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COHESION OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONS IN THE CONDITIONS OF A TERRITORIALY-ORIENTED POLICY

Abstract: The aim of the article is to identify the degree of cohesion of goals and needs of functional areas development with targets defined in the development of communes and a region. The functional areas: urban and sub-regional of Opole Province make the case study here. The study was conducted on the basis of documents which deal with planning and programming of the development of regional, local, as well as functional areas. As a result of the study, it was established that: the degree of adjustment of the targets defined in the development of functional areas is higher with reference to goals of the regional rather than local development. This results from greater possibilities of financing them through external means than those assigned for the needs of local development. Regarding the aspect of spatial planning, the main barrier to achieving cohesion of the spatial structure is a different range of functional areas determined for the needs of regional planning and areas formed as organizational units.

Key words: territorially oriented development, spatial planning, programming development, goals of development, cohesion, functional areas

JEL codes: R11, R58

1. Introduction

The regional policy of the European Union in the years 2014–2020 is being realized with taking into account the so-called territorial approach (Słodowa-Hełpa, 2014, Szlachta, Zaucha, 2014, Noworól, 2013, McCann, Ortega-Argilés, 2013, Żuber, 2011). This particular approach assumes addressing mechanisms of development to functional areas, its task being, among others, to accomplish spatial, economic

and social cohesion through making use of internal resources of development (Kormornicki, Zaucha, 2014, Szlachta, 2011). The conditions behind an effective realization of this approach are, first of all, the following: distinguishing functional areas, long-term programming of development and de-centralized manner of management (*Krajowa...*, 2010, p. 7–8). Despite defined guidelines and principles of distinguishing functional areas indicated in the source documents and scholarly publications (Heffner, Gibas, 2014a, 2014b, Śleszyński, 2013, Andersen, 2002), there is chaos reigning in the practice of regional development regarding this sphere. Functional areas of different types and different sizes are distinguished, which – at the same time – become addressees of the development policy. It is run parallel at the local and regional levels and with reference to functional areas. This situation restricts possibilities of accomplishing cohesion in the scope of programming and planning of development of regions.

A new model of regional development which is created through implementation of the territorial dimension of the development policy, requires harmonizing goals of strategic and spatial development (Szafranek, 2015, Noworól, 2013, p. 162). The stage of programming and planning the development is of the key importance to reaching effectiveness of development processes. At this stage, targets are defined and – on the basis of them – tasks are set to be undertaken in the successive years. Incompatibility of the assumed goals in different program documents with reference to the same areas limits the cohesion of the process of development. This is a most vital question in the situation, where the process is conditioned by acquiring structural means from the EU. Development of regions in Poland in the years 2014–2020 is – a large extent – dependent on financial support from EU funds. The possibility of their acquisition and usage in the development process is conditioned by a number of factors, among others, by the necessity of preserving cohesion at the stage of planning and programming the development process (*Fundusze...*, 2014). In practice, this is expressed by the necessity of adjusting projects being realized to concrete goals written in documents of strategic development. As far as the regional development of Poland is concerned, they include: strategy of local development,¹ strategy of regional development, strategy of development of the country, national and regional operational programs, and also – in the case of functional areas – the strategy of Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI). It seems, thus, that maintaining cohesion between the goals contained in ITI strategies and those defined in programme documents referring also to the development of these areas is a most significant task to accomplish.

