in rural communes) does not know that such documents exist at all or what is their content and their role. It is not enough to announce that the plan is being prepared and that the documents currently in force and the proceedings are available at the commune office, on the Internet or on the formal display. The plan should be permanently presented in places frequented by residents (community centres, schools, bus shelters); drawings should be understandable for the average recipient, and the records should be given not only in the form of urbanist jargon. Ignorance of the plan's documentation, results i.e. in misleading potential customers of developers who hide, for example, the fact that a highway is planned in the proximity. Late awareness of such a fact causes a serious conflict (Academic, transportation planner).

20. What will be the challenges in the future if the region supports improving participatory urban planning? Which stakeholders or other governmental bodies should be involved in the process?

Since participation is today interpreted as a matter of generating knowledge as well as a matter of providing legitimacy, the involvement of 'lay citizens' or 'non-experts' in the plan-making process has great potential to raise the legitimacy, quality, and effectiveness of spatial plans.

Provision of sustainable funds for participatory meetings, consultations, workshops, commissioning of professional surveys, engagement of mediators, facilitators, visual communication specialists, production of professionally prepared graphic materials and visual media will be the challenge.

Other challenges would have more technical nature: investing in GIS and ICT tools that enable systematic elaboration and organization of GIS resources and web-based interactive maps, to develop ge-questionnaires for mapping places, phenomena and processes, analysing BigData, etc.

Interactive participation by citizens will make it necessary to deal with differences in language. Experts tend to use their own jargon, both spoken and written. It is essential to support communication by visual language as the only common language which all participants can relate to.

Visual language is usually easier to grasp but visual media do not necessarily provide a common ground for all participants. Two-dimensional maps demand a great effort from lay people to imagine what the proposed changes would actually mean in the landscape. Geo-visualisation may help to solve this problem.

We asked our respondents, which stakeholders or other governmental bodies should be involved in the process and how. They indicate:

- Not only planning services should be involved in the participatory urban planning in the municipality but also commune boards and officials including mayors, village headmen, and councillors (this opinion is shared by most of planning officers).
- The most important thing is to determine the form of cooperation between the communes and the sub-region (Krakow Metropolis). What about communes that will not want to cooperate? (Local government strategic planning officer).
- Advisory teams of local governments and specialized NGOs, such as the Krakow branches of the Association of Polish Urbanists, the Association of Engineers and Technicians of Communication, the Małopolska branch of the Polish Ecological Club, should be involved in the process (academic, transportation planner).
- If the region supports the enhancement of participation in urban planning, one of the biggest challenges, perhaps decisive for the effectiveness of such a body, will be the creation of a multi-disciplinary team of adequately prepared officials on the regional level, and ensuring the sustainability of its operation (NGO activist and urbanist specialised in revitalisation programmes).
- If the region / sub-region intervenes in the participation on the local level, it would make the complex and long-drawn planning procedure in communes even longer, which in turn may cause the whole participatory process to evolve back towards unwanted formality. Another solution would be more effective (with or without the involvement of the region): the participatory planning process in the commune should be continuous, accompanied by intermittent updates of the local plan [MPZP]. Updates would be a strictly technical activity resulting from the closure of a certain stage of a dialogue with stakeholders. The role of local authorities would be to secure public interest, involvement, and symmetry of the process (Local level strategic planning officer).
- A possibility to consider would be the creation of legally empowered, external research & design units with strictly defined competencies. These competencies could include more comprehensive coordination of planning activities, implementation of landscape audits with an extended scope, setting standards for the urban design and architectural competitions, establishing standards to support the quality of public space, information, and educational activities promoting good architecture and urban design, and substantive control of spatial planning documents.

Such a solution would meet the need for planning mediation between municipalities indicated in the draft Urban and Building Code (2017). Research & design units would, therefore, promote

coordination of activities, especially at the level of urban agglomerations. Recommendations of associations of professionals would decide on the selection of the appropriate group of experts. The units created in this way would have a potentially greater public authority (Korbel, 2019).

21. Give a good and bad example of how the public has been involved in a planning process. Concisely describe the reasons for it being a good/bad practice.

