URBAN TRANSITIONS FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: LESSONS FROM EUROPE

EUKN Webinar Report for Poland, March 2021
About the EUKN
The European Urban Knowledge Network (EUKN) EGTC is the only independent EU Member State driven network in the field of urban policy, research and practice. As a strategic knowledge partner, it supports its members through tailor-made services such as Policy Labs on contemporary urban topics. The EUKN has been closely involved in the establishment of the Urban Agenda for the EU and the global New Urban Agenda and has been actively supporting the further development of these strategic agendas through events, research, and expert analysis. The EUKN Secretariat, located in The Hague, is responsible for the overall coordination and operations of the network.
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EUKN Webinar for Poland | Key Policy Learnings (Extractable infographic) .................................... 15
1. Background: The EUKN Webinar for Poland 2020
Urban Transitions for a More Sustainable Future: Lessons from Europe

In recognition of the challenges that many European cities face when it comes to developing and rolling out their own sustainable urban transitions, the Polish Ministry for Development Funds and Regional Policy co-organised a Policy Lab on this topic with the EUKN EGTC on 16 December 2020. The event provided an (online) platform for Polish and other European city-makers to discuss their own sustainable urban transition strategies and to discover how other cities across Europe are facing up to the challenge of climate change.

During the event, expert speakers from Maribor (Slovenia), Essen (Germany), Jaworzno (Poland) and Vitoria-Gasteiz (Spain) shared their knowledge about recent transformations of European cities towards greater sustainability and resilience. Five Polish cities also ‘pitched’ their city’s sustainable transition strategy or idea. There was room for debate and interaction with the panelists, who offered practical recommendations.

The event, therefore, gave participating cities, particularly those in Poland and other V4 countries, an insight into how European cities can drive green, just, and productive transformations successfully and in different ways.

The event was part of Poland’s 2020-21 presidency of the Visegrad Group and contributed to the Ministry’s preparations for the 11th World Urban Forum (WUF11), taking place in Katowice, Poland in 2022 – another initiative that aims to help Polish cities in their sustainable urban transitions.

This report summarises the main reflections and recommendations co-produced during the webinar, extrapolating practical tips for Polish (and other European) municipalities to develop and implement their own sustainable transition strategies. It will also inform the Ministry’s development of the World Urban Forum (WUF) Action Plan over the course of 2021.

What is the WUF11?
The World Urban Forum (WUF) is an international conference organized by UN-Habitat focused on urban growth and human settlements. It covers municipal policies, transformation and development and much more. Held every two years, the WUF welcomes over 20 thousand participants from governments, regions, cities, non-governmental organizations and financial institutions. The 11th edition of the WUF, organised by the Polish Ministry for Development Funds and Regional Policy in collaboration with other stakeholders, will take place in Katowice, Poland in June 2022.

What is the WUF11 Action Plan?
The WUF11 Action Plan is a document being developed by the Polish Ministry for Development Funds and Regional Policy in preparation for the WUF11 to help Polish (and other) cities to become more resilient and sustainable. The WUF11 Action Plan will be co-developed with local authorities from Poland and the V4 countries, with input from other European urban stakeholders. It will provide a basis for national urban policy in Poland, serving as a signed mandate showing Polish cities’ commitment to sustainable urban transition and offering policy guidance for Polish cities in the development of their sustainability strategies.
**Event Agenda**

