

Municipal youth policy strategies as a mean of youth participation and self-governance



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OPENING REMARKS

Dear Sirs,

I have been actively participating in the development of youth policy in Poland and Europe for nearly 15 years. During this time, the concepts of „youth policy” and „youth action” have evolved significantly. Today, the formation of modern youth policy, is the creation of a space that is friendly to young citizens, that is, a space where they can develop, live, start families, participate in public life and be entrepreneurial.

There is no longer any doubt that activities for the young in Poland should be supported. At the central level, there is continuous consultative work going on, putting young citizens at the center. Evidence of this are initiatives such as: „Youth in the Palace” (Młodzi w Pałacu), organized by Polish President Andrzej Duda, or „Strategy for the Young Generation” (Strategia RP na rzecz młodego pokolenia) organized by the Prime Minister’s Office. Regardless of the results of the consultations, the centrally diagnosed problems, will be fraught with some imperfection. A nationwide consultation, although a significant ennoblement of youth, cannot take into account the conditions and problems of individual counties or municipalities.

This study, identifies and analyzes a tool that bridges the gap of previous consultations. Local youth strategies, is a solution that focuses the attention of local governments on local youth issues. It identifies a document that defines not only the local needs of young people but also highlights the development opportunities of a given territorial unit. These opportunities should be particularly closely examined in terms of the new post-pandemic reality, marked by numerous technological innovations and the development of remote work. Local governments must also identify the challenges they will face in the face of unskillful youth policies. These include: social exclusion and marginalization of young people, the outflow of young people to larger urban centers and the subsequent negative demographics, the extinction of municipalities.

The above problems are already affecting some municipalities in Poland and pose significant challenges for local governments. However, it is difficult to counter regionalized problems if they are not diagnosed and monitored locally. Attempts to centrally prevent such incidents will either be highly costly or ineffective. Local youth strategies make it possible to identify the precise, environmental needs of youth and select the most effective solution to them. At the same time, the process of local consultation and creation of such strategies makes it possible to: (i) activate the young community; (ii) build a sense of agency, of influence over „small homelands,” and (iii) prove that their needs are important to local authorities.

I believe that this study will convince you of the need to create local documents, diagnosing the needs of young Poles and indicating the most effective solutions to their problems. I am also deeply convinced that the indicated problem is worth considering - in the form of an obligation of local government units to create such strategies through changes in legislation. After all, the use of the widely presented instrument will promote the implementation of long-term social policy.

Tomasz Opar

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INTRODUCTION

For both legal researchers and ordinary residents of a given basic local government unit (municipality – gmina¹), the tasks assigned to this type of unit are of fundamental importance, both doctrinal and practical. In the case of a municipality, this is stated in Article 7 of the Law on Municipal Self-Government (hereinafter: u.s.g.)², which currently lists about 20 own tasks. For the subject matter of this analysis, combined with an analysis of the legal state of affairs regarding the creation of strategies for the youth of a municipality, of fundamental importance is point 17 of the above article, which states that: „(...) in particular, own tasks include matters of promoting and disseminating the idea of self-government, including the creation of conditions for the operation and development of auxiliary units and the implementation of programs to stimulate civic activity”. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the municipality’s own tasks are limited only to Article 7 of the u.s.g. For even more important and definitely more significant for young people is the task arising from Article 5(1) of the u.s.g., which states: „(...) the municipality shall undertake activities to promote and disseminate the idea of self-government among the residents of the municipality, especially among young people, involving them in matters of importance to them”. Thus, if one were to situate the subject of important tasks of the municipality within the formation of the idea of self-government, one can see that these two provisions at the general (statutory) level give a certain framework on which the municipality’s youth policy should be based.

Turning first to the definition of the term youth policy itself, it should be noted that there is no legal definition of this expression in the legal language, however, it is not difficult to define it. Thus, youth policy can be considered a rationalized, strategic, multi-sectoral and ultimately medium-term³ sequence of activities of public authorities in relation to people in the age bracket that defines them as youth, aimed at the implementation, evolution or elimination of instruments that affect society. Thus, it is a certain set of activities of the public authority (whether government or local government) within the scope of its competence, which is intended to form a long-term process of influencing society, aimed at the sphere of interests of young people.

In the case of the municipality, youth policy is functionally as well as objectively related to the essence of promoting the idea of self-government and a number of the municipality’s own tasks. A rather detailed and currently rare form of combining these two spheres is the municipality’s youth strategy (otherwise known as the municipality’s youth policy). In this case, defining the term is easier, as it is a detailed form, special and separate in terms of tasks and activities from the municipal development strategy, aimed at defining activities in strategic sectors for the young generation. In technical terms, it is usually accepted that the strategy is a single, unified document, however, in practical terms, it is not without validity that the youth policy of a basic local government unit is prepared in several documents or in a separate, separate part of the overall municipal development strategy, as long as the whole is coherent in content. From the formal point of view, „municipal strategy for youth” means „a legally binding document for municipal bodies aimed at determining activities in strategic sectors for the young generation, implementing a youth policy of an optional nature”. Particularly important here is the term „legally binding”, which defines a legal act whose provisions are subject to mandatory application. The concept of optionality in administrative law, on the other hand, means a situation in which the body has the opportunity to make a determined choice between refraining from action and taking action, in accordance with the content of the competence available to it and updated, due to the fact that in this situation there is no specific obligation to act.⁴

1 Article 164(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 2, 1997 (Journal of Laws 1997 No. 78, item 483, as amended).

2 Journal of Laws 2021, item 1372 as amended.

3 Pointing to a medium-term sequence of activities (instead of, for example, a long-term one) should be guided by the current evolution of strategic planning by replacing long-term development strategies with a medium-term strategy, e.g., the Law of July 15, 2020 on Amendments to the Law on the Principles of Development Policy and Certain Other Laws (Journal of Laws 2020, item 1378).

4 M. Oleś, *Optional Actions of the Public Administration*, Warsaw 2017, p. 77.

However, there remains the question of the content jurisdiction of such a document. In principle, it could be answered that everything that falls within the definition of youth policy, however, on the basis of the municipal government's own tasks, certain spheres clarify themselves, which, due to their essence, must be included in a strategy aimed at young people. These are undoubtedly matters of local public transportation; social welfare, including care centers and institutions; support for the family and the foster care system; public education; culture, including municipal libraries and other cultural institutions, and the protection and care of monuments; physical culture and tourism, including recreational areas and sports facilities; pro-family policy, including the provision of social, medical and legal care for pregnant women; and support and dissemination of the idea of self-government, including the creation of conditions for the operation and development of auxiliary units and the implementation of programs to stimulate civic activity (with elaboration in Art. 5b paragraph 1).⁵

In the case of a city with county rights, this catalog is expanded to include the county government's own tasks, and thus the implementation of public education; social welfare; support for the family and the system of foster care; pro-family policy; support for the disabled; public transportation and public roads; culture and the protection of monuments and care for monuments; physical culture and tourism; prevention of unemployment and activation of the local labor market; protection of consumer rights as public tasks of a supra-municipal nature⁶ and support and dissemination of the idea of self-government among the residents of the district, especially among young people, involving them in matters important to them (art. 3e(1) of the Law on County Government).

So, as you can see, the strategies shaping youth policy in the municipality, the promotion of the idea of local self-government and general public (youth) policy are areas that are highly correlated on theoretical, legal and dogmatic grounds. However, how does such a strategy for youth at the municipal level work in practice? What is included in such a strategy? Does the form of the municipality (e.g., a city with county rights) affect the implementation of youth policy in that local government unit? Finally, is such a strategy needed, and does it meet the definition of youth policy in perspective? I will try to clarify all these aspects in this report, additionally providing some statistical outline relating to documents that can be qualified as „municipal youth policies”, and the willingness of local governments to undertake such activities.

5 Art. 7(1)(4), (6-6a), (8-10), (16-17) u.s.g.

6 Article 4(1)(1), (3-8), (17-18) of the Law on County Government.

PROMOTING THE IDEA OF SELF-GOVERNMENT AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE MUNICIPALITY

As mentioned at the outset, the municipality has a legal obligation to carry out the task of promoting the idea of self-government, especially among young people (Article 5b(1) of the u.s.g.). This provision is a development of the municipality's task indicated in Article 7, paragraph 1, item 17 of the u.s.g. - to promote and disseminate the idea of self-government. Of course, the substantive law in no way creates a closed catalog of forms through which a municipality would carry out these tasks. Nevertheless, the legislator, in the subsequent provisions of Article 5b of the u.s.g., describes a model (according to him) form for carrying out this task - the creation and operation of a youth council of the municipality. However, practice has indicated many more ways of implementing the tasks of Articles 5b and 7, among which should be mentioned:

Creation of a youth council of the municipality

By far the most popular form of activity of municipal government bodies in terms of Article 5b of the u.s.g. Trying not to elaborate too much on the subject, this is evidenced by at least three aspects. First, a clear legal basis⁷ giving an optional possibility for the municipal/city council to establish such an auxiliary body. Secondly, the long tradition of the creation of such bodies, dating back to the „rebirth” of local government in 1990. Finally, the interest in the functioning of such a body by local decision-makers and young people, even in times of pandemonium.⁸

Creation of positions of social assistants to councilors

This is an attempt to implement the solution of appointing social assistants to MPs and senators to the local government, however, heavily criticized by the doctrine and case law. As the administrative court in Gliwice points out: „Article 5b(1) of the municipal law cannot be an independent basis for the appointment of social assistants to councilors, as the purpose of this provision, i.e. the promotion of the idea of self-government, is not directly realized in this way. (...) The function of social assistants to councilors can be replaced by the already regulated institution of volunteerism. Pursuant to Article 42(1)(2) of the Act of April 24, 2003 on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteerism (...), volunteers may also perform services for the benefit of public administration bodies. This means that for the benefit of municipal bodies, volunteers promoting local government ideas among residents could work, without their direct connection to councilors⁹”.

The action of volunteers at the legislative and executive bodies in the municipality

This form is largely related to the above-mentioned judgment of the administrative court in Gliwice, which indicated that the activity of social assistants to councilors is contrary to generally applicable law, but did not exclude volunteer activity coordinated and organized by municipal bodies, carried out on the basis and within the limits of the Act of April 24, 2003 on public benefit activity and volunteerism.