The aim of the article is to identify the degree of cohesion of goals and needs of functional areas development with targets defined in the development of communes (forming the given functional area) and a region. Determination of the cohesion of these goals is made in the dimension of strategic programming and spatial planning. Functional areas: urban and sub-regional, which are established within the space of Opole Province, were selected for the case study. In the first part of the

¹ It is not an obligatory document, yet procedures of competition demand that the given project to be realized from the EU means in the area of a commune should go in line with a concrete target of its development written in the development strategy.

article, the essence of the development policy oriented territorially is presented, on the basis of which the main determinants of planning and programming of the development for territorial units are indicated. The empirical research was conducted for chosen functional areas. Program and planning documents of individual territorial units, which were accepted on the basis of relevant resolutions² and covered the years 2014–2020, made the source of information. In the practice of development policy these documents make the foundation of undertaking actions and realizing the process of socioeconomic and spatial development of the examined area. The basis of the comparative research was identification of the goals behind the development of the functional areas and then referring them to the targets of the development of Opole Province, as well as those of the development of communes forming individual areas. In this case, cross-impact matrix was used, on the basis of which the convergence was determined of each goal of a functional area development with those of the development of the province and then with the goals of the development of communes. In this way the number of such goals of functional areas development that were compatible with the goals of the development of the province and individual communes was established. The sum of the goals of the functional areas development, which were acknowledged to be congruent with the compared goals of other units, made the foundation to determine the percent share of compatibility of the goals.

2. The policy of territorially-oriented development

The current regulations of the European cohesion policy and Polish policy of development, which point to the territorial dimension of public policies, assume a transition from a sector-based approach to one that is integrated and territorially oriented as far as management of development is concerned. It takes into account social, economic and spatial changes in regions, as well as growing expectations of effectiveness of undertaken actions and spending public means (*Strategie...*, 2015, p. 5). An integrated package of investments is projected in this approach, which primarily makes use of internal potentials of areas and, next – also of their ability to acquire exogenous factors. The new paradigm of regional policy, apart from its orientation at taking advantage of endogenous potentials of individual areas with the aim to create growth, employment and cohesion in the country, assumes the following: realization of goals connected with cohesion, including support for problem areas, as well as competitiveness and institutional effectiveness (*Krajowa...*, 2010, p. 7–8.).

Fabrizio Barca (2009) put forward the territorial approach as a political strategy aimed at supporting development through actions adjusted to a given situation. Formally, this approach means a long-term strategy of development with the aim to decrease the permanent incapacity of development and inequality in the given area.

² Strategies of communes' development are accepted through resolutions passed by commune councils, development strategies for a province – through decisions of the provincial assembly, ITI strategies for functional areas – on the power of decisions taken by boards of associations/partnerships/unions.

It is assumed that development, as regards economic, social and spatial spheres, can be strengthened in almost every place through linking suitably adjusted institutions, as well as integrated public investments, planned in the process of interaction of factors which are internal and external to the given place.

With reference to the concept presented by Barca, it is recommended to adopt a practical framework of the territorial approach in Poland, in compliance with which it is assumed that (*Zintegrowane...*, 2013, p. 11):

- for development to follow, there is a need for cooperation of both local and external stakeholders, with a simultaneous curbing of the so-called “striving for annuity”;
- the subject responsible for the development of a given area is to emphasize the significance of the development of the given “place” for the country and the development of the country for the state of this “place”;
- the development is to be the result of horizontal and vertical contacts and cooperation of organs responsible for the development of units in different spatial scales.

The territorially-oriented approach proves that there does not exist one universal model to shape policies in a modern way. It is stressed that such an approach makes it possible to increase the effectiveness of policies with a simultaneous decrease in costs of their implementation.

New instruments have been introduced in the EU and in Poland for the policy oriented territorially for the period of 2014–2020, the ITI being of the key importance among them. They should be applied in the cases when strategies of development of territorial units require realization of projects within more than one priority axis of one or a few operational programs. Moreover, the ITI promote an integrated use of European Funds, as well as hold potential to obtain better results at the same costs of public investments (Ratuszniak, 2013, p. 2). It has been accepted that actions of the territorial character, which are realized within the ITI should follow in three basic dimensions (*Zintegrowane...*, 2013, p. 10.):

- intelligent economic growth (*e.g.*, strengthening of functional dependences, benefits of agglomerations, increase in the significance of social capital, networking);
- sustainable economic growth (taking advantage of resources of the space for renewable energy resources, shaping consolidated sustainable cities, development of pro-ecological transport, ecological corridors);
- economic growth favoring social inclusion (activation of population and facilitation of availability of work and services).

