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**DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN AREAS  
IN THE CONDITIONS OF TERRITORIAL-ORIENTED  
POLICY – THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS AND  
EXPERIENCE IN FUNCTIONAL AREAS  
OF POLISH CITIES**

**Summary:** The objective of the paper is the identification of conditions and needs of development of urban functional areas, particularly in the scope of management and programming of their development through current implementation of ITI as an instrument of territorial development. The study focused on the management of functional urban areas (FUAs) of voivodship capitals and selected regional and sub-regional centres in Poland, as well as the implementation of projects adopted in ITI strategies. The actual cooperation of territorial self-government units in the scope of the functioning ITI Unions was analysed in the context of the development of the efficient city. The generic and financial structure of the undertaken activities and their contribution in the development of the competitiveness of cities and their functional areas was also analysed. The obtained results show that ITI permitted support of the development of the organisational culture of territorial governance and implementation of integrated investments in FUAs. They created a system of financial incentives and benefits determining the development of sustainable, efficient and competitive cities.

**Keywords:** Cohesion Policy 2014-2020, territorial oriented policy, Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI), Functional Urban Area (FUA).

**JEL Classification:** R1, R11, R12.

## Introduction

Building strong urban centres and areas, promoted in the scope of the National Urban Policy 2023 [Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023, 2015] and corresponding with the idea of place-based and territorial approach [Barca, 2009; Szlachta and Zaucha, 2010; Żuber, 2011; Barca, McCann and Rodríguez-Pose, 2012; McCann and Ortega-Argilés, 2013] should focus on support of endogenic potentials of urban centres through the implementation of targeted undertakings and integrated governance [Binek et al. 2016; Kociuba, 2017a]. An important issue in the scope of territorial approach is a diversion from the perception of areas in terms of their administrative boundaries, and instead defining them based on potentials and development barriers with simultaneous existence of functional-spatial correlations.

The theses became important elements of the Cohesion Policy 2014-2020. Their implementation is to be supported by two new tools: in the programming-financial aspect by Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI), and in the strategic-planning aspect – Functional Urban Areas (FUA). In practice, FUA should ‘detach’ interventions from administrative boundaries, support their actual territorialisation, and aim at the strengthening of the endogenic potential of a given territory for the purpose of provision of its competitive advantage (Kociuba, 2017a). Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) in turn aim at the strengthening of mechanisms of territorial coordination of interventions and implementation of new rules in the scope of management and governance of EU funds in functional areas. The importance of the implementation of ITI is twofold: 1) in terms of governance, it aims to contribute to the promotion of the partnership model of cooperation between territorial self-governmental units (TSU) 2) in terms of programming, it aims to support the economic development of FUA and increase its influence on the hinterlands [Szafranek, 2015; Kociuba, 2017a].

The possibility of implementation of ITI offers new challenges for EU Member States in the scope of territorial governance of functional urban areas and possible implementation of common integrated projects. Activities undertaken by TSU in functional urban areas can be a good example of the implementation of the concept of the sustainable, competitive and efficient city specified in the National Urban Policy [Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023, 2015].

The objective of the paper is the identification of conditions and needs of development of urban functional areas, particularly in the scope of management and programming of their development through current implementation of ITI as an instrument of territorial development. The implementation of the objective on

the one hand focuses on territorial management in FUAs in Poland, and on the other hand on the implementation of projects adopted in ITI strategies corresponding with selected investment priorities (IP). In the scope of the works, the actual cooperation of TSE in the framework of the functioning partnerships was analysed, with particular consideration of the process of establishment of ITI Unions and in the scope of their task delegation as Intermediate Bodies (IB) in the implementation of regional operational programmes (ROP). 13 IP were considered, selected as key for building strong and economically competitive urban centres. They are investment priorities in the scope of the following directions of intervention: Strengthening of research, technological development, and innovation, as well as Improvement of the situation in the labour market.

The conducted study was particularly based on the analysis of source materials concerning the implementation of ITI in functional areas. They include: ITI strategies of all analysed functional areas, regional operational programmes, and ministry guidelines. The analyses covered 26 FUAs which obtained financing under restricted call for proposals in the framework of ROPs.

## **1. Challenges of urban centres in the territorial policy**

In the first decade of the 21st century, a search began for solutions for possibly effective distribution of funds to the countries of the community and for the direction of allocation of support so that it brings the best results for the socio-economic development of countries and regions. Eventually, a decision was taken on the implementation of the so-called place-based approach (Barca, 2009; Barca, McCann and Rodríguez-Pose, 2012), with a place or region as the intervention unit, defined not through administrative boundaries, but through challenges, potentials, and development barriers. The key features of the new approach can be summarised as follows: integrating both sectoral and horizontal policies (e.g. combination of hard investments with the development of social or human capital), growing attention to flows, networks, and functional interlinkages, shifting the focus from resources to institutions, attempting to substitute redistributive measures with those enhancing permanent self-reinforcing growth processes, and finally the revival of the multi-level governance concept resulting in increased importance of the local context (OECD, 2009, p. 36). Additionally, the place-based approach also focuses on the issue of knowledge and innovation in policy intervention (Foray, 2006; Barca, McCann and Rodríguez-Pose, 2012). The activities are aimed at support of obtaining competitive advantage by re-

gions and countries (Barca, 2009; OECD, 2009; Barca, McCann and Rodríguez-Pose, 2012; McCann and Ortega-Argilés, 2013). It was determined that particular support should be granted for the intensive development of regions with chances for effective participation in global competition. 'Engines' of development were specified to be cities and their functional areas for which documents of the EU level designate the key role in the development of regions and building their territorial cohesion [Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, 2007; Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020, 2011; Urban Agenda for the EU 'Pact of Amsterdam'..., 2016].

