

APPLICATION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF POLAND FOR UKRAINE

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Abstract. The paper presents theoretical, methodological and practical principles for creating a coherent system of strategic planning, taking into account European experience in organising this process. The characteristics of the Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy and the rural development strategy are outlined. *The methodology* of strategic planning is examined, analysing the system and hierarchical construction of development strategies. A general logical sequence of procedures for developing and implementing development strategies at different levels is formulated. Approaches to strategic planning for rural development are also analysed, emphasising the importance of rural development in European Union Member States and outlining sources of agricultural funding. It is noted that in the current economic conditions European countries are shifting from subsidy strategies to grant strategies for specific agricultural development programmes. The situation of strategic planning in Ukraine is presented in comparison with the Polish system, highlighting its development stages and strategic planning principles. Special attention is given to the Polish experience in multifunctional rural development planning. *The aim* of the paper is to study the peculiarities of the use of strategic planning for rural development in Ukraine and Poland. The research is based on the analysis of statistical data, scientific literature and strategic documents, using dialectical methods for understanding the impact of economic laws, systematic approaches to studying economic phenomena, as well as monographic, abstract-logical and abstract methods. *The research findings* propose recommendations for further effective planning in Ukraine based on the Polish experience. Ukraine is in the early stages of strategic planning, and monitoring and evaluation of strategies are still of a recommendatory nature. Comprehensive evaluations have not yet been included in academic publications. In this context, it would be particularly important to incorporate insights and content guidelines from Polish strategic documents in order to better conceptualise and subsequently implement new strategy editions more effectively. The research led to the development of a comprehensive and logical sequence of procedures for preparing and implementing rural development strategies at different territorial levels. The paper emphasises the priority of rural development in EU Member States. The state of strategic planning in Ukraine is compared with Poland, taking into account both stages and principles. The paper highlights the Polish experience in multifunctional rural development planning, covering three planning perspectives: 2004–2005, 2007–2013 and 2014–2020.

Key words: development strategy, socio-economic development, strategic planning, rural areas, Poland, Ukraine.

JEL Classification: Q18, R28, R38, R5, R58

1. Introduction

Strategic planning in rural development is currently regarded as one of the most promising and effective mechanisms for implementing long-term regional policy in the European Union (Wiatrak, 2011). Strategic planning itself is an important tool for guiding and activating development processes. In the case of Poland, the strategic planning system took its current form

after accession to the EU, when it became necessary to comply with EU budgetary requirements. The development of legal bases and supporting institutions made this adaptation possible. The strategies have become an important instrument of regional and local development policy (Górniak and Mazur, 2012).

The search for effective models of socio-economic development determines the need to

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use strategic planning at all levels of central and local government administration in order to find the most optimal directions of development (Khomych, 2007). In the modern sense, the concept of "strategy" consists of the following elements: a combination of planned actions and responses to unpredictable situations, a concept of success, commitments to act according to the plan, integrated development, a set of goals and means to achieve them, directions of development for a certain period of time and the activities assigned to them (Buryk, 2014). Development strategies have become the basic documents enabling the development not only of enterprises, but also of territorial units and organisations.

Until 1990, Ukrainian territorial units had long-term development plans based on demographic indicators, as well as indicators of infrastructure development, construction, production of goods, etc. These plans were created as a "rigid project" because the basic principle of strategic planning – the adaptation of plans to the actual state – was ignored. (Stanasyuk, 2009).

Poland's expertise in strategic planning is of particular value to Ukraine. The strategic planning system in Poland covers three levels of the country's territorial division. At the national level, long- and medium-term as well as sectoral documents are developed. These shape regional planning (voivodeship development strategy). At the local level, development strategies are prepared for individual powiats and basic local government units: urban, urban-rural, rural gminas or, more broadly, associations of gminas (e.g., Local Action Groups). In the case of rural areas, they often concern the development of production and promotion of traditional agricultural products and the creation of producer groups (Gawroński 2010, Wiatrak 2011, Sadura et al., 2017, Furmankiewicz et al., 2021).