The above-mentioned dimensions mark out possibilities of financing tasks directed to be realized within determined areas. Thus, the formulated targets of the development of particular areas should concern the indicated dimensions.

Another condition behind the realization of the territorial dimension of development policy is distinguishing functional areas. As regards this scope, they have been defined in Concept of Spatial Development of the Country 2030 (CSDC 2030) (*Koncepcja...*, 2012), while their formal-legal sense has materialized through the Act on principles of running a policy of development (*Ustawa o zasadach...*, art. 7, pkt. 1a).

According to the CSDC 2030 (*Koncepcja...*, 2012, p. 182) and also in compliance with legal acts (Ustawa o planowaniu..., art. 2, pkt 6a; Ustawa o zasadach..., art. 7, pkt. 1a), a functional area is a consolidated spatial system consisting of functionally connected areas which are characterized by common conditions and anticipated uniform goals of development. For the use of running the development policy, these areas have also been defined in a document which determines principles of strategic programming, according to which a functional area is a spatially distinguished specific territorial complex characterized by common geographical features (socio-geographical and spatial) (*Aktualizacja strategii...*, p. 33).

In the case of each approach, there are distinguished different types and kinds of functional areas. However, from the point of view of realization of the policy of regional development, it is of key importance to differentiate between functional areas due to their significance in the regional and spatial policies. In this sense, they are functional areas of the supra-regional (great importance to the spatial policy of the country), regional (a considerable impact on the spatial policy in the given province), or local (considerable significance in the spatial policy of communes) significance (Ustawa o zasadach..., rozdz. 4a, art. 49a, b).

Marking out functional areas of the determined significance results in acceptance of a new model of running development policy and spatial policy. Strategies (or programs) of development and plans of spatial development are considered to be the foundation of implementation decisions. In this way a new structure of the so-called territorial planning is formed, in which administrative divisions are of the secondary importance. Thus, functional areas require harmonizing targets and directions of development in the horizontal and vertical dimensions.

3. The functional areas in Opole Province

The following functional areas were distinguished taking into account the space-planning framework: urban (the capital center and sub-regional ones), rural, ones being a special phenomenon on the macro-regional scale, ones forming developmental potential, ones that require programming of protective actions, ones that require restructuring and development of new functions, and those with a high intensity of negative demographic phenomena (*Koncepcja zmiany planu ...*, 2015, p. 8–41). However, treating the territorially oriented approach in the sense of direct shaping of development of functional areas, those of urban centers – central and sub-regional – should be regarded as the most important. In the case of the other functional areas, there are no subjects established which would be responsible for managing them, yet their development is conditioned by decisions taken by the authorities of local or central governments relevant to the given self-governmental unit that is identical with the administrative one.

The functional areas which are formed around urban centers have two different sources of decision taking. The first case is appointing by the regional authorities for the use of realization of the spatial policy of the province, and the other – setting up upon the initiative proceeding from the ranks, as associations of *gminas*

(communes) and *poviats* (counties) expressing the will to create a functional area. The spatial ranges of both types of functional areas are divergent. It must be noted that the area of a commune which has accessed an organization of the functional-area character does not automatically become a part of it in the geographical or space-planning sense. Nonetheless, it is these organizations that are capable of obtaining means and realizing projects that serve to integrate the functional area. A comparison of the basic features and ranges of the functional areas accepted in the plan of spatial development of the province and units that formally are organizations is presented in Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2.

