



National Report Regional Sustainable Development

Poland



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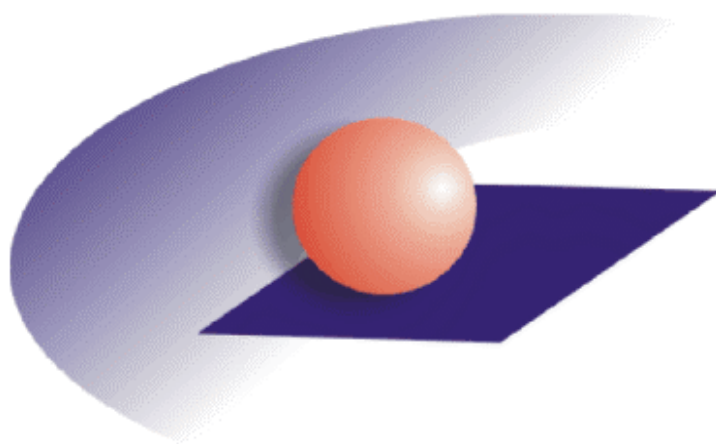
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Introduction

This National Report on regional sustainable development in Poland has been written as part of the REGIONET project. REGIONET (Strategies for Regional Sustainable Development: An Integrated Approach beyond Best Practice) is a research project funded under the EU's 5th framework programme for research. The main objective of the project was to provide an integrated and interdisciplinary approach to support the implementation of sustainable development in regions across Europe.

The project team of REGIONET consisted of sixteen partners coming from fourteen different European countries (current and new Member States). Early on in the project's running time, the idea came up to use this opportunity and develop a comprehensive study about regional sustainable development in Europe. The high number of project partners (plus associated partners) allowed us to have seventeen storylines and a comprehensive picture of regional sustainable development policy-making across Europe.

In order to ensure comparability, the project team developed a concept for analysis. This concept was used by each national team as a template to carry out the review about regional sustainable development in their country. Out of the project's general objectives, the following main sections are covered within each National Report:

- *National background on regional development*: this includes not only the history of regional development in the country but also the political and administrative system and hierarchies as these are of major importance in giving a framework for policy-making. This section also includes a reflection about national initiatives for sustainable development.
- *Regional sustainable development*: in here, the National Reports reflect upon national and regional initiatives for regional sustainable development. An important aspect, too, is the role of Structural Funds in fostering

sustainable development at the regional level and what the experiences of the regions are with Structural Funds programmes and Community Initiatives.

- *Multi-Level governance*: this section elaborates on the involvement of the different political/administrative levels in policy-making – from the EU, to the national and regional level – as well as the multi-level interaction between the different stakeholders. Additionally, it is analysed how cross-sector policy integration in regional sustainable development is carried out by the different levels.
- *Evaluation methods and tools for regional sustainable development*: the current evaluation methods, tools and indicators are described in this section. It also reflects upon the different types of measurements for regional sustainable development, and if a harmonization of the various methods and tools already takes place in Europe.
- *Analysis of regional sustainable development*: summarizes the practical experiences with regional sustainable development across Europe. This section also evaluates the general trade-offs, top-down and bottom-up relations as well as the future of European regional policy for the period after 2006 when new Structural Funds regulations will be implemented.

Therefore, this National Report of Poland gives a comprehensive overview of regional sustainable development. Together with the other reports, it makes up what is the first comparative study of regional sustainable development in Europe. In 2004, a book publication which will include all National Reports, together with an introduction and conclusion chapter, is planned. Please find further information and ordering details about this forthcoming book on the REGIONET project homepage:

www.iccr-international.org/regionet.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Table of figures and maps	5
List of abbreviations	6
National Report	
1. National background on regional development.....	7
a) Political and administrative system and hierarchies	7
b) History of regional development.....	10
c) National initiatives on sustainable development	13
2. Regional sustainable development.....	14
a) National initiatives linked to regional sustainable development	14
b) Regional initiatives linked to regional sustainable development	16
c) Pre-accession Funds and sustainable development	19
3. Multi-level governance	23
a) Regional issues and cases which involve the EU-level, national and sub-national co-ordination.....	23
b) Multi-level interaction among different stakeholders on a regional level	26
c) Cross-sector policy integration	31
4. Evaluation Methods and Tools for Regional Sustainable Development	33
a) Existing evaluation methods and tools (including indicators)	33
b) Types of measurement.....	34
c) Harmonisation.....	36
5. Regional sustainable development analysis.....	37
a) Experiences with regional sustainable development.....	37
b) Practical implications of regional sustainable development	39
c) General trade-offs.....	40
d) Top-down and bottom-up relations	41
e) Post-2006	41

Table of figures and maps

Table 1 Territorial units in Poland

Figure 1 Administrative hierarchy in Poland

Figure 2 Division of Poland into NTS units

Figure 3 Interrelation between policy documents preparing Poland for the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund

Figure 4 Local section of national government vs self-government institution in Poland

Figure 5 North-eastern part of Poland as Green Lungs of Poland territory

List of abbreviations

ARMA	Agency for Restructuring and Modernising Agriculture
BSR	Baltic States Region
CBC	Cross Border Co-operation
CSF	Community Support Framework
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESC	Economic and Social Cohesion
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
FIFG	Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GL	Green Lungs of Poland
GUS	Central Statistical Office
IROP	Integrated Regional Operational Programme
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession
KBN	State Committee for Scientific Research
KUL	Catholic University of Lublin
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non - governmental Organization
NTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (in Poland)
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAN	Polish Academy of Sciences
PARR	Polish Agency for Regional Development
Phare	Poland, Hungary – Assistance for Restructuring of their Economics
PMU	Programme Management Unit
R&D	Research and Development
RP	Republic of Poland
RSD	Regional Sustainable Development
SAPARD	Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development
SMEs	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SOP	Sectoral Operational Programme
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
UKIE	Office of the Committee for European Integration
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

1. National background on regional development

A) POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM AND HIERARCHIES

Country main characteristics

Republic of Poland (RP) is an EU accession country located in the Central Europe at Baltic Sea, and shares borders

with Russia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Germany.

Area	312 690	sq. km
Agrable land	59	%
Forests and woodland	28	%
Urbanisation	61.9	%
Density of population	131.3	per sq. km
GDP Poland (as compared to the EU's)	38.6	%
Population (in 2000)	38.6	million
Rural population	38	%
Employment in agriculture	15.7	%
Employment in industry	27	%
Employment in a service sector	45	%
Registered unemployment rate (in 2001)	15.2	%
Two-chamber parliamentary system:		
Number of deputies (posel)	460	
Number of senators	100	

The present administrative structure of Poland is an outcome of a new system of public administration introduced according to the laws adopted by the Parliament in 1998¹. This structure consists of:

Voivodeships (provinces)

There are 16 voivodeships. Regional self-governmental authorities are created at the voivodeship level. The organs of self-government of voivodeship are: regional parliament, named *Sejmik*, elected directly, and the executive body of the regional self-government – the Voivodeship Board, headed by *Marszalek* (marshal) of the voivodeship, elected by the Sejmik. In each voivodeship there is a *voivode* appointed by the Prime Minister to whom he/she is subordinated. The voivode's task is to represent central government at the provincial level and to co-ordinate the work of the organization units of government administration and local self-governments' performance. On the strength of entitlements conferred upon them by Act of Parliament, voivodes are vested with the power to issue by-laws binding within the area of the given voivodeship.

Poviats (counties)

Under the present system there are 380 poviats (including 65 towns with poviats rights and 7 new poviats formed as from 1

January 2002), representing a tier of local government between the regional (voivodeship) and local (gmina) levels.

The organs of each poviat are an elected Poviat Council and its Board, headed by *Starosta*.

Gminas (communes)

There are 2489 gminas forming basic local government organisational units. The gmina authorities are subject to election, while executive functions are exercised by the Gmina Board, headed by *Wojt* (administrative head of a village) or town/city president².

The administration of Poland is shared between the Government of RP and self-governments, and the hierarchy of the administration is given in Fig. 1.

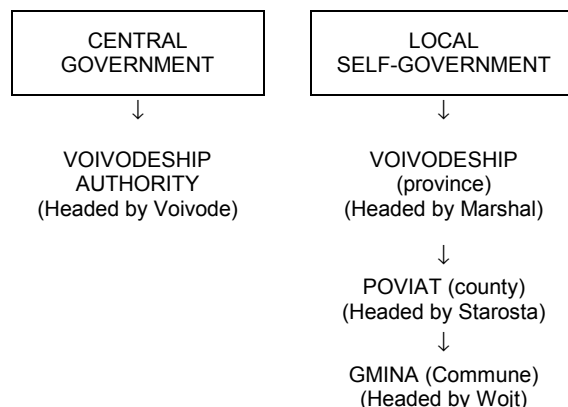


Fig. 1 Administrative hierarchy in Poland³

The decisions concerning the new administrative division of the territory of Poland and the number of self-government units were the subject of long discussions and political negotiations by Polish policy-makers. These issues are of vital importance from the political point of view as the regional policy has become an integral component of the state socio-economic policy.

The Eurostat standards

The process of adaptation of Polish regional statistical instruments and procedures to the EU standards has been advanced, however the present classification is not yet entirely compatible with the Eurostat standards. The NTS⁴ system used in Poland entirely corresponds to the EU NUTS system when it concerns the regions of level 1 (territory of Poland), and level 2 (voivodeship).

No	Voivodeship/Capital	Population (in thousands)	Area (in km ²)	Density of population (per sq. km)	Number of territorial units	
					gminas	poviats
1	Dolnośląskie/Wrocław	2 972.0	19 948	149.5	169	30
2	Kujawsko-pomorskie/Bydgoszcz	2 099.7	17 970	116.8	144	23
3	Lubelskie/Lublin	2 232.0	25 114	89.2	213	24
4	Lubuskie/Zielona Góra	1 023.9	13 984	73.1	83	14
5	Łódzkie/Łódź	2 643.3	18 219	146.1	177	24
6	Małopolskie/Kraków	3 233.7	15 144	212.4	182	22
7	Mazowieckie/Warszawa	5 072.3	35 579	141.8	325	42
8	Opolskie/Opole	1 084.6	9 412	115.7	71	12
9	Podkarpackie/Rzeszów	2 128.6	17 926	118.6	160	25
10	Podlaskie/Białystok	1 221.1	20 180	60.6	118	17
11	Pomorskie/Gdańsk	2 198.3	18 293	119.4	123	20
12	Śląskie/Katowice	4 847.6	12 294	396.6	166	36
13	Świętokrzyskie/Kielce	1 322.8	11 691	113.6	102	14
14	Warmińsko-mazurskie/Olsztyn	1 468.3	24 203	60.4	116	21
15	Wielkopolskie /Poznań	3 360.8	29 826	111.9	226	35
16	Zachodniopomorskie/Szczecin	1 733.8	22 912	75.2	114	21
POLAND		38 644.2	312 685	131.3	2 489	380

Table 1. Territorial units in Poland

The Polish NTS level 3 (NTS 3) sub-regions, including groups of poviats, comprise larger number of populations than the threshold admissible for NUTS level 3 sub-regions. Thus, the division of Poland into NTS 3 sub-regions requires an amendment to be in conformity with the EU standards concerning NUTS. The division of territory of Poland into NTS units is presented in Table 1 and Fig. 2.

Rationale for focusing the survey on three regions

Poland is a large country, strongly differentiated from the point of view of regional development⁵. The actual three stage administrative organisation of the country, acceptance of the subsidiarity principle, decentralisation, de-concentration and deregulation allows variety of initiatives undertaken by various institutions and on different levels. Therefore, it is very difficult to make a comprehensive survey of Poland's regional sustainable development initiatives. Hence, it was decided to

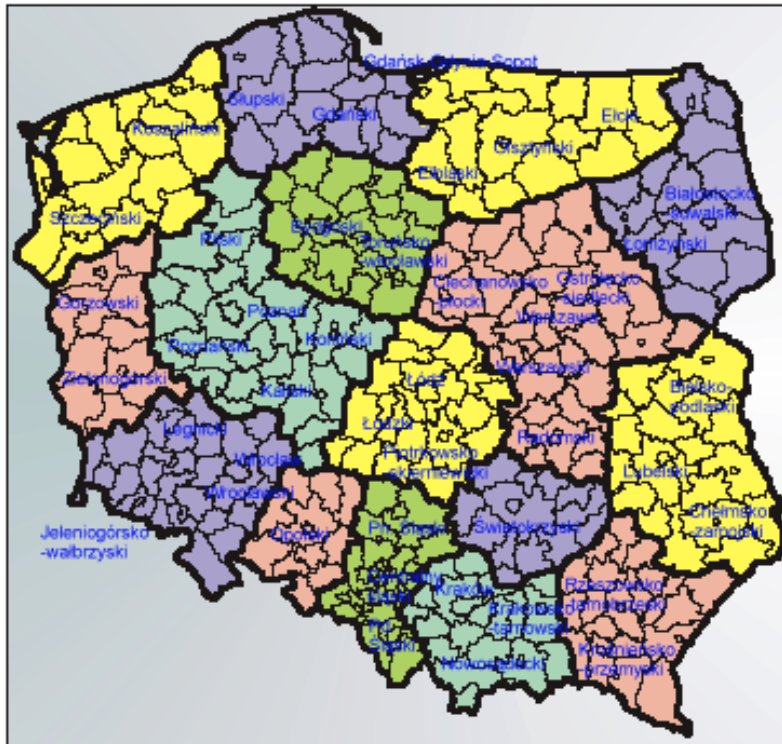
present here the initiatives undertaken by three representative regions: Śląskie (Silesia), Podkarpackie and Pomorskie. Śląskie voivodeship was chosen as an example of an extensive reconstruction of heavy industries and as a region where majority of funds for regional development were allocated. The main priority for Śląskie region is the reduction of heavy industry pollution devastating natural environment and threatening human health; and curbing unemployment resulting from industry's restructuring process.

Podkarpackie voivodeship was selected as an example of a less developed Polish region being in contrast to Śląskie in regard to regional development needs. Podkarpackie is one of the ecologically cleanest regions in Poland, favouring a concept of becoming an ecological food producer.

Pomorskie voivodeship was selected on the strength of its economic attractiveness, privileged location in the region next to the Baltic sea, its maintaining of strong contacts with other

regions in Europe aimed at economic, scientific and cultural development, with the promotion of tourism. The region has

a strong tradition of Hanseatic towns cooperating in the past, dating from the 13th to 15th centuries.