10:00 - 10:05  Welcome and programme outline - Martin Grisel, Director of EUKN
10:05 - 10:15  Welcome on behalf of the Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy - Daniel Baliński, Deputy Director of the Department of Strategy
10.15 - 10.30  Brief Opening Remarks by the V4 countries – Marie Zezulkova, Director of Department of Regional Policy, Czech Republic; Ladislava Cengelova, Director General of DG Housing Policy and Urban Development, Slovakia
10.30 - 10.50  Maribor’s Circular Transition - Klemen Risto Bizjak, Senior Advisor, City of Maribor, Slovenia
10.50 - 11.05  Vitoria-Gasteiz’s Biodiverse Transition - Imanol Zabaleta Altuna, Director of the Centre of Environmental Studies (CEA), City of Vitoria-Gasteiz
11.05 - 11.20  Essen’s Post-Industrial Transition - Sebastian Schlecht, City of Essen, Germany
11.20 - 11.35  Jaworzno’s Sustainable Mobility Transition - Tomasz Tosza, Deputy Director, Road and Bridge Administration, City of Jaworzno, Poland
11.35 - 11.50  Q+A: audience interaction
11.50 - 12.05  Coffee break
12.05 - 12.10  Opening of Part 2 - Martin Grisel, Director of EUKN
12.10 - 12.40  V4 City Pitches:
   - City of Skawina - Maciej Zacher, Policymaker
   - City of Kielce - Jadwiga Skrobacka, Chief Specialist
   - City of Piaseczno - Bartłomiej Gajewski, Policymaker
   - City of Hawa - Wiesław Skrobot, Plenipotentiary of the Mayor
   - City of Zduńska Wola - Michalina Lagunionok, Policymaker
13.00 - 13.20  Interactive audience Q+A.
13.20 - 13.30  Closing remarks by the Polish Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy and the EUKN EGTC

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**A note from Daniel Baliński, Deputy Director of the Department of Strategy, Polish Ministry for Development Funds and Regional Policy**

For us, this Policy Lab is an important stepping stone in our preparations for the WUF11 in that it gives Polish cities a voice. We want Polish cities to be actively involved in our preparations for the WUF11 so that they can input into the WUF Action Plan, which will form the basis of our national urban policy. The cooperation of many Polish and V4 cities is essential to make this plan and the World Urban Forum a meaningful event that has relevance to local populations in the future. The WUF Action Plan will serve as toolkit for Polish cities, offering a set of recommendations, including suggested programmes and financial/organisational arrangements for cities. It will be co-developed with Polish cities and presented at the WUF 2022.

The time to act is now: we want Polish cities to be able to develop and implement sustainable strategies, capitalising on guidance and funding not only within Poland but also elsewhere in the EU and beyond – such as the New Leipzig Charter, the New Urban Agenda, the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, the EU pandemic recovery funds, etc. This Policy Lab is more important than ever before: cities are facing the huge challenge of implementing systemic transformations and European/International solidarity and collaboration will be crucial to their success.
2. Opening Remarks from the Visegrad +4 Group: Sustainable Urban Transitions in Czechia and Slovakia

The Czech Republic: Focusing on the local aspect of sustainable urban transitions
Marie Zezulkova, Director of Department of Regional Policy, Czech Republic

"Following the review mechanism of the UN Agenda 2030, the Department of Regional Policy has started work on voluntary national reviews (VNRs) to be presented at a political forum in New York in June 2021. The VNRs seek to strengthen policies and government institutions in order to mobilise multi-stakeholder collaboration for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We will use the VNR’s to accelerate the roll-out of the 2030 Agenda in The Czech Republic.

It is our core priority to initiate urban sustainable transitions by prioritising the importance of the local level. Sustainability should be realised through both technical and political approaches that take a holistic view and put liveability for citizens front and centre. This means engaging citizens in every stage of the transition and taking a place-based perspective. Sustainability is not just about science – it’s about ideas, values and standards. The year 2020 has demonstrated that sustainability is not the only thing cities should focus on. The resilience of cities – their ability to recover from unexpected shocks - is just as important. The pandemic is testing our cities in their transition to more sustainable cities. What we do now will be judged in the future: so now is the time act."

Slovakia: Developing and Implementing the Urban Development Policy for 2030 (UDP 2030)
Ladislava Cengelova, Director General of DG Housing Policy and Urban Development, Slovakia

"The Slovakian Urban Development Policy (UDP) for 2030 was adopted in 2018 as the result of a participative process with diverse stakeholders. It has two central goals: 1) A healthy living environment for a high quality of life (high employment rates, good public services, affordable housing, and a high-quality urban built environment); and 2) Productive cities (the effective use of resources for value generation).

We believe that formulating a national urban policy and taking an integrated approach are key to successful sustainable urban development. The UDP places emphasis on good governance, favourable economic conditions, reliable data, and the quality of urban environment, including mobility. To achieve the goals of the UDP, we are strengthening the ties between urban and regional development and promoting partnerships and cooperation. The UDP’s progress is constantly and systematically monitored via the Platform for Development of Slovak Cities and Towns and specialised studies.

