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## Development strategy of the Mazowieckie voivodship 2030 : reflections

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# Development Strategy of the Mazowieckie Voivodship 2030 – reflections

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Krzysztof Opolski, Sylwia Marciszewska

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## ABSTRACT

The article is a collection of critical reflections on the „Regional Development Strategy of the Mazowieckie Voivodship 2030. Mazowsze as on Innovative Region”. The authors discuss provisions of the Strategy on the territorial dimension of development and SWOT analysis. Against this background, the main problems of development of Mazovia region, possible scenarios of development and ways to achieve the objectives of the strategy are discussed.

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After a decade of Polish membership in the European Union, Poland’s position in the international arena, the role of the entire country and its various regions, has changed. EU accession was associated with a change in policy, imposing various rules and constraints which must be constantly adapted to. As a consequence of the changes in the socio-economic situation in Poland and the new realities of the development policy, an update of the “Mazowieckie Voivodship Development Strategy up to 2020” became necessary, adopted in 2006. The question “Where are we heading?”, “What goals do we want to achieve?” needed to be reiterated, priorities for activities set and problems defined. To achieve this objective the “Development Strategy of the Mazowieckie Voivodship 2030. Mazovia as on Innovative Region” was drafted. It is based on the implementation results of the previous strategy, and the emerging problems, and is a continuation of the approach set out in the current document, which portrays the Mazovian region as a competitive region in the international system, one which is building an information society, socially, economically and spatially cohesive, in line with the principles of sustainable development.

## Territorial dimension of the Strategy

The division of the Mazowieckie Voivodship into territories plays a significant role in the *Strategy*:

1. The City, including – Warsaw with the Warsaw Metropolitan Area (WMA)
2. Rural areas

The Warsaw Metropolitan Area was delineated on the basis of relevant indicators: functional-spatial and socio-economic, which are set out in detail in the *Study of the Spatial Development Plan of the Warsaw Metropolitan Area*. This division has been made having regard to the processes taking place in the modern world. The era of globalization, the development of an economy based on knowledge and services, has resulted in metropolisation, that is, the process of opening up of urban structures to relations with larger regions. The result of this phenomenon is the formation of metropolitan areas – systems in which the centre is compo-

sed of one or several cities retaining close cooperation with the smaller towns or suburban neighborhoods.

Therefore, appropriate action for the development of cities and metropolitan areas must be taken to ensure the sustainable development of the whole country, socio-economic and territorial cohesion, i.e. the objectives listed in the *National Development Strategy of Regions 2010-2020: Regions, Cities, Rural Areas*. The process of urban development should be conducted with the utmost care in respect of a number of factors, such as the aforementioned cohesion (social, economic and spatial), environmental protection, securing internal harmony of spatial and urban order. One should note the fact that having an impact on the future of the region the global trends ought not to be the sole focus. Reference should be made to the specific conditions of the Mazowieckie Voivodship, to establish factors of comparative advantage, which cannot be applied to the whole province, but must be assigned to the appropriate areas. The Mazowieckie Voivodship is a very diverse area – it is impossible to determine a single path for its development, and so different tactics should be adopted to stimulate growth in individual areas. To achieve this, the most important features of the Metropolitan Area of Warsaw need to be identified, such as the large number of cities (36) and inhabitants (more than half the population of the Voivodship), and the concentration of decision-making and control functions related to competitiveness and innovation on of territory. It is also the centre of political, and state governance, and is a centre of information and opinion-forming for the country.

### **Strengths of the Mazowieckie Voivodship**

The study of the main strengths of Mazovia was presented in the *Mazowieckie Voivodship Development Strategy up to 2030* with the use of a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). This method not only provided answers to questions on the strengths of the region, but also about the weaknesses and a forecast opportunities and threats for Mazovia.

Mazovia's strengths most certainly include the fact that it is the most economically developed region in Poland, borne out by two primary indicators: economic growth and participation in the generation of the country's GDP. These are evident in the region at a high level (the latter indicator for Mazovia, is the highest of all provinces in Poland). The SWOT analysis was carried out in the following areas:

- 1) industry and manufacturing;
- 2) space and transportation;
- 3) society;
- 4) environment and energy;
- 5) culture and heritage.

