

“Green Corridors” concept as an inspiration for spatial management in Poland

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Synopsis: Regional development is based upon varying economic, social and environmental factors, on which it depends. One of its conditions is adequate technical infrastructure, which enables care for entrepreneurship development, improved communication or social and public capital. Development of technical infrastructure however, must be consistent with the rules set by sustainable development, predominantly with its environmental scope. The concept of “Green Corridors” in the European context will be one of the most important instruments for realisation of a sustainable development principle.

Introduction

Regional development is based upon varying economic, social and environmental factors, on which it depends. One of the conditions for regional development is adequate technical infrastructure, which enables care for entrepreneurship development, improved communication or social and public capital. The development of technical infrastructure however, must be consistent with the rules set by sustainable development, predominantly with its environmental scope. The institution of “Green Corridors” might be capable of providing such compatibility on an EU scale. The aim of the article is to describe the role of “Green Corridors” in regional and local development and to propose actions on spatial management, which are going to provide wider support, from the introduction of rules consistent with the following concept, to the Polish system of area management.

Sustainable development in transport

The principle of sustainable development is categorically linked to the concept of local and regional development [Nowak, Mickiewicz, 2012, p. 24–27]. In its current state it determines the possibilities of any wider activities, undertaken on a regional and national scale, not only due to economic factors, but legal ones as well. The principle of sustainable development, beyond its environmental (ecological) dimension, includes:

- social dimension – which comes down to maintaining and improving human health, work safety and welfare, which are the most important social aims [Bukowski, 2009, p. 31],
- economic dimension, associated with acquisition of optimal profit for particular sectors of the economy [Jaźwiński, 2010, p. 209–210].

The above classification also deserves to be accepted also due to fact that economic development is closely associated with intensification in using natural resources [Nazarko, Dobrzyński, 2006, p. 2]. The main ecological aim of sustainable development is stability of basic environmental processes, while the main aim of economy – stable economic develop-

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ment [Markowski, Stawasz, 2001, p. 220]. M. Chudak [2008, p. 163–164] points out, that idea behind sustainable development should appeal to all investments – including those associated with transport – undertaken on a particular territory, regardless of the scale its ecological consequences may have – whether local, regional, national or global. Actions which take into account sustainable development may improve competitiveness at any level [Słodowa-Hełpa, 2010, p. 132–133]. Such perceptions make sustainable development fully useful for activities associated with transport policy. Sustainable transport mobility should be based on elements such as the use of renewable resources within the limits of their renewability and keeping the use of non-renewable ones on low and gradually lower levels, also efficiency of transport as a system and not preference of its one chosen part [Kassenberg, 2005, p. 38]. The EU as early as 2001 has made arrangements in formulating a sustainable transport strategy, in particular:

- introduction of transport charges
- achieving an interoperability of charging systems for road transport and further technological development
- attaching priority status to public transport within infrastructural investments; railways, waterways and sea transport (European Transport Policy to 2010. Time to decide. White Paper of EU Commission from 2001)

In Polish conditions the principle of sustainable development should be applied on a much wider scale. In professional literature it is pointed, that the “polluter pays principle” has to be used in a greater array [Lorek, 2008, p. 148–149]. It is assumed that in institutional range, the realisation of sustainable development principle should currently be based on an elaboration and introduction of institutions and solutions beneficial to the environment, on a global or at least European scale. An example of the above mentioned issue might be the procedure associated with the evaluation of the influence on the environment as well as the society’s access to the information about the environment, along with social organizations’ participation in the proceeding dealing with the environment. Postulated direction and relations between transport policy and sustainable development principle lead to the conclusion that it is entirely reasonable to include the concept of “Green Corridors” into the Polish legal system.

