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Opportunities of small and medium-sized towns in the context of urban policy at the EU level

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LEIPZIG CHARTER on Sustainable European Cities

PREAMBLE

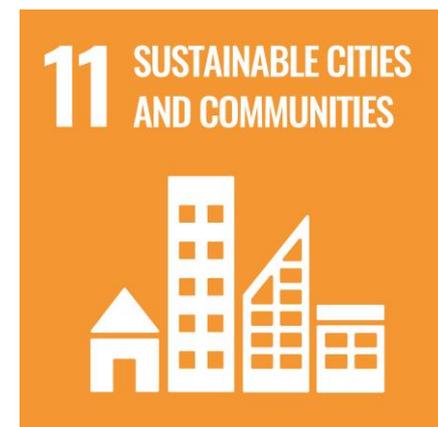
The "LEIPZIG CHARTER on Sustainable European Cities" is a document of the Member States, which has been drawn up with the broad and transparent participation of European Stakeholders. In the knowledge of the challenges and opportunities as well as the different historical, economical, social and environmental backgrounds of European cities, the Member States' Ministers responsible for Urban Development agree upon common principles and strategies for urban development policy. The Ministers commit themselves

- to initiate a political debate in their states on how to integrate the principles and strategies of the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities into national, regional and local development policies,
- to use the tool of integrated urban development and the related governance for its implementation and, to this end, establish any necessary framework at national level and
- to promote the establishment of balanced territorial organisation based on a European polycentric urban structure.



**TOLEDO INFORMAL MINISTERIAL MEETING
ON URBAN DEVELOPMENT
DECLARATION
Toledo, 22 June 2010**





Small and medium-sized cities in the European policies and documents

- Growing significance of the urban dimension of the Cohesion policy, including small and medium-sized cities
- A lot of documents, policies, declarations, reports regarding urban development
- But metropolises and biggest cities are more present (dominant) in lobbying, networks, international collaboration, innovative actions
- Cohesion Policy rules and programmes negotiated with Member States, not cities
- Small and medium-sized cities struggle, with lack of financial potential and relatively low institutional capacities
- Infrastructural and social development of small and medium-sized cities strongly dependent on the EU funds since 2004

Small and medium-sized cities in Poland

- progress in recent years

The Ministers agree:

That, taking into account the priorities of the EU 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the initial list of Priority Themes (in no particular order) for the Urban Agenda for the EU is as follows (see Work Programme of the Urban Agenda for the EU for an indicative description of the themes):

1. *Inclusion of migrants and refugees.*
2. *Air quality.*
3. *Urban poverty.*
4. *Housing.*
5. *Circular economy.*
6. *Jobs and skills in the local economy.*
7. *Climate adaptation (including green infrastructure solutions).*
8. *Energy transition.*
9. *Sustainable use of land and Nature-Based solutions.*
10. *Urban mobility.*
11. *Digital transition.*
12. *Innovative and responsible public procurement.*



Small and medium-sized cities in Poland - progress in recent years (cross cutting issues)



1. *Effective urban governance, including citizens participation and new models of governance.*
2. *Governance across administrative boundaries and inter-municipal cooperation: urban-rural, urban-urban and cross-border cooperation; link with territorial development and the Territorial Agenda 2020 (well-balanced territorial development).*
3. *Sound and strategic urban planning (link with regional planning, including 'research and innovation smart specialisation strategies' (RIS3), and balanced territorial development), with a place-based and peoplebased approach.*
4. *Integrated and participatory approach.*
5. *Innovative approaches, including Smart Cities.*
6. *Impact on societal change, including behavioural change, promoting, among other things, equal access to information, gender equality and women empowerment.*
7. *Challenges and opportunities of small- and medium-sized Urban Areas and polycentric development.*
8. *Urban regeneration, including social, economic, environmental, spatial and cultural aspects, also linked to the brownfield redevelopment with the objective of limiting greenfield consumption.*
9. *Adaptation to demographic change and in- and out migration.*
10. *Provision of adequate public services of general interest*
11. *International dimension: link with the New Urban Agenda (Habitat III) of the UN (to be agreed upon), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development) of the UN and the Paris Agreement on climate change of December 2015.*

2020 – turning point for cities



- What future of small and medium-sized cities?
- „Old” and new challenges (deserted centers, online work, more spending on basic health services, growing demand for green-blue infrastructure, reduced municipal budgets, especially of tourist cities, etc.)
- **Regression and collapse** or **awareness, effectiveness, resilience, solidarity?**
- Roles of local, regional, national and European level

Opportunities of small and medium-sized towns

- Rapidly growing awareness of global, European and national challenges among small and medium-sized cities
- Increasing awareness of public participation significance
- Extensive experience in recent years in advanced development activities (ITIs, revitalization, collaboration across administrative boundaries, social innovations etc.)
- Less inertia than in large cities in terms of management, flexibility, resilience
- Great potential for wise use of the EU Cohesion Policy Funds 2021-27 and the Recovery and Resilience Facility

Opportunities of small and medium-sized towns

The main factors of successor failure:

- Leadership and management
- Ability to get inhabitants, local businesses and other stakeholders involved
- Combining financial sources
- Ability to transform local economy
- Horizontal and vertical collaboration

Wałbrzych example



Strategia Zintegrowanych Inwestycji Terytorialnych

AGLOMERACJI WAŁBRZYSKIEJ



HOME → MEDIA CENTRE → NEWSROOM → ALL RELEASES

Poland: Investment Plan for Europe - EIB loan for the revitalisation of Wałbrzych, a former mining town

ENGLISH

5 SEPTEMBER 2018



- EUR 14m to finance the upgrade of urban infrastructure and energy efficiency
- First Polish town to benefit from direct EIB support under Investment Plan for Europe
- Loan is key to helping the city address long-standing structural challenges

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is aiming to help a former mining town to turn



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Thank you!



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