Youth deputy (advisor) of the municipal executive body

A very rare form of municipal activity in the framework of support and dissemination of the idea of self-government among the residents of the municipality, especially among young people (occurs, for

7 As recently amended, see the Law of April 20, 2021 amending the Law on Municipal Government, the Law on County Government, the Law on Provincial Government and the Law on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteerism (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1038).

8 O. Wyrzykowska, J. Zapolski-Downar, *Młodzieżowa samorządność w Polsce. Analysis and further perspective*, Poznań 2021, pp. 77-83.

9 Judgment of the WSA in Gliwice of 30.06.2011, IV SA/GI 492/11, LEX No. 1088121.

example, in Zawiercie¹⁰). However, as the doctrine points out, nowhere in the local government laws is the possibility of appointing such bodies clearly defined, and looking at the example of such activity as analogous to the institution of „social assistants of councilors”, it seems that such activity (*nota bene* in the form of a sovereign act, such as an ordinance) may not be in accordance with the law.¹¹

Youth civic budget

It is based on different concepts, however, two main rules can be distinguished. In the first case, it is an amount set aside from the Civic Budget to be allocated for purposes or investments serving youth or proposed by youth (very often minors). The second case involves a youth civic budget as a form of public consultation on the allocation of a portion of spending from the general municipal budget to designated proposals for tasks of a local nature that fall within the competence of the municipality.¹² To date, this form has not been examined in any way by the administrative judiciary with regard to the legality of such a mechanism, so the presumption of legality of such an arrangement should be recognized. However, there have been cases of repeal of the resolution by the Regional Chambers of Accounts, which pointed out, among other things, the lack of authority to limit the right of a resident to submit and select a task project within the framework of the civic budget, depending on the age of the resident and the subject of the task project, and the fact that it follows from Article 5a (3) and (6) of the Law on Municipalities that the civic budget is a single budget and that the funds spent within this budget can only be divided into pools covering the entire municipality and its parts in the form of auxiliary units or groups of auxiliary units.¹³

Municipal strategy for youth shaping the municipality's youth policy

This issue, as relevant to the topic of this publication, will be presented in the next chapter.

Other activities of the municipality of a non-governmental nature

There is no enumerative catalog of such activities, however, as T. Moll points out: (...) „it should be understood as conducting training courses, courses, informational meetings aimed at increasing the involvement of residents in local government activities, undertaking projects that support the development of the local community, creating conditions that have an impact on increasing the involvement of the local community in the life of the municipality, thus all those activities that result in strengthening the idea of local government, its popularization and identification of members of the local community with the municipality¹⁴”.

Before moving on to describe the solution of creating a municipal youth policy strategy, it is important to focus on one common aspect characteristic of all the above-discussed forms of carrying out the task of Article 5b(1), which is the principle of legalism based on Article 7 of the Polish Constitution. Based on it, authority can be exercised only to such an extent and in such forms as the legislator expressly provides. State authorities may take action if and only if the law unambiguously indicates to them the basis for exercising sovereign decisions on behalf of the state, included in the competence norms.¹⁵ Thus, as can be seen from the above examples, it is quite common for state bodies to carry out sovereign actions despite the lack of an adequate basis in substantive law.

10 Order No. 1/2018 of the President of the City of Zawiercie dated November 21, 2018.

11 O. Wyrzykowska, J. Zapolski-Downar, op. cit. p. 48.

12 Ibid, p. 49.

13 Resolution No. 10.166.2019 of the College of the Regional Chamber of Accounts in Warsaw, dated May 8, 2019.

14 T. Moll, [in:] *Municipal Self-Government Act. Commentary*, ed. B. Dolnicki, 3rd edition, LEX, Warsaw 2021 *Commentary to Art. 5b*.

15 M. Zubik, *Constitutional Law of Contemporary Poland*, 1st edition, Warsaw 2020, p. 51.

LEGAL AND FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE MUNICIPAL STRATEGY FOR YOUTH

As already noted, the municipal youth strategy is a detailed form, special and separate in terms of tasks and activities from the municipal development strategy, aimed at determining activities in strategic sectors for the young generation. It can be defined as a form of implementation of local youth policy, understood as a rationalized, strategic, multi-sectoral and ultimately medium-term sequence of activities of public authorities (in this case, municipal government) towards aspects relevant to youth. This is probably the least popular form of implementation of municipal tasks related to youth, but also the most capacious, since the strategy is not limited to the implementation of Article 5b, paragraph 1 and Article 7, paragraph 1, item 17 of the u.s.g., but includes all youth-related tasks from the catalog of Article 7.u.s.g. First, however, bearing in mind considerations of legalism, the question must be answered: can the municipal decision-making body adopt a medium-term strategy for youth? This question can be answered in the affirmative.

The provision of Article 5b(1) of the u.s.g. does not indicate the forms by which the municipal bodies undertake activities to support and disseminate the idea of self-government among the residents. Therefore, it seems that the choice of the method of implementing the task arising from Article 5b Section 1 of the u.s.g. is left to the municipal bodies, which, depending on the conditions existing in the given local government unit, may use those forms of action which they consider most expedient. It should be emphasized that activities for the promotion and dissemination of the idea of self-government among the residents of the municipality cannot take on authoritative forms. This type of task is carried out only through actions of a non-mandatory nature.¹⁶ What also needs to be noted is that most of the resolutions adopting such a strategy were based on Article 18(1) of the municipal law, which “indicates the basic character of the council in the system of municipal bodies. However, it does not create the possibility of issuing a normative act of a universally binding nature. A municipality can only issue regulations under the authority of the state as part of the decentralization of public power. It is not possible to speak of any independent law-making activity of the municipality¹⁷”.

It is also worth outlining the difference between competencies and tasks. As M. Zubik points out: “while competences, which are always associated with a sovereign action, must be implemented strictly on the basis and within the limits of the law, tasks can be carried out by state organs with greater freedom and using non-sovereign mechanisms of action¹⁸”.

Thus, based on the above, it would seem that the creation of a municipal strategy for youth in the form of a normative act (a resolution of the municipal council) is as contrary to the principle of legalism as possible. Nothing could be further from the truth. In accordance with the operative part of the judgment of the administrative court in Gliwice, Article 18(1) of the Law on Municipalities (and thus the legal basis for enacting such a strategy) does not, in principle, constitute an independent basis for issuing generally binding acts of a normative (sovereign) nature, as these must find a basis in the provisions of substantive administrative law. On the other hand, this provision authorizes the municipal council to take non-mandatory (e.g., programmatic, intentional) actions, but remaining within the limits of the municipal tasks provided for in the provisions of the law.¹⁹

Such a strategy is, to all intents and purposes, a programmatic document intended to systematize and rationalize the activities of municipal bodies in matters related to youth in the long term. Thus, it constitutes a certain intention, the individual elements of which should be implemented through authority actions and competence norms, and cannot be equated with the municipal development

16 T. Moll, [in:] Law on Municipal Self-Government. Commentary, op. cit.

17 M. Augustyniak, T. Moll, [in:] *ibid*, commentary to Article 18.

18 M. Zubik, op. cit. p. 52.

19 Judgment of the WSA in Gliwice of 6.10.2008, IV SA/GI 487/08, LEX No. 464003.

strategy, enacted pursuant to Article 10e of the municipal law. However, the lack of analogy does not preclude the youth strategy from becoming a component of the municipal development strategy (then already enacted pursuant to Article 10e together with other provisions of the general strategy document).

The above view is also supported by the amended Article 5b of the municipal law, which in paragraph 8(2) and (3) states: “The tasks of the municipal youth council include, in particular: participation in the development of strategic documents of the municipality for the benefit of young people and monitoring the implementation of strategic documents of the municipality for the benefit of young people. One can see a certain element of retrospection here – this provision refers to past events (the functioning of the current strategy). So, since the legislator, referring to the tasks of the municipal youth council, clearly articulated the monitoring and development of strategic documents of the municipality for the benefit of the youth, axiologically it must recognize the permissibility of creating such documents of a legally binding nature. Nevertheless, the mere invocation of Article 5b(8)(2)-(3) without regard to Article 18(1) seems to be an insufficient legal basis for the creation of a municipal strategy for youth. It is also questionable whether such a strategy should be adopted by order of the municipal executive, unless this authority has been delegated to it by the legislative body.

This also follows from Article 18 (1), which: “sets forth the presumption of jurisdiction of the municipal council to handle matters that fall within the scope of the municipality. The municipal local government is authorized to deal with local public affairs that have been statutorily included in its scope of action, as well as to deal with such tasks and competencies that have not been delegated by law to any entity, but which fall within the scope of local government tasks and competencies of a local nature. However, these must not be arbitrarily created by the municipal government public tasks, but only those that are objectified, that is they find a legal basis, but there is no entity explicitly designated by the legislator with the power to implement them²⁰”. The ordinance adopted the strategy of the capital city of Warsaw - “Young Warsaw. City with climate for the young 2016-2020”. Article 30 paragraph 1 in connection with Article 11a paragraph 3 of the Law on Social Problems and § 2 of Resolution No. XLVI/1427/2008 of the Council of the Capital City of Warsaw, dated December 18, 2008, on the Social Strategy of Warsaw - Strategy for Solving Social Problems for 2009-2020, was given as the legal basis there.

It is unwarranted to comment on the articles, “taken out” from the u.s.g. - after all, they only concern the statement of the executive function of the mayor: “The mayor executes the resolutions of the municipal council and the tasks of the municipality specified by law” (Article 30, paragraph 1), and introduces an equal sign between the mayor and the mayor when defining the designators of the phrase “the executive body in the municipality” (Article 11a, paragraph 3). Thus, turning to the resolution of the Warsaw City Council, the cited provision states that: “District bodies shall perform the tasks and competencies delegated to them in accordance with the provisions of generally applicable law, resolutions of the Council of the City of Warsaw and orders of the President of the City of Warsaw. So we are talking here about a certain relationship of subordination between the district bodies and the bodies of Warsaw. Sticking to the crux of the problem, however, it should be noted that no provision gives explicit authority to the President of the City of Warsaw to issue an ordinance concerning the adoption of legal acts (and especially those with a strategic profile). Of course, the presumption of legality of a legal act should be fully assumed here, but the legal basis on which the act was adopted is very flimsy.