“Green Corridors” – basic assumptions

The concept of “Green Corridors” has been present in professional literature and practice for a certain amount of time. In a formal way the issue was undertaken by EU authorities in 2007 in “Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan”. It indicated that “Green Corridors” shall reflect the concept of integrated transport, implying mutual complementation of short sea shipping, railroads, inland water shipping and road transport, in order to select a transport mode closest to the natural environment. In this document a necessity of introduction of fair and indiscriminating access to “Green Corridors” and reloading facilities is indicated (Communication from the Commission – Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan {SEC(2007) 1320} {SEC(2007) 1321} COM/2007/0607 final*/). In the scope of the mentioned document “Green Corridors”, the association is mainly with freight transport. Discussions about green corridors are being shown in literature about this subject and in research projects [Foabos, Ryan, 2004, p. 143–146; Vehnes, Le Viol, Clergeau, 2012, p. 171–176]. At the present moment in Europe one can distinguish 9 Green Corridors, selected from 30 priority projects. Two Green Corridors might be mentioned associated with Poland to a small degree. These are: RotMos (covering the sea harbor in Gdańsk) and Silk Way, which in the future may cover the sea harbor in Gdańsk as well as an east-west distance. European Green Corridors should take into consideration technologies, decreasing the negative influence on the environment in such scientific fields as: engines, propulsion, transport, heating and navigation technologies. The aim connected with the realisation of “Green Corridors” is to be supported by numerous initiatives, with rail cargo transport predominantly or sea motorways. It already

stems from the above, that within the „Green Corridors” concept, the principle of sustainable development will be realized on a major scale, combining the development of infrastructure with the protection of environment. Currently literature on this subject [Szydarowski 2010, p. 128] indicates the following features closely tied to the „Green Corridors” concept:

- „Green Corridors” shall offer complementarity of transportation services by integration of road and rail transport, short sea shipping and inland water shipping,
- selection of means of transport within a “Green Corridor” is an autonomous decision made by operators who are users of transport, under conditions that they are energy efficient and have lesser impact on the surrounding area – this condition is associated with the necessity of introducing control and evaluation mechanisms,
- strategic areas within “Green Corridors” shall possess infrastructure enabling reload and stations with fuels produced from renewable resources,
- in a “Green Corridors” area new transport technologies and remotely operated traffic control systems are to be studied and verified,
- functioning of “Green Corridors” requires harmonization of administrative rules which are in force in areas where they will take their run and to ensure free access to corridors for all entities interested in them.

From the following recommendations and features of “Green Corridors” a number of activities can be derived, crucial from the point of view of regional development management. They are doubtlessly connected in full scale with the concept of innovations, perceived as the introduction of changes leading to beneficial technical – economic or social results and bringing positive economic effects [Nowakowska, Przygodzki, Sokołowicz, 2011, p. 84]. Moreover, T. Kudłacz [2011, p.129] described that the management of regional development indicates the necessity of conducting development policy which takes into account relations between economic systems and ecosystems. In the scope of a spatial transport policy, this requirement, in relation to the “Green Corridors” concept, would be fully maintained. The concept "supergreen" guarantees a continuation of the transport policy development with simultaneous maintenance and preservation of solutions favorable to the environment.

The Concept of “Green Corridors” in the area of Poland is described in a very limited way. In the literature it is mainly presented in context of the functioning of the Baltic Sea region. It is assumed that this region is an area which enables the development of “Green Corridors”. In Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions concerning the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region, creation of conditions adequate for a sustainable state of environment was introduced as a main endeavour [Szlachta, 2010, p. 17]. W. Szydarowski [2010, p. 136–137] commenting on the specificity of "Green Corridors" in the Baltic region indicates that:

- “Green Corridors” located there will integrate offers of road, rail and sea transport,
- over the course of “Green Corridors many components of EU transport policy shall be present (especially TEN-T transportation network),
- Baltic concept of “Green Corridors” will lead to create a consistent network, covering the entire territory of this region,
- public and private entities involved in this concept will be obliged to reshape their ad-hoc partnerships into stable consortiums, possessing tools for steering and management of infrastructure and services inside the corridor.

To further define the concept of “Green Corridors” the European Commission currently funds a research project called “SuperGreen”, which aims at deeper definition of those issues. Nine “Green Corridors” were selected from among 30 projects within “SuperGreen”. During the process of elimination such criteria were verified like volume of transport, length

of a particular corridor, multimodality or geographic conditions. Moreover, the percentage of cover by Natura 2000 sites was counted for each corridor, in accordance with data from February 2010. Two of the corridors from those extracted (in limited scope) are running through Poland. These are: RotMos, with a sea element in the form of the port in Gdańsk and "Silk Way" – with the port in Gdańsk and a planned route from east to west (www.supergreen.eu).