Of all the functional areas mentioned in Table 1, Opole Agglomeration has the biggest population potential and counts among the so-called urban functional areas of a regional center. The other functional areas belong to the group of urban functional areas of a sub-regional center. In compliance with the idea assumed in the CSDC 2030, they are determined by the self-government of the Province for areas located around cities with the population ranging between 50 and 100 thousand, which play an important role as centers concentrating economic and social functions. They are also places providing public services which are vital from the perspective

Table 1. Basic features of the urban and sub-regional functional areas of Opole Province

Name of the area	Size of the area and population	Date of establishing as an organizational unit	Number and structure of units of territorial self-government forming the functional area
Opole Agglomeration	a 2,369 km ² 337,398 people	14 November 2013	22 communes
	b 2,187 km ² 323,842 people		21 communes (incl. a town with the rights of a county)
Kędzierzyn-Koźle Functional Area	a 1,200 km ² 162,971 people	5 June 2013	2 counties, 11 communes; a bipolar system
	b 1,102 km ² 141,866 people		
Nysa Functional Area Nysa Partnership	a 218 km ² 58,132 people	25 March 2013	1 urban-rural commune
	b 2,469 km ² 244,909 people		3 counties, 14 communes
Kluczbork-Olesno-Namysłów Functional Area	a 2,573 km ² 180,500 people	10 September 2013	1 urban-rural commune
	b 217 km ² 36,781 people		3 counties, 19 communes
Brzeg Functional Area	a 665 km ² 73,820 people	June 2014	1 county, 5 communes (incl. 3 located in Opole Province and 2 in Lower Silesia Province)
	b 337 km ² 53,823 people		

a – functional area in the spatial policy of the province; b – functional area as an organizational unit

Source: author's own elaboration on the basis of primary sources: *Strategia Rozwoju Aglomeracji Opolskiej na lata 2014–2020*, Opole 2014; *Strategia Rozwoju Subregionu Kędzierzyńsko-Kozielskiego do roku 2020*, Kędzierzyn-Koźle 2015; *Strategia rozwoju obszaru funkcjonalnego Kluczbork – Namysłów – Olesno 2015–2020*; *Strategia rozwoju współpracy Subregionu Brzeskiego na lata 2014–2020 z perspektywą do roku 2025. Program rozwoju obszaru funkcjonalnego Subregionu Brzeskiego (projekt)*, Brzeg 2014 and BDL (www.stat.gov.pl; date of access: 28.06.2015)

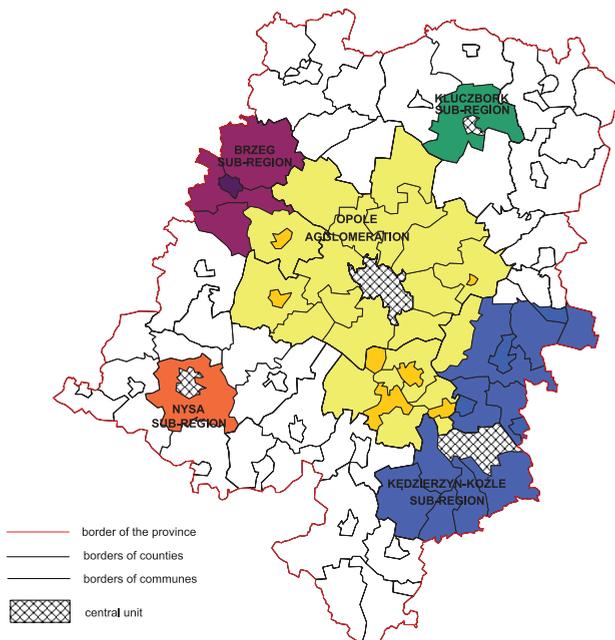


Fig. 1. Urban and sub-regional functional areas of Opole Province in the spatial policy
Source: author's own elaboration.

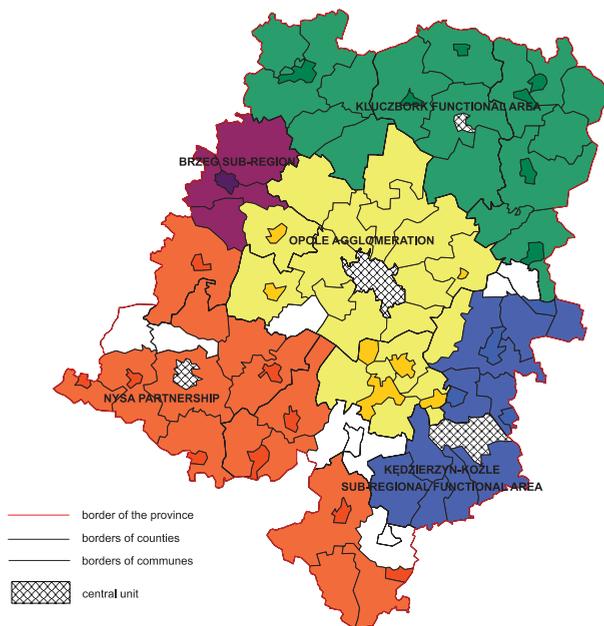


Fig. 2. Urban and sub-regional functional areas of Opole Province as organizational forms
Source: author's own elaboration.

of both their inhabitants and those of peripheral areas (*Koncepcja...*, 2012, p. 178). In the case of the above-mentioned functional areas, one can perceive strong differentiation due to human potential and size of the area. The largest functional areas distinguish themselves also by a very strong differentiation of the functional-spatial structure. Each of the functional areas existing in Opole Province, which came into existence as organizational forms, is larger and therefore varied to a greater extent than it is indicated in the CSDC 2030 or in the spatial-planning document for Opole Province. Acceptance of such differentiated functional areas and their introduction into the policy of regional and spatial development inhibit the cohesion of formulating the goals of spatial development with those of the socioeconomic character.

4. Conditions of forming and assessing the cohesion of goals of functional areas development

The existing divergences in the size, potential and the functional-spatial structure of the functional areas impose a vital limitation to cohesive spatial planning. Working out a plan of spatial development of the province refers to the functional areas distinguished in the spatial policy and it is to such units that that defined directions and tools of action are addressed. At the same time, in each of the organizations composing a functional area, preparations were made to launch studies on the conditionings and directions of spatial development or to procure another document of the planning character, like *Strategy of Transport of the Functional Area of Nysa Partnership 2020* or *Communication Study of Opole Agglomeration*. Implementation of the above-mentioned examples of program documents will influence qualitative changes in the spatial sphere of the examined areas in a direct manner. On the other hand, concepts behind these changes do not make reference to the plan of spatial development, which is being elaborated, therefore they will not be cohesive in all the cases.

The fact that seven communes have not agreed to belong to any of the functional areas is a vital aspect limiting the cohesion of the spatial planning. In consequence, they make “blank spots” on the map of the Province, which are not covered by projects of changes in the spatial development. Thus, the areas of the communes do not secure cohesion or continuity of the spatial structure in the region.

Comparing the accepted strategic targets (or priorities) of the development of individual functional areas with those behind the development of the province, one can easily notice a close similarity between them. The determinant behind formulating the developmental goals for the functional areas are records of Regional Operational Program for Opole Province 2014–2020 (ROP OP 2014–2020), which – in compliance with the ministerial directives – defines the principles and possibilities of financing tasks for functional areas (*Planowanie...*, 2013, p. 4). The key role in this respect is played by the principles of realization of the ITI. The targets should be appropriate to the developmental needs of the functional areas, yet must also remain in accordance with the principles of qualifying tasks for the ITI financing procedures. It should be underlined that due to the impossibility of applying the ITI

for sub-regional areas in the full dimension, not all of the mentioned targets can be financed from the ROP OP 2014–2020. Only Opole Agglomeration is covered with full financing of the ITI within the ROP OP 2014–2020. As it is indicated in the document, it is only tasks within the priority axis, that is Competitive economy (action: development/improvement of investment-designed areas) and Low-carbon economy (actions: energy-efficient public buildings and low-carbon dioxide strategies) which can be financed from the Program. Additional conditional support has been assumed for partner projects in the scope of the following: water-sewage management, waste management, support for preschool education and general education, social inclusion, prolonging professional activity (*Regionalny Program...*, 2014, p. 52–207). The above-presented short list of actions which can be financed from the ROP OP 2014–2020 entails the need to apply for means to cover the realization of the assumed goals within the domestic operational programs. This fact can be a decisive factor in a lower than the assumed effectiveness of realization of the accepted goals.