Poland is a country similar to Ukraine in terms of natural conditions and agricultural production. In both countries, employment in agriculture is comparable. In Ukraine, about 20% of the working-age population is employed in agriculture (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2019), while in Poland – 15% (Report on the Condition of Rural Areas, Polish Countryside, 2020). The same applies to the specialisation of agriculture in both countries, but the agricultural sector in Poland is characterised by much higher intensity and productivity than the Ukrainian sector.

After Poland joined the EU, its agriculture became much more efficient. The situation of farmers in terms of income, living standards and farm equipment has improved thanks to support from the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) (Miniszewski, 2021). Ukraine expects to join the European Union in the current decade. Therefore, the use of Polish experience in agricultural policy is of great importance for Ukraine's European integration. Currently, it is important to support Ukrainian producers of animal products and producers of labour-intensive crops (vegetables, fruit and berries), which are eligible for support under the CAP in Poland. As Poland has once overcome many of the problems limiting the development of rural areas (e.g., limiting monofunctionality, improving living conditions, preparing for the implementation of smart development programmes and developing strategic objectives), which Ukraine has not yet resolved, the use of Polish expertise in agricultural policy can provide a strong impetus for improvements in Ukraine.

The paper aims to examine the specifics of the use of strategic planning for rural development in Ukraine and Poland. The study is based on the analysis of statistical data, academic sources and strategic documents.

2. Particular Problems of Strategic Management in Ukraine in the Light of the EU Documents

The national plans for the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement pave the way for the convergence of Ukrainian strategic planning with that of the EU. Ukraine has synchronised its strategic documents with the priorities of the EU's seven-year financial framework (starting with the framework for 2014–2020) and adopted guidelines for the practical implementation of the principles and objectives of European socio-economic development policy, which have been included in the Europe 2020 Strategy (Europe 2020 Strategy, 2010). At the national level, EU approaches to development policy are reflected in the Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy, which defines the direction of structural changes in the economic and social spheres, and in the "Regional Development Strategy until 2020" (Figure 1). Ukraine's implementation of reforms in line with EU

strategies should ensure the implementation of the Association Agreement.

Article 403 of the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement (2015) states that Ukraine and the EU shall cooperate to promote agricultural and rural development, including through the convergence of policies and legislation. Convergence is a process of harmonisation with relevant EU legislation and regulatory standards, including those listed in Annex XXXVIII of the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement.

In Ukraine, the administrative division includes a national level and a three-tier system of local government: region (oblast), district (raion) and hromada. Until 2020, the development strategy of each region was a projection of the national and pan-European approaches at the regional level (Figure 1). It defined the initial position of an oblast as well as the system of priorities that should ensure the implementation of the target scenario of the region's development.

Strategies are long-term development plans, developed for 7-10 years, with a clearly defined vision, mission and development priorities for the authorities and society. However, their provisions are implemented through annual plans, development programmes and specific projects for which funds are allocated or raised from external sources. The gradual, phased implementation of such projects or programmes brings the municipality closer to achieving the strategic goals (Krawczenko, 2017).

In the Europe 2020 Strategy, adopted in 2010, the EU defined priority development goals and ways to achieve them. The main factors influencing the competitiveness of the EU

economy and its resilience to global crises were: the development of the internal market, the strengthening of cooperation between Member States and social partnerships (Table 1).

At the level of the European Commission, the Europe 2020 Strategy (2010) has been defined as a guide for EU Member States and a point of reference for candidate and neighbouring countries of the EU. In accordance with the priorities set by the Europe 2020 Strategy (2010), the Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy was developed, which defines the directions and priorities of the country's development for the period up to 2020, as well as targets and indicators for their implementation. It was a time when Ukraine chose the European perspective for its development. Therefore, the preparation of strategic documents in Ukraine should meet European standards. The strategy was an important reference point for possible changes in Ukraine. However, the complete renewal of the state required the fulfilment of certain conditions and factors contributing to the implementation of the changes proposed in the document.