It is also clear that in a youth strategy a municipality cannot go beyond its own competencies (e.g. creating new auxiliary bodies) and its own tasks or those assigned by the government administration. Thus, a municipality in such a youth policy as much as possible can include the relevant program norms concerning, for example, physical culture and tourism, including recreational areas and sports facilities or municipal greenery, while the strategy should not include the implementation of

20 Judgment of the WSA in Poznań of 16.07.2014, IV SA/Po 507/14, LEX No. 1498465.

tasks provided strictly for the county (e.g. supporting people with disabilities) or the province (e.g. public education, including higher education). Returning also to the issue of legislative activity of the municipal executive body, it should be pointed out that it can pass ordinances that enable the implementation of the objectives of the strategy, but this must always be secondary to the legislative activity of the decision-making body. This issue is graphically illustrated by the summary in Table 1.

Table 1. own tasks of the municipality and the city with district rights

The municipality's own tasks include	The city's own tasks in the district include all the municipality's own tasks and those of a supra-municipal nature in the field of:
public education	public education
health care	health promotion and protection
supporting family and the foster care system	supporting family and the foster care system
Social assistance, including centers and care facilities	social assistance
Family-friendly policies, including the provision of social, medical and legal care for pregnant women	pro-family policies
municipal roads, streets, bridges, squares and traffic organization local public transport	public transport and public roads
Culture, including municipal libraries and other cultural institutions, as well as protection and care of monuments	culture and protection of monuments and care of monuments
Physical culture and tourism, including recreational areas and sports facilities	physical culture and tourism
spatial order, real estate management, environmental and nature protection and water management	real estate management architectural and construction administration water management environmental and nature conservation
Public order and safety of citizens, as well as fire and flood protection, including equipment and maintenance of the municipal flood storage facility	public order and security of citizens Flood protection, including equipment and maintenance of the district flood control warehouse, fire prevention and prevention of other extraordinary threats to human life and health and the environment
telecommunications activities	telecommunications activities
promotion of the municipality	promotion of the district

cooperation and activities for non-governmental organizations and entities listed in Article 3, paragraph 3 of the Act of April 24, 2003 on public benefit activity and volunteerism	cooperation and activities in favor of non-governmental organizations and entities listed in Article 3 Paragraph 3 of the Act of April 24, 2003 on public benefit activity and volunteerism (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 688, 1570 and 2020 and of 2020, item 284)
communal greenery and tree plantings	geodesy, cartography and cadastre
municipal housing construction	counteracting unemployment and activating the local labor market
markets and market halls	consumer rights protection
municipal cemeteries	defense
Water supply and water supply, sewerage, removal and treatment of municipal wastewater, maintenance of cleanliness and order and sanitation, landfills and disposal of municipal waste, supply of electricity and heat and gas	supporting people with disabilities
Support and dissemination of the idea of self-government, including the creation of conditions for the operation and development of auxiliary units and the implementation of programs to stimulate civic activity	agriculture, forestry and inland fisheries
Maintenance of municipal public facilities and equipment and administrative facilities	Maintenance of district public utilities and administrative facilities
Cooperation with local and regional communities of other countries	

Turning to the form of the resolution itself, it does not seem reasonable that the document constituting the strategies should be included directly in the body of the resolution (as, for example, in the case of the statute of the municipal youth council). The municipality's youth strategy is a programmatic and intentional document, so adopting it in the form of a resolution with an appendix in the form of this document is most reasonable. However, the situation becomes complicated in the case of possible annexes to the strategy itself, when the construction of "annex to annex" arises. According to D. Ziolkowski, this is not an incorrect action²¹, however, it is impossible to agree with such a thesis, confronted with the judgment of the Regional Administrative Court in Krakow of July 5, 2005, which stated that the introduction of annexes to an appendix to a resolution hinders "the understanding and application of such regulation, hinders the control of the correctness of this legislative activity, creates an unnecessary risk of internal disorganization of the provisions of a given act".²² It should therefore be postulated that the municipal youth policy strategy should be a single autonomous appendix to the resolution of the municipal constituting body, and the construction of "appendix to appendix" should be negated, due to the considerable difficulty of citing regulations, drafting unified texts or giving a correct structure to electronic documents²³, in times where correct legislation is rare anyway.

At the very end of the theoretical introduction to the discussion of functioning youth strategies in

21 D. Ziolkowski, [in:] Local Government Laws. Commentary, ed. S. Gajewski, A. Jakubowski, Warsaw 2018 Commentary to Article 5b, thesis 11

22 Judgment of the WSA in Cracow of July 5, 2005, III SA/Kr 393/05, LEX No. 879364.

23 G. Wierczyński, Commentary to the Regulation on "Principles of Legislative Technique," [in:] Redagowanie i ogłaszanie aktów normatywnych. Commentary, 2nd edition, Warsaw 2016 (Annex No. 1 § 29, para. 9).

municipalities, it is worth mentioning the specific status of cities with county rights and municipal auxiliary units, with particular emphasis on the districts of the capital city of Warsaw.

The status of a city with county rights is the easiest to describe, as it is defined by Article 92(2) of the Law on County Government²⁴, which states that: "A city with county rights is a municipality that performs the tasks of a county under the terms of this law." Thus, a city with county rights can, as much as possible, perform municipal tasks and refer to the u.s.g. (especially in the context of Articles 5b(1), 5b(8)(2)-(3) and Article 7(1)(17) of the u.s.g., discussed earlier), except that it can also extend strategies to tasks assigned to counties.

However, it is more difficult to define the status of municipal auxiliary units in the context of the possibility of enacting a youth policy. It should be taken the position that there is no competence norm that would give the possibility to enact such a document and even take actions of a non-authoritative nature. An even more unique situation exists in the case of mandatory auxiliary units - districts of the capital city of Warsaw. Seemingly, it would seem that these districts could adopt strategies for youth in connection with Article 11(1) of the Act on the organization of the capital city of Warsaw.²⁵ However, this competence has to do with action of an authoritative nature, and the creation of a municipal youth policy does not fall into this category. Therefore, it should be concluded, following S. Gajewski, that in case of doubts as to the assignment of a particular task or competence to a district of the City of Warsaw or to the City of Warsaw itself, it should be assumed that they belong to the City of Warsaw and its authorities.²⁶ This is also what happens in practice - Warsaw prepares an identical youth strategy for the entire area of the capital city, of course, taking into account the specifics of the districts concerned.

24 Journal of Laws. 2020 item 920 as amended.

25 Journal of Laws 2018, item 1817.

26 S. Gajewski, [in:] Local Government Laws. Commentary, op. cit. Commentary to Article 11 of the Act on the organization of the capital city of Warsaw, thesis 1

YOUTH POLICY AS PART OF THE MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY – UNIVERSAL TOOL FOR SHAPING LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

As mentioned in the introduction, the municipal strategy for youth does not have to be a separate document. As much as possible, it can function as an integral part (chapter, point) of the municipal development strategy, adopted on the basis of Article 10e of the u.s.g.

In accordance with the principle expressed in Article 10e(1) of the municipal law, the municipal development strategy is a planning document prepared on an optional basis. As the doctrine indicates, this is the right solution, as not every municipality has a need to develop one. Above all, this observation applies to small municipalities, for which the costs of developing such a strategy would be disproportionate to the benefits of its use.²⁷

As is clear from the wording of Article 10e(2) of the municipal government Act, the municipal development strategy must be consistent with the provincial development strategy or the supra-local development strategy, if such a strategy is already in place in the area of the municipality wishing to prepare it. However, it should be stipulated that, in accordance with the principle expressed in Article 11 paragraph 1aa of the Law on Provincial Self-Government, the provincial development strategy shall be consistent with the medium-term national development strategy and the national regional development strategy. The above issue is or was particularly significant in the case of the Świętokrzyskie voivodeship, where in 2017-2020 there was a youth strategy of the voivodeship called “Świętokrzyskie for Youth. Directions of support for social activity of youth of Świętokrzyskie province for 2017- 2020²⁸”, and Opolskie province, where activities are currently being carried out to create such a youth policy through the project “Strategy: Youth Opolszczyzna”, implemented by the Europa Iuvenis Association in cooperation with the Office of the Marshal of Opolskie Province.²⁹

Finally, it is also worth pointing to the justification of the draft law of 15.07.2020, which states that the purpose of introducing the commented provisions into the u.s.g.: “is to create an opportunity for the municipality to draw up a document defining the strategy of action in the medium term, to involve the local community in the work (public consultations), and to create a basis for checking the progress in achieving the set goals. So far, a significant number of municipalities, despite the lack of a formal possibility, have prepared development strategies, in most cases for the purpose of obtaining European funds. Thus, the introduced solution gives a legal basis for the practice. Since not all municipalities have the need to prepare strategies, the law proposes the possibility of preparing them, rather than an obligation. Such a solution responds more flexibly to the needs of municipalities.³⁰

So, as you can see, “throwing in the bag” with the strategic objectives of the municipal development strategy can be a universal and very useful solution for any municipality in Poland, especially dedicated to those local government units for which it would be uneconomical to draw up a separate youth policy strategy.

A similar approach has been forged by practice itself - the municipal strategy for youth as an integral part of the municipal development strategy is found in the documents of both the largest municipalities and rural ones. We are talking about cities with county rights: Sopot and Opole, and the rural municipalities of Zielonki and Zabierzów.

27 R. Marchaj, [in:] Law on Municipal Self-Government. Commentary, op. cit. Commentary on Article 10(e), Article 10(f), Article 10(g)

28 Information on the website of the Marshal's Office of the Świętokrzyskie Province, <https://www.swietokrzyskie.pro/category/urzed-marszalkowski-programy-i-projekty-unijne/archiwum-programy-i-projekty-unijne/swietokrzyskie-dla-mlodych/strategia-swietokrzyskie-dla-mlodych-kierunki-wspierania-aktywnosci-spoecznej-mlodziezy-na-lata-2017-2020/> (accessed 24.02.2022).

29 Information from the Europa Iuvenis Association website, <https://www.europaiuvenis.org/rozpoczynamy-projekt-strategia-mlodziejowa-opolszczyzna/> (accessed 24.02.2022).

30 Explanatory Memorandum to the Government's Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Principles of Development Policy and Certain Other Laws, Ninth Legislature, Parliamentary Print No. 64.

The city's strategy for youth, which falls within the definition of the term adopted in this study, in Opole is expressed primarily through chapter 1.3 of the Opole Development Strategy to 2030 titled "City according to youth"³¹. However, this is not a typical strategic document, but rather a certain set of ideas of the youth about the development of the city in the next decade. However, noteworthy are the goals and topics addressed in this chapter: economy, housing, architecture, urban planning, culture, entertainment, leisure, green Opole, transportation.

First of all, in these aspects, it is noted that there is a need for local government support for young entrepreneurs, mainly those whose activities fall within the strategic development of the city (services, mainly the IT industry), the creation of a low-cost housing rental system over a period of 5-7 years, as well as the development of social housing and low-rise buildings. It is also pointed out that there is a need for the functioning of urban efficient information about events and initiatives happening in the city, for example, by means of an application with geolocation and an algorithm that selects events according to the interests and preferences of the people around. In terms of ecology, the main activities are related to greening cities and investing in RES, while transportation - with regard to the needs of young people - is to be primarily modern (renovated rolling stock) and as mobile as possible (e.g., the ability to purchase tickets at each stop with a credit card).³² Finally, it should be mentioned that the above subsection was developed on the basis of the results of the "City of the Young" project, carried out in cooperation between the Opole City Hall and the local editorial office of "Gazeta Wyborcza".

The City of Sopot, in turn, in its 2014-2020 municipal development strategy³³ defined the strategic objective "Sopot a magnet for the young" as a way to achieve the horizontal objective "Green and civic Sopot". As indicated in the strategy, this correlation is justified because "the quality of the natural environment will be an increasingly important factor in the settlement and migration decisions of young people, especially well-educated people," and from the fact that "for the young it is important to feel "at home", responsible co-determination about the place where they live - further expansion of participatory management of Sopot will therefore attract and encourage young and active residents to settle in Sopot.

What measures did the city propose? These include raising the quality and availability of pre-school and school education, cooperation with universities in the implementation of scholarship and internship programs, programs of extra-curricular and extracurricular activities with the city's cultural institutions and NGOs, an internship program in cooperation with businesses in the Public-Private Partnership system, or the program "Sopot a Mecca for Young Artists" - developing internships and facilitating access to places of creation for local, national and international young artists. Local government is identified here as an investor, regulator, facilitator, partner and promoter.³⁴

The discussed type of municipal strategy for youth also functioned in the Malopolska rural municipalities of Zielonki and Zabierzów. This is, of course, thanks to the openness of local decision-makers and the activity of youth, but not without significance was the activity of the Center for Strategic Consultancy from Krakow, which provided substantive assistance to both municipalities in researching needs, collecting ideas and, above all, the final development of a youth policy.

The strategy for the development of youth policy in the municipality of Zielonki for 2021-2030 identifies three strategic goals: „Leisure – sport, recreation and culture”, „Environment”, „Development of safe public transportation system within the city”³⁵. The first objective is to be realized through such

31 Annex to Resolution No. XV/282/19 of the Opole City Council dated August 29, 2019, <https://www.opole.pl/dla-mieszkanca/strategia-rozwoju-opola-do-2030-roku>.

32 Ibid.

33 City of Sopot Strategy, <https://bip.sopot.pl/m,58,strategia-rozwoju-miasta.html> (accessed February 24, 2022).

34 Ibid.

35 Annex to Resolution No. XXX/60/2021 of the Zielonki Municipality Council of September 30, 2021 on the adoption of the Zielonki Municipality Development Strategy for 2021-2030, <https://bip.malopolska.pl/gzielonki,m,400274,strategia-2021-2030.html> (accessed 24.02.2022).

activities as: construction of a skatepark-type recreation park for young people, creation of a public meeting place, expansion of sports and entertainment infrastructure, implementation of workshop series dedicated to young people, organization of entertainment events. Care for the environment is to be ensured by monitoring pollution, increasing garbage segregation and reducing its generation, organizing a series of environmental workshops, new green plantings, increasing the number of recreational green areas and expanding the network of bicycle paths. Ultimately, in order to reach the third goal, the municipality's tasks are to develop public transportation (e.g. increase the frequency of buses, optimize commuting routes); develop routes and a network of bicycle infrastructure, improve road safety (e.g. develop a network of sidewalks with lighting and pedestrian crossings); provide free public transportation tickets for students during vacations, and introduce an electric scooter rental network with charging centers.³⁶

The most extensive and at the same time specific is the youth strategy defined in the Zabierzow municipality. On the face of it, it is non-binding, however it has been almost entirely implemented in the municipality's development strategy until 2030³⁷. The goals envisaged within its framework are identical to those identified in the Zielonki municipality, i.e. interesting leisure activities, efficient and safe transportation, and a clean and friendly environment.

Within the first objective, 11 tasks are envisaged, which include: the construction of a skatepark with a track/trail for skaters and skateboarders; the creation of an open recreation zone by the water, integrated into the public space of the municipality; the creation of multifunctional, paved, small sports fields. In the area of safe communication, the following is postulated: creation of a safe bicycle road/path connecting Aleksandrowice and Balice, expansion of the fiber-optic line in the municipality and development of municipal transportation. In terms of the environment, the municipality's goals in the youth strategy focus on increasing environmental initiatives and activities for young people and improving and expanding school infrastructure.

Thus, it can be seen that the tasks by means of which a municipality is to implement youth policy generally differ from one center to another (either a city with county rights or a rural municipality), but as a rule they settle around similar goals in the areas of environmental protection, increasing inclusive infrastructure for youth, and communication within a given local government unit.

Equally importantly, in the case of the two rural municipalities mentioned, the strategies are quite similar. However, this is nothing unexpected - they are located in the same province and were developed under the substantive supervision of the same entity.

However, as for the cities (Sopot and Opole) it is difficult to undertake an assessment. youth policy of these cities with county rights - their youth strategies (components of the city development strategy) are modest and vague. While in the case of Sopot one is dealing with a certain plan and strategy, in the case of Opole there are vague and vague visions of the future, mainly in the form of expectations of members of the local youth city council.

36 Ibid.

37 Resolution No. XXIX/324/21 of the Zabierzów Municipality Council of June 25, 2021 on the adoption of the Development Strategy of the Zabierzów Municipality until 2030, <https://bip.malopolska.pl/ugzabierzow.a,1956163,uchwala-nr-xxix32421-rady-gminy-zabierzow-z-dnia-25-czerwca-2021-r-w-sprawie-przyjecia-strategii-roz.html> (accessed 24.02.2022).

AUTONOMOUS YOUTH POLICY STRATEGIES IN RURAL AND URBAN MUNICIPALITIES

What may come as a surprise and a bit of a shock, in no rural-urban or urban municipality has one encountered a municipal strategy for youth that was adopted in a legally effective form through a resolution of a local government body. Hence the use of the adjective “autonomous”, understood here as “independent, self-contained, not forming part of another local law act”. Nevertheless, it is worth noting in this context two documents encountered in circulation that fulfill the definition of a youth strategy, however, they were not in any way binding on its addressees, i.e. local government authorities and local administration bodies.

We are talking about the publication “Starachowice - a city for young people - strategic directions for creating the city as a space friendly to young people”, which is the result of work carried out under the project “Starachowice - a city for young people” from May 2017 to October 2018, with the support of European Union funds under the Erasmus+ program³⁸, and the document “Youth Off - Development Strategy of the City and Municipality of Niepołomice for 2011-2020”³⁹ (incidentally also developed with the support of the Center for Strategic Consulting in Krakow).

Due to the above doubts in qualifying these documents as municipal youth strategies, it is not purposeful to cite the most important aspects of the youth policies in question. However, it was necessary to signal the functioning of such forms, which, as can be seen, have occurred and probably do occur in municipal document circulation. Finally, it is worth emphasizing that both the Starachowice and Niepołomice youth strategies were created by local youth councils.

38 Starachowice - a city for youth - strategic directions for creating the city as a youth-friendly space, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HqGPxJnSovQSK-TdY08T_kKwOoZ1sCVSU/view?fbclid=IwAR1TDScfzUbXCu4jGwrY3Q8lrxWvrLUZFjzTHelEn4pTyQA4kUNYpy3Qbo (accessed 24.02.2022).

39 Youth Off - Development Strategy of the City and Municipality of Niepołomice for 2011-2020, https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwif4diLg5f2AhWw-yoKHxv-CWQQFnoECAQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpartykpacjaobywatelska.pl%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2015%2F10%2Fmłodzieżowa_off_strategia.pdf&usg=AOvVawOLkrFq519XzFbON92FEUNw (dostęp: 24.02.2022).

AUTONOMOUS YOUTH POLICY STRATEGIES IN CITIES WITH COUNTY RIGHTS

Among Polish cities with county rights, the longest tradition in creating youth policies for young people is undoubtedly the City of Krakow. From 2009 to 2019, the Municipality of Krakow implemented the "Young Krakow" Program, and from 1999 to 2009 the Municipal Youth Crime Prevention Program". Currently, the city has a program, "Young Krakow 2.0", which is implemented from 2019 to 2023.