The presented assumptions result in determining, in the strategies of development of these areas, such targets that go in line with the possibility of obtaining financial means for their realization (Table 2).

As presented in the table above, the juxtaposition of the aims of the development of the functional areas with the priorities and actions defined in the ROP OP

Table 2. Juxtaposition of the goals of the development of functional areas with the priorities financed from the RPO OP 2014–2020

Goals or priorities of the development of functional areas	Priorities/actions financed from the ROP OP 2014–2020						
	Competitive economy	Low-carbon economy	Water-sewage management	Waste management	Preschool education and general education	Social inclusion	Prolonging professional activity
OPOLE AGGLOMERATION							
New investments and raising the economic activity of the inhabitants	x						x
Promoting low-carbon strategies and application of renewable energy sources in the public sector		x					
High quality of education					x	x	
Cultural heritage and culture	x						x
BRZEG SUB-REGION							
Improving the technical and organizational conditions for dynamic economic development	x			x			
Building a sub-regional system of public services on the basis of modern infrastructure					x	x	
Raising the economic competitiveness based on the cultural and nature's heritage and increasing energy efficiency	x	x					

Goals or priorities of the development of functional areas	Priorities/actions financed from the ROP OP 2014–2020						
	Competitive economy	Low-carbon economy	Water-sewage management	Waste management	Preschool education and general education	Social inclusion	Prolonging professional activity
KĘDZIERZYN-KOŹLE SUB-REGION							
Competitive economy based on knowledge, quality of labor resources and innovations	x						
Protecting natural resources, their rational usage for increasing the quality of socioeconomic life		x	x	x			
Effective integration of developmental processes as regards technical and spatial aspects							x
High quality of provided public services					x		
KLUCZBORK-OLEŚNO-NAMYŚLÓW SUB-REGION							
Raising the investment attractiveness, strengthening the innovative potential of the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises, opening of companies to foreign markets	x						
Implementing solutions of integrated, low-carbon public transport and expanding the transport-related availability of the Functional Area		x					
Revitalizing public spaces, housing and social infrastructure	x					x	
Improving the quality of education, modernizing educational resources, raising the availability of high quality educational services and connecting education with economy					x		x
Developing the infrastructure of healthcare, promotion of healthy lifestyle and prevention of civilization diseases						x	
Demographic development with a particular focus on prevention of the phenomenon of depopulation						x	
Developing culture, spa and active tourism, as well as management in tourism	x						
Developing the infrastructure of sustainable exploitation of natural environment resources, developing low-carbon economy and protection of biodiversity and areas valuable for their natural assets		x	x	x			
Perfecting the system of protection against threats of natural or manmade disasters; raising the effectiveness of actions undertaken by services of public security			x	x			

Source: author's own elaboration on the basis of primary sources.