Once a socio-economic diagnosis and examination of Mazovia's potential had been carried out, it was possible to identify the most important factors influencing the course of de-

velopment processes. The main advantages of the Mazowieckie Voivodship, however, relate to the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, which plays a very important part in the development of Warsaw, not only in local development, but also at regional and national level. The major strengths of WMA are as follows:

- 1) the largest economic and population potential in Poland;
- 2) the leader in entrepreneurship;
- 3) large share of entities operating in industries generating the most innovation and companies with foreign capital;
- 4) has the largest scientific potential for the development of high-tech industries in Poland;
- 5) a developed service sector;
- 6) functions as a capital city ;
- 7) good transportation connections;
- 8) a place conducive to business;
- 9) attracts entrepreneurs;
- 10) inhabitants have a high standard of education;
- 11) high level of gasification;
- 12) increasing tourist traffic;
- 13) developed cultural activity;
- 14) developed agricultural and food industry.

### **Problems to be solved in the Mazowieckie Voivodship**

The problems of the Mazowieckie Voivodship, possibly resulting in a decline in its competitiveness, are due to its weaknesses. By taking appropriate action they can be overcome. The presence and levels of weaknesses is also dependent on the area. At present you will notice a high peak of weaknesses in the rural areas characterized by:

- 1) a low proportion of entrepreneurs;
- 2) limited access to e-services and the Internet;
- 3) unsatisfactory development potential and absorption of innovation.

The main problems occurring in WMA are the degradation of urban space, excessive noise and air pollution. The negative phenomena occurring throughout the Voivodship include:

- 1) reduction of the Voivodship's production functions due to use of outdated technologies;
- 2) a low level of specialization and network-based economy;
- 3) low utilization rate of research results in enterprises;
- 4) poor quality road and rail infrastructure;
- 5) inadequate municipal economy.

There are also phenomena that are a common scourge of the structure of metropolitan areas, namely: the intensification of social polarization and social exclusion.

## Development scenarios for the Mazowieckie Voivodship

The first forecasts for the future of the region are presented in the *Strategy* as opportunities and threats, using the SWOT analysis method. As is clear from the document, extensive opportunities for the Voivodship are available in the area of technological development and industry focused on innovation. Threats are identified with economic recession, the public finance crisis, and fiscal overburden. Some variables such as the state of the environment or conditions for the development of entrepreneurship have been interpreted as both opportunities and threats.

The *Strategy* proposes four development scenarios for the Mazowieckie Voivodship each linked to a different extent in two dimensions: the level of social, economic, territorial cohesion and competitiveness. Whether a given scenario can be realized depends on two factors:

- 1) the possibility of an active policy of development - access to financial resources affecting the level of consistency and allowing it to maintain the high quality of the environment;
- 2) the socio-economic situation having an effect on the level of competitiveness of the Mazowieckie Voivodship.

The first scenario – supporting competitiveness, characterized by a concentration of positive changes mainly in the Warsaw Metropolitan Area, where the application of modern technology leads to strong economic growth. The volume of production, exports, consumption, employment and wages will improve. The competitive position of Warsaw will clearly grow with the reinforcement of its metropolitan functions and improved access to other cities.

However, the adverse phenomena intensifying the weakening of the coherence in all three of the above mentioned areas (society, economy, space) are: polarization processes, and disparities between Warsaw and the peripherals due to the fact that the development processes have not spread in the suburban areas. This will accompany deterioration of the environment.

The second scenario – sustainable development, is associated with numerous positive processes both in the external environment and in the region. As in the previous scenario, the following will increase: exports, consumption, production, wages, capital expenditure, and this in turn will promote rapid GDP growth, improving the position of Warsaw as the strongest metropolitan centre in Central and Eastern Europe. All these phenomena will be accompanied by sustainable development, regional specialization, diffusion of development processes to suburban areas, the development of local centers of advanced economic functions.

The third scenario, one of diminishing differences, portrays adverse developments in the external environment and in the region as well as loss of competitiveness in the Mazowieckie Voivodship. Funds from the European Union would be allocated to implement a three dimensional cohesion policy: social, economic and spatial by combating social exclusion, access to and availability of public services, improving and access to social services. This would undermine the position of Warsaw and its peripheral areas.

The fourth, or crisis scenario predicts a decline in competitiveness, cohesion, and negative developments in the external environment. Economic growth will be low, polarization processes will gain in force, social exclusion will increase, and the natural environment will therefore be degraded. A problem which is of considerable significance at the moment should also be taken into account – the outflow of a large part of the proceeds to other regions.