The goal of the program is to create conditions for active participation in the life of the city by young people living, studying or working in Krakow and to strengthen attitudes of civic engagement, entrepreneurship and openness to others. The initiative is also intended to facilitate young people's entry into adulthood in an interesting and valuable way, based on positive experiences. The recipients of the program are young people living or working in Krakow between the age of 13 and 26, especially school-age youth.⁴⁰ The project took a legally binding form - Resolution No. VII/125/19 of the Krakow City Council of February 13, 2019 on the adoption of the Program of active participation of youth in the life of the city "Young Krakow 2.0" for 2019-2023.⁴¹

The program of active participation of youth in the life of the city "Young Krakow 2.0" for 2019-2023 is a strategic program of the Development Strategy of the City of Krakow 2030: Area V: Social capital, strategic goal: Strong community of self-government of Kraków residents, operational goal: V1. High level of social participation of residents, as well as Area IV: Quality of life, strategic goal: Kraków - a city friendly to life, operational goal IV.5: High level of security in Kraków.⁴² The main goal of the Program is to create conditions for active participation in the life of the city by young people living, studying or working in Krakow, and to strengthen in them attitudes of civic involvement, entrepreneurship and openness to others. It is implemented through specific goals and related tasks:

1. Space for youth - expanding access to youth development and educational opportunities and equalizing development and educational opportunities for youth from different backgrounds;
 - a. Creating open moderated spaces for youth in each neighborhood.
 - b. Creating outdoor meeting places with friendly infrastructure.
 - c. Expand the offer of free after-school activities for young people, including sports and outdoor activities.
 - d. Integration of Krakow's youth community during city events, integrating schools of different profiles through the implementation of inter-school projects.
 - e. Creating spaces for multicultural encounters, such as through international cooperation between schools, organizations and youth groups.
 - f. Raising the competence of young people to be creative and safe online, as well as raising the level of knowledge of the risks of online activity and methods of dealing with such situations among youth workers.
2. Young people act locally - building civic-mindedness and shared responsibility for the school, neighborhood and city;

40 Information on the website of the City of Krakow, https://www.krakow.pl/aktualnosci/239711,26,komunikat,mloidy_krakow_2_0___aktywny_i_zaangazowany_.html (accessed 26.02.2022).

41 Resolution No. VII/125/19 of the Council of the City of Krakow of February 13, 2019 on the adoption of the Program of active participation of youth in the life of the city "Young Krakow 2.0" for 2019-2023, and previous resolutions on. polityki młodzieżowej miasta Krakowa, https://www.bip.krakow.pl/?dok_id=167&sub_dok_id=167&sub=uchwala&query=id%3D23934%26typ%3Du&_ga=2.144656053.1846337913.1563172373-975670207.1553865830 (dostęp: 26.02.2022).

42 Ibid.

- a. Creating opportunities for civic projects in the city through youth informal groups, groups of young people from schools, day care centers and clubs, and day care centers.
 - b. Support the activities of student governments.
 - c. Promoting volunteerism.
 - d. Building civic and leadership attitudes among young people, such as the youngest students through activation activities in school day care centers.
 - e. Shaping young people's openness to diversity and building social trust; improving young people's competence in communication, conflict resolution, negotiation.
3. Youth voice in the city - creating conditions for young people to express their opinions on city development and co-create city actions and policies:
 - a. Promote active participation in activities using participatory tools, i.e. civic budget, local initiative, involving schools and teachers, day care centers and youth clubs.
 - b. Supporting the activities of the City Youth Council for the benefit of the youth community, strengthening its representativeness.
 - c. Creating channels of communication with young people in terms of informing them about events available to them and about the life of the city.
 4. Culture (for) youth - expanding access to culture for young people and creating conditions for the creation of culture by young people;
 - a. Organizing programs and events to support young artists in various fields of art.
 - b. Increasing the availability of cultural offerings, especially for youth at risk of social exclusion.
 - c. Include youth as an audience in ongoing programs and events.
 5. Youth in the labor market - building an entrepreneurial attitude among young people and encouraging participation in society through work;
 - a. Promotion of entrepreneurial attitudes among young people.
 - b. Organizing events and meetings to introduce young people.
 6. Partnership for youth - building a network of institutions and youth workers and valuing the work and raising the competence of youth workers and those involved in youth citizenship;
 - a. Recognizing and supporting the work of those who are involved in building youth citizenship and youth activism, raising the prestige of youth work.
 - b. Creation of a "Krakow Network for Youth" - a network of cooperation between youth workers, schools and other centers to exchange knowledge and experience and disseminate information on urban youth activities.
 - c. Developing international cooperation in the field of youth policy.
 - d. Fostering communication and promoting intergenerational activities⁴³.

What is also noteworthy, funds for the performance of tasks implemented under the Program will

43 Ibid.

be planned annually in the budget of the City of Krakow, and the Mayor of the City of Krakow will present a report on the implementation of the Program to the Krakow City Council by April 31 of the following year.

Poland's capital city also had its youth strategy. In the capital city of Warsaw, the 2016-2020 program „Young Warsaw. A city with a climate for the young,” established by Order No. 87/2016 of the President of the Capital City of Warsaw of January 28, 2016.⁴⁴ Consultations around the new youth program are currently underway.

In the context of the past strategy, it is worth recalling some of the conclusions of the evaluation of its implementation, leaving aside the presentation of specific goals and strategies due to the end of the youth policy's duration. Well, it was found that the way of thinking about its goals of those involved in the program on the side of the offices is consistent with the provisions of the strategy document.

Unlike officials, formulate objectives partners responsible for the implementation of specific activities, indicating the most important objectives of the program, did not directly refer to the provisions of the document.

In turn, for example, in the context of the youth councils of the capital city, the results of the evaluation survey lead to the conclusion that both the youth district councils and the Youth Council of the Capital City of Warsaw carry out most of the functions imposed on them. However, the distribution of priorities differs from the assumed ones. Nevertheless, one of the most important activities of the councils indicated by the respondents is not so much advisory and consultative activities, but initiating original activities with the support of the office. On the other hand, what differentiates MRW from MRD is the larger scale of activities and the focus on cyclical implementation of some of them.

In the context of implementation itself, it was found that there is a certain disconnect between the activities of local government and the prioritization of goals by officials and the expectations of youth. The main barrier to widespread youth activity within the framework of the creation of the concept of the city's youth policy was seen as a lack of faith in the real possibility of influencing their environment in cooperation with institutions (this can be illustrated by the example of the functioning of the student government/student council). This is also reflected in the passivity on the part of the office (so the aforementioned fears are fulfilled). As indicated, as many as 44% of youth advisors, 39% of MRD supervisors and 41% of representatives of offices delegated to cooperate with the Youth Council of the City of Warsaw did not undertake any activities disseminating knowledge about the program. Despite this, among the respondents, they were convinced that Young Warsaw should be implemented after 2020.⁴⁵

The youth strategy is also found in the Tri-City, specifically in Gdynia. The „Action Plan of the Child, Youth and Family Friendly City for 2020- 2022”, adopted by Resolution No. XXIV/788/20 of the Gdynia City Council of 25.11.2020⁴⁶ is in operation there. Interestingly and quite peculiarly for this plan, the aspect of youth policy is included in the sphere of the city's activities directed at social issues, and pro-family activities in particular. It is also one of the more elaborate reports - it includes four priority goals and 54 tasks:

- I. Engaging in the life of the city (Integrating and networking the community of institutions and organizations. Building and developing an offer that fills everyday life. Building the

44 Order No. 87/2016 of the President of the Capital City of Warsaw, January 28, 2016, <https://bip.warszawa.pl/NR/exeres/1BA42A97-2BC5-4815-AC-24-CD3EFD868C70,frameless.htm> (accessed February 26, 2022).

45 Report on the evaluation study of the implementation of the urban youth policy specified in the program "Young Warsaw. A City with Climate for Youth 2016 - 2020," p. 72, <https://stocznia.org.pl/projekty/ewalauacja-programu-mloda-warszawa/> (accessed March 01, 2022).

46 Resolution No. XXIV/788/20 of the City Council of Gdynia dated 25.11.2020, https://bip.um.gdynia.pl/wyszukiwarka-uchwal-rady-miasta,7485/wyszukiwarka-uchwal,504923?Contents_OrdinancesSearchForm%5Bnumber%5D=XXIV%2F788%2F20&Contents_OrdinancesSearchForm%5Bdate%5D=2020&Contents_OrdinancesSearchForm%5Bcategory%5D=&Contents_OrdinancesSearchForm%5Btype%5D=1 (accessed 26.02.2022).

identity of young Gdynia residents and a community that is open and sensitive to the needs of others).

- II. Creating accessible urban spaces (Activities in urban spaces. Development of urban infrastructure. Education and information campaigns).
- III. An inclusive and encouraging city (Educating the “network” and residents. Developing educational offerings. Access: to knowledge. Educational campaigns).
- IV. Safe and supportive city (Building a sense of security in a multidimensional aspect, focused on the individual needs of Gdynia’s citizens of all ages, especially the youngest residents)..

Thus, it can be seen that the plan prepared by the authorities of Gdynia is comprehensive in the field of family policy, as well as youth policy. What distinguishes it, however, is its short duration (only 3 years), a period that can be defined as „medium”.⁴⁷ Gdynia’s strategy is also defined by a two-stage division into goals and objectives, and a very extensive grid of the latter.

Youth policy strategy is also present in the capital of the Wielkopolska region - Poznań. In 2018, the „Policy for Young People of the City of Poznań for 2019-2025” was adopted there.⁴⁸ This is the first strategic document for Poznań entirely dedicated to youth, targeting people aged 15-29.

Taking into account the mutual expectations of the City and young people, the following vision of the „Poznań of the Young 2025” Policy was formulated: „Poznań is a city where young people, through the realization of their dreams, passions and various professional aspirations, realistically co-create and develop them for the benefit of the entire community. Implementation of the goal and priorities of the „Poznań Młodych 2025” Policy in the sphere of involving young people in the life of the city is based on 4 principles::

1. Competency development - enabling young people to acquire knowledge, experience and skills that they will be able to use in making a variety of decisions in adulthood as well.
2. Diversified involvement - taking into account the diversity, opportunities for activity, potential, experience of young people, which will allow the inclusion of the largest possible representation of different groups of young people.
3. Mutual respect - basing the process of engaging young people on mutual respect among all sectors of society, interest in constructive proposals from young people, and responsibility for decisions and actions taken.
4. Openness and disclosure - basing the process of engaging young people on transparent, clear and fair procedures so as not to create unrealistic expectations.

and 5 priorities:

1. Priority: City of Talents - Greater opportunities for the personal development of young people and the realization of their passions and professional ambitions.
2. Priority: City of Active - Greater opportunities for young people to engage and influence the organization of life in the city.
3. Priority: Open City - Modern forms of communication as a basis for effective social dialogue in the city.

47 Ibid.

48 Resolution No. LXXIV/1408/VII/2018 of the Poznań City Council of 16-10-2018 on the adoption of the "Policy for young people of the City of Poznań for 2019-2025": <https://bip.poznan.pl/bip/uchwaly/kadencja-2014-2018,23/lxxiv-1408-vii-2018-z-dnia-2018-10-16,77070/> (accessed 27.02.2022).

4. Priority: City of Friendly Space - Functional urban space as a place for young people to live, study, work and spend leisure time.
5. Priority: the City of Ecomobility - High quality of movement in urban space.

Statistical monitoring of the implementation of the Poznań Young People's Policy 2025 will be carried out using contextual indicators that describe the implementation of the Policy's goal, as well as indicators of the implementation of the priorities, which are intended to focus on young people and relate to their activities and attitudes. There are, moreover, already available reports on the implementation of the Strategy in 2019⁴⁹ and 2020.⁵⁰

The reporting system itself is proving to be an invaluable issue. Bearing in mind the medium-term nature of a given strategy, it is extremely important to monitor individual tasks and specific goals envisaged for a short period of 1-2 years. The creation of reports on the implementation of the strategy here provides a measure of the effectiveness of local government bodies and other entities that were ultimately intended to work on the development of municipal youth policy. However, the biggest advantage of reporting is the ability to constantly measure the effects and compare them with the assumptions, and consequently make adjustments in the process of performing tasks or specific goals. Ultimately, the reports are also a ready base of know-how in case of continuing the program in the next period of time.

Finally, the Youth Strategy document is also present in the local legislation of the City of Leszno. In 2018, the Leszno City Council passed a resolution on the adoption of "Leszno Strategy for Youth".⁵¹

The concept of this strategy is unique in that it does not assume, as previously discussed strategies, a three-element division into strategic goal-detailed goals-tasks, but focuses on presenting two "projects" that can have an impact on young people. The first concerns the creation of optimal conditions for the fuller use of the potential of the predispositions and talents of young residents of Leszno, including tasks to be implemented as part of a long-term strategy with the participation of school establishments operating in the city. The second - ad hoc solutions, influencing an increase in the feeling of satisfaction and identification with the place of residence, as well as the fuller use of the potential of young residents of nearby towns, especially those attending Leszno schools, covering tasks to be consulted as part of meetings with youth representatives.

The first project plans:

1. Building a coherent chronological strategy for collecting and processing knowledge about the student's aptitudes and talents.
2. Pedagogization of parents.
3. Deepening cooperation between schools specializing in vocational training and elementary schools.
4. Developing a new formula for the Education Fair, organized for both students and their parents.
5. Implementation of the project "My Little Homeland" - an attempt to strengthen the emotional ties of schoolchildren with their place of residence.

49 Report on the Implementation of the "Policy for Young People of the City of Poznań for 2019-2025" for 2019, p. 88 et seq. <https://badam.poznan.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Raport-z-realizacji-program%C3%B3w-sektorowych-w-2019-roku-2.pdf> (accessed February 27, 2022).

50 Report on the Implementation of the "Policy for Young People of the City of Poznań for the Years 2019-2025" for the Year 2020, p. 80 et seq. <https://badam.poznan.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Raport-z-realizacji-programow-sektorowych-2020-3.pdf> (accessed February 27, 2022).

51 Resolution No. XLVIII/668/2018 of the Leszno City Council of May 30, 2018 on the adoption of the "Strategy of Leszno for Youth, <http://bip.leszno.pl/uchwala/4182/uchwala-nr-xlviii-668-2018> (accessed 27.02.2022).

6. Permanently update information on the fate of graduates of high schools in Leszno, through the acquisition of reliable feedback, providing a basis for future actions for young people.
7. Project: Work my hobby.

The second project, on the other hand, is to be implemented through:

1. Creating typical meeting places for young people in the City.
2. Project: Culture Containers.
3. Improve transportation within the City itself and between Leszno and nearby towns at later hours, in order to increase youth participation in the City.
4. A new look at the activities of the Youth Council of the City of Leszno - as an initiator and advocate for the interests of youth⁵².

The strategy of the city of Leszno for youth contains one more thought that should, above all, be close to local government authorities, whether they are implementing a strategy for youth or any other task that is related to it. Well, as noted: "The task of the "Strategy of Leszno for Youth" is not to relieve the City of the obligation to make sensitive decisions on the main directions of its development or to look for an ad hoc antidote to a given problem, but to skilfully indicate methods and outline areas of action so that most of the problems signaled today should not be a drawback in the future. The task of the strategy is to look for the causes of the occurrence of problems and seek solutions as close as possible to the source of their origin."⁵³ .

A special position in the context of the cities' strategy for young people is occupied by Lublin - European Youth Capital 2023. In 2019, Lublin undertook a successful bid for the title of European Youth Capital. The resulting final application is the result of a year-long work of the task force, consisting of representatives of the City Youth Council, the Children and Youth Team, the student community and youth organizations and groups.

The program of activities of Lublin as the European Youth Capital 2023, which has the character of an urban youth policy, focuses on 3 areas:

1. City for youth - activities designed by the "city" for youth.
2. Youth for the city - youth projects/initiatives.
3. Youth and the city - cooperation and partnership between youth and "the city," for the planning and implementation of joint activities.

Within the framework of all 3 areas, the following activities have been planned: broadly understood youth participation, support, sports, culture and education, with a local, regional, national and European scope. Through networking, partnerships, exchange of good practices, Lublin collects the best ideas for youth policy, enabling equal opportunities for the development of young people, strengthening their importance in social life and inclusion in city-forming activities.⁵⁴

The example of Lublin is therefore specific - it is not a municipal strategy for youth according to the definition, however, it would be difficult not to consider as such the application submitted (success-

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid, p. 5.

54 Lublin's application document created as part of its bid for European Capital of Culture title Youth, https://lublin.eu/gfx/lublin/userfiles/_public/lublin/esm2023/lublin_aplikacja_europejskastolicaml_clothing2023.pdf (accessed 27.02.2022).

fully!) for the title of European Youth Capital, with a 4-year perspective of youth-oriented activities forming the city's youth policy.

A youth policy strategy also exists in Slupsk for 2018-2023, adopted by a resolution of the Slupsk City Youth Council, making it not a legally binding act of the city authorities.

Youth strategies in cities with county rights are more diverse than those in rural municipalities, however, this is expected - cities with county rights are mostly agglomerations characterized by a much larger group and percentage of young residents. In addition, against the background of Poland as a whole, they are found in various regions of the country, and not - as in municipalities - only in rural areas.

Equally importantly, the aspect of youth participation in civil society is definitely more emphasized in the case of cities with county rights. In general, tasks and goals related to civil society and the training of skills, qualifications and "soft" competencies are more developed.

MUNICIPAL STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH IN NUMBERS

The issue of the implementation, execution and creation of youth policies in municipalities is particularly important for further theoretical analysis. Statistics are also not insignificant, providing an overview of practical measures.

Accordingly, from 01.02-28.02.2022, 2477 municipalities, 66 cities with county rights and 18 districts of the City of Warsaw were surveyed for the functioning of legally binding documents on their territories that could be considered a local government unit's strategy for youth. Thus, the basis of the research is the information obtained during this period from 2087 local government units⁵⁵ based on the answers to the questions contained in the request for access: to public information. The research questions were sent electronically to all municipalities, through email addresses available in a publicly accessible database maintained by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration. Despite this, not all local governments fulfilled their obligation to respond to the request for public information under Article 13 of the Access to Public Information Act of September 6, 2001.⁵⁶ 408 local governments did not respond to the request - the basis of the research.⁵⁷

Table 2 Number of responses received from local government units.

Type of local government unit	Number of responses obtained	Number of responses not obtained
Rural municipalities	1272	251
Urban-rural municipalities	543	109
Urban municipalities	194	42
Cities with district rights	60	6
Districts	18	0
Total	2087	408

Source: IREPSO survey

In the request for access: to public information, five general questions were asked about the municipality's broad strategies for youth. Local government units responded to the following questions:

Is there a document that takes the form of a municipal youth strategy, a policy for young people in the municipality, a youth policy development strategy or an identical instrument in the performance of the municipality's tasks and activities?

Did such a document function in the past?

Did the municipality's youth strategy take a legally effective form, i.e. was it adopted by a resolution of the municipal council or an executive order?

If the municipality's strategy for youth has worked in the past, is there any evaluation/report of the activities carried out and any conclusions?

Does the municipality plan to prepare a youth strategy for the municipality, a policy for young people in the municipality, a youth policy development strategy or the same strategic document during the coming year?

⁵⁵ 60 cities with county rights, 18 districts of the capital city of Warsaw, 1264 rural municipalities, 535 urban-rural municipalities and 191 urban municipalities.

⁵⁶ Journal of Laws of 2020, item 2176, as amended.

⁵⁷ 6 cities with county rights, 259 rural municipalities, 117 urban-rural municipalities and 111 urban municipalities.

Based on the above research, it can be clearly stated that according to the adopted definition of the municipal strategy for youth, the document in this form is present in 8 local government units, while in the past it was present in an additional 3. Importantly, each of these units expressed willingness and high approval or was even in the process of creating another strategy for youth for the next several years. In the case of three⁵⁸ municipalities, municipal strategies for youth were not adopted in a legally effective form (municipal council resolution), so they were not included in the statistics.

Thus, it can be said that with defined strategies existed in 10 local government units, while 121 municipalities⁵⁹ are planning or working on implementing such a document. With such projections and analysis, a youth policy strategy would be the second most popular (after the youth council of the municipality) form of promoting the idea of self-government among young people and action for young people in the municipality. Does this mean that it will be a popular form? If the predictions come true, the popularity of youth strategy documents could rise from 0.4% to 4.7%. On the one hand, this is an increase of more than tenfold; on the other, it is still a drop in the ocean of needs and a small turnaround in the country's youth policy.

Table 3 Occurrence of youth policy strategies in municipalities.