2014–2020 as projects possible to be financed, shows a high degree of cohesion of the targets under consideration. Irrespective of the number, and hence the detailed character of the accepted goals of the development, in the case of each of the functional areas, all the assumed goals go in line with the scope of priorities and tasks included in the ROP OP 2014–2020. Decidedly the largest number of targets behind the development of the functional areas concern promoting competitive economy. Accordingly, the accepted goals are connected with different dimensions of competitiveness, appropriately to the functional structure and specialization of individual functional areas, however most often concerning development of investment areas. The second priority of the ROP OP 2014–2020, which the goals of the development of the functional areas are often connected with, is low-carbon dioxide economy. This priority is, at the same time, a requirement of realization of the EU's regional policy, which Polish economy is expected to be successively adjusting to. Such a situation causes the priority to be binding on the level of both the country and its provinces, and therefore the necessity of carrying it out has been transferred onto functional areas, as well. In the case of the examined areas, the approach to realization of low-carbon economy is connected primarily with obtaining energy from renewable sources and also with advancing sustainable low-carbon dioxide transport. Moreover, there are actions linked to this category, which aim at rational taking advantage of resources of natural environment and their protection.

The other actions which offer the chance of financing projected aims and tasks of the development of the functional areas within the ROP OP 2014–2020 also find their reflection in defined targets of development of individual functional areas, though to a lesser degree. The weakest relation concerns building and/or modernizing water-sewage management, as well as prolonging social activity.

Another dimension of the study is making comparisons between the goals of the development of each of the functional areas and those of the strategic development of communes composing the given functional area. The basis of the assessment of the considered goals cohesion were cross-impact matrices, in which, for each functional area the targets of their development were juxtaposed with the goals of the development of local units forming the given functional area. Because of the different methodology of elaborating the strategy of development of individual territorial and local government units, it was maximally the second level of detailed specification of the considered goals which was accepted as the basis of their comparison (they were general goals or strategic/detailed ones). For each functional area there was a separate matrix created, on the basis of which the degree of similarity of the goals was determined. The occurrence of a development target in development strategies (or a local development program) of each commune was identified, which would be cohesive with at least one development target of a functional area. On the basis of the number of communes, whose development strategies contained aims convergent with those of the development of a functional area, the degree of cohesion of programming of the strategic development was determined. The final result of the study is presented in Table 3.

The obtained result of the comparative study (Table 3) points to a varied degree of cohesion of the goals of local development with those of the development of

the functional areas. It is a reflection of consequences of programming the development, but has also been determined by: the degree of detailing the formulated targets behind the development on both levels of programming and possession of valid documents of strategic development by individual communes.

The highest similar degree of cohesion of local development goals with the development of functional areas has been achieved by Opole Agglomeration and Kędzierzyn-Koźle Sub-Region. The obtained result shows that in these areas the majority of targets behind their development finds its reflection in over 50% of the communes forming the functional area. Thus, a large number of the communes do not have any goals of development, considered on the level of a functional area, included in their strategies or local programs of development. This means that the need to realize this type of initiatives has not been perceived in this group of communes. An average cohesion of comparable targets is noticed in Brzeg Sub-Region. The lowest degree of cohesion of goals occurred in the case of Kluczbork – Namysłów – Olesno functional area, the low result being the effect of, among others, the lowest share, as regards the examined units, of communes which possess a document to program their development. However, it was decided that if a commune does not possess a document delineating the perspective of its development, then it does not have defined goals of development. The obtained result shows that fewer than a half of

Table 3. Cohesion of the goals of development of communes with the goals of development of functional areas

Functional area	Goals of development of functional area	Number of communes defining a goal convergent with a goal of development of functional area	Degree of cohesion of goals (%)
Opole Agglomeration (total of 21 communes)	1	20	95.2
	2	7	33.3
	3	16	76.2
	4	11	52.4
Brzeg Sub-Region (total of 5 communes)	1	3	60.0
	2	1	20.0
	3	2	40.0
Kędzierzyn-Koźle Sub-Region (total of 11 communes)	1	6	54.5
	2	5	45.5
	3	8	72.7
	4	9	81.8
Kluczbork- Namysłów- Olesno Sub-Region (total of 16 communes)	1	7	43.8
	2	4	25.0
	3	2	12.5
	4	4	25.0
	5	3	18.7
	6	6	37.5
7	1	6.3	
8	7	43.8	
9	6	37.5	

Source: author's own elaboration.

the communes forming the functional area plan to realize the targets behind their development. In the case of a few of the goals it is less than 25%. It can therefore be concluded that cohesion of programming the development in this sub-region is very low. This does not mean that the defined goals behind the development of the functional area are improper or not acceptable by units of the local government.