Level	Territorial unit	Number of units	
NTS 1	Poland	1	
NTS 2	Voivodeships	16	————— Voivodeships' borders (NTS 2)
NTS 3	Sub-regions	44	————— Sub-regions' borders (NTS 3)
NTS 4	Poviats	380	————— Poviats' borders (NTS 4)
NTS 5	Gminas	2489	

Fig.2 Division of Poland into NTS units
(Source: Rocznik Statystyczny Wojewodztw 2001, GUS, Warszawa 2001)

Trends and tendencies

The effective usage of Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund requires institutional and procedural adaptation. These issues concern inter alia: institutional system of programming, implementing, management and monitoring; long-term programming of state budget spending; enhancement of self-government units revenues, and creation of effective public - private partnership mechanism. Although the self-government of voivodeship has exclusive competence to create regional development strategy, de facto it is a client contending for centrally accumulated funds for its development. Therefore, the necessity of further decentralization of public funds should make the self-government of voivodeship

the main actor of the regional policy. In order to conduct effectively intra-regional policy, self-government units should obtain sufficient amount of funds. Thus, it is indispensable to amend some of the Laws: Law of 26 November 1998 on the revenues of self-government units⁶ increasing their revenues; Law on self-government of voivodeship and Law of 12 May 2000 on rules of regional development support⁷, directed at the establishment of a coherent financial system. The difficult situation of public finances makes it impossible to transfer funds from state budget to self-government budget. It requires consolidation of public finances directed at enhancement of both the state and self-governments budgets and

decreasing of special purpose funds as well as those of governmental agencies. Decentralisation of public funds is the next necessary step to decentralization of competencies. Firstly, it is vital to set aside a new part of the budget – the regional policy budget, and to divide it into the state policy budget and the support budget for regional development (intraregional policies of regions). Also, the rules defining the division of the funds in this area should be formulated. Moreover, the clear specification of the scope of intraregional policy should help in preventing potential competence conflicts between Government administration and that of self-governments and make the responsibility for certain measures much more transparent.

Competencies and tasks of administration levels – present status

Polish Government is in charge of setting up the state regional policy and its coordination in accordance with the Law of 12 May 2000 on rules of regional development support. The Minister of Economy elaborates the strategy of regional development that constitutes the objectives and priorities of regional policy, taking into account regional development strategies and the selection of regulations for the support areas.

The state regional development policy implements measures specified in voivodeship contracts signed both by the government and by a given voivodeship. The voivodeship contract is a negotiated agreement between the self-government of voivodeship and the Council of Ministers. The subject of the agreement is a set of measures supported by the Government which are based on the Support Program⁸ and voivodeship programmes. The Law on regulations of regional development support is being currently a subject of amendments which are to extend the range of support for

regional development and simplify the procedures. Both the amount of resources and the directions of support are addressed in the first place to the voivodeships. This enables coordination of the tasks undertaken within voivodeship strategies and programmes by self-governments of voivodeships, and provide for necessary flexibility in the allocation of resources on a local level. The task of solving territorially concentrated problems, such as unemployment, structural changes in agriculture, or industrial restructuring have to be perceived first of all in the context of the situation in the region and not in selected gminas or poviats.

When describing the competences of self-government units, it is vital to stress that there are two kinds of them – the competences of self-governments alone, and those delegated by the higher level of administration. Unfortunately, in some areas of the competences, the subsidiary principle has been broken, and in other cases the competences have not been defined clearly enough, due to an imperfect legislative process, making responsibilities in these areas too confusing.

Decentralization of competences and tasks of the self-government units has not yet been completed by adequate public financing amendments. Thus, the shortage of financial resources at regional and local levels makes the implementation of voivodeship contracts difficult which has an adverse effect especially since they remain the main instrument of regional development. The self-government units do not have at their disposal sufficient funds to fulfil all their tasks and to implement the measures within voivodeship programmes. On the other hand, co-financing of the voivodeship contracts gives the Government a strong argument for defining the goals of regional development policy.

B) HISTORY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regionalism and regionalisation

Regionalism in Poland is understood as a process of looking for identity within a bigger state territorial system by a group of citizens larger than a local community where connections and interrelations are

more personal and closer than in a case of a region. Regional identity may be shaped by many different factors: ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural, or economic. All these factors may lead to strengthen the conviction among members of a given

group of their separateness from the others⁹.

Regionalisation is a process of indicating administrative borders between regions as elements of the division of the state territory, and allocating competences to such units.

The two processes are strongly interconnected, thus regionalism as a feeling of being different and having other group identity may affect the way in which the territory of a country may be divided into regions (regionalized), and *vice versa*; thus the regionalisation process may become a foundation of growing regional identity among those inhabiting a region founded as a result of political and administrative decisions.

Post war regionalisation in Poland

This period may be divided into 3 stages of evolutionary process of harmonising and making the development more sustainable in a contemporary Polish regionalisation model¹⁰:

1. The phase of “real socialism”, the period from 1945 until the end of the 80s, dominated by central government and central administration in all functions – planning, distribution, extensive exploitation of natural resources and total control of the system from the central level down on. The regional entities (49 voivodeships) were the representation of the Government in the regions without any practical competence to create and implement any regional development policy.

2. The phase of transition, initiated by the Solidarity movement until 1999, when the 16 regions (voivodeships) were created as a result of the reform of the administrative system of governance (described above in section 1a). This period is characterised by the absence of legal and material addressee of regional policy at the regional level. The 49 voivodeships could not have played this role, and neither have they participated in many actions which were more or less consistent with the framework of promoting the free market economy in Poland. These actions included initiating processes of transforming ownership structures in Poland, privatisation of companies and PGRs, (state-owned farms) which caused progressing differentiation and polarization among particular parts of Poland confirming their

historically formed backwardness and under-development. The centralised employment policy did not succeed either in preventing, or even in managing the growing unemployment; thus, finally, the regional labour offices received within the system the right to distribute social help, and to implement on behalf of the state the protection policy against poverty, addressed to the unemployed.

3. The phase of free market economy lasting from 1999 on, when regions became addressees of the country's regionalisation policy. The self-government regions initiated, for the first time in post-war Poland, the processes of strategic, integrated and holistic planning, with the main focus on environmental issues and social development, performed usually in a participatory manner, by attracting and engaging different actors and regional communities. This period is characterised by implementing neo-keynesian and neo-liberal doctrines with varying intensity, and at different levels of the self-government in Poland. The intervention from the central level down on, concerns old industrial regions (Śląsk); underdeveloped areas, mainly in the Eastern part of Poland including the Podkarpackie Region in the South-East (see the case study of the region in the present report), and big agglomerations. For the first time in Polish regionalisation process has occurred a chance for international regional cooperation, due to the incentives from the EU. The present Polish regional policy is focused on five priorities: 1) development of sectors of new economy, 2) job creation function SMEs development, 3) utilizing local/regional assets and potentials, 4) development of infrastructure, and 5) privatisation of the remaining state sectors. The integrated regional planning including natural environment, spatial planning as well as economic instrumentation of regional development is creating favourable conditions for sustainable development.

Organisational framework for Polish regionalism

Polish regionalism is relatively well organised in a network of more than thousand cultural associations. Majority of these associations were founded after the First World War, but 6% of them have

longer tradition, going back to the period preceding the First World War. These associations, (approx. 250,000 members) have their national representation in the form of the National Council of Regional Cultural Associations. However, the movement has rather local character, focused mainly on local culture promotion. The dynamics of regionalism movements in Poland based on the analysis of regional associations appears to be rather low¹¹.

Apart from the administrative structure presented in section 1a, there is a number of regional agencies functioning in all regions, either for the whole region, or for a part of it. The total number of such regional agencies amounts to 60 entities for 2001¹² (1-6 per region), founded as commercial entities in the form of joint stock companies, companies with limited liability, or as NGO-type organizations, most often in the form of a foundation. These agencies are grouped in the National Association of the Regional Development Agencies. The system is supported by a considerable number of other centres and/or associations which operate in the sphere of innovation, entrepreneurship and/or economic development, education and promotion, either locally, sub-regionally or regionally. At the country level, there is a system of government agencies to which the government has delegated some tasks and duties usually assigned to the central level of governance at the present stage of decentralization of management and governance in Poland. In the domain of regional development, there is the Polish Agency for Regional Development (PARR)¹³ founded in 1993 as a State Treasury Foundation. Since 2001, the Minister of Economy and the Minister of State's Treasury - its founder, have supervised PARR. PARR operates in two main types of activities: offering direct support for regional and local development and popularising knowledge and instruments, as well as methodologies of regional development, emphasising the EU structural funds principles and supporting relevant projects and initiatives. According to the new Law, approved by the Sejm on 8 May, 2002, PARR was liquidated and the Polish Agency of Enterprise Development took over all its tasks and responsibilities.

Challenges of further regionalisation

Polish regionalisation as described above needs further development and optimisation, taking into account the following four issues:

Low level of regional identity.

According to empirical research¹⁴ the Poles with few exceptions represent nowadays a low level of regional identity. In the first place, the young Poles polled mentioned in a declining order: national identity, local identity, European identity and at the very end - regional identity. The strongest local identity is noted in Wielkopolska and Galicja (Małopolska), while the strongest voivodeship identity is observed in Galicja and Pomorze, in the latter the strongest European identity is also noted. Polish regionalism was strengthened to some degree after Solidarity has built its territorial structures using old historical names of Polish regions. This fact may have had some influence on the regionalization process and could have accelerated final administrative and political division of the country into 16 regions - voivodeships in 1999 (see section 1a).

Too many weak poviats. It will require some action and financial resources for consolidation and integration. In the opinion of most experts the total number of poviats should not exceed 120.

Centralized system of public finances seems to be the main barrier on the road to progressing regionalisation in Poland.

Integration with the EU may become an accelerating factor for further regionalisation in Poland provided that the EU itself makes some progress in its policy addressed to regional development; and also by delegating more responsibilities and competences to the Committee of Regions, and allocating growing amount of its funds for regional development directly to regions and not necessarily to each state for their further distribution.

An analysis of facts and comments as well as research on Polish regionalisation brings us to the conclusion that Polish regionalism is rather a marginal phenomenon, considered by some authors as voluntary and destructive for the unitary character of the country. However, this opinion is not shared by other authors who believe that further regionalisation and strengthening of regionalism will not cause any harm to

Poland's unitary character but might rather become a vehicle for increasing competitiveness of the Poles in the united

Europe where cooperation of European regions presents a challenging issue.

C) NATIONAL INITIATIVES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The sustainable development is one of the principles formulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which in the Article 5 states that "Peoples' Republic of Poland protects its independence and its territory, assures freedom, human and citizen rights' protection, safeguards the national heritage and assures protection of the natural environment having the principle of sustainable development in mind". Consequently, all secondary legal acts refer to this statement so important for implementing the concept of sustainable development. The legal framework for sustainable development is based on several legal acts and strategies adopted by the government.

The most important legal act is the Environmental Protection Law¹⁵ based on the rule of sustainable development, and understood as a kind of socio-economic development which entails an integration of political, economic and social activities, with the natural balance being retained, along with the continuity of the fundamental processes of nature, and with a purpose of guaranteeing the opportunities for the basic needs of different societies or citizens to be met at present and in the future. The Law in question lays down principles concerning the protection of the environment and conditions on which its resources can be utilised, with regard to sustainable development.

The Law has provisioning of information on the environment; it concerns society's participation in proceedings and states procedures regarding the protection of the environment, establishing principles in combating major emergencies, together with obligations of administrative organs; finally it specifies liabilities and sanctions. This Law together with the detailed regulations of the individual, subject-oriented Laws, (e.g. Water Law¹⁶, Wastes Law¹⁷, Forests Law¹⁸, Agriculture and Forest Land Law¹⁹, Geological and Mining Law²⁰, and Spatial Planning

Law²¹) is a guide-post for the elaboration of specific national strategies.

The most important strategies in respect to the sustainable development principle are:

Poland 2025 – The Long term Sustainable Development Strategy adopted by the Government on 26 July 2000. According to this document "The top priority of socio-economic policy is to enable steady growth of Polish citizens' prosperity, while at the same time strengthening their material freedom and stability".

So-defined priority involves a clear-cut paradigm of social order based on respect of human freedoms, approval of family values, inter- and intra-generations solidarity, broad application of the subsidiarity principle and the State's task to foster community interests, national identity and sovereignty. The top priority of the Strategy as defined above, reflects in a condensed way guiding principles for balanced and sustained growth approved at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, in June 1992. This Strategy strives to narrow the civilisation gap between Poland and that of developed countries, with an intention to achieve in a foreseeable future the living standards relative to EU average. As the European Union is developing further knowledge-based economy, Poland needs to begin building up as fast as possible a knowledge-driven society and promote similar economy. The protection of natural environment and its rational maintenance is stated as a high priority and a prerequisite to ensure adequate life for the public, amidst clean nature harmonised with socio-economic growth. Finally, the Strategy aims at the protection of cultural heritage which along with the development of the entire country, its regions and localities harmoniously included into the historical space, will determine and reinforce the identity of Poland within the framework of the European Community.

The National Strategy of Environmental Protection for 2000-2006, was adopted by

the Council of Ministers Committee for Regional Policy and Sustainable Development on 27 July 2000. This Strategy is one of the strategies developed towards the Preliminary National Development Plan.

The Second National Environmental Policy²² was formulated with the intention of achieving two goals: further improvement of the environment and good indicators of management of natural resources (low energy, material and water consumption indicators *versus* the national revenue). The major objective of this National Environmental Policy is to provide environmental safety for the Polish society in the 21st century, and to create a basis for elaboration and implementation of national sustainable development strategy.

The National Environmental Education Strategy. "Through education to sustainable development," was adopted by the Ministry of Education in 2000 as a guideline of actions in this domain. The Strategy is a document that identifies and prioritises major goals of environmental education. Simultaneously, it points to the appropriate ways to accomplish these

goals. The Strategy promotes the idea of sustainable development in all spheres of human activity, including work and leisure, i.e. providing all citizens with an environmental education. The next principal goal of this Strategy is the introduction of environmental education at an ongoing basis, and as an interdisciplinary form of education at all levels of formal and informal educational system. Moreover, it recommends the creation of voivodeship, county, and community environmental education programmes serving as extensions of the National Environmental Education Programme, and also the supplementation of these programmes by suggestions from respective entities carrying out educational activities in local communities. The Strategy also underlines the necessity of promotion of sound practices in environmental education methodology. The National Environmental Education Programme which serves as the implementation programme for the Strategy, is identifying educational tasks and objectives as well as entities responsible for their execution.

2. Regional sustainable development

A) NATIONAL INITIATIVES LINKED TO REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Regional development policy is one of the most important policies to be developed in Poland and must be seen not only in the context of administrative reform of the country, but also in view of economic and social development necessary to integrate the country into the European Union. The regional development policy²³, based on the experience of the European Union Member States is oriented not only to support weakest regions, but also to increase regions' competitiveness and the efficiency of invested resources. The necessity to end the policy based solely on the support of selected sectors of the economy and to develop modern regional policy in Poland is now widely understood²⁴.

A general description of Poland's present policy on regional development is given in Section 1a, and here the most important initiatives are presented:

The Law on rules of regional development support lays down principles of cooperation between the government and self-governed regions and also stipulates instruments, means and documents required in regional policy together with the responsibilities of different levels of administration. This Law has for the first time defined five principles of the regional policy: 1) strategic long-term planning, 2) partnership, 3) regional self-government independence, 4) voivodeship initiative, and 5) project financing from different sources (government, regional and private sector). In art. 3.1 of the Law, the

principle of sustainable development is mentioned as the guiding principle for the government support for regional development. The following ten tasks may be included into voivodeship contracts and may obtain financial support from the central budget:

- 1) enterprise and SMEs development,
- 2) innovations and technology transfer,
- 3) restructuring of public services and local/regional economy based on principle of sustainable development,
- 4) sustainable job creation,
- 5) investment in technical and transport infrastructure,
- 6) projects aiming at regional cultural development and having a cultural local and/or regional heritage,
- 7) investments aiming at improving condition of the natural environment,
- 8) support of development of organizational infrastructure for local and regional communities,
- 9) research on regional development, and
- 10) other tasks related to regional sustainable development.

National Strategy of Regional Development 2001-2006 was adopted by the Government on 28 December 2000. This Strategy was the first main basis for preliminary negotiations with EU on the level of financial support in the pre-accession and memberships periods. It is worth mentioning, that in 1999, after the country's division into 16 voivodeships, all of them worked out their development strategies, usually with the time horizon of 10-15 years. In majority of the cases sustainable development plays the leading role in these strategies. Although the regional development strategies come strictly from the policy set up on the national level, the question of the growth of Polish regions competitiveness in the explicitly understood sustainable development conditions is raised in the series of official documents. The regional self-governments and the Voivodeships' Boards developed their own Voivodeship Development Strategies, Voivodeship Operational Programmes and Regional Innovation Strategies²⁵. In the case of one of our regional studies, the main regional initiative for the sustainable development measures take place in the Regional Development Strategy for Silesia Voivodeship. The goals presented in the present strategic document show clearly that all actions in Śląskie voivodeship are

focused on the sustainable development. The Regional Contract for Silesia presents an initiative closely connected with the above Strategy.

The Support Programme for 2001-2002 which became the framework for the first voivodeships contracts was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 28 December 2000 in the form of the Regulation that extended the date of the Support Programme until 2003. According to the Support Program, 5 priorities were financed in the following proportions: 50% of all means were allocated to modernization of infrastructure in order to increase competitiveness of the regions; 18% of all support was allocated to peripheral regions to activate them; 15% to diversification of the economic potentials of the regions; 12% to the development of human potential; 5% to intra-regional cooperation. The Podkarpackie voivodeship, the case study of the present Report has received 7.04% of all funds, Pomorskie - 5.84% and Śląskie - 10.19 %.

The total sum of the two-year support from the state budget for all the regions in Poland is about 1 Mio. EUR, from co-financing about 0.15 Mio. EUR, from the transfer from EU about 0.5 Mio. EUR, giving the total support of about 1.5 Mio. EUR.

Poland is now preparing for the adoption of sustainable development programmes. Therefore, there is a strong need for a viable research activity on the issues on hand. The increase of sustainable development awareness at national, regional and local levels is reflected in Polish R&D sector, as recommended by the National Environmental Policy which states at one point that "it is necessary to enhance the link between environmental policy and scientific research."

The practical approach to the above goal is presented by research projects approved by the State Committee for Scientific Research (KBN) and financed from the state budget. In fact, regional sustainable development, has not been called explicitly by its name in official KBN's policy documents published until now. However, it is in such publications as: Basis for the National Science and Technology Policy (governmental

document approved by the Council of Ministers on 20 July 1993); supplement to Basis for the National Science and Technology Policy, Preferred Directions of Scientific Research and Development Projects Aimed at an Increase of Innovativeness of the Polish Economy (approved by the Council of Ministers on 16 January 1996), and Directions of National Innovation Policy Till 2002 (approved by the Council of Ministers on 6 December 1999). In all of them there are numerous references to the particular aspects of sustainable development, either as part of the governmental Strategy for Sustainable Development in

Poland, or as recommended research priorities. The task “to increase the research part of governmental strategic programmes” through “elaboration of strategic projects” introduced under Direction of National Innovation Policy until 2002 is suggesting that more emphasis will be put on sustainable development as a whole in the nearest future.

Analysis of research grants financed from the State budget allows to conclude that there is a considerable involvement of Polish scientific community in selected issues of sustainable development.

B) REGIONAL INITIATIVES LINKED TO REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Examples of local/regional initiatives given below were divided into two groups: the first, directly or indirectly related to Local Agenda 21, and the second initiative, was activated in regions without reference to the above Agenda²⁶.

Local and/or sub-regional Agenda 21 strategies/initiatives

The following example of initiatives having a stimulus from Agenda 21 strategies were recorded in:

Pomorskie voivodeship. The Gdańsk Town Project implemented in 1990 “Local Agenda 21 Strategy” with eco-development as a foundation of all sectorial urban development policies. Likewise, the Gdynia Town Project was implemented in 1994 –1998. “The Strategy of Development” was based on an expert planning process. As a result, considerable improvement in the standard of living of inhabitants and in the conditions of the natural environment was noticed. The third example is related to Sopot town, which in 1994 implemented “Strategy of Development with Reference to Sustainability Realised in the Community”. Improvements in the efficiency of the cities’ organisation and management are the main results of the project.

Śląskie voivodeship. The response to Agenda 21 was recorded in the case of Regional Development Strategy for Silesia Province in 2000-2015. This strategy is a continuation of Development Strategy for Silesia Province in 1998 –

2002. The goals stated in the present strategic document show clearly that Silesia region is focused on sustainable development. The Regional Contract for Silesia is an initiative closely connected with the Strategy. Each initiative originating at a local level has to be in a scope of general frames defined in the Strategy. The initiatives considered apart from other developments the ideology of sustainable development are hard to see; however when treated globally it is easy to notice that due to these strategic frames, each of them is a necessary part of the global sustainable development of the region.

Podkarpackie voivodeship. Agenda 21 influenced the need to incorporate sustainable regional development concept into the regional development strategy and it has become a methodological imperative in strategic planning. “The Strategy of Development of Podkarpackie Voivodeship for years 2000-2006” presents a vision of “the acceleration of development and structural adjustment of the region along with the improvement of living standards of its inhabitants”. The general objective of this strategy is “the balanced development of the urban centres’ network and rural areas of the region”. The regional self-government sees counteracting marginalisation of large social groups and the related improvement of the region competitiveness as necessary steps to the accomplishment of the general objective.

Examples of initiatives, other than Agenda 21-related actions

Pomorskie voivodeship. Here, the initiatives other than Agenda 21 process were directed towards the Clean Bay Program (Protection of waters of Puck Bay and Gdansk Gulf) and implemented in 1993 – 2000. Their results included: construction and modernization of two big sewage plants Debogorze and Wschod, sewage treatment lines in Władysławowo, Jastarnia, Hel and Krokowa, modernization of water and sewage treatment systems in Wejherowo, Rumia and Reda, and also improvement of water and sewage treatment systems in Puck and Kosakowo towns. The sea resort Stegna and Krynica Morska obtained sewage plants. Another example is the Armaag Project – Clean Air, implemented in 1993-2000, which resulted in the construction of 10 stations to measure the level and composition of air pollution.

The project package - the Waste Management - consisting of several separate projects, has obtained support from the Voivodeship Environmental Protection and Water Management Fund in Gdańsk.

The project included several programs of waste segregation in Bytów, Nowy Dwór, Sopot and Słupsk as well as the Waste Treatment Plant in Gdynia-Lężyce. Particularly interesting is a project toward enhancing sustainable development awareness – the Green Schools Project – realised in a preliminary phase in 1995-1997, and in the process of implementation from 1998 on. Three schools situated in 3 regional scenic parks in Schodno, Szymbark and Władysławowo were chosen as pilot projects. Over 2,500 pupils annually are able to take advantage of ecological programs run by those schools. Costs of investment and the running costs are covered by the Voivodeship Environmental Protection and Water Management Fund in Gdańsk. The Green Academy, opened in 1997 is another example of such an initiative. The Academy is a part of the Postgraduate School at Gdańsk University (eco-education) and was founded in co-operation with the Regional Branch of Ecological Club in Gdańsk.

Śląskie voivodeship. Its most important initiative is the Regional Contract for Katowice Province, oriented towards

integration of social, economic, and development problems, to achieve the economic revival of the region.

It is consistent with the strategy for Silesia Province with the above mentioned purposes, and in particular, the creation of the Strategy for Silesia Province which includes research on social development in period of political transformation and industrial restructuring in the region. As a result two holistic reports and a number of detailed accounts were published: "Miners in the phase of industrial restructuring" "On child poverty problems", "Violence among children", "Women in Katowice Province", "Poland and the Region in the European Union", "Culture Standing in Katowice Province", "Social Dialogue on Jobs," etc.

Podkarpackie voivodeship. The most valuable initiative is the project "Support for ecological agriculture development". Its task consists of three parts: 1. elaboration of the ecological agriculture development programme, 2. training activities, and 3. editing and distribution of educational materials referring to the ecological agriculture development, together with the use of electronic media. The project is expected to increase a number of ecologically oriented farms in the region. The next quite impressive activity of Podkarpackie voivodeship concerns the involvement of the region in Inter-regional Association Karpaty Euroregion, which is the biggest international organisation established to support transborder and inter-regional co-operation among Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine. The Euroregion Karpaty covers 160,000 sq. km, and has the population of 16 million. Promotion of sustainable development and playing the role of a catalyst of regional development policy and transborder co-operation are the main tasks of the Association.

Inter-regional project "Green Lungs of Poland"

The Green Lungs of Poland is an inter-regional project covering an area in the North-East part of Poland (parts of voivodeships: Podlaskie, Mazowieckie, Pomorskie, Kujawsko-pomorskie, and Warmińsko-mazurskie) encompassing about 20% of Poland's territory and about 10% of population. The Green Lungs of Poland project is aimed at protecting the part of Poland presenting the

extraordinary value of uncontaminated nature presenting considerable touristic attraction. The idea of eco-development for this area originated in 1983; its rules have been accepted by several voivodeships which set aside the protected area of about 60000 sq km. This macro regional system is administratively divided but consists of closely connected natural areas. The main objectives of the project are: preservation and enhancement of natural eco-systems and complex protection of natural resources (water, forests), promotion of social activity of local communities and development of the citizenry awareness, economic development in agreement with the protection of environment and adhering to the principles of sustainable development, preservation of cultural diversity, and preservation of national, ethnic and religious values. It is focusing on harmonizing economic development with protection of the natural potential in regions covered by the Green Lungs of Poland project with a particular stress on agriculture, forestry, tourism, health care and processing industry based mainly on local mineral and agricultural resources. As the Green Lungs of Poland project is localised in regions with very low development potential (GDP less than 0.3% of average Poland GDP, the highest unemployment rate, etc.) but have very rich unexplored natural resources (coal, metals, wood), it seems appropriate to help them. The problem arises due to the fact that these regions representing enormous natural environmental value cover an area particularly suitable for the future communication links (especially roads) to be built to connect the North and the South of the European Union.

Actors

Many actors are taking part in the above presented sustainable development initiatives on different levels: national, regional and local. Their role depends on involvement in policy and strategy formulation, and also on engagement in implementation processes. It is worthwhile to mention that in 1999, after the administrative reforms in Poland, the role of the actors was strongly re-defined as the responsibility for regional development was shifting down to smaller entities.

The sustainable development strategy was formulated and adopted on the level of the Council of Ministers, after detailed inter-ministerial consultations. The Council of Ministers is a principal strategy/policy oriented actor. All activities towards programming future utilization of the Structural Funds, after accession to the European Union, are the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy. This ministry conducts consultation with other sectorial ministries, responsible for the preparation of Sectorial Operational Programmes.

It was stated, as a result of our research, that actors playing important role in the activation and implementation of the projects oriented toward regional sustainable development can be divided into two networks. The first one encompasses a network of institutions founded by appropriate Laws, of which statutes set their tasks related to sustainable regional development. They are the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management (set up by the Parliament Act), and Voivodeship's, Poviats' and Gmina's Funds for Environmental Protection and Water Management²⁷. Other organizations are Polish Agency for Regional Development²⁸ with its regional subsidiaries, and Polish Agency of Enterprise Development. Moreover, the important role is also played by a system of Public, Voivodeship, and Poviats' Labour Offices which are a government administration responsible for labour market and for combating unemployment. The second type of network results from the public organisations' own initiatives. Poland is a large country, where liberal conditions promote creation of different non-governmental entities, resulting in setting up hundreds of institutions desiring to play an important role in a process of regional sustainable development. Many nationwide, regionally and locally operated foundations, associations, ecologically oriented centers and clubs can be quoted, e.g. National Protection League, Polish Tourist Association, Polish Ecological Club, National Association for Birds Protection, regionally operated Baltic Centre for Eco-education and Eco-development, the pro-nature "Group of Scenery Parks" in the Śląskie voivodeship, and hundreds of others. We

also registered direct involvement in regional sustainable development projects of research institutions, universities, Institutes of Polish Academy of Sciences, other higher education establishments, and many small and medium sized enterprises. Many international organizations such as United Nations Development Fund, internationally operated foundations e.g. The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, are also

important participants. A substantial foreign aid and bilateral donors, under the auspices of the Official Development Assistance is also noted. Reversibly, it is interesting to observe that Poland, a newcomer to the OECD, has not only a potential for promoting regional sustainable development in other countries, but equally is offering them assistance.

C) PRE-ACCESSION FUNDS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The PHARE Programme and Pre-accession Funds as the predecessors of Structural Funds

The European Union assistance for Poland has played a vital role in Poland's economy transformation process over the last 12 years.

Together with the increasing intensity of the EU and Poland relations, the objectives of the assistance have been amended and its institutional structure has undergone significant changes. In the early 90s, PHARE programme comprised humanitarian aid (food, medicines), and the actions necessary for macroeconomic stabilisation after the economic shock of 1989. Since Polish economic development strategy was sorely lacking, it was difficult to determine the coherence of foreign aid with measures undertaken by the Government. In this period the co-ordination of foreign assistance was assigned to the Council of Ministers, and its member, the Minister for European Integration; however it played mostly political and not administrative role in the process. In general, the first years of PHARE performance were rather related to the Official Development Assistance – i.e. the support for the development of free market economy. As PHARE was mainly assisting the Government, the creation of a public administration structure for aid managing became essential, especially, since the program implementing authorities were concentrated at a central Government level. In mid-90s, the de-centralisation of PHARE Program occurred. It was due to more stringent requirements imposed by the European Union concerning PHARE management and which demanded much more engagement on the part of Poland. Therefore, special programme management units (PMU) were created in

non-governmental institutions, agencies and foundations. Since the New PHARE Orientation took place in the second half of the 90s, the objectives of the assistance have been changed from demand-driven to accession-driven. The new rules imposed financing and substantial responsibilities for programme implementation on public administration. Thus, it became necessary to improve administrative capacities for funds management, especially when human resources and institutional development were considered. One of the most important amendments was entrusting the implementation of all Institution Building projects, under PHARE, to a single implementing agency – Finance and Contract Unit²⁹. New programmes – ISPA and SAPARD made it necessary to establish new management and implementation authorities which would be also utilised for Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund implementation. Some PHARE implementation agencies, as mentioned earlier, are now in the process of reorganisation³⁰. Their knowledge and experience with Pre-accession Funds will be utilised for Structural Funds as they are to operate as final beneficiaries.

The end of the 90s was very important for the PHARE performance as it was strongly stimulated by a dynamic evolution of the European Union and its candidate country relations. Since then, the EU aid has been identified with Official Assistance – i.e. the support with political pre-conditions concerning Poland's preparation to the European Union membership.

The Council of Ministers in March 2002 has decided that the Minister of Economy will become the Management Authority for Community Support Framework and that he will be equally responsible for

building appropriate institutional structures.

At the very beginning the EU aid for Poland was firstly directed at humanitarian aid and macroeconomic stabilisation and later at sectorial support necessary for the creation of indispensable structures of free market economy. From 1994 on, the assistance was aimed mainly at infrastructure investment and the improvement of public administration performance. Apart from the sectorial programme of PHARE, STRUDER and Cross Border Co-operation (CBC) have more rational approach. These programmes were of great significance as they followed a new element in the economic policy – that of regional development.

Before, implementing the New PHARE Orientation till 1997, Poland obtained over 150 Mio. €³¹ for over 100 projects. Most projects (33)³² were addressed to private sector and internal market support, almost 20% (18 projects) were directed at public administration and institutional reforms. Fifteen projects (14%) comprised education, training, research and health protection. The same number of projects were aimed at CBC and regional programmes. There were 9 agricultural projects and 8 infrastructural ones. Only 6 projects were addressed to environment protection. Merely 2 projects concerned social protection and employment issues.

Taking the cost under account, CBC and regional projects absorbed over 22% of total PHARE allocations. For education, training, research and health over 16% of funds were committed, and 15% for infrastructure projects. Almost 15% of PHARE commitments comprised internal market and private sector restructuring. About 11% were allocated to public administration and institutional reforms and merely 6% for environmental projects. Only 2% of available funds were reserved for social protection and employment issues projects. Different research papers pointed out in their analysis that the greatest amount of PHARE funds (30%) were destined to infrastructure investment projects, and the least to social protection and employment issues (2%).

Together with the implementation of the New PHARE Orientation, the areas

eligible for the PHARE support have been defined in Accession Partnership³³ and National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis³⁴. The projects under PHARE are aimed at Institutional Building (30% of funds) and Investment (70%).

Between 1998-2001, most projects concerned the regional programmes and CBC (19 projects), and public administration and institutional reforms (12 projects). There were 6 environment projects. Four projects comprised private sector and internal market and the same number of the education and health protection projects were likewise prepared under PHARE. There were 3 agriculture projects; however, since 1999 the cost of these projects has doubled on average.

The PHARE funds for 1998-2001 were allocated to the regional programmes and CBC – 40% of total commitments (almost 600 Mio. €), and to the public administration and institutional reforms – nearly 18% (over 250 Mio. €). For the internal market were reserved about 9% (over 130 Mio. €) of the funds available and the same amount was allocated for justice and home office projects. Agriculture, transport and environment projects were recipients of PHARE funds 7,5%, 6,5% and 7,8% respectively.

Since 2000, PHARE has been performing Economic and Social Cohesion (ESC) Programme focusing on reducing disparities between regions. This programme performs activities previously undertaken by the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund. Two new programs – ISPA and SAPARD have changed priorities of the EU assistance. The problems with implementation of the new rules and preparation of projects with the new objectives brought about a delay in PHARE 1998 start. Poland managed to allocate only 180 Mio. € of which almost 60% were reserved for infrastructure and CBC projects, 16% for private sector and 10% for public administration adaptation.

The problem with SAPARD programme³⁵ has been resolved and it is expected that it is to begin in June 2002. The European Commission in October 2000 adopted the operation programme and implementation rules. The allocation, for SAPARD 2000, in accordance with the annual agreement signed on 29 March 2001, amounts to

171, 6 Mio. €³⁶, and the commitment period has been prolonged till 31 December 2002. The support areas of SAPARD, defined in operational programme, are as follows:

improvement of food processing and marketing of rural production and fish products, investments in farms, development and improvement of rural infrastructure, diversification of activities undertaken to provide alternative sources of incomes, pilot projects, human resources development, technical assistance.

The ISPA programme has operated since 2000. Financial memoranda have been signed for 11 transport projects for almost 850 Mio. €, and 20 environmental ones for nearly 813 Mio. €; co-financing of ISPA grants is 629 Mio. € and 485,6 Mio. € respectively. The projects under the ISPA comprise 10 projects of sewage treatment, 4 projects of solid waste management and 5 projects of drinking water plants/pipes and water quality improvement. Among transport projects, 6 concern roads infrastructure and 3 railway ones. Only one project comprises technical assistance for the pre-feasibility study for the sustainable development of the cross/connection of the Corridor I, II, IV.

Experiences of the regions with Pre-accession Funds

When the EU assistance for Poland is considered, geographic layout of the aid must be taken under account. Between 1990-1997, the only region not to obtain support was Mazowieckie voivodeship. A very small amount (0.3 Mio. €) was allocated to Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship. The greatest amount of PHARE funds received the following regions: Lubuskie (128 Mio. €), Opolskie (73,5 Mio. €) and Dolnośląskie (53 Mio. €). The remaining regions obtained between 10 and 20 Mio. € of the support funds for their projects.

New PHARE Orientation, ISPA and SAPARD programmes have increased annual allocations for Poland several times. Thus, the support for regions has been enhanced. However, not all regions are yet eligible for all types of assistance available. When, under PHARE programmes all regions were chosen to

get the aid, only 5 regions were eligible for the assistance under PHARE ESC 2000³⁷. The number of regions eligible for PHARE ESC 2001 was enlarged to 8 regions³⁸. Under Phare ESC 2002, the number of regions was increased to 13, and there are now two horizontal programmes (human resources development and SMEs support), to enable all regions taking part in them. The European Commission agreed to all 16 regions participation in PHARE ESC 2003. Under Phare 2003, the requirements stipulate to set aside a support of at least 11% and 15% respectively for HRD and SMEs in most regions³⁹.

Between 1998-2001, the regions that received the largest amount of the PHARE funds (100 Mio. € and more) were: Śląskie, Kujawsko-pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Mazowieckie, Małopolskie and Dolnośląskie. The regions where large projects under ISPA are implemented are: Małopolskie, Mazowieckie, Pomorskie, Śląskie, Dolnośląskie and Kujawsko-pomorskie. So far, there were no projects under ISPA in Lubelskie and Świętokrzyskie.

The analysis of the projects shows that most of them concern infrastructure with local, or regional dimensions. It must be stressed, however, that most regional strategies contain sustainable development principle. Nevertheless, sustainable development has not yet been seen as the most effective environment resources for economic, social and environment activities, but solely in terms of environment protection. Thus, the lack of this sort of approach limits our activities solely to environment not to sustainable development. It must be stressed that due to insufficient spatial planning and management within the regions and at the local level, it was difficult to co-ordinate actions under PHARE concerning the regional sustainable development approach. One of the reason was the absence of strong regional and local policies, due, firstly, to the lack of self-government authorities, and then to their weakness. A great number of basic needs, poor financial public resources and not strong enough managing authorities in regions, on the one hand, and incompatible interests of different lobbying groups on the other,

might have been an obstacle to coherent actions favourable to sustainable development.

Preparation of Poland to the European Union's Structural Funds utilisation – regional sustainable development issues

The decision of the Polish Government on the association with the European Communities in 1991, and then subsequently, on submitting Poland's Application for Membership to the European Union on 8 April 1994, has established a strategic goal of Polish foreign policy - i.e. integration with the EU. Since then, all the action undertaken by the Government were aimed at the adaptation to the EU requirements. The next phase in Poland's preparation to the EU membership and to obtaining Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund, is the preparation of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2004-2006⁴⁰ (see Fig. 3). The Ministry of Economy is in charge of preparing it at the present moment.

The goal of the National Development Plan between 2004-2006 and its strategy should take under consideration not only the perspective of the first few years after joining the EU, but also address challenges to be shared by all EU countries in the next programming period, at least until 2013. The sum total of EU and Polish funds potentially engaged in the implementation of the National Development Plan for the next programming period should make possible the continuation of the development strategy to be implemented within the next few years and concerning the scope of modernisation processes, and that of shaping the socio-economic situation of the entire country and its regions.

The strategic aim of the National Development Plan for 2004-2006 formulated from this perspective is as follows:

The strategic goal of the National Development Plan consists in increasing the development of a competitive economy based on know-how and innovations, able to ensure long-term, sustainable development, growth of employment, and the achievement of social, economic and regional cohesion with the European Union on a regional and national levels.

The goal formulated in this manner is in accordance with the basic assumptions of the Government's economic programme for 2002-2005, referring to innovativeness, development and employment. It is also a direct extension of the goals formulated in the Preliminary National Development Plan⁴¹ relating to structural activities, co-financed between 2000-2003 by the resources from pre-accession funds. It is also to promote creation of the foundations for strengthening competitiveness of Polish economy and improving the standard of living in the perspective of joining the European Union.

Apart from the National Strategy for Regional Development, other five sectorial strategies have been prepared: National Strategy for the Increase of Employment and Human Resources Development⁴², National Strategy for Development of Rural Areas and Agriculture (Uniform Structural Policy for the Rural Areas and Agriculture Development)⁴³, National Strategy for Fisheries (draft), National Strategy for Environmental Protection⁴⁴ and National Strategy for Transport Development⁴⁵. The work is being done at six sectorial operational programmes (SOP), one Integrated Regional Operational Programme (with sixteen sub-programmes), and one Operational Programme – Technical Assistance.

As Poland will be covered by Objective 1 for all four Structural Funds (ERDF, ESF, EAGGF Guarantee Section and FIFG), it will be possible to use the measures under Community Support Framework in co-financing. Along with the implementation of the sectorial operational programmes and the regional program, large projects co-financed by the Cohesion Fund will be completed. The means originating from the Fund will not support the realisation of operational programmes but they will be complementary instead. Two sectors - transport and environment, will have support from the Cohesion Fund. For the projects under the Cohesion Fund it about 30.3% of total funds (about 13 300 Mio. €) will be allocated.

Moreover, two Community Initiatives – EQUAL and INTERREG - will be realised in Poland. The allocation on these initiatives is estimated to represent 4.7% of total resources.

As far as particular areas of the structural funds intervention are concerned, the most funds under the National Development Plan (structural funds together with the Cohesion Fund) will be allocated to infrastructure modernisation and development projects and actions – 35.5%, and in the area of transportation infrastructure in particular – 31.8%. Under the CSF (not including the Cohesion Fund), the share of the particular intervention areas in structural funds expenditure will be as follows: 35.2% basic infrastructure, including, in particular, transportation infrastructure, 23.3% human resources, 40.4%

production environment, including 21% industry and services, 18.2% development of agriculture, rural areas and fishery, and 1.2% tourism industry. Under the CSF (not including the Cohesion Fund), the share of the particular intervention areas in structural funds expenditure will be as follows: 35.2% basic infrastructure, including, in particular, transportation infrastructure, 23.3% human resources, 40.4% production environment, including 21% industry and services, 18.2% development of agriculture, rural areas and fishery, and 1.2% tourism industry.

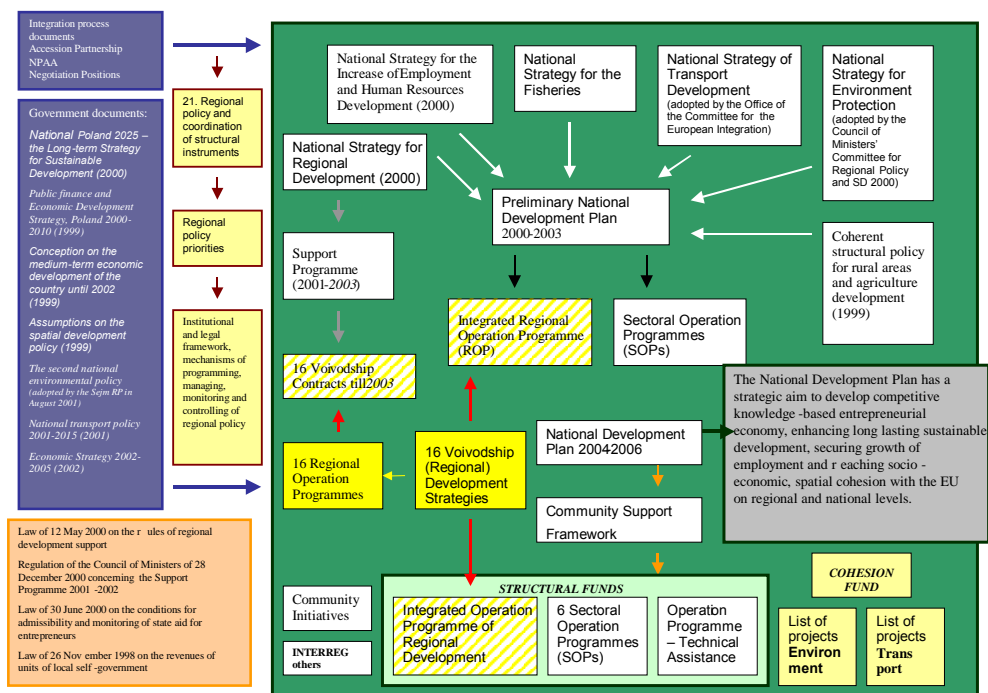


Fig. 3 Interrelation between policy documents preparing Poland for the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund

3. Multi-level governance

A) REGIONAL ISSUES AND CASES WHICH INVOLVE THE EU-LEVEL, NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL CO-ORDINATION

Regional issues and cases which involve the EU-level, national and sub-national co-ordination should be perceived in the context of comprehensive reforms of Poland's administrative system of 1998, based on a unitary national model, which for the first time brought multi-level governance into practice (the concept of Poland's multi-level governance is

presented in Fig. 3.1, together with specific issues of RSD connected thereto).