The basic condition for the creation of the Ukraine 2020 Strategy was a social contract between government, business and civil society, in which each side had its area of responsibility. The authorities' commitments included implementing reforms and ensuring a balance of interests between civil society, business and the state. Businesses committed themselves to supporting the state and civil society, developing the business environment, paying fair taxes, investing effectively and respecting the principles

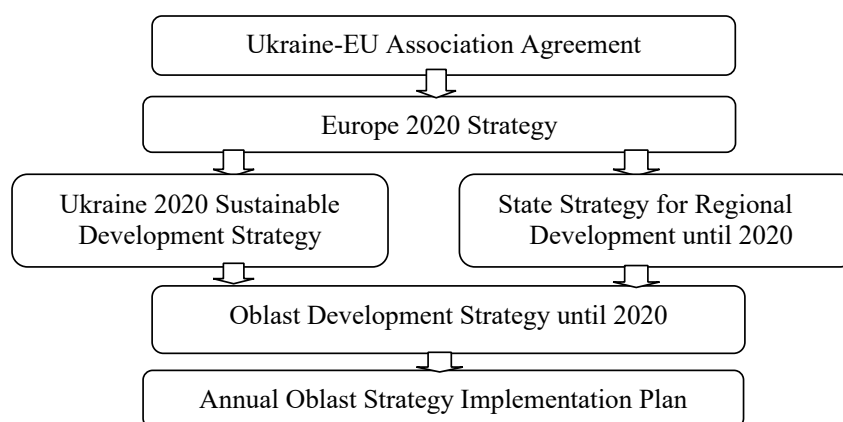


Figure 1. Strategic planning system in Ukraine

Source: Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy", 2015

Table 1

Directions of activities and goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy

Key activities for EU Member States				
Employment	Research and innovation	Climate change and energy	Education	Combating poverty
Key factors to strengthen the economy				
Smart development: economic development based on knowledge and innovation		Sustainable development: promoting a more resource efficient, environmentally friendly and competitive economy		Socially inclusive development: assistance in increasing employment, achieving social and territorial cohesion
Key initiatives				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation Union - Youth on the Move - European Digital Agenda 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource Efficient Europe - Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda for New Skills and Jobs - European Platform Against Poverty
Key measurable goals				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The employment rate for people aged 20-64 should be 75%. - 3% of the Union's GDP was to be spent on research and development. - The 20/20/20 climate and energy targets were to be achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the share of energy from renewable sources from 10.3% to 20% in the overall energy consumption structure; - reduction in total energy consumption by 20%; - reduction of carbon emissions by 20%. - The share of early school leavers should be reduced to 10%, and at least 40% of the younger generation should have higher education. - The number of people at risk of poverty should be reduced by 20 million. 				

Source: own study based on the Europe 2020 Strategy, 2010

of fair competition. It was the duty of civil society to control the government, to live in dignity and to strictly observe the Constitution of Ukraine and the laws of Ukraine. The reforms were aimed at achieving European standards of living and a decent place for Ukraine in the world. The "Ukraine 2020" strategy envisaged 62 reforms. Of these, eight reforms and two programmes were identified as priorities. 25 key target indicators for the country's development were set. The strategy formulated four key areas of the country's development: sustainable development, security of the state, business and citizens, responsibility and social justice, and a sense of pride in Ukraine in Europe and the world (Decree of the President of Ukraine, 2015).

Ishchuk and Horna (2018) analyzed the strategy implementation. Ukraine met only three goals, namely the maximum ratio of the state budget deficit to gross domestic product, spending on national security and defense at least 3% of GDP, and the number of professional soldiers per 1,000 citizens. Other tasks were still in progress in 2018.

European rural development policy helps local authorities across the EU to tackle many economic, environmental and social challenges.

The direction of rural development is set by the CAP, which consists of two pillars: direct payments, market interventions and the organisation of agricultural markets (European Agricultural Guarantee Fund) and rural development policy (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, EAFRD) (Common Agricultural Policy, 2013).

European rural development policy was funded by the EAFRD with 99.6 billion EUR for the period 2014-2020. 118 different rural development programmes were funded in the 28 EU Member States. 20 Member States submitted one national programme and 8 Member States submitted two or more regional programmes (Table 2).

Rural development policy covers three main areas: support for agricultural producers, environmental protection and support for integrated rural infrastructure development projects. About 5% of all funds are allocated to rural infrastructure development projects. Each EU Member State has designed its rural development programmes according to its needs (Prokopchuk, Usyuk, 2016).

