

The impact of revitalization activities implemented under the RPO WD 2014-2020 on the improvement of degraded areas

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Research purpose

The purpose of the research was to determine how **the Regional Operational Programme of the Dolny Śląsk voivodship for 2014-2020** (RPO WD 2014-2020), through supporting revitalization, influenced the situation of degraded areas in this region.



Degraded areas are areas in crisis due to the concentration of negative social phenomena and negative economic, environmental, spatial-functional, or technical phenomena.



Revitalization means a comprehensive process of bringing such areas out of crisis through joined undertakings relating to various types of problems that occur within. The revitalization process focuses on a selected part of the municipality, and is carried out on the basis of a revitalization programme adopted by its council.

Commissioned by:

The Marshal's Office of the Dolny Śląsk voivodeship
12-14 Wybrzeże J. Słowackiego, 50-411 Wrocław

Conducted by:

Dyspersja – badania społeczne i ewaluacyjne
4 Szymanowskiego Street flat no. 65, 03-477 Warszawa
biuro@dyspersja.com

Methodology

The research was conducted by **the use of many sources of information and methods**: analysis of existing data on revitalization and RPO WD 2014-2020; interviews with representatives of institutions responsible for the implementation of the programme; interviews and surveys with representatives of municipal offices and other institutions implementing revitalization projects.

Support for revitalization under the RPO WD 2014–2020

6.3 Measure was devoted exclusively to the revitalization of degraded areas. As part of this Measure, support was provided to improve the condition of facilities and spaces in order to restore or give them new functions, renovate collective parts of residential buildings, and reconstruct and modernize local roads. The necessary condition for obtaining support from 6.3 Measure for the implementation of the project was to include it in the revitalization programme of a given municipality on the 'A List'.

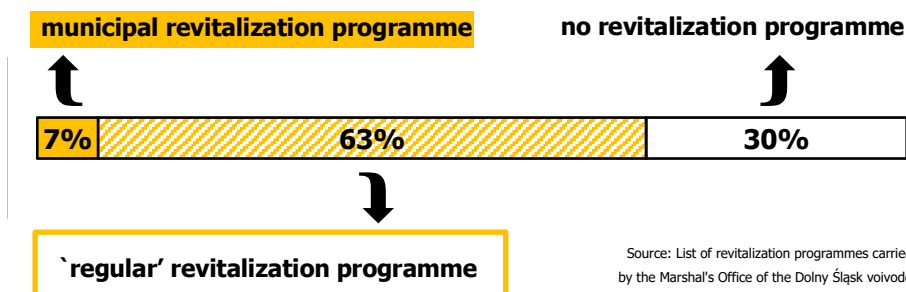
Moreover, under **11 other Measures**, when assessing applications for co-financing, revitalization projects entered into the revitalization programs on the 'B List' were awarded. Under these Measures, support was given to projects in the field of entrepreneurship, energy efficiency of buildings, reducing low emission, cultural heritage, rail transport, counteracting unemployment, social integration, care services and infrastructure for social and professional activation.

The main role in the implementation of the RPO WD 2014-2020 was played by the **Marshal's Office of the Dolny Śląsk voivodeship, acting as the Managing Authority**. In this respect, they cooperated with the Voivodeship Labour Office and associations of municipalities from the functional areas of Wrocław, Wałbrzych and Jelenia Góra.

Revitalization programmes in the Dolny Śląsk voivodeship

Among the municipalities from the Dolny Śląsk voivodeship, 70% prepared revitalization programmes that were approved by the Marshal's Office of the Dolny Śląsk voivodeship. However, only 10% of these documents are municipal revitalization programmes. From 2024 onward, revitalization undertakings will be possible only on the basis of such programmes.

Revitalization programmes owned by municipalities approved by the Marshal's Office of the Dolny Śląsk voivodeship (%)



Diagnosed needs

The majority of revitalization areas presented the concentration of crisis phenomena consisting in:

- unemployment
- low level of participation in public life
- poor condition of public spaces and residential buildings
- maladjustment of public buildings and spaces to the needs of the disabled
- a small number of enterprises.

Effects to date and their monitoring

In the case of all the indicators of 6.3 Measure for which target values were assumed, the concluded co-financing agreements allow for forecasting a significant excess of these values. However, the reliability of some indicators is limited.

Revitalization processes were **the most effective** in terms of improving road safety, adapting public facilities and spaces to the needs of the disabled, improving the condition of public spaces and buildings owned or jointly owned by the municipality.

The reduction of, among others, crisis phenomena related to the risk of social exclusion such as homelessness and addictions was far less successful.

A significant number of municipalities do not pay enough attention, or do not have the necessary resources to monitor the overall effects of revitalization. Hence, opinions about the effects of revitalization are often not based on systematically collected data.

Research conclusions

- ➔ **The budget resources of municipalities are the most scarce resource** in the field of revitalization. Co-financing from the RPO WD 2014-2020 was the key condition for the implementation of projects.
- ➔ **The complexity of revitalization** carried out within individual municipalities was positively influenced by the **mechanism of awarding bonuses** to projects included in revitalization programmes, and **point bonuses awarded for complementarity**.
- ➔ The most common circumstance that limited the involvement of beneficiaries in the creation of revitalization programmes was the **lack of sufficient knowledge** on how to conduct it.

➔ The solution consisting in directing the support from the RPO WD 2014-2020 to projects included in the revitalization programmes **did not ensure that the revitalization processes were comprehensive.**

- Some municipalities created revitalization programmes as documents necessary to apply for funds to meet infrastructure needs, instead of coordinating the process of bringing degraded areas out of the crisis.
- A significant part of projects included in the revitalization programmes did not receive co-financing and therefore was not implemented.
- The integration of revitalization projects related to various types of crisis was not favoured by the solution adopted by the IZ RPO WD consisting in requiring municipalities to enter only projects from the scope of 6.3 Measure in the revitalization programs on the 'A List'. The remaining projects were entered on the 'B List', therefore, at the stage of preparing any revitalization programme, they could be planned to a much lesser extent than projects under 6.3 Measure.

➔ As part of the RPO WD 2014-2020, the solution consisting in **supporting integrated projects**, namely related projects in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions, was not applied. According to the Managing Authority, this would create a risk for the disbursement of funds at a rate consistent with the principles of accounting for the implementation of operational programmes.

➔ The scope of support for the RPO WD 2014-2020 related to supporting revitalization took a **wide range of problems** in the social, economic, environmental, spatial-functional and technical spheres into account. The disadvantage was that **the interventions related to education were not included** among the projects related to the revitalization.

Recommendations for the European Funds for Dolny Śląsk for 2021-2027 programme



Decisions on co-financing revitalization projects in a given municipality should be made **jointly with regard to a group of interrelated projects** in order to ensure the comprehensive nature of revitalization.



The scope of help aimed at supporting revitalization should be extended (in the relation to the one existing under the RPO WD 2014-2020) by **projects aimed at increasing the quality and accessibility of education.**



The employees of municipal offices and potential stakeholders should be **educated on revitalization**, with paying special attention to elements that differ GPR from 'regular' revitalization programmes, and to elements that are weaknesses of the existing revitalization processes (actual complementarity, and monitoring of effects).



Treating area revitalization as a condition for **receiving support for the implementation of infrastructure projects** (which municipalities report particularly high demand for) should be stopped. The number of municipalities for which revitalization support from the regional programme will be available should be limited, for instance, to municipalities that will have developed the GPR by the end of 2023. The largest possible amount of funds for financing revitalization projects should be secured.