To date, in particular after the election of 2002, the reform of Poland's multi-level governance has been streamlined and refined, more power given to the municipalities' presidents, sometimes

against self-government decisive bodies highly sensitive to currently-going political coalitions.

A short commentary below aims to signpost the post-election status quo.

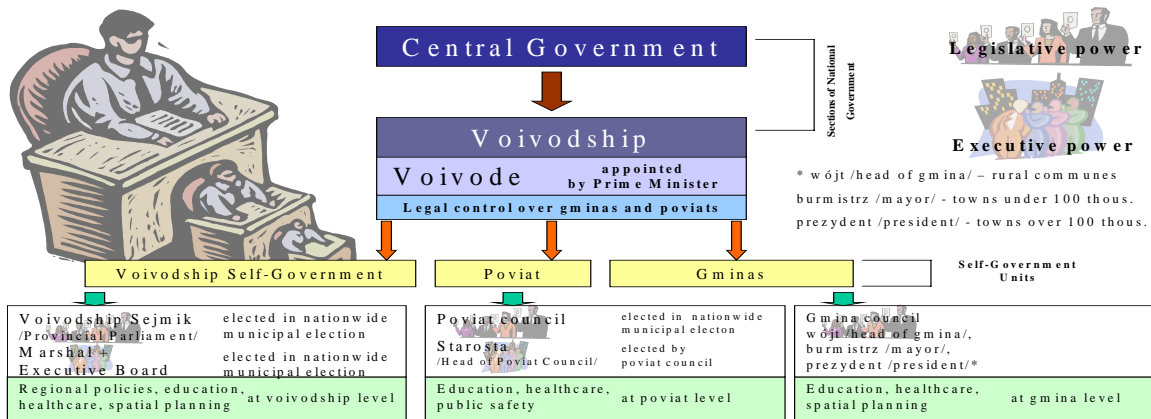


Fig. 4 Local sections of national government vs. self-government institutions in Poland

After the balloting day, when heads of rural communes, mayors and presidents were nationally elected, a real stand-off is looming in several councils of towns and cities. Conflicts are brewing. Locally-elected mayors are quite likely to have to confront a hostile majority in the council, which in practice may leave them unable to rule.

Under previous regulations, newly elected mayors entertained a majority of vote in the council. Otherwise they could simply have not been promoted. From now on, mayors and heads of localities are elected direct by the public, albeit regulations relative to the liaison between executives and the council remain unchanged. On the other hand, aside from day-to-day stewardship, mayors have never been permitted to take whatever major decisions unless cleared by the council. Without that, they could not e.g. have a property purchased, sold or leased, decide investments, take out a loan, etc. Now they have requisite powers to do so.

Head of a commune (mayor, president) can only be removed by way of a referendum. For such a referendum to be valid, at least 30% of citizens must attend. The hitherto experience reports a mere few per cent turnout, which makes such referendums effectively null.

The council may also hold out for the budget, not to approve it within the first three months. But then it is not only the

head of commune/mayor to leave the office, the council is dissolved too, and the commune/town is managed by a trustee. With things looking that way the council members would rather be reluctant to choose that weapon to wield authority over the mayor.

It was when local government legislation was underway that experts warned of an imminent clash unless the powers of mayors and respective councils were clearly defined. The MPs, having altered the procedure for mayors' election, failed however to adequately modify other regulations.

The above is a new exercise in the process of building in Poland a fully democratic and open society. Both readiness of the society to be part of this exercise and the very notion of multi-level governance will opportunely be tested while delivering the "sustainable development principle" provided for in the Constitution of Poland, Art. 3.

As an accession country, Poland is pushing ahead with its preparations for the EU membership. The process of reforms of the administrative structure with which power is being assigned to regional/local communities must be seen as a step to preparing Poland to implement the EU regional development policies and to do so in an effective and efficient way. It is critical to test to what extent multi-level governance is being incorporated into the RSD issue given

that the conditions of Structural Funds Programming are so stringent and the time is so tight - this means that present decisions on future Structural Funds intervention in Poland, referable to the RSD principle, are decided on central level with rather weak consultation with lower ranks. The quality of the decision-making process will be presented.

Poland is working on the National Development Plan (NDP) and Sectoral Operational Programmes (SOPs) and one Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP) with a view to developing the principle of sustainable development and local stakeholders' governance practice. This will be made a case study of democratisation - decision-making processes, possible coalitions among major groups and how "the partnership criterion" is being fulfilled in Structural Funds programming will come under scrutiny.

The pre-accession instruments (Phare, ISPA and SAPARD) have not worked out a partnership mechanism as the implementation of programmes involving regional partners (such as for example Phare ESC [Economic and Social Cohesion Programme]⁴⁶) has been at the deep implementation and payment phase. Thus, the regional partners – self-governments has been established by the administration system reform of 1998, creating the background for a partnership mechanism. The role of other stakeholders such as e.g. NGOs is still not used to sufficient extent. Therefore, a lot has to be done when the Structural Funds programming carried out. The first step was drafting of the documents (NDP, SOPs, IROP). The programming was carried out in consultation with social partners – stakeholders (including self-governments, potential final beneficiaries of SOPs and IROP - representatives of different groups of social and economic life). This consultation process has been seen as a beginning of a partnership mechanism building as creates an opportunity for stakeholders to cooperate and to achieve common objectives when strategies under the Structural Funds being programmed and implemented. As the Structural Funds programming imposes a horizontal principle of sustainable development, there is a strong believe that the partnership

mechanism will play a vital role in a multi-level governance.

The governance of sustainable development in Poland needs deeper understanding given that the transformation towards market economy, democracy and regional co-operation has only 13 years' history. The concept of sustainability, that is the conservation of natural eco-systems in line with accelerated economic development, is in case of Poland influenced by the general sense that it must quickly make up for the delay in economic development, what needs acceleration of efforts. It is very difficult for the present generation of Polish people to speak of slowing-down economic activity to accommodate future generations. Moreover, when it comes to the management of sustainable development, there is a problem of political 'hassle and tussle'. Obviously, the principal goal is to cut the economic distance to the EU partners with whom the accession countries' economies will have to compete, but this concern should not interfere with democratic mechanisms⁴⁷. How to balance the need of the aforesaid competition with the sustainability principle is a question to handle in the medium-term perspective. The concept of sustainability should be taken comprehensively, considering not only the necessities of life in the accession countries, but also in the aspect of their confrontation with the European Single Market.

The multi-level governance of sustainable development needs a coherent public programme taking under consideration sustainable development principle by the well-trained human resources that understand exactly the assumptions of the principle, the implementing mechanism and coherent with this programme activities in all spheres in social and economic life. According to the article 5 of the Constitution of Republic of Poland, the state ensures environment protection in line with sustainable development principle. Thus, the multi-level governance of sustainable development requires, first of all, a strong, sustainable development goal-oriented strategy at national/central level which has been adopted and then step by step but consequently implemented at all

levels. In accordance with art. 74.1, public authorities are to ensure ecological security for present and future generations. Thus, all public and self-governmental authorities are obliged to observe sustainable development principle at central, regional and local level. As the sustainable development need to be taken into account when social and economic development considered, it requires an involvement of all stakeholders. The national development strategy (at first National Strategy for Regional Development 2001-2006, then Preliminary National Development Plan till 2003 and finally National Development Plan 2004-2006) constitutes a base for regional development strategies (regional operational programmes). Therefore, the cohesion between these strategies has to be preserved. That requires acting at local/regional level but thinking at national

or rather global one. As the principle covers top-down initiatives as well as bottom-up ones, a close cooperation (multi-level governance) is indispensable to have a sustainable developing economy. Unfortunately, in Poland it is very difficult to observe a multi-level governance of sustainable development. The reasons for that are different. Most important ones seem to be: a lack of knowledge concerning what the concept of sustainable development in practice means, how to ensure sustainable development in economy – i.e. how to implement it in all policies of state, a lack of a partnership mechanism of programming development strategies and their implementation mainly due to relatively young multi-level administration structure and poor adaptation of public and self-governmental authorities to implement sustainable development principle.

B) MULTI-LEVEL INTERACTION AMONG DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS ON A REGIONAL LEVEL

In regard to this issue the case of “Green Lungs of Poland” (GL) is presented, where the multi-level interaction could be gauged *in statu nascendi*. The Green Lungs of Poland is a typical case where the principle of *bis dat qui cito dat* has played an important role in a governance approach - this project started much earlier (early 90s) than socio-economic transformation had begun. All key aspects, such as policy-making, power-sharing and hierarchical cross-dependence were evaluated and the results presented. This project is an extremely suitable instance of multi-level interaction, the more so that it relates to about 20% of Poland’s territory.

The GL functional region is an ecologically defined, multistage system of economic and social growth, originated as a voluntary ‘partnership’ of the central government and its regional representatives, other central organizations, funds and foundations on

the one hand and local authorities at the commune and, following the reform of public administration, *poviat* (*county*) level on the other.

The territory under the said partnership for eco-friendly development of the GL extends over 60.759,00 sq. km. and represents 19.4% of Poland’s entire area. It is inhabited by 3.7 mln, which stands for 9.6% of the country’s population. Right from the start, the partnership strived to further the GL growth under the constitutional principle of sustainable development, the one that came to set a standard for whatever initiative contributed to social or economic life. The region is located in the north-eastern part of Poland. Administratively, it integrates the provinces (voivodeships) of: *Warmińsko-mazurskie* and *Podlaskie* as well as part of *Mazowieckie*, *Kujawsko-pomorskie* and *Pomorskie* (see Fig. 3.2).



Fig. 5 North-eastern part of Poland as Green Lungs of Poland territory

The formation process of the GL was first urged by a critical condition of the natural environment Poland suffered from in late 1970s and early 1980s. Industrialization processes and the economic policy of that time preferred the growth of huge production facilities, industries. This gave rise to close to thirty regions of high ecological risk. In practical terms, the only large part free of pollution was north-eastern Poland. Thus an idea arose to create a defence system to ward natural and cultural resources on a regional (functional territories) level.

The first attempt at identifying that system as well as programming was made in relation to north-eastern Poland and was initially addressed to the area of land extended over the former Suwalskie voivodeship, inclusive of the Great Mazurian Lakes, and part of the former Białostockie voivodeship.

The GL formation process coincided with Poland's preparation to the First World Summit. It is also at that time that the political makeover came about, which allowed for the state to revise its priorities and devise new finance methods with a variety of ecological funds and foundations brought into being.

In June 1992 Poland was among 166 states attending the World Summit in Rio de Janeiro which was dominated by the debate on problems surrounding sustainable development. Among numerous propositions submitted to the

final document, Polish delegation had their own package relating to sustainable development of the north-eastern Green Lungs of Poland.

Over 1988 – 1992, this notion was finally accommodated in the social-economic register, first in the region, then in Poland and Europe.

Crowning moments of the many steps taken to promote this idea happened on the 13th day of May 1988 and the 30th of December 1990 when in respective towns of Białowieża and Olsztyn an agreement between central government officials and local authorities of the north – eastern region of Poland was signed and revised to have established a partnership between the said stakeholders aimed to further the end of comprehensive and organic protection and rational management of natural environment in the functional region of the Green Lungs of Poland. This partnership agreement was the first document ever in Poland discarding the concept of economic growth based on industrialization and favouring ecology instead. The primary number of signatories grew steadily over time as the territory under the document increased, and so did the interest and backing from central administration and environmental protection agencies. Presently, the partnership consists of 22 stakeholders (31 October 2002) who form the Programme Council. The main promoter and coordinator of the project was the National Foundation for

Environment Protection. In 1992, the National Council was convened to manage the work of the Programme Council and its local offices.

Qualifications required to enter the GL were twofold: an outstanding natural merit of a particular area and a strong commitment made by its local authorities. The GL is a region of distinction which has a potential to become an 'export commodity'. Unique qualities of this territory come together to yield a particularly attractive product that makes a difference. Among them are: sparse population, unspoiled natural environment, high biodiversity value in an attractive green, forest and lake complex. There is rich ethnic culture, good traditional cuisine, constantly increasing infrastructure, academic potential and favourable conditions for the production of health food or installing 'clean industries'.

True for the entire region, these qualities are internally, sub-regionally or locally different, which results in that the product of the GL represents yet another value, that is diversity. It seems that this latter characteristic fully justifies the following motto being taken to encapsulate a marketing guidance: *think regionally - act locally*.

The GL counts as a low-industry region. It is beneficial considering nature conservation. Principal industry is food processing, besides a significant part in national output play electrical, paper and pulp, rubber and tyre industries, as well as production of building materials. Unemployment ranks high. By the end of 1999, the unemployment records showed the number of 297.000., which contributed to 12.6% of the national statistics. Curbing unemployment seems a no.1 problem to tackle.

Exuberant nature and picturesque landscape of the GL along with its proximity to Warsaw metropolis make the region play an important part in Poland's tourism industry, albeit its potential is not yet entirely exploited. The location of tourist-attracting regions in Poland, at an international, national and regional level.

An important factor in the economy of the GL is agriculture. It is marked by rather poor quality of farmland in its eastern and

southern parts with a larger concentration of better soil in the north. It is noteworthy that a fairly large proportion of farmland lies fallow or uncultivated, which creates a potential for afforestation; there are largely fine conditions for eco-farming.

The important fact was Poland's completion in 1995 of the National Ecological Network ECONET Polska, whereby areas of land of outstanding, international merit were classified. The GL ranked high as one of major regions on a European scale.

Until 1995 the number of stakeholders involved in the GL partnership stabilized, as did the territorial structure of the undertaking. Both have remained so until today.

In December 1998, the Minister of the Environment, Natural Resources and Forestry appointed Minister Plenipotentiary for the GL. It was a crucial event for the partnership, whereby social and regional efforts were combined with the activity of the relevant governmental department in its capacity as maker and executor of ecological policies of the state.