New challenges and directions were reflected in the Europe 2020. Strategy for intelligent and sustainable growth promoting social inclusion [2010] and have been implemented under the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020. Functional urban areas fulfil the key role in the implementation of ideas and rules of the territorial approach to the development of regions and countries [Camagni and Capello, 2015; Binek et al. 2016; Kociuba, 2017a]. In the case of Poland, the following challenges were adopted: efficiency, cohesion, and sustainable development. They are assumed to lead to building sustainable, competitive and strong cities [Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023, 2015, s. 12].

The competitiveness of territorial self-government units has no single unambiguous definition [Begg, 1999; Turok, 2004; Szafranek, 2010; Smętkowski, 2011; Szczech-Pietkiewicz, 2012]. By generalising different approaches, however, it can be assumed that it means the ability to achieve success in the process of socio-economic growth in the existing conditions of development. As emphasised by Duché [2010, p. 12], the primary challenge of competitiveness for urban areas is currently the improvement of their innovative, technological, and social and organisational abilities. Favourable conditions for the development of competitiveness concern large urban centres fulfilling not only production, but also service functions in the scope of generating intellectual resources, and characterised by the flexibility of the economic structure. This type of centres develop a network of interrelated elements in space. Growth factors particularly appear in the nodes of the network and in strands between them [Gaczek and Komorowski, 2010]. In the conditions of territorial integration, they lead to the development of FUA. Competitive FUA should be distinguished by the optimisation of transport connections, diverse and abundant labour market, and a well-developed R+D sphere and business-related institutions. The fact is also confirmed by Veltz [1996, p. 238] who points to the important role of external benefits of agglomerations leading to the development of competitive centres. The development of competitiveness of urban areas through integrating activities

in the territorial dimension is stipulated as objective 4 of the National Urban Policy [Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023, 2015, p. 14]. A competitive city should be characterised by well-developed metropolitan functions, high level of innovativeness, and carbon efficiency of the economy, and simultaneously provide high quality of life. Pursuant to the Polish urban policy, such cities should be all voivodship capitals together with their functional areas.

The approach to the development of the efficient city (objective 1 of the National Urban Policy) is similar. In the urban policy, it refers to efficient and effective governance for the improvement of the quality of life and provision of business activity [Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023, 2015, p. 13]. The idea of the efficient city involves perceiving urban territories in functional terms. The mechanisms of cooperation of self-governments in FUA should lead to common planning [Kociuba, 2015] and provision of high quality infrastructure and public services [Krajowa Polityka Miejska 2023, 2015, p. 13].

A sustainable city is defined as one with spatial order and efficient management of all, particularly endogenic, resources. The term sustainable city also covers the dimension of its cohesion, meaning creating a harmonious urban organism through the inclusion of degraded areas and social groups in the development [Kowalewski, 2005; Leśniak, 2009; Mierzejewska, 2015]. It is worth drawing attention to the fact that when the term territorial cohesion was introduced in the Treaty of Amsterdam [1997], the territorial dimension became associated with the idea of sustainable development [Zagrzejska, 2014, s. 145]. The concept of sustainable development of cities is currently not only the idea of development policy, but also the objective of the EU Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 [Szafranek, 2017b].

Development of cities in the territorial approach requires integration of activities in the organisational, economic, and spatial dimension [Ling, 2002; Markowski, 2011; Tosics, 2011; Szczech-Pietkiewicz, 2012; Noworól, 2013; Nowakowska, 2015; Rode, 2016]. The basic impulses in the process are integrated management of urban areas involving different groups of stakeholders, harmonising the implementation of the economic and spatial policy, and implementation of tasks for sustainable development. One of the key instruments of the policy supporting building cities are ITIs.

## 2. ITI and FUA – implementation in Poland

ITI are assumed to support sustainable development of cities and their functional areas within the framework of the cohesion policy 2014-2020 (CEC, 2012). The definition and typology of FUA in Poland was specified in the National Spatial Development Concept 2030 (NSDC 2030) [Koncepcja Przestrzennego Zagospodarowania Kraju 2030 [NSDC], 2011]. Pursuant to NSDC 2030, FUA is a spatially continuous settlement system composed of administratively separate units; it covers a compact urban area and the functionally related urbanised zone (it can cover urban, rural, and urban-rural communes). FUA can be divided into four sub-types: voivodship capitals (FUA VC), regional centres (FUA RC), sub-regional centres (FUA SC), and local centres (FUA LC) [NSDC, 2011, pp. 187-191]. In the scope of ITI implementation in Poland, support of FUA VC is obligatory, and FUA RC (in the Śląskie and Mazowieckie voivodships also in the form of Regional Territorial Investments – RTI) and FUA SC – facultative. Works on FUAs delimitation for the implementation of ITI took place in 2012-2014 and were conducted in 5 variants namely I. Ministerial, II. Cooperation, III. Strategic Planning, IV. Expert, and V. Interim. The results of these works were significantly differ from those proposed by the Ministry of Regional Development. Practice showed that ministerial delimitation was adopted in only 4 FUA VC (Wrocław, Zielona Góra, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Olsztyn). The remaining ones increased or reduced the ITI support area [Kociuba, 2017b].

