

Land use management for sustainable European cities

>> Interview with the Mayor of Bytom, Piotr Koj – 20. April 2010

Interview



Mayor of Bytom, Piotr Koj

Dear Mr Koj, in a short sentence, how would you describe the LAP of Bytom?

In the first part Local Action Plan presents legal, organizational, and technical aspects of land use planning in the city of Bytom. The second part is a kind of discussion on the strong points, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the LUMASEC area and finally focuses on the strategies of land use development which could be implemented in the city of Bytom.

What are the real problems, needs or challenges that the LAP addresses?

The real problem emerged when we had to:
Choose the tools to study the impact of decisions on spatial planning,
Complete the data on the site,
Promote the investment zone,
Solve the problem of bad effects of mining,
Change the ownership structure, Involve the local community.

What are the specific features of the context that have shaped the LAP?

Local Action Plan was created in response to the problems, challenges and needs of the city. Within its framework the new methods were developed to ensure sustainable development of LUMASEC area and city.

What are the key aims of the LAP and in what way do they contribute or add something to what is already being done in the city?

The aim of the Local Action Plan was to propose diagnostic methods used for scenarios, and development indicators to monitor the situation in the area of the LUMASEC project.

What are the key components, measures or actions in the LAP?

During the work on Local Action Plan the existing methods of planning of the city were examined. In addition to this the legal status of the LUMASEC area was determined. They diagnosed the need for dynamic assessment of changes in spatial planning and the creation of credible future scenarios. These actions have been rehearsed on the example chosen for the LUMASEC project.

At city level what were the origins for the ideas in the LAP. When do they date back to? When did the actions sparked off by the LAP start? When did they end or are they still ongoing?

The general framework of the Local Plan was a good practice before starting the project, while the project focuses on the previously mentioned aspect of creating a dynamic spatial solutions, and therefore that the activities are in the initial stage of implementation, we think they will only



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be a good practice in future.

What were the key stages of implementation? What were the set backs and obstacles faced? How were they overcome? At what stage is the LAP at this moment?

The first key stage was to establish the Local Support Group, and then to develop the assumptions for the Local Action Plan, and the challenge will be to have the final implementation of the Local Plan. On the other hand the obstacle was to find a relationship between a special case of Bytom, and a general reference to the situation in other project partners (potential or interested). Discussions with stakeholders about errors proved to be easier when we achieved the success for the first time. Local Action Plan is currently at the stage of implementation.

How did the group learn from URBACT exchanges and network partners?

Given the very large differences in law between partners, it is difficult to relate directly to the partners experience of our situation. Nevertheless, every meeting with the partners was the inspiration to seek their own solutions.

Who had the main idea, who was the initiator, and who were the main players?

Substantive support and coordination staff assured the City Council in Bytom. However, the most inspiring were the discussions with members of the Local Support Group, among whom property owners and businessmen demonstrated considerable activity.

Who brought the group together, called meetings and provided the animation?

Substantive support and coordination staff assured the City Council in Bytom.

How were managing authorities involved? What problems arose? What was learned? Have you had separate meetings with them to discuss the LAP(s)? Have they participated in the LSG at all?

Have any provisional indications been given in respect of possible funding?

Knowing the importance of the site chosen for the LUMASEC project, the city watched with great attention the progress of work on the project, and the work carried out in parallel with planning related to this area and their interconnection.

How were the residents or users (primary stakeholders or target groups) involved? What problems arose? What was learned?

Residents and users of the site were members of Local Support Group. There were no problems connected with it. Lessons learned are as follows: Cooperation, in order to be successful, must be based on reasonable expectations and assumptions, without trying to force the arguments of one party.

What was the dynamic between the actors? How did different departments, different agencies and different types of stakeholder coordinate among themselves?

Assessing the dynamics of cooperation between the actors involved in the project it can be said that after the initial phase of enthusiasm, there was a stabilization process. Coordination and cooperation took place in the working meetings and in meetings of the Local Support Group.

Were any tools like stakeholder analysis used to check that all relevant partners had been included?

Basic analysis, which allows to check whether all partners are involved in the project, was to examine the ownership structure. The data used for this purpose were held by the City Council in Bytom and were connected with external partners.

What has changed in the city as a result of the work done in through the local action plan? For example, have new departments or stakeholders

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been brought on board? Have recommendations been adopted into city policy? Have city funds been allocated to the actions? Have funds been attracted from outside the city? Have certain actions been implemented or launched?

LUMASEC project has not been completed yet, therefore it is hard to talk about its results, but the results of work on the project, in particular recommendations, were met with a very warm welcome of the city authorities, who fully support the initiative of implementation in Bytom. But at the moment we cannot measure the impacts on the local level.

Were there any unplanned results that came about because of the work of the LAP?

The result of the work on the Local Action Plan was very strong investor interest in the area, which has not been developed so far.

Can you measure the impacts at local level of the LAP? What kinds of ways has there been an impact? (New partnerships? New ideas? Re-thinking policy? Etc). Has the target group or target area experienced improvements?

At the moment we cannot measure the impacts on the local level.

Does the LSG continue to meet and oversee implementation?

Yes. The meetings and supervision are continued.

How has the action changed the way things are organised or done in the city?

It is difficult to talk about the results of actions, because we find ourselves at the beginning of the LUMASEC implementation.

Has the approach developed in the project become a mainstream aspect of delivery of services at local, regional or national level?

Our approach is developed to supplement and extend the existing good practice, our framework connected with spatial planning, is strictly defined by law.

Lessons learned: What were the key factors that led to success?

It is still too early to talk about the results because of incomplete implementation of the Local Action Plan.

What are the results and experiences related to the three levels of LUMASEC Spatial Patterns / Data, Governance and Capacity building (or other topics like Brownfields and Urban Sprawl)?

The basis for good management and the development of future solutions is to have a good and constantly updated database, which is readable in real time.

Are the lessons capable of transfer to another situation?

Of course, but they should be adapted to the local legal situation.

What issues are still unresolved? e.g. sustainability of funding, maintaining involvement of the partnership etc.

The problem of maintaining a balance between commitment and expectations of investors and the needs of community as a whole is not solved yet.

What makes this case interesting from an external perspective?

The opportunity to implement our Community Viz method at different levels of detail, ie region, city, district, and at the different legal systems.

Dear Mr. Koj, thank you very much.