When considering the cohesion of programming with reference to domains of development, the goals relating to the economic development are characterized by the highest cohesion in all of the functional areas. They are connected with shaping the investment attractiveness and stimulation of local entrepreneurship through improvement of investment areas, raising inhabitants' business activity, modernization of the economic structure and acquisition of new investments. A high degree of cohesion has also been found regarding the goals connected with revitalization of social and technical infrastructure, primarily in the sphere of public services, including education, healthcare and urban economy management. The both of the listed groups of goals are defined in all the communes which have documents of strategic development. A lower degree of cohesion is seen in the scope of new challenges of the territorially-oriented policy, and – in particular – developing low-carbon economy and creating integrated partnership for development. The obtained result is an effect of natural processes, since economic and social development make traditional programming categories. New challenges have not been included in the documents of strategic development on the local level as there is no such an obligation. Thus, as long as these tasks are not introduced as priorities and are not supported with possibilities of their financing with external means, communes do not acknowledge them to be important in the sphere of long-term development.

Analyzing the type of tasks contained in the priorities and actions of the ROP OP 2014–2020, going in line with realization of identified targets of local development, it can be seen that the goals, whose achievement requires carrying out tasks of the spatially concentrated character, display the highest degree of adjustment. In the case of the functional areas, it is anticipated that new investment zones will be established in precisely appointed areas, mostly urban ones. This situation causes the majority of communes which form a given functional area not to participate directly in the realization of the accepted task. According to relevant assumptions, such communes are supposed to draw indirect benefits from the realization of such a goal on the principle of diffusion of the development process. The remaining targets require realization of tasks of either dispersed or linear-network character. In the case of the first group, the targets are connected with tasks of infrastructural investments and intellectual nature in each of the communes, but relating to different objects or social groups. This means that each of the communes would participate in realizing goals of development of the functional area, yet to a small degree, in the form of individual investments. The second group of goals refers to tasks which concern building or modernization of infrastructure of the network character, such as water-sewage or communication networks. Several communes can take part in realization of this type of tasks in a direct way, hence the real cohesion should be high.

5. Conclusion

The aims and priorities the functional areas development, as well as that of the province and communes, have been selected upon a diagnosis of the socioeconomic state of these areas, determination of the most vital potentials and needs of their development. In the case of identification of goals connected with the development of functional areas, selection of priority goals, whose realization could improve the functioning of the whole functional area has been of the key importance. Furthermore, concrete areas realized within the Integrated Territorial Investments are presented in the Regional Operational Program for Opole Province 2014–2020, which has determined the establishment of priorities. The following are mentioned to be cohesive with these directives which concern the development of the functional areas: preparation of sites for investments, low-carbon economy and supporting the cultural and natural heritage, and also building a partnership-based management model. These targets display a high degree of cohesion with goals of regional development, yet much lower in comparison with needs of local development. This is a consequence of defining goals of development by functional areas appropriately to the possibilities of financing them with external means. The needs of development of individual communes which form a functional area are of lesser significance in this respect. In the case of spatial planning, the main barrier to achieving cohesion of the spatial structure is a different range of functional areas established for the needs of regional planning and areas established as organizational units.

Reassuring, formation of cohesion of programming and planning of development in the practical framework is conditioned first of all by the possibility of acquiring financial means for realization of defined tasks. Such an approach is not characterized by long-term perspective influencing of the development of regions, but by adjustment of implemented actions to the needs of a current period of programming. This situation does not guarantee shaping the spatial and socioeconomic cohesion of the region in the long run. Instead, it facilitates realization of tasks regarded as the most important in the given period of time.

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