



## THE STATE OF NATIONAL URBAN POLICY IN POLAND

Name of national urban policy	<i>National Urban Policy 2023</i>
Date of national urban policy	20 October 2015
Explicit or partial	Explicit
Legal status (e.g. act of the legislature, executive order, administrative guidance, etc.)	Approved by Council of Ministers
Previous/secondary policies	<i>National Strategy for Regional Development 2010-2020: Regions, cities, Rural Areas</i> (adopted 2010); <i>National Spatial Development Concept 2030</i> (adopted 2011). The direct basis for drawing up the <i>National Urban Policy</i> was the assumptions of the <i>National Urban Policy until 2020</i> adopted by the Council of Ministers on 16 July 2013.
Stage of development	Implementation
How developed (e.g. through a participatory/stakeholder process, or act of parliament, etc.)	Stakeholder participation – based on a participatory approach, the document was the subject of a broad debate among stakeholders, including: local governments (not only urban) and their organisations, regions, economic and social partners involved in the urban areas, ministries, organisations, and advisory committees
Implementing body	Ministry of Economic Development (previously Ministry of Infrastructure and Development), although responsibility for urban areas is spread among ministries and agencies
Government system	Centralised
Type of national urban agency	General national planning authority
Implementation mechanism (e.g. committee, involvement of multiple agencies, national-local co-ordination)	Municipal-level dialogues and public consultation. Specific provisions of national urban policy on the activities of government institutions (not just ministries, but also to the institution subordinated, government agencies, etc.) should be treated as a direct commitment – that is, in their actions, these institutions have sought to enter the designated national urban policy lines of action. As national urban policy emphasises the independence of local government, it does not impose direct obligations on urban authorities. However, the content relating to cities should be regarded as a desirable direction of their development and actions. National urban policy is also a part of the implementation of the regional policy.

### Current national urban policy

Poland created a *National Urban Policy* in 2015, which sets out the government's urban-policy related activities within the context of the medium-term *National Development Strategy* and the *National Strategy for Regional Development*. The goal of the *National Urban Policy* is to strengthen the capacity of cities and urbanised areas for sustainable development and job creation, as well as improving the quality of life of the residents. The challenges diagnosed in the national urban policy were formed into five specific objectives, contributing to the achievement of the strategic objective. In line with these objectives, all urban policy actors must strive to create a city that is efficient, compact, sustainable, coherent – and as a result – competitive and strong. It is organised around 10 thematic areas:

1. **development of space**, including reducing urban sprawl, ensuring consistent spatial policy in cities and creating multifunctional space;

2. **public participation**, including municipal-level dialogue and public consultations in the development process;
3. **transport and urban mobility**, including prioritising public transport and integrating transport systems;
4. **low-carbon and energy efficiency**, including increasing building energy efficiency and promoting a low-carbon economy;
5. **regeneration**, including social, economic, spatial, environmental, functional and technical aspects, as well as improving housing, knowledge sharing, monitoring and evaluation;
6. **investment policy**, conducting investment in a reasonable manner that follows the sustainable development principles, including providing technical assistance in preparing urban investments;
7. **economic development**, including developing local specialisations, promoting innovations and strengthening local businesses;
8. **environmental protection and adaptation to climate change**, including green infrastructure, water management, re-use of already developed areas that have lost their original functions, using brownfields instead of greenfields;
9. **demography**, including addressing ageing and shrinking urban populations; and
10. **management of urban areas**, including multi-level governance and co-operation within functional urban areas.

The *National Urban Policy* is addressed directly to national ministries and other government institutions and indirectly to regions, cities, citizens, NGOs and experts. It is intended to be implemented at the national, regional and local levels. The *National Urban Policy* will be supported through dedicated tools (including EU funds), national instruments, programmes and sectoral activities. A legal act dedicated to revitalisation came into being on 18 November 2015. It introduces new solutions to organise the revitalisation process, define the most important concepts and issues, as well as to introduce a uniform procedure for local authorities in the preparation for their own municipal revitalisation programmes. Revitalisation is defined as a complex, multidimensional process and its main aim is to improve the quality of life in deprived areas.

The new *Revitalisation Act (2015)* allows a municipality to use an adjacency levy and expanded real estate tax in designated areas in order to better capture increases in land value resulting from public investments. The recently passed *Metropolitan Association Act (2015)* establishes a legal framework for metropolitan co-operation.

## Previous national urban policy and developments

Previously, many policy documents addressed urban development, including the *National Strategy for Regional Development*, which provided a vision and policy tools for regional development, the *Medium-Term National Development Strategy*, which defined national development policy, the *National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013* in support of growth and jobs, and the *National Cohesion Strategy* which guided EU structural fund spending (UN-Habitat, 2015).

## Areas covered by current urban policy

Sector	Sectoral representation in the <i>National Urban Policy</i>
Economic development	Extensive
Spatial structure	Extensive
Human development	Extensive
Environmental sustainability	Extensive
Climate resilience	Extensive

## Specific issues covered by current national urban policy

The 2015 *National Urban Policy* includes the following characteristics:

Criteria for national urban policies	Appears in the policy
Responds to population dynamics	X
Promotes a territorial approach (in particular urban-rural linkages)	X
Addresses the urban systems (from large to medium and small cities) and the connectivity among cities	X
Prepares for infrastructure and services in cities (including public space)	X
Promotes urban land-use efficiency	X
Enhances environmental sustainability and resilience to climate change	X
Develops effective urban governance systems (horizontal co-ordination and vertical alignment)	X
Promotes effective municipal finance systems	X
Supports partnership and co-operation between urban actors	X
Safeguards inclusiveness and participation in the process and outcomes (inequity, segregation, safety, etc.)	X
Ensures robust and comparable urban scale data	

## Bibliography

OECD (2015), “Regional Outlook Survey Results: Poland”, unpublished.

Polish Ministry of Infrastructure and Development (2015), “National Urban Policy 2023”, presentation, Lodz, 28 October 2015, Ministry of Infrastructure and Development, Warsaw, [www.vasab.org/index.php/documents/doc\\_download/974-polish-national-urban-policy-2023](http://www.vasab.org/index.php/documents/doc_download/974-polish-national-urban-policy-2023) (accessed 14 June 2016).

UN-Habitat (2017, forthcoming), “NUP Regional Report: Western and Eastern Europe and North America.” Nairobi: UN Habitat.