	Good practice
Name:	Participatory Planning of the Municipal Revitalisation Programme (GPR) in Skawina Commune , organized by Municipality of Skawina
Context:	<p>As a part of the Municipal Revitalization Program (GPR) for the Commune of Skawina, a number of coordinated participatory activities were carried out: Diagnostic Inquiry with a survey, Process planning workshops, Diagnostic Workshops / Participatory Appraisal as well as Planning and Briefing Workshops.</p> <p>As a part of Diagnostic Inquiry, a Survey was conducted among the residents of the Skawina Commune rural areas (divided into villages) and for the city of Skawina. In the traditional survey (paper questionnaires) and digital one (online form), a total of 2018 residents took part. Regarding the structure of respondents, a greater share of women than men was reported (in the city they constituted 55.8% of respondents while in rural areas - 53%).</p> <p>A significant share of the respondents were young people, aged 15-34 (50% in the city and 37.3% in rural areas). The second largest group was those of middle age of 35-64. The seniors were therefore the least-represented group in this study. People over the age of 65 made up only 5.2% of respondents in the city and 11.8% in rural areas.</p> <p>Consultations carried out in the first stage of the work were preceded by 16 Process planning workshops organized in November and December 2015. The aim of the workshops was to collect opinions of residents about the situation in the village or housing estate, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current problems and needs of residents, • vision of the future of the village / housing estate • places of special importance to respondents. <p>An important element of the public space evaluation was to indicate places that would meet the needs of residents, where people usually meet, spend their free time, which are accessible for everyone, conducive to social contacts, activation and integration of different age groups. During the meetings, the Diagnostic Workshop / Participatory Appraisal methods were used. A total of over 200 people took part in the workshops.</p> <p>As a part of the first stage of the Municipal Revitalization Program development, Planning and Briefing Workshops were held to identify degraded areas (OZ) and revitalization areas (OR). Eight workshops were held with OZ and OR stakeholders in eight different locations in the city of Skawina and the villages of Rzozów and Zelczyna. 12 to 48 people participated in each of them.</p> <p>Consultations of the draft Resolution on the designation of OZ and OR as well as the composition and operation principles of the Skawina Revitalization Committee (Community advisory group) were conducted in the form of Community Meetings held in four locations.</p> <p>As part of the preparation of the GPR, six in-depth interviews were conducted with local leaders (stakeholders of sub-areas of revitalization). Besides, the characteristics of those sub-areas, were consulted with representatives (usually headmen) of villages in which sub-areas of revitalization were designated.</p> <p>In the second stage of elaboration of the GPR, the meetings were held with stakeholders of the revitalization process, regarding the preparation of projects responsive to diagnosed problems. Discussions, divided into sub-areas of revitalization, took place in four different locations in the commune.</p> <p>The conclusions from the all participatory activities were used in the in-depth analysis of the sub-areas of revitalization and for the identification of key problems / challenges for the entire area of revitalization in the commune.</p>
Main stakeholders involved:	Residents of the Skawina Commune, including local leaders, were the main stakeholders involved.
Web links:	Reports from the workshops are available online: http://www.gminaskawina.pl/index.php?option=16&action=&cat_id=90&menu_id=554&page=42
Why is the practice considered as "good"/ "bad"	A sequence of actions was planned and implemented using various techniques.

	<p>The participation was relatively large. At the stage of diagnosis, more than two thousand residents of the commune took part in the Inquiry. More than 200 people participated in diagnostic workshops.</p> <p>The area of activity was divided, depending on the stage, into 4, 8 and 16 areas. This reduced the distance between the organizers and addressees of the techniques.</p> <p>The conclusions from the meetings and workshops were published and used in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-depth analysis of sub-areas of revitalization, • identification of key problems / challenges for the area of revitalization, • identification and definition of projects to respond to identified problems and challenges.
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	Bad Practice
Name:	Implementation of the Sustainable Mobility Plan [SUMP] in the Parish of Rzozów, organized by Municipality of Skawina
Context:	<p>Implementation of the Sustainable Mobility Plan [SUMP] for the Skawina Commune, in the implementation area of the pedestrian & bicycle route along the County Road 1939K in Rzozów, to connect the intersection of the Regional Road No. 953 with the Metropolitan Railway stop of Rzozów and the planned stop of Rzozów Central.</p> <p>The goal was to improve the safety of users, reduce the speed on the County Road, and eliminate the heavy traffic.</p>
Main stakeholders involved:	Residents of the village of Rzozów, and users of the County Road 1939K.
Web links:	https://bip.malopolska.pl/umiqskawina,a,1567946,petycja-nr-4.html
Why is the practice considered as "good"/ "bad"	<p>Consultations of this task began at the stage of the Mobility Plan for Skawina Commune preparation. The introduction of the pedestrian and bicycle route to the document was as a result of the residents' requests to raise safety along the County Road, build the pavement, and calm down the traffic. On the basis of the provisions of the Mobility Plan, the Commune proceeded with the implementation of the Functional and Utility Program [PFU] for this task.</p> <p>The PFU was publicly available and gained particular interest from two residents of the village. In their request, the route was shifted to the other side of the road and several additional traffic-calming measures were introduced. In the meantime, the project was presented at a village meeting and did not meet with any kind of objection among residents. Then a site visit was organized, as well as an enquiry walk organized by the headman of Rzozów.</p> <p>Only five residents participated in the walk. After the final version of PFU was elaborated, its presentation was held as part of a village gathering. During this meeting, the residents also did not express any critical opinions about the planned investment.</p> <p>On such a basis, the Commune has launched a tender for the implementation of the investment for which, based on PFU, it had received a subsidy of 85% from external funds. Then, a group of residents who had not taken part in any consultations, filed a petition signed by about 500 people, demanding the cessation of work on the investment, motivating their demands with the possibility of entering private premises and changing the boundaries of plots adjacent to the investment, as well as a decrease of the capacity, speed and safety of drivers moving along the road.</p> <p>It is worth emphasizing, that the majority of persons signed under the petition were not residents of Rzozów and had been using the road only to pass through the village. However, as a result of the petition, another village meeting was convened, during which the residents decided to withdraw from the investment consisting of the pedestrian and bicycle route (3 meters wide), for the pedestrian sidewalk alone (2,3 meters wide).</p> <p>In result, the municipality would lose external co-financing for the implementation of the project of the pedestrian and bicycle route, and the construction of pavement would take place in an unspecified future.</p> <p>The key to the failure of the process was the low involvement of the main stakeholders in the initial stages of consultations, and the participation (on equal rights) of the stakeholders representing interests opposite to the residents in the last stage of the process.</p> <p>Another aspect was the lack of understanding of technical conditions, legal requirements, and restrictions concerning implementation of that type of infrastructure.</p>

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