The implementation of ITI is aimed at encouraging (in practice more often obliging) TSU to cooperate in the establishment of institutional structures and organisational solutions leading to the preparation of strategic documents and efficient governance of a given functional area. The implementation of ITI is the responsibility of partnerships of TSU of cities and their functional areas, formalised as ITI Unions [Zasady realizacji..., 2013]. They are responsible for the preparation and implementation of inter-sectoral territorial strategies (ITI strategies) stipulating a list of integrated and inter-sectoral activities/projects/bundles of projects designated for financing in the form of ITI within the framework of ROP and/or national programmes (OP Infrastructure and Environment, and OP East Poland) based on rules stipulated in the Partnership Agreement [Umowa Partnerstwa..., 2014]. ITI are implemented based on very preferential rules, i.e. they are financed in the scope of thematic objectives 1-10 EFSI, whereas it is possible to combine financing of projects from different funds (ERDF, CF, ESF).

In such a context, the primary objective of the implementation of ITI is: 1) increase in the impact of FUA on the form and manner of conducting activities supported in their areas within the framework of the cohesion policy; 2) strengthening of the mechanisms of territorial coordination of interventions corresponding to the needs, challenges, and problems of FUA; 3) development of the partnership culture and promoting the partnership model of cooperation of TSU in the management of EU funds. Such activities perfectly correspond with the implementation of the idea of the efficient and competitive city.

### **3. Conditions and objectives of management of functional urban areas development**

The key to the development of FUA is efficient and effective territorial governance. However, it is aimed at contributing to achieving territorial cohesion, and on the other hand, the development of mechanisms of synergy of actions. Territorial governance involves the implementation of the new paradigm of the regional development policy focused on supporting endogenic potentials of countries/regions [Noworól, 2013]. The implementation of the place-based and integrated approach is the fullest through multi-level governance [Szczerki, 2005, p. 145] and Inter-Municipal Cooperation (IMC) [Hulst and van Montfort, 2007]. The main 'actors' are public administration units cooperating in horizontal and vertical systems, from the central government to local authorities, as well as non-governmental economic and social organisations and residents [OECD, 2009, p. 36]. The implementation of such ideas at a larger scale in the current perspective can be done owing to ITI [Kociuba, 2017a].

The success of the integration of governance in functional urban areas resulting from the implementation of ITI requires the strengthening of mechanisms supporting territorial coordination of interventions. It is also of key importance for the development of the efficient city. In practice, it is a task of ITI Unions. Examples of institutionalised cooperation of TSU in functional urban areas [Danielewicz, 2013; Nowak and Perska, 2014] especially in the scope of delimitation of FUAs [Kociuba, 2017b] and formalisation of ITI Unions [Frankowski and Szymkowska, 2015; Kociuba, 2017a] show that building partnerships is not an easy process. Particularly over the recent years, it is subject to quite dynamic changes and game of interests. New entities appear coordinating activities in the scope of implementation of ITI, and the existing structures are transformed. The extent of delegation of tasks of ITI Unions fulfilling the function of the Intermediate Body (IB) in the implementation of ITI within the framework of ROP is also different (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Legal and organisational forms of cooperation of TSU and institutionalisation of ITI Unions in selected FUAs in Poland

| Name of FUA                       | Form of partnership  | Establishment of partnership | Entrusting the role of IB to ITI Union | Scope of delegation of tasks of IB* |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1                                 | 2  | 3                            | 4                                      | 5                                   |
| FUA VC                            |  |                              |  |                                     |
| Białystok FUA                     | <i>Partnership Arrangement of the Białystok Metropolitan Area</i>  | 2005                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Białystok Functional Area Association  | 2013                         | 2014                                   | 1                                   |
| Bydgoszcz-Toruń FUA               | <i>Partnership Arrangement on the Bydgoszcz-Toruń Metropolitan Area</i>                                      | 2005/2008                    | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | <i>Bydgoszcz Metropolis Association</i>  | 2010                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Arrangement  | 2014                         | 2014/2016                              | 2                                   |
| Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot (Tricity) FUA | <i>Metropolitan Council of the Gdańsk Bay</i>  | 2003                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | <i>Metropolitan Transportation Association of the Gdańsk Bay</i>   | 2006                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | <i>Arrangement (Metropolitan) Forum of Heads of Communes, Mayors, City Presidents, and, Starosts 'NORDA'</i> | 2011/2012                    | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Gdańsk Metropolitan Area Association   | 2011                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Arrangement  | 2014                         | 2014                                   | –                                   |
|                                   | Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Association  | 2015                         | 2015                                   | 2                                   |
| Gorzów Wielkopolski FUA           | <i>Special-Purpose Association of Communes MG6</i>   | 1999                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | <i>Arrangement on cooperation between territorial self-governments of the Gorzów Agglomeration</i>           | 2011                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Arrangement  | 2013                         | 2015                                   | 2                                   |
| Central Sub-region FUA            | <i>Upper Silesian Metropolitan Association (Metropolia Silesia)</i>  | 2007                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Association of Communes and Poviats of the Central Sub-region Union  | 2013                         | 2013                                   | 2                                   |
| Kielce FUA                        | Arrangement  | 2013                         | 2013                                   | 2                                   |
| Kraków FUA                        | <i>Council of the Kraków Metropolitan Area</i>   | 2007                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Kraków Metropolis Association  | 2013                         | 2014                                   | 2                                   |
| Lublin FUA                        | <i>Arrangement on the Lublin Metropolitan Area</i>   | 2005                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Cooperation Agreement  | 2014                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Arrangement  | 2015                         | 2015                                   | 2                                   |
| Łódź Metropolitan Area            | Łódź Metropolitan Area Association   | 2012/2013                    | 2015                                   | 2                                   |
| Olsztyn FUA                       | <i>Olsztyn Agglomeration Association</i>   | 2013                         | –                                      | –                                   |
|                                   | Arrangement  | 2013                         | 2014                                   | 2                                   |



