THE ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, INCLUDING TYPES OF COMMUNES

Emilia Norkowska*

Abstract

This operation is aimed at economic growth, meeting the needs of local communities, creating new practical values of the commune, and improving the already existing ones. Local government units are a major reference point for the local development. The aim of this paper is to check whether the type of selected municipalities, urban-rural and rural units influences the direction of local development, as it is in the case of practical values of the unit, available natural resources, and funds. To meet this end, an analysis of the development strategies of three different communal units was made: Krakow municipality, Kety rural-urban commune, and Klucze rural commune. Based on a comparison of strategic and operational objectives included within the strategies, the hypothesis which claims that the type of units adopted to be analyzed influence the direction of their local development was confirmed. In their objectives of development strategies, all of the studied units emphasize the need to take action for economic development, education, and housing. However, the remaining strategic and operational objectives are divergent. The most significant difference was noticed between the municipality and the rural unit. Their targets range from fulfilling the need for international promotion of the city, to the necessity of ensuring the residents access to water and sewer systems. The conclusions derived from this analysis will allow further research. Its effect is to facilitate the selection of appropriate tools for local development in relation to a certain administrative unit.

Keywords: *local development, local development objectives, commune, local government unit, local development strategy.*

^{*} Ph.D. Student, Faculty of Economics and International Relations, Department of Economics and Real Estate Investment Process, Cracow University of Economics, ul. Rakowicka 27, 31-510, Cracow, e-mail: norkowska@gmail.com.

1. Introduction

The problem of localism originated in the late '70s when the crisis of regional politics manifested itself in Western Europe. As a result, economic stagnation painfully affected local communities and their environment, including large enterprises (Pajak, 2001, p. 44). These enterprises were recognized as carriers of progress, making small and medium enterprises completely unnecessary. In addition, it was believed that the smaller units do not generate any innovation, which is indispensable in the development process (Jewtuchowicz, 2005, p. 61). It was not until the modification of this trend and resignation from subordination of peripheral areas to the central ones, when the potential of local development was recognized. In Poland, this approach was primarily a reaction to the excessive political and economic centralism and its weakness regarding new social needs. Currently, this development is often put first due to the argument that small units are a driving force for the development of the whole country. However, the development processes of individual units and areas often differ substantially. This is mainly due to the specificity of individual units, which in turn is the cause of defining local development objectives in various ways. One of the ways to distinguish between individual units of local government is to divide them into: municipalities, urban-rural, and rural communes. The aim of this paper is to present the idea of local development, and to check whether the objectives of the said development are subject to the type of commune units chosen to serve this analysis. To answer the abovementioned question, the literature on the subject, which defines local development, will be analyzed. The second part of the paper will contain the comparison of the development strategies of selected communes in the province of Małopolska: Krakow municipality, as well as Kety, and Klucze communes.

2. The essence of local development

Local development is the subject often undertaken in both discussions and scientific studies concerning, inter alia, local government. It is also reflected in the multitude of terms defining this issue. However, there is a common belief stating that local development should be associated with desirable and positive qualitative, quantitative, and structural transformations of a given system. This idea relates to two principal terms, that is territory and change (Naworól, 2006, p. 81). In order to facilitate the formulation of the definition, it is worth to analyze both elements of the term "local development".

Development is associated with a change of the current state. However, this is, by all means a process that brings benefits and leads to even more perfect

states. Development is defined by W. Krajewski (1997, p. 33) as 'a kind of chain of directed and irreversible changes occurring in the structure of complex objects' (Nermend, 2009, p.7). In the following analysis, local government units can be considered as such a complex object. This development consists of particular phases and stages, which take place over a longer period of time. These phases are full of both quantitative and qualitative changes. In addition, it is emphasized that development is a fundamental category, occurring in many areas of life and science (Piontek, 2006, p. 36). One of these areas is economy, where we distinguish, among others, socio-economic, sustainable, or local development, which is the subject of this paper.