The situation in Ukraine required new approaches to reform and policy-making.

The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine developed the Integrated Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development for 2015–2020 (<http://minagro.gov.ua/node/16025>). To meet the real needs of the sector, it was developed through an extensive stakeholder consultation process, including consultations with representatives of civil society, business and international donors.

The strategy set out a development plan for Ukraine's agricultural sector and rural areas for 2015–2020. It also drew on existing strategic documents, including the Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy and the 2014 Government Coalition Agreement. Identifying and prioritising the needs of Ukrainian agriculture and rural areas required the involvement of government ministries and other institutions, representatives of major donors, including the EU and its Member States, the United States Agency for International Development, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Investment Bank, and other donor countries (e.g., Norway, Switzerland). Throughout the implementation period of the strategy (Integrated Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development for 2015–2020, 2015), there have also been intensive consultations with businesses, NGOs, research institutions and the general public.

The Strategy covered a comprehensive list of issues affecting the entire agricultural sector, including land management, agricultural research and education, access to financial resources, state support mechanisms, food safety, environmental protection, etc. The main goal of the strategy was to increase the competitiveness of agriculture and promote sustainable rural development in line with European and international standards. The strategy included 10 key priorities that were to provide a comprehensive and realistic development concept (Figure 2).

However, the comprehensive strategy and action plan developed for the development of agriculture and rural areas in Ukraine for 2015–2020 were declarative. Some of the proposed priorities, such as education, environmental protection and trade, did not fall within the remit of the Ministry of Agrarian

Table 2

Financing of rural development programmes in the EU Member States in 2014-2020

No.	Member State	Funding of programs, million EUR	Number of programs
1.	Austria	3 938	1
2.	Belgium	648	2
3.	Bulgaria	2 367	1
4.	Cyprus	132	1
5.	Czechia	2 306	1
6.	Denmark	919	1
7.	Estonia	823	1
8.	Finland	2 380	2
9.	France	11 385	30
10.	Greece	4 718	1
11.	Spain	10 323	20
12.	the Netherlands	765	1
13.	Ireland	2 191	1
14.	Lithuania	1 613	1
15.	Latvia	1 076	1
16.	Luxembourg	101	1
17.	Malta	97	1
18.	Germany	9 446	15
19.	Poland	8 698	1
20.	Portugal	4 058	3
21.	Romania	8 128	1
22.	Slovakia	1,560	1
23.	Slovenia	838	1
24.	Sweden	1 764	1
25.	Hungary	3 431	1
26.	United Kingdom	5 200	4
27.	Italy	10 044	23
Total		99 586	118

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020/country-files/common/number-of-rdp-per-country_en.pdf

Policy and Food of Ukraine. In the end, the document was not adopted.

Earlier, the State Strategy for Regional Development for the period until 2020 was adopted (Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of August 6, 2014, No. 385). The strategy was prompted by:

- Expiration of the State Strategy for Regional Development for the period until 2015, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 21 July 2006, No. 1001 (Journal of Laws of Ukraine, 2006, No. 30, p. 2132).
- Changes in the external and internal conditions of regional development over the past seven years. Since the beginning of 2014, additional threats to regional development have arisen as a result