Having the above in mind it should be indicated, that on THE current stage of introducing the concept of "Green Corridors" to the Polish system of spatial management, it means taking actions, which must ensure fulfilment of environmental requirements in the process of shaping technical infrastructure, while utilising innovative means and methods and international and co-modal scales of action.

"Green Corridors" and spatial planning on national and European scale

Territorial Cohesion – seen as the basis for the concept of spatial planning at a European level – is a sound instrument for the coordination of various sectoral activities within regions [Grosse, 2009, p. 142–143]. According to a new perception of cohesion policy, the EU development policy should integrate various socio-economic aspects in relation to the territory and ensure the utilisation of development potentials in each region [Nobles, 2011, p. 49–50]. The vast majority of documents on the cohesion policy is now indicative, but point out that the present state of elements will change over time, as the territory of new countries of the European Union will bear greater significance [Zielinski, 2010, p. 284]. In the transport sector, objectives set at EU level include mainly:

- ensuring the spatial cohesion through expansion of transportation network sections in the territory of a given country,
- development of boundaries for transport in order to simplify their crossing,
- socio-economic activation of regions through development of transport infrastructure,
- mitigation of negative impact of transport infrastructure on the environment.

Problems associated with spatial transport policy are also included in the Draft of National Spatial Development Concept. According to its assumptions:

- taking into account territorial driven EU policies and the integrated approach in problem solving are conditions for achieving internal objectives European Union (such as the implementation of territorial cohesion),
- there is a need to increase the Polish activity in preparation, promotion and implementation of its own vision of European development and closest surroundings of the country (the activity in preparation of a document concerning directions of spatial management across the European Union),
- wider interventions should be introduced to develop of key regions and subject areas [*Projekt...*, 2011, p. 27].

The document mentioned above especially stresses efforts to reduce external transportation costs and environmental costs included. To realise this aim particular elements are predicted:

- modernisation of railroad network and construction of high-speed railways,
- support of intermodal systems,
- improvement of road accessibility to environmentally valuable areas (without generating transit movement on roads leading to them),
- expansion of intelligent (also multimodal) transportation systems.

In Project of Concept there was also no legal basis for protection of ecological corridors, sustainable networks in Poland and their spatial structures, which could enable the maintenance of a good state of ecological corridors. It is very important because very often, even at the institutional level, there are mistakes in the notion of "Green Corridors" and ecological corridors. At the same time, ensuring the utilisation of high values of environment and land-

scape, requires implementation of mechanisms, which serve the purpose of reducing the number of conflicts over areas and support management in valuable natural areas [*Projekt...* 2011, p. 111,113].

A.Tyszecki [2009, p. 62] characterises key issues in the context of spatial planning in transport in Poland:

- protection of areas with particular environmental values and important ecological functions,
- protection of water and water-dependent ecosystems,
- reduction of environmental transformation in areas subject to fervent urbanization,
- climate change and increased frequency of extreme events that cause threats to public safety.

W. Gaczek [2003, p. 33] in turn accentuates economic functions of the environment, which among others are responsible for supplying resources and energy carriers, used in production and consumption processes.

Therefore as the table above presents, on both a European and Polish level, a problem of relationship between the development of technical infrastructure and protection of the environment is recognized, and indeed quite often well stressed. It is doubtless that the concept of "green corridors" is incorporated into objectives of spatial planning and can serve as a basis for more effective implementation of each of its aims. To make this possible, however, it is necessary to identify the main activities related to spatial management, which can enable gradual adaptation of the "Green Corridors" concept to the Polish system.

Adaptation of "Green Corridors" to the spatial management system in Poland

The introduction of principles associated with the concept of "Green Corridors" to the Polish space management requires action at national, regional and local levels, which ensures the possibility of an effective use of individual instruments. It should be noted that some of these instruments are already implemented in different ways.

The Main directions in activities associated with the adoption of "Green Corridors" concept to the Polish system is shown in Fig 1. "Green corridors" are combined with the principle of co-modal transport and international scope. Therefore it is necessary to make quick and efficient adjustments – on a full national scale – of the transportation network for investments being subject of it. The main tools which serve this purpose are local spatial management plans. Efficient spatial management in the context of infrastructure shaping, in accordance with the sustainable development principle and the spatial order principle, can be provided by these spatial management tools. In relation to planned technical infrastructure – especially associated with the realisation of the "Green Corridors" concept, obligatory requirements of local plans should be introduced. Decisions on building conditions, which often substitute them, do not guarantee that an investor can be sure of the realisation of a given aim, and as a consequence – the realisation of investments on technical infrastructure. In the context of the "Green Corridors" concept, implemented to co-modal and international systems, such limitations would completely block investments. It is also reasonable that local plans, prepared in relation to investments important from a national and international point of view, were financed by central authorities. Only when all indicated requirements are included, local plans will be effective instruments for such management.



