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Województwa Opolskiego



DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
Opolskie Voivodship

OPOLSKIE 2030

Opole 2021

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Abbr.	Meaning
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
ASI	Areas for Strategic Intervention
BEI	Business Environment Institutions
BOV	Board of Opolskie Voivodship
CF	Cohesion Fund
CKE	Central Examination Board
DIG	Department of Infrastructure and Economy
DRP	Department of Regional and Spatial Policy
DRW	Department of Agriculture and Rural Area Development
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EC	European Commission
EIB	European Investment Bank
EMFF	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
EFO	European Funds for Opolskie 2021–2027
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GUS	Central Statistical Office
GVA	Gross Value Added
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
JTF	Just Transition Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSRD 2030	National Strategy for Regional Development 2030
OA	Opolskie Agglomeration
OCRG	Opolskie Centre for Economy Development
ORDF	Opolskie Regional Development Fund
ORW	Odra River Waterway
OTT	Other Territorial Tools
OU	Opole University

Abbr.	Meaning
OUT	Opole University of Technology
OVLG	Opolskie Voivodship Local Government
PA	Partnership Agreement
PAN	Polish Academy of Sciences
PARP	Polish Agency for Enterprise Development
R&D	Research & Development
REGON	National Official Business Register
RES	Renewable Energy Sources
RIS OV 2020	Regional Innovation Strategy of Opolskie Voivodship 2020
RIS OV 2030	Regional Innovation Strategy of Opolskie Voivodship to 2030
ROP WO 2014-2020	Regional Operational Programme of Opolskie Voivodship for 2014-2020
RRF	Recovery and Resilience Facility
SBW	Surface Body of Water
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRD	Strategy for Responsible Development for the period to 2020 (including the perspective to 2030)
Strategy "Opolskie 2030"	Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030"
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TLGU	Territorial Local Government Units
TOWS/ SWOT	Analysis of individual elements of the SWOT analysis consisting in the assessment of their mutual influence
UFA	Urban Functional Area
UKE	Office for Electronic Communications
UMWO	Marshall's Office of Opolskie Voivodship
VLGOU	Voivodship Local Government Organisational Units

FOREWORD

The *Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030"*, which you are now holding in your hands, is vitally important for managing the region in an efficient manner and for the benefit of the local population. It is a combination of our dreams for our little homeland and ideas on its future with the knowledge and experience of the many wonderful people who have worked to develop a Strategy that will help make these dreams come true.

The Strategy has been developed with representatives from all regional socio-economic groups who, working under the guidance of an expert scientific advisor, shared their knowledge and experience. Over many meetings and in cooperation with hundreds of people, members of Advisory Groups had lively discussions as to what our region should look like in ten years, how we imagine it, and in what kind of region we would like to live and work. The Strategy owes its final shape and character mainly to this grass roots approach, which constitutes its unique value.

The uncertainty about the future that has surrounded us over the past year and in recent months is unlikely to disappear any time soon. Along with socio-economic issues that are hard to predict, there is also the prospect of living in the shadow of the pandemic. We have to take this into account, but above all we have to be able to adapt, as best as we can, to the new conditions.

Therefore, when thinking about the further development of the region, we must pay attention to security, whether it is the security which comes from a sense of stability in our professional lives, or quick and easy access to health services, or the right to breathe clean air. We support the further improvement of education, and increasing the competitiveness of enterprises which provide good working conditions, and modern services. We focus on what we have collectively identified as the most important issues to ensure a good quality of life in the region.

We will continue to use EU funds to implement these plans. However, given the changing situation and economic conditions, we need to rely more than ever on ourselves and mobilise internal resources, whether they be national, regional, local, or private.

How do we want to do this? Above all, in collaboration with local government officials, entrepreneurs, politicians, scientists or students, who we will support and encourage to work and live in the region. It is our intention to involve everyone who cares about the region's development, who will bind their future and the future of their family to it.

We are glad that we have worked on the strategy together and now we can say that it is our common strategy – after all, local government is a community of voivodship inhabitants. In passing this Strategy on to you, we would like to thank all those involved in its development. We encourage everyone to follow the path it outlines together.

Rafał Bartek

Chairman
Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship

Andrzej Buła

Marshall
Opolskie Voivodship



OPOLSKIE VOIVODSHIP IN 2030 – VISION FOR DEVELOPMENT

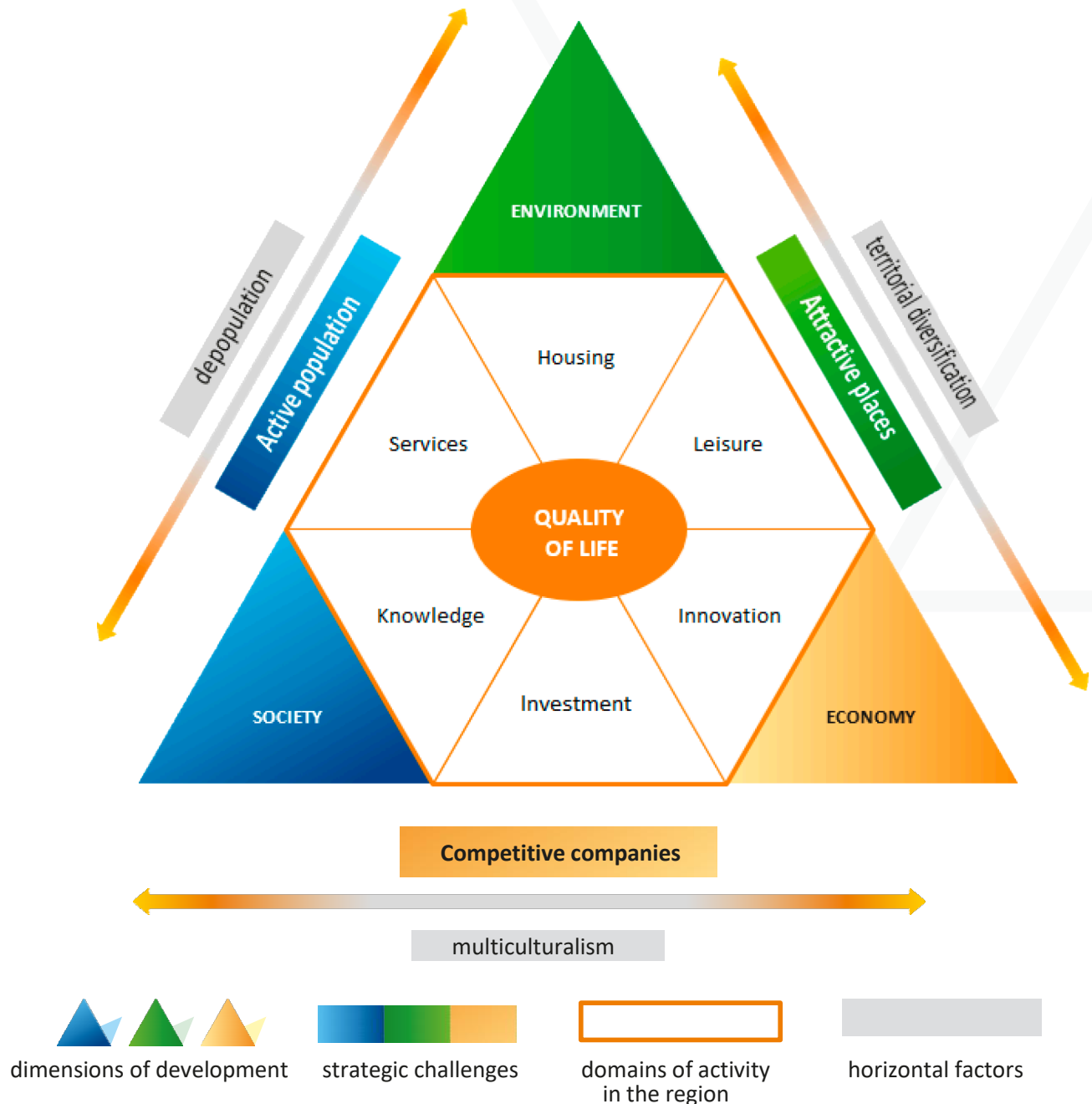
Opolskie in 2030 is a region with a high quality of life resulting from a unique and universal combination of diversity: dynamics and balance, modernity and tradition, openness and inclusion

Each of these elements has its broader significance in the context of the region's future, which will depend on whether the present and future population are provided with **adequate** and **competitive conditions for development**. This meaning of **quality of life** is the focus of the voivodship development policy, the key principle of which will be **combining (reconciling) diversity**.

- **Unique Opolskie** – a unique region, not only because of its **"compactness"**, which is its strength, but above all because of the smart utilisation of its **location, natural assets, multiculturalism and unprecedented level of cooperation**.
- **Universal Opolskie** – a **multifunctional** region and at the same time one that actively follows **global development trends**. A universal region which skilfully **adapts to changes**, and ensures the broad **use of its assets** for the benefit of the **diverse needs of its inhabitants and guests**.
- **Dynamic and balanced Opolskie** – a region which meets the diverse **expectations** of the population, and follows a multi-faceted **development policy**. The dynamics are not just limited to **growth, innovation or investment hubs**. They should also be observed in **social activities**, in establishing **relationships** and in **cooperation**. The balance manifests itself in a well-developed **range of jobs and social services**, in the **harmony between family and professional life**, as well as in **leisure opportunities**. Sustainability also relates to the **natural environment** and means the actual implementation of the **principles of sustainable development**. This is supported by the model for polycentric development, which creates an opportunity to achieve a high level of spatial order, ensure competitiveness in relation to the external environment and eliminate the inequalities in living conditions within the region.
- **Modern and traditional Opolskie** – a region which, with its best communications infrastructure and **excellent quality of human capital** is integrated within **global networks of economic and scientific cooperation**, while cultivating **historical foundations of development**. Tradition, which manifests itself in Silesian diligence, reliability and care for order, as well as in various forms of economic and social activity, will be an important element in strengthening the **regional community**. Modernity also manifests itself in the **symbiotic** combination of **urban** and **rural** operation and development.
- **Open and integrated Opolskie** – on the one hand, using the opportunities arising from **multiculturalism**, and on the other hand, developing **interculturalism** in the region. Openness is achieved through **modern education** and **development of skills** to address changing civilisational challenges, as well as **civic attitudes**. An open region is also a region which has a **well-developed transport network**. Integration, in this case, means the high **internal accessibility** of various types of public services. **Tolerance** towards new ideas and attitudes is above average, which should be seen as a potential for developing **creativity**, as well as **cooperation**. Broad, widespread and multifaceted cooperation: **business – administration – science – local communities and other cross-border relations** contribute to deepening the region's integration.

OPOLSKIE 2020 – CONCLUSIONS FROM THE DIAGNOSIS

Opolskie – diagnoza regionalna (hereinafter: Diagnosis) was the initial stage of work on the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy “Opolskie 2030”, which began in 2019. The basic assumption of the Diagnosis was to describe Opolskie Voivodship in socio-economic and spatial terms, with quality of life at the centre (figure 1).



Source: Opolskie - diagnoza regionalna

Figure 1. Diagram of the strategic diagnosis for the development of Opolskie Voivodship

Using the provisions of the Diagnosis and the vision for voivodship development, the diagnostic content was reviewed to answer the question of the influence of the processes and phenomena on the achievement of the development vision. The input, which includes recent changes both nationally and globally, was analysed again, and this allowed conclusions from the Diagnosis to be drawn, which are included in this part of the document.

DIMENSIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

The starting point for assessing quality of life was identifying three dimensions of analysis:

- **social** – because the region’s population is its key resource, affecting both the economy and the environment;
- **environmental** – which is important from a socio-economic point of view. The quality of the natural environment is an increasingly important feature in the quality of life;
- **economic** – because satisfying work is one of the most important factors in the quality of life. Hence the importance to create conditions for the development of entrepreneurship and enterprises, now commonly referred to as the “business climate” or “investment attractiveness”.

Within these three dimensions, six areas critical for the region’s population and which constitute its assets were identified. These areas are tangible domains of life as they relate to: *knowledge, services, housing, leisure, investment and innovation*.

CHALLENGES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Diagnosis also assessed the validity of existing strategic challenges (in the Strategy Opolskie 2020):

- “active society prepared for the labour market” is comprehensively included in the Diagnosis under the slogan “**active population**” – this challenge arises from the analysis of knowledge and service domains;
- “areas attractive for living, investing and recreation” is equivalent to the “**attractive places**” provision in the Diagnosis – this challenge arises from the analysis of the housing and leisure domains;
- “competitive economy based on innovation and cooperation with science”, or “**competitive companies**” – this challenge arises from the analysis of the innovation and investment domains.

Although these challenges remain valid, it was decided, especially in view of the crisis in 2020 and the ongoing workshop discussions, to specify in more detail the challenges for 2021–2030, additionally taking into account those challenges related to external conditions.

HORIZONTAL DETERMINANTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The Diagnosis highlights three key horizontal determinants of development for Opolskie Voivodship which affect all dimensions and domains of development. These are the following:

- **depopulation** – adverse demographic conditions in the region, manifested mainly by population decline and an ageing population, affect all areas of life, especially the labour market, health and social policy. Therefore family and senior-friendly policy should be considered as a long-term, horizontal and unconventional influence in every aspect of human life (as a resident, student, parent, employee and senior citizen). This issue has so far been addressed within the framework of the “Family-friendly Opolskie” programme in recent years;
- **multiculturalism** – perceived in the light of national and ethnic minorities residing in the Opolskie region, the observed and anticipated growing number of immigrants, as well as cultural heritage and diversity;
- **territorial diversification** – a factor resulting, on the one hand, from the border location of the region, development zones connected with the region’s capital, Opole, and with sub-regional centres, and, on the other hand, from the occurrence of disadvantaged areas (i.e. areas threatened by permanent marginalisation and medium-sized towns which have declined in socio-economic function).

HORIZONTAL DETERMINANTS OF DEVELOPMENT

As reflected by social policy indicators, the social situation of the voivodship shows, among other things, a decrease in economic poverty and the number of people on benefits. On the other hand, the improvement in the synthetic indicator value of social development places the voivodship among Poland's most highly developed regions; this results from improvements in health, education and wealth. Equally optimistic are the high marks given by the population to their material living conditions, place of residence and overall life satisfaction. Unfortunately, unfavourable changes to the climate and insufficient medical staff are among the threats faced by many communities, not only that of the Opolskie region.

Adverse long-term demographic processes, which include in particular depopulation (badly affected by a negative birth rate and, to a lesser extent, by a negative migration rate) and an ageing population constitute existing barriers and threats to the current and future social and economic development of Opolskie Voivodship. The municipalities located in the southern part of the region are worst affected by the declining population.

Considering the social conditions, the region's asset is its cultural heritage, related to the ethnic diversity of the communities. The most numerous national minority in Opolskie Voivodship is German; moreover, a large number of inhabitants declare themselves to be of Silesian national and ethnic origin. In the region there is also an ethnic Roma community¹.

KNOWLEDGE

A wide range of childcare options supports women in the Opolskie workplace. Availability of both nursery and pre-school care is higher than in most regions (2nd place) and higher than the national average. In the context of human and labour resource development for the regional economy, the high level of professional qualifications among the region's population are an important asset, especially Poland's highest percentage of graduates from vocational and technical secondary schools. On the other hand, participation of the region's inhabitants in lifelong learning is lower than the national average, which is considered to be a disadvantage.

An important factor, especially when considering new investments in the region, is the presence and capacity of local universities, as well as the academic character of the city of Opole. Nevertheless, the weak competitiveness of the region's universities in relation to other national and foreign universities (the low number of students in relation to the number of inhabitants in comparison to other voivodships), as well as the attractiveness of the neighbouring regions, threaten a further outflow of the region's young people.






SERVICES

The Opolskie voivodship is distinguished by good access to public administration services. In terms of health services, in common with other voivodships, Opolskie faces a shortage of medical staff, in particular specialists. Although in 2018 the percentage of specialist physicians was higher than the national rate, it is noticeable that in certain areas of medicine, the number of specialists was extremely low². The health care infrastructure in the Opolskie voivodship is not entirely satisfactory. Social support structures (including the care and inclusion of the elderly in society) are quite well developed;

1 *Ludność w województwie opolskim. Stan i struktura demograficzno-społeczna. Narodowy Spis Powszechny Ludności i Mieszkań 2011*, Opole Statistical Office, Opole 2013.

2 *Priorytety dla regionalnej polityki zdrowotnej dla województwa opolskiego na okres od 1 stycznia 2019 r. do 31 grudnia 2021 r.*, Wojewoda Opolski, Opole 2020.

however, the number involved in social work is limited. Social infrastructure, despite its relatively good condition, requires further development.

SOCIETY		Opolskie in 2019
	Population	982,626
	Birth rate	-2,201
	Migration rate	-1,452
	Demographic dependency ratio (post-working age population per 100 people of working age)	37
	Percentage of children aged 0-2 covered by crèche care	17.2
	Percentage of children aged 3-5 covered by pre-school education	91.6
	Graduates of vocational and technical secondary schools in the total number of post-middle and high school graduates	60.0%
	Percentage of foreign students at Opolskie universities	8.0
	Doctors per 10,000 people (total registered staff)	41.3

CHALLENGES FOR SOCIETY

In terms of society, the strategic challenge is to ensure an **“active population”**. This includes the following three specific challenges:

1. Development and use of effective social policy instruments, including further improvement of accessibility and quality of health and social services, which guarantee a mitigation of the consequences of demographic processes.
2. An active migration policy and promotion of the region through multiculturalism in response to changes in labour markets.
3. An improvement in the status of academia and the quality of educational institutions as a means of strengthening human resources in the region and improving competitiveness in terms of options for young people.

ENVIRONMENT – KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VOIVODSHIP

The diversified potential of the region's environmental resources include its biodiversity, natural and landscape assets, high soil fertility, the country's best agricultural land, a base of mineral resources and environmental energy potential. On the one hand these create pleasant living conditions, but on the other they serve to stimulate the economy, especially tourism. An additional development opportunity is the potential of the River Odra.

However, the state of the environment continues to be unsatisfactory; in particular, there are high levels of air pollution (high CO₂ and particulate matter emissions) and surface water pollution, as well as threats to the climate and biodiversity. The voivodship is also characterised by a low rate of energy production from renewable sources compared to other regions.

HOUSING

Opolskie's assets include an evenly developed network of conurbations with a centrally located capital city, as well as good housing conditions. Another advantage of the region lies in its efficient communications network and arrangement of space in a such way that all its residents are able to participate in the processes of development. This is aided by good access to broadband internet over the whole voivodship. However, transport links between Opole and Warsaw and other metropolitan centres are in need of improvement (e.g. by direct motorway links). The development of the region may also be hampered by the low tarmacked road density in comparison with the rest of the country. The condition of the water and sewage infrastructure, especially the water supply system, has improved in recent years. However, there are still areas in need of support for the development of technical infrastructure, especially in rural areas. Investment in the development of the gas network, especially in the north-eastern and central part of the region is necessary.









It should be stressed that the region's population is trustful towards other people and institutions, which, when combined with social activity (grassroots, non-formalised initiatives) for the benefit of their places of residence builds a good climate for strengthening local social capital. Of particular importance are initiatives to stimulate local development, and revitalisation initiatives, not included in public statistics, including activities run by Local Action Groups.

LEISURE

Opolskie has good potential for short-stay tourism, with its natural assets, places of interest and cultural heritage, including numerous monuments and historical urban and rural settlements. The cultural attractiveness of the voivodship is further strengthened by supra-regional and national cultural events which take place in Opole, the regional capital, and other centres throughout the voivodship. An important role in creating cultural life is also played by other local governments, including their cultural institutions and numerous non-governmental organisations. Despite many investments in the development of "leisure" infrastructure, in many localities local authorities are still lacking sporting, recreational and cultural infrastructure. Mass tourism is not the region's domain, so the promotion, development and networking of its attractions is crucial. It is also important to look for niche tourism products, which would foster the development of tourism and active recreation, also among the region's residents.

ENVIRONMENT

Opolskie in 2019

	Voivodship area	9412 km ²
	Share of protected natural areas	27.6%
	Particulate matter emissions from plant with major environmental impact per 1 km ²	0.13 t/y
	Assessment of water condition	
	surface (in rivers)	good 0% poor 100%
	underground (in underground reservoirs)	good 85.7% poor 14.3%
	Percentage of people connected to a sewage system	73.6
	Percentage of people connected to a gas system	42.4
	Density of public roads with high-quality tarmac surface	84.6 km/100 km ²
	Monuments (2017)	335/1000 km ²

CHALLENGES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The strategic challenge for the environment is to ensure **“attractive places”**. This includes the following five specific challenges:

1. The reasonable use of natural environmental resources with simultaneous efforts to reduce the adverse human environmental impact.
2. The protection of biodiversity, as well as the functional and spatial cohesion of the natural system.
3. Efficient activities to prevent and mitigate the effects of climate change.
4. Improvements in housing and investment.
5. Taking advantage of the potential for tourism.

ECONOMY – KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VOIVODSHIP

Opolskie Voivodship is characterised by a medium level of economic development, as measured by gross domestic product per capita. Despite a steady increase in GDP per capita, it remains lower than the national average.

The voivodship is blessed with a varied industry structure and a long tradition of industrial production (food, mineral, metal and chemical industries). In recent years, local companies' levels of activity and competitiveness have increased, with the value of exported products rising, which translates to a higher regional GDP. Opolskie is also a highly productive agricultural region, favoured not only by a high level of farming culture, but also by the potential of its agricultural land (i.e. climatic conditions, soil and land profile). High agricultural productivity translates into a strong agri-food industry.

The region's economy also has weaknesses, which include a low number of national economic entities (legal persons, organisational entities without legal personality and natural persons running businesses), and a low level of entrepreneurship among its inhabitants, as measured by the number of sole traders. The dynamics on the Opolskie labour market are also unfavourable, with decreasing labour resources and falling salaries, especially in relation to the national average.

INVESTMENT

In terms of its population and economic potential, the region should be seen as attractive for investors and effective in attracting foreign capital. Opolskie is highly rated by investors in terms of communications accessibility and economic infrastructure; however, it ranks lower in social infrastructure and the size of the sales market³. In terms of the efficiency of local governmental activities, a significant proportion of the region is covered by SEZ investment areas and a large part of the voivodship (higher than the national average) is covered by valid local zoning plans. The formulation of a land use policy is one of the investment-stimulating instruments of local government.

INNOVATION

On a European scale, Opolskie Voivodship is classified as a region of "modest innovators". The region's economy has a higher percentage of innovative industrial companies than of service companies (in both cases the level is lower than, although close to, the national average). However, over the last few years, the share of innovative service companies has been distinctly lower than Poland's average, and service companies also show a low inclination for cooperation in the field of innovation.

Emphasis should be placed on increasing research and development potential, expanding cooperation between business and science, and increasing outlays in enterprises on R&D activities, which are at a relatively low level in the country.