Municipalities need guidance and funding from national governments to sustainably transition. But, as this topic is so wide and multi-level, exchanging information at the European level is really needed to strengthen the integrated urban development of regions and their functional areas."
2. Case Studies of Transition from across Europe

Maribor’s Circular Transition
Klemen Risto Bizjak, Senior Advisor, City of Maribor

Focus on:
- Circular Economy
- European Cooperation

The transition pathway
From 2014, the Municipality of Maribor (MOM) prioritised circular economy development to avoid further landfills. By 2018, they had developed a Strategy for the Transition to Circular Economy and the WyCycle Project, a long-term project to engender development-oriented management of resource/raw material flows in the local and regional area towards a circular approach.

In 2017, the WyCycle Institute Maribor (IWM) arose as a body to implement the WyCycle project in Maribor, bringing together partially or fully public five companies. It is responsible for the implementation of circular city projects created by founding enterprises, townspeople or private entities. Maribor’s circular approach focuses on two actions:

1) Making the operational model of the publicly owned public service enterprises circular.
2) Promoting cross-sectoral cooperation between public companies, citizens, industry and local self-government in the handling, processing, re-use and development of resources.

Via several European projects, the MOM focused on seven core selected sectors: municipal waste; construction; industry; energy; water management; land use; and mobility. All city stakeholders now have to share information and cooperate in order to be more efficient and achieve the highest possible reuse of resources in the city and region. The ultimate aim of the strategy is citizens’ wellbeing in the long-term.

Looking forward
The development of the new strategy and a new economic model for a better quality of life in Maribor involved iterating three versions of the circular economy strategy in 2016, 2018, and 2020 via European funded projects. The main thread of all three versions was the focus on the wellbeing of citizens and getting public companies to work together to provide services that raise quality of life in the city. From 2021 onwards, the Circular Economy strategy of Maribor will be updated again, to integrate concepts developed during the submission of new project applications (INTERREG, Digital Climate Challenge, EU Green Capital Award [not won], etc.) and via the expansion of the city’s international networks (cooperation and exchanges with other cities).

Klemen says:
“I recommend applying for the European Green Capital award, even if you are not successful. You can learn a lot from the application process: it highlights the city’s strengths and weaknesses and the feedback you get can be a driver to speed up your transition process.”

Key Policy Learnings | Maribor

1. Take a place-based approach
There is no silver bullet for cities when it comes to sustainable transition. It’s important to learn from other cities but don’t try to simply replicate their strategies.

2. Focus on the enablers and drivers of change
Focus on the processes that can generate transformative change (how to change) and on the multi-stakeholder partnerships needed for transformation (who should be involved).

3. Go for European funding and cooperation
EU projects and cooperation can help you to develop strategic models and co-creative methods; each application is a learning process that will improve your sustainable transition strategy.
Focus on:
- Green infrastructure
- Ecosystem services
- Biodiversity

The transition pathway

Vitoria-Gasteiz has promoted biodiversity and green infrastructure for the past 30 years by taking a territorial approach to embedding the city within its surrounding natural ecosystem. Once a post-industrial landscape, the city is now an internationally recognised natural area. This has been achieved by:
- Prioritising prosperous, resilient natural environments within and outside the city
- Creating ecological corridors inwards and outwards the city (to allow the movement of different species and different ecosystem services in and out of the city)
- Connecting citizens to nature
- Optimising ecosystem services
- Identifying priority intervention areas

Today, this green infrastructure strategy (including the ecological corridors) is still being developed and remains at the heart of Vitoria-Gasteiz’s sustainability vision. Example projects include the recovery of public spaces, natural areas and water bodies within the city, and the use of endogenous plants. These projects focus on reducing space for cars to make room for green and blue infrastructure, public transport and active mobility options. The re-naturalisation of degraded urban lands has also been key to the city’s strategy. For instance, a drained swamp on the outskirts of the city has been recovered and is now a biodiversity haven and recreation space that is part of the Natura2000 network. Another project like this is the Green Belt project, through which a series of peripheral parks have been connected. They are now home to 50% of the biodiversity of the Iberian peninsula, including 42% of birds and mammals, and receive 1 million visitors per year.