The strategy occurred or is occurring	The strategy was occurring, but was not adopted in a legally effective form	Work is underway or planned to prepare a youth strategy for the municipality in the short to medium term	The strategy did not occur, is not in place, no work is underway and there are no plans to prepare a youth strategy for the municipality in the short or medium term
10	3	121	1953

Source: own research

It is worth noting that youth strategies are present only in the largest agglomerations - cities with county rights (8) and rural municipalities (2). In the case of rural-urban and urban municipalities, from a purely formal point of view, there were and are no such documents (nevertheless, it was possible to encounter individual such documents in these types of municipalities in a form not binding on local government bodies).

Table 4 Breakdown of youth strategies by location.

Place of occurrence	Number of strategies
Rural municipality	2
Rural-urban municipality	0 (possibly 1 subject to the above)
Municipality	0 (possibly 1 subject to the above)
City with district rights	8 (possibly 9 subject to the above)

Source: own research

On the other hand, referring to the question of willingness and plans, the most positive responses were recorded in rural municipalities (60), followed by rural-urban municipalities (35), cities with

⁵⁸ The city and municipality of Niepołomice, the city of Starachowice and the city of Slupsk.

⁵⁹ This includes the previously mentioned 13 local government units where the strategy is working or has worked.

county rights (15) and urban municipalities (11). In the end, it can be said that also in terms of planning to implement such an instrument, cities with county rights are in the lead (25% of this type of local government units plan to do so⁶⁰), followed by rural-urban municipalities (about 6.5%), urban municipalities (about 5.7%), and at the very end rural municipalities (about 4.7%).

Putting this in an analysis carried out on all local government units to which a response was sent, including those local government units that did not respond to a request for access: to public information, the statistic is still clearly led by cities with county rights (less than 23% plan to do so⁶¹), followed by urban-rural municipalities (about 5.5%), urban municipalities (more than 4.5%) and rural municipalities (almost 4%).

Table 5. Number of local government units in which work is underway or planned to prepare a youth strategy of the municipality in the short or medium term, along with the percentage of the total number of the type (regardless of the fact of response*).

Type of local government unit	Work is underway or planned to prepare a youth strategy for the municipality in the short to medium term	Percentage share
Rural municipalities	60	4,71% (3,94%*)
Urban-rural municipalities	35	6,45% (5,37%*)
Urban municipalities	11	5,67% (4,66%*)
Cities with district rights	15	25% (22,7%*)

Source: own research

Distinguishing the considerations arising from the statistics from the substantive conclusions (related to the institution of the youth strategy and the operation of documents with these characteristics), it is worth discussing them below, summarizing this subsection, as it were.

First of all, it is important to note a possible statistical error. Well, on the surface, rural municipalities are the least active in terms of youth strategies. Nothing could be further from the truth. It should be noted that of all the non-response cases (there were 408 in total), about 60% are rural municipalities. So their activity may be slightly underestimated, and with some probability can even be considered higher than that of urban municipalities.

First of all, unsurprisingly, the creation of youth strategies is the domain of cities with county rights, i.e. the largest agglomerations, which bring together young people sooner or later due to their development in the educational field (secondary schools and universities). Therefore, these cities have the most opportunities to study the needs of 15-24 year olds and prepare comprehensive solutions that will lead to a coherent youth policy for this age group. Perhaps more importantly, such solutions will convince young people to take advantage of the city's offer and definitely change their place of residence, thus migrating from rural and suburban areas to cities with county rights.

The previous proposal was rather unsurprising, the next one surprises. One can observe an increased activity of rural municipalities in terms of wanting to create such a strategy for young people. The first reason is simply the reverse of the actions of the cities in the county. Since cities want to convince young people to permanently stay in their area, rural municipalities must also use their assets to convince young people to return to a "hometown" or one where they can count on professional development. Secondly, the preparation of a coherent and long-term strategy in such municipalities

60 15 positive responses/60 responses obtained*100% = 25% (the same methodology is used for the other types).

61 15 positive responses/66 cities with county rights*100% = about 22.7% (the same methodology is used for the other types).

will stem the outflow of young people to cities and increase the rate of return after a period of study. Crucially, however, the Polish countryside is losing its rural character not only in socio-occupational terms, but also in functional and spatial terms. The percentage of people living in the countryside and engaged in agriculture and related services is declining (currently, about 12-13% of the countryside's population lives from agriculture), which is not insignificant for its architectural image.⁶² Statistically, the countryside is getting younger, which translates into fertility rates. Recent demographic analyses show that suburban areas are the space where the highest percentage of children currently live.⁶³ Thus, rural municipalities need to prepare strategies for the young, as young people are a growing group living in their area. As an aside, it is worth mentioning that there are also many youth councils in rural municipalities, which have continued to be active in the community despite the COVID-19 pandemic. According to our own research, as of 23.06.2021 there were 70 councils out of 242 functioning (about 30%).⁶⁴

While in rural-urban municipalities the author's predictions and estimates essentially came true (although he expected the presence of some legally binding strategy), activity of more than 5% was rather expected. The situation in urban municipalities, on the other hand, is strange and somewhat unpleasantly surprising. In these areas, not a single municipal strategy for youth is present, and the desire to create one is declared by the fewest entities, comparing these data with the total responses in a given type of local government unit. This is worth pondering in view of the fact that the seat cities of urban municipalities are also the seats of counties, and thus far more youth spend their time in their areas than the average, if only because of secondary schooling. Equally importantly, urban municipalities are very often surrounded by so-called "peripheries" - rural municipalities that form a kind of mini-suburbs, so the urban municipalities' strategy for youth may de facto affect this age group in both local government units.

Ultimately, the prevalence and use of the instrument of municipal youth policy is determined by the location and activity of expert NGOs working in this area and lobbying for these solutions. This is clearly evidenced by the example of the Center for Strategic Counseling in Cracow and its activity in the Małopolska province.

Thus, the above data does not inspire optimism - municipal strategies for youth in the landscape of public administration bodies are rather a kind of "exotic" than an institution that is used. In fact, only the willingness to introduce such a strategy, declared by about 120 local governments, is hopeful. With an optimistic assumption that half of them will implement it, the plan of action for youth in the local government community will be implemented in only one in 40 municipalities (mostly in areas of cities with county rights).

62 A. Barczykowska, (Apparent) idyll of the suburbs - considerations of opportunities and barriers in the process of socialization of children and youth, "Society. Education. Language" 2021, no. 14/1.

63 J. Balcerzak, et. al, Demographic Atlas of Poland, Central Statistical Office, Warsaw 2017.

64 O. Wyrzykowska, J. Zapolski-Downar, op. cit. p. 73.

CONCLUSIONS

The first municipal strategy for youth was created in 1999 in Krakow as a component of the Safety Improvement Program for the city of Krakow titled "Safe Krakow".⁶⁵ On the other hand, as an individual document, it first appeared in 2009 also in Krakow as the program "Young Krakow".⁶⁶ As you can see, it first appeared two years before the introduction of the amendment to the Law on Municipal Self-Government concerning youth councils, however, the activity of local governments in this regard de facto began only in 2016-2017 or so. So why such a hiatus in the path of development of the institution of youth policy strategy?

First of all, there are two reasons. The first is certainly the lack of a clear legal basis for the creation of such a document - its permissibility is an act of doctrinal interpretation of the law rather than the result of a literal interpretation of the law or a review of case law. On the other hand, the legislature has never addressed this topic, despite deciding to create a national youth policy strategy (the last one ended in 2012).

The latter argument is particularly important in the context of the current situation - for nearly 2 years, government bodies have been working on the creation of a new national youth policy strategy. However, despite the fact that quite extensive consultations on the subject have been completed, there is no sign that the matter is going to find a successful conclusion in the near or even distant future. Therefore, also in the spirit of decentralization and the idea of local self-government, it would make sense for the bodies of local communities to take up the topic of preparing a municipal youth policy in their areas, especially in view of the current awkwardness of the government administration bodies in this regard.

Despite the rather "sparse" field of study (10 strategy documents), the analysis of the provisions of the various strategies, their conditionality and their effectiveness to date allow us to draw a number of conclusions that are very likely to give insight into the sense and feasibility of preparing such solutions.

Turning to the substantive issues involved in analyzing the strategies, at the very outset it is necessary to pay attention to the very aspect of their legally binding adoption. One must check very carefully whether documents that qualify as a youth policy strategy are in some way binding on their addressees. There are many documents with such a name in circulation, however, many of them turn out to be NGO initiatives or project implementations. Such a form, however, is not conducive and should rather be questioned due to, for example, the lack of evaluation, the transfer of project implementation outside the framework of the office, the lack of continuation of such projects, and limited supervision, unlike the resolutions of the municipal council, which are supervised, for example, by the Regional Chambers of Accounts from a financial point of view.

The picture of strategies in terms of types of local government units is also interesting. As indicated earlier, a picture is indeed drawn in which large agglomerations (cities with county rights) and municipalities with rural areas (rural and urban-rural municipalities) have the most to offer young people, through a greater propensity to create such strategies. Urban municipalities, on the other hand, are the least interested in such a solution. So this shows that it is the county cities that suffer most from the outflow of young people to the suburbs and big cities. How to remedy this? The most sensible would be to change the age group (the main beneficiaries) of youth policy to children and young people in the course of primary and secondary education.

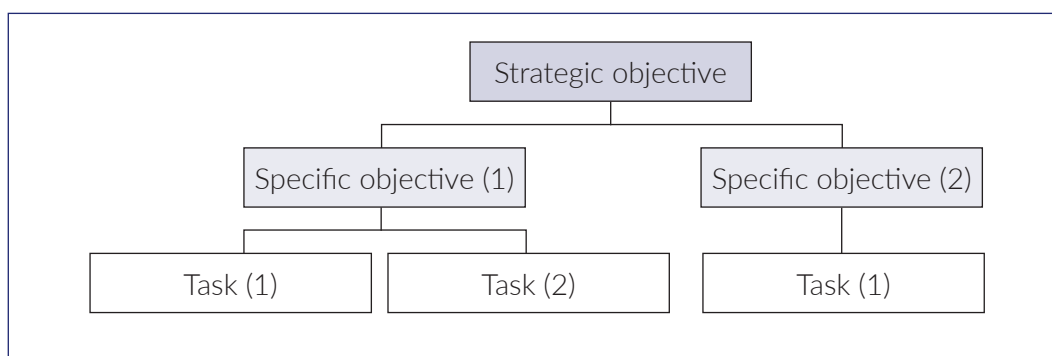
65 Resolution No. XL/299/99 of the Krakow City Council of December 22, 1999 on adoption of the Safety Improvement Program for the City of Krakow titled "Safe Krakow," Resolution- https://www.bip.krakow.pl/?dok_id=167&sub_dok_id=167&sub=uchwala&query=id%3D12026%26typ%3Du (accessed March 08, 2022).

