

Abstract of the doctoral dissertation written under the scientific supervision of prof. dr hab.

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"INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL INVESTMENTS IN THE PROCESS OF
METROPOLISATION OF AGGLOMERATIONS ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE
EMERGING URBAN COMPLEX OF THE UPPER-SILESIA-ZAGŁĘBIAN
METROPOLIS".

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Integrated Territorial Investments are a tool of the EU's cohesion policy, introduced in the 2014-2020 financial perspective. They were intended to lead to regional cohesion of the European Union through the implementation of a territorial-based policy, based on a strategy for a given territory, taking into account the deficits and development potentials diagnosed in its area.

ITIs in Poland were obligatorily to be implemented in all of the functional areas of voivodeship cities. When planning their introduction, the possibility of improving the functioning of metropolitan areas was also taken into account.

In the Silesian Voivodeship, ITIs were implemented in the entire area of the Central Subregion. In the remaining area of the voivodeship, in the Northern, Western and Southern subregions, Regional Territorial Investments were implemented in accordance with the adopted development policy.

In the Central Subregion, ITI projects were implemented by municipal and powiat local government units (81 l.g.u. in total), establishing an association called the Union of Municipalities and Poviats of the Central Subregion of Silesian Voivodeship. The task of the association was to coordinate joint undertakings of its members, and one of the adopted statutory goals was to undertake activities for the development of metropolitan functions in the Central Subregion.

In the area of the Central Subregion there was also, as of 2017, the Upper Silesian-Zagłębian Metropolis (SZM/GZM), the only metropolitan association in Poland whose tasks are regulated by statutory provisions. The SZM spatially covered, as in the case of the Central Subregion Union, the Upper Silesian Metropolis (excluding Jaworzno). The SZM comprises 44 municipalities, including 13 cities with powiat rights.

The Upper Silesian Metropolis is a polycentric urban complex which develops metropolitan functions and is recognised in the strategic documents of the Silesian Voivodeship as the central development area of the voivodeship, consisting of 23 cities, including Katowice,

the voivodeship's capital. In the Central Subregion development strategy, delimiting the ITI support area, were taken into account both this core area of the subregion and the local government units making up the Direct and Indirect Functional Area of the Upper Silesian Metropolis.

ITI projects were to lead to the strengthening of urban functional areas through the implementation of the tasks based on diagnosed common challenges, as well as through the cooperation of local governments in the area that is the subject of support.

This dissertation was aimed at checking whether ITIs were an effective tool of urban development policy and whether they were important in metropolisation processes, as well as whether they allowed territorial local governments to achieve such a level of cooperation that would result in a new quality, affecting metropolisation processes.

The research hypotheses adopted in the study are:

1. Main hypothesis: Integrated Territorial Investments intensified metropolisation processes.
2. Auxiliary hypotheses:
 - a. The implementation of ITI contributed to the long-term cooperation between individual local government units.
 - b. ITI projects had a metropolitan dimension.

The subject of interest was the way in which municipalities organised themselves in an association - the Union of Municipalities and Poviats of the Central Subregion - and the scope of projects implementing the ITI strategy of this association.

In order to verify the hypotheses, research was conducted based on literature studies, strategic and operational documents (including: statutory documents, regulations, agreements, resolutions, meetings' protocols), legal acts, as well as an analysis of the scope of ITI projects accepted for funding.

A time scope was adopted, i.e. the years 2013-2020, covering the formation of the poviat-communal association, implementing the ITI strategy of the Central Subregion, and the period of EU programming assuming the implementation of ITI in the years 2014-2020.

In order to verify the conclusions drawn during the research, in-depth individual semi-structured interviews were also conducted with representatives of local governments - municipal and poviat coordinators of the Union of Municipalities and Poviats of the Central Subregion of Silesian Voivodeship. The coordinators included in the study represented both

their own local government units and participated in the organisation and management of fundraising and implementation of ITI projects.

Editorially, the paper is divided into four parts.

The first, theoretical part (Chapters 1 and 2) presents the concepts of local and regional development, the factors influencing this development and selected theories of regional and local development. Issues related to the metropolisation processes are also presented.

The second part (Chapters 3 and 4) presents an approach to development processes and the formation of integration processes in European Union and Polish policy, taking into account the state's metropolitan policy. Selected instruments of EU integration policy are described. The directions of the EU intervention in the Central Subregion of the Silesian Voivodeship in the scope of implementation of ITI projects are presented. The institutional organisation of the process of planning and realisation of ITI projects is also presented on the basis of the analysis of documents of the authorities of the Association of the Central Subregion, acting as the Intermediate Body, which performs part of the tasks related to the implementation of the Regional Operational Programme of the Silesian Voivodeship within ITI.

The third part is devoted to the analysis of ITI projects adopted for implementation, analysis of cooperation between local governments, analysis of the functional and organisational links related to the implementation of ITI in communes and identification of projects of metropolitan character. These analyses were conducted on the basis of data obtained from the open data portal of the Silesian Voivodeship, as well as on the basis of in-depth individual semi-structured interviews with the representatives of territorial local governments.

The fourth part - conclusion, contains a summary of the research, verification of hypotheses and recommendations.

The conducted research makes it possible to state that the main hypothesis of the study has been verified and partially confirmed.

Within the range of projects accepted for implementation, the scope of which was determined by EU guidelines and Polish programme documents, undertakings were distinguished which could develop metropolitan functions allowing interaction with other metropolises.

Projects related to supra-local challenges were also distinguished, implementing the urban policy of the entire area of the Central Subregion, as well as those gaining particular significance in the functioning of the metropolising Upper Silesian agglomeration. The effect of the scale of the projects implemented, which were not necessarily metropolitan, was also noteworthy, as they concerned the quality of life in the area in question.

However, most projects did not create a metropolitan product. These projects did not have the direct aim of realising metropolitan functions. The main driving force behind these projects was the implementation of the strategic plans of the local authority concerned, which incidentally reflected the provisions of the Central Subregion strategy.

Partnership projects were not undertaken due to the designated scope of programme documents, the implementation of which in partnership in a given area would not make sense due to the subject matter of the projects undertaken. The arguments put forward to justify this were the non-overlapping different needs of individual local authorities, located at different levels of development and at different levels of territorial local government division, as well as the different degree of organisational, financial and human resources preparedness of individual local authorities. The projects that could be implemented in partnership, as indicated during the research, are network projects.

In the light of the above analyses, it can be concluded that the auxiliary hypothesis: ITI projects had a metropolitan dimension has been partially verified positively.

This is due to the fact that projects that improve the quality of life in urban functional areas, including metropolitan areas, can be demonstrated. Out of a number of projects, the with a metropolitan character can be identified, particularly those related to low-emission urban transport, allowing for synergies and the development of transport links both within the Central Subregion and with other metropolitan centres. The remaining projects were metropolisation projects to a small extent, creating mainly tourism products in tourist, nature, sports and cultural facilities.

The cooperation undertaken in establishing an institution such as a poviát and commune association, information and organisational activities, projects implemented not on the basis of a formal partnership, but on the basis of a common goal, as well as the declared intention to undertake further projects in the new programming period, including in the ITI form, allows for the recognition of the auxiliary hypothesis: The implementation of ITI has contributed to undertaking a long-term cooperation between individual local government units and has been verified positively.

It is particularly important to emphasise that the activity of the bodies, including the office, of the Association was recognised as integrating individual local governments. An institution was created that was recognised by local governments as the actual representative of their interests at various levels of local government, including towards the provincial government. It should be noted, however, that the community of interests of the local governments was based on the efficient absorption of funds by each of these local governments separately.

The local governments saw the realisation of common challenges in the activities of the Upper Silesian-Zagłębian Metropolis - in this respect, however, they emphasised the lack of subjectivity of this institution to make authoritative decisions in relation to other local governments, as well as the need to extend the scope of its competences, necessary for efficient management of the metropolitan area of the Upper Silesian agglomeration.

The literature studies, research and analyses conducted and the verification of hypotheses allow us to conclude that the aim of the study has been achieved.

The conducted research does not exhaust the issue of implementation of ITIs and their metropolitan dimension in the Central Subregion of the Silesian Voivodeship in the conditions of functioning of two entities: The Union of Municipalities and Poviats of the Central Subregion, as well as the Upper Silesian-Zagłębian Metropolis. This is a scope that requires further analysis based on data obtained in the subsequent years of implementation of the tasks of these entities and projects in the formula of Integrated Territorial Investments.