³ *Atrakcyjność inwestycyjna województw i podregionów Polski 2016*, Instytut Badań nad Gospodarką Rynkową, Gdańsk 2016 and *Atrakcyjność inwestycyjna Regionów 2017. Województwo opolskie*, Warsaw School of Economics, Warsaw 2017.

ECONOMY

Opolskie in 2019



GDP per capita
(current prices, estimated data)

PLN 47,036

R&D

Internal expenditure on R&D in the
enterprise sector

PLN 143.3 million



Investment outlays
per capita
(current prices)

PLN 7,958

GVA

Share of agriculture, forestry,
hunting and fisheries (2018)

2.8%



Number of national economic
entities per 1,000 inhabitants

105



Average gross
monthly salary
(businesses with more than 9 employees)

PLN 4,712.47



Share of national economic
entities (up to 9 employees) in
the total number of entities
registered in the REGON register

96.1%

CHALLENGES FOR THE ECONOMY

The strategic challenge is to ensure **“competitive companies”** and this includes the following specific challenges:

1. Increasing the competitiveness of the economy and ensuring conditions for sustainable and balanced development.
2. Effective support for smart specialisations in order to improve their international competitiveness.
3. Strengthening R&D potential and developing regional cooperation networks in innovation.
4. Increasing the effectiveness of the regional system for attracting investors.

KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

GLOBAL TRENDS

All forecasts made at the end of 2019 collapsed with the global coronavirus pandemic. Considering current information and evaluating the activities of countries and other organisations on a global scale, the following issues are having an impact on the implementation of the vision for Opolskie Voivodship's development:

- **the severity of the global economic crisis** – the current situation, caused by the pandemic, is a typical “black swan”, i.e. an unexpected phenomenon which is also radically affecting Opolskie Voivodship. The economic effects, given GDP forecasts, are clearly negative, but it should be stressed that periods of crisis are also an opportunity for positive change and this is how they are approached by a significant proportion of entrepreneurs;
- **climate change** – irrespective of the degree of attention focused on the pandemic, a key global problem also affecting the region is climate change, which is generating not only extreme weather phenomena, but is also or, in the near future, may also be an accelerator of social problems (climate migrations, diseases related to global warming, etc.);
- **technological progress** – the recent pandemic-dominated period has made people aware of the significance of communications and information technologies and their ability to use them. Yet this is just the start of a revolution resulting from the increasing and advanced use of technology in every area of life. This means that technology will displace people from some occupations but support them in some others. At the same time, technological progress will create opportunities for the development of new professions;
- **the increasing competitiveness of non-European economies** – as globalisation progresses the competitiveness of individual European countries is likely to decline. Therefore, the development of individual regions of Europe, including Poland, will depend to a greater extent on multinational cooperation within the European Union (hereinafter: EU) and will be linked to and influenced by the global economic situation.

EUROPEAN POLICIES

European policies will continue to be a highly important factor in determining regional development, especially in the face of the pandemic. The EU has played an active role in combating the effects of the crisis, introducing a special EU-wide recovery plan (Next Generation) with a budget of EUR 750 billion, which is a special instrument to support economic recovery in the years 2021–2024. This is in addition to the EU budget for 2021–2027 which exceeds EUR 1.1 trillion. Alongside the EU's immediate and intensive recovery efforts, its objectives as set out in its cohesion policy, which are the basis for national budget negotiations with Member States, remain crucial:

- Policy objective 1: “A smarter Europe” (innovative and smart economic transformation);
- Policy objective 2: “A greener, decarbonised Europe” (including transformation of the energy sector, the transition to a circular economy, climate change adaptation and risk management);
- Policy objective 3: “A more connected Europe” (concerns mobility, connectivity and information and communications technologies);

- Policy objective 4: “A more social Europe” (this is primarily social support);
- Policy objective 5: “Europe closer to citizens” (this objective focuses on sustainable urban, rural and coastal development and local initiatives).

NATIONAL POLICIES

The Opolskie Voivodship development strategy is directly influenced by two key documents drafted at the governmental level which include, but are not limited to, the delineation of sectoral actions undertaken by individual ministries. The documents are the Strategy for Responsible Development for the period to 2020 (including the perspective to 2030)⁴ and the National Strategy for Regional Development 2030⁵. Moreover, in the context of financing the voivodship’s development through EU funds, of major importance are the provisions of the Partnership Agreement for the implementation of cohesion policy in the years 2021–2027 in Poland, which was drawn up during the formulation of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030”.

The Strategy for Responsible Development for the period to 2020 (including the perspective to 2030)

(SRD) defines the basic conditions, objectives and directions of the country’s development in social, economic, regional and spatial spheres in the perspective for the years 2020 and 2030. The SRD presents a new model of development, responsible development, as well as socially and territorially sustainable development. It is based on individual territorial potential, investments, innovation, development, exports and highly processed products. The new model of development assumes the abandonment of current support for all sectors/industries in favour of supporting strategic sectors that can become engines of the Polish economy. Its fundamental challenge is to rebuild the economic model so that it serves all of society.

The main objective of the SRD is “Creation of conditions for growth in income of the Polish population with a simultaneous increase of cohesion in the social, economic, environmental and territorial spheres”. The expected effect of the SRD will be an increase in the wealth of Poles and reduction in the number of people threatened by poverty and social exclusion.

The Strategy also formulates specific objectives:

- I. Sustainable economic growth increasingly based on knowledge, data and organisational excellence;
- II. Socially sensitive and territorially balanced development;
- III. An efficient state and institutions which favour growth, as well as social and economic inclusion.

The document indicates a new model for Poland’s regional development. It envisages the country’s development as socially and territorially balanced, through which the local resources and potentials of all its regions are effectively developed and used. The aim of the model is to support those areas which cannot fully meet their development potential because they have lost their socio-economic functions (e.g. they ceased to be voivodship capital cities), thus becoming more vulnerable to a range of negative issues (e.g. the effects of demographic processes).

The Development Management System of Poland is a document adopted by a resolution of the Council of Ministers in October 2018. It defines the principles and main components of a new system for managing the country’s development, the implementation of which will require the development of a number of detailed solutions. These changes, including legal changes, are to be phased in to ensure a gradual transition to the proposed solutions. Implementing the solutions proposed in the new model will lead to an improvement in the quality and effectiveness of management of development policy by the state, including a more effective integration of strategic documents with implementation instruments, at all levels of public authority.

4 <https://www.gov.pl/web/fundusze-regiony/informacje-o-strategii-na-rzecz-odpowiedzialnego-rozwoju>

5 <https://www.gov.pl/web/fundusze-regiony/krajowa-strategia-rozwoju-regionalnego>

From the regions' point of view, this document is important for conducting development policy at the regional level. The new model will result, first of all, in the need to reformulate the existing way of thinking about spatial and strategic planning, and the development of new integrated voivodship development strategies.

The National Strategy for Regional Development 2030 (NSRD 2030) is the basic strategic document for the regional policy of the state. The NSRD 2030 reflects the provisions of the Strategy for Responsible Development defined in the socially and territorially balanced development pillar. The document presents the objectives for regional policy and the activities and tasks to be undertaken by the government, voivodship, poviats and municipal local governments and other entities implementing this policy in the period to 2030. The document defines a systemic framework for conducting regional policy both by the government towards the regions and within regions. It will play an important role in the allocation of public funds, including EU funds, in the coming years.

NSRD 2030:

- emphasises the sustainable development of the whole country, i.e. reducing disparities in the socio-economic development of various areas, mainly urban and rural;
- provides for a more effective identification of the development needs of all areas of the country, as well as for a more effective recognition of the resources at their disposal, and an indication of the developmental challenges and barriers; such an approach will translate into a better adjustment of intervention tools (e.g. programmes) to the development opportunities and potentials of particular areas of the country;
- assumes ensuring the greater developmental cohesion of Poland through supporting economically weaker areas; therefore, the document identifies the areas for strategic intervention which will receive particular support (these will be areas threatened with permanent marginalisation, medium-sized towns which have lost socio-economic functions, Silesia and areas in Eastern Poland);
- supports the competitiveness of regions and assumes the continuation of actions aimed at increasing the quality of human and social capital and the development of entrepreneurship and innovation. Thus, local businesses will be supported;
- stresses the need to develop the competences of the public administration, in particular to support links between the local and regional public sector and the world of business and science;
- provides for an increase in the role and responsibility of local authorities as decision-makers on development policy on a local scale. The strategy creates conditions for greater involvement of municipal and poviats local governments in the implementation of joint projects and cooperation beyond administrative borders.



The Partnership Agreement for the implementation of the 2021–2027 cohesion policy⁶:

- sets out a strategy for the use of EU funds under EU policies for the period 2021–2027;
- defines the scope of intervention in European Commission (hereinafter: EC) policy objectives, constituting a description of the specific objectives;
- combines the expectations of the EC regarding the focus on objectives defined in the package of regulations on this perspective with the challenges arising from national strategic documents (SRD, NSRD 2030);

⁶ Draft of the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy of July 2021.

- highlights the key development challenges for the country, formulated on the basis of the analysis of development needs and territorial potentials;
- is consistent with the National Recovery and Resilience Plan developed in connection with the introduction of the EC's recovery package for European economies affected by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

The Partnership Agreement is a key document for the flow of EU funds, which will continue to constitute a critical part of financing development policy in the regions.

Opolskie in 2020		EXTERNAL FACTORS
COVID-19	Socio-economic impact of the pandemic	European Recovery and Resilience Plan
	Climate change	Adaptation to climate change / Green technologies
	EU Cohesion Policy Budget	The most important source of funding for regional development
SRD	Directions of national development to 2030, including areas for strategic intervention	Sustainable development policy / Additional regional support from the national level
NSRD 2030	Objectives and directions of the state's regional policy	New instruments to support regional development

CHALLENGES ARISING FROM EXTERNAL FACTORS

External conditions will need to be accommodated in the voivodship development policy, the success of which depends on many factors, including those outside the region's control. It is possible to identify a number of challenges facing public policies implemented at different levels, which will also be addressed in the framework of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030". The main challenges include:

- 1. Implementation by national authorities and the EU of the most effective measures to fight the pandemic and mitigate its consequences.** Although some of these activities are independent from the region (e.g. research on vaccines), the region can effectively react, for example, with regard to the proposed instruments to support the economies of EU countries (Recovery and Resilience Facility – RRF);

- 2. Cooperation of all partners in reducing the negative effects of climate change and caring for the natural environment on a global scale** – this challenge implies a proactive approach to environmental issues based on cooperation with external partners (at international, national and regional levels);
- 3. Implementation of national strategies to level up the country's socio-economic development** – the region should use and strengthen its own resources of human and institutional capital in order to maximise efficiency in obtaining external resources. This means the use of the opportunities and tools provided for in individual government documents (mainly the Strategy for Responsible Development, but also horizontal strategies), as well as active participation in creating future development concepts;
- 4. Mitigation of adverse demographic changes at a national level** – this will be important to effectively implement European policies and government policies and programmes, in particular those aimed at supporting the elderly and families, including parents and child care, and supporting the potential of foreign economic immigration.

SWOT ANALYSIS

PREMISES FOR SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis was conducted on the following premises:

- strengths and weaknesses determine the features of Opolskie Voivodship (internal factors);
- opportunities and threats are external factors that have a significant impact on the voivodship's situation;
- qualification of a factor to a given group gives it a positive or negative aspect; therefore, additional adjectival phrases were dropped (e.g. instead of writing *well-developed ICT infrastructure* in strengths, *ICT infrastructure* is sufficient);
- the analysis focuses on the most important and selected factors;
- the analysis is carried out at the general voivodship level, without division into thematic areas;
- the list of factors is not arranged hierarchically;
- strengths and weaknesses were related to the elements of the development vision in order to facilitate control of the strategy's internal coherence (opportunities and threats were considered to be of horizontal nature).

Table 1. SWOT analysis layout

FACTORS	internal (endogenous characteristics of the region)	external (trends and phenomena occurring in the environment)
positive	STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
negative	WEAKNESSES	THREATS

Source: own study

The SWOT analysis is the result of a process that included the following activities:

- analysis of statistical data and other sources of information contained in the Diagnosis;
- assessment of the validity of the SWOT analysis included in the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy 2020;
- analysis of preliminary provisions made during strategic workshops and consultation of the analysis among departments of Marshall's Office of Opolskie Voivodship (UMWO) and Voivodship Local Government Organisational Units (VLGOU).

RESULTS OF SWOT ANALYSIS

The results of the SWOT analysis in comparison with the elements of the development vision (tables 2-5) lead to the following conclusions:

- all elements of the SWOT analysis influence at least one of the components of the development vision;
- the strength of the voivodship which should have the greatest positive impact on the individual elements of the vision for development is the quality of life. Strengths also include multiculturalism and the positive impact of grassroots social initiatives;

- among the weaknesses, the greatest negative impact is exerted by unfavourable demographic phenomena and processes and the low entrepreneurship of the local population;
- the key opportunity for the voivodship, from the point of view of the vision's elements, comes from the development policies of the EU;
- in the context of the voivodship's vision, the key negative impact is from the following four threats: limitation of competences, including revenues and the possibility for implementing policies by TLGU; an unstable legislative environment; the economic slowdown; the as-yet unknown effects of the pandemic on various areas of socio-economic life.

Table 2. SWOT analysis – strengths of the voivodship

(a plus indicates a direct positive impact on the implementation of the element)

Strengths	Elements of the development vision					
	dynamics	balance	modernity	tradition	openness	integration
quality of life	+	+	+	+	+	+
grassroots initiatives	+			+	+	+
multiculturalism		+	+	+	+	+
availability of crèches and nursery schools		+				
parent and child care		+				+
professional qualifications of the population	+		+	+		
innovation-based enterprise competitiveness	+		+			
business exports	+					
investment attractiveness	+	+	+			
investment-supporting activities of local governments	+	+				
institutional efficiency	+	+	+			
diverse natural conditions and landscapes		+		+		
evenly distributed settlement network with a centrally located regional capital		+				+
cultural heritage of the region		+		+	+	+
agricultural productivity	+	+	+	+		
quality of agricultural land		+		+		
level of development of water		+	+			
dense transport system					+	+
ICT Infrastructure	+	+	+			
conditions for renewable energy development	+	+	+		+	

Source: own study

Table 3. SWOT analysis – weaknesses of the voivodship

(a minus indicates a direct negative impact on the implementation of the vision element)

WEAKNESSES	Elements of the development vision					
	dynamics	balance	modernity	tradition	openness	integration
adverse demographic phenomena and processes	-	-	-	-	-	-
organisational and financial potential and the level of professionalization in non-governmental organisations	-	-			-	-
social economy sector		-				
shortage of medical staff		-				-
interest in lifelong learning	-	-	-			
condition of social infrastructure		-			-	
innovation in the service sector	-	-	-		-	-
cooperation between business and science	-		-		-	-
R&D expenditure at enterprises	-		-		-	
entrepreneurship of the population	-	-	-	-	-	-
remuneration level	-	-				
recognition of tourist products		-			-	
competitiveness of regional universities	-		-		-	-
level of development of the southern part of the voivodship		-				-
air quality			-			
health and environmental awareness of the population			-		-	
surface and ground water pollution		-				
sewerage system in rural areas	-	-	-	-		
limited transport accessibility within the region		-			-	-
level of development of the gas network	-	-	-	-		
level of development and use of renewable energy			-		-	

Source: own study

Table 4. SWOT analysis – opportunities for the voivodship

(a plus indicates a direct positive impact on the implementation of the vision element)

OPPORTUNITIES	Elements of the development vision					
	dynamics	balance	modernity	tradition	openness	integration
EU policy	+	+	+	+	+	+
family-friendly policy and development of the care sector		+		+	+	+
development of regional specialisations	+		+			
instruments for social and professional mobilisation of the population		+			+	+

OPPORTUNITIES	Elements of the development vision					
	dynamics	balance	modernity	tradition	openness	integration
development of modern technologies and the e-economy	+	+	+		+	+
increased importance of education and lifelong learning		+	+		+	+
development of territorial cooperation		+			+	+
cooperation with neighbouring metropolitan regions	+	+	+			
development of economic cooperation with foreign countries and diversification of directions of international exchange	+		+		+	+
increased interest in cooperation in the border area	+	+		+	+	+
foreign economic immigration		+			+	+
increasingly more popular healthy lifestyle			+	+		
the Odra waterway	+	+			+	+

Source: own study

Table 5. SWOT analysis – threats to the voivodship

(a minus indicates a direct negative impact on the implementation of the vision element)

THREATS	Elements of the development vision					
	dynamics	balance	modernity	tradition	openness	integration
climate change		-				
postponement of flood protection and water retention investments	-	-				
state policy aimed at the strong position of coal-based power generation			-		-	
attractiveness of moving to national metropolises and foreign towns	-	-	-			
strong competition of domestic and foreign universities	-		-		-	-
limited competences, including revenues and possibilities of policy implementation by TLGU	-	-	-	-	-	-
lack of migration policy	-	-			-	-
unstable legislation	-	-	-	-	-	-
economic slowdown	-	-	-	-	-	-
the as-yet unknown effects of the pandemic on various areas and levels of socio-economic life	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: own study

SCENARIOS OF VOIVODSHIP DEVELOPMENT TO 2030

TOWS/SWOT ANALYSIS

The starting point for devising the development scenarios was to conduct a TOWS/SWOT analysis, consisting in determining mutual relationships between the individual parts of the SWOT analysis.

The results of the TOWS/SWOT analysis (table 6) indicate that the strongest relationships are between strengths and opportunities and between weaknesses and opportunities. This means high expectations towards external factors in the development process, both in terms of synergy with the assets of the region and the impact on eliminating its weaknesses.

Table 6. Results of TOWS/SWOT* analysis

	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
STRENGTHS	$44.6 + 39.9 = \underline{84.5}$	$26.3 + 40.4 = \underline{66.7}$
WEAKNESSES	$33.9 + 39.8 = \underline{73.7}$	$32.2 + 38.0 = \underline{70.2}$

(*) – percentage of the maximum value of the mutual influence of the factors identified in the SWOT analysis. The first value on the left represents the impact of the voivodship's strengths or weaknesses on opportunities or threats, while the second value in the cells represents the impact of opportunities or threats on the voivodship's strengths or weaknesses. In each case, the maximum value was 100, so the maximum sum of the reciprocal effect was set at 200.

Source: own study

From the five factors identified as strengths of the region, those with the biggest impact on opportunities and threats are:

- the investment-supporting activities of local governments;
- the institutional efficiency of TLGU;
- innovation-based enterprise competitiveness;
- investment attractiveness;
- grassroots initiatives.

These strengths testify to the high expectations of local government (at the regional and local level) and community involvement. The region should also take advantage of its investment attractiveness and the presence of innovation-based companies in the region. In turn, the five weaknesses that most impede development are:

- remuneration level;
- adverse demographic phenomena and processes;
- cooperation between business and science;
- entrepreneurship in the community;
- R&D expenditure at enterprises.

These weaknesses concern mainly three issues: the innovativeness of the economy, entrepreneurship and unfavourable demographic processes.

EU policies come first on the list of opportunities that should have the strongest impact on the strengths and weaknesses of the region. Therefore, preparation for the effective use of EU funds may be a key issue in the further development of the voivodship. In addition, other opportunities with a strong impact on the voivodship are related to the development objectives of the EU (**development of modern technologies and the e-economy, increasing the importance of education and lifelong learning, development of regional specialisations, development of an environmentally-friendly economy and reducing adverse climate change**). The region should also exploit closer and further opportunities stemming from **territorial and cross-border cooperation**.

Also among the five threats with the strongest impact on strengths and weaknesses are factors that are already present: the **economic slowdown** and the **reduction in competence, including revenues and the ability of TLGU to implement policies**. A factor that may significantly limit the development potential of the region is the **unstable legislation**. The voivodship is also subject to very fierce competition which can still drain human capital from the region (**the attractiveness of moving to national metropolises and foreign towns**, as well as **strong competition from national and foreign universities**).

THREE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

In the process of developing the Strategy "Opolskie 2030", a workshop was held to draft six development scenarios. Four of these corresponded to the relationships of the factors from the TOWS/SWOT analysis, and two additional ones were identified as so-called "surprise scenarios" which do not follow the previous premises. All the scenarios were developed using an anticipatory approach – knowing the development vision, an effort was made to characterise the key steps (actions) that would lead to that vision.

The scenario efforts also involved identifying initial actions proposed for implementation. These were then taken into account when defining the operational objectives. Some of the actions were modified in order to incorporate them properly into the provisions of the specific objectives.

The three scenarios are presented below. As the TOWS/SWOT analysis indicated the strongest relationship was between strengths and opportunities (the dynamic development scenario), this scenario was considered the most relevant. To counterbalance this, a "collapse avoidance" scenario was also considered in order for the remaining strategic factors (weaknesses and threats) to be analysed. Of the two "surprise scenarios", the scenario of limited ROP resources was selected as fairly well reflecting the uncertainty associated with the impact of the pandemic's development⁷.

"DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENT" SCENARIO

This scenario assumes taking advantage of opportunities and building on the strengths of the voivodship (figure 2). In this scenario, the actions taken should first yield results in the form of halting depopulation and increasing regional GDP per capita, including pay rises. At the same time, activities for improving air quality should bring results.

This scenario is based on the use of four external factors: EU policies, the trend towards modern education, technological progress in the broad sense, and measures related to demographic change (family-friendly policies on the one hand and policies responding to population ageing on the other).

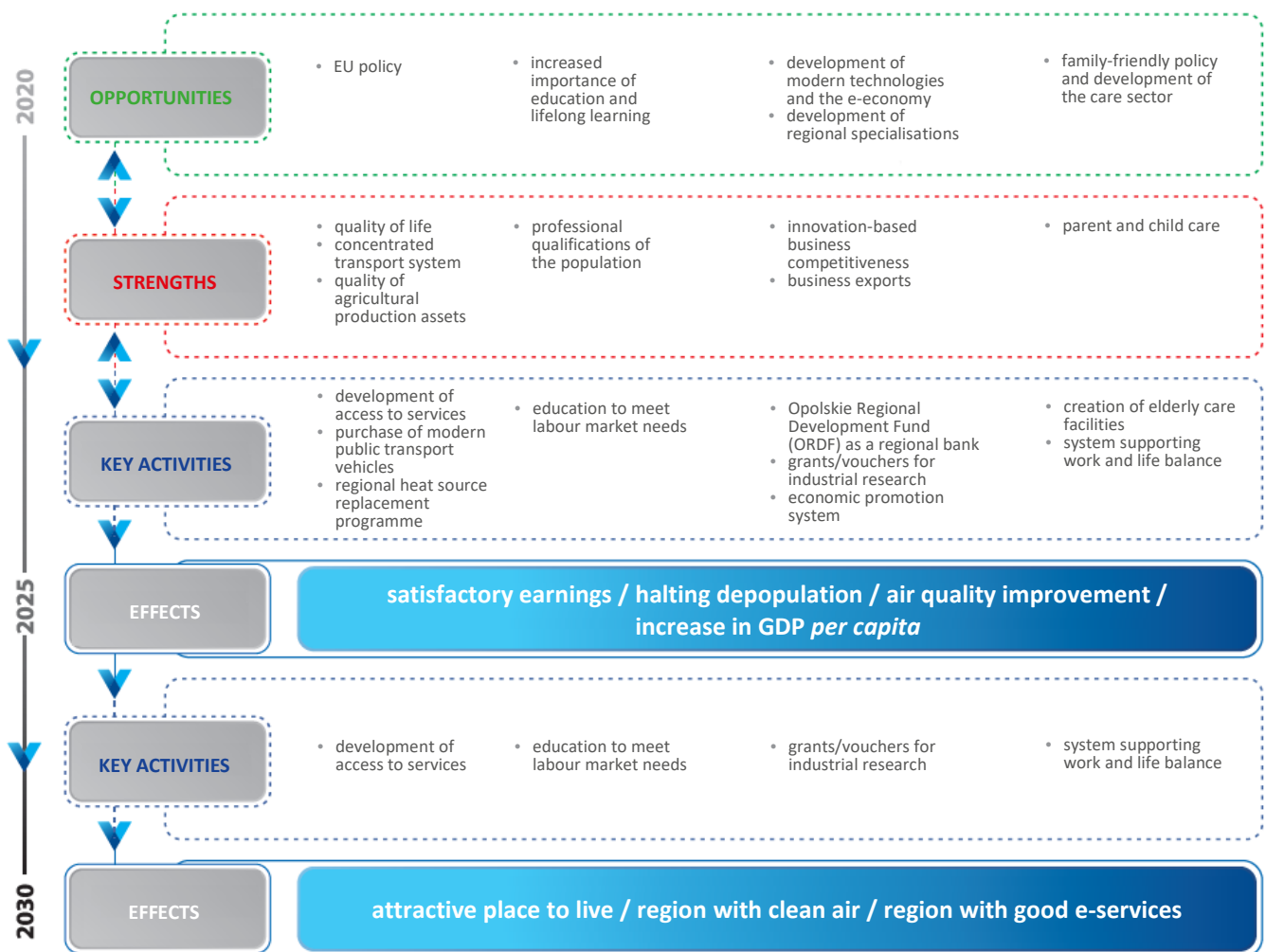
⁷ In addition to the scenario listed above, the following three scenarios were devised during the workshops: "coming out of the shadows" (focused on tapping into opportunities in order to eliminate the weaknesses of the region); "overcoming difficulties" (using strengths to eliminate threats); and "dire" (depicting a failed attempt to implement the vision).

The strengths of Opolskie Voivodship make it possible to expect a strengthening of the region through the use of the opportunities described above. The voivodship will benefit from a qualified population, as well as the activity and competitiveness of local companies. It will also draw on its own experience in implementing instruments aimed at supporting families and the elderly.

The scenario identifies the key activities that should lead to the intended outcomes. These activities focus on:

- the development of a support system for the regional economy through the establishment of a regional bank, the development of financial instruments for entrepreneurs and more effective economic promotion;
- increasing access to services along with improving the accessibility and quality of public transport;
- development of a system supporting work and life balance and the creation of care facilities for the elderly.

The fulfilment of the region’s development vision in 2030 will also be accompanied by positive changes in the quality of the natural environment. The voivodship will be distinguished by highly developed e-services and high-quality living standards.



Source: own study

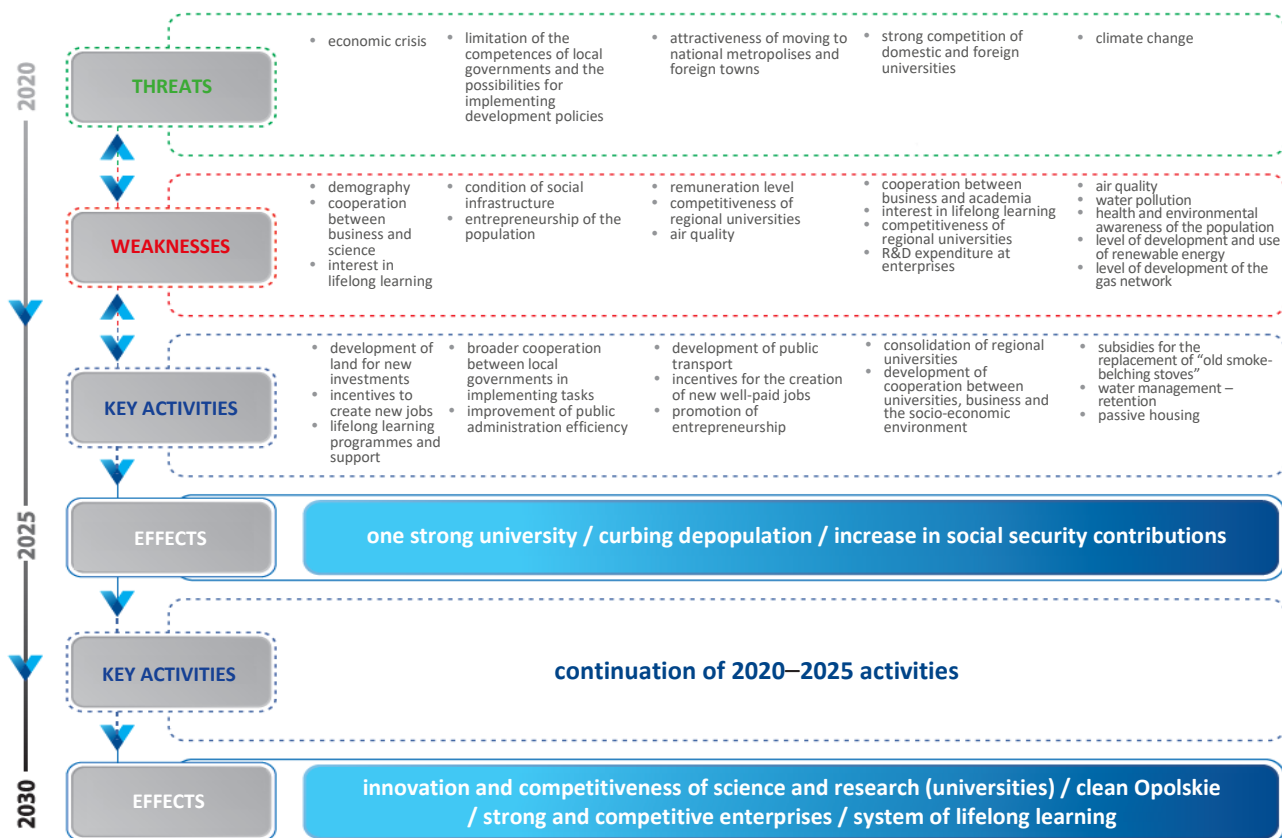
Figure 2. The “Dynamic Development” scenario

“COLLAPSE AVOIDANCE” SCENARIO

This scenario focuses on activities that allow the voivodship to eliminate its current weaknesses and overcome the threats arising in the environment (figure 3). Five factors were identified as key threats to the development of the voivodship: the economic crisis; limitation of the competences of local governments and the possibilities for implementing development policies of TLGU; the attractiveness of settlement in national metropolises and foreign towns; competition of domestic and foreign universities, as well as climate change.

In this scenario, threats affect a relatively large number of weaknesses in the region. This means that avoiding a risky development path requires a wide range of preventive actions. Key activities focus on the following:

- creating the best possible conditions for conducting business in the region, with particular emphasis on creating high quality jobs and supporting entrepreneurship;
- building a strong base for human capital development which would cover both lifelong learning and enhanced cooperation between universities in order to build their strong competitive position. An important activity in this area will be the development of cooperation between universities, business and the socio-economic environment;
- developing co-operation between local governments and improving the efficiency of public administration;
- reducing the negative human impact on the natural environment (improving the state of the natural environment) and applying clean and energy-saving technologies.



Source: own study

Figure 3. “Collapse avoidance” scenario

The quality and scope of the activities should see results in the initial period: strengthening the position of universities (at least one university with a very strong position in the country), curbing depopulation and increasing the wealth of the local population.

The scenario assumes that by 2030 there will be an increase in innovation, as well as the research and development competitiveness of the entire region and a significant improvement in the quality of the natural environment. An important effect of the measures will also be an increase in the potential and competitiveness of Opolskie companies and a well-developed system of lifelong learning.

“LIMITED PUBLIC FUNDS” SCENARIO

The scenario of limited public funds, in particular the from the EU, means having to implement the vision with no guarantee of structural funds for the voivodship local government. This scenario envisages implementing the most effective measures for limiting development slowdown caused by significantly reduced external funds. Such an option cannot be ruled out, particularly in view of the ongoing pandemic and its future socio-economic impacts.

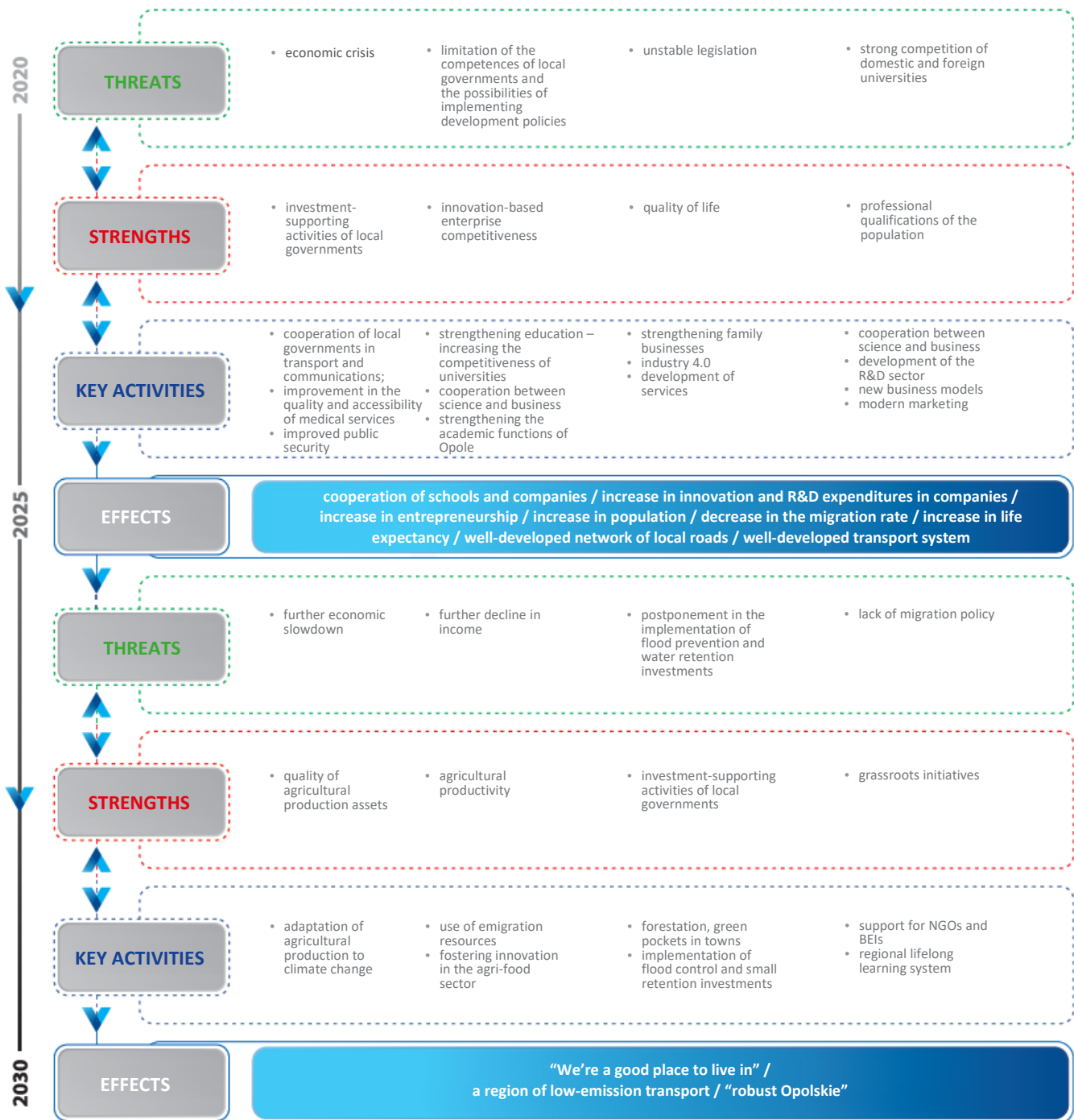
In addition to the economic crisis, the scenario assumes the occurrence of three additional risks in the first phase and three more in the second phase (after 2025) as the wave of the crisis transitions into economic downturn (figure 4). The scenario assumes that in an extremely difficult external situation it will be crucial to bolster development on the strengths of the voivodship. In this case, the following should be highlighted:

- the investment-supporting attitude of local governments that aim to carry out necessary development activities even where there are limited resources;
- innovation-based companies that, as leaders, should primarily deal with the global crisis;
- a skilled population to support the employment needs of internationally competitive companies;
- quality of life in the region, which is currently considered by many to be high, and therefore should contribute to increased interest in Opolskie Voivodship as a place to work and live.

Based on these strengths, it is assumed that by 2025 key actions will have been taken in the region focused on the following areas:

- development of human resources linked to the strengthening of the academic functions of the city of Opole;
- strengthening the role of science and innovation in the region's business development;
- improvement in the quality and accessibility of services, mainly medical and those ensuring public safety;
- support for companies, in particular the development of Industry 4.0 in the region;
- cooperation of local governments for transport and communications;
- the development of modern marketing.

In an era of limited resources, these actions should be tailored precisely to the needs of the stakeholders and guarantee the highest possible efficiency. This will make it possible to effect the first changes in the region in the form of broad institutional cooperation, including economic cooperation, and shifting a large part of the region's economy to innovation-based activities.



Source: own study

Figure 4. “Limited Public Funds” scenario

After 2025, greater emphasis is planned to be placed on developing agri-food production that is better adapted to climate change, along with activities to increase the protection and sustainable use of the natural environment. It will be necessary to rely on immigrants who will need to be supported by NGOs, business environment institutions, and others.

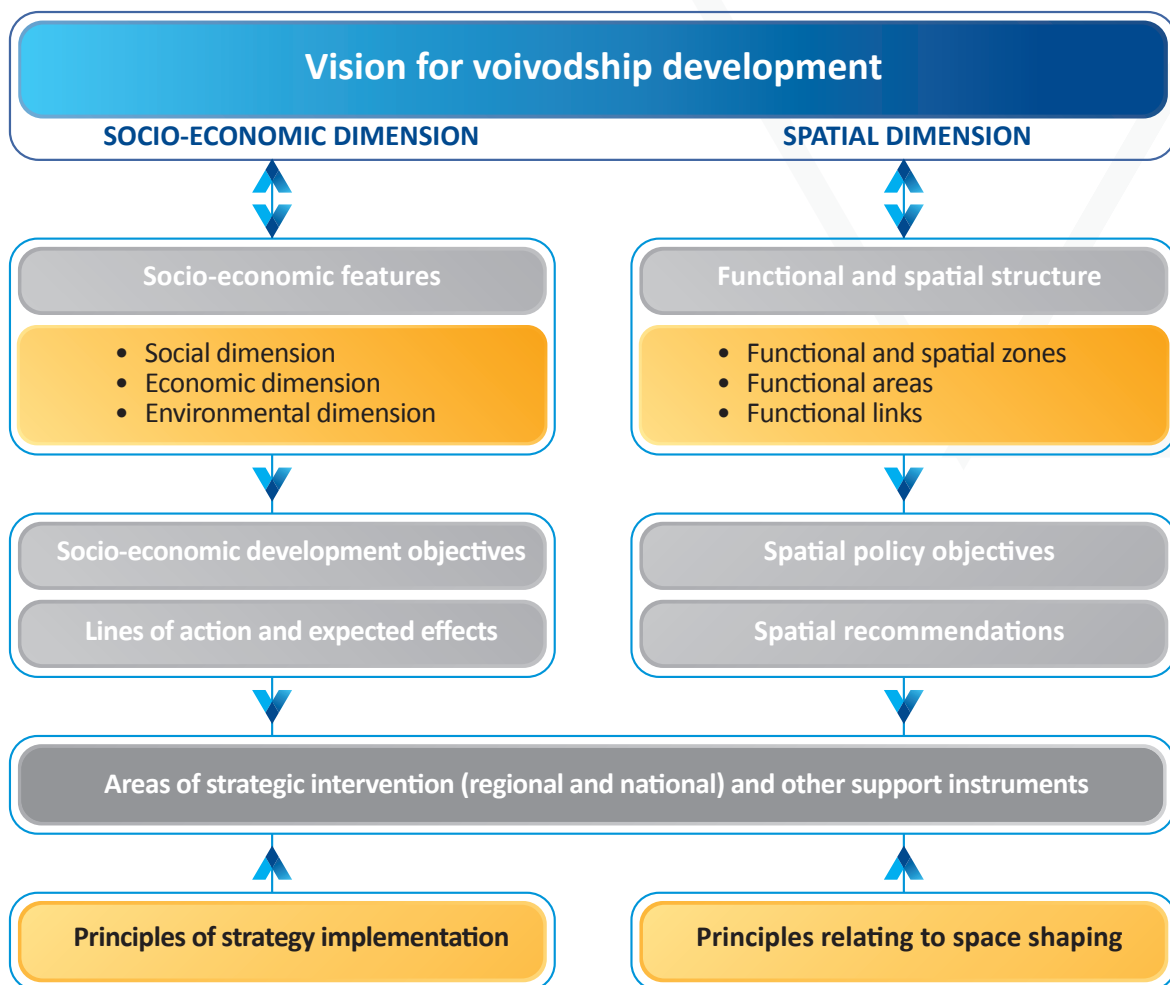
These activities will be conducive to building the brand and strengthening its image as a good place to live with a friendly natural environment.

VOIVODSHIP DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Strategy “Opolskie 2030” maintains the coherence of three dimensions of development: social, economic and environmental – the latter being equivalent to the spatial dimension (figure 5). The vision for the voivodship indicates its future characteristics (primarily socio-economic), while simultaneously expressing expectations towards the spatial relations formed in the region.

The objectives for the region’s development were based on analyses and discussions of the three dimensions, with the objectives and the areas of intervention defined without making unnecessary references to specific territories.

The territorialisation of the objectives is manifested by indicating the areas for strategic intervention and opening the possibility for flexible intervention in different areas also through other support instruments. The territorial dimension of socio-economic objectives therefore takes into account the functional and spatial structure of Opolskie Voivodship and defines specific spatial policy objectives and recommendations



Source: own study

Figure 5. Voivodship development policy

An important element of the voivodship development policy will be implementing the principles in the Strategy „Opolskie 2030”. These principles are intended to support decision-making, both in the socio-economic and spatial aspects.

OBJECTIVES AND LINES OF ACTION WITHIN THE STRATEGY “OPOLSKIE 2030”

The Strategy “Opolskie 2030” has two levels of objectives (strategic and operational) and lines of action. Implementation of the development vision is directly influenced by three strategic objectives that will be achieved through a total of eleven operational objectives. Strategic goals and operational objectives:

- contribute to the fulfilment of the vision;
- are linked to the strategic challenges and elements of the SWOT analysis;
- are of a horizontal nature – they target the region’s entire community;
- are territorialised – through the voivodship functional and spatial structure model and the expectations towards the areas for strategic intervention given in the Territorial dimension of the Strategy „Opolskie 2030”;
- meet SMART criteria, i.e. are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic objectives were defined in three areas, which were also the basis for identifying the challenges: society, environment, economy. The provisions and description of the strategic objectives constitute the aim for the voivodship in 2030.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS – RESIDENTS READY FOR CHALLENGES AND FOR CREATING AN OPEN COMMUNITY

OPOLSKIE IN 2030

The local population forms a socially active community which embraces change. Human relations and sensitivity to other people’s needs are an excellent basis for the development of social activity, voluntary actions and grassroots initiatives. In the region there are numerous social organisations supported in terms of professionalisation and an increase in the quality of their activities. A priority for regional authorities is to create conscious and consistently implemented policies for youth, families and seniors. Of particular importance in the regional development policy is the preservation of multicultural heritage and building a climate for intercultural and international integration, tolerance and openness to different attitudes, views and people, including immigrants, as well as the inclusion of foreigners and re-emigrants in the socio-economic life of the region.

The comfort of living in Opolskie is increased by integrated revitalisation efforts in local communities which will allow the renewal of disadvantaged areas. With the support of regional authorities, municipal authorities are carrying out comprehensive revitalisation programmes which include interventions in the economic, environmental, spatial, functional or technical domains in areas with negative social phenomena. Housing provision is increasing as a result of collaboration between the public and private sectors, and there is a steady increase in housing availability.

The region’s qualified population is both a strength and an asset. Improvement in the quality of education at all levels, bolstering educational institutions, vocational mobilisation and activities aimed at increasing the qualifications and competences of the local population serve to develop the regional labour market and prepare it for modern-day challenges.

Opolskie universities are involved in the processes of social and economic development, and, along with academic work and teaching, they are ready to cooperate with other local actors and commercialise research.

The service sector is buoyant. Social services, including in health care, but also attractive leisure opportunities, influence the image of the voivodship as an agreeable place to live and relax. This increasing quality of life is associated with the development of the e-service sector, the uninterrupted provision of which facilitates the population's social and professional lives.

Ensuring security, order and social balance are some of the most important tasks for public authorities. A sense of security is provided by well-developed and constantly improving health protection, crisis management and communications structures. Specialised IT systems recognise threats, allowing a rapid and efficient reaction to approaching emergencies. Of key importance in this area is the development of education to shape the appropriate attitudes and habits, as well as teaching the population how to avoid threats in everyday life by consciously reducing the possibility of their occurrence.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT – A CLIMATE CHANGE-RESILIENT ENVIRONMENT THAT IS CONDUCTIVE TO DEVELOPMENT

OPOLSKIE IN 2030

The environment is increasingly protected to make it more resilient to climate change, while also being conducive to development by addressing global issues on a regional scale. Dwindling water resources, the effects of extreme weather events, modern waste management or low emissions are all factors that determine the quality of life here and now. And it is on solving these problems that the further development and prosperity of the region depends.

Apart from massive financial and infrastructural investments, added to legal and organisational changes, sustainable development requires a real revolution in the way individuals think and act. Therefore, ecological education is being introduced with the aim of shaping the attitudes and behaviour of the region's population overall age groups. Public authorities, including the regional local government, are role models and apply modern, environment-friendly solutions to e.g. investments, public transport management, anti-smog programmes or the use of renewable energies. These are accompanied by shaping environmental awareness and the individual choices made by local consumers.

The sustainable development of the region means satisfying the needs of the local population in a way that will not limit the development opportunities of future generations. The region's economy, society and environment are developing in parallel and harmoniously, with particular concern for the preservation of biodiversity through, for example, the protection of endangered habitats and species, as well as areas of particular natural and landscape value and the ecological spatial connections between them. At the same time, we cannot neglect cultural heritage, which will not survive without proper conservation, but with the right support is likely to become a driving force of regional culture, education and tourism. Much depends on the effectiveness of the landscape audit, which safeguards areas of particular value to the region's communities.

In order to meet social expectations, the authorities are actively pursuing the environmentally friendly shaping of public spaces – improvement in their quality increases the residents' wellbeing. Local governments are promoting the importance of ecosystem services – the benefits that people derive from the natural world around them, particularly in urban areas.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: STRONG ECONOMY – A SMART ECONOMY TO STRENGTHEN THE REGION'S COMPETITIVENESS

OPOLSKIE IN 2030

A strong economy is an economy that develops using modern technological processes and through the implementation of innovative solutions, cross-sectoral cooperation and business support. A strong economy also entails companies operating in international cooperation networks, having the potential to introduce new technologies, with qualified staff and contributing to the development of regional specialisations.

A distinctive feature of the local economy is small and medium enterprises, including family businesses and enterprises operating in rural areas, as well as players in the social economy. Comprehensive financial and organisational support for companies fosters entrepreneurship, the expansion of sales markets, the exchange of good practices, and ultimately, the harmonisation and intensification of development processes in the region. The support is also aimed at the optimal use of natural conditions and at increasing the productivity of Opolskie agriculture and fisheries, which are characterised by their multi-functionality, as well as by an environment-friendly approach in their production processes.

A competitive regional economy requires good external and internal transport and communications accessibility. The region offers a modern internet infrastructure with high-speed data transmission, uninterrupted fixed and mobile access, along with the security of services and data. Concern by public authorities for the economy and the environment are reflected in activities aimed at building an integrated transport system, which requires cooperation at all levels of development management and the successive introduction of new organisational and technical solutions.

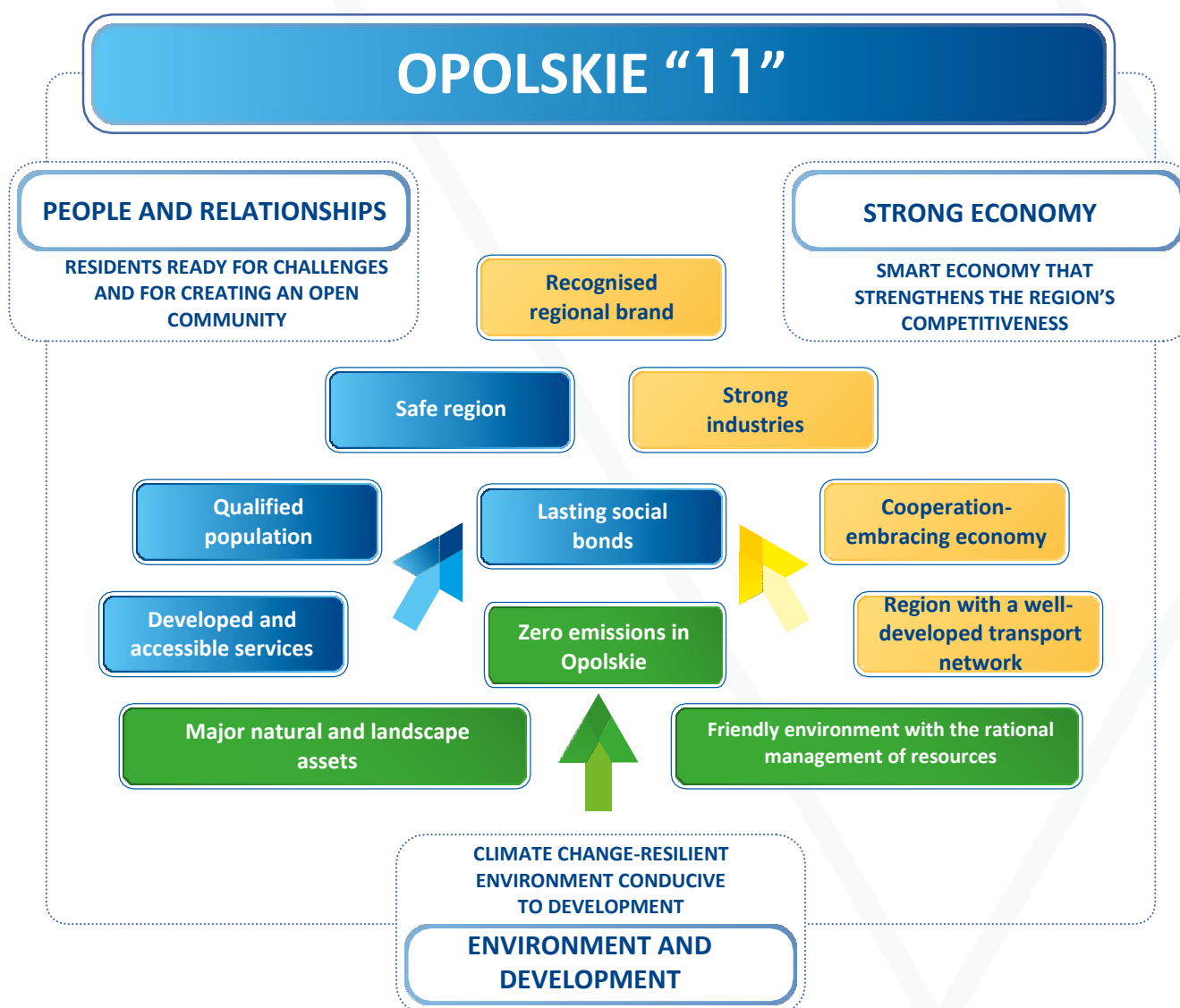
Promotion of the region (e.g. economic, tourist, cultural) using modern marketing instruments supports building the regional brand, in which the concept of *slow life*⁸ is promoted, seamlessly linking the area of economic and vocational activity with a comfortable and prosperous life. The effectiveness of the marketing depends on the efficiency and preparation of the institutions and organisations responsible for promotion, which are provided with organisational support. Shaping a regional identity from the early stages of education is also crucial.

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND LINES OF ACTION

Operational objectives are the detailed breakdown of strategic objectives. The lines of action indicated in individual objectives are specified by means of catalogues of interventions identified in the process of developing the Strategy "Opolskie 2030". These catalogues are open-ended, which facilitates a flexible approach to the customisation of support at the stage of document implementation.

All operational objectives lead to the implementation of the strategic objectives and thus of the region's development vision. Some directly affect the strategic objective, others indirectly. The objectives interact with each other, so they should be considered comprehensively (figure 6).

⁸ *Slow life* means moving away from a materialistic, consumerist lifestyle in favour of mindfulness, concentration, and conscious choices about where to live, food, clothes etc.



Source: own study

Figure 6. Opolskie “11” – Operational objectives against strategic objectives

LASTING SOCIAL BONDS

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **social integration and involvement** (increasing the participation of residents in activities for their local communities and the entire voivodship; support for the joint initiatives of various social groups, including those aimed at European integration, the social inclusion of people at risk of exclusion; increasing awareness of the needs and problems of people with disabilities; the creation of civic and village budgets; the promotion of volunteering and other good practices in social life);
- ✓ **support for family-friendly solutions** (support for housing construction; measures supporting families, including but not limited to, facilitating work and the family-life balance; the promotion and preparation of applicants to foster parent; social work with problem families, the prevention of family violence; measures directly addressed at children, young people and the elderly, multi-sectoral partnerships for the elderly, building intergenerational links and supporting intergenerational dialogue);

- ✓ **the professionalisation of social organisations** (support for quality in management and possibilities to employ highly qualified specialists, establishing local and international cooperation to support the application of the latest methods of social integration and mobilisation; the digitalisation of organisations);
- ✓ **the development of a revitalisation support system** (comprehensive and strongly socialised measures aimed at revitalising areas; support for the creation of public spaces integrating various social groups; strengthening the capacity of municipalities to program and implement revitalisation measures; monitoring of revitalisation; disseminating revitalisation measures);
- ✓ **the development of a multicultural society** (support for activities promoting openness and tolerance, developing multiculturalism, intercultural integration and regional identity; promoting and supporting activities which help preserve and develop the cultural and linguistic identity of national and ethnic minorities living in the region; promoting the Silesia dialect; developing cultural education, support and the integration of foreigners and re-emigrants).

QUALIFIED POPULATION

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **increasing the quality of education** (improving the quality of education at all levels, including language education and the development of digital competences, as well as supporting personal development; introducing modern teaching methods; supporting the development of pro-innovative competences; promoting lifelong education, and developing lifelong learning; promoting and raising the reputation of vocational education; the broader inclusion of employers in the education process; supporting regional universities, e.g. in launching prestigious or niche curricula);
- ✓ **the strengthening of institutions** (the expansion and modernisation of educational establishment and university infrastructure; the equipping and retrofitting with equipment, including IT, necessary software and teaching aids; increasing the technological advancement and digital inclusion of institutions; developing partnerships between institutions and enterprises from the region);
- ✓ **re-employment** (the professionalisation of careers advice, including that addressed to young people entering the labour market; measures increasing opportunities on the labour market for those who require support, such as the elderly, professionally inactive, women, re-emigrants, foreigners, the disabled, part- and full-time carers);
- ✓ **cooperation for the development of qualifications and competences** (building a wide cooperation network for high qualifications in the local population, concentrated around universities and integrating the activity of institutions at different stages of education; exchanging experience and cooperation with universities and foreign institutes; strengthening the third mission of universities to contribute to the development of the region).

WELL-DEVELOPED AND ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **the development of health care and prevention** (support for the set-up of a coherent system of medical services from basic health care and specialist outpatient care to hospital treatment; improvement of the health care infrastructure; increasing access to medical care; improving modern health care services, including rehabilitation; health education and prevention; the promotion of physical, mental and psychosocial health; counteracting lifestyle diseases; increasing the quality of the services provided);
- ✓ **the development of social services** (developing social infrastructure; improving access to crèche and pre-school services; improving management quality in entities providing care services; support for the deinstitutionalisation process; the development of care and respite services; support for the elderly, people with disabilities and their carers);
- ✓ **expanding the range of leisure activities** (using the region's natural potential; the construction and modernisation of existing infrastructure and improving accessibility to it; activities to diversify cultural, recreational, tourist and sports attractions);
- ✓ **the development of e-services** (support for the development of new services provided entirely or partially via the internet, in particular e-services of high maturity, as well as actions aimed at increasing the diversity and high quality of e-services; increasing the universality and accessibility of e-services; development of the digital accessibility of public sector information, and the digitalisation of resources; support for actions aimed at adapting services to interoperability standards and principles of openness and transparency, in particular by taking into account the international accessibility guidelines of WCAG).

SAFE REGION

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **the improvement of security** (the development of infrastructure that ensures security in different areas of social and economic life, including, but not limited to, crisis management, the development of threat signalling IT systems, and support for organisational activities to improve security);
- ✓ **the development of safety education** (counteracting and limiting the effects of disasters, avoiding threats in everyday, forming good habits and attitudes, following procedures in emergency situations and during extreme conditions);
- ✓ **institutional cooperation** (support for public security institutions, the cooperation of various entities and institutions, both national and international, to increase security, in crisis situations and threats to civilisation, including cyber security).

ZERO EMISSIONS IN OPOLSKIE

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **the decarbonisation of the economy** (developing a low-carbon economy, not based on fossil fuels; implementing anti-smog and air protection programmes; supporting the development of modern and sustainable public and shared transport solutions; improving vehicle efficiency; support for the development of intelligent mobility; creating the conditions for the establishment of zero-emissions investment areas);

- ✓ **the development of green technologies** (implementing modern, environmentally friendly technical and technological solutions for socio-economic purposes, support for the popularisation and use of renewable, distributed and prosumer energy, support for research and cooperation to develop and deploy green technologies and innovations);
- ✓ **improvements in the economy's energy efficiency** (support for actions minimising energy consumption: energy modernisation, changing thermal energy supply systems, energy recovery, and intelligent – smart energy management).

FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT AND THE RATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **the development of ecological awareness and practical applications** (pro-environmental solutions in public entities; the shaping of attitudes e.g. through environmental education and shaping environmentally friendly attitudes and consumption patterns; the development and promotion of model solutions for environmental protection, encouraging the use of public transport);
- ✓ **the protection of water resources** (improving the quality and development of water and sewage infrastructure; improving surface and underground water quality and their rational use; the protection and rational management of soil and water resources);
- ✓ **modern waste management** (support for the development of a circular economy; efficient use of raw materials, products and waste; strengthening the effectiveness of waste management systems, measures to reclaim landfills; support for actions to reduce waste generation);
- ✓ **natural resources management** (the protection of documented and potential natural resources, in particular those strategic for the voivodship; sustainable forest management; comprehensive exploitation in accordance with licences; rational use of mineral and thermal waters; protecting highest-potential soils; the stabilisation of water, microclimatic and biotic conditions in wetland areas; supporting ecological agricultural production initiatives; counteracting soil erosion);
- ✓ **the prevention of the effects of climatic events** (the creation of a pro-environmental flood and drought prevention system; increasing forested areas, adapting the range of forest species; increasing retention, in particular natural retention; the protection and restoration of wetlands, floodplains and re-naturalisation of rivers and other water courses; the development of green and blue infrastructure; implementing solutions for retaining rainwater; the use of "grey water").

MAJOR NATURAL AND LANDSCAPE ASSETS

The following lines of action have been envisaged under this objective:

- ✓ **the protection of biodiversity** (protection of endangered habitats and species, restoration of degraded habitats, in particular wetlands and marshes; introduction and enhancement of green infrastructure, in particular of high natural value in agricultural and urbanised areas and pro-nature development of public spaces; development of centres for biodiversity protection, education and ecotourism; promotion of ecosystem services);
- ✓ **strengthening the system for nature protection** (this includes strengthening the protection provided by ecological corridors; strengthening the effective protection and management of nature protection at a regional level; identifying and monitoring the resources and natural assets of the voivodship);

- ✓ **landscaping and protection of landscapes** (the creation and gradual implementation of a landscape audit for Opolskie Voivodship, including guidelines and recommendations for the protection and shaping of areas particularly valuable to residents; multidirectional and multifunctional landscaping of open and urbanised areas).

COOPERATION-EMBRACING ECONOMY

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **the development of entrepreneurship** (education and training in entrepreneurship at every level of education (“lifelong learning”): support in setting up one’s own business, including by re-emigrants and foreigners; the development of the social economy; the promotion of pro-business attitudes);
- ✓ **economic cooperation** (support for cluster activities and initiatives; the development of existing cooperation networks and support for the creation of new ones; the exchange of good practices and cooperation within cross-border and international systems; the development of public-private partnerships; the integrated and comprehensive economic promotion of the region; cooperation and exchange of practices among organisations supporting economic development);
- ✓ **research for the economy** (support for research at universities, scientific and research institutes and other organisations, the main purpose of which is creating products and the commercialisation of knowledge; research into the potential of regional specialisations and identification of development niches; research into the needs and possibilities for supporting entrepreneurs; monitoring of the investment climate).

STRONG INDUSTRIES

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **improvement in the competitiveness and innovativeness of enterprises** (increasing the technological competence of companies; development of the R&D sector; increasing the use of new technologies in the regional economy; including regional companies in international cooperation networks; support for entrepreneurs, including family companies and start-ups, in expanding markets for products and services also on an international scale, e.g. through access to services provided by business support institutions; development of a support system for innovative undertakings);
- ✓ **support for jobs** (measures to increase companies’ access to highly qualified employees, strengthening activities aimed at eliminating deficits in the labour market, supporting cooperation between educational institutions and entrepreneurs; supporting personnel policy offering career paths in modern enterprises operating in the region; supporting the employment of specialists in the region’s economy; supporting job retention);
- ✓ **the development of leading branches of the regional economy** (support for smart specialisations and the process of entrepreneurial discovery, as well as for other industries and sectors playing an important role in the region’s economy, including, but not limited to, sustainable agriculture and fisheries);
- ✓ **improvement of the investment climate** (investment incentives at the regional and local level; the development of competitive investment areas; the development of a comprehensive system for attracting external investors; strengthening the quality of start-up creation and acceleration; promoting and supporting enterprises, especially those implementing “Industry 4.0”).

REGION WITH A WELL-DEVELOPED TRANSPORT NETWORK

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **the development of transport infrastructure** (linking motorway and expressway hubs with the national and regional road system and border crossings; improving the condition and quality of the existing transport infrastructure in the region; the construction and reconstruction of roads, bypasses and bridges in the region; the development of the north-south communication axis; constructing a new motorway junction for better links with the region's capital city; improving internal road accessibility in the region; upgrading railway lines; supporting activities aimed at harnessing the social and economic potential of the River Odra for both transport and tourism);
- ✓ **the expansion of ICT infrastructure** (infrastructural investments to increase internet accessibility in the entire region, ensuring fast data transmission, uninterrupted stationary and mobile access to the internet, network security);
- ✓ **the development of integrated transport and sustainable mobility** (actions aimed at developing the public transport network and counteracting the phenomenon of traffic exclusion, including the construction of transfer hubs – P&R and B&R⁹; developing an integrated timetable, tariff-ticket integration, and comprehensive passenger information system; developing a traffic management system, including in towns within the smart city framework; extending the system of bicycle paths, and the construction of cyclist-friendly infrastructure; supporting the development of alternative forms of transportation).

RECOGNISED REGIONAL BRAND

The following lines of action have been envisaged for this objective:

- ✓ **care for the preservation and development of cultural heritage** (integrated management of tangible and intangible cultural heritage; the popularisation of knowledge of the region and its inhabitants with various cultural heritages: Polish, German, Silesia, borderland, Czech and Roma; the promotion and cultivation of traditions that distinguish the region and the ethos of work and reliability; the commemoration of important events in the region's history; the promotion and development of the region's culinary heritage; activities to preserve and adapt monuments to new functions, in particular for culture, tourism, education; support for the establishment of cultural parks);
- ✓ **building an image of Opolskie as a green region** (promoting green values and regional products, a high quality of life combined with the growing ecological awareness of the local population, Opolskie as a *slow* region, the concept of *smart villages*; supporting the use of *car-sharing*¹⁰, scooters and bicycles);
- ✓ **the development of strong tourist products** (support for measures aimed at creating new tourist products and strengthening those already existing; support for measures integrating tourist products addressed to specific target groups);
- ✓ **the modern marketing of the region** (inter-institutional cooperation for effective promotion of the region; strengthening the ability of institutions and organisations to use modern communications tools; supporting activities to increase access to information on the region, local events and the region's assets; the promotion and development of innovative service platforms).

9 P&R and B&R mean Park & Ride and Bike & Ride – a parking system for cars and bicycles that allows them to be left in a safe place and the journey then continued using public transport.

10 *Car-sharing* means an automatic system for the short-term, paid use of vehicles to registered users.

COHERENCE OF THE STRATEGY "OPOLSKIE 2030" WITH NATIONAL STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS

Work on the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was carried out during the period of the SRD and implementation of the NSRD 2030. At the same time, work was underway on amending the act on the principles of development policy. This made it possible to ensure consistency of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" with the above strategies and to take into account the legal and organisational provisions introduced.

The Strategy "Opolskie 2030" remains consistent with the SRD (table 7), particularly under the strategic objective "Residents ready for challenges and for creating an open community", which should support the implementation of objectives II and III of the SRD. The strategic objective "A climate change-resilient environment that is conducive to the region's development", due to the structure of the SRD, refers to two areas influencing the achievement of the objectives. In turn, "A smart economy that strengthens the region's competitiveness" corresponds to the provisions of specific objective I in the government strategy, which is "Sustainable economic growth increasingly based on knowledge, data and organisational excellence".

Table 7. Coherence of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" with the Strategy for Responsible Development 2020 (including the perspective to 2030)

Strategic objectives for the Strategy "Opolskie 2030"	Strategy for Responsible Development 2020		
	Specific objective:	Main areas of concentration	Areas affecting the achievement of the Strategy objectives
PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS – Residents ready for challenges and for creating an open community <u>Operational objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lasting social bonds ▪ Qualified population ▪ Well-developed and accessible services ▪ Safe region 	Specific objective II Socially sensitive and territorially balanced development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved access to services in response to demographic challenges ▪ Increased and improved use of human capital potential on the labour market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved quality of human capital ▪ Increased share of social capital in the social and economic development of the country
	Specific objective III An efficient state and institutions which favour growth, as well as social and economic inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ e-government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthened digital development of the country
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building of an integrated socioeconomic and spatial planning system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved state resilience to contemporary threats and the capacity to counteract them ▪ Increased level of security and public order as prerequisites for the country's development

Strategic objectives for the Strategy "Opolskie 2030"	Strategy for Responsible Development 2020		
	Specific objective:	Main areas of concentration	Areas affecting the achievement of the Strategy objectives
ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT – A climate change-resilient <u>Operational objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zero emissions in Opolskie ▪ Friendly environment with the rational management of resources ▪ Major natural and landscape assets 	–	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainability of the Polish energy system
	–	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing the potential of the environment for the benefit of the population and businesses
STRONG ECONOMY – A smart economy that strengthens the region's competitiveness <u>Operational objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperation embracing economy ▪ Strong industries ▪ Region with a well-developed transport network ▪ Recognised regional brand 	Specific objective I Sustainable economic growth increasingly based on knowledge, data and organisational excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased capacity of Polish industry to manage global competition 	–
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased innovativeness of Polish enterprises on domestic and foreign markets 	–
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structural transformation of the sector ▪ New forms of activity and cooperation ▪ Modern supp 	–
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased internationalisation of the Polish economy ▪ Increased exports of technologically advanced products 	–
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ e-government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strengthened digital development of the country
		–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased transport accessibility and improvement of the conditions of providing services related to the transport of goods and passengers

Source: own study

Evaluating the coherence of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" with the NSRD 2030 demonstrates the convergence of the regional goals with the first and second objective of the NSRD 2030 (table 8). It is important that the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" also includes areas for strategic intervention defined in the NSRD 2030 (and earlier in the SRD) in the territorial dimension of development, while providing for the synergy of national and regional policies.

Table 8. Coherence of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” with the National Strategy for Regional Development 2030

Strategic objectives for the Strategy “Opolskie 2030”	National Strategy for Regional Development 2030		
	Specific objective:	Lines of action	Lines of action – details
PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS – Residents ready for challenges and creating an open community <u>Operational objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lasting social bonds ▪ Qualified population ▪ Well-developed and accessible services ▪ Safe region 	Objective 1 Improve the consistency of the country’s development in its social, economic, environmental and spatial dimensions	Combating crises in degraded areas	–
		Development of infrastructure supporting the provision of public services and enhancing the investment attractiveness of areas	Social infrastructure
	Objective 2 Strengthen the region’s competitive advantages	Development of human and social capital	Higher and vocational education
			Lifelong learning
Increasing labour market resources and the development of social capital			
ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT – A climate change-resilient environment that is conducive to development <u>Operational objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zero emissions in Opolskie ▪ Friendly environment and the rational management of resources ▪ Major natural and landscape assets 	Objective 1 Improve the consistency of the country’s development in its social, economic, environmental and spatial dimensions	Development of infrastructure supporting the provision of public services and enhancing the investment attractiveness of areas	Municipal infrastructure
STRONG ECONOMY – A smart economy that strengthens the region’s competitiveness <u>Operational objectives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperation-embracing economy ▪ Strong industries ▪ Region with a well-developed transport network ▪ Recognised regional brand 	Objective 1 Improve the consistency of the country’s development in its social, economic, environmental and spatial dimensions	Development of infrastructure supporting the provision of public services and enhancing the investment attractiveness of areas	Electronic communications infrastructure
			Transport infrastructure
	Objective 2 Strengthen the region’s competitive advantages	Promotion of entrepreneurship at regional and local levels	Services of business environment institution for SMEs
			Business support
			Support for the location of external investment
			Focus on innovation-support activities
Innovative development of the region and improvement of the regional smart specialisationsbased approach	Stimulation of innovation growth in the regions		

Source: own study

VOIVODSHIP SPECIALISATION

One of the key tasks for stimulating each region's development is to focus development policy on the areas of the economy that will lead to a regional competitive advantage. In an era of growing globalisation and technological progress, two levels of competition remain relevant: cost and quality.

Voivodship policy will aim to strengthen the qualitative competitiveness of the region, striving to achieve a high level of wages that attracts skilled workers, reduces the rate of migration abroad and attaches new residents to the region. Relatively simple, cheap and repetitive types of work will increasingly be replaced by automation.

Development policy aims to nurture specialisations that will make it possible to offer products and provide services that will be of higher quality than those offered by others. That is why, in accordance with the draft Regional Innovation Strategy of Opolskie Voivodship to 2030 (RIS OV 2030), there will be a continuation of activities falling within three types of specialisation (table 9):

- regional smart specialisations;
- potential smart specialisations;
- regional specialisations.

The identification of specialisations was conducted as part of parallel work related to drafting RIS OV 2030. At the first stage, based on previously drawn up documents from the current RIS OV 2020, as well as on the output of an expert panel, groups of technologies, products and processes in various areas of development of Opolskie Voivodship were defined. Then, measures were identified for creating innovative potential, the transmission of innovative products, and innovation creation, i.e. building supra-regional competitive advantages.

The classification of these specialisations was carried out according to the following assumptions. If a given group of technologies was present in the three phases of knowledge transfer, then it was classified as a smart specialisation. If a given group of technologies was present in two phases, then it was classified as a potential smart specialisation, whereas one occurrence classified a given group of technologies as a regional specialisation.

Table 9. Classification of groups of technologies in terms of specialisation

GROUPS OF TECHNOLOGIES, PRODUCTS	CREATION	TRANSITION	DISSEMINATION	TYPE OF SPECIALISATION
Chemical technologies (sustainable)				regional smart specialisations
Sustainable construction and wood-processing technologies				
Machine and metal industry technologies				
Agri-food technologies				
ICT sector				potential smart specialisations
Health and safety processes and products				
Intelligent mobility management systems				
Energy industry technologies (including RES)				regional specialisations
Circular economy				
Education based on new technologies and innovations				

Source: draft RIS OV 2030

A detailed definition of current and potential smart specialisations of Opolskie Voivodship, including an in-depth analysis of the medical services sector, will be provided in the new RIS OV 2030.

TERRITORIAL DIMENSION OF THE STRATEGY "OPOLSKIE 2030"

FUNCTIONAL AND SPATIAL STRUCTURE MODEL

Features of the Opolskie Voivodship space determine the possibilities for its social and economic development, while at the same time the space is shaped by socio-economic policy. Therefore, the strategy takes into account the territorial dimension both in the context of conditions and challenges in terms of creation of an optimal functional and spatial structure.

The present functional and spatial structure derives from diverse physical and geographical characteristics, as well as various activities taken to make use of them, and the result of historical geopolitical processes. The main elements of the functional-spatial structure are territorial (functional) units with various management characteristics (predispositions, limitations), different development goals (protective, stabilising, modernising, intensifying etc.) and different forms of socio-economic activity.

Development policy must be embedded in a spatial framework that will rationalise the undertaking of all socio-economic activities in the region, ensuring that the desired changes are achieved while maintaining the necessary balance between the economy, society and the environment.

In the Spatial Development Plan for Opolskie Voivodship, a model of polycentric development was adopted in view of the current development challenges. This model creates an opportunity to achieve a high level of spatial order, ensure competitiveness in relation to the external environment and eliminate adverse differences in living conditions within the region.

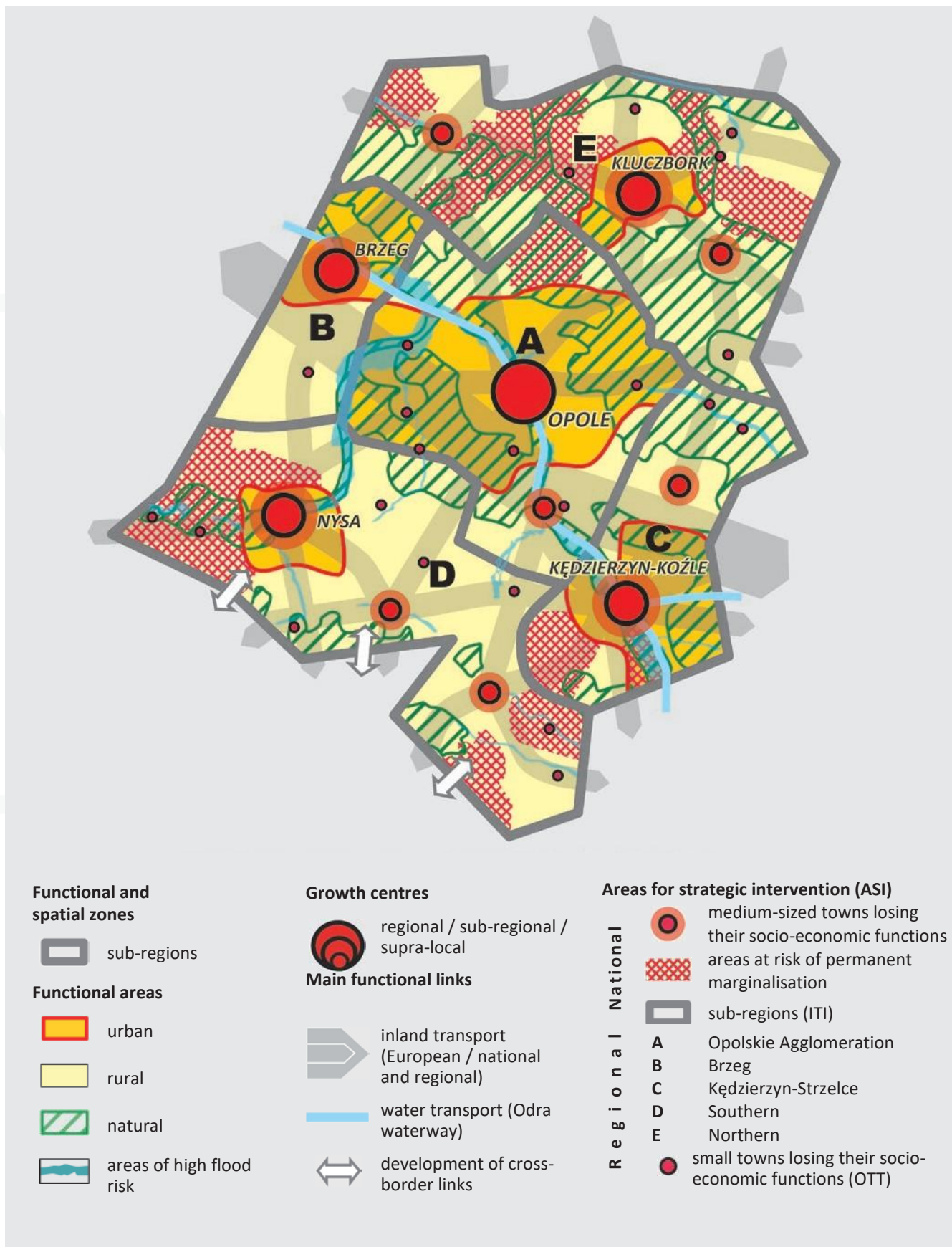
This model refers to the historically formed network of evenly distributed towns with a centrally located regional capital and a ring location of sub-regional towns, connected by transport corridors. Poviats play an important role in the polycentric model, supplementing the network of urban centres, in particular at the supra-local level.

The idea of the polycentric development model is based on the creation of a network of growth centres (towns), of various size and specialisation, that offer both employers and employees a wider choice of activities (polycentric deconcentration). The model takes the form of a nodal structure, with the Opolskie Agglomeration (OA) and its sub-regional and poviat centres as the places of concentration of socio-economic activity. An important role in this model is played by links both between towns and within functional areas, cooperation between towns and the complementarity of their functions.

In the socio-economic dimension, the concept of polycentric development translates into the following, including but not limited to:

- rationalisation of the costs of adapting public infrastructure and services,
- rationalisation of the cost of services and commuting to work,
- companies' opportunity to find a location that optimally combines market access or workforce resources with the cost of business operation,
- increased competitiveness of all growth centres,
- reduction in the polarisation of development.

In the Strategy "Opolskie 2030", while combining the socio-economic and spatial dimensions, the above mentioned assumptions have been included in the synthetic model of the functional and spatial structure (map 1).



Source: own study

Map 1. The model of functional and spatial structure for Opolskie Voivodship – synthesis

AREAS FOR STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

Development strategies at the national and regional level set out areas for strategic intervention (ASI) at which development activities and support in development programmes will be targeted. The ASI in Opolskie Voivodship coincide with functional and spatial structures within which functional integration takes place. They include existing or potential functional links and differ in terms of their specific social, economic and spatial conditions. Good experiences of cooperation, as well as the development problems and potentials indicated in the Diagnosis and the topicality of the challenges speak in favour of maintaining intervention in five ASIs:

1. ASI Opolskie Agglomeration Sub-region,
2. ASI Brzeg Sub-region,
3. ASI Kędzierzyn-Strzelce Sub-region,
4. ASI Northern Sub-region,
5. ASI Southern Sub-region.

At the same time, the voivodship development policy takes into account the ASI defined in the SRD and NSRD 2030. Some of the towns and municipalities in Opolskie Voivodship were included in two types of ASI:

- 1. ASI Medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic functions.** The delimitation of medium-sized towns prepared for the needs of the SRD lists 252 medium-sized towns which are losing their development functions, some of which have been listed in the NSRD 2030 as the national ASI¹¹. In Opolskie Voivodship, the group of towns affected by the consequences of political and socio-economic transformations (deindustrialisation, shrinkage of the economic base, depopulation and, as a consequence, the elimination of functions) includes all the towns with a population of over 20,000. The NSRD 2030 lists Brzeg, Namysłów, Nysa, Kędzierzyn-Koźle, Kluczbork, Krapkowice, Strzelce Opolskie and Prudnik (it should be emphasised that two important powiat centres, Głubczyce and Olesno, were not included in this classification).
- 2. ASI Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation.** The national ASI were determined on a list of problem areas, updated in 2019, which identified 667 municipalities at risk of marginalisation¹². Compared to the national average, there are relatively few in the Opolskie region, i.e. 15 municipalities. These are municipalities where social problems are accumulating (demographic old age, the outflow of inhabitants, limited access to services, low social activity, poor education levels and quality of school education, income poverty). A characteristic feature of these municipalities is their peripheral location (on the outskirts of the voivodship). In these areas, the NSRD 2030 includes the municipalities of Kamiennik, Otmuchów, Paczków, Pakosławice, Branice, Domaszowice, Świerczów, Wołczyn, Murów, Gorzów Śląski, Radłów, Cisek, Pawłowiczki, Baborów, and Wilków.

The units indicated at the government level do not cover all the voivodship's towns and municipalities that require support. In accordance with the delimitation carried out as part of a Polish Academy of Sciences study entitled "Determination and typology of medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic

11 *Delimitacja miast średnich tracących funkcje społeczno-gospodarcze*, Przemysław Śleszyński, Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning at the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw 2016 and its 2019 update. The Ministry responsible for development included 139 towns in the national ASI.

12 *Aktualizacja delimitacji obszarów problemowych na 2018 rok*, Przemysław Śleszyński, Institute of Geography and Spatial Planning at the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw 2019. The Ministry responsible for development included 755 municipalities in the national ASI.

functions" (*Wyznaczenie i typologia miast średnich tracących funkcje społeczno-gospodarcze*), in which all Polish towns were analysed regardless of their population size, every town in the Opolskie voivodship, including all its towns with a population of below 20,000, met the delimitation criteria. Therefore, the voivodship policy will take into account the necessity for the complementarity of assistance in relation to selected areas of the voivodship. It will be particularly important to support small urban centres which are also threatened by the loss of their socio-economic functions, and which, at the same time, are also centres of supra-local development and have not been listed in the NSRD 2030 for support, similarly to medium-sized towns.

Support will be provided through two types of instruments:

1. Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) – this instrument will be dedicated to sub-regions recognised as ASI of regional importance;
2. Other Territorial Tools (OTT) – an instrument designed for all other territories, with a preference for small towns and a group of rural municipalities with development problems, for which no additional support was provided in the national ASI.

Development policy in the ASI will require a differentiated approach, resulting from both the specificity of the ASI and its internal diversity:

- 1. ASI Opolskie Agglomeration Sub-region** – the area with the largest concentration of social and economic potential and problems in terms of society, economy and environment. The OA includes the territorially separate set of 21 municipalities, including the capital city of Opole and functionally connected towns and villages (in terms of economy, society, communications, infrastructure, and environment). It has common organisational (Opolskie Agglomeration Association) and technical systems, as well as common development goals, defined in the supra-local strategy. It is characterised by a high level of urbanisation and a concentration of administrative, industrial, service and residential functions. The OA, located between the metropolises of Wrocław and Upper Silesia, can benefit from its location, but also requires strengthening in terms of competitiveness. As one of the 18 urban functional areas (UFA) in Poland, it constitutes an important element of Poland's settlement structure. The sustainable development of the region ensures the strengthening and accessibility of cultural, scientific, university and educational functions located in Opole, modern health care infrastructure and quality of life, public services (in particular administrative), supra-regional transport functions, as well as sports and recreation. The Sub-region in question includes the town of Krapkowice which was classified as a medium-sized town losing its socio-economic functions. Murów is another town within the Sub-region which was identified in the NSRD 2030 as threatened with permanent marginalisation. Other smaller towns which belong to the OA sub-region – Gogolin, Niemodlin, Ozimek, Zdzieszowice, Prószków and Tułowice – will be supported as centres losing their socio-economic functions. Taking into account the experience, needs and declared will for further cooperation in the OA as the main centre of growth, innovation and science, projects that aim at integrating the Sub-region should be undertaken on an even greater scale than before. This will contribute to increasing the competitiveness not only of this area, but of the entire region.
- 2. ASI Brzeg Sub-region** – an area thus far dominated by agriculture, at present developing new non-agricultural functions which require balancing high space assets with the needs of modern industry, settlement and agriculture. In this Sub-region, the engine of development is the city of Brzeg with its UFA, with a developing economic zone, where new enterprises are already thriving. Good transport links with the OA, both by road and rail, may be an asset for the development of the Sub-region. This centre has been identified at the national policy level as a town which is losing its socio-economic functions. The Sub-region also includes the town of Grodków, which is also included in the group of small towns which are losing their socio-economic functions and require support under the voivodship policy.

- 3. ASI Kędzierzyn-Strzelce Sub-region** – characterised by high development potential and complex problems, but also functional diversity, starting from the concentration of industrial production potential to areas with the highest natural and landscape assets. The Sub-region includes municipalities which require different types of support. The towns of Kędzierzyn-Koźle and Strzelce Opolskie have been identified at the national level as medium-sized centres which are losing their socio-economic functions. This Sub-region also includes municipalities threatened by permanent marginalisation in the NSRD 2030 (Cisek and Pawłowiczki). The Sub-region also includes small towns which are losing their socio-economic functions – Kolonowskie, Leśnica, Ujazd, and Zawadzkie. The advantage of the Sub-region, which can be used to an even greater extent, is the fact that it includes areas of the Katowice Special Economic Zone. Their attractiveness is increased by the proximity of the A1 and A4 motorway junction. The potential of the Sub-region is the River Odra and the Gliwice Canal, which offer the possibility for creating new transport routes and developing industry based on cargo handling terminals or logistics centres.
- 4. ASI Northern Sub-region** – an area with smaller urban centres and a large share of rural areas with the most difficult developmental situation, as well as the largest share among the Sub-regions of municipalities with the lowest level of access to goods and services (Domaszowice, Gorzów Śląski, Lasowice Wielkie). The eastern part of the Sub-region has a long tradition of internationally-recognised furniture making. Two medium-sized towns, Kluczbork and Namysłów, have been identified at the national level as centres which require support (the third important urban centre of the Sub-region, Olesno, was not included in this group). There are an additional four small towns in the Sub-region which require support due to the loss of their socio-economic functions: Byczyna, Dobrodzień, Praszka, and Wołczyn. The following rural municipalities have been identified as intervention areas at the national level: Wilków, Domaszowice, Świerczów, Wołczyn, Gorzów Śląski, and Radłów.
- 5. ASI Southern Sub-region** (cross-border) – characterised by difficult transport accessibility to the centre of the region, dominated by agriculture, with development barriers resulting from its natural mountain and foothill areas and historical conditions (state border). These conditions have had an impact on the slower pace of development in the region, which requires additional support to level up development differences, and which should be largely based on the use of human capital development opportunities (e.g. based on Nysa's academic functions). Its cross-border location, development of cooperation within Euroregions and greater use of tourist assets may be an opportunity for development. Two towns in the Sub-region, Nysa and Prudnik, have been categorised as national ASI in the NSRD 2030, as medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic functions (Głubczyce was not included in this document). In this Sub-region there are also municipalities that are threatened by permanent marginalisation: Baborów, Branice, Kamiennik, Otmuchów, Paczków, Pakosławice and other municipalities with the most difficult developmental situation (Biała, Korfantów, Łambinowice, Skoroszyce, Kietrz, and Branice). Specific support instruments will also be directed to small towns in the Sub-region: Baborów, Kietrz, Głogówek, Biała, Korfantów, Głuchołazy, Otmuchów, and Paczków.

SPATIAL POLICY OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE AREAS FOR STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

The functional-spatial structure model reflects the territorial dimension of the planned development activities, indicating areas for the implementation of a specific spatial policy. This policy is addressed to functional areas, i.e. areas distinguished by intensive and open systems of social, economic or natural ties determined by geographical features. Recognising the embedding of the development policy in the functionally diverse space of the region as a way to effectively shape the desired transformation of the structure, the model indicates the objectives of and recommendations for spatial development.

The recommendations serve the spatial development goals of the region. At the same time, they take into account the arrangements of the national and regional documents specifying the principles, objectives and lines of action related to the management or use of environmental resources, such as the Water Management Plan for the Odra river basin, the Risk Management Plan for the Odra river basin, the Plan for Counteracting the Effects of Drought in the river basins, the Environmental Protection Programme for Opolskie Voivodship, the National Plan for the Protection of Monuments, the Programme for the Protection of Monuments in Opolskie Voivodship and others. The recommendations include guidelines for the lines of action that should be taken into account by the entities which develop planning documents within the boundaries of Opolskie Voivodship.

The Strategy "Opolskie 2030" assigns a special role to the ASI, i.e. those functional areas that require targeted public intervention or regulatory solutions.

The intervention and regulation measures in the ASI should be carried out in compliance with the objectives and recommendations of the spatial development (tables 10–14) and the principles of implementation of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" (p. 60). This means that at each level of development planning (local, supra-local), the authorities preparing planning documents should take into account the compliance of the proposed solutions with the objectives and recommendations of the spatial development and the principles for implementing the Strategy "Opolskie 2030".

The voivodship spatial policy objectives are fully consistent with the adopted strategic objectives and operational objectives. The consistency expressed in relations between the operational objectives of the Strategy and the spatial policy objectives is illustrated in table 15.

Table 10. Spatial policy objectives and recommendations – ASI Opolskie Agglomeration Sub-region

Spatial policy objectives	Medium-sized towns losing socio-economic functions	Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation	Urban functional area of the voivodship capital – Opole	Small towns losing their socio-economic functions
Recommendations				
Development of metropolitan functions				
Shaping spaces strengthening regional and national functions			*	
Creation of conditions for development of public transport	*	*	*	*
Development of economic mobilisation zones	*	*	*	*
Creation of conditions for the development of modern industry, business services and the IT sector	*		*	*
Shaping the space for the development of the R&D sector and technology parks	*		*	
Creation of conditions for the development of business incubators	*			
Promotion of comprehensive revitalisation solutions	*	*	*	*
Strengthening of functional and spatial links				
Shaping spaces strengthening regional and national functions			*	
Creation of conditions for development of an integrated public transport system	*	*	*	*

Spatial policy objectives					
	Recommendations	Medium-sized towns losing socio-economic functions	Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation	Urban functional area of the voivodship capital – Opole	Small towns losing their socio-economic functions
	Construction, development and modernisation of transport infrastructure (road and rail)	*	*	*	*
	Construction, development and modernisation of technical infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Construction, development and modernisation of energy infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Shaping systems of cycle paths and routes, together with associated infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Development of connections of the natural system	*	*	*	*
	Strengthening the competitiveness of development				
	Shaping and implementation of a common spatial policy	*	*	*	*
	Shaping attractive public spaces	*	*	*	*
	Construction, development and modernisation of technical infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Development of economic activity zones	*	*	*	*
	Creation of conditions for development of tourism functions	*	*	*	*
	Increasing access to infrastructure (social and technical)	*	*	*	*
	Promotion of comprehensive revitalisation solutions	*	*	*	*
	Increasing the importance of the social aspect in the revitalisation process	*	*	*	*
	Strengthening the energy potential	*	*	*	*
	Construction, development and modernisation of energy infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Increasing energy efficiency	*	*	*	*
	Increasing share of renewable energy sources (RES)	*	*	*	*
	Ecological upgrading of the economy	*	*	*	*
	Strengthening space resilience to natural hazards	*	*	*	*
	Increasing water resources availability and drought resilience	*	*	*	*
	Ongoing maintenance of flood control infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Preventive protection of areas with a particular flood hazard and flood risk in the spatial development plans	*	*	*	*
	Ensuring flood safety for residents				
	Implementation of technical measures related to reservoirs and watercourses	*	*	*	*
	Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and landscape assets				
	Improvement of air quality	*	*	*	*
	Reduction in noise emissions and improvement of the acoustic climate	*	*	*	*
	Shaping the space for modern waste management	*	*	*	*
	Protection of valuable natural and landscape areas	*	*	*	*
	Shaping of a coherent natural system				
	Development of natural system interrelationships	*	*	*	*
	Improving spatial order				
	Shaping attractive public spaces	*	*	*	*
	Increasing public participation in planning activities	*	*	*	*
	Reduction of the dispersion of development	*	*	*	*
	Implementation of solutions to improve public safety	*	*	*	*
	Protection of historic urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*
	Multifunctional development of rural areas				
	Shaping the space for different forms of economic activity		*	*	*
	Protection of the high potential of agricultural production space				
	Protection of the most valuable and productive soils from urbanisation pressure		*	*	

Source: own study

Table 11. Spatial policy objectives and recommendations – ASI Brzeg Sub-region

Spatial policy objectives	Medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic functions	Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation	Urban functional area of the sub-regional centre – Brzeg	Small towns losing their socio-economic functions
Recommendations				
Shaping of a coherent natural system				
Development of natural system interrelationships	*	n.a.	*	*
Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and landscape assets				
Development of modern waste management	*	n.a.	*	*
Reduction in noise emission and improvement of acoustic climate	*	n.a.	*	*
Improvement of air quality	*	n.a.	*	*
Protection of valuable natural and landscape areas	*	n.a.	*	*
Protection of the high potential of agricultural production space				
Protection of the most valuable and productive soils from urbanisation pressure		n.a.	*	
Prevention of soil erosion	*	n.a.	*	*
Multifunctional development of rural areas				
Shaping the space for various forms of economic activity		n.a.	*	*
Multifunctional development of key development centres				
Shaping the space for the development of urban functions	*	n.a.	*	
Strengthening of cultural functions				
Protection of historic urban and rural planning systems	*	n.a.	*	*
Establishment of historical monuments	*	n.a.	*	*
Creation of cultural parks	*	n.a.	*	*
Strengthening the competitiveness of development				
Construction, development and modernisation of technical infrastructure	*	n.a.	*	*
Creation of conditions for development of tourist functions	*	n.a.	*	*
Increasing access to social infrastructure	*	n.a.	*	*
Promotion of comprehensive revitalisation solutions	*	n.a.	*	*
Strengthening space resilience to natural hazards				
Ongoing maintenance of flood control infrastructure	*	n.a.	*	*
Preventive protection of areas with a particular flood hazard and flood risk in the spatial development plans	*	n.a.	*	*
Increasing availability of water resources and drought resilience	*	n.a.	*	*
Strengthening the energy potential				
Ecological upgrading of the economy	*	n.a.	*	*
Strengthening of functional and spatial links				
Construction, development and modernisation of transport infrastructure (road and rail)	*	n.a.	*	*
Development of cycling path and trail systems with accompanying infrastructure	*	n.a.	*	*
Creation of conditions for development of public transport	*	n.a.	*	*
Ensuring flood safety for residents				
Implementation of technical measures related to reservoirs and watercourses	*	n.a.	*	*
Improving spatial order				
Shaping attractive public spaces	*	n.a.	*	*
Increasing public participation in planning activities	*	n.a.	*	*
Reduction in the dispersion of development	*	n.a.	*	*
Implementation of solutions to improve public safety	*	n.a.	*	*
Protection of historic urban and rural systems	*	n.a.	*	*

Source: own study

Table 12. Spatial policy objectives and recommendations – ASI Kędzierzyn-Strzelce Sub-region

Spatial policy objectives	Medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic functions	Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation	Urban functional area of the sub-regional centre – Kędzierzyn-Koźle	Small towns losing their socio-economic functions
Recommendations				
Shaping of a coherent natural system				
Development of natural system interrelationships	*	*	*	*
Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and landscape assets				
Development of modern waste management	*	*	*	*
Protection of valuable natural and landscape areas	*	*	*	*
Reduction in noise emissions and improvements in the acoustic climate	*		*	*
Improvement of air quality	*	*	*	*
Protection of the high potential of agricultural production space				
Protection of the most valuable and productive soils against urbanisation pressure		*	*	
Prevention of soil erosion	*	*	*	*
Multifunctional development of rural areas				
Shaping the space for different forms of economic activity		*	*	*
Multifunctional development of key development centres				
Shaping the space for the development of urban functions	*		*	
Strengthening of cultural functions				
Protection of historical urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*
Establishment of historical monuments	*	*	*	*
Establishment of cultural parks	*	*	*	*
Strengthening the competitiveness of development				
Construction, development and modernisation of technical infrastructure	*	*	*	*
Creation of conditions for development of tourism functions	*	*	*	*
Increasing access to social infrastructure	*	*	*	*
Promotion of comprehensive revitalisation solutions	*	*	*	*
Strengthening space resilience to natural hazards				
Ongoing maintenance of flood control infrastructure	*	*	*	*
Preventive protection of areas with a particular flood hazard and flood risk in the spatial development plans	*	*	*	*
Increasing the availability of water resources and drought resistance	*	*	*	*
Strengthening the energy potential				
Ecological upgrading of the economy	*	*	*	*
Strengthening of functional and spatial links				
Construction, development and modernisation of transport infrastructure (road and rail)				
Development of systems of cycling paths and routes, together with associated infrastructure	*	*	*	*
Modernisation and extension of the Odra River Waterway				
Creation of conditions for the development of public	*	—	*	*
Ensuring flood safety for residents				
Implementation of technical measures related to reservoirs and watercourses	*	*	*	*
Improving spatial order				
Shaping attractive public spaces	*	*	*	*
Increasing public participation in planning activities				
Reduction in the dispersion of development	*	*	*	*
Implementation of solutions to improve public safety	*	*	*	*
Protection of historic urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*

Source: own study

Table 13. Spatial policy objectives and recommendations – ASI Northern Sub-region

Spatial policy objectives	Recommendations	Medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic functions	Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation	Urban functional area of the sub-regional centre – Kluczbork	Small towns losing their socio-economic functions
Shaping of a coherent natural system					
	Development of natural system interrelationships	*	*	*	*
Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and landscape assets					
	Development of modern waste management	*	*	*	*
	Protection of valuable natural and landscape areas	*	*	*	*
	Reduction in noise emissions and improvements in the acoustic climate	*		*	*
	Improvements in air quality	*	*	*	*
Protection of the high potential of agricultural production space					
	Protection of the most valuable and productive soils against urbanisation pressure		*	*	
	Counteracting soil erosion			*	
Multifunctional development of rural areas					
	Shaping the space for different forms of economic activity		*	*	*
Multifunctional development of key development centres					
	Shaping the space for the development of urban functions	*		*	
Strengthening of cultural functions					
	Protection of historical urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*
	Establishment of historical monuments	*	*	*	*
	Establishment of cultural parks	*	*	*	*
Strengthening the competitiveness of development					
	Construction, development and modernisation of technical infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Creation of conditions for the development of tourism functions	*	*	*	*
	Increasing access to social infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Promotion of comprehensive revitalisation solutions	*	*	*	*
Strengthening space resilience to natural hazards					
	Ongoing maintenance of flood control infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Preventive protection of areas with a particular flood hazard and flood risk in the spatial development plans	*	*	*	*
	Increasing availability of water resources and drought resistance	*	*	*	*
Strengthening the energy potential					
	Ecological upgrading of the economy	*	*	*	*
Strengthening of functional and spatial links					
	Construction, development and modernisation of transport infrastructure (road and rail)	*	*	*	*
	Development of cycling paths and routes systems, together with associated infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Creation of conditions for the development of public transport	*		*	*
Ensuring flood safety for residents					
	Implementation of technical measures related to reservoirs and watercourses	*	*	*	*
Improving spatial order					
	Shaping attractive public spaces	*	*	*	*
	Increasing public participation in planning activities	*	*	*	*
	Reduction in the dispersion of development	*	*	*	*
	Implementation of solutions to improve public safety	*	*	*	*
	Protection of historic urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*

Source: own study

Table 14. Spatial policy objectives and recommendations – ASI Southern Sub-region

Spatial policy objectives	Recommendations	Medium-sized towns losing their socio-economic functions	Areas at risk of permanent marginalisation	Urban functional area of the sub-regional centre – Nysa	Small towns losing their socio-economic functions
Shaping of a coherent natural system					
	Development of natural system interrelationships	*	*	*	*
Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and landscape assets					
	Development of modern waste management	*	*	*	*
	Protection of valuable natural and landscape areas	*	*	*	*
	Reduction in noise emissions and improvements in the acoustic climate	*		*	*
	Improvements in air quality	*	*	*	*
Protection of the high potential of agricultural production space					
	Protection of the most valuable and productive soils against urbanisation pressure		*	*	
	Counteracting soil erosion	*	*	*	*
Multifunctional development of rural areas					
	Shaping the space for different forms of economic activity		*	*	*
Multifunctional development of key development centres					
	Shaping the space for the development of urban functions	*		*	
Strengthening of cultural functions					
	Protection of historical urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*
	Establishment of historical monuments	*	*	*	*
	Establishment of cultural parks	*	*	*	*
Strengthening the competitiveness of development					
	Construction, development and modernisation of technical infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Creation of conditions for the development of tourism functions	*	*	*	*
	Increasing access to social infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Promotion of comprehensive revitalisation solutions	*	*	*	*
Strengthening space resilience to natural hazards					
	Ongoing maintenance of flood control infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Preventive protection of areas with a particular flood hazard and flood risk in the spatial development plans	*	*	*	*
	Increasing availability of water resources and drought resistance	*	*	*	*
Strengthening the energy potential					
	Ecological upgrading of the economy	*	*	*	*
Strengthening of functional and spatial links					
	Construction, development and modernisation of transport infrastructure (road and rail)	*	*	*	*
	Development of cycling paths and routes systems, together with associated infrastructure	*	*	*	*
	Creation of conditions for the development of public transport	*		*	*
Ensuring flood safety for residents					
	Implementation of technical measures related to reservoirs and watercourses	*	*	*	*
Improving spatial order					
	Shaping attractive public spaces	*	*	*	*
	Increasing public participation in planning activities	*	*	*	*
	Reduction in the dispersion of development	*	*	*	*
	Implementation of solutions to improve public safety	*	*	*	*
	Protection of historic urban and rural systems	*	*	*	*

Source: own study

The effectiveness of the development policy will be supported by linking the strategic and operational objectives with the spatial policy objectives. Table 15 illustrates both the occurrence of these relationships and their nature. The results show numerous direct connections, which should result in a strengthening of the Strategy's "Opolskie 2030" spatial dimension by giving the operational objectives additional importance in the form of the expected spatial effects.

Table 15. Relationships between operational objectives and spatial policy objectives

Spatial policy objectives	Operational objectives (in the order in which they have been presented)											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Shaping of a coherent natural system												
Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment and landscape assets												
Protection of the high potential of agricultural production space												
Improving spatial order												
Development of metropolitan functions												
Multifunctional development of rural areas												
Multifunctional development of key development centres												
Strengthening of cultural functions												
Strengthening the competitiveness of development												
Strengthening space resilience to natural hazards												
Strengthening the energy potential												
Strengthening of functional and spatial links												
Ensuring flood safety for residents												

	Strong direct link between objectives
	Direct link between objectives
	Indirect link between objectives
	Weak/potential indirect link between objectives

- 1 – Lasting social bonds;
- 2 – Qualified population;
- 3 – Well-developed and accessible services;
- 4 – Safe region;
- 5 – Zero emissions in Opolskie
- 6 – Friendly environment and sustainable management of resources;
- 7 – Major natural and landscape assets;
- 8 – Cooperation-embracing economy;
- 9 – Strong industries;
- 10 – Region with a well-developed transport network;
- 11 – Recognised regional brand.

Source: own study

IMPLEMENTATION SYSTEM FOR THE STRATEGY “OPOLSKIE 2030”

IMPLEMENTATION RULES

Implementation of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” will take place in accordance with the principles serving the use of internal potentials, the elimination of intra-regional development disparities, ensuring the socio-economic and spatial cohesion of the region, and inclusion of society in the policies implemented in the region. Because there are strong feedbacks between socio-economic and spatial development, the Strategy’s implementation principles also include those of spatial development.

The implementation principles for the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” are as follows:

- **the cohesion principle** – implementation will take place in accordance with the objectives and directions of European cohesion policy and national development policy, and its implementation will be carried out through the Operational Programme and other regional development programmes;
- **the rationality principle** – the development policy will be carried out in accordance with economic rationality, including the requirement to adjust the undertakings to the functional capacity of the area and the financial capacities of the authorities of a relevant territorial local government unit, and public intervention will be directed to specific territories and priority areas which require support;
- **the sustainable development principle** – the economic development of the voivodship will take place while ensuring social, ecological and spatial balance, and the prosperity of residents will increase in the harmonious relationship between humans and nature;
- **the openness principle** – allows the implementation of actions and initiatives to achieve Strategy objectives even if they have not been overtly mentioned at the development stage;
- **the integration principle** – consists in the simultaneous consideration of the following dimensions in social, economic and spatial development activities, which allows better adjustment of public interventions to the local conditions and simultaneously increases their effectiveness;
- **the subsidiarity principle** – assumes that pro-development activities will be carried out as closely as possible to the inhabitants by the entities that guarantee their highest effectiveness, and regional authorities will be involved only where the effectiveness of the lower administrative level is uncertain;
- **the social sensitivity principle** – the actions taken build social solidarity and a sense of regional community, do not disadvantage any social group and serve to limit social exclusion;
- **equal opportunities (women and men) and non-discrimination principles** – everyone, regardless of gender, age, degree of disability, skin colour or ethnic origin, religion or belief, or sexual orientation, will be targeted by the Strategy and can participate on equal terms in the activities undertaken to implement the development objectives; will have equal rights and responsibilities and equal access to resources (financial resources, development opportunities) that they can use; everyone will be assigned the same social value, which in effect should guarantee freedom of action within the boundaries of the applicable law without restrictions based on stereotypes;
- **the principle of partnership and cooperation** – involves a possibly wide group of public and non-public entities and the region’s population in the implementation of the voivodship development goals. This cooperation will be based on mutual trust, will build social dialogue and consensus concerning important issues for the future of the region and will increase the effectiveness of pro-development activities;

- **the spatial order principle** – manifests itself in the implementation of effective and rational spatial and planning policy, will make it possible to achieve a harmonious whole, will take into account all conditions including the functional, socio-economic, environmental, cultural and compositional-aesthetic. In particular, this principle applies to the following spatial policy actions:
 - ✓ concentration of economic activity in areas with a particular developmental capacity;
 - ✓ concentration of housing and public services in the main centres of the settlement network;
 - ✓ the formation of compact urbanised areas;
 - ✓ functional integration in sub-regions and urban functional areas;
 - ✓ support for functional links, including transport links in the Opolskie Agglomeration with sub-regional and supra-local centres;
 - ✓ increased protection of the system for open areas (agricultural, water, forest, nature, landscape) which support climate adaptation;
 - ✓ a reduction in the negative environmental and climate impacts of the actions taken;
 - ✓ the pursuit to eliminate communication/infrastructure barriers;
 - ✓ protection of the public interest.

IMPLEMENTATION SYSTEM

The Voivodship Local Government Act stipulates that voivodship development strategy should be implemented through development programmes, regional operational programme, a programme to implement the partnership agreement, a territorial contract, sectoral contract and programme contract.

The way the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” is implemented determines the effectiveness and efficiency of achieving the assumed strategic objectives. By 2030, a new model for its implementation is planned.

The local government of the voivodship has a major impact on the process of the Strategy’s “Opolskie 2030” implementation:

- cohesion policy and other EU policies implemented in the region;
- development policy implemented by the state together with sectoral policies;
- the economic condition nationally and internationally;
- the stability of legislation;
- financial resources for statutory tasks entrusted to the voivodship local governments;
- the trust of public partners and their willingness to cooperate for the benefit of the whole region;
- the involvement of non-state actors and organisations in pro-development activities;
- social transformations connected with civilisational progress, exclusion and threats, including epidemics.

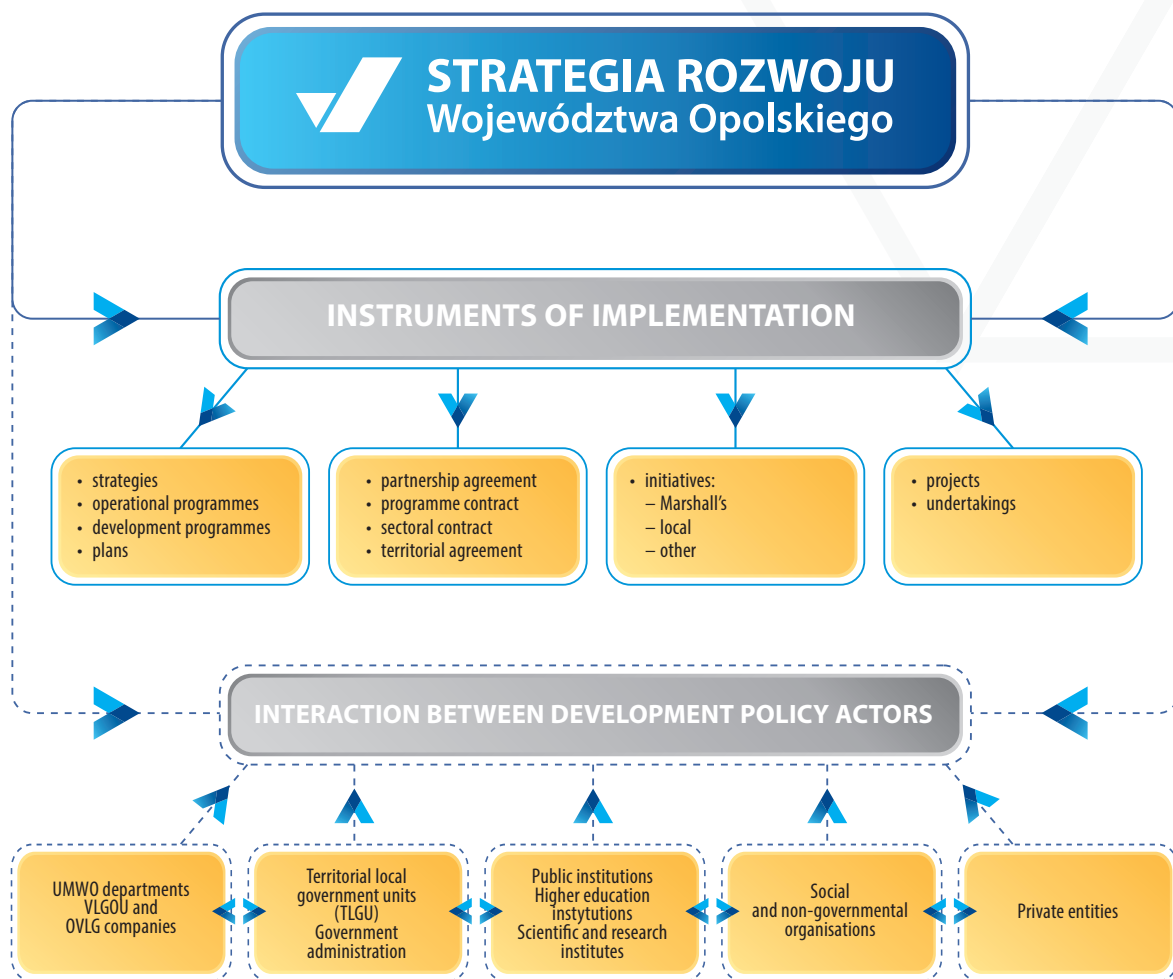
The process for implementing the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” has been planned with the key involvement of the departments UMWO and VLGOU, as they should play the role of “coordinators” of most of the programmes aimed at its implementation. They have been active participants in the strategic process in which the objectives and lines of action were identified, and are the main implementers of the Strategy’s provisions. Their annual work plans together with planned budget expenditures serve as an effective link between its provisions and the development policy pursued by the regional authorities. In individual substantive areas, the possibility for implementing projects and one-year or multi annual undertakings is envisaged, as well as designing and implementing development programmes aimed at counteracting their problems and difficulties.

Multilevel and harmonious cooperation with the government, public institutions and local governments is another element of the Strategy's "Opolskie 2030" implementation model and it significantly affects the effectiveness and efficiency of activities under the regional development policy. State support for an integrated approach to development will also systematically address the problems in the identified national and regional ASI.

An important role in the model was also foreseen for cooperation with non-governmental organisations which for years now have supported the voivodship local government in the implementation of public tasks and have delivered them at grassroots level.

The model also considers private entities which are ready to cooperate with the local government administration as partners in which both sides gain tangible benefits and work for the harmonious social and economic growth of the region. A good example of such cooperation may be the stimulation of investment activity through loans and guarantees or initiatives implemented under corporate social responsibility, which increases the welfare of the region's inhabitants.

The effectiveness of the model depends on the good cooperation and involvement of all its participants. This is of particular importance in the implementation of the regional operational programme, the main instrument for implementing the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and other pro-development undertakings such as the Marshall's initiatives or strategic projects.



Source: own study

Figure 7. Model of the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030"

IMPLEMENTING ENTITIES

The key issue for the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” implementation system is the identification of its participants. The entity responsible for the implementation and achievement of its objectives is OVLG, which is operationally represented by the Board of Opolskie Voivodship (BOV).

Local government services represented by departments in the UMWO, VLGOU and the OVLG companies are adopting the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” as a priority in their activities. Through development programmes, multi-annual undertakings and annual work plans, they are implementing the objectives and directions set out in it, making a fundamental contribution to their achievement by 2030.

In accordance with the adopted principles of partnership, cooperation and subsidiarity, Strategy “Opolskie 2030” implementation involves public, social and private partners, i.e. in first place TLGU, universities, NGOs, business organisations and socio-economic institutions. The implementation of its provisions is also supported by all initiatives and undertakings carried out in a perspective broader than regional, i.e. interregional, foreign and cross-border cooperation. This allows the addressees of the activities to be reached directly and efficiently and the objectives and lines of action to be disseminated effectively.

Central government is an important partner for OVLG in the implementation of national objectives implemented regionally. Good cooperation with central government is conducive to the region’s harmonious development, allows EU funds to be spent efficiently, and subsidies and other resources to be obtained to carry out the development policy.

INSTRUMENTS OF IMPLEMENTATION

How effective the implementation of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” will be depends on the appropriate selection of instruments and the mechanisms used to solve problems occurring in the region. The catalogue of instruments is open, which allows new planning, programming and legal solutions to be introduced into the implementation system. The main instruments include:

✓ **planning:**

- regional sectoral strategies – strategic documents drawn up on a range of topics and indicating the directions of development in a selected socio-economic field; an example of this type of strategy is a regional innovation strategy or a regional strategy for social policy;
- sub-regional development strategies – strategic documents indicating the directions of development in a given sub-regional area, compliant with the voivodship spatial development plan and serving to increase the effectiveness of public intervention in a given territory;
- plans – short- and medium-term documents introducing concrete concepts of activities in a selected socio-economic domain;

✓ **legal¹³:**

- partnership agreement – defines the conditions, objectives and directions for using funds from the EU budget, developed with the participation of social and economic partners and approved by the EC;
- programme contract – defines the directions and conditions for co-financing a programme aimed at implementing the partnership agreement within the scope of cohesion policy, developed by the Board of the Voivodship, including priority undertakings implemented within this programme;
- sectoral contract – specifies the method of implementation, including the financing of development programmes devised by the relevant ministers within the scope of a territorially-focused intervention;
- territorial agreement – defines, in particular, priority projects for the development of the area covered by the agreement;

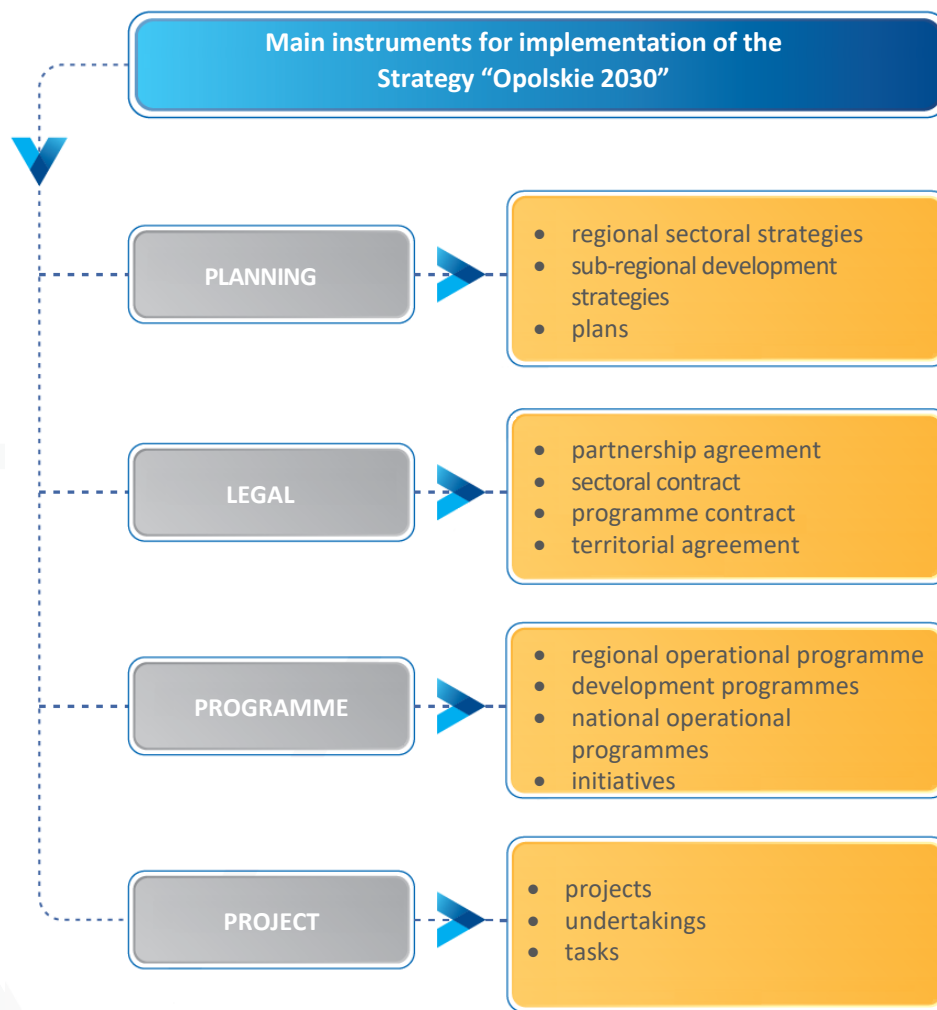
✓ **programme:**

- regional operational programme – a document of an operational nature setting out areas and priorities consistent with EU development policy, in which the Board of the Voivodship takes measures for the development of the region; the legal basis for this programme is the Principles of Development Act, in accordance with which the programme is financed from the resources of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund (CF);
- development programmes – operational documents which have their legal basis in the Voivodship Local Government Act; these cover a range of topics and detail the Main Strategy; they are financed from the voivodship budget and other available public financing sources;
- national operational programmes – documents consistent with EU development policy, the implementation and management of which is the responsibility of the ministry in charge of development and which cover the entire country, financed from EU funds;
- initiatives – undertakings financed by funds at the disposal of local governments and involving residents in the process of the identification, selection and implementation of specific projects for the benefit of local communities, e.g. the Rural Area Renewal Programme, the Marshall's Civic Budget or the Marshall's Village Initiative;

✓ **project:**

- projects, undertakings, tasks – strategic and priority undertakings of hard and soft character (investment and non-investment), thematic or horizontal, implemented in the region and serving to improve the residents' quality of life.

13 Development policy instruments indicated in the National Strategy for Regional Development 2030.



Source: own study

Figure 8. Main instruments for implementation of the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030"

IMPLEMENTATION FINANCING

Activities described in the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" will be financed by funds from various sources, which increases the options for implementation and the effectiveness of interventions undertaken in the region.

A precise definition and detailed description of measures for the implementation of the development strategy is difficult due to the general and referential nature of the document, the details of which, especially as regards financing, are provided by the implementation instruments. The Voivodship Local Government Act stipulates that voivodship development strategy should be implemented through development programmes, a regional operational programme, a programme to implement the partnership agreement, a territorial contract, sectoral contract and programme contract. Most of the documents mentioned are drawn up by central governmental and the funds for their implementation remain at the disposal of sectoral ministries.

Financing the pro-development measures indicated in the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was therefore planned, while considering the following issues:

- ongoing agreements on the shape of the next financial perspective of the EU, and thus the lack of certainty about the size of the allocation of EU funds for Poland and the Opolskie region under the Multiannual Financial Framework of the EU;

- legal uncertainty as to the implementation of solutions concerning the country's development policy in relation to the regions defined in NSRD 2030;
- lack of information on the amount of funds foreseen to be spent on the national regional development policy.

The Strategy "Opolskie 2030" will be financed from three sources:

- foreign public funds, primarily from EU funds and other European instruments and mechanisms;
- national and regional public resources including the voivodship budget, special purpose funds and state subsidies, resources for the development policy defined in the NSRD 2030, as well as local government budgets;
- private funds.

Foreign public funds

The most important measures in this category are those defined by EC regulations, i.e. measures from the following funds:

- the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), including territorial cooperation (Interreg),
- the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+),
- the Cohesion Fund (CF),
- the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF),
- the Just Transition Fund (JTF),
- the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF),
- the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

These funds will contribute to the budgets of various European programmes and initiatives, including operational programmes implemented at a national and regional European level. The regional operational programme – developed, negotiated and managed by the BOV – is of the utmost importance for the development policy in the region. The following funds may also be used to finance regional development policy:

- European instruments such as, for example, Horizon Europe, Life, Erasmus+ and others;
- the European Investment Bank (EIB), which provides finance for projects to meet EU objectives, mainly through loans, joint financing and advice, as well as technical assistance;
- non-repayable foreign aid under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism;
- the World Bank, which provides long-term loans, grants and technical assistance to combat poverty and finance development in health care, education, environmental protection or infrastructure development.

According to the Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021–2027, the cohesion policy budget for 2021–2027 amounts to **EUR 330.2 billion, including a EUR 75 billion allocation (in current prices) for Poland.**

According to the algorithm for the distribution of funds adopted by the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, in order to implement the European Funds for Opolskie 2021–2027 regional programme (EFO 2021–2027), Opolskie Voivodship will receive almost **EUR 921 million**, which should be increased by its own contribution of approx. 30%.

Moreover, bearing in mind that the funds in the regional programme are not the only source of investment financing, Opolskie Voivodship will also implement investments from national programmes for 2021–2027 and other national funds.

In addition, with the creation of the EU's EUR 750 billion Recovery and Resilience Facility (Next Generation), Poland can benefit from a total of EUR 58.1 billion under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. Taking into account the Polish Government's position, regional governments are to be directly involved in implementing investments for enterprises (microbusinesses and SMEs from the industries most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic), planning and land use reform and investments to increase the potential for sustainable water management in rural areas.

National, regional and local public funding

This category of funds primarily includes those at the direct disposal of regional authorities in the voivodship budget which come from their own revenues, plus general and earmarked subsidies from the state budget. The voivodship budget and the multiannual financial forecast associated with the objectives and actions identified in the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" allow an autonomous regional development policy to be devised and carried out.

It is assumed that an important element of these financing sources is the state budget funds transferred between the central and voivodship governments, i.e. under the programme contract, sector contract and territorial agreement, indicated in the NSRD 2030. Their aim is to strengthen the integrated approach to development and cooperation at local, regional and supra-regional levels. They will be used to a significant extent to support ASI, both national and regional.

Local governments and public finance sector entities also participate in financing the implementation of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030", primarily in the form of their own contributions to projects co-financed by EU funds. All expenditures from this pool of funds, transferred to pro-development activities, serve directly or indirectly to achieve the assumed objectives and improve the quality of life in the region.

This category of funding sources may include funds to co-finance projects or implement projects previously agreed with the relevant governmental unit. In the financial perspective 2014–2020 there were approx. EUR 22 million earmarked for the co-financing of projects from the ESF under ROP WO 2014–2020, in accordance with the provisions of the Territorial Contract.

Funding for activities beyond 2020 will, to an increasing extent, make use of funds remaining in circulation from previous perspectives. It can be expected that subsequent years will see a continuation or even an expansion of the guarantees and loans currently provided by financial institutions, including the Opolskie Regional Development Fund (ORDF), which offers various revolving financial instruments.

Private funding

Cooperation between the public and private sectors is based on mutual trust and a sense of responsibility for the region. While for regional authorities this cooperation stems from the nature of their function and regulations, for private entrepreneurs/investors it is not necessarily a natural need. The key is to create a good climate for cooperation serving the region's population and bringing profit to local companies. Therefore, the involvement of private funds in the activities initiated by the local government administration requires special attention, and the systematic inclusion of the private sector in the decision-making processes (e.g. through participation in various regional councils and committees, or consulting on issues important for the development of the region). It is also necessary to further improve existing solutions, such as public-private partnerships.



Source: own study

Figure 9. Sources of financing for the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030"

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

ASSUMPTIONS

Monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" is an important tool for the regional decision-making process in the field of development management, and it provides knowledge of whether it is being implemented in accordance with the assumptions and whether it is bringing the expected results (and, if not, provides arguments to correct the actions specified in it).

Monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Strategy means the systematic collection and analysis of data (both quantitative and qualitative) on activities aimed at its implementation. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate the programme's assumptions, improve the quality of activities or evaluate and disseminate the results. In the process of identifying context indicators of strategic objectives, the principle of concentration was adopted (limitation of the number of indicators), which corresponds to the approach used in determining the objectives of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and the factors included in the SWOT analysis. It was also assumed that there is a need to observe changes over a longer time horizon, analogous to the approach in the previous document. The indicators have been selected to correspond as closely as possible to the activities undertaken in the region¹⁴.

The most important source of statistical data used in the monitoring system is public statistics, including the Strateg system¹⁵. This is complemented by qualitative information from the OVLG organisational

¹⁴ The list of indicators is subject to modification mainly due to data availability or changes in the methodology of their compilation.

¹⁵ In justified cases, the system may take into account indicators other than those provided by the Central Statistical Office.

units, the evaluation of EU interventions implemented in Opolskie Voivodship, and the results of available research, analyses and expert opinions.

The Strategy's "Opolskie 2030" monitoring system is closely linked to reporting on the implementation of the regional operational programme which, as the most important tool for its implementation, is a source of funding for a significant part of the pro-development activities. Monitoring also takes into account data from other development programmes used as the Strategy's "Opolskie 2030" implementation instruments.

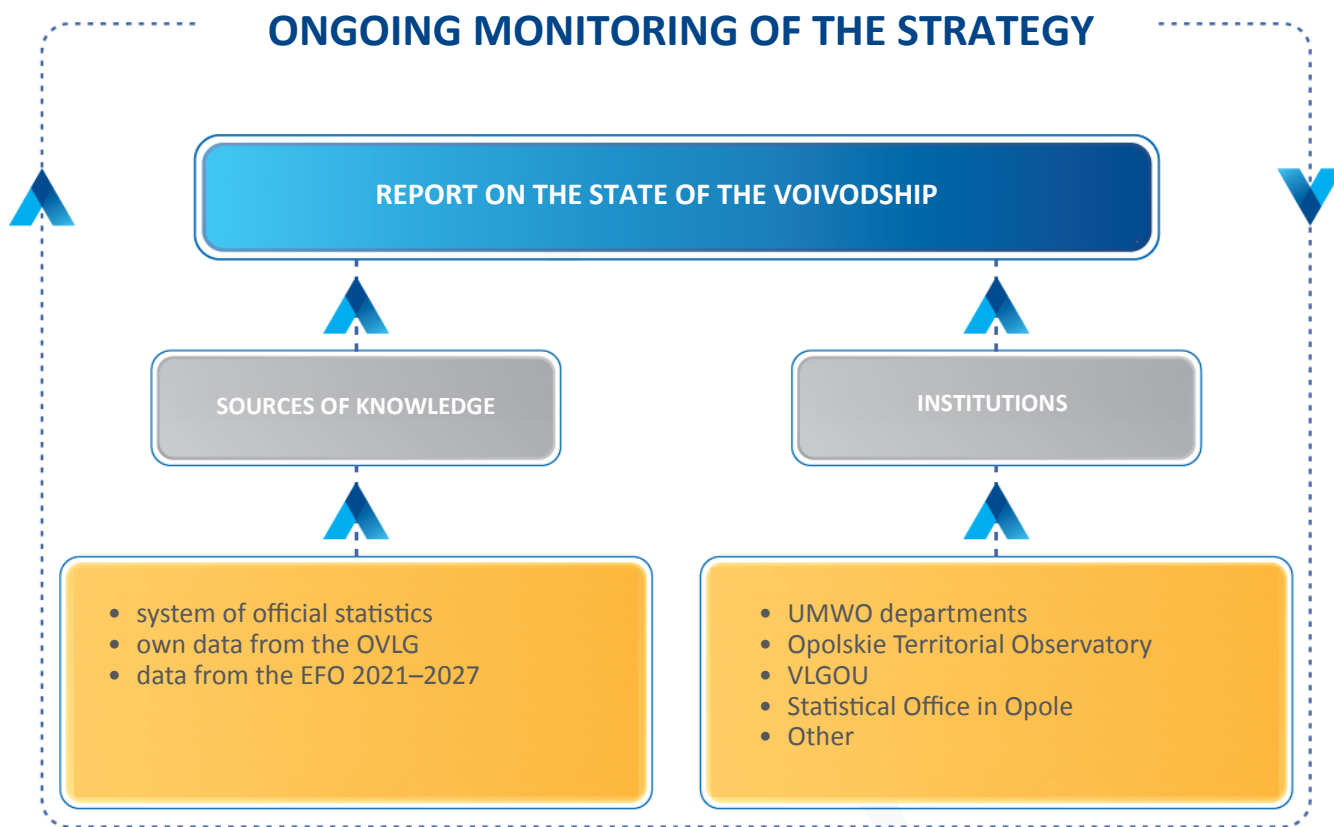
Reporting on the Strategy's "Opolskie 2030" implementation is carried out systematically on an annual basis pursuant to Article 34a of the Voivodship Local Government Act, which obliges the BOV to annually submit a report to the Regional Assembly on the status of the voivodship. It includes a summary of the activities of the BOV in the previous year, in particular the implementation of policies, programmes, strategies, resolutions of the BOV and the civic budget. The report will contain qualitative data for the year preceding its submission and quantitative data as available in the public statistical system.

Preparation of an in-depth analysis in the form of a report covering a period longer than 1 year depends on the decision of the BOV and is carried out according to a separately agreed concept. In this case, it is possible to cooperate with external experts both at the stage of concept preparation and report drafting.

Annual monitoring is carried out by staff at the department responsible for the development policy with the involvement and active participation of the UMWO organisational units and the VLGOU and other entities that possess data covered by the monitoring, which provide quantitative and qualitative information on the activities aimed at achieving the objectives of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030".

In justified situations there will be evaluation studies, the type of which will depend on, among other things, the timing of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" implementation and will be linked to the evaluations of the regional operational programme implemented in the Opolskie region in the period 2021–2027. The evaluations will be complementary to the monitoring system and will be carried out by an independent external expert. This will allow the expert knowledge, experience and potential of the institutions specialised in this type of research to be considered, as well as ensuring impartiality and objectivity in the evaluation process. The principles of monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030":

- **the integrity principle** – the monitoring and evaluation system is closely linked to reporting on the regional operational programme, the most important tool for implementing the Strategy; it may also consider data and information from other sources as available;
- **the reliability principle** – this demonstrates the necessity for data, information and their sources to be thoroughly verified in order to ensure the objectivity and reliability of the reporting process;
- **the complementarity principle** – according to which both processes, i.e. monitoring and evaluation complement each other;
- **the openness principle** – ensures free and easy access to the results of monitoring and evaluation activities;
- **the cooperation principle** – the implementation of both processes is related to the cooperation of the UMWO with various entities at the national and regional level which have data on the implementation of the Strategy.



Source: own study

Figure 10. Monitoring of the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy “Opolskie 2030”

CONTEXT INDICATORS FOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The monitoring of the Strategy „Opolskie 2030” uses the context indicators of the strategic objectives specified in tables 16-18¹⁶.

Table 16. Indicators for strategic objective People and relationships - Residents ready for challenges and for creating an open community

Name of indicator	Unit of measure	Value for Opolskie	Value for Poland	Base-line year	Trend in 2030 for Opolskie	Source
number of foundations, associations and social organisations per 1,000 inhabitants	number	3.75	3.83	2019	increase	GUS
number of foreigners covered by pension insurance and disability insurance compared with the total number of the insured (natural persons)	%	4.88	4.04	2019	increase	Own calculations, ZUS data
cards issued under the Opolskie Family and Senior Card initiative (cumulative since 2014)	number	85,606	not applicable	2019	increase	UMWO/DRP
adults aged 25-64 participating in education or training	%	3.1	4.8	2019	increase	GUS
matriculation exam pass rate (success rate during primary exam date)	%	80.3	80.5	2019	increase	CKE
tertiary students and graduates in mathematics, science and technology by ISCED-F2013 classification as % of tertiary students and graduates ¹⁷	%	31.7	32.1	2019	increase	Own calculations, GUS data
proportion of people aged 16–74 using the internet for private contacts with public administration	%	32.7	40.4	2019	increase	GUS
number of community social welfare beneficiaries per 10,000 residents	number	398	463	2019	decrease	GUS
number of doctors per 10,000 people (total workforce)	number	41.3	58.8	2019	increase	GUS
infant deaths per 1,000 live births	‰	3.7	3.8	2019	decrease	GUS
audiences in theatres and at musical institutions per 1,000 residents	number	208.16	374.18	2019	increase	GUS
people taking physical exercise at sports clubs per 1,000 residents	number	31.2	27.5	2018	increase	GUS
victims of industrial accidents (total victims per 1,000 employees)	number	7.08	6.06	2019	decrease	GUS
incidents requiring the intervention of the fire brigade per 1,000 residents	number	13	13	2019	decrease	GUS
total expenditures of municipalities and poviats on public safety and fire protection per capita	PLN	141.61	128.01 ¹⁸	2019	increase	GUS

16 As some data is not available for 2020, 2019 is used as the baseline where possible. This also is influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic due to which the values of some indicators available for 2020 deviate substantially from the trend so far.

17 Subgroups: biological, environmental sciences, medical, physical, mathematical and statistical, information and communication technology, engineering, architecture and construction.

18 The aggregate may be incomplete.

Table 17. Indicators for strategic objective Environment and development – A climate change-resilient environment that is conducive to development

Name of indicator	Unit of measure	Value for Opolskie	Value for Poland	Base-line year	Trend in 2030 for Opolskie	Source
number of days with PM10 exceeding 50 µg/m ³	number	according to data at individual meas. stations ¹⁹	— ²⁰	2019	decrease	GIOŚ
share of renewable energy in total electricity production	%	4.0	15.5	2019	increase	GUS
expenditures on fixed assets for ambient air and climate protection	kPLN	115,170.9	4,083,195.9	2019	increase	GUS
total annual water consumption for the national economy and population	dam ³	132,885.7	8,816,039.8	2019	decrease	GUS
municipal waste collected selectively in relation to total waste	%	35.3	31.2	2019	increase	GUS
status of surface water assessment (in rivers): – good – poor	%	0 100	1.1 98.9	2019	increase decrease	GIOŚ
capacity of water reservoirs and polders – reservoir retention	in million m ³	403.99	— ²¹	2019	increase	PGW Wody Polskie
share of legally protected areas in the total area	%	27.6	32.3	2019	increase	GUS
loss of agricultural production space (separation of agricultural land from agricultural production)	ha	50	4,350	2019	decrease	GUS
share of parks, green areas and housing estate greenery in total area	%	0.2	0.2	2019	increase	GUS

19 Measuring stations and number of days with exceeded limit values in 2019: Zdieszowice, ul. Piastów – manual (59), Kędzierzyn-Koźle, ul. B. Śmiałego – manual (48), Opole, ul. Koszyka – automatic (47), Opole, Osiedle Armii Krajowej – manual (28), Głubczyce, ul. Ratuszowa – manual (50), Kluczbork, ul. Mickiewicza – manual (19), Nysa, ul. Rodziewiczówny – manual (45), Olesno, ul. Słowackiego – automatic (33), Prudnik, ul. Podgórna – manual (24). In subsequent years, the stations at which the measurements will be taken may change.

20 The index values are given for particular measurement stations according to regions. It is not reasonable to provide results for all the stations in other regions. The results would not represent a value for Poland (in total).

21 No comparable data for Poland.

Table 18. Indicators for strategic objective Strong economy – A smart economy that strengthens the region’s competitiveness

Name of indicator	Unit of measure	Value for Opolskie	Value for Poland	Base-line year	Trend in 2030 for Opolskie	Source
GDP per capita according to PPP (EU-27=100)	%	57	73	2019 ²²	increase	EUROSTAT
synthetic entrepreneurship indicator	%	53.4	*	2019	increase	PARP
number of business incubators and science and technology parks	number	8	*	2019	increase	OCRG
balance between new jobs created and jobs lost	thousand jobs	3.6	360.7	2019	positive in the period of Strategy implement.	GUS
area of developed investment areas sold	ha	170	*	2019	increase	OCRG
employment rate of people aged 20-64	%	72.5	73.0	2019	increase	GUS
share of exports in revenues from sales of products, goods and materials	%	26.6	23.0	2019	increase	Office of Statistics in Opole
expenditures on innovative activities at enterprises	kPLN	367,183	38,579,618	2019	increase	GUS
number of passenger bus lines	number	577	*	2019	increase	UMWO/DIG
number of passenger rail lines	number	18	*	2019	increase	UMWO/DIG
number of localities in which entities have declared the existence of their own telecommunications network access nodes	number	674	22,871	2019	increase	UKE
tourists using tourist accommodation establishments over the whole year	number	447,011	35,668,091	2019	increase	GUS
length of bicycle paths	km	511	15,538.7	2019	increase	GUS
number of products entered on the List of Traditional Products maintained by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (cumulative since 2005)	number	64	1942	2019	increase	UMWO/DRW

* – no data, no data available

²² Preliminary/temporary data that may be subject to revision.

APPENDICES

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Legal framework for the development of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030”

1. **Resolution No. IV/33/2019 of the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship of 26 February 2019** on amending Resolution No. IV/65/2011 of the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship of 22 February 2011 on determining the principles, procedure and timetable for drafting the Opolskie voivodship development strategy. The resolution set out the principles and procedures for the development of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” and a framework schedule of work on the document. On its basis the BOV took further actions in the strategic process. The resolution was amended by Resolution No. XV/141/2020 of 25 February 2020 to align the strategic process with national strategic considerations.
2. **Resolution No. 792/2019 of the Board of the Opolskie Voivodship of 20 May 2019** on the commencement of drafting the Opolskie Voivodship development strategy to 2030. The resolution was amended by resolutions No. 2401/2020 of 23 March 2020, No. 3083/2020 of 21 July 2020, and No. 4940/2021 of 14 June 2021 in order to secure adequate time for the various phases of the work due to changes in the concept and mode of work, constraints resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and changes in the legal environment.
3. **Resolutions of the Board of Opolskie Voivodship** regarding drafts of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030”, Resolution No. 3878/2020 of 30 November 2020 and Resolution No. 4355/2021 of 8 March 2021 after language editing.
4. **Resolution No. 4356/2021 of the Board of the Opolskie Voivodship of 8 March 2021** on the Rules of social consultation for the draft Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy “Opolskie 2030” and of the forecast for its environmental impact.
5. **Resolution No. 5217/20221 of the Board of the Opolskie Voivodship of 27 July 2021** on the adoption of the draft Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy „Opolskie 2030” after social consultation.
6. **Resolution No. 5455/20221 of the Board of the Opolskie Voivodship of 13 September 2021** on adoption of draft Resolution of the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship on the adoption of Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy „Opolskie 2030”.
7. **Resolution No. XXXIV/355/2021 of the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship of 4 October 2021** on the adoption of Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy „Opolskie 2030”.

Organisation of the strategic process

The strategic process is a comprehensive undertaking which lasts many months and requires a number of substantive and organisational decisions to be made. A particular concern of the BOV in this process was also to invite people whose knowledge and experience guaranteed that it would be carried out with the real social participation of the region’s population.

The first steps were taken in 2018, when the *Conceptual Framework for the development of the new opolskie voivodship development strategy* was drafted. These were the basis for the further planning and implementation of the subsequent stages of the process, the details of which were included in the above mentioned resolutions.

Before March 2020, work on the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” proceeded in accordance with the adopted concept. However, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a change in the manner and mode of operation, and affected the timing of the process and the organisation of the work on the document.

Constraints related to epidemic safety primarily resulted in a shift to remote working and online collaboration, and prevented closer work with sub-regions at the target identification stage.

Expert support in the process was provided in collaboration with Prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz, who aided the BOV with the Diagnosis and organisation of the work of Advisory Groups (AGs) and Working Groups (WGs), analysis of their results, development of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and participation in the final stages related to public consultations and required statutory arrangements.

An important role in the development of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was played by the AGs organised around the substantive departments of the UMWO, in which public entities, institutions, associations, companies and local communities were represented, e.g. in the areas of education, infrastructure, health, culture or the environment. The work of the AGs required the efforts of over 200 people. Thanks to their involvement, almost 900 postulates were collected, which after a thorough analysis and synthesis, were included in the proposals for the operational objectives. The AGs also took part in discussions on the vision for the region and were invited to consult the postulates of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" before finalising the first draft of the document.

A separate element of the process were the WGs, which consisted of representatives of the management and employees of the substantive departments of the UMWO and VLGOU. Their task was primarily conceptual work and strategic discussion based on the findings of the AGs. WG members took part in meetings and workshops concerning the SWOT analysis and scenarios for the region's development, they cooperated in the identification of objectives and lines of action, and in the selection of appropriate indicators.

On 30 November 2020, the BOV adopted a draft of the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030". This document was reviewed as part of the environmental impact assessment by the Central Mining Institute in Katowice and the ex-ante evaluation by the Silesian Institute in Opole.

The first two months of 2021 were devoted to cooperation with the above institutions in charge of the studies and to the preparation for public consultation of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and of the forecast for its environmental impact. The procedure, rules and schedule for public consultations were agreed upon, the Rules of Procedure for public consultations were drawn up and information and promotional activities were planned and commissioned. At this time, several minor substantive changes were also made to the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" of 30 November 2020 and then it underwent linguistic and editorial revisions. In addition, three meetings were held on 15-17 February 2021 as a pre-consultation with members of the AG, WG and Opolskie Voivodship Councillors.

On 8 March 2021, the BOV adopted the:

- Draft Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030",
- Forecast for the environmental impact of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030",
- Regulations for the social consultation of the draft Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and of the forecast for its environmental impact.

Public consultation of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and of the forecast for its environmental impact was held from 10 March to 30 April 2021. For full information on this topic, please see the chapter entitled Information on the course and results of public consultations of the draft Strategy.

In the period from May to June 2021, a Report on the course and results of public consultations of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was prepared, which was the basis for amending the document.

The organisation and coordination of the strategic process at the UMWO was the responsibility of the DRP acting on behalf of and in agreement with BOV.

Table 19. Strategy “Opolskie 2030” development timeline

Strategy “Opolskie 2030” development timeline	
DATE	MILESTONE
26 February 2019	Resolution of the BOV on amending resolution No. IV/65/2011 of the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship of 22 February 2011 on determining the principles, procedure and timetable for drafting the Opolskie Voivodship development strategy.
20 May 2019	Resolution of the BOV on the commencement of drafting the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy 2030.
24 June 2019	Adoption by the BOV of the document entitled Opolskie – regional diagnosis.
July – September 2019	Determination of the composition and formation by department heads of Advisory Groups (AGs) which included representatives from various local communities in the given thematic area.
9 August 2019	Workshop for directors at the UMWO on the organisation of the work of AGs they manage, led by prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz
August 2019	Determination of the composition and establishment of Working Groups (WGs) in three areas: Society, Environment and Economy, which consisted of representatives of the management at the UMWO and VLGOU.
11 September 2019	Workshop for the BOV members led by prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz. On the same day, Opolskie Voivodship Councillors familiarised themselves with the concept and work plan of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030”.
September – October 2019	AG meetings to identify the needs of local communities, industries, professional groups, etc. organised by the directors of departments at the UMWO – AG coordinators.
1 October 2019	WG workshop led by prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz.
5 November 2019	Kick-off conference for the strategy entitled “Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy to 2030 – introduction to the strategic process” involving a wide representation of social, economic, local government, scientific and other stakeholders.
20 November 2019	WG workshop led by prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz.
18 December 2019	Meeting of the members of all the AGs combined with a presentation of the vision for the development of the region.
16 January 2020	WG workshop led by prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz during which the content of the SWOT analysis was finally agreed upon.
3 February 2020	Adoption of the SWOT analysis by the BOV.
21 February 2020	WG workshop led by prof. Wojciech Dziemianowicz on scenarios for the voivodship’s development.
March – April 2020	Development of strategic, operational objectives and lines of action. The epidemic situation made it impossible to hold meetings in the sub-regions. Development of the objectives was done remotely, with meetings and consultations taking place online.
15 June 2020	Adoption by the BOV of the objectives and lines of action within the Strategy “Opolskie 2030”.

Strategy "Opolskie 2030" development timeline

DATE	MILESTONE
25 June 2020	Conference presenting the objectives and directions of activities within the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" with representatives of AGs. The meeting was held with a limited group of participants, but broad participation was made possible by online streaming.
July – August 2020	Consultation of comments made during and after the conference.
14 September 2020	Adoption by the BOV of the objectives and lines of action within the Strategy "Opolskie 2030", taking into account the comments received during the consultation process.
September – November 2020	Work on the first draft of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030".
30 November 2020	Adoption of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" by the BOV.
November 2020 – Q1 2021	Process of strategic environmental impact assessment and ex-ante evaluation of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030".
15–17 February 2021	Pre-consultation meetings with the participation of members of the AGs, WGs and Opolskie Voivodship Councillors.
8 March 2021	Adoption by the BOV of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" for social consultation, Forecast for the environmental impact of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and the Rules of procedure for social consultation of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and of the forecast for its environmental impact.
10 March – 30 April 2021	Public consultations of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and of the forecast for its environmental impact environmental impact and an information and promotion campaign.
May – June 2021	Drafting the Report on the course and results of the public consultations on the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030".
5 July 2021	Adoption of the Report on the course and results of the public consultations on the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030".
27 July 2021	Adoption by the BOV of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" after public consultation.
13 October 2021	Adoption by the BOV of Resolution No. 5455/2021 on the adoption of a draft resolution of the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship on the adoption of the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030".
4 October 2021	Adoption by the Regional Assembly of Opolskie Voivodship of Resolution No. XXXIV/355/2021 on the adoption of the Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030".

INFORMATION ON THE COURSE AND RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY

From the outset, the process of drafting the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” was based on the openness and involvement of the broadest possible group of representatives of various stakeholders representing the whole region. Public consultations on the document, required by law, were also carried out in this spirit. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this process took place in a fundamentally different way than in previous years. The epidemic situation and the sanitary restrictions in place meant that most of the scheduled meetings were held online. On the other hand, the use of social media made it possible to reach out to a much wider audience, beyond traditional administration, science or business circles.

REGULATIONS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY “OPOLSKIE 2030”

On 8 March 2021, the BOV adopted the Rules of Procedure for public consultation on the draft Strategy “Opolskie 2030” and the forecast for its environmental impact. This document defined the consultation process, its principles and procedure based on the requirements of the relevant acts of law²³. The original schedule of meetings during the consultation process had to be changed due to the pandemic – meetings for sub-regional communities initially planned in a mixed mode, i.e. stationary for local government officials and remote for other participants, were conducted entirely remotely (held in April 2021).

COURSE OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Official public consultations on the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” began on 10 March 2021 and lasted until 30 April 2021. They were preceded by pre-consultation meetings for the co-authors of the document – members of the AGs, WGs and Voivodship Councillors (held on 15–17 February 2021). An announcement on the commencement of public consultations was published on 10 March 2021 in a newspaper with regional coverage, the *Nowa Trybuna Opolska*. On the same day, a conference inaugurating the consultations was held with the participation of representatives of local and government administration, business and science, members of the Opolskie Parliament, as well as Voivodship Councillors and members of AGs. The meeting was held remotely and broadcast over the internet. The launch of consultations was announced on the Opolskie region website and FB profile.

Information on the public consultation was announced on local and regional radio stations, in the regional press and in 15 local magazines, among others. Great emphasis was placed on advertising on the internet through, for example, sponsored posts, graphic advertisements on the portals of the region’s largest newspapers, sponsored texts and advertising banners on 5 local portals and posts on the region’s FB profiles. In order to disseminate knowledge of the Strategy “Opolskie 2030” among the region’s population and at the same time encourage them to participate in the consultations, two animated films were released, also widely promoted on the internet. For the purposes of promotion on radio stations, three versions of a commercial were produced. Due to the length of the public consultation process, media advertising was planned in two rounds, in March and April 2021.

23 *The Voivodship Local Government Act of 5 June 1998* (consolidated text – Official Journal *Dziennik Ustaw* of 2020, item 1668), *The Principles of Development Policy Act of 6 December 2006* (consolidated text – Official Journal *Dziennik Ustaw* 2020, item 2327) and *The Provision of Information on the Environment and its Protection, Public Participation in Environmental Protection and Environmental Impact Assessments Act* (consolidated text – Official Journal *Dziennik Ustaw* of 2021, item 247).

As part of the consultation, industry meetings were held in five thematic areas. All of these were held remotely (from 17–30 March 2021), some were broadcast live on FB and YouTube, and all are available on the Opolskie region’s social media profiles.

Sub-regional meetings were organised for all five sub-regions of the region: North, Brzeg, South, Opolskie Agglomeration and Kędzierzyn-Strzelce (13–28 April 2021). All took place remotely and were recorded.

Table 20. Summary of meetings during public consultations on the draft Strategy “Opolskie 2030”

DATE	EVENT
10 March 2021	Public consultations kick-off conference
SECTORAL MEETINGS IN THEMATIC AREAS	
17 March 2021 13:30	Infrastructure
19 March 2021 13:30	Economy
24 March 2021 13:30	Society
26 March 2021 13:30	Environment
30 March 2021 12:00	Seniors and Youth
14 April 2021 14:00	Public Benefit Board
MEETING WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY	
26 March 2021 11:00	Silesian Local Government Association
TERRITORIAL MEETINGS WITH SUBREGIONAL COMMUNITIES	
13 April 2021 11:00	Northern Sub-region
16 April 2021 13:00	Brzeg Sub-region
20 April 2021 11:00	Southern Sub-region
21 April 2021 11:00	Opolskie Agglomeration
28 April 2021 12:00	Kędzierzyn-Strzelce Sub-region

Source: own study based on meetings

As part of the consultations, the draft Strategy “Opolskie 2030” and the Forecast for its environmental impact were also submitted to the Regional Council for Nature Conservation operating at the Regional Inspectorate for Environmental Protection in Opole, as well as to the President of the State Water Management Company Wody Polskie.

STATISTICS ON PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY “OPOLSKIE 2030”

A total of 301 comments were received from 37 entities, including primarily local government units, associations of TLGU, non-governmental organisations, government administration institutions, as well as individuals and other entities. Comments were submitted via a form, mainly electronically, but were also minuted at industry and sub-regional meetings.

REPORT ON THE COURSE AND RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY "OPOLSKIE 2030"

The report was drafted at the DRP in accordance with S. 6 of the Principles of Development Policy Act. Among other things, it contains information on the manner and criteria for considering comments received by the UMWO as part of the consultation.

All comments and opinions have been summarised in a table in order to properly systematise them based on the adopted division into individual areas. The compilation also takes into account comments to the Diagnosis and the Forecast for its environmental impact, as well as recommendations from the ex-ante evaluation.

According to the criteria adopted, 77 comments were taken into account, 81 comments were partly taken into account and 129 comments were disregarded. Additionally, 14 comments did not contain any proposal for provision amendments.

Report on the course and results of consultations of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was adopted by the BOV on 5 July 2021, and then posted on the Opolskie voivodship local government website.

INFORMATION ON THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY

The obligation to carry out a strategic environmental impact assessment (SEIA) of the draft strategy results from the Access to Information on the Environment, Public Participation in Environmental Protection and Environmental Impact Assessment Act²⁴. One of the elements of the SEIA is the preparation of a forecast for environmental impact. This document is to support the decision-making process for the implementation of investments interfering with the environment and resulting from the strategy.

In fulfilling this obligation, the scope and level of detail of the forecast for the draft strategy were agreed with:

- the Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection in Opole,
- the Opolskie Voivodship Sanitary Inspector.

The forecast within the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was made by the Central Mining Institute in Katowice.

FORECAST FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY "OPOLSKIE 2030"

The findings of the Forecast confirmed that the objectives and lines of action put forward in the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" are in line with the objectives and priorities indicated in international, especially the EU, national programmes and strategies. The project is in line with the EU's sustainable development policy and covers issues related to improving the quality of life by combining various aspects of development, in particular those related to ecology and environmental protection.

The Forecast indicates that with the implementation of the Strategy "Opolskie 2030", positive environmental effects can be expected, including a reduction in the energy intensity of the region's economy, the introduction of circular economy solutions, the increased use of energy from renewable sources, the development of green urban transport, and the adaptation and increase in resilience of urban areas to climate change. The potential negative impacts on individual elements of the environment resulting from implementing the Strategy's "Opolskie 2030" objectives can be limited or minimised through the rational choice of location for the planned investment and the appropriate selection of organisational, technical and technological solutions. Therefore the Forecast includes a list of recommendations for action possible to be implemented under the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" and resulting from its environmental impact assessment. In addition, it was recommended (to be considered at the stage of operationalisation of the document's provisions) that the scope of monitoring of the Strategy be extended to include indicators indirectly describing its impact on sustainable development issues.

The authors of the Forecast did not identify any risk of significant adverse impacts on neighbouring countries, which would necessitate the development of a cross-border environmental impact assessment.

On 8 March 2021 the BOV adopted the draft Forecast which was then subject to public consultation together with the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030". Both documents can be found at www.opolskie.pl and they were also submitted to the Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection in Opole and the Opolskie Voivodship Sanitary Inspector for review. In both cases they were positively reviewed and the comments were taken into account.

In the course of public consultations the Forecast received 35 comments from three entities. The comments were then submitted to the author for consideration in the final version of the Forecast. All were considered and included in the summary of the Forecast (pursuant to S. 55 (3) of the Provision of Information on the Environment and its Protection, Public Participation in Environmental Protection and Environmental Impact Assessment Act) and the Report on the course and results of public consultations of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030".

²⁴ Consolidated text – Official Journal Dziennik Ustaw of 2021, item 247.

INFORMATION ON THE RESULTS OF THE EX-ANTE EVALUATION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY

The obligation to carry out an ex-ante evaluation of the draft strategy results from S. 10a (2) of the Principles of Development Policy Act²⁵. The ex-ante evaluation of the draft Opolskie Voivodship Development Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was carried out by the Silesian Institute in Opole.

The main objective of the study was a comprehensive evaluation of the draft document and the formulation of conclusions and recommendations on its basis allowing the introduction of possible corrections to the Strategy "Opolskie 2030". In the course of the study, the needs and development challenges identified in the draft document, the vision, the adopted strategic and operational objectives and directions of strategic activities, as well as the territorial dimension of intervention and a set of indicators monitoring the strategic objectives were analysed.

KEY CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EX-ANTE EVALUATION RELATED TO THE INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY "OPOLSKIE 2030":

- **Regional diagnosis and SWOT analysis** – The starting point for work on the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" was a separate document entitled "*Opolskie – diagnoza regionalna*". This was the basis for the formulation of diagnostic conclusions included in the draft Strategy. The Diagnosis contains an analysis of most of the key internal and external processes and phenomena that determine the development of the region. The Diagnosis is concluded with a SWOT analysis which contains a catalogue of accurately identified strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats that constitute the key factors in the region's development. Most of these are confirmed by the results of the analyses and conclusions presented in the diagnostic section.
- **Development vision** – The most important part of the project from the point of view of the voivodship's development is the vision for development, as well as the strategic and operational objectives. The advantage of a generally outlined vision is the possibility for its more detailed specification at the level of planned strategic objectives, operational objectives and lines of action, which constitute an accurate response to the diagnosed socio-economic needs of the voivodship and correspond to the development conditions identified within the SWOT analysis.
- **Development scenarios** – Three ambitious but achievable development scenarios are also an important part of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030". The results of the study indicate that although the "dynamic development" scenario was considered the most relevant, it is very likely that all three scenarios will overlap during the implementation of the Strategy.
- **Territorial dimension** – The Strategy "Opolskie 2030" also takes into account the territorial dimension of development policy, the accuracy of which is demonstrated by correctly designated functional areas and areas for strategic intervention. This makes it possible to support places with slower or weaker growth, and those with insufficient potential for faster growth.
- **Objectives and lines of action** – The results of the study confirm that the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" is a coherent and logical document, which is the result of its well-thought-out structure. The multifaceted voivodship development policy adopted in the project is reflected in the defined

²⁵ Consolidated text – Official Journal Dziennik Ustaw 2020, item 2327

strategic objectives, the corresponding operational objectives and lines of action that lead to the achievement of the outlined vision. With regard to international provisions, the strategic and operational objectives, as well as lines of action put forward in the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" are in line with the objectives contained in the Draft Partnership Agreement for the implementation of the Cohesion Policy 2021–2027. The draft is also consistent with key international documents which define the model of sustainable development at the global and European level, i.e. the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the European Green Deal strategy, and at the national level. It takes into account the provisions of the SRD and the provisions of the NSRD 2030.

- **Implementation system** – The proposed concept for the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" implementation system is general, open and flexible. It is relevant and sufficient for the successful implementation of the vision, strategic and operational objectives of the Strategy. The draft document correctly presents those elements that determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the vision and strategic objectives (principles, system, actors, instruments, financing).
- **Monitoring and evaluation system** – The system for monitoring and evaluating the Strategy "Opolskie 2030" is relevant and has been rightly linked to its implementation system. The sources of reliable data used in the monitoring system were correctly identified, the system was correctly connected with reporting and with the participation of the employees at the department responsible for development policy in preparing the report on the state of the voivodship. Monitoring indicators were also correctly selected.
- **Financing system** – The sources of financing for the planned lines of action have been identified correctly and adequately to the strategic nature of the document. It was also assumed that Opolskie Voivodship local government and its partners would take an active approach in identifying sources of financing and raising funds, developing cooperation between the public and private sectors (public-private partnership) and with the non-governmental sector.

The findings of the evaluation confirmed that the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030" meets the prerequisites arising from legislation and contains all the elements required by law.

The ex-ante evaluation has led to 16 recommendations. They concern both the diagnostic part of the document, its postulates and the implementation system. All of them are operational, i.e. they are proposals of specific provisions that have been taken into account in whole or in part in the content of the document. A detailed method of their consideration has been presented in the Report on the course and results of public consultations of the draft Strategy "Opolskie 2030".

LIST OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Board of Opolskie Voivodship

Andrzej Buła – Marshall of Opolskie Voivodship

Roman Kolek – Deputy Marshall of Opolskie Voivodship to 22.02.2021

Zuzanna Donath-Kasiura – Deputy Marshall of Opolskie Voivodship from 23.02.2021

Zbigniew Kubalańca – Deputy Marshall of Opolskie Voivodship

Szymon Oglaza – Member of the Board of Opolskie Voivodship

Stanisław Rakoczy – Member of the Board of Opolskie Voivodship to 31 May 2020

Antoni Konopka – Member of the Board of Opolskie Voivodship from 1 June 2020

Stanisław Mazur – Treasurer of Opolskie Voivodship

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