

**Summary of the doctoral dissertation written under the guidance of prof. zw. dr hab.
Elżbieta Lorek**

**„Revitalization of degraded areas as an element of sustainable development strategy of
an industrial region”
Renata Dębecka-Pisarek**

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development of the United Nations and the strategy for Europe: sustainable development it is a development which meets the needs of current and future generations but at the same time does not deteriorate the opportunities of future generation to meet their needs and achieve their aims. One of important factors of sustainable development is management of devastated areas (of total lost value in use) and degraded (whose value in use decreased as a result of deterioration of natural conditions or as a result of environmental pollution). The way to bring a given area out of the crisis state, leading to its durable sustainable development including economic and social revival and improving the quality of life of the local community in all areas: economic, cultural, social and environmental -is revitalization.

The Silesian Voivodship is an industrialized region in which degraded areas occupy a significant part, therefore, implementation of sustainable development strategy is not possible without effective revitalization processes. Obtaining access to the European Union Structural Funds since Polands accession to the EU, created additional opportunities and allowed to generate tools to carry out revitalization programs leading to a change in social attitudes and improvement of the quality of life of residents in social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects, and provoking further development of the area.

An attempt to recognize revitalization as an important part of the concept of sustainable development causes a necessity to identify the current state of degraded areas, unification of legal acts in this area, evaluating revitalization programs which were finished and developing and implementing new programs on the basis of a comparative analysis of revitalization processes, which were already carried out.

The aim of this thesis is:

- organizing and supplementing knowledge in the fields of management of degraded areas,
- recognition of directions, barriers and factors determining the implementation of revitalization projects in degraded areas, in particular in the three analyzed municipalities,
- an attempt to formulate indicators and measures to check the effectiveness of revitalization projects of degraded areas,

- identification of needs and priorities of local communities in the analyzed crisis areas,
- recognition of connections and estimating the influence of the effectiveness of revitalization projects on sustainable development and environmental protection programs in the analyzed municipalities,
- application of the Case Study method to measure the effectiveness of revitalization projects carried out in Jaworzno, Bytom and Sosnowiec.

In this work the following research thesis were adopted:

1. The effects of revitalization processes of degraded areas as a part of the sustainable development concept lead to improving living conditions of residents in social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects.
2. Case Study method is an effective tool to estimate the effectiveness of revitalization projects in degraded areas.
3. Planned and finished revitalization processes in Jaworzno, Sosnowiec and Bytom are based on long-term sustainable development programs.
4. The main barriers in introducing revitalization programs in Jaworzno, Sosnowiec and Bytom concern financial situation and the need to obtain external financing for their implementation.
5. The examined revitalization processes in Jaworzno, Sosnowiec and Bytom meet social, economic, environmental and cultural needs.

The time range of the dissertation will cover the years of 2001-2018. The reasons for choosing this particular time range are as follows: the Program for Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection for the Silesian Voivodship was adopted for the years of 2001-2015 and what is more the time range of revitalization programs adopted in Jaworzno, Bytom and Sosnowiec covers the years of 2007 to 2023 (in the thesis only the effects of these programs obtained by 2018 will be examined).

The subjects of this thesis will be revitalization projects of degraded areas, introduced in Jaworzno, Bytom and Sosnowiec, and their impact on the effectiveness of the sustainable development strategy.

To achieve the goals of the work, the critical analysis of literature in the fields of environmental protection, management of environmental protection, management of degraded areas and revitalization will be used. In particular, national and foreign literature, national and

foreign specialist journals, legal acts and scientific papers published in the Internet will be analyzed.

The empirical part will consist the analysis of primary sources, in particular documents and studies concerning the implementation of revitalization projects of degraded areas. The method to verify the research hypotheses will be CASE STUDY.

In the first chapter the basic concepts of degraded areas, the criteria for their delimitation, the scope of formal, legal and economic conditions concerning the management of degraded areas are discussed. Moreover, the typology of barriers concerning managing degraded areas is presented. In the second part of the first chapter, the definitions, characteristics, stages and goals of revitalization are presented, revitalization programs are defined, and their sources of financing are analyzed.

In the second chapter the foundations of the theory of sustainable development are systematised. The paradigm, principles, goals of sustainable development and eco-development as well as the genesis of the concept of sustainable development are defined, moreover the necessary instruments to implement the sustainable development strategy and indicators of sustainable development are presented. Additionally, the features of local development and development goals in municipalities are discussed. Basic assumptions of ecological policy and EU action in the light of the idea of sustainable development are presented.

In the third chapter the conditions and directions of introducing the revitalization projects as a part of sustainable development concept are analyzed, and examined in particular:

- the way of preparing and programming revitalization process,
- how is the communal sustainable development strategy (successive stages) created and how the strategy should be integrated with Agenda 21,
- principles and measures of the revitalization processes.

The last part of the chapter presents positive examples of transformations of degraded areas.

In the fourth chapter the case study method is used to evaluate the revitalization processes carried out in degraded areas in Jaworzno, Bytom and Sosnowiec taking into consideration the sustainable development. In particular, the theory of the Case Study method and the reasons for choosing this method to assess the revitalization processes carried out in Jaworzno, Bytom and Sosnowiec are presented.

Moreover

- a diagnosis of the situation and formal and legal conditions is carried out,
- sources of financing and aid resources in the analyzed municipalities are analyzed,
- the measures and barriers to the effectiveness of actions are defined,
- the needs and priorities of local communities are identified,
- finished revitalization processes in the analyzed municipalities in the aspect of sustainable development are evaluated,
- the methodology of conducted empirical studies is presented,
- the implementation of sustainable development assumptions in communal revitalization programs is assessed based on a survey carried out among the residents.

The conducted research shows that not all the analysed revitalizations met all the assumptions of sustainable development and also confirms that the Case Study method, despite some restrictions resulting from its properties, has proved to be an effective tool for efficiency assessment of revitalization processes of degraded areas.

The analysis of the financial situation and funds allocated in the examined municipalities for revitalization programs shows that the most funds (even three times more) were allocated in Bytom, in which municipality (as the only one of the three examined) revitalization fully met all the assumptions of the sustainable development concept, unlike in the two others.

It follows from the above conclusion that revitalization programs in Poland will meet the assumptions of the sustainable development concept, provided that cities and municipalities consciously and fully support the revitalisation programs.

Additionally, while implementing revitalisation processes not only financing but also forecasting, programming and planning as well as using information and educational tools, particularly targeted at residents of municipalities and other social and economic units, are becoming increasingly important.

Therefore, it is important for all the participants of the process to be able to influence decisions on revitalization for example by: participation in discussion panels, counselling on the program, control groups, conducting sociological surveys, launching a permanent consultation point, creating conditions for systematic workshop meetings and broadly informing residents about taken actions and about the offer provided by local authorities included in the strategy.

The cognitive value of presented theories and research results is important as far as the Polish local self-government units orientation towards sustainable development is concerned.