66 Resolution No. LXX/908/09 of the Krakow City Council of April 29, 2009 on the adoption of a program of social activation of youth in Krakow called "Young Krakow," https://www.bip.krakow.pl/?dok_id=167&sub_dok_id=167&sub=uchwala&query=id%3D17776%26typ%3Du (accessed March 08, 2022).

It is also noteworthy that the youth council is seen as an indispensable element in the functioning and promotion of the municipality's youth strategy. This is particularly evident in cities with county rights, where youth councils are assigned autonomous tasks, and their voice is taken into account first when determining the planning strategy. These bodies are therefore essential for the proper operation and monitoring of the strategy, especially since the assumptions of the 10-year youth policy are confronted with the expectations of as many as "five generations" of youth councilors, due to the 2-year term of office.

The relationship between the municipality's youth strategy and the municipal youth council is important for yet another reason. Well, the youth council fits perfectly into the youth policy strategy, and the relationship can be boldly reversed. However, it cannot be that the strategy complements the council. Unfortunately, in a way, due to the legislator's preference in the redaction of Article 5b of the municipal law over the years, it is the municipality's youth strategy that is a "complementary good" to the youth council. Therefore, the strategy is not treated as an individual legal institution combined with the youth council. This is not a correct view, since this document should be treated institutionally, independently and autonomously from other institutions of local youth policy, but also (as economists or mathematicians would put it) as a certain "constant". The youth council itself, on the other hand, is a certain "variable" if only because of a certain term of office or a rather high dependence on cooperation with the municipal authorities (that is, colloquially put: "how one lives with the current authorities"). Therefore, it may be saddening that instead of taking coordinated action in the form of a youth strategy - which much better implements the tasks of the municipality in relation to young people - and only then creating a youth council - either as a result of these actions or on the sidelines of the entire planning process - the reverse order is used, and in a dozen cases. The creation of a youth policy for the municipality will therefore result in a decisive activation of the youth council, especially in the aspects of consultation (consulting on the implementation of individual tasks of the strategy), advisory (advising on the entire strategy and strategic goal) and initiative-control (inquiries and interpellations of the councilor). Thus, it is worth leaning into the topic of strategy, especially in a situation where the statutory task of the youth body in the municipality is precisely to participate in its creation and monitor its creation, implementation and execution.

In terms of the planning technique itself, the three-element concept prevails - the division of the municipality's strategy into 3 parts, according to the diagram below::



Thus, the strategic objective, measured at the end of the strategy's life, consists of individual short- or medium-term specific objectives, overlaid with short-term tasks. Strategies can also fit into two-element schemes (without a strategic goal), however, it is the three-element structure that seems optimal and sensible, thanks to its clear division into a main goal, medium-term goals and short-term objectives.

Finally, the content of youth policies is, of course, tailored to the specifics of a particular municipality, however, they are mostly concerned with the identical tasks of the local government, falling within the subject definition of the strategy: education, transportation, pro-family policy and environmental protection. Such a document also includes goals and tasks arising from the specifics of the region (for example, in Sopot it was assistance to artists).

Also important for the strategy in cities with county rights are goals and actions in the area of entrepreneurship and the labor market for young people. The goal of such solutions is simple - to stay in a given place no longer as a pupil/student, but as an employee. The best base for cooperation on the local government-enterprise line is, of course, available to cities with county rights, but other local government units at the municipal level can compete with them in this regard, by creating privileged conditions for the development of young or budding entrepreneurs (sole proprietorships, partnerships, capital companies). There is great potential in this concept related to increasing competitiveness - currently untapped.

Technically, all resolutions were prepared correctly, and the content contained in the strategies fell within the scope of both the tasks of the type of local government unit and the definition of the municipal youth policy in question.

Despite the fundamentally different peculiarities of cities with county rights and rural municipalities, it should be noted that, in fact, youth policies are differentiated only by the “lowest level” of activities of local government bodies (tasks). In the context of specific and strategic goals, on the other hand, they are quite consistent - they are based on similar areas (e.g. improving public transportation) and ultimately assume similar results (especially in the field of environmental protection).

For the municipalities’ strategies for youth, the idea of such a document based on the principles and „doctrine” of sustainable development is also extremely important. The foundation of the idea of sustainable development itself is contained in Article 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which states that the Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and inviolability of its territory, ensure the freedoms and rights of man and citizen and the security of citizens, guard the national heritage and ensure the protection of the environment, guided by the principle of sustainable development. Normative clarification of the conceptual apparatus used is indicated in the Law of 27.04.2001. - Environmental Protection Law⁶⁷ where in Article 3, paragraph 50, the legislator decided that whenever sustainable development is mentioned in the law, it is understood as such social and economic development, in which there is a process of integrating political, economic and social activities, with preservation of natural balance and sustainability of basic natural processes, in order to ensure the possibility of satisfying the basic needs of individual communities or citizens of both the present and future generations. At the same time, the legislator has introduced practical mechanisms for the implementation of the rule of sustainable development, through, among other things, the assessment of the impact of the project on the environment, access: of the public to environmental information, the possibility of participation of public representatives in ecologically important procedures.⁶⁸ However, it should be pointed out that the definition of sustainable development has been unequivocally criticized by the doctrine. According to B. Rakoczy: “The concept of sustainable development should not be defined at all. The principle of sustainable development should play such a role in environmental law as the principles of social coexistence play in civil law. It should be a general clause. Attempts to define sustainable development are doomed to failure”.⁶⁹

In the end, one more thing should be noted - all the above-described youth strategy documents form a single concept, complete in concept, and include a number of long-term activities. This does not mean that there will not be modifications to the plan, but the subject of youth requires a certain long-term view. It is therefore worth persuading local authorities to apply this vision.

This appeal is particularly important at the present time, after all, local government, as well as all public authorities revolving around the subject of youth, are expected to have some planned, thoughtful, targeted and institutional actions in the field. Anyway, this is also the idea of medium- and long-term

67 OJ 2021, item 1973 as amended.

68 M. Jankowska, J. Kania, National basic legal regulations for sustainable development, [in:] Law of artificial intelligence and new technologies, ed. B. Fischer, A. Pązik, M. Świerczyński, Warsaw 2021.

69 B. Rakoczy, [in:] Z. Bukowski, E.K. Czech, K. Karpus, B. Rakoczy, Prawo ochrony środowiska. Commentary, Warsaw 2013, Commentary to Article 3.

strategies. The activities planned in them are mainly retrospective to younger age groups. For young people, it is mainly about creating a space in which they can realize themselves - both in the personal and professional aspects.

FINAL REMARKS

The above publication is the first compact monograph devoted to the subject of municipal strategies for youth in the Polish legal order and local government practice. This solution, despite the fact that it has not yet been clearly defined in the legislation, fully fits into the implementation of the municipality's own tasks and introduces a certain important instrument in the form of an action plan in the long term.

Of course, excessive and detailed planning has similar effects to total responsiveness, but remember that one of the most important features of public administration, and therefore of local government, is continuity. This, above all, tells citizens and municipal authorities that one cannot limit one's activities and plans within the timeframe of a given term. The concept adopted in Polish legislation of creating development strategies in the medium term means that activities in important and long-term areas must have a certain long-term and measurable goal and be based on a rational concept that will correspond to one business cycle over a period of 8-10 years (the so-called Juglar cycle).

We hope that readers of this publication, more or less connected with local self-government, administrative law or youth work, will deepen their knowledge of the forms of dissemination of the idea of self-government among young people and strategic action on their behalf. As the Institute for the Development of Legal Education and Civil Society, we believe that knowledge about the strategies of municipal youth policies will spread and find application in the practical activities of local government units. We also hope that the text has been written in as accessible and understandable language as possible for all audiences and recipients.

Realizing a certain niche nature of the topic and the lack of items on youth in local government, we invite discussion by publishing papers on the subject. We pledge to help with any concerns, especially for youth and decision-makers at the local, regional and national levels.

Municipal strategies for youth represent a unique but rapidly developing institution for both the municipality, its bodies and the youth or youth council of the municipality. Their main benefit is first and foremost a plan for the development of local youth policy for a period of 1.5-2 terms, thus looking beyond the term of the municipal legislative and executive body. This is also a certain sphere of activity that develops the youth councils of municipalities and, incidentally, gives them the opportunity to carry out the statutory tasks of Article 5b(8). The benefit is also undoubtedly the inclusion of young people living in the area of the local government unit in the consultation process, and thus the dissemination of the idea of self-government (especially local government). Politically, such a document also turns out to be particularly important for young people - on its basis, in particular, they will be able to evaluate local decision-makers and the effectiveness of their implementation of local policies. The influence of municipal youth policy on the implementation of own tasks is also invaluable, especially those in which the "substrate" in the form of youth is of decisive importance (as is the case with public education or family support).

Finally, we encourage all mayors, mayors and councillors of municipal and county-level governing bodies to initiate discussions on the creation of such a document and consult the idea of a local youth strategy with young people. We guarantee to provide substantive assistance in the preparation and development of this document, along with the necessary consideration of the specifics of the local government community.

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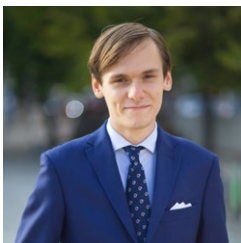
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W RAMACH RZĄDOWEGO PROGRAMU FUNDUSZ MŁODZIEŻOWY NA LATA 2022-2033
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