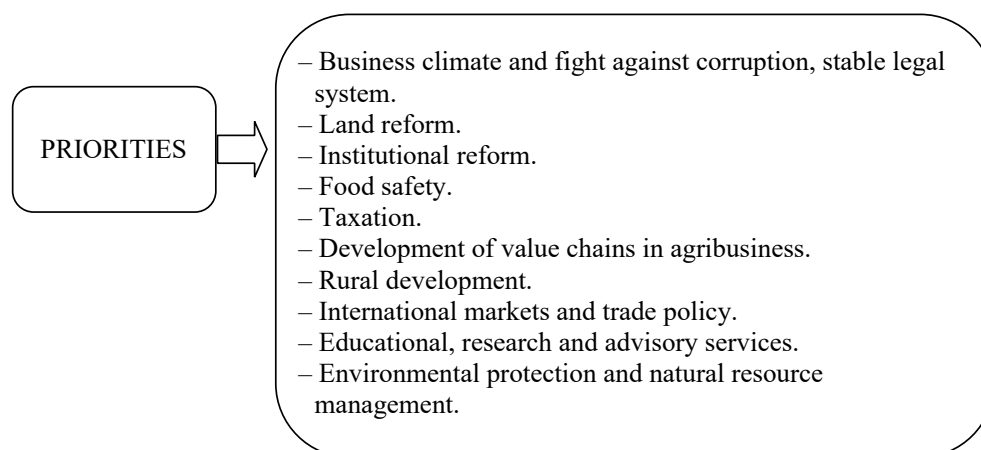


Figure 2. Key priorities of the Comprehensive Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development for 2015–2020

Source: <http://minagro.gov.ua/node/16025>

of the attempted annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and its subsequent occupation of the eastern regions of Ukraine, as well as internal factors caused by imperfect government policy.

– The feasibility of preparing a new strategic document developed in accordance with European standards for a period synchronised with the EU planning and budget cycles, taking into account the impact of global spatial development trends that Ukraine could not avoid.

The Strategy (2014) defined the goals of the state regional policy, the main tasks of public administration bodies at the central and regional levels, as well as the tasks of local self-government bodies aimed at achieving these goals. It also envisaged coordination of the state regional policy with other state policies aimed at territorial development.

Regional development programmes have been developed and adopted to implement the regional development strategy until 2020. Their scope is shown in Figure 3.

Effective implementation of the regional development strategy is not possible without independent monitoring of the implementation of tasks and allocation of funds for their completion, if it is carried out regularly within the framework of strategic priorities. Today, the strategic approach to state regulation of regional development in Ukraine is just beginning to be put into practice. Thus, there are many unresolved theoretical and methodological, legal and organisational issues. There are also

practical problems with the implementation of the prepared documents and programmes. Official results on the state of implementation of the regional development strategy have not yet been published (Shashyna et al., 2021).

In Ukraine, a strategic approach to planning sustainable territorial development is being actively developed and implemented. This is due to the advantages of this method for all stakeholders. Programming is increasingly becoming a tool for improving the competitiveness of territories and regions, bringing together the various actors of territorial development around new values and long-term priorities. These activities of planning renewal are, on the one hand, a welcome step towards creating modern foundations for the development of regions and some territories, and, on the other hand, they allow a detailed analysis of the situation in the regions in order to identify appropriate tools that will help to meet the challenges of today's globalised world. Many changes are significantly accelerated, including political, economic, social, technological and environmental (Bryl, 2018).

Since the beginning of the self-government and administrative-territorial reform, local self-government bodies have been given powers, their own resources and additional external financial resources. The Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy, approved by presidential decree on 12 January 2015, included decentralisation on the list of top-priority reforms needed to ensure European standards of living in Ukraine. The decentralisation

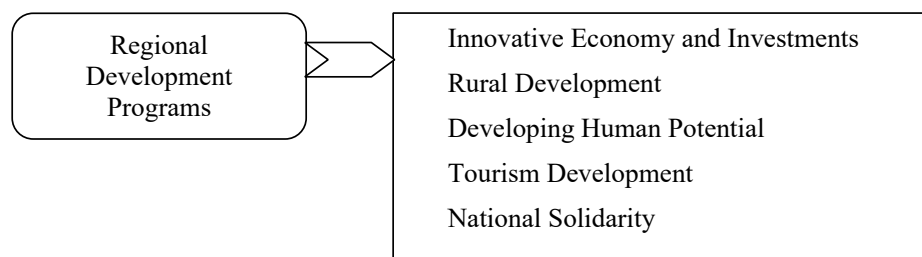


Figure 3. List of regional development programmes implementing the Regional Development Strategy

Source: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua>

policy aimed at "moving away from the centralised model of power, strengthening the capacity of local government and building an effective system of territorial organisation of power in Ukraine, full implementation of the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_036), the principles of subsidiarity, universality and financial self-sufficiency of local self-government" (Decree of the President of Ukraine "On Ukraine 2020 Sustainable Development Strategy"). Local self-government bodies are also accountable to the residents of their municipalities, primarily for creating a comfortable and safe living environment and ensuring equal access to quality services. To this end, it is necessary to implement rational strategic planning and apply it to the territory of new hromadas, i.e., to introduce spatial planning in new hromadas (Bryl, 2018), which will promote local development and ensure the availability of quality public services in the given area. It is worth noting that the decentralisation reform was undertaken because the tens of thousands of city, town and village councils were unable to use their own and delegated powers.

Therefore, the development strategy of the hromada must have clearly defined main goals and operational objectives, as well as defined means necessary to achieve these objectives. In Ukraine, the strategic planning of hromadas is regulated by the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Housing and Utilities of Ukraine (Order No. 75 of March 30, 2016).

3. Selected Problems of Strategic Management in Poland

The Europe 2020 strategy, as the EU's long-term programme for socio-economic growth, identified

three priorities: sustainable development, smart growth and social inclusion. Agriculture was to play an important role in the implementation of these priorities (Rural Development, 2014–2020).

The Common Agricultural Policy for 2014–2020 was a policy subject to reform due to changing domestic conditions as well as dynamic changes on a global scale.

CAP programmes focus on six EU priorities covering six areas:

- Supporting the transfer of knowledge and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas;
- improving the viability of farms and the competitiveness of all types of agriculture in all regions, promoting innovative farming technologies and sustainable forest management;
- support for the organisation of food supply chains, including the processing and marketing of agricultural products, promotion of animal welfare and risk management in agriculture;
- restoring, protecting and improving ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry;
- support resource efficiency and the transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in the agricultural, food and forestry sectors;
- promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

Based on this, three cross-cutting goals were also identified: innovation, environment, and climate change mitigation with climate change adaptation.

The main instrument of support for agriculture and rural areas, in addition to direct payments, is the Rural Development Programme (RDP), which is integrated into the country's overall development policy system, in particular through the mechanism of partnership agreements. Such an agreement sets out a strategy for using EU funds to achieve the common EU goals set

out in the Europe 2020 Strategy, taking into account the development needs of a given Member State. Additional aid instruments are national funds that complement EU support or, for example, credit lines for farmers (Kołodziejczak, 2021).

The main objective of the last RDP for 2014–2020 was to increase the competitiveness of agriculture, support sustainable management of natural resources, combat climate change and sustainable territorial development of rural areas. The programme implemented the six priorities set for the EU's rural development policy for 2014–2020:

1. Promote knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas.
2. Enhance the competitiveness of all types of farming and increase the profitability of farms.
3. Improve the organisation of food chains and promote risk management in agriculture.
4. Restore, protect and enhance ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry.

5. Support resource efficiency and the transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in the agricultural, food and forestry sectors.

6. Increase social inclusion, reduce poverty and promote economic development in rural areas.

Poland began building a strategic management framework and strategic planning system several decades ago.

Strategic planning in Poland includes the following:

- At the national level: long-term and medium-term development strategy (legal framework: Act of December 6, 2006 on the Fundamentals of Development Policy, which has been amended several times (last published consolidated text: Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland, 2021, item 1057);
- at the regional level: regional development strategies (legal basis: Voivodeship Self-Government Act of 1998, consolidated text, Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1668);