Table 1 cont.

| 1                                | 2   | 3         | 4    | 5 |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------|------|---|
| Opole Agglomeration FUA          | Arrangement   | 2012      | 2013 | – |
|                                  | Opole Agglomeration Association   | 2013      | 2014 | 3 |
| Poznań FUA                       | <i>Council of the Poznań Agglomeration</i>  | 2007      | –    | – |
|                                  | Poznań Metropolis Association   | 2011      | 2013 | 2 |
| Rzeszów FUA                      | <i>Partnership Arrangement of the Rzeszów Metropolitan Area</i>   | 2005      | –    | – |
|                                  | <i>Association of Territorial Self-Governments of the Rzeszów Agglomeration</i>                           | 2008      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2014      | –    | – |
|                                  | Rzeszów Functional Area Association   | 2015      | 2015 | 2 |
| Szczecin Metropolitan Area       | Self-governmental Association of Regional Cooperation from 2009<br>Szczecin Metropolitan Area Association | 2005/2009 | 2015 | 1 |
| Warsaw FUA                       | <i>Warsaw Metropolis Association</i>  | 2000      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2014      | 2014 | 2 |
| Wrocław FUA                      | <i>Development Agency of the Wrocław Agglomeration</i>  | 2006      | –    | – |
|                                  | <i>Association of Communes and Poviats of the Wrocław Agglomeration</i>                                   | 2013      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2013      | 2015 | 2 |
| Zielona Góra FUA                 | <i>Lubuskie Trójmiasto Association</i>  | 2006      | –    | – |
|                                  | <i>Zielona Góra Agglomeration Association</i>   | 2011      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2014      | 2014 | 2 |
| FUA RC/SC                        |   |           |      |   |
| Wałbrzych Agglomeration FUA      | Cooperation declaration   | 2013      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2015      | 2015 | 3 |
| Jelenia Góra Agglomeration FUA   | Cooperation declaration   | 2012      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2015      | 2015 | 2 |
| Kalisz-Ostrów Agglomeration FUA  | Cooperation arrangement   | 2008      | –    | – |
|                                  | Kalisz-Ostrów Agglomeration Association   | 2015      | 2015 | 2 |
| Koszalin-Kolobrzeg-Białogard FUA | Arrangement   | 2014      | 2015 | 2 |
| Elk FUA                          | Arrangement   | 2014      | –    | 2 |
| Elbląg FUA                       | <i>Arrangement for the establishment of the Elbląg Functional Area</i>                                    | 2013      | –    | – |
|                                  | Partnership Agreement   | 2014      | –    | – |
|                                  | Arrangement   | 2014      | 2016 | 2 |
| South Sub-region FUA             | Arrangement   | 2015      | 2015 | 2 |

**Table 1 cont.**

| <i>1</i>                | <i>2</i>  | <i>3</i>  | <i>4</i> | <i>5</i> |
|-------------------------|---|-----------|----------|----------|
| North Sub-region<br>FUA | <i>Association. Club of Heads of Communes, Mayors, and City Presidents of the Częstochowskie Voivodship from 2000</i> | 1992/2000 | –        | –        |
|                         | <i>Club of Heads of Communes, Mayors, City Presidents and Starosts of the Częstochowa Region Association</i>          |           |          |          |
|                         | Arrangement   | 2015      | 2015     | 2        |
| West Sub-region<br>FUA  | Union of Communes and Poviats of the West Sub-region of the Śląskie Voivodship  | 2002      | 2015     | 2        |

Nota:

1 – specification of strategic projects

2 – collection, selection, and assessment of projects

3 – conducting a complete call for proposals procedure as Managing Authority.

Source: Based on: Kociuba (2017a) and selected ITI/RTI Strategies of FUA RC and SC (in italics – entities not fulfilling the function of ITI Union in the current financial perspective).

The analysis of Table 1 reveals certain patterns. The first forms of cooperation of TSU in FUA, usually non-formalised (councils, partnership arrangements, development agencies) appeared in the years 1992/1999-2002 and 2005-2008. At this stage, they rarely took the form of institutionalised cooperation, i.e. association (Szczecin, Częstochowa) and municipal union (Gorzów Wielkopolski, West Sub-region FUA). In the years 2010-2011, some cities (Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Poznań) formalised earlier efficient cooperation with neighbouring TSU through the registration of associations. Cases of long-term cooperation of neighbouring communes excluding the central city also occurred (Warsaw, Rzeszów). A large majority of partnerships of TSU in FUA was established in the years 2013-2014. This was closely related to the introduction of the ITI tool. Such partnerships differed in terms of legal form of cooperation. Initially, ITI Unions adopted the form of an association only in six FUAs, namely in Bydgoszcz, Central Sub-region, Kraków, Łódź, Opole, and Olsztyn. In the remaining 19 FUAs, arrangements were concluded, whereas in the case of 10 FUAs ITI Unions still function in the form of an arrangement, and in 5 FUAs they changed the form to association with time. In the case of Olsztyn FUA and Wrocław FUA, the form of association was changed to arrangement. It should be emphasised that only in the case of FUAs of Poznań, Szczecin, Three-City, and West Sub-region, formalised partnerships functioning earlier got involved in the implementation of ITI. The Three-City FUA is an interesting example, where an arrangement was first concluded, and then the role of ITI Union was taken over by the newly formed the Metropolitan Area of Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Association, established based on the Gdańsk Metropolitan Area Association. The Spe-

cial-Purpose Association of Communes MG6 functioning in the territory of Gorzów Wielkopolski FUA did not take over the role of ITI Union in spite of long-term efficient cooperation. The same concerns North Sub-region FUA with the longest in history cooperation of TSU dating back to 1992. Although the majority of the partnerships were only established for the purpose of implementation of ITI<sup>1</sup> (2), the formalisation of cooperation alone and the resulting further activities offer an actual possibility of the implementation in FUAs of the idea of territorial governance which is the basis of the development of the efficient city.