Local development is associated with a certain territorially limited area. There is no clear framework suggesting the size of this area. In Poland, taking into account its current administrative division, it is considered that the local scale may cover the following areas (Małkowska, 2011, p. 19):

- the area of districts and communes
- the area of communes

This divergence stems from the objectives and resources used on a given territory. Some of the tasks require cooperation at a higher level than the local authorities. The literature on the subject is very helpful in determining this distinction. According to M. Trojanek's interpretation (1994, p. 9-10), locality can be understood in three various ways:

- locality as an element characterizing a property of the analyzed system or entity, with respect to the interconnected surrounding and primary systems (in this regard, commune is a local system in relation to province which, in turn, is local in relation to the country),
- locality as a measure of a given part of the territory in relation to the whole, standing as its relatively small part (it is assumed that locality refers to what is bigger than a single settlement unit but smaller than the region),
- locality as distinctness, which means a possibility to undertake autonomous actions in relation to similar systems.

This interpretation indicates that in local development locality does not apply exclusively to the territory. Locality should be understood as a relation of subordination between units and the ability to take certain independent actions. What is more, this restriction characterizes not only geographical constraint, but it also relates to the society, which plays a very essential role in local development. Within the theory of local development, this population is referred to as "local community" (Brol, 1995, p. 91). The characteristics of this community are convergent with the foregoing interpretation of locality proposed by M. Trojanek. This is a group of people who are connected with each other by a certain system of relationships. This group has some common values and it considerably distinguishes itself from other communities,

according to the principle of distinction. To some extent, local community is self-sufficient and capable of meeting the basic needs of its members. According to A. Sztando (1998), the influence which a local community has on local development can appear in two forms:

- Community living in a given territory transforms it through individual actions of its members.
- Transformations within the territory are held on the basis of the
 activities executed jointly by the community. Individuals join with
 each other to form business entities, institutions, and organizations.
 The most important of them is the group that joins all the units of
 a given community. The group that decides about the direction and
 pace of development is a self-government community. Its members
 at large, and all of its characteristics, are called local government.

Combining the abovementioned considerations relating to the development, locality, and community of residents, we can move to define local development. Firstly, we can cite R. Rezsohazy, who defined local development as 'harmonized and systematic action carried out in a local community, involving people interested, the results of which serve to meet the social needs of the locals and contribute to the overall progress' (Sztando, 1998, p. 12). The importance of local community in the creation of local development is also emphasized by J. Parysek (1995, p. 37), who defines it as 'operating for economic and social development of a given territorial unit (city, commune), using its resources, taking into account the needs of the residents, taking into consideration their contribution to the activities undertaken'. The last of the definitions was formulated by R. Brol (1998, quoted after: Małkowska, 2011, p. 16). Apart from local community, he pays attention to a highly essential aspect, which is how development influences regional ecology. He defines development as 'harmonized and systematic action carried out by local community, local authority and other subjects functioning in the commune and intended to create new and improve the already existing practical values of the commune, provide favorable conditions for the local economy and ensure spatial and ecological order'.

While looking at these definitions, one can notice that they emphasize not only the importance of local communities, but also the practical values of a given unit. Each and every territory has a certain potential determined by internal social, economic and environmental resources. This potential is also determined by a closer and a more distant environment of a unit. These resources are defined as the development factors that determine the character and direction of the development. J. Nowak (2006, p.23) divides these factors into internal and external ones. Among the external factors he enumerates government politics, including international programs (e.g. the actions of

the European Union) and the actions of the investors. The internal factors, according to the author, involve local resources such as: society, economy, current infrastructure and environment, as well as local administration, that is, the actions undertaken by local authorities, adaptability of the unit, and newly constructed social and technical infrastructure. Properly recognized and interpreted factors are a source and a driving force for local development. Their absence may, however, constitute a major obstacle to the development and even change into the development barriers. These barriers constitute significant limitations in the development process. They can be removed using economic or legal and organizational means (Bagdziński, 1994, p. 27).