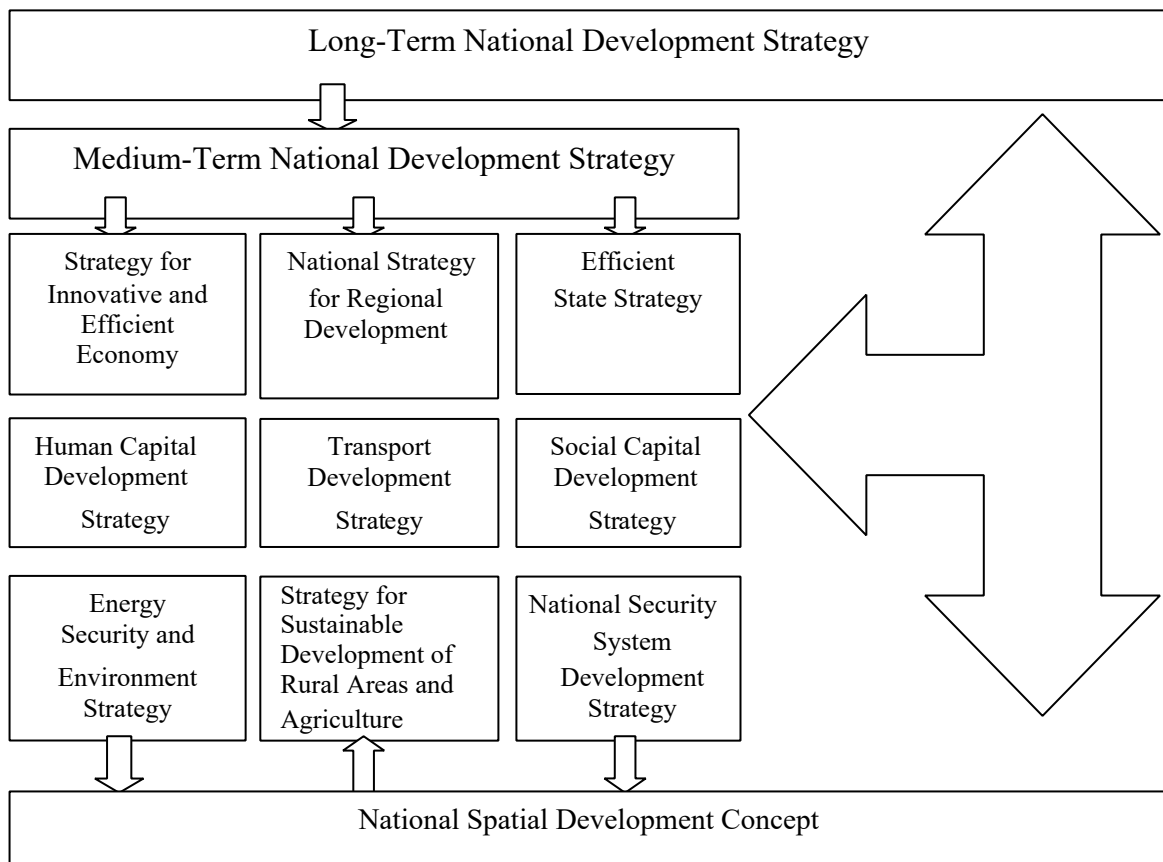


Figure 4. Strategic planning in Poland (as of 2016). The Medium-Term National Development Strategy was supplemented by the Strategy for Responsible Development until 2020 (including the perspective until 2030)

Source: <https://www.gov.pl/web/inwestycje-rozwoj>

– at the local level: local strategies (legal basis: Act on Gmina Self-Government of 1998, consolidated text, Journal of Laws 2021, item 1372, Act on Powiat Self-Government of 1998, consolidated text, Journal of Laws 2020, item 920) (see Figure 4) (<https://www.gov.pl/web/inwestycje-rozwoj>).

The basic strategic document for rural areas was the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Rural Areas, Agriculture and Fisheries for 2012–2020 (Official Journal of the Republic of Poland, 2012, item 839). The main objective of the strategy was to "improve the quality of life in rural areas and enable the efficient use of resources and potential, including agriculture and fisheries, for the sustainable development of the country". The specific objectives were as follows:

1. Better quality of human and social capital, employment and entrepreneurship in rural areas.
2. Improvement of living conditions in rural areas and their spatial accessibility.
3. Food security.
4. Increase the productivity and competitiveness of the agri-food sector.
5. Environmental protection and adaptation to climate change in rural areas.

These objectives were directly linked to the Europe 2020 Strategy guidelines.

Before 2004, the pre-accession programme SAPARD was very important for Polish agriculture, as it provided significant financial support and was also a tool for institutional adaptation to future conditions and functioning under the CAP. According to Rowiński's (2008) analysis, rural development policy took on a different dimension after Poland's accession to the EU. Poland received funds for its implementation under the second pillar of the CAP in each long-term perspective. For the first time, Poland participated in its implementation in 2004–2006, preparing the Sectoral Operational Programme – Restructuring and Modernisation of the Food Sector and Rural Development – for the amount of 1.19 billion EUR from the EU budget, implementing a number of activities aimed at modernising Polish rural areas and agriculture.

In the next perspective 2007–2013, Poland implemented an RDP worth 13.4 billion EUR from the EU budget. The activities of the RDP corresponded to the current needs and challenges

resulting from the situation of rural areas and agriculture in the country. The last RDP was based on the financial perspective for 2014–2020. Poland received 8.6 billion EUR from the EU budget for its implementation. Naturally, the focus of this programme was different from the previous ones, as it took into account both the external environment and the situation of rural areas and agriculture. It should be noted that the implementation of the RDP 2014–2020 was extended for another two years, which meant that further calls for applications were opened in 2021 and 2022 (Czyżewski and Sebastian, 2015). In total, Poland received 22.19 billion EUR from the EU budget to implement programmes related to rural areas and agriculture in 2004–2020.

4. Conclusions

The Polish system of strategic planning is both comprehensive and consistent with EU documents. In the case of rural areas, a particularly important issue is the method of formulating the concept of development at different levels of territorial division. Therefore, the place and rank of rural areas in these documents also differ. According to the analysis conducted by Czarnecki (2015), rural areas receive little attention and are generally perceived through the prism of agriculture. Other equally important issues affecting rural areas receive little space. Strategies proposing solutions to these issues are rare.

The analysis of strategies in terms of addressing the problems of rural areas allows the formulation of several recommendations (Bański et al., 2009) that should be taken into account in the preparation of subsequent documents. This will facilitate the selection of alternative measures in the case of limited resources to achieve the policy objective.

Miszczuk (2014) notes that the issues of rural areas, although methodologically diverse, are reflected in the objectives of the analysed voivodship development strategies. It should be emphasised that there are relatively few objectives formulated exclusively for rural areas.

Representatives of the whole community, not just its leaders, should be encouraged to participate in the preparation and implementation of a strategy. This process can be based on the partnership method and supported

by experts who play the role of guides (Wiatrak, 2011).

Ukraine is now in the first stage of strategic planning. Monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation are still very rare and optional. The examples of comprehensive assessments of strategy implementation have not yet been presented in scientific publications, reports and expert opinions. In such a situation, the use of lessons learned from Polish strategic documents when drafting rural development programmes for Ukraine would bring significant improvements in the preparation of new Ukrainian documents and the implementation of their subsequent editions.

Poland's expertise in strategic planning is particularly valuable to Ukraine. The Polish system includes three levels of strategic planning: national, regional and local. Depending on the level, strategic planning is carried out with different proportions of conceptual and decision-making recommendations. Programming of socio-economic development in the long-term, medium-term or short-term perspective takes into account the level of strategic planning and its sectoral character (Górniak, Mazur ed., 2012).

In the case of Ukraine, the strategic planning system is structured in such a way that all documents are coordinated at the national level and take into account EU guidelines. The analysis of the national experience in the development and implementation of strategic planning leads to the conclusion that the Ukrainian system of programming socio-economic development

is at an advanced stage of development and continuous improvement. However, the legislative framework is relatively good. According to experts (United Nations Development Programme in Ukraine), the alignment of Ukraine's national strategic programmes with those of EU Member States will be possible through a transition to a single conceptual system of strategic planning, in which specific goals, directions, priorities, tasks and issues would be formulated and the categories would have common definitions and interpretations.

The authors of strategic documents for the next perspectives in Ukraine should have a full understanding of the differences between goals and tasks, directions and priorities, as well as problems and their causes. Due to the lack of certainty about the meaning of these concepts, logical connections, subordination and coherence between them have been broken. An improved strategic planning system will define the optimal use of limited resources to achieve the greatest impact and propose benchmarks for measuring performance (Kostetska, 2021). In the next phase of strategic planning, Ukraine should, as far as possible, take into account the strategic orientations of rural development programmes developed by the EU and Poland when drafting subsequent editions of national strategic documents. Drawing successful lessons from Poland's implementation of previous programmes will help Ukraine to move in the right direction in terms of efficient rural development.

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