### **From vision to strategic aims**

It is worth emphasizing that in the *Development Strategy of the Mazowieckie Voivodship 2030. Mazovia as an Innovative Region* targets have a multi-dimensional approach that takes into account the previously tested areas (industry and manufacturing, the environment and energy, economy, space and transportation, society, culture and heritage). The vision is “a Mazowiecki Voivodship which is geographically consistent, competitive, innovative, with a high growth rate and its inhabitants enjoying the best possible living conditions.” In this scenario, the main objective, in turn, would be “reduction of disparities in the Mazowieckie Voivodship, the growing importance of the Warsaw metropolitan area in Europe.” According to the principle of subordination of objectives, the main aim would be achieved by implementing the priority task of the strategic objective which is “the development of an export-oriented manufacturing industry with advanced and moderate technologies and in industry and food processing.” This objective applies to industry and production. It places an emphasis on implementation of innovation, creation of an area that will attract investors and entrepreneurs, support for the development of manufacturing enterprises, the internationalization of the economy, non-agricultural investments. The priority objective comprises strategic objectives, which are divided into 3 areas: the economy, space and transportation, and society. Starting with the economy: the focus should be on the development of new technologies. Warsaw will be a capital centre and one of the aims should be to utilize and enhance regional specialization. The region’s weaknesses should be addressed, and for example, such as Internet access and e-services in rural areas which should be more widespread, and their potential for growth and absorption should be increased. In the field of space and transport, the emphasis is on improving the accessibility and territorial cohesion of the region and the development of spatial order. As regards the public, the aim is to “improve the quality of life and the use of human and social capital to create a modern economy.” Here specific attention has been paid to the development of human and social capital, to prevent social exclusion, promote social integration, improvement on the labor market, education, health, public safety, equal opportunities in education, development priorities for the regional field of science, which will contribute to competitiveness. In turn, the framework supports the strategic objectives, of which the first is “to provide the economy with diversified energy supplies at sustainable management of environmental resources” and refers to the innovation in ecology, and the second, is to “realize the potential of culture and cultural heritage and quality of the natural environment for the economic development of the region and improvement in the quality of life.” Accordingly, the cities are to be the centers of cultural activity. All of these goals are aimed to raise one of the two dimensions of competitiveness or cohesion.

## Conclusions

The *Development Strategy of the Mazowieckie Voivodship 2030. Mazovia as an Innovative Region* is a continuation of the approach outlined in the previous document, the *Mazowieckie Voivodship Development Strategy up to 2020*. It introduces the modifications made in response to important changes in the Mazowieckie Voivodship in Poland, Europe and worldwide. It draws attention to the process of metropolisation, shaping the capital city of Warsaw with the use of many valuable resources. It is the largest Polish city, and in making good use of its strengths, it will be in a position to interact with the European environment, thereby becoming the strongest metropolitan centre in Central and Eastern Europe.

Warsaw as a centre of science and education has the highest concentration of research and development facilities in many fields, including medicine, biology, chemistry, technology, electronics, and mechanics, which offer a considerable potential for innovation. Universities, such as the University of Warsaw, Warsaw University of Technology, Warsaw School of Economics and the Medical University of Warsaw, top-ranking universities in Poland and also recognized overseas, are established here. It is the cultural centre of the country, offering a variety of entertainment and where many regular events are organized, and because of the wide range of theaters, cinemas, libraries, museums and galleries it is also a place where you come into daily contact with art. Because of the unique character of the historic centre of Warsaw the Old Town has been entered onto the UNESCO list. The rich cultural heritage, and an extensive range of accommodation and catering services contribute to the development of the tourist industry. Another factor which puts Warsaw on the map as a modern city is its importance as a place for business meetings, and the fact that the headquarters of many firms in the financial sector, i.e. banks, insurance companies, consulting firms and other businesses, are located there. All of these factors combined with the well-developed transportation network, and the appropriate real estate management, attract, not only domestic but also foreign investors. According to market trends, we should be striving to strengthen the position of Warsaw. The MAW innovation must, however, not cause the degradation of the natural environment, so the key is to use energy-saving and material-saving technologies, in the context of adequate municipal services.

The Mazowieckie Voivodship also includes many poorer regions that, as a result of the development of the centre of Mazovia, may further diminish in importance; it is likely that their residents will undergo a process of social exclusion. Action to prevent this is a regional priority. Examples include areas of strategic intervention (OSI): Radom, ostrołęcko-siedlecki, płocko-ciechanowski. Depending on the advantages of each of these regions, it should lead to the development of the petrochemical industry (Płock), changes in agriculture region (ostrołęcko-siedlecki), the development of higher education (Radom), whilst at the same time improving the availability of communication in these areas.

The digitization process plays an important role in the latest *Strategy*. In contrast to the previous document, the current concept of “information society” has been included here, though in fairly general terms. The three main aspects of this phenomenon i.e. transmission,

processing and storage of information, should be taken into consideration. Now that information has become one of the resources of production, the development of modern services, namely, information technology, banking, finance, telecommunications, should be pursued. A knowledge-based economy will enable the creation of many new jobs, will lead to greater social cohesion, and contribute to economic growth.

A condition that can greatly accelerate the development of the information society is the intensification of cooperation between universities and businesses, as funding for research, education and innovation are necessary to transform the economy in its present state to one based on knowledge. Entrepreneurs are open to cooperation with universities, yet there is a lack of initiative on the part of research centers. In many industries there is also an increased use of Big Data analytics, which can prove useful in investigating, for example, the behavior of customers. Only after making changes in these areas will the development of R&D sector be on the right track.

However, there are major threats to the sustainable development scenario set out in the Mazowieckie Voivodship strategy, which were merely mentioned in the document. In addition to global phenomena, including a difficult period for emerging markets, the rising debt caused by the Mazowieckie Voivodship "janosikowe" (*also referred to as the Robin Hood tax; Robin Hood, an English historical character who acted on the principle of taking away from the rich to give to the poor*), i.e. mandatory payment by the richest municipal governments to the government budget for the poorest regions, should be taken into account. An algorithm to calculate the amount of individual Voivodship contribution has been formulated for the purpose of this subsidy. It takes into account an unstable source of income, i.e. corporate income tax (CIT). The region is under an obligation to transfer money based on its surplus in the two previous years. Warsaw and the Mazovian region are at the very top of the list of areas paying the largest amount of this tax annually. This means that a loan is necessary for the current budgetary requirements. The aim should be to even out the differences in society, to spread the idea of social solidarity, but it should be made with caution. The introduction of a savings program that will enable the Voivodship to apply for a loan of 400 million PLN, will have a negative impact on investment, functioning of schools, cultural institutions, conservation and protection of cultural buildings and locations and regional promotion. Additionally, in the coming years, the size of European funds allocated per capita will be the lowest in the Mazowieckie Voivodship (compared to all other voivodshis). It is worth noting that at present Warsaw, theoretically the richest region, designates enormous amounts of its funds to the other "poorer" regions, without any knowledge of how this money will be used. Therefore, there is the question of management of the money received – poorer regions in this situation do not have the required motivation to invest in ventures which bring the highest yield. In the case of Mazovia, one should take into consideration not only the money paid to other regions, the loans taken out, but also the cost of lost opportunities, and those, due to the advantages the metropolitan area enjoys, are very high. The payment of "janosikowe" i.e. Robin Hood tax, may be a factor hindering the development of the Mazowieckie Voivodship, and consequently Warsaw as a suitable place for business meetings, a cultural



and scientific centre, loses relevance as a tourist attraction, weakening the position of the metropolis and Poland in the world.

### Literature:

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Karpiński Andrzej, 2014, *Rola strategii długookresowej w rozwoju regionu – pozytywne wzorce – najczęstsze błędy*, [en: *The role of long-term strategy in the development of the region – positive role models – the most common mistakes*], "MAZOWSZE Studia Regionalne", no 14, p. 39-54.

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### Strategia rozwoju województwa mazowieckiego do 2030 roku – refleksje

#### STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł jest zbiorem krytycznych refleksji na temat *Strategii rozwoju województwa mazowieckiego do 2030 roku. Innowacyjne Mazowsze*. Omówiono w nim zapisy Strategii na temat terytorialnego wymiaru rozwoju oraz wyniki analizy SWOT. Na tym tle przedyskutowano główne problemy rozwojowe Mazowsza, możliwe scenariusze rozwoju oraz sposoby realizacji celów strategii.

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