3. Local development objectives

Definitions of local development emphasize its various levels. The most frequently indicated levels of development are social, economic, environmental, political, cultural, and spatial. It should be noted that the above-mentioned areas interfere with each other and complement each other. These levels can also be noticed in the aspects of commune development enumerated below and proposed by M. Adamowicz (2003, p. 18). According to the author, local development of a commune manifests itself by:

- economic growth,
- increase of prosperity and quality of life of the population,
- increase of investment attractiveness,
- technical development and implementation of innovations,
- restructuring and diversification of business activity,
- development of public welfare services and resources,
- growth of job and social mobility of the population,
- development of the institutional infrastructure,
- re-cultivation and improvement of the quality of the natural environment,
- strengthening local, regional, and environmental identity.

The aforementioned levels of development can also be noticed by analyzing the development objectives, which relate mainly to the areas enumerated above. The local development objectives are universal, but under certain local conditions they are specified and hierarchized, and adjusted to the existing conditions of development (Wojtasiewicz, 1997, p. 9). It means that, depending on a direction of development, the authorities of the unit establish adequate main and detailed objectives.

In its activities, the authorities of the communal local government are obliged to follow the well-being of the citizens and meet their basic needs (Act of 8 March 1990, art.7) It is their needs that should be given priority while designing local development. For this reason, in the literature on the

subject, it is assumed that the strategic objective of local authorities within local development is to 'provide the residents of a given self-government unit with jobs and income at a level which allows decent standard of living' (Chądzyński, Nowakowska, Przygodzki, 2007, p. 81). Complete implementation of the above-assumed objective allows further development of a society and a region.

All the other objectives of regional development can be divided into several main groups, which are: economic, social, psychosocial, technological, political, and cultural. The following table presents detailed objectives within each of these categories.

Table 1. Main groups of local development objectives

Economic Objectives	Pursuits taken to ensure the residents high economic development		
	through their self-realization and a certain external aid.		
Social Objectives	Social integration of people inhabiting a		
	certain region.		
Psychosocial Objectives	Increase in the identification of single individuals of the society		
	with a whole group and with action programs implemented in the		
	region.		
Technological Objectives	Increase of technical conditions of life in the region.		
Political Objectives	Pursuits undertaken to increase participation of local communities		
	in a decision-making system. Creation of democratic structures of		
	power in the region.		
Cultural Objectives	Creation of a regional system of norms and values accepted by the		
	residents; identification of the residents with the region inhabited.		

Source: Own work on the basis of Chądzyński et al. (2007), p. 81.

The problem of local development is also raised by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. It stems from the main objective of the organization, which is to help the citizens achieve the highest standard of living. The objectives of local development politics, formulated by OECD, refer primarily to the generally formulated economic objectives (see Table 1). According to the OECD, the local development objectives should be understood as:

- increase of competitiveness of the region through skillful and appropriate use of available resources, including adequate promotion of regional products and services,
- improvement in the employment levels and the pursuit to provide long-term career opportunities for the residents of the region,
- pursuits undertaken to increase participation of the disabled and the national minorities in local economy,
- taking care of land management which contributes to the quality of residents' life and determines the possibilities to undertake business activities.

4. Diversification of local development objectives depending on the administrative type of a communal unit

The catalogue of local development objectives mentioned in the previous chapter (see Table 1) is a universal one. Particular territorial units can, or even should, establish the abovementioned objectives individually, being dependent only on a situation and the needs appearing on a given area. This catalogue can be extended by new objectives, while the already included points can be ordered and hierarchized. The properly chosen objectives will serve to obtain a long-term local development.

The commune is the basic unit of local government (the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, art.164). In Poland we can distinguish between three types of a commune. These are:

- municipalities this name is used to denote the communes which are located within the administrative borders of a given city,
- urban-rural communes these are the communes which enclose the city and the surrounding villages; local authorities are usually located within a given city,
- rural communes these are the communes without any city on their territory.