Fig. 1. Instruments for spatial management and actions adjusting the Polish system of area management to "Green Corridors" concept

Source: own elaboration.

As it was mentioned above, the concept of "Green Corridors" is tightly associated with innovations and care for the environment. These two aims require deeper research concerning the influence of particular activities on the environment. That is why a correct procedure of environmental impact assessment is of great importance. Implementing it to the Polish system and gradual improvement is a sound proof of introducing the principle of sustainable development and bringing the system closer to the concept of "Green Corridors". It should be reserved for the latter, that it also important to constantly undertake actions with the protection of the environment as far-reaching as possible (in compliance with other components of regional development). Environmental impact assessment is currently included as one of the most important instruments of environmental management and, as a consequence, a development instrument [Poskrobko, 2007, p. 147–150]. P. Mickiewicz indicates, that time for realisation of this procedure is conditioned by the necessity for conducting detailed environmental inventory [Mickiewicz, 2011, p. 230]. It is therefore even more reasonable to develop and create variants of this instrument [Nowak, Kiepas-Kokot, 2010, p. 38]. In the context of "Green Corridors" concept development, technologies reducing the negative impact on the environment are especially taken into consideration, including engines, fuels and propulsion systems, transport and cargo handling, heating and cooling and navigation technology.

Actions related to implementation of "Green Corridors" should also find support in spatial management systems, on national, regional and local levels. The vision of forming environmentally friendly, co-modal technical infrastructure should find relation to the Concept of National Spatial Development. Such visions concerning certain development of infrastructure with use of adequate means and methods should be reflected in plans of spatial management of voivodeships, and consequently – in studies of conditions and directions for municipal spatial management.

Final remarks

The concept of “Green Corridors” in the European scope will be one of the most important instruments for realisation of sustainable development principle. Currently in the Polish context it serves as an example, capable of partial adoption to the spatial management system. Regardless, whether the concept directly encompasses a territory of Poland or not, it is worth to implement rules and recommendations stemming from it. Consequently, at the current stage, a spatial management system must be adapted to the supergreen concept in such a way as to guarantee gradual bringing closer of Polish solutions to western concepts.

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Koncepcja „zielonych korytarzy” jako inspiracja dla zarządzania przestrzenią w Polsce

Rozwój regionalny opiera się na zróżnicowanych czynnikach gospodarczych, społecznych i środowiskowych, od których jest zależny. Jednym z uwarunkowań rozwoju regionalnego jest dobra infrastruktura techniczna, dzięki której można dbać o przedsiębiorczość, lepszą komunikację, czy kapitał społeczny oraz kapitał ludzki. Rozwój infrastruktury technicznej musi być zgodny jednakże z zasadą zrównoważonego rozwoju, a w szczególności z jej środowiskowym wymiarem. Instytucją, która taką zgodność może zapewnić mogą być w skali Unii Europejskiej „Zielone korytarze”. Celem artykułu jest określenie roli „Zielonych korytarzy” w rozwoju regionalnym i lokalnym oraz zaproponowanie działań z zakresu zarządzania przestrzenią, które pomogą w szerszym zakresie wprowadzić zasady związane z niniejszą koncepcją do systemu zarządzania przestrzenią w Polsce.

Zasada zrównoważonego rozwoju w sposób kategoryczny jest powiązana z koncepcją rozwoju regionalnego i lokalnego. W obecnej sytuacji, nie tylko z uwagi na argumenty natury ekonomicznej, ale również prawnej, determinuje ona możliwość jakichkolwiek szerszych działań w skali krajowej i regionalnej.

Unia Europejska już od roku 2001 formułując strategię zrównoważonego transportu zakłada w szczególności:

- wprowadzenie systemu opłat transportowych,
- doprowadzenie do współzależności systemów opłat za transport drogowy oraz dalszego technologicznego rozwoju,
- nadanie priorytetