



Territorial organizational policies for regional development in Bulgaria

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Abstract

Over the last 30 years, Bulgaria has been undergoing reforms aimed at making the transition to a market economy and strong regional development. This article is devoted to problems with the organization of the territory in Bulgaria as one of the important elements of the regional policy. The exhibition is an attempt to bring out the problematic aspects of spatial planning and possible policies for regional development. Mechanisms and methods have been proposed to more clearly define the problems of regional development and to promote development policies. Territorial tendencies and processes are derived.

Keywords: Territory; Structure; Regional development; Management; Environment; Elements; Space; Change

1. Introduction

- the application of a regional and territorial approach for regulating the urban development, with a view to achieving and maintaining a balanced polycentric settlement network;
- directing the development activity mainly to the improvement of the quality of life, by improving the qualities of the spatial living environment;
- responsible management of natural resources and environmental protection;
- rational land use, aimed at the efficient and integrated use and protection of land resources and the territory as a whole;
- the expansion of the direct participation of the population in the decision-making process in the field of spatial planning and urban planning;
- the gradual replacement of the generally valid national structural rules and norms with local rules and norms;
- the transition to permanent spatial planning with periodic adaptation of development decisions to real development.
- Here is the place to emphasize that the Bulgarian development policy should not be a collection of land properties, but a single and indivisible basis, created by nature and formed and inherited from history, on which are formed and transformed over time different types and sizes of land properties. Thus, in order to carry out the functioning of individual and collective life activities and to meet the ever-changing needs of development, territorial problems come to the fore.

2. Nature and features of the policy on spatial planning

In our socio-economic conditions, the policy for the arrangement of the territory, in addition to the activity of use, protection and construction of the land properties, includes its (on the territory) functional, structural and communicative organization and infrastructural provision, as a result of which the realized public and private investments. initiatives [2]. As a result, these development policies lead to the formation of a complex spatial environment with certain qualities. In this sense, both territorial and spatial planning, in practice, have national

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significance in relation to larger parts of the national territory. In local and local aspect, urban planning, in terms of settlements and settlements, is the main tool with which local authorities facilitate and channel entrepreneurial initiatives and investment intentions.

Thus, the owners have the opportunity to regulate their compliance with the permanent purpose and the specific characteristics of the terrains and provide them with infrastructure. In this regard, the structural problems in Bulgaria are becoming more complex due to the need to introduce rules on the framework and nature of investments and the vision for change in territorial terms.

Such a conservative approach can have a disciplining role in the construction of the national space, and at the same time to improve the quality of investments in the name of and in accordance with the common and lasting interests of the respective territorial community [2]. We can summarize that the longevity of the development process is extremely important, because it involves many economically active leases and the high degree of interdependence and commitment of the individual constituent operations require its management from the standpoint of overall policy.

Hence the need for a hierarchical level of the central government, through the districts and respectively the municipalities to have its own policy on the organization of the territory, in accordance with its specific characteristics and problems on a territorial scale [3]. Here is the place to note that the municipalities are in fact the center for the implementation of development policies. This is because the objective link between regional development and spatial planning (between regional planning and spatial planning) takes place between regional development plans and the municipality's spatial planning policy [4].

Unfortunately, the implementation of this connection is hampered by the time disconnection between regional and spatial planning, arising from the Regional Development Act, which sets a seven-year long term for regional development plans and the Spatial Planning Act, respectively.

The ordinance under Art. 117, according to which the perspective term of the development schemes and the general development plans is 15 - 20 years. Moreover, Art. 99, para. 1 of the Spatial Planning Act requires “the development schemes to ensure the arrangement of the territories, corresponding to the socio-economic development”, and Art. 101. envisages “The regional development schemes shall determine the requirements for the development of the territories in accordance with the regional development plans. Thus, there is a legal requirement that long-term development decisions be formed in accordance with the short-term or, at best, medium-term projections of regional development plans [1]. The draft Ordinance on the volume and content of development schemes and plans to some extent mitigates this contradiction by providing in Art. 8 The National Development Scheme to be the basis for the periodic updating of the National Plan for Regional Development. This is likely to be the case for lower levels of regional planning. In any case, the municipal policy on spatial planning should be based on the municipal plans for regional development, developing the trends set for them for long-term development in the long run. At the same time, if it is found that these trends are contrary to the requirements for balanced and sustainable organization and organization of the territory, to reveal the contradictions, with a view to taking procedural actions to overcome them [5].

3. Implementation of the policy of spatial planning at the municipal level

The municipal policy on spatial planning is built in accordance with certain generally accepted principles and is based on an assessment of the existing condition on the territory of the municipality and of the individual settlements. It contains goals and priorities and analysis of the factors that will influence the achievement of the goals during the period of its realization, as well as the resources that will be available for the implementation of the development activities. The main content element of the development policy are the guidelines for the development of the functional and structural components of the municipal territory and of the individual settlements. As well as the tasks to be performed to implement the guidelines, in particular to achieve the objectives of territorial development (6). The content of each municipal policy on spatial planning should be consistent with the specifics of the municipality. In this regard, the municipalities in our country are characterized by great diversity - the size of the territory and population, the nature of the terrain, the degree of urbanization, the structure of the economy and other activities, the rank and structure of infrastructure. This diversity also applies to the municipalities of the regional centers. One is the characteristics of the Plovdiv municipality, which can be assessed as purely urban. Quite different are on the Kyustendil, where a large part of the territory is rural in nature and with pronounced problems on the border area. In addition, the structure of each municipal development policy must clearly distinguish between two levels, which are closely interrelated, but also with specific problems - the municipal level and the city, especially when the center of the municipality is a medium or large city. The content of the municipal spatial planning policy is significantly influenced by the presence or absence of a regional development policy, formulated in a regional development scheme for the whole district or for a group of

neighboring municipalities. Obviously, in the presence of a regional policy, the municipal policy must clearly outline those tasks that are related to common inter-municipal activities and will lead to the achievement of the common goals of the region (6).

Any municipal spatial planning policy should be formed in accordance with the following principles:

- stability
- continuity
- realism
- solidarity
- partnership.

In this direction, we will focus on each of these principles according to the need to implement structural policies. The principles are an important condition for conducting effective regional policies at the local level, which should promote local economic development.

The first principle of sustainability is related to the requirement for environmental friendliness of the general development concepts and of each of the specific development solutions. It includes the economical use of all natural resources, especially non-renewable ones and, above all, land resources. An important element of this principle is the maintenance of a multi-sectoral structure of economic activity, in which the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises based on local resources is particularly important, as well as the provision of a diverse housing environment (7). An essential requirement of this principle is the protection against crisis situations, either due to inconsistent physical and geological processes on the ground, or due to ignoring the danger of natural disasters. It is important to apply the principle of continuity at the municipal level. This means encouraging those structural solutions that add new positive qualities to what has already been created, and do not deny and destroy it. Both our territory and settlements have a centuries-old existence and what was created in the past should be valued not only when there are recognized cultural and historical qualities, but also by virtue of its very existence. It is often necessary to look at local government in a realistic way within settlements. This imposes the principle of realism, which requires the formulation of achievable goals, investment and organizational efforts necessary for the implementation of which are commensurate with the scale of resources that can actually be provided by the public and private sectors. Following the principle of solidarity means a balance between individual and group interests on the one hand and the interests of the territorial community as a whole on the other, taking into account that in their essence they can not be conflicting, as community interests are a combination of certain types of individual interests (for health, for fresh air and green areas, and for education). It means a balance between the interests of different social categories, including special care for vulnerable groups, such as children, and the disadvantaged categories of the population - low-income families, the disabled, the elderly. Last but not least, at the municipal level it is good to apply the principle of partnership. Its implementation is extremely important both for achieving reliable and stable design solutions and for increasing the resource potential for their implementation [8]. In practice, it means active partnership with the representative structures of business, with civic associations and movements. It also means interaction and coordination of efforts with the central departments, implementation of inter-municipal initiatives.

4. Status and analysis of the territory and the development policy

The meaning of the assessment of the condition of the territory is in the derivation of the main problems, to the solution of which the structural policy of the municipality should be oriented. The assessment is made in general for the whole territory of the municipality, for its possible structural parts with specific character (plain and mountain zone, coastal territories, highly urbanized and agrarian part) and by settlements. It is necessary to analyze and evaluate the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the elements of the territory and of the vital activities. The assessment includes the land use, the ecological and sanitary-hygienic situation, the territorial distribution of the activities and the population, the structure of the settlement network. Also the intra-urban structure, the construction of the systems of economic activities, housing, social infrastructure and recreation, territorial development, configuration and construction and capacity of transport systems, territorial development, construction and capacities of technical infrastructure systems (9). Both the current situation and the trends manifested over as long a period as possible are assessed (7). The evaluation criteria and hence the derivation of the problems should be:

- the conformity of the characteristics of the condition of the territory with the quantity and quality of the natural conditions and resources of the municipality, with the possibilities and needs of its population, with the place and role of the municipality in the territorial community of the district and the country as a whole;

- compliance with the principles of environmental friendliness and rational land use, with European standards for the quality of the spatial living environment.

An essential requirement for the assessment is to show the possible territorial unevenness in the characteristics of the situation and the tendencies, the presence of acute territorial disproportions.

The object of assessment, in addition to the physical condition of the territory, must be the condition of the system for management of the development process and for servicing the investment initiatives. This assessment should cover the state of the cadaster, incl. that of the underground pipelines such as territorial coverage, topicality and digitization; the provision of general and detailed development plans and their relevance; staffing, work organization. Also the technical equipment of the technical services, the presence or absence of a reliable system for collecting, systematizing and processing information for the needs of the operational management for spatial planning and its organizational and technological level. Thus, the current decision-making system in the field of development; the existence of a municipal investment program and / or of the individual settlements (5). At the end of the analyzes and the assessment it is desirable for the strengths and weaknesses of the condition of the territory and of the system for management of the development process to appear, respectively systematized.

5. Basic postulates of the policy on spatial planning

In terms of content, the objectives of the municipal policy on spatial planning are determined by the combination of the identified problems in assessing the state of the municipality and its settlements with the general principles of spatial policy at the stage of our accession to Europe. Their wording should be proposed by the policy-making team, but should be endorsed after careful discussion by the widest possible range of stakeholders. From a structural point of view, several water targets should be formulated at different levels. In terms of time, the goals should be divided into strategic, with a long-term horizon - 10-15 years or more and mandated, to be realized within one management mandate.

From the point of view of their subject scope, the goals are general and specific. The first cover the overall development of the municipal territory or the respective city. The latter refer to the development and organization of the individual life systems - housing, transport, social infrastructure.

From the point of view of their territorial scope, the goals are general and private for the separate groups of settlements, especially for the city, the center of the municipality, as well as for the specific settlement formations (resort areas, industrial concentrations).

Given that the identified problems are of varying significance, as well as the inevitable resource deficit, which will implement the municipal development policy, it is necessary to rank the mandate, specific and private objectives in order of priority. An additional criterion for prioritizing objectives, in addition to their relationship to the importance of the problems that motivate them, should be the indirect effect of achieving them on the achievement of other objectives [4].

The time needed to achieve the goals, as well as the guidelines to be followed and the tasks to be solved, depend on the factors and conditions under which the development of the territory will take place in real time. This requires the identification of the main influencing factors on the specific territory of the municipality, as well as an assessment of their expected specific manifestation.

6. The approximate scope of a study of factors and conditions includes:

- factors external to the municipality: macroeconomic situation, development measures of regional and / or national importance, progress of the implementation of the National Program and strategy for transition to the information society;
- perspectives for economic development of the municipality: growth rates, structural changes, incomes;
- demographic development: population growth (+) or (-), evolution of age structure and other qualitative characteristics;
- natural limiters and stimulators of spatial development: ecological situation and climatic conditions, resort and tourist resources, water resources, terrain reserves, protected areas, terrains endangered by natural disasters;
- anthropogenic limiters and stimulators of spatial development: structure of the settlement network and the presence of systemic connections between its elements, transport accessibility of the territories and their infrastructural security, the presence of territories with objects of cultural and historical heritage.

Special attention should be paid to the assessment of the resource factor, which in many respects can play a decisive role in setting guidelines and tasks, and to some extent may lead to a revision of some of the objectives.

This primarily concerns the assessment of the scale and territorial location of the available municipal (and public) land resources. It is no less important to assess the financial resources for the implementation of development measures, which could be provided by municipal finances (Fund "Landscaping"), to be received as a state subsidy and / or to be attracted by the private sector, through various forms of partnership (3).

7. Elements and milestones of the spatial planning policy

In practice, the individual elements and milestones in structuring the spatial planning policy are the framework that illustrates the corrupting processes and passportize the development policies. The framework of the spatial policy determines the dependencies between the revealed specific problems of the territory in accordance with the universal principles of the modern Western European spatial planning. The practice in our country from the last ten years gives grounds to recommend conducting a line of balanced development and spatial organization throughout the municipality, which means:

- the rational and full use on site of the natural and anthropogenic resources available in the separate parts of the territory;
- achieving and maintaining an equivalent in quality urban living environment, offering equal access to employment opportunities, to knowledge, to cultural values, to the main types of services;
- achieving spatially continuous natural habitats, which provide people with opportunities for daily contact with the natural environment within 10-15 minutes of transport isochrones;
- full development of the transport and infrastructure networks and modern means for decentralized engineering and technical provision, which will offer equal opportunities for access to all inhabited parts of the municipality and from them to the high levels of transport communications, as well as an equal level of public works. (2). With regard to the structure of land use and territorial development of settlements and other urban areas at the municipal level, to fend off the intensified in recent years, the trend of development of agricultural land for construction or at least not to allow this to happen at the expense of high-category land. It is also necessary to take into account that the hypertrophied territorial expansion of cities, which is observed in certain places in the country, predetermines for decades to come significant additional costs for the development and functioning of the territory (6). Two main problems need special attention in the guidelines related to the territorial and field provision of economic activities.
- The first is to create conditions for the penetration of such activities with harmless production and service in residential areas not to happen accidentally and spontaneously, at the expense of the quality of the living environment and to the detriment of the activities themselves, but organized in accordance with certain urban principles. The second is the urgent urban restructuring of the existing production areas and the creation of suitable places in them on plots for small and medium enterprises. In perspective, the imposition of a model of national housing policy based on:
 - the achievement of diversity of the living environment in the separate parts of the cities, as a condition for free choice of the way of living;
 - conditions for realization of compact operations of mass housing construction, accessible for low-income families, as well as for social housing construction for the needs of the unjustified categories - disabled people, single mothers, minority groups;
 - conditions for development of high-category living in urban and suburban environments;
 - clear distinction between the roles of the municipality and the private sector in housing construction: public investments - only for infrastructure and partially for field provision, private - for housing construction and participation in the construction of infrastructure.

An important requirement is that, in the context of a decline in the construction of public service facilities, the possibilities for further development of the city's central systems must not be compromised (7). Moreover, it is important to provide field opportunities for the development of complex and specialized centers of a new type, which in the next stage will be realized with cooperative public and private investments. An example of this are the complex trade and service centers, which will inevitably be reached in the process of concentration of trade activity and its integration with other forms of service.

With regard to the development of social infrastructure, it is necessary to preserve the planned but undeveloped terrains for schools, in order to create conditions for one-shift training. However, the requirement for proximity to the place of residence remains valid only for primary schools, and for the upper course should be used available municipal land in other places and / or reserve land on the outskirts of cities. When restructuring the existing residential complexes, it is important to preserve the necessary terrains for sports and children's play. The structural measures for environmental protection should be directed in two directions: preventive and compensatory. At the regional (municipal) level, preventive measures should include the application of a landscape approach and the implementation of transport and infrastructure communications with minimal disturbance of the natural environment (6). At the settlement level, the activity and construction load of the individual parts of the territory should be limited to the permissible limits for air pollution and the energy efficiency of all development measures should be ensured (5).

Of the compensatory measures, the emphasis should be on the development of green areas (at least in the suburbs), protection from traffic noise and effective evacuation and treatment of waste. In the development of the communication and transport system of the cities it is expedient to give priority to the system of mass public transport, the improvement of the street network in the short and medium term to rely mainly on the existing routes, achieving maximum network connectivity, as well as to opportunities for future more radical solutions remain. Special attention should be paid to the problems of parking and parking. In the municipalities through which the routes of the European transport and infrastructure corridors are planned to pass, special attention should be paid to their connection with the regional and local transport system, as well as to the realization of the development potential of which they are carriers (7).

According to the specific conditions of the respective municipalities, in the scope of the municipal spatial planning policies there should be specialized guidelines regarding the development problems of specific territories - protected areas, territories with objects of cultural and historical heritage, coasts and water areas, settlements with specific functions. We can summarize that at the local and local level it is necessary to outline clear guidelines for improving the management of the development process, including the construction of a modern computerized information system, programming of public investments, streamlining of maintenance procedures, technical equipping and staffing of technical services. Thus, spatial planning turns out to be an important component of the spatial development of municipalities.

Due to its complex nature, the municipality's spatial planning policy in Bulgaria still has only relative autonomy. In the future, it is not necessary for the structural policy to realize connections with the other regional, regional and municipal specialized policies and programs, which treat important activity spheres with spatial dimensions. In practice, the development policy is the foundation of effective spatial development of municipalities.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, we can summarize that Bulgarian municipalities and regions do not have sustainable development policies. This necessitates the promotion of public spatial planning policies at the state level. This would be a purposeful policy that has long-term, not short-term and piecemeal responsibility for the development and spatial image of the municipalities in Bulgaria. Structural policies are largely a deficit in this regard. It is necessary to emphasize that the formation of a policy on spatial planning is a process whose mechanism is not regulated by law, just as the documentary expression of this policy is not regulated. For example, we assume that the tasks for designing the general development plan of the municipalities and the general development plan of the city are the most appropriate form of documenting the policy. Of course, the imposed models for regional development in Bulgaria call on municipalities to impose both the model of regional government and local self-government. This significantly defocuses the effectiveness of their management and leads to difficulties in setting priorities and preparing sustainable development schemes and general development plans. As a result, in the implementation of municipal policies there are certain practical difficulties in the implementation of schemes and plans. Problems are also raised regarding the possibility for integration of the spatial planning policy in the municipal development strategy. Undoubtedly, through the implementation of effective development policies, conditions will be created for strengthening the functional connections between urban and rural areas. Thus, through development policies, integrated and sustainable development will be promoted, which over the years has been complicated mainly by the specific approach imposed by the constant exchange of flows of people, goods and services. Structural policies can also create more and more necessary partnerships in solving common problems and attracting territorial investments.

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