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ABSTRACT !!!!!!!

**POLISH STANDARDS OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLANNING
IN SMALL AND MEDIUM COMMUNES**

A single universal procedure of strategic planning does not exist. Polish theoretical studies quote many recommendations in this domain. Therefore, the author decided to take up the challenge of constructing a polish model standard for the procedure of establishing territorial self-government unit development strategy based on both contemporary professional literature and his personal experience gained in the period of 1995-2010 while constructing and implementing 54 strategies for Polish communes, districts and regions. It consists of the 19 consecutive stages.

Stage 1 – the decision to join strategic planning. In Polish self-government system such decision is most frequently taken by the territorial self-government appointing body in the form of the due resolution. Stage 2 – an entity is chosen which is responsible for strategy draft preparation. Practice shows that the most frequently accepted solution is close cooperation of local authorities representatives and self-government administration with workers of a selected consulting company. At present this market of services is well developed, full of both Polish and international companies competing and offering manifold and complex support for self-governments regarding strategic planning. Stage 3 – prospective diagnosis. It consists in collecting and analyzing correctly all data describing the past, present and substantially predictable future of territorial self-government unit attributes. One of the key requirements to face is the credible description of a broad spectrum of properties characteristic for a given territorial self-government unit and factors influencing it. Stage 4 – public opinion diagnosis. The best way to perform it is by means of opinion surveys conducted among natural persons inhabiting a given territorial self-government unit, and owners or top executives of economic entities conducting business activity in its territory. Stage five and six should be implemented together with stage three and four. Fifth stage consists in appointing the team of leaders. The team of leaders is the group of local community representatives. The goal behind appointing such team is its participation in the process of strategy construction, which is supposed to result in its high quality. Stage 6 carried out parallel to stage five represents social consultancy conducted most often in the form of strategic workshops together with team of leaders. Stage 7 – strategic analysis. It consists in SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) or SWOT Plus (strengths, weaknesses, internal chances, internal threads, stimulating agents, destimulating agents, external opportunities, external threats) procedure. Eighth stage deals with construction of mission and vision of a territorial self-

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government unit. The mission means answering a question: “Why do you exist?”. Vision constitutes the descriptions of its future state, which is supposed to be created by a given entity as the result of this strategy implementation. Next constructing of objectives and defining priorities (stage 9) should take place. The most important objectives are strategic and subordinate, intermediary (partial) ones, are called operational objectives. Priorities represent elements of operational goals, accomplishing which is most important for the unit development and should take place as soon as possible. Now, is time to define strategic tasks (stage 10), i.e. organization, modernization, investment, information, diagnostic, law-making and restructuring oriented activities, implementation of which constitutes the condition for meeting operational objectives and indirectly strategic ones. Stage 11 is the verification of horizontal and vertical compliance. Vertical compliance means the compliance with strategic planning documents of higher and lower level self-governments. Horizontal compliance refers to strategy compliance with planning documents of neighbouring self-governments at the same level. Stage 12 is devoted to referring tasks to financing sources. This stage consists in estimating realization costs of planned strategic tasks and searching for such sources of financing them which are highly likely in providing due financing. Next step is the construction of implementation system, including monitoring subsystems and corrections (stage 13). Correct strategy implementation requires all strategic tasks to be assigned to particular self-government organization units and companies, as well as strategic cooperation entities (at their consent). It is stage 14 – assigning strategic tasks. Within this framework the guidelines for projects to be executed also have to be defined (stage 15). Many of the described above strategic tasks require implementation projects to be prepared for them. Strategy is an element of unit’s promotion, facilitates its image improvement both from the point of view of potential investors, potential inhabitants, potential partners and individuals. Promotional strategy planning is therefore initiated already at the stage of creating it (stage 16). Work on the strategy text starts almost at the first stage. However, full version of its draft, including the results of all presented above stages, may not be prepared until this moment. Strategy draft preparation is the 17 stage of the process. Once strategy draft is prepared it has to be verified. This stage (18) consists in presenting strategy draft for verification of the self-government constitutive body commissions which express their remarks and prepare recommendations. Obtaining positive opinions results in presenting strategy (stage 19) to be approved for realization. In Polish self-government practice strategies are approved in the form a resolution of the legislative body.

The above presentation of work stages over a strategy does not discuss all issues referring to the problem of the described above planning procedure. However, the author hopes that presented information constitute a cohesive picture of the presented planning procedure model, and that they will undergo practical verification in Ukraine, just like in Polish self-government practice.

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