The implementation of the idea also requires a relevant degree of formalisation of partnerships. It can affect the quality and rate of strategic programming of development and governance of FUA. In practice, such cooperation took a more or less institutionalised form (Table 1). Out of 26 analysed FUAs, in 10 FUAs (Białystok, Three-City, Central Sub-region, Kraków, Łódź, Opole, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Kalisz-Ostrów) ITI are implemented by Associations also fulfilling the role of ITI Unions. In West Sub-region FUA, partnership of TSU has a form of municipal union. Such ITI Unions have more formalised structures including Councils/General Meetings (counterpart of General Shareholders Meeting), fulfilling decision-making functions, composed of representatives of all communes, poviats and voivodships included in the Association/Union, Management Boards composed of several members (selected representatives of TSU from the functional area) – implementing bodies, usually playing the role of the Intermediate Body (ITI IB), and Revision Commissions, controlling the course of the implementation process of ITI/RTI. ITI Offices deal with administrative service, including the scope of obligations of IB (e.g. prepare drafts of ITI strategies). In this case, the governance of FUA is formalised and subject to full control.

The remaining 14 partnerships signed arrangements on cooperation between TSU for the purpose of common implementation of ITI (Table 1). Such a form of partnership is less formalised, and the responsibility for the management of ITI is largely accredited to the central city – leader, usually represented by the City President. The leader has the greatest competences and scope of delegation of tasks. It is entitled to represent all TSU and coordinate the implementation of ITI in the territory of FUA. The role of the Management Board is fulfilled by the Council of the ITI Union (ITI Praesidium) which can also be composed of socio-economic partners. It has the decision-making function. Steering Committees usually play the opinion-forming role (although e.g. in Elk or Elbląg FUA they

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<sup>1</sup> This includes ITI Unions functioning in the functional areas of Białystok, Kielce, Lublin, Łódź, Central Sub-region, Opole, Rzeszów, Warsaw, and all ITI Unions functioning in FUA RC/SC (except for West Sub-region FUA).

constitute the decision-making body of the ITI Union, responsible for the implementation of ITI Strategy), e.g. in the scope of approval of ITI Strategy, and the administrative functions, including those in the scope of obligations of IB, are the responsibility of ITI Offices usually incorporated in the structure of Municipal Offices. The structure of the Unions can also include ITI Expert Panels (opinion-forming and advisory bodies). The leader of the Union is responsible for the implementation of ITI. The remaining TSU usually have their representatives in the Council and Steering Committees. Adopting such a model by the majority of ITI Unions reveals the weakness of the cooperation culture of TSU and strong position of the central city as the leader.

The governance of functional areas as the pillar of the implementation of the idea of the efficient city, realised by ITI Unions, has significant consequences for the territorialisation of interventions. The ITI Union, with competencies in the scope of distribution and management of EU financial resources, took over part of tasks of IB related to the implementation of ROP which so far were the responsibility of regional authorities. This is related to the implementation of the provisions of art. 7 par. 4 of EU Regulation No. 1301/2013 on the ERDF and art. 12 par. 2 of EU Regulation No. 1304/2013 on the ESF based on which the ITI Union participates at least in the selection of projects for the implementation of ITI Strategy. In practice, the extent of competences of the ITI Union as IB can be different, from: 1) specification of strategic projects (two ITI Unions currently function in such a form – in Szczecin Metropolitan Area and Białystok FUA); through 2) collection, selection of projects, and assessment of their coherence among others with the ITI Strategy (22 ITI Unions), to 3) performance of the full scope of tasks related to the implementation of ITI (in Opole and Wałbrzych FUA) (Table 1). From the perspective of building an efficiently managed city, taking full responsibility, also in the financial aspect, for the implementation of ITI seems to be of key importance. It is important whether tasks for implementation correspond with the process of actual development of urban functional areas in accordance with the assumptions of the National Urban Policy.

#### **4. Development of urban areas in the sphere of programming of economic development**

The scope of activities for the development of FUA was specified in the form of directions of interventions supported financially in the framework of ITI. They are closely related to the thematic objectives (TO) of the EU regional policy in the years 2014-2020. Moreover, support of activities in the scope of ITI

must be in accordance with the directions of interventions of particular ROP, as well as with the needs of given cities and their functional areas. All of the analysed entities undertake activities corresponding with the directions of *Support of energetic efficiency* and *Sustainable development, efficient transport connecting the city and its functional area* [Szafranek, 2015; Szafranek, 2017a]. This should be considered as providing conditions for the development of their sustainable and competitiveness. Among the remaining directions of interventions possible to be implemented in the scope of ITI, two are considered as having key importance for the development of competitiveness of cities, namely:

- Strengthening of research, technological development and innovation, related to TO 1 and TO 3;
- Improvement of the situation in the labour market related to TO 8 and TO 10.

The list of investment priorities (IP) in the scope of the specified directions of interventions together with the number of ITI Unions implementing them, as well as the scale of their financing, is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Selected investment priorities implemented by ITI Unions in selected FUAs in Poland

| Categories of implementation identification | Number of Investment Priority*                 |   |  |   |  |                                   |   |   |                           |  |  |                   |  |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|--|--|-------------------|--|
|   | 1.b  | 3.a   | 3.b                                    | 3.c   | 8.i                                      | 8.iii                             | 8.iv.   | 8.v   | 8.vi                      | 10.a   | 10.i   | 10.iii            | 10.iv  |
|   | Cooperation of enterprises with the R+D sector | Promotion and development of entrepreneurship | For small and medium-sized enterprises | Advanced products and services development capacity | Increase in employment of the unemployed | Self-employment, entrepreneurship | Equal rights, reconciliation of private and professional life | Adaptation of employees and employer to changes | Active and healthy ageing | Development of education and training infrastructure | Prevention of premature discontinuation of education | Lifelong learning | Adjustment of education and training to the needs of the labour market |
| <i>I</i>                                    | 2  | 3   | 4                                      | 5   | 6  | 7                                 | 8   | 9   | 10                        | 11   | 12   | 13                | 14   |
| Name of FUA                                 | FUA VC   |   |  |   |  |                                   |   |   |                           |  |  |                   |  |
| Białystok FUA                               |  | X   |  |   |  |                                   |   |   |                           | X  | X  |                   | X  |
| Bydgosz-Toruń FUA                           |  |   |  |   |  |                                   | X   |   |                           | X  | X  |                   | X  |
| Three-City FUA                              |  | X   |  |   | X  |                                   |   |   |                           |  |  |                   |  |
| Gorzów Wielkopolski FUA                     |  | X   | X                                      |   |  |                                   |   |   |                           | X  | X  |                   | X  |
| Central Sub-region FUA                      |  | X   |  |   | X  | X                                 | X   | X   |                           | X  | X  | X                 | X  |
| Kielce FUA                                  |  |   |  |   | X  | X                                 | X   |   | X                         | X  | X  | X                 | X  |
| Kraków FUA                                  |  | X   |  |   |  |                                   |   |   |                           |  | X  |                   | X  |
| Lublin FUA                                  |  | X   |  |   |  | X                                 |   |   |                           |  | X  |                   |  |
| Łódź Metropolitan Area                      |  |   |  |   |  | X                                 |   |   |                           |  |  |                   |  |

**Table 2 cont.**

| 1                                     | 2    | 3     | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8    | 9   | 10   | 11    | 12    | 13  | 14    |
|---------------------------------------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Olsztyn FUA                           |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |     |      |       |       |     |       |
| Opole Agglomeration FUA               |      | X     |      |      |      |      |      |     |      |       | X     |     | X     |
| Poznań FUA                            |      | X     |      |      |      |      | X    |     | X    | X     | X     |     | X     |
| Rzeszów FUA                           |      | X     |      |      |      | X    |      |     |      |       |       |     |       |
| Szczecin Metropolitan Area            |      | X     |      | X    |      |      |      |     |      |       | X     |     | X     |
| Warsaw FUA                            |      | X     | X    |      | X    |      | X    |     |      | X     |       |     |       |
| Wrocław FUA                           | X    | X     | X    |      |      | X    | X    |     | X    | X     | X     |     | X     |
| Zielona Góra FUA                      |      | X     |      |      |      |      |      |     |      | X     | X     |     |       |
| FUA RC/SC                             |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |     |      |       |       |     |       |
| Wałbrzych Agglomeration FUA           |      | X     |      | X    |      | X    | X    |     | X    | X     | X     |     | X     |
| Jelenia Góra Agglomeration FUA        |      | X     |      |      |      |      | X    |     |      | X     | X     |     | X     |
| Kalisz-Ostrów Agglomeration FUA       |      |       |      |      |      | X    |      |     | X    | X     |       |     | X     |
| Koszalin-Kołobrzeg-Białogard FUA      |      | X     |      | X    |      |      |      |     |      |       | X     |     |       |
| Ełk FUA                               |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |     |      |       |       |     |       |
| Elbląg FUA                            |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |     |      |       | X     |     | X     |
| South Sub-region FUA                  |      |       |      |      | X    | X    |      |     |      | X     | X     | X   | X     |
| North Sub-region FUA                  |      | X     |      |      | X    | X    | X    | X   |      | X     | X     | X   | X     |
| West Sub-region FUA                   |      | X     |      |      | X    | X    | X    |     |      | X     | X     | X   | X     |
| Total:                                | 1    | 18    | 3    | 3    | 7    | 11   | 10   | 2   | 5    | 15    | 19    | 5   | 17    |
| Financing                             |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |     |      |       |       |     |       |
| Value of the priority (million euros) | 16,0 | 239,9 | 11,7 | 25,0 | 58,4 | 41,7 | 36,2 | 5,3 | 11,2 | 165,7 | 122,8 | 7,8 | 109,1 |
| Value per 1 project (million euros)   | 16,0 | 13,3  | 3,9  | 8,3  | 8,3  | 3,8  | 3,6  | 2,7 | 2,2  | 11,0  | 6,4   | 1,6 | 6,1   |

\* The abbreviated names of priorities were elaborated based on: Umowa Partnerstwa... [2014].

The first of the discussed directions of intervention concerning strengthening research, technological development, and innovation (it covers priority 1.a and 1.b) should be considered as being of key importance for the development of modern competitive economy. Because only Wrocław FUA designated activities in the scope for implementation through ITI, it can be assumed that ITI Unions managing the development of functional areas do not perceive ITI as a tool influencing the development of the R+D sector. Although it constitutes a low financial contribution (16 million euros), it is the most expensive task in unitary

terms. For the implementation of this direction of intervention, in the framework of ITI, also projects in the scope strengthening of competitiveness of enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The most important of those priorities is 3c. concerning support of the acquisition and expansion of advanced skills in the scope of products and services development. Such activities, however, were only declared by three FUAs (Koszalin-Kołobrzeg-Białogard, Wałbrzych and Szczecin) to the total amount of 25 million euros (2.9% of the value of the analysed TO). ITI Unions showed little interest in the implementation of projects in the scope of priority 3b dedicated to the internationalisation of enterprises (only in: Gorzów Wielkopolski FUA, Warsaw FUA, and Wrocław FUA). Due to high allocation (239 million euros, i.e. 28.9% of the value of the analysed TO) and diversity of forms of use of resources, as many as 18 ITI Unions planned activities in the scope of implementation of priority 3a. aimed at the improvement of business-related services for SMEs (Table 2). The analysis of all undertakings related to research development, technology, and innovation shows the dominance of those addressed to enterprises and not to the scientific and R+D sector. Moreover, many of them require no development of new technical and organisational solutions, but concern popularisation of the existing good practices. Considering the involvement of the analysed entities in the implementation of undertakings for the innovation activity of enterprises, Wrocław FUA should be emphasised. Functional areas not implementing measures and projects in the scope of research development, technology, and innovation particularly include functional areas of regional and subregional centres with no strong scientific and research and development centres. In this context, it seems disturbing that this direction of activities was also not indicated by functional areas of Kraków, Łódź, and Bydgoszcz-Toruń which have such centres.

Further investment priorities are included in the scope of two directions of interventions related to the optimisation of the labour market.

In the scope of PI Improvement of the situation in the labour market implemented under TO8 (promoting employment and employee mobility), the largest portion of the resources (58.4 million euros, i.e. 6.9% of the value of the analysed projects) is allocated for professional activation of persons with no employment, and particularly young people (8i). It is primarily a group of people without the unemployed status, but entering the labour market. A task that is important for building competitiveness of the labour market and relatively frequently chosen (11 FUA) is support of self-employment, entrepreneurship, and establishment of enterprises and new workplaces (8.iii). The implementation of the discussed undertakings indicates their concentration in the sphere of creating

new workplaces and promotion of entrepreneurship. Equally high importance was ascribed to the issue of gender equality and reconciliation of the family and professional life (8.iv). Undertakings in the scope were declared by 10 ITI Unions. Priority 8.vi responding to health and vocational problems of ageing society is of less importance. Although the problem of ageing society concerns all areas of Poland, such activities were considered for only 5 FUA's of Poznań, Wrocław, Central Sub-region, Kalisz-Ostrów, Wałbrzych. The lowest contribution is reached by activities referring to priority 8.v which can cover support for employees threatened with dismissal or dismissed for reasons concerning the workplace (Central Sub-region and North Sub-region) (Table 2). The implementation of undertakings in the scope of TO8 suggests their concentration in the sphere of creating new workplaces and promoting entrepreneurship. Lower importance is ascribed to activities addressed to the unemployed. It seems to be a justified direction of development of the competitiveness and strong urban centres. In the majority of FUA's, the problem of unemployment is relatively inconsiderable, and the focus should be on activities adjusting labour resources to the changing conditions of the labour market. From the financial point of view, single tasks undertaken in the framework of priorities TO8 are relatively low-cost.

The second of the EU thematic objectives concerning the improvement of the situation in the labour market (TO10) considers the need of lifelong learning, and investing in education and training aimed at the improvement of skills. They are activities commonly declared and undertaken within the framework of ITI. The greatest resources (165.7 million euros, i.e. 19.5% of the value of the analysed TO) were allocated to the development of educational and training infrastructure (priority 10.a), with 15 FUA's participating. Such tasks, related to infrastructural investments, generate high unitary costs (11 million euros per task on average), unlike the remaining ones in the scope of this TO. The highest number (19) of FUA's declared activities within priority 10.i aimed at the reduction and prevention of premature discontinuation of school education and provision of equal access to high quality education at all levels and educational paths. The scale and diversity of guidelines concerning priority 10.iv is similar. It aims at the adjustment of educational systems to the needs of the labour market, in particular through practical vocational education implemented in close cooperation with employers. Priority 10.iii is undertaken the most seldom. It concerns providing equal access to lifelong learning (Table 2). Activities undertaken for education and training aimed at the development of integrated educational systems commonly implemented with the application of ITI provide the basis for strengthening human capital – the key resource in the development of the competitiveness of cities.



FUAs showing the highest contribution of undertaken initiatives for the improvement of economic development with the application of ITI include all functional areas of the Śląskie voivodship as well as functional areas of Wrocław, Warsaw, Poznań, Kielce, and Wałbrzych. Only two of the studied functional areas, i.e. Olsztyn and Elk, declared no activities in the analysed scope. The variability of the undertaken activities within the discussed investment priorities shows the diversity of approaches to the programming of the development of functional areas, adequately to their needs and possibilities. This is also at the core of the implementation of ITI as a tool of territorial development.

The importance of use of ITI in the development of the competitiveness of urban areas is evidenced by the financial scale of activities in the scope of the tool. The financial value of directions of intervention analysed in this study (4 out of 10) is high, and amounts to 850.8 million euros which constitutes 16.9% of total resources declared for ITI. The largest part among the discussed 4 directions, i.e. 47.6% (405.4 million euros) is allocated for tasks concerning lifelong learning and improvement of skills (TO 10). Together with resources planned in the scope of TO8 (152.8 million euros), 558.2 million euros (i.e. 65.6% of the value of resources of the discussed directions of intervention) is allocated for the improvement of conditions in the labour market. The remaining part (292.6 million euros, i.e. 34.4%) will be used for the implementation of tasks within TO 1 and TO 3: Strengthening of research, technological development, and innovation. In such a scope, the dominant financial contribution (94.5%) is reached by tasks related to entrepreneurship (TO3), and only 5.5% by tasks for Strengthening of research, technological development, and innovation. This does not bode well in the context of development of competitiveness of FUAs in the world's knowledge-based economy.

## **Conclusions**

The development of FUA in the conditions of territorial-oriented policy requires flexible cooperation of administrative units and integrated development programming. In the current programming period, such an approach is stipulated in the Integrated Territorial Investments.

ITI provided a perfect opportunity for support of development of the organisational culture of territorial governance and implementation of integrated investments in functional urban areas. They created a system of financial incentives and benefits for the development of cooperation in territorial systems. Due to this, even self-governments which earlier showed no will of inter-commune cooperation undertook such cooperation.

Current practice shows that building partnerships responsible for the establishment of ITI Unions has been performed based on two models: interim and cooperation [Kociuba, 2017a]. They implement, with certain modifications, the ‘top-down’, and more seldom the ‘bottom-up’ models of territorial management [Kaczmarek and Kociuba, 2017]. As evidenced herein, the main goal of the establishment of the majority of partnerships was the possibility of financing of investments in the scope of the implementation of ITI. It should be emphasised that in spite of frequently interim and not always carefully considered activities of TSU, the implementation of ITI permitted the development of institutional structures and organisational solutions necessary for efficient governance of FUA, which is the basis for the development of the efficient city.

All ITI Unions indicated support of energy engineering efficiency and sustainable transport as the most important objectives of development. They are tasks which pursuant to the assumptions of development policy should have an effect on shaping a sustainable city. The practice of implementation of ITI can be therefore recognised as fully considering the assumed objective. Building sustainable cities, however, requires complementary activities in the social, economic, and spatial sphere. They are undertaken in a comprehensive way in particular FUA [cf. Szafranek, 2017a].

Diversity of programming approaches is observed in the sphere of use of ITI for the shaping of strengthening of the economic development of urban areas. The majority of FUAs undertook interventions contributing to the improvement of the economic situation, including the labour market. The diversity of directions of intervention can be assessed positively, because they are assumed to concern internal conditions and needs of particular FUAs. Activities in the scope of development of the competitiveness of the economy are observed to have the lowest importance. In the context of development of the competitiveness of urban areas, this cannot be assessed positively. Activities concerning the development of entrepreneurship and vocational activity are undertaken by the majority of the analysed FUAs and at a large financial scale. Undertaking of various tasks by the majority of ITI Unions suggests the complexity of the approach for strengthening the competitiveness of urban areas.

Therefore, from the point of view of needs of development of urban areas in Poland, ITI initiated building the subjectivity of functional areas in the sphere of management, finance, and strategic planning of investments. To sum up, the implementation of ITI promotes the organisational culture aimed at cooperation, develops the feeling of trust, and supports practical skills of common action important for the management of the sustainable development of the functional

area. In the sphere of governance, through the expenditure of financial resources, ITI permits obtaining the synergy of activities, and their efficient association with financing, as well as integration and territorialisation of intervention in functional urban areas. Two issues will be of the highest importance for the permanence of the currently functioning ITI Unions, i.e. development of efficient mechanisms of inter-municipal cooperation, and success of undertakings implemented by them [Kociuba, 2017ab]. If both of them are met, the partnerships will be likely to efficiently govern FUAs also in the future, which is the key to success of the development of urban areas.

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## **ROZWÓJ OBSZARÓW MIEJSKICH W WARUNKACH POLITYKI UKIERUNKOWANEJ TERYTORIALNIE – ZAŁOŻENIA TEORETYCZNE I DOŚWIADCZENIA W OBSZARACH FUNKCJONALNYCH MIAST POLSKI**

**Streszczenie:** Celem artykułu jest określenie warunków i potrzeb rozwoju funkcjonalnych obszarów miejskich, szczególnie w zakresie zarządzania i programowania rozwoju z uwzględnieniem bieżącej implementacji ZIT jako instrumentu terytorialnego rozwoju. Badania koncentrowały się na zarządzaniu miejskimi obszarami funkcjonalnymi (MOF) ukształtowanymi w strefie oddziaływania miast wojewódzkich (stołecznych) i wybranych regionalnych i subregionalnych ośrodków w Polsce, a także realizacji projektów przyjętych w strategiach ZIT. W kontekście identyfikacji cech miasta sprawnego została przeanalizowana aktualna współpraca jednostek samorządu terytorialnego w zakresie funkcjonowania związków ZIT. Dodatkowo analizie poddano dziedzinową i finansową strukturę podejmowanych działań i ich wkładu w rozwój konkurencyjności miast i ich obszarów funkcjonalnych. Uzyskane wyniki wskazują, że ZIT sprzyjają wspieraniu rozwoju kultury organizacyjnej sprawowania władzy i wdrożenia zintegrowanych inwestycji w MOF. stworzyły też system zachęt finansowych i korzyści określania kierunków rozwoju miasta zrównoważonego, sprawnego i konkurencyjnego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** polityka spójności 2014-2020, polityka terytorialna, Zintegrowane Inwestycje Terytorialne, Miejskie Obszary Funkcjonalne.