Looking forward

1) Further development of ecological corridors: the city is strategically rethinking its approach and planning connection with natural areas on a bigger scale. They are looking at ways to allow more biodiversity into the city.

2) Agro-food strategy: the city is developing an agro-food strategy to localise and decarbonise food supply chains, regenerate cultural landscapes and recover agro-biodiversity. This will build on a citizen agriculture movement developed in 2014 and prioritise investment in agro-food enterprises run by citizens, particularly those by young people.

Key Policy Learnings | Vitoria-Gasteiz

1. Create a dedicated team or agency for sustainable transition

Create a team or body like Vitoria-Gasteiz’s Centre of Environmental Studies (CEA) whose responsibility is to develop your city’s transition.

2. Take a territorial, place-based approach to renaturalisation and greening

Focus on your city’s unique positioning within its natural surroundings - what natural “assets”/ecosystem services does your city have, how can you nurture their development and connect the city with them?

3. Nature-based intervention and rewilding are key

When greening the city, the best way to increase biodiversity and create sustainable habitats for both humans and other species is to follow nature herself - from planting endogenous species on city streets to renaturalising industrial habitats to make them biodiversity hotspots.

Imanol says:
“The role of the city should be to put the dreams of different stakeholders, particularly citizens, on paper to create a future vision of what the city could be”
Essen's Post-Industrial Transition
Sebastian Schlecht, Strategic Management, Department of Environment, City of Essen

Focus on:
- Greening post-industrial landscapes: "from grey to green and blue"
- A holistic approach to sustainable transition management
- Sustainable mobility

The transition pathway
Essen is a city that has a long tradition of transition from the 1960s onwards, when municipal and state leadership joined forces to re-orientate the economic model in the Ruhr region (where Essen is located) to benefit both people and nature. This resulted in investments in education, infrastructure, and environmental protection programmes and urban renewal projects. The aim of this approach was to promote green and liveable spaces and increase quality of life for the city’s neighbourhoods.

The city’s slogan “from Grey to Green” embodies its transition away from an industrial area (up until the mid-20th century) towards one that is sustainable and liveable. In practical and policy terms, this slogan translates into the prioritisation of green and blue infrastructure and the renaturalisation of previously industrial, degraded areas. Development projects in the city have often created parks and lakes and then capitalised upon this natural capital to trigger further (public or private) investment.

One of the main initiatives the city is still implementing is a green network (ecological corridors) to improve residents’ quality of life and biodiversity. Essen has focused a lot on transforming and renaturalising wastewater and industrial infrastructure – for example converting an open sewer into a rainwater habitat or a colamine into a biodiversity hotspot and recreational area (Zollverein Park).

Integrating economic, social and environmental goals into city policies and initiatives has also been important – for example, the city launched a landscaping education programme with local companies to offer the unemployed training and jobs while also building a green infrastructure and cycling network in and around the city area. Overall, they have implemented more than 500 single projects over 15 years.

Looking forward
The city is now focusing on a new sustainable mobility modal split strategy, moving from 50% car use towards an even split between cycling, walking, public transport and cars. The first step is new cycling infrastructure backed by local political support. Street-level transformation is an important area that Essen will be focusing on in the coming years. They have also used the first report evaluating Essen’s work thus far on the 12 goals of the European Green Capital Award as a management tool to update their sustainability strategy for the coming few years. This strategy was finalised in February 2021 and involved the creation of a far-reaching local multi-stakeholder partnership initiative.

Key Policy Learnings | Essen

1. Apply an equity lens to the transformation process
Make sure you’re taking into account social, environmental and economic justice when planning your sustainable transition.

2. Create broad cross-societal partnerships
Building partnerships with stakeholders across society is a really important step to build momentum for transformation.

3. Go for global cooperation and participation in city networks
Climate change is a global issue with local impacts. Working with other cities allows you to learn from each other and access European funding together.

Sebastian says:
“Global cooperation for local action is key to sustainable transition – in Essen, we have benefited hugely from urban networks for exchanging and learning.”
Jaworzno's Mobility Transition
Tomasz Tosza, Deputy Director of the Municipal Road and Bridge Authority, City of Jaworzno

Focus on:
- Sustainable, affordable mobility
- Digital innovation in public service models

Transition Background
The foundation of mobility in Poland has changed in the recent three decades from relatively low car usage pre 1990 to mass motorisation, resulting in heavy congestion, poor road safety and poor urban liveability. In the previous 30 years, the defragmentation of transport policies and companies has resulted in lower availability and use of public transport.

In Jaworzno, anti-car policies have been implemented since 2003 after 14 years of struggles with traffic jams and road accidents. A transport study from 2003 carried out by scientists was directly implemented by politicians (which is unusual in Poland). The decision was made to reclaim public transport and use it as the solution to the city’s mobility problems.

The main changes implemented were:
- Timetables and routes were adapted to passenger’s needs
- Tariffs were corrected and simplified
- Improvement in service quality (e.g. regular cleaning of the buses; digitalisation of the system)
- Electrification and upgrading of buses (nearly 80% of all buses are electric)

These measures have made Jaworzno an example of sustainable, people-centred mobility not only in Poland but on a European scale.

Today, people prefer taking the electric buses (they are quiet, fast, quick, cheap, and digitalised) to individual modes of transport like cars. There is no longer any social stigma associated with using public transport (a cultural shift has happened) and fewer cars on the roads results in better city infrastructure, higher liveability and fewer fatalities on the road (there were no fatalities at all in 2017 and 2019). Overall, it has been a transformation for people in the suburbs (not in a big city) to have access to excellent mobility options. Cars and public parking areas have all but disappeared from Jaworzno’s landscape.

Looking forward
Jaworzno will continue to develop urban mobility in the city based on public transport and active mobility infrastructure for pedestrians and bicycles. They are planning to electrify more of the bus fleet and introduce non-collision bike lanes.

Key Policy Learnings | Jaworzno

1. Take a place-based approach
Adapt everything from new street signs, to bus timetables to the design of the buses to local conditions.

2. Be brave and bold
Be prepared to implement radical policies that people may not initially like. Many citizens were opposed to moving away from car-centricity in Jaworzno but they appreciated the policies once they saw how beneficial and effective they were.

3. Employ people who are passionate about sustainable urban transition
Give pioneers the space to experiment their innovation vision by working for the municipality

Tomas says:
“Citizens initially reacted negatively to the plan but, over time, they have seen that it’s beneficial for them and the city. Now, 83% of people living in Jaworzno have a public transport subscription”
4. Sustainable Transitions in Poland: City Pitches

During the second half of the webinar, five Polish cities pitched their main sustainability challenge(s) and approach to tackle them. This chapter summarises their pitches and concludes with some key take-aways.

**Skawina**

**Focus on:** Civic Co-creation and European Exchange

**Presentation by:** Maciej Zacher, Policymaker

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<td>Skawina is an urban-rural municipality close to Krakow that is home to around 50,000 people.</td>
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<th>Central Challenge</th>
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<td>The city is car-centric and the last sustainability strategy failed to bring about a real transition.</td>
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<th>Transition Approach</th>
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<td>Skawina has developed a radical new development strategy for 2020 – 2030 based on an extensive public co-creation process. A general strategic document has been developed covering six core areas: Mobility; Environment; Economy; Place; People, and Governance. The document uses the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as its central framework. The measures to be implemented are contained in operational documents per core area (above). Having a general strategic document plus operational documents with a shorter lifespan will give the city flexibility in terms of changing policies and selecting measures going forward.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Looking forward</th>
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<tr>
<td>Skawina is now figuring out how to build on momentum of the co-creative public engagement process to implement the strategy and (eventually) to evaluate it.</td>
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**Ilawa**

**Focus on:** natural resources and tourism.

**Presentation by:** Dr. Wiesław Skrobot, Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of the City of Ilawa for Public Space

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<td>Ilawa is a medium-sized city in the western part of the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship.</td>
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<th>Central Challenge</th>
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<td>The city is unprepared for climate change and does not have a sustainable development strategy - the only existing document (the Integrated Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of the Ostróda-Iława Functional Area (OIF) for 2015-2025) has not been implemented. Its natural assets, a nearby lake/canal, and potential to be a tourist city remain under-exploited. With a shrinking population, the city would benefit from further economic development.</td>
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<th>Transition Approach</th>
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<td>In October 2020, Ilawa started to prepare the Municipal Plan of Adaptation to Climate Change. The city aims to think about how to use the resources it has to achieve development.</td>
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<th>Looking Forward</th>
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<td>The city administration would like to take a coherent, long-term approach to sustainable urban development, focusing on resilience and climate change mitigation. They are considering building on the concept of the “Warmian-Masurian Tiger” to enable socio-economic development, increased tourism, and better use of the city’s surrounding natural resources.</td>
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**Kielce**

**Background**

Kielce is a city in south-central Poland with 194,852 inhabitants.

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<th>Central Challenge</th>
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<td>Shrinking population/depopulation; social issues (fewer people in productive age, more seniors, unemployment in the youth) and air pollution.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Transition Approach</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kielce has already developed a number of strategic policy documents including the Diagnosis...</td>
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Focus on: smart city planning and civic co-creation

Presentation by: Jadwiga Skrobacka, Chief Smart Cities Specialist

and Vision of Kielce Smart City 2030+ and the Shared Values list, which were co-created with citizens. This involved mapping local challenges and barriers to change in the areas of: Smart City Strategy, Information and Data, Technology, Administration and Service Provision, Stakeholder Engagement.

Looking forward

The city is starting to develop a new Sustainable Development Strategy and to develop in a participatory process, with the participation of the Smart City Council: the Operational Program (action plan). Work started on this in January 2021. The biggest challenges Kielce faces going forward are finding ways to co-create with the public and gain their buy-in, and prioritising and guaranteeing financing for municipal projects.

Background

Zduńska Wola is a municipality located between Wroclaw and Warsaw, close to the city of Lodz. It has a population of 41,686.

Central Challenge

Zduńska Wola is facing depopulation, an ageing population, a brain drain to the nearby city of Łódź, air pollution-related issues and climate change effects.

Transition Approach

So far, the city has undertaken different activities related to sustainable development in various sectors: 1) energy transformation and mitigating the effects of climate change (proprietary Stop Smog program, systematic thermal modernisation of buildings, replacement of street lighting); 2) making it easy for residents to move around the city (electromobility); 3) building a local community open to everyone (Incubator of Social Initiatives, 60+ smart city), and 4) digital transformation (hackathon, open data).

Looking forward

Zduńska Wola aims to develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy to deal with all of the above issues coherently and via a long-term approach.

Background

Piaseczno is a municipality on the Southern border of Warsaw, the capital of Poland. It is situated within a big suburban agglomeration of 2.5 million inhabitants.

Central Challenge

As a mainly residential suburban area, it is facing the issue of urban sprawl. Moreover, the city faces a high dominance of motorised transport and lacks sufficient pedestrians/cyclist infrastructure. It is also lacking green infrastructure.

Transition Approach

Identification of an area to locate public services and the development of new green streets ("living streets" that give priority to pedestrians and cyclists and promote local activity), which connects with the local town centre and can transform the area.

Looking forward

The new "living streets" area has been designed but faces many challenges to implementation: changing public opinion on private car use and how the area is is proving to be difficult (the public does not think car-use/lack of green infrastructure is a "problem") and public administration is also struggling with change management internally.
5. Key Take-Aways from the City Pitches: The Challenges Facing Polish Cities and How They Can Overcome Them

Based on the city pitches and a survey that was completed by fourteen participating Polish cities following the webinar, we can deduce the core urban issues and enablers and barriers to sustainable urban transition in Poland.

**The Core Urban Issues Facing Polish Cities**

- Depopulation of working age people
- Ageing population
- Climate change effects
- Lack of green infrastructure
- Lack of active mobility infrastructure
- Dominance of motorised transport (cars) and associated issues: air pollution, congestion, poor road safety, etc.

**The Core Barriers to Sustainable Transition in Polish Cities**

- Financing difficulties - a lack of (private or public) investment in the city
- Resistance to change within municipal administration
- Lack of municipal knowledge/experience of developing coherent, long-term strategies for sustainable transition
- Uncertainty about how to capitalise on local natural (and other) resources
- Opposing stakeholder interests
- Difficulty engaging stakeholders effectively to convince them of the need for sustainable transition/for co-creation
- Difficulties accessing European exchange networks and European funding

What do Polish cities need to develop or implement their sustainability strategies?

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More funding for sustainability projects</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>More cooperation with Polish cities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More cooperation with international cities</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better access to knowledge &amp; data</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>New legislation &amp; regulation</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>National policy guidelines</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidance on civic engagement strategies</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>More multi-level cooperation</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>More local partnerships</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>More cooperation between local authority departments</td>
<td>0</td>
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{Checkbox question to all 14 cities surveyed):
6. Follow-up Survey Results: Suggested Topics for Future Events

**Cultural heritage and capital**
- Building place identity
- Architectural/conservation policy
- Museums as strategic city-forming partners

**Blue-Green infrastructure:**
- Developing blue-green infrastructure, including "blue-green" procurement criteria (Skawina; Zielona Góra)
- Integrating natural and cultural heritage (Ilawa)

**Participatory decision-making and management of city space**
How to capture public focus and raise public awareness.

**Strategic spatial planning and governance**
The integration of strategic planning at various levels.

**Policy for peri-urban/rural areas directly adjacent to the city**

**Change-management and innovation-sparking in local authorities**
How to change urban paradigms and stimulate urban regeneration (Piaseczno; Kielce)

**EU support for medium-sized cities 2021-2027**

**Circular economy**

**Development decisions/requests being refused by the SKO or the Provincial Administrative Court**

**Multi-stakeholder partnerships**
Cooperation between local government, business and research centres for urban development
7. Follow-up Survey Results: Proposed Legislative Changes in Poland

- Improve local authorities' legal capacity decisions about their own development conditions - remove the inability of local governments to block the excessive sprawl of built-up areas, dictated by the decision being revoked by the Local Government Appellate Court and Provincial Administrative Court (Zielona Góra)

- Implementation of the Construction and Town Planning Code, improvement of the Revitalization Act. (Ława)

- Introduce a special act on green areas in cities (Biłgoraj)

- Simplify the procedures for applying for funds (Piotrków Trybunalski)

- Introduce more ambitious national targets for sustainable transition (Vitoria-Gasteiz)

- Sustainable solutions should be promoted via grant competitions etc. and their implementation should be realistically checked, possibly using “reverse” mechanisms, rewarding sustainable solutions (post-factum) and possibly reimbursing the local authority if the project is implemented in accordance with the “sustainable development criteria” etc. (Skawina)

- A significant improvement in spatial planning, removing the decision about building conditions from the basics of spatial shaping and developing a clearer link between the creation of a development strategy and the shaping of spatial policy. An unequivocal definition of the primacy of the public interest and the common good over private property rights is also needed, plus the identification and implementation of a training system for councilors/candidates. The legal introduction of citizens’ panels as an obligatory part of the system of social consultations on strategic decisions (Kielce).

- Removal or limitation of the possibility of issuing WZ decisions (e.g. bilateral neighborhood + compliance with the Study). A certain limitation of the possibility of obtaining compensation for property owners covered by the enacted LMP. Tax relief for people without cars. Obligatory urban planning indicators for the local development plan regarding the number of public areas (roads and squares), which would also facilitate landowners sharing the purchase and implementation costs of new road systems (Piazzano).
8. Follow-up Survey Results: How Polish cities Envision The WUF11 Action Plan

A follow-up survey sent after the webinar was completed by fourteen participating Polish cities. This chapter displays the results.

**Do you find the idea of co-creating a (Polish) Action Plan for Cities with the Ministry interesting?**

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<th>Yes</th>
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<td>Count</td>
<td>15</td>
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**How involved would you like to be in the preparations for the WUF11?**

- Extremely involved: 57.1%
- Involved from time to time: 35.7%
- Not at all involved: 7.1%

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**What do Polish cities want to get out of the WUF11 Action Plan?**

- The long-term provision of organisational, legal, technical and financial tools.
- Permanent structures of national and European cooperation and modern management in local government.
- Strengthened self-governance and a sense of co-ownership and shared responsibility among citizens.
- Ambitious and binding guidelines/targets with support from all Polish Mayors.
- Examples of good development strategies and best practice to guide cities.
- Access to national and international finance to fund municipal strategies.
- Opportunities for broad national and international cooperation and knowledge-exchange and the implementation of joint projects with other cities e.g. EU funded projects.
- Draft legislative changes e.g. an amendment to the act on spatial planning and development.
- Integration of European and International urban sustainability frameworks in Polish legislation and regional/municipal policy e.g. the EU Green Deal, UN Sustainable Development Goals and the New Leipzig Charter/Urban Agenda, and so on.
7. Conclusion: key findings from the EUKN Policy Lab for Poland 2020

The EUKN Policy Lab for Poland - Sustainable Urban Transitions: Lessons from Europe offered policymakers from Poland and other countries in the Visegrad Group insights into how cities from all over the continent have been implementing sustainability initiatives and strategies over the past five decades.

If offered a number of key lessons for sustainable urban transitions. Speakers highlighted the importance of green infrastructure in improving a city’s liveability and biodiversity indicators. Employing approaches based on rewilding and ecosystem services, in particular creating ecological corridors throughout and surrounding the city and renaturalising degraded urban areas, proved to be successful ways to boost a city’s environmental, social and economic prosperity. A core lesson that emerged was also the need to capitalise on unique local natural resources and avoid replicating approaches from elsewhere without local adaptation.

Another key idea emerging from the event was the need to move away from car-centric urban planning and design. Prioritising the greening of city streets and the introduction of active mobility infrastructure over motorised transport proved to be initially unpopular among the public in some cities, but led to widespread satisfaction and improved liveability once the initiatives had been implemented.

The pivotal importance of multi-stakeholder participation in co-creating sustainability policies and initiatives, notably involvement of local communities and businesses, was emphasised. To achieve this, speakers noted that good governance and transition management processes within the municipal administration were essential. Almost all of the speakers suggested creating an in-house innovation or transition team to help stimulate and carry the process. The need for political support - for example from the city’s mayor or other local councillors - was also emphasised.

A final point that was highlighted by all speakers was the value of get involved in European networks and applying for European funding projects and awards. Maribor, Essen and Vitoria-Gasteiz were only able to develop their transition strategy and implement projects via EU cooperative networks, political charters, and funding mechanisms. The green capital award application process, in particular, stood out as a way to develop a comprehensive transition strategy and identity a city’s strengths and weaknesses.

Would you like to be involved in the creation of the WUF11 Action Plan?

Register your interest here/get in touch with X here!
**1. Work with nature, not against it**
Plant local species, capitalise on local resources and focus on nature-based/rewilding solutions that genuinely increase biodiversity, create ecological corridors and have direct/indirect economic and social benefits.

**2. Capitalise on opportunities for national and international knowledge-exchange**
Joining national and international networks can give you access to best practices and opportunities to join projects and funding applications. This can really drive transition and create a positive feedback loop.

**3. Engage in participative processes with multiple stakeholders**
Transformation visions that are co-created with citizens and other local stakeholders will be more successful in the long run. You can find ideas for co-creation methods via EU networks and EU projects.

**4. Political support is key**
Multi-level governance is always a challenge, but when it comes to sustainable transitions, it can be particularly helpful to have local political support, for example from the Mayor, to give radical actions political legitimacy.

**5. Take a place-based approach**
There is no silver bullet for cities when it comes to sustainable transition. It’s important to learn from other cities but don’t try to simply replicate their strategies.

**6. Be brave and bold**
Be prepared to implement radical policies that people may not initially like. Many local stakeholders will be opposed to change but they are likely to appreciate the policies once they see their benefits.

**7. Focus on good governance and build an inhouse transition team**
Good change management and governance is key to systemic transformation: create a transition acceleration team that is supported by external experts. Find the policy pioneers, “native creatives” and conscious companies willing to work with you on this challenge.

**8. Understand that your city’s transition should be a flexible, iterative, and long-term process**
Urban transition is an interactive and long-term process that should integrate learning throughout.