

гл. ас. д-р СУ „Св. Климент Охридски“ – София
ivanov.metodi@gea.uni-sofia.bg

CHALLENGES FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN- AND SPATIAL PLANNING

**Chief. Assist. Prof. Metodi Ivanov,
SU “St. Kliment Ohridski”- Sofia
ivanov.metodi@gea.uni-sofia.bg**

Abstract

In this article, an attempt will be made to examine the development opportunities for regional development in the context of urban planning and spatial planning. The challenges in the context of urban planning are related to the fact that, in essence, urban planning fails to cope with large-scale urbanization around the world, as a result, cities are becoming one of the most difficult and urgent challenges of the 21st century. Linked to the vulnerability of the urban environment and at the same time the accelerating pace of climate change accompanied by population growth, which poses a number of challenges to humanity and outlines an unsustainable future. Urbanization is widespread around the world, on the other hand, climate change and the movement of people predetermine the existence of a huge number of people living in urban ghettos without access to basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity. The rapid growth of cities, which is accompanied by the lack of timely spatial and urban planning leads to an increase in problems such as lack of access to basic services and adequate living space for urban residents. On the other hand, the shortage of jobs is increasing, as well as the homeless population, as a result of which the vulnerability to crime in urban areas and agglomerations is increasing. Definitely, timely urban planning can transform and change modern cities by turning them into cities of the future. In this line of thought, it is necessary to pay additional attention to increasing the opportunities for urban management, which requires both planning and design, as well as seeking investment to increase the technical urban infrastructure.

Keywords: regional development, urban planning, spatial planning, strategic planning

INTRODUCTION

By performing a comparative analysis of the next strategic framework for regional socio-economic development, spatial development and urban planning of individual cities in the country can be seen by finding plans and strategies for development based on the requirements of legislation in the country and following European requirements and global trends in the development of regional development planning. But, definitely a comprehensive analysis of the current legislation can help to introduce problems in spatial and regional development and to open opportunities for urban planning in the current 21st century. The highlighting of the opportunities for modern intelligent development of cities should be linked to the selection of appropriate priority areas for change and provision for implementation of own and specific measures, activities and projects, after identifying the

needs and requirements of the population. This process predetermines, uses and performs the implementation of an analysis placed after the following main emphases, namely:

- Economic development - determining the current state of the local economy and identifying opportunities for interventions to increase economic indicators in the region;
- Demographic development - including, in addition to the analysis of the demographic processes in the region and the highlighting of trends, as well as the identification of measures to prevent the negative consequences of the local demographic crisis;
- The social development of cities and municipalities, paying attention to the development of public relations, as well as the principles and management of the social economy;
- Development of the settlement network, the territorial-urban structure, the infrastructural provision, the connectivity and accessibility of the cities and their adjacent territories.

Based on the analysis, it is necessary to identify the challenges to the planning and management of cities that are related to the planning of measures in the following areas:

- Measures aimed at increasing the competitiveness and application of innovation in the local economy of cities;
- Measures and activities related to attracting investments and implementation of public-private partnerships in the field of the identified priority areas of development in the strategic documents of the cities;
- Measures and activities for development of the sectors in which the settlement has comparative competitors' advantages;
- Measures and activities for creating a favorable business environment;
- Measures and activities for the infrastructural provision of the business and the population reflecting the modern tendencies and requirements;
- Measures and activities for the development and marketing of the desired modern city, i.e. marketing and advertising of the opportunities offered for business development in the respective city;
- Measures and activities for development of a highly productive industrial base, which includes the modernization and construction of modern infrastructure, favorable business environment for attracting investments;
- Measures and activities for development of entrepreneurship and support for the application and implementation of innovations in the production facilities of the operating companies in the city;

These measures and activities can be supplemented depending on the results of the analysis related to the socio-economic development of the studied city, therefore the author does not claim to be exhaustive regarding the selection of appropriate measures and activities that will positively affect the development of cities and turning them into modern cities of the future.

The strategic spatial planning „is essential to forming policies for economic development in determining the necessity by residential developments and accommodation for the socially vulnerable groups of the population and in the definition and identification of a wide array of government programs and policies on health, employment, education, transport, environment, culture etc. The strategies for spatial development have a wider scope, compared with the regional development strategies, which are mainly focused on economic activities in a separate territorial unit. However, the scope and character of the

considered activities of spatial planning, regional development and regional planning gives us reason to regard them as similar to or more like the exceptionally closely associated activities. The regional development strategies in Bulgaria are strongly formalized, as we see, the content and the set objectives in the various regional development strategies are taking prescription of the existing legislation which can be seen in the implementation of the process of the preparing regional development strategy or the plan for regional development, which preserves the designated deadlines in the existing legislation on carrying out consultations with key agencies, departments, NGOs and other established and existing hierarchical levels of management in the central and local government. In terms of contents is required accordance of the regional development strategy with the existing on a higher level the administrative legislative acts, plans and strategies". (Ivanov, M., Naydenov, Kl. 2016)

1. Stimulating the development of the modern city.

One of the opportunities for the development of the modern city and stimulation of the socio-economic development of the cities in Bulgaria is through the study of the possibilities for creation and creation of free economic zones. „The development and growth of the autonomy of the regions implies an increase in their degree of recognition, related to the increase of international economic relations and trade. One of these options is a free economic zone, as a particular type of state (or private) regulation of international economic relations and trade. Free economic zones around the world must include free - commercial, port, economic, banking - or duty - free shops and warehouses. Generally, they are designed to stimulate industrial exports, increase foreign exchange earnings, and workplaces used as "laboratories" to test new economic methods and mechanisms. Another favorable feature of all free economic zones is the favorable investment climate - customs, tax, financial privileges and administrative concessions compared to the general regime operating in the rest of the economic area in one or another country (respectively region). Often, factors such as political stability, investment guarantees, infrastructure quality, workforce qualifications are crucial. The localization of such a free zone is an essential element of the national strategy and an important approach in the development of regional policy for a given territory. This is one of the world-wide recognized forms of organizing production, especially of high-tech products, as well as creating conditions for providing modern technologies, as well as for moving foreign direct investments and accelerating the development of certain economic regions. Free economic zones are an important tool for regional development. Some of the most important localization requirements for such free zones in accordance with world standards are:

- Political and economic stability in the region, accompanied by a concept of economic development and planning;
- Good construction of the transport system and communications, proximity to a railway and communication center of national importance;
- Environmentally friendly, environmentally friendly, high standard of physical planning;
- Reliable infrastructure for all seasons during the year - transport, water, energy;
- Market access - preferential access to important markets with a major advantage;

- Developed financial and banking infrastructure with prerequisites for servicing in the field of electronics and engineering;
- A required labor force, a low labor cost, a production qualification that essentially determines the type of industry that could be developed in the area;
- The existence of an existing industry with a well-developed production infrastructure and a plant economy, - a good organization of the zone and general coordination;
- Prerequisites for the development of light industry in the presence of traditions and highly qualified personnel, which is a prerequisite for high quality of production and competitiveness.“(Naydenov, Kl. 2018).

2. Role and place of integrated urban regeneration and development plans.

Integrated plans for urban regeneration and development are subject to the principles of sustainable development of cities and agglomerations and criteria for spatial development. To prepare such a plan is needed clarity on the current urban planning, continuity and further development of strategies at the highest level, but the diagnosis of the condition of cities and regions, their development potential and opposing their cores. So integrated plans become realistic solutions tailored to the financial and administrative capacity of a given municipality and the realities and problems of the area of action. Regardless of the accuracy in the preparation of integrated plans for urban regeneration and development their success must go through public hearings, environmental assessment and appropriate assessments to ensure sustainable urban development, equal access for all members of the community and protect and improve environmental quality environment. With integrated plans for urban regeneration and development can improve economic development, social protection, environment, develop quality urban environment, transport accessibility and not least self-government through an integrated approach to sustainable development and participation of the whole society. The main problem may be noted that the largest cities will receive the most money. This in turn will lead to new imbalances in regional development. Big cities will become larger and more attractive for investment and small less attractive and people will continue to move towards larger ones. These are people mainly in fertile and working age. This in turn will worsen the demographic crisis in small towns and will lead to depopulation. (Naydenov, Kl., Traykov, T., 2016, p.497-503). “According to urban planning goals, smart cities can be defined as "cities of knowledge", "digital cities", "cyber cities" or "eco-cities". Smart cities in economic and social terms are looking to the future. They are constantly monitoring the most important infrastructure - roads, bridges, tunnels, railways, metro, airports, seaports, communication systems, water supply, power supply, even important buildings - for optimal resource allocation and safety. The main difference in the smart city from the traditional city is in the nature of relations with citizens. In the ordinary city, ICT-based services can't respond as quickly to changing economic, cultural and social conditions as services in the intelligent city. In this way, the intelligent city, primarily aimed at the human being, is based on the ICT infrastructure and the continuous development of the city, taking into account the requirements of ecological and economic sustainability. Smart cities can be the new cities that are already designed as such, or those cities that are based on a particular purpose (such as industrial cities or techno parks), or who become "smart" step by step. Urban areas must manage their development, support economic competitiveness, while enhancing social

cohesion, environmental sustainability and improving the quality of life of their citizens. For smart cities to take place, local government needs to be an innovator. It should also stimulate innovation. This can be achieved through partnerships with universities and research organizations. In order to have integrated strategic urban planning, the intelligent city implies working together, not only for local authorities but also for citizens”(Naydenov, Kl.,2018).

Discussion

In front of the scientific community will be left with a number of questions, the answer to which will not be unambiguous, and the possible solutions will depend on the socio-economic development of individual countries, as well as on the skills and modern capabilities for urban planning and spatial planning. Nevertheless, a number of issues will be of interest, such as:

How will the smart cities of the future need to be modeled to meet their ever-growing population?

How to combine the types of urban transport with the growing population density in the modern cities of the future?

Conclusion

The challenges for regional development in the context of urban planning and spatial planning are related to the fact that more than half of the world's population already lives in urban centers, and is expected to exceed 60% in about twenty years. As a result, urbanized urban areas must be able to solve some of the biggest problems of the overcrowded urban environment. This challenge predetermines architects, engineers and designers in spatial planning and urban planning to think now about the future problems facing cities and their development. We will increasingly witness how urban planning is embedded in local culture, while at the same time cities are able to sustain their transformation and address larger issues, even such as public health, the impact on climate change. , ecological energy production. Urban planning will focus on finding opportunities to simultaneously increase the value of the built environment and its integrated use, to solve the problems of the future, the problems of the new 21st century. There will be a process of constantly growing and densely populated urban centers, this process will be accompanied by the desire of people to live close to work and at the same time to have all the necessary services near their homes. Increasingly, urban planning will focus on people and preserve their public health and build communities by creating vibrant and dynamic neighborhoods. Planning and construction of mixed-use spaces, transport systems for people, as well as the construction of intermodal transport systems. Increasing attention will be paid to the planning and implementation of green spaces, especially in terms of the construction of micro parks, balconies, green roofs, through the introduction of vertical gardening in urban planning. „In the European union, building a sustainable economy is vital for our efforts to provide further proof of our cities and improve people's quality of life. Creating the right conditions for a circular economy is a key battlefield in the fight for carbon neutrality. It will provide new and sustainable competitive advantages for Europe and stimulate job creation. European union leadership can help to determine the right conditions at city level by removing barriers to speeding up the circular economy. The so-called circular economy wants to create a virtuous circle that produces goods and services without wasting the limited resources of the planet such as raw materials, water and energy. The principles

of the circular economy bring economic benefits. The Circular Economy is presented as a model for operating sustainable principles. This model can be transferred, for example, to agriculture, real estate, and the tourism sector“ (Naydenov, Kl., 2018).

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