In 1998, land development planners from the voivodeships engaged in the partnership came up with an audit titled 'The Diagnostic Study of the GL Functional Region' which then gave way to 'The Development Strategy of the GL Functional Region. Propositions'. The latter document was compiled in 1999 by order of the Research Council of the GL Partnership. The main objective was to provide assistance in translating the GL idea into practice. In 2001 'The Development Framework for the GL Functional Region. 2001 – 2010' came out. It is an executory guidance to 'The Strategy...' and its update as well.

In June 2000, the Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry Committee of Polish Parliament gave an opinion to further develop the GL project in the context of Poland's association with the European Union.

The partnership in hand made by the authorities of north-eastern Poland was a key political act which perhaps would have to wait until it is fully recognized. It is

carefully looked on by the international community and obviously was the first conscious effort in the history of Poland jointly made by the authorities and public for the cause of eco-friendly development as precondition for economic, social and cultural prosperity. By way of digression, it is worthwhile to say that the rule 'that gives twice who is first to give' was fully exercised in that context.

The following power structure and extent of authority in the Green Lungs region can be recognized in the whole period of the Green Lungs of Poland Project development. According to the new structure of authority involved in the Green Lungs of Poland, the following participants to the strategic work are to be named:

- state government at a central and provincial level, responsible for the spatial cohesion of the entire state, transnational relations and pursuance of top priority aims in regard to the protection of most valued natural and cultural phenomena;
- the policy of the government should be geared toward a balance in bridging a gap in status among regions and stimulating the kind of growth which would bring out those regions' unique qualities;
- regional self-government at a provincial level, responsible for the economic and social development of its respective voivodeship in conformity with external and internal conditions determining its distinctive nature;
- municipal self-government at a poviat (municipality) level, responsible for servicing the public on a superlocal plane, assuring the efficiency of technical and social infrastructure in the district;
- local self-government at a commune level, responsible for the creation of basic living conditions in a community, such as home, work, essential services; it mobilizes support from subsidiary local stakeholders.

It is very interesting for future perspective of the political interaction for the Green Lungs of Poland. The present political – administrative make-up of the Green

Lungs region after the latest municipal elections (at a provincial level) looks as follows:

- in the Podlaskie voivodeship, the political Right has conceded power to the alliance of SLD (Democratic Left Alliance) - PSL (Peasants' Party) - Samoobrona (Self-Defence Party),
- in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship, the Left bloc has handed over to the coalition: PSL – PiS (Law and Justice) – Self-Defence Party – PO (Citizens' Platform),
- in the Warmińsko–mazurskie voivodeship, the Left-wing coalition of SLD – PSL – Samoobrona – UW (Union of Freedom) has been formed,
- in the Kujawsko-pomorskie voivodeship, the former Left bloc of SLD – PSL –
- Samoobrona has remained in office,
- in the Pomorskie voivodeship the Right-wing coalition of PO - PiS will continue to rule.

The following conclusions regarding internal issues can be drawn:

1. It should provide more stability than the previous one as the majority of Voivodeship Offices and a large part of voivodeship self-government authorities (Marshall's Offices) come from the same political parties. Such a make-up can easily vote resolutions.
2. This stable political arrangement should enable to prompt renegotiation of the GL partnership agreement given an unequivocal position of the Ministry of the Environment on that matter.

A study of strategic aims adopted for the development of voivodeships situated on the territory of the GL demonstrated that all take on sustainable development. Among key factors to be a success is harmonious cooperation of the voivodeships in hand, and, no less importantly, the inclusion of local players at a poviat and commune level. All the voivodeships involved are open to transnational initiatives and seek potential success in the increasing competitiveness of their respective domains.

Aside from the authorities, a number of NGOs are involved in the Green Lungs of Poland. They are:

- regional and local development agencies whose aim is to ensure the flow of relevant information, foster entrepreneurship and promote respective areas they operate in;
- purpose-specific foundations oriented to particular aspects of life (ecology, education, health), e.g. the Great Mazurian Lakes Foundation, the Biebrzańskie Society, The Society for the Protection of Białowieska Forest, etc.;
- consultative bodies, information and training institutions;
- economic associations and industry chambers with a view to integrating local communities of workers and their employers;
- educational, research and scientific institutes, such as Białystok Technical University, University of Białystok, the Catholic University of Lublin (KUL), the Nicolas Copernicus University in Toruń, the Research Institute of Forestry in Warsaw, the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN), etc.;
- promotional commercial establishments aimed to encourage business contacts at a local, regional, national and international level;
- business entities – large industrial plants and fast-growing SMEs represented by local Chambers of Commerce;
- foreign players, such as WWF (the Conservation Organization), UICN (the World Conservation Union), EURO-NATUR Foundation, Fondation France – Pologne.

The scope of activity of this complex network of stakeholders needs to be seen in the eyes of distinct nature of the Green Lungs of Poland, taking into account both the level of autonomy of regional and local players and the degree of state intervention whenever necessary.

Right on the threshold of the European Union, Poland has two unquestionable

assets to offer: a millenary culture and natural beauty. Both should be taken as the property of the entire Europe and duly protected by it. The GL territory is the nearest to the centre of Europe land so suitable for research, ecological and cultural teaching, or tourist exploration.

An important piece of work to do in the nearest future is to develop an idea of eco-friendly growth for other European regions similar in natural and civilization status that will draw on the experience of the GL. It needs to continue efforts aimed at further integration of operational methods used for the management of the GL project and the cross-border territories of Russia, Lithuania and Belarus. That will help develop the idea of the Green Lungs of Europe, a pan-european, extensive system of protection regions covering the most valued natural resources of the continent.

With most of the GL situated in the drainage area of the Baltic Sea, this territory is part of the European natural configuration system. The European Ecological Network ECONET which has classified key regions of international import finds evidence of strong connectivity with equally important areas outside Poland. Part of these were declared cross-border natural conservation areas where international research is being done over their protection. Lake regions around the Baltic with similar problems in respect of environmental care and a balanced, rational development for them laid the foundations for the GL project.

Noticeably, an initiative raised by Poland in 1992 on further extension of the GL idea into the Green Lungs of Europe to encompass the most valued bits of natural beauty in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and the Kaliningrad District (Russian Federation), Belarus and, in small proportion, Ukraine won but preliminary and conditional approval by the interested parties⁴⁸.

The controversial problem is that the GL borders: the District of Kaliningrad of Russian Federation in the north, and Lithuania and Belarus in the east are related to the necessity of opening connection between Poland and European territory by a network of routes

what certainly will have an impact for nature conservation in the area of GL project.

Trans-European routes which cross the GL region bind:

- the Baltic states with Central and Western Europe - route I: Helsinki – Riga – Warsaw (Via Baltica), with a division: Riga – Kaliningrad – Gdańsk,
- Southern Europe - route VI: Gdańsk – Katowice – Vienna (planned motorway A1),
- Further south, off the GL boundary - route II across the country (Berlin – Warsaw – Moscow) is under way.

An alternative concept of making the GL part of an international undertaking is a project named the Green Baltic Ring . A goodwill declaration for international co-operation to protect the environment was signed in the early 90s by delegates from Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine and Poland. Recently, within the framework of the Baltic States' (BSR) cooperation over the policy for space utilization VASAD 2010, broad lines were drawn for the strategy toward a sustainable development of the Baltic Region. Engaged are the following countries: Poland, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Germany (Mecklenburg-West Pomerania), Denmark and Norway.

Among priorities are projects orientated on the development of protection areas and the areas of ecological merit, as well as joint effort under the Baltic Agenda 21⁴⁹. The GL fits in the Green Baltic Ring project while pursuing the growth and protection of outstanding habitats, building a network of conservation areas and setting up a product range for tourism industry featuring natural beauty, wildlife and culture. Integrating the GL into the broad plane of cooperation of the Baltic nations is to be perceived as a constituent aspect of the integration of entire Europe.

A distinct scale and agenda has cross-border cooperation within the framework of Niemen (Neman) and Bałtyk (Baltic) Euroregions. Under the Niemen Euroregion (Poland, the Kaliningrad District, Lithuania, Belarus) the priorities are: economic growth, the environmental policy promotion and a joint effort to develop telecommunications, transport and power supply infrastructure, also modernization of agriculture and forestry. The Bałtyk Euroregion founded in 1998 (Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden) aims at infrastructure projects, land development and sustainable growth of the region, tourism, protection and enhancement of the environment, education, culture, social problems, unemployment.

C) CROSS-SECTOR POLICY INTEGRATION

When Poland is the issue, now on the threshold of the European Union, there are two categories of instruments that serve the purpose of cross-sector integration under the principle of sustainable development.

One is a collection of already existing sector-specific development strategies at a national level, such as the National Strategy for the Environmental Protection the National Strategy for the Increase of Employment and Human Resources Development, the National Strategy for the Development of Rural Areas and Agriculture (Uniform Structural Policy for the Rural Areas and Agriculture Development), the National Strategy for Fisheries (draft) and the National Strategy

for Transport Development. What binds these sectoral policies together is the Council of Ministers' document of 2002 titled 'the National Environmental Policy for 2003 – 2006 with a Preview for 2007 - 2010', which acknowledges the principle of sustainable development in regard to policies and strategies for respective areas of the state government. This would apply in particular to energy sector, manufacturing industry, transport, public utilities, construction, farming, forestry, tourism and all other which affect natural environment, in a direct or indirect way, whilst utilizing its resources, generating pollution and/or causing whatever harmful physical impact. In that respect, the so-called 'good governance practice' will be

available, along with environmental management systems that will allow to combine economic with ecological results. Cross-sector relations will be enhanced in Poland by working of a market for the environment-oriented business. Under these terms, the following achievements are expected: equity in access to the limited resources, keeping up present and the creation of new jobs in businesses less hazardous to the environment, fostering growth of manufacturing and services less hazardous to the environment (sustainable consumption), application of principles of economy into the environmental protection domain, maximizing the advisory potential subsidiary to sustainable development.

Sector-specific development strategies currently available in Poland do not fully accommodate the principle of cross-sector partnership or take a selective approach to that. Often, they are but a memorandum with no transmission into practice. It is critical then to better match the government's ecological agenda with particular sectoral policies under the guidance of the aforesaid national environmental policy and make a commitment and keep to the principle of cross-sector partnership throughout the pursuance of regional strategies, programmes, plans or other documented guidance at a voivodeship, poviast and commune level that are applicable to sustainable development.

To meet the inter-sector goals, there is a strong need to intensify relations with business community knowing that they are the first users of the environment. To do so, some kind of environmental code for business must be introduced, though on the other hand, steps need to be taken lest tuning into increasingly stringent controls detract from industrial activity in Poland. This should be balanced by promoting adequate consumer attitudes. Presently, a strategy is on the way to regulate the consumer demand for goods and services to further the end of sustainable development.

With that policy in mind, the latest achievements in management will have to be applied and the society mobilized (through social dialogue); this will entail

the application of new methods of governance⁵⁰. While pursuing this new approach to regional growth in Poland, sustainable development must be viewed as a process of learning toward the new model of progress, drawing on the hitherto experience and reflecting specific needs of respective regions. An effort should be made not to reduce it to a hardly welcome messy abstraction or a symbol of rigorous controls to protect the environment. As regards Poland, a country in transformation, talking about sectoral policies means raising the issue of costs that are incurred while the structural changes are gaining momentum before the EU accession. These structural changes entail massive reduction or even renouncement of some industries (or certain large corporations), and the fall of businesses. This means job losses amongst large professional groups and possible social tensions. On the plus side however, there is improved productivity in terms of macroeconomics and a go-ahead for sustainable development. Shunning structural changes will slow Poland's economy down and smother the now fast pace of socio-economic growth. Also, it will put off the time when the sustainable development theory is put into practice.

The other of the two instruments of cross-sector integration mentioned above is the National Development Plan with Operational Programmes specially made for Poland to benefit from the Structural Funds. The National Development Plan says "*The strategic goal of the National Plan for Development is the promotion of an economy based on knowledge and entrepreneurship, capable of a long-term, organic growth, allowing for increased employment and the improvement of social, economic and spatial cohesion with the European Union at a regional and national levels*".

Even though the 'sustainable development' expression is not used in the direct wording of the National Plan's strategic goal, the implication is that the sustainable development principles are presupposed in the Structural Funds agenda. It is an obligation under the community law to reckon with them. Also, they are provided for in the Strategy for Sustainable Development which was

assembled at the latest EU Summit in Gothenburg.

In the European Commission's guidelines for projects under the Structural Funds umbrella for 2000 – 2006, sustainable development is viewed as a horizontal principle⁵¹. This principle is highly contentious, causing an enormous controversy when designing specific tasks.

On the one hand, programming of the Structural Funds must comply with fundamental goals, that is to stimulate the economic growth, improve its competitiveness, mobilize jobs creation and battle against social alienation, all with due regard for the environment, but on the other, it must now include the interrelationship between these goals. It is critical for the programming of Structural Funds in Poland that the theory of sustainable development is translated into operational programmes which are coherent with the Structural Funds' procedures. It seems necessary to provide in the National Development Plan for the growth of economy in line with

adopted priorities and focus on those its sectors which in years 2004 – 2006 are most likely to boost its competitiveness.

In the context of sustainable development, it is essential that the National Development Plan and the Operational Programmes make adequate provisions for actions aimed at increasing competitiveness of Poland's economy while at the same time meeting the challenge from the environment. The Sectoral Operational Programmes for the National Development Plan need to be so oriented as to support businesses close to the environmental protection issue, whether directly or indirectly connected. They should include both the companies that promote this protection (compliance with the community law on the environmental policies) and others that are predisposed to using technologies which promote the development of increasingly advanced systems for such protection.

4. Evaluation Methods and Tools for Regional Sustainable Development

A) EXISTING EVALUATION METHODS AND TOOLS (INCLUDING INDICATORS)

In Poland, the sole experience of designing regional data bases and creating sustainable development indicators is in the area of regional development monitoring. The output is neither sufficient - the new administrative division of Poland is not long since introduced - nor tested yet for conformity to sustainable development principle. As a result, there is no evaluation method for regional sustainable development to be used by central or local government, notwithstanding a strong desire expressed in *The National Long-term Strategy for Sustainable Development – Poland 2025*. By that document, decisions made for economic, social and ecological development should be based on diagnoses of the present status and

prognoses of potential economic, social and environmental impacts, and set against reference/base values to ensure conformity to objectives and desirability of resulting changes. To do so, that is to say to monitor and evaluate the progress in the strategy implementation, indicators and evaluation methods are required. For indicators, two types are distinguished - quantitative (e.g. production, income, GDP) and qualitative (e.g. energy or water waste in relation to GDP unit).

Evaluation methods and tools for regional sustainable development require standardized indicators throughout the country. As hitherto experiences demonstrate, it causes a lot of problems⁵². Even with environment protection the issue is difficult in Poland

as there are no relevant data bases created. According to *The National Environmental Policy for 2003-2006*, indicators for environmental policy need to be redesigned to be able to measure the efficiency of environment protection schemes. Other indicators are also addressed, such as social, economic and other instruments, i.e. to measure the size of impact upon environment, initiative of the state and mobilization of local communities. Altogether, they form a sound base for the creation of indicators to monitor sustainable development.

Having such instruments at the core, reports will be produced:

- at national level – the Report of the Council of Ministers, subject to the Sejm approval (every four years) and
- at regional and local levels – reports of voivodeship boards, poviats and gminas, subject to

B) TYPES OF MEASUREMENT

Despite initiatives to create data bases to monitor sustainable development under regional programmes such as *The Carpathian Ecoregion Initiative* (to promote sustainable development and preserve biodiversity), *Baltic 21*, *The Global Urban Observatory*⁵³, there is no standard instrument to monitor and evaluate the process at a national level. Favourably, there is determination among the authorities to design such an instrument and use it as medium for the creation of central evaluation method and measurement tools for sustainable development.

Final Report marking the completion of a practical model of sustainable development indicators at a voivodeship level (built on regional data bases and in a modular form) will come up with a suite of strong and reliable tools aiming to verify:

1. whether a particular voivodeship, its economy and people keep track of sustainable development,
2. what the rate/pace and implementation scope of this process is,
3. how efficient it is.

approval by the Sejms of particular voivodeships.

It is expected that the Ministry of Environment will elaborate an evaluation method for the sustainable development based on standard indicators, given in a modular form and published before Poland's accession to the European Union. For indicators, the ground was already prepared by the Regional Eco-Development Centre of the Karkonoska Fund in March 2003. Their elaboration offers a modular package of regional sustainable development indicators at a voivodeship level. It is assumed that the conceptual and implementation phases at all levels of governance (central, regional and local) will be completed in 2004, since when an integrated system of sustainable development indicators will be available for self-government bodies and national and international structures such as EUROSTAT, OECD, UN, etc.

Research results show that regional and local data bases, when used for preparing RSD indicators, require enlargement/extension. The following criteria are applied to identify and select the indicators:

4. sustainable development principles and Millennium Development Goals⁵⁴,
5. European best practises in this respect.

Indicator modules of regional directory, regularly updated with the latest data, clearly need to pertain to sustainable development if they are to monitor and evaluate the process. Present directory consists of 246 indicators covering environmental, spatial, economic and social fields. Target directory will comprise 406 indicators (only 76 of them have presently a defined source of data coming in).

Within environmental and spatial fields, there are seven groups of indicators covering:

6. the quality of water and its protection (water and sewage management) – present module (figures given in brackets down the survey) 24 indicators and the module of destination 38 indicators,

7. air quality and its protection – (9) 32 indicators,
8. hazardous waste management – (16) 17 indicators,
9. quality and acoustic climate protection (noise) – (1) 6 indicators,
10. spatial management and nature and scenery/landscape protection – (14) 21 indicators,
11. anti-radiance protection and extreme environmental threats – (1) 2 indicators,
12. access to information on environment - (0) 2 indicators.

Within the field of economy, there are seven groups of indicators:

13. GDP in region (voivodeship) – (5) 9 indicators,
14. entrepreneurship development and labour activity – (15) 28 indicators,
15. access to infrastructure (municipal and economic) – (13) 19 indicators,
16. sustainable development of rural areas – (19) 21 indicators,
17. sustainable development of tourism – (4) 5 indicators,
18. sustainable development of transport – (10) 12 indicators,
19. sustainable development of energetics – (3) 7 indicators.

Within social field, eight groups have been selected:

20. demography – (3) 13 indicators,
21. combating poverty – (16) 28 indicators,
22. health and its protection – (19) 36 indicators,
23. culture and recreation – (18) 24 indicators,
24. education – (31) 36 indicators,
25. public security – (6) 9 indicators,
26. domestic architecture – (18) 27 indicators,
27. partnership and equal opportunities – (1) 13 indicators.

Drawing on the above lists one may perform indicator analyses for each particular field given. Such analyses offer a chance to investigate and describe a complete causation chain for particular indicators using the sequence *pressure/cause – status – reaction/response*.

For example, when social field is concerned, the following analysis can be done (*see table*):

Pressure/cause indicators	Status indicators	Reaction indicators
Unemployment rate (%)	Percentage of people living in poverty (%)	Number of NGOs aimed to combat poverty/10,000 inhabitants
Persistently unemployed to unemployed total	Percentage of people living under minimum living wage (%)	Number of enterprises/1000 inhabitants
Demographic overpressure (%)	Number of people benefiting from social security/1,000 inhabitants	Expenditure on social security/1 inhabitant
No of pensioners in population (%)	Number of homeless/10,000 inhabitants	

According to relevant research, indicator analysis is one of the most valued methods in search of the best practices in sustainable development (especially when reaction indicators are taken into account).

This tool may be used for Poland's regions alone, but it may equally serve a purpose of comparing the regions of Poland with those of other states.

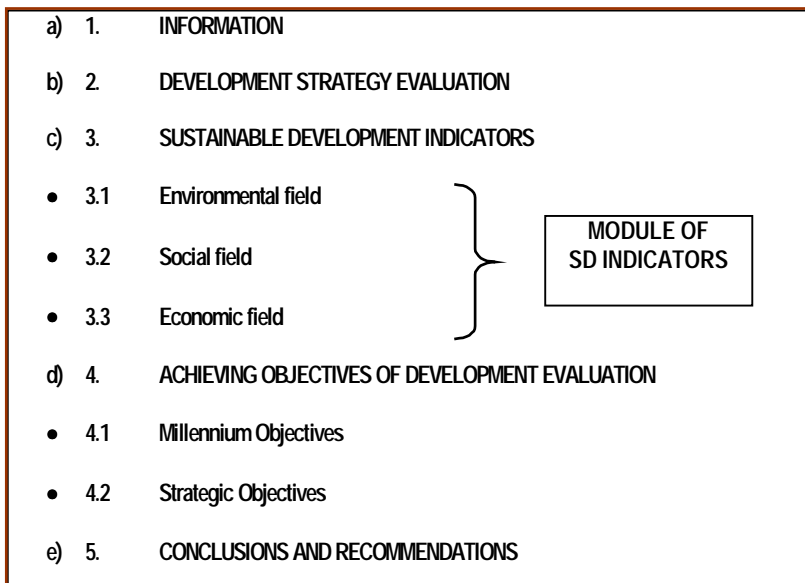
Monitoring of indicators sets the ground for carrying out an audit of regional sustainable development as a systematic and independent operation to establish how close a regional development policy

(strategy or programme) or actions (strategy or programme implementation) are to sustainable development principle and whether such actions - and policy - are implemented in an efficient way. If required, such audit can be carried out as preliminary (ex ante evaluation), strategic (implementation), a proper audit (mid-term evaluation) or ex post, supplemented with sustainable development benchmarking.

A regional audit standard of sustainable development progression is presented on the next page.

This audit standard may prove a very useful tool in monitoring and evaluating of regional sustainable development and will

be used as foundation for a more advanced, complete audit structure along with guidelines for its execution.



Given the latest examples of best practice and new aspects of sustainable development concept, the present indicator – module proposition requires

constant verification and updating in order to be still regarded as an efficient tool for sustainable development monitoring and evaluation.

C) HARMONISATION

Poland is only at the stage of designing its method and tools for sustainable development monitoring and evaluation. In order to assure the maximum practical value of the tools at regional and local levels, the bottom-up approach has been applied.

There is argument whether Poland's accession to the European Union and becoming a beneficiary of the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund will stimulate in any way progress in work on the monitoring tools and evaluation methods for sustainable development. When National Development Plan (NDP) for 2004-2006 and Operational Programmes strategies and measures were being

prepared, sustainable development was a guiding principle (equal opportunities, environment protection, innovation, information society and knowledge-based economy). This will be for the first time that Poland is to address the above-mentioned horizontal issues under the Operational Programmes. Among other things, this will entail the application of sustainable development monitoring tools, i.e. sustainable development indicators and evaluation method. They can also be used in strategic environmental impact assessment carried out for the NDP and the Operational Programmes.

5. Regional sustainable development analysis

A) EXPERIENCES WITH REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The implementation of the sustainable development principle in Poland at regional level is strictly related to the constitutional, legislative and administrative changes introduced in Poland during the last 14 years of transformation towards market economy, bound up in recent years with the process of preparation to the European Union membership. Among the most spectacular achievements is making it a constitutional commitment of the state to protect environment in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, which is duly reflected in all secondary laws. As for legal framework for regional sustainable development, it is based on several acts (on environment, self-government formation and autonomy, level regional development) and resulting strategies (for environmental protection and education, regional development and sustainable development), all adopted by the government. With the strategies, the first and foremost is *“Poland 2025 – The Long term Sustainable Development Strategy”*, adopted in 2000. This strategy in a condensed way reflects the principles of balanced and sustained growth as it attempts to narrow a civilization gap between Poland and the developed countries, thus paving the way to achieving in a foreseeable future the living standards of the EU average. As the European Union is moving further towards knowledge-based economy, Poland has no choice but to build a knowledge-driven society and promote similar economy as fast as possible. The protection of natural environment and its rational use is high on the list of priorities – it is a prerequisite for ensuring an adequate life for the public in clean nature unaffected by socio-economic growth. Equally important is cultural heritage. Moulded to the growth of the entire country, its regions and localities, it forms an important part of the historical space, with which to bring out the identity of Poland against the European Community background. This strategy, together with other strategies focused on environmental protection and education, has already shown a considerable impact

on the sustainable development issue. However, it should be noted that practical implications of the strategy would seldom have to do with the three pillars of sustainable development and that the effects are seen mainly at lower levels of self-government.

A true legislative breakthrough in Poland came with an exercise of transposing EU environmental policy legislation into Polish laws. Such transposition gives a chance to strengthen the legislative effectiveness and enforceability of relevant provisions, thus improving the policy about and, finally, the quality of the environment.

The new administrative division of Poland’s territory, establishment of local and regional government and transfer of decision-making process from the central to regional and local levels is without doubt a major step towards regional sustainable development. In this context, regional governments are left with an obligation to work out their own strategic documents (strategies and operational programmes), including goals mostly focused on the issue in hand. More flexibility on the part of regional and local governments under the new conditions and increased competence and responsibility should contribute to the ultimate success in the implementation of these goals. However, decentralisation of prerogatives and tasks has not yet been matched with adequate regulations in regard to public financing. Resultant shortage of financial resources at regional and local levels makes the implementation of the said documents difficult and is a major setback to the process knowing that they remain the main instrument of to promote development in the regions.

In face of limited national budgetary resources, especially when sustainable development is the issue, foreign financial support is invaluable. In this context the European Union assistance, supporting Poland’s economy transformation process over the last decade, has played a major part in setting grounds for such

development in Poland. At the very beginning (early 90's), the EU aid was geared to humanitarian aid and macroeconomic stabilization, later - to sectoral support necessary for the creation of sound structures of free market economy. From 1994, the assistance switched largely to infrastructure investment and the improvement of public administration. Along with the sectoral programme of PHARE, STRUDER and Cross Border Co-operation (CBC) programmes came, showing yet more rational approach. These programmes were so much important as they featured a new factor in the economic policy - that of regional development. Since 2000, there has been Economic and Social Cohesion (ESC) Programme, in place, done under the PHARE scheme, focusing on reducing disparities between regions. Two new programmes – ISPA and SAPARD have brought in new priorities under the EU assistance and made it necessary to establish new management and implementation authorities. These new governing bodies shall be utilised when the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund are implemented after Poland's accession date in 2004. The analysis of the projects shows that most of them are about infrastructure on a local or regional scale. Similarly, most of the regional strategies referred to above involve a sustainable development principle. Yet, this principle is not yet seen a tool for the harmonious management of natural resources and economic and social life, but solely environment protection. Thus, the entire exercise is about keeping up the environment and not sustainable development. Also, due to insufficient spatial planning and management in the regions and localities, it has proved to be difficult to co-ordinate measures under the PHARE concerning regional sustainable development. Initially, the reason was the absence of strong regional and local policies, first due to the lack of relevant authorities, then due to their weakness. Finally, there is a great number of basic needs, still waiting to be met, poor financial public resources and still relatively weak managing bodies in the regions, as well as incompatible interests of different lobbying groups. All continue to pose an obstacle to coherent

actions favouring sustainable development.

The second most important aid in conjunction with the sustainable development principle in Poland came from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP projects have still been underway, in collaboration with the Polish government and local partners, according to Agenda 21 principle: "think globally, act locally". The projects concern, i.a., the creation of the gminas' and poviats' sustainable development strategies, delivery of new tools for the management, monitoring and assessment of activities developed to implement local SD strategies (Umbrella Project) and enhancement of environmentally favourable and friendly companies (Global Compact Project). The initiative of the UNDP Umbrella project is especially important as it hands down the interest in sustainable development to the ground and opens up planning opportunities for the utilisation of Structural Funds after the EU accession of Poland. Moreover, UNDP has triggered several cross border sustainable development activities, most notably stimulating "East-East" co-operation under that principle.

To be able to utilise the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund, Poland has prepared the National Development Plan (2004-2006), making it a groundwork for the Community Support Framework. National Development Plan, as well as Sectoral Operational Programmes (SOPs) and Integrated Regional Operational Programme (IROP), have been so designed as to provide for the principle of sustainable development, with the strategic goal of *increasing the development of a competitive economy based on know-how and innovations, able to ensure long-term, sustainable development, growth of employment, and the achievement of social, economic and regional cohesion with the European Union on a regional and national levels*, and the inclusion of local stakeholders' governance practice. The regional partners – regional and local governments – have naturally been invited into a partnership mechanism. The programme designing stage has been carried out in consultation with

representatives of these governments as well as different groups from social and economic spheres. However, the role of other stakeholders, such as e.g. NGOs has not been sufficiently used. The consultation process is seen as a beginning of a partnership mechanism with which to build a platform for sound cooperation of the stakeholders and achieve common objectives when the time will come for the Structural Funds to implement. As the Structural Funds programming impose a horizontal principle of sustainable development, there is a strong belief that the partnership mechanism will play a vital role in a multi-level governance.

When the current state of implementation of sustainable development in Poland is the issue, there are a lot of differences by region or locality reflecting unequal knowledge about the principal aspect of such development, that is to say how to ensure sustainable development in economy, or how to implement it in all policies. It results, i.a., from the lack of a flexible partnership mechanism during the regional development programming and implementation, as the multi-level administration structure is relatively new and the public and self-governmental authorities not always ready to implement the sustainable development principle. Actually, the implementation of that as laid down in the definition of law on

environmental protection “as a kind of socio-economic development which entails an integration of political, economic and social activities, with the natural balance being retained along with the continuity of the fundamental processes of nature, and with a purpose of guaranteeing the opportunities for the basic needs of different societies or citizens to be met at present and in the future” is very rare in Poland.

As an illustration, a survey of practical application of local/regional initiatives under Local Agenda 21 shows that there is a big number of regional and local councils that know nothing of that agenda, still contest the SD concept, view the environmental protection rule as a barrier to economic development and do not understand the meaning of social factor in local planning. Alongside, there is another group of the councils who tend to confine the realisation of the Agenda objectives to environmental protection only. The most advanced in LA 21 are those councils that exercise the sustainable development principle in a systemic way, adapt recommendations of Agenda 21 to the whole process of local planning and integrate the SD pillars into the act. At present, the prevalent practice across Polish regions is to identify sustainable development with environmental protection (eco-development).

B) PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Even though regional sustainable development in Poland is at the preliminary stage of implementation and thus very far from desired - some positive effects are already noticeable.

The transfer of decision making from central level to regional and, above all, to local level have boosted activities in cities, towns and villages. Their residents have come to feeling that they rule in the areas they live; as a result, the councils start considering ways of developing those areas in accordance with the people’s current and long-term interests. Decision-making process in localities about whatever economic, social or environmental problems is remarkably shorter, the decisions themselves more

consistent with local factors and to available resources. The increased power of regional/local governments gives them comfort to follow the principle of sustainable development, even unintentionally or indirectly. To make it plain, true and sincere things done for the good of people, nature and its resources must be sustainable in character. Success of such local undertakings would encourage other and increase ecological awareness of the public.

This awareness is increasingly seen amongst the industry and enterprises sector as well. Many are companies that have changed their attitude to the customer, employee and environment they operate in. Large companies which

pursue long-term policies of production and services development in Poland have begun to regard the role of customers, suppliers, users, authorities and opinion-creating organizations as crucial for their success. For many such companies the notion of social and environmental adequacy has become so important that they joined the responsible business initiative.

Beyond doubt, the growth of this dynamic production and services sector that grants the needs of environmental protection should be recognized as a very important achievement in marrying environmental policies with industrial ones. Such companies are a solid basis for promoting and supporting sustainable undertakings. They are natural partners for both the administration and environmental non-government organizations in the implementation of the principle in question.

C) GENERAL TRADE-OFFS

In Poland, trade-off practice is doing well at the highest political level of the socio-economic sphere, but, as already mentioned in this study, falters as it goes down the rungs of the governance ladder. We have given examples of trade-offs in relations between the public and private sector and non-governmental organisations in social, economic, environmental and spatial aspects of development. It seems that environmental development is hinged on short-range trade-offs, in sole pursuance of immediate goals and without any long-term vision about the growth of particular *gminas* or other areas. Also, skillful trading off is needed to assuage intra-sectoral conflicts between local and regional government structures (*gmina, powiat, wojewodship*) and central government, as well as among competing local and regional government bodies alone. This is of vital importance when it comes to attracting investment and handling it in harmony, with due recognition of the role of investors coming in.

It is expected that public-private sector co-operation for sustainable development cause will grow stronger. Initiatives promoting cross-sector partnership, e.g. *Forum for Plock*, a project aimed at the creation of informal institution that brings together NGOs the private sector and public administration, need to be replicated at any time and as widely as possible in regional and local practice.

Last but not least, sustainable development is also applicable to agricultural sector. Presently in Poland, ecological farming is on the rise, though this kind of economic activity needs special effort and joint forces. With setting up EKOLAND, an initiative that brings together eco-farms, the growth of a very prospective area of agricultural activity is going on, especially as there is expectation and potential of niche marketing of such foodstuffs in the European Single Market.

It is commonly realized that Poland needs a new decision-making formula, which will involve co-operation of private, public and central government actors, all united to further the cause of sustainable development. Needless to say, compromise is strongly dependent on the willingness to co-operate as well as organisational ability of the stakeholders involved in the act.

It is expected, that the successful implementation of the Structural Funds in Poland, and the related beneficial effects (in accordance with the principle of supplementary impacts) will make it possible, in a trade-off manner, to allocate a proportion of public funds for the purpose of promoting the sustainable development principle. Still, it is a true fact that the presently available key documents pertaining to the matter of Structural Funds, such as National Development Plan, Sectoral Operational Programmes and Integrated Regional Development Plan are only signaling the issue of trade-offs, which in consequence does not help much to ease the decision-making process.

D) TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP RELATIONS

The most important aspect of the top-down and bottom-up relations is finding an optimum way to manage a particular segment of space. This aspect is strictly related to the matter of sustainable development at a local level. It is necessary at this point to construct an instrumentarium which may allow an influence on the development goals on the one hand and minimise conflicts in relation to them and remove random

decisions on the other. In Poland's reality, relations concerning development have little relevance to sustainable development since they are oriented towards a passive model of coexistence of public and private sectors. True as it is, we see in Poland however a lot of initiatives successfully completed at the bottom level owing to the UNDP technical assistance schemes (the Umbrella Project under Agenda 21).

E) POST-2006

Taking into account the current shape of the economy, state of the society and condition of the environment in Poland, one may conclude that further success of sustainable development requires the social pillar to be strengthened. It is necessary to create opportunities for further building of the market economy with inclusion of Civil Society, viewed as a subject rather than object of transformation. The size of the upcoming Structural Funds to finance sustainable development after the year 2006 strongly depend on the right assessment to what extent the goals put in for financing

conform to the sustainable development principle and to what extent the funds are used to the right cause. For this purpose, a special monitoring system is offered by the UNDP, based on profound experience and expertise in the matter in hand. Post-2006 development depends on general re-orientation of the structural policy of the European Communities, which is presently debated. As other countries newly approved to join the EU, Poland will play an active role in this debate, sustainable development ranking high on the agenda.

¹ Law of 5 June 1998 on self-government of voivodeship, Official Journal of Laws 1998, No 91, item 576, and Law of 5 June 1998 on self-government of poviats, Official Journal of Laws, 1998, No 91, item 578.

² The head of the Board is a city president of a city over 100 000 citizens.

³ H. Kosarczyn, "Regional development in Poland. An overview", PARR, Warsaw 2001, p. 13.

⁴ NTS is an acronym for the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics, introduced in Poland, by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers, 13 July, 2000, Official Journal of Laws, 24 July, 2000, No 58, item 685.

⁵ The survey for the region's development potential carried out by the Center for Regional Development has revealed the regional development potential disparity between 75 for Mazowieckie voivodeship and 22 for Świętokrzyskie voivodeship [Rzeczpospolita 231(6004), 3.10.2001 A10]. Our case study regions are ranked as follows: Śląskie 66, Podkarpackie 35, Pomorskie 48.

⁶ Law of 26 November 1998 on the revenues of self-government units, Official Journal of Laws, 14 December 1998, No 150, item 983, with later amendments.

⁷ Law of 12 May 2000 on rules of regional development, Official Journal of Laws, June 14 2000, No 48, item 550 with later amendments.

⁸ The Support Programme, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 28 December 2000, Official Journal of Laws No 122, item 1326, amendments announced in Official Journal of Laws No. 39, item 460 (Regulation of 11 April 2001) and Official Journal of Laws No 73, item 666 (Regulation of 28 May 2002).

⁹ G. Gorzelak „Czy Polska będzie państwem regionalnym ?” - Regionalizm i regionalizacja w Polsce na tle europejskim, EUROREG, Studia 9 (42) Warszawa, 1993, p. 45.

¹⁰Based on „Planowanie strategiczne w równoważeniu struktur regionalnych”, T. Parteka, KPZK PAN, Studia, Tom CVIII, PWN Warszawa 2000, p. 27-29.

¹¹W. Dziemianowicz, T. Zarycki , „Oblicza polskich regionów”, Studia EUROREG 17 (50), Warszawa 1996, Regionalne Towarzystwa Kultury w Polsce, p. 238-246.

¹² Słownik Rozwoju Regionalnego, PARR, Warszawa 2001.

¹³ The impact of loan funds on employment creation in Poland, PARR, Warszawa 2001, p. 44.

¹⁴ B. Jałowicki – „Świadomość regionalna młodzieży licealnej”, Oblicza polskich regionów, Studia EUROREG 17 (50), Warszawa 1996, p. 176-177.

¹⁵ Official Journal of Laws 27 April 2001, No 62, item 627.

¹⁶ Official Journal of Laws, 8 July 2001, No 115, item 1128.

¹⁷ Official Journal of Laws, 27 April 2000, No 62, item 628.

¹⁸ Official Journal of Laws, 28 September 1991, No 101, item 444 with later amendments.

¹⁹ Official Journal of Laws, 3 February 1995, No 16, item 78 with later amendments.

²⁰ Official Journal of Laws, 4 February 1994, No 27, item 96 with later amendments.

²¹ Official Journal of Laws, 1999, No 15, item 139 with later amendments.

²² The Second National Environmental Policy was adopted by the Council of Ministers in June 2000 and by Sejm in August 2001.

²³ Broszkiewicz R., et al. „Strategiczne wyzwania dla rozwoju regionalnego Polski”, The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Warszawa 1996.

²⁴ Markowski T. „Wzrost konkurencyjności regionów” regionalne i lokalne uwarunkowania i czynniki restrukturyzacji gospodarki Polski, The Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Łódź 1996.

²⁵ The examples of actions and relevant documents are as follows: „The Strategy of the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship Development, by the Board of the Wielkopolskie Voivodeship, The Voivodeship's Operational Programme for Regional Development of the Podkarpackie Region 2001-2006 adopted by the Board of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship, and The Regional Innovation Strategy of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship by the Board of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship.

²⁶ The references to regional initiatives linked to the regional sustainable development are also in Section 2c.

²⁷ All take under consideration the principle polluter pays and re-distributing funds.

²⁸ This network is taken over by the Polish Agency of Enterprise Development.

²⁹ „Ogólne zasady funkcjonowania programu Phare”, UKIE, Warszawa 2001, p. 3.

³⁰ Polish Agency for Enterprise Development took over the responsibilities of Agency of Technology and Polish Agency for Regional Development.

³¹ „Pomoc Phare i jej efekty”, UKIE, Warszawa, p. 3.

³² „Sektorowy spis programów Phare w latach 1990-1999, UKIE, Warsaw.

³³ This document, adopted by the European Commission on 25 March 1998, presents a programme of measures of pre-accession strategy for each candidate country. It is updated every year.

³⁴This document, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 23 July 1998 as a response for each updated Accession Partnership.

³⁵ The problem concerned the accreditation of the implementing and paying agency for SAPARD – ARMA.

³⁶ „Informacja okresowa Phare, ISPA, SAPARD”, UKIE, Warsaw, 14-16.

³⁷ Voivodeships: Warmińsko-mazurskie, Podlaskie, Podkarpackie, Lubelskie and Śląskie.

³⁸ Regions of Phare ESC 2000 and Kujawsko-pomorskie, Świętokrzyskie and Podlaskie.

³⁹ These limits/rules do not apply to three regions (voivodeships: Lubuskie, Opolskie and Świętokrzyskie) having smallest allocations under the Phare 2003.

⁴⁰ NDP, according to the schedule, is to be adopted by the Council of Ministers and the Sejm of RP in November 2002.

⁴¹ The Preliminary National Plan of Development outlines the directions and scale of involvement of pre-accession funds; the first Preliminary National Plan of Development for 2000-2002 was approved by the European Integration Committee in December 1999, and its extension concerning the period of 2000-2003 was accepted by the Committee in January 2002.

⁴² This document was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 4 January 2000.

⁴³ This document was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 13 July 1999.

⁴⁴ This document was adopted by the Council of Ministers' Committee for Regional Policy and Sustainable Development on 27 July 2000.

⁴⁵ This document was adopted by the Office of the Committee for the European Integration.

⁴⁶ The Phare ESC has been described in chapter 2c.

⁴⁷ An excellent case in this respect is the one of introduction into Polish legislation a commitment to promoting alternative sources of energy, inclusive of motor vehicle fuels - so called biofuels. The mechanism of this proposition is to bind the producers and distributors of fuels to add into petrochemical products they produce or deal in organic components obtained from vegetable matter (ethanol, vegetable oils). There is no denying the fact that this strict legislation to use biofuels' blends was strongly influenced by political and business groups. Their successful lobbying instigated Parliamentary vote against any access whatsoever to traditional fuels, regardless of possible concerns raised by consumers over their cars' performance. This initiative, however valid for sustainable development, by falling short of public consultations typical to the present-day governance methods, ignoring the compromise between different actors across the government and business community, probably breaching the constitutional freedom of choice on the part of consumers, seems most likely to be rejected by the president's veto.

⁴⁸ S. Kozłowski 'Przyszłość Zielonych Płuc Polski', Warsaw 1998.

⁴⁹ Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea region – The Baltic 21, Nyborg 1998.

⁵⁰ Governance – a collection of principles, processes applied and attitudes which affect the manner of governing, its transparency, openness to participation, methods of control, efficiency, and coherence of whatever measures taken, European Governance A White Paper, COM(2001) 428final 25.7.2001.

⁵¹ Art.1 of the Instruction for the Structural Funds programmes, Council Regulation (EC) 1260/1999 of 21 September 1999. It says that 'in order to meet its goals the Community should take part in an organic, balanced and sustainable development of economic activity, employment and human resources, protection and improvement of the environment, elimination of inequity and promotion of equal opportunities of men and women.

⁵² A good example is *Baltic 21* Programme, aiming to support regional cooperation and build a solid platform for common transition towards sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. When the Programme got under way, it was clearly visible that no coherent data base systems were at work to exchange data and monitor development in the regions involved in the Programme.

⁵³ The programme initiated by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements – Habitat.

⁵⁴ Defined in the UN Millennium Declaration (Resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 2000) following eight goals: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, Achieve universal primary education, Promote gender equality and empower women, Reduce child mortality, Improve maternal health, Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Ensure environmental sustainability, Develop a global partnership for development.