Different statuses of a given unit should considerably determine the direction of local development. Such diversification should be signaled by the discrepancies within the local development objectives adopted by particular units. In order to test the abovementioned hypothesis, the development strategies of 3 Lesser Poland communes with different statuses were compared: Krakow municipality, Kety rural-urban commune, and Klucze rural commune.



Figure 1. Location of Krakow municipality, Kęty and Klucze communes on the administrative map of Małopolska

Krakow is a city with district rights and a residence of the Małopolska province authorities. In addition, Krakow is the second largest city in Poland, also in terms of population. Currently, it is a residence of culture and science. In the Development Strategy of the City of Krakow, the city authorities have to take into account, not only its status and the needs of its residents, but also the economic, tourist, and scientific potential. To meet this end, 3 equally important objectives were created:

- Strategic objective I Krakow as a family-friendly city and a place attractive to live or visit.
- Strategic objective II Krakow as a city of competitive and modern economy.
- Strategic objective III Krakow as a European metropolis with important functions in science, culture and sport.

To specify the strategic objectives, the city adopted a catalogue of operational objectives followed by programs, which are to help with their realization. The following table presents the list of these objectives.

Table 2. Operational objectives according to the Development Strategy of the City of Krakow

Strategic objective I	Strategic objective II	Strategic objective III
-improving natural environment, -providing broader scope and better access to education for all age groups, ensuring higher educational standards, -guaranteeing a greater sense of public security, -developing the housing industry and revitalizing the degraded areas, -providing the residents with a proper level of health service, -guaranteeing protection of a family status and welfare, -enabling the individuals and whole groups at risk of exclusion participation in social development, -developing local self-administration and improving management methods, enhancing social awareness and interest in the life of the city.	-shaping spatial conditions for economic development, retaining balanced development of the city and a topographic order, -improving access to public transport, -developing technical infrastructure, -developing small and medium enterprises (SME), -raising competitiveness in the labor market, -improving touristic attractiveness of the city.	conditions of the Krakow scientific center, -supporting institutions maintaining co-operation between science and economy, -preserving the cultural heritage, including revitalization of historical complexes of the city,

Source: The Development Strategy of the City of Krakow.

Kęty is a rural-urban commune located in western part of the Lesser Poland in the Oświęcim district. The residence of the commune is situated in Kęty. Apart from the town, the commune consists of Bielany, Bulowice, Łęki, Nowa Wieś, Malec and Witkowice villages. Currently, the commune lost its typically industrial character. Most of the inhabitants are employed in micro and small enterprises located in Kęty and the surrounding area. In addition, the unit has a high potential in terms of residential facilities, tourism and recreation for nearby urban centers. In its Strategy, as it was in the case of Krakow, the local authorities established 3 main strategic objectives:

- Strategic objective I higher economic competitiveness and investment attractiveness of the commune.
- Strategic objective II expansion and modernization of transport routes, which should increase the access to transport.
- Strategic objective III broader access to high quality public services.

Short-term (3-5 years) operational objectives were developed to complete the strategic objectives enumerated above. Their structure was presented in the following table.

Table 3. Operational objectives according to the Development Strategy of Kety Commune for the years 2012-2020

Strategic objective I	Strategic objective II	Strategic objective III
-creating local areas of economic activity, -increasing competitiveness among micro and small enterprises through establishing cooperative connections, -developing and implementing a coherent system of economic and investment promotion, -creating the touristic image of the city of Kęty, -creating entrepreneurial skills among local community, -alleviating the effects of unemployment and enhancing vocational activation, reflecting changes in the local labor market.		-maintaining high standard of technical infrastructure and protecting the environment, -developing crisis management systems and the infrastructure protecting from the effects of floods and other natural disasters, -developing the institutional base and increasing effectiveness in terms of social assistance in the district, -developing information society, -ensuring optimal premises, sports facilities and high-quality educational services in the commune, -focusing on a policy of l ong-term cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) -initiating and supporting the actions which serve the development of housing, -efficiently managing the commune.

Source: The Development Strategy of Kety Commune 2012-2020.

The last commune to be analyzed is the rural commune of Klucze. It is located in the northern part of Małopolska in the Olkusz district. The residence of the commune is situated in Klucze. This unit consists of 15 villages. What determines the attractiveness of this commune is its location, which is the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland – a very interesting and picturesque southern part of Poland. In this area there are such manufacturing plants as Kimberly Clark Ltd and a glass factory in Jaroszowiec. Agriculture is also highly developed. The structure of the division of development objectives in the Klucze commune is similar to these presented in the case of the preceding

communes. In order to make their actions more precise, the local authorities decided to formulate 4 strategic objectives.

- Strategic objective I supporting the development of modern entrepreneurship and enhancing competitiveness of local economy.
- Strategic objective II developing the local infrastructure, which serves to improve the quality of natural environment and local natural resources.
- Strategic objective III creating the conditions for harmonious development of tourism and culture and securing the durability of cultural heritage.
- Strategic objective IV striving for improvement in the quality of life of the residents and ensuring favorable conditions for social development of the Commune.

In the Development Strategy of the Klucze Commune, the local authorities thoroughly defined the operational objectives. These objectives were presented in the following table.

All of the analyzed development strategies have a similar pattern and hierarchy of the objectives. Local authorities define main strategic objectives, which point out directions of the development. Afterwards, the operational objectives and tasks are formulated, the completion of which allows to obtain the assumed development direction of the unit.

The common characteristic of all these strategies is the emphasis placed on the importance of the economic development within the development programs. This development is, however, adjusted to the type of the unit. The municipality, here represented by Krakow, aims at developing modern economy. The rural-urban and rural communes, in their actions, strive to improve competitiveness of the economic actions implemented within their areas. In addition, in the case of the municipality, the need to support small and medium enterprises was emphasized within the operational objectives. The remaining administrative units focus on micro and small enterprises. The aim of this support is to activate local community. The Klucze rural commune, within its strategy, even included the development of small food outlets. Their task is not only to have a positive influence on the touristic side of the commune, but also to provide new places of work. The analyzed units pay attention also to the problem of education.

Table 4. Operational objectives according to the Development Strategy of Klucze Commune

Strategic objective I Strategic objective II Strategic objective IV

-creating favorable conditions of entrepreneurship development, -providing institutional support to farmers in terms of rationalization of agricultural land management, and providing help in occupational requalification of people leaving agriculture, -developing information society and increasing the number of people using information networks. Improving quality of and accessibility to public services.

-ensuring water resources and modernizing the drinking water supply system for the residents of the commune. -maximizing the amount of discharged and treated waste water, -increasing the segregation and disposal of municipal waste, -reducing road traffic that is a nuisance for the residents and increasing road safety, improving the accessibility to transport in selected parts of the commune, and create the center -protecting and revitalizing natural and landscape values, -minimizing the emission of gas and dust pollutants produced locally, -increasing flood safety and enhancing water retention basins.

-constructing and improving the quality of leisure facilities and organizing a flexible of small catering businesses. -intensively promoting opportunities for the landscape and recreational values of the Commune and supporting cultural initiatives in the Commune. -creating conditions favorable for the development of tourism, -using and protecting the historical monuments of the Commune, in order to develop public space of the village.

-extending the educational offer and increasing the number system of education in the commune, -providing equal education and development of the young generation, -developing educational infrastructure and providing the schools within the area with specialized equipment and sports facilities, -providing equal life chances for the disabled, -increasing employment and economic activity of the residents; preventing social exclusion, -renovating unsafe residential areas and improving safety in the commune, -preparing appropriate amount of land for house and residential building (for summer) and increasing the number of council flats, -improving quality of health care services, -enhancing civil society.

Source: The Development Strategy of Klucze Commune.

The municipality, due to its nature, emphasizes the importance of higher education, whereas the rural-urban and rural units recognize the problem within such a basic need as equal access to education. The last common, and sharply outlined area is the development of housing. In the case of Krakow, this development relates primarily to multifamily housing. Additionally, this objective was increased by revitalization of degraded areas. The Kęty rural-urban commune and the Klucze rural commune included information concerning single-family housing. This development should be supported through initiating certain activities and preparing appropriate areas by the local authorities. The objectives defined in this way are consistent with the universal objectives of local development (see Table 1) and the strategic objective of local development, which is to provide the residents of a given local government unit with places of work and incomes on a level that ensures them a decent standard of living.

Due to its nature, the municipality differs substantially from other communes in a number of objectives (Table 2). Above all, attention was given to the international character of the city. This refers not only to the already mentioned modern economy and the branches of foreign companies established in the city, but also to the support given to the scientific center and touristic promotion of Krakow carried abroad. Due to the historical character of the city, new objectives aimed at preserving the monuments and revitalizing certain areas were included in the strategy. The Development Strategy of the City of Krakow is the only one that raises the problem of spatial order, usually noticed only in reference to bigger urban centers. In this case, the problem of public security was also noticed. It was not included in the strategies of the other units. What is interesting, is that the strategic and operational objectives do not raise, at least directly, the issue of unemployment. The actions undertaken to resolve this problem were included only in the detailed provisions of the Strategy.

The urban-rural Kety commune, as the only one, in its objectives (Table 3) emphasizes the expansion and modernization of transport routes. Through implementation of certain tasks, local authorities want to ensure that all residents of the commune have equal access to the main urban center, which is Kety. These actions refer not only to the construction of infrastructure, but their aim is also to promote public transport. As it was mentioned above, in case of this unit, they significantly emphasize the need to create entrepreneurial skills among the local community. Fulfillment of this task, alongside with the formation of local areas of economic activity, should help to enhance economic competitiveness in the commune.

The operational objectives were most thoroughly defined in the strategy of the last unit, that is the Klucze rural commune (Table 4). Due to its nature, this commune is the only one that raises the issue of agriculture. Local authorities recognize the need to support the farmers in terms of rationalization of agricultural land management, as well as the necessity to help those people

who decide to leave agriculture. This part of the community needs also to be supported in the occupational requalification. Klucze is the only commune that focuses on increasing the number of people using information networks. This issue was raised only in the case of the rural commune, as the access to information networks does not pose any problems in the municipalities. The last of the operational objectives which distinguishes the rural commune on the background of other units is how to ensure water resources, modernize current drinking water supply systems and construct new sewer systems, which should encompass as much of the communal area as possible. As it was in the case of information networks, most of the land in urban centers is covered by a full water supply and sewer system. In rural areas, on the other hand, providing full access to the media is becoming a priority for the authorities.

5. Conclusion

For several years, local development has been gaining much importance. This is because the authorities noticed that the potential of smaller units could, to a large extent, contribute to the development of larger areas. The development of certain communal units is subject to the available resources, funds, and the local community. The aim of this paper was to check whether this development was determined by the type of the communal units chosen. In order to test this hypothesis, the development strategies of 3 communes were compared: the Krakow municipality, the Kety rural-urban commune, and the Klucze rural commune. The analysis showed that, in their strategies, all units recognize the need to support specific areas, such as economic development, education, and housing. However, other objectives of the units differ from each other. The most significant divergence can be noticed between the municipality and the rural commune. The objectives enumerated in their strategies relate to totally different problems – from international promotion of the image of the city, to ensuring the residents full access to water and sewer systems. Comparison of the development strategies enabled to conclude that the type of selected units also influences the specificity of local development. This differentiation will allow further research, which, in turn, will provide the possibility to analyze a larger number of communal units. As a result, it will be possible to demonstrate the way to plan development in a particular communal unit, and, above all, to show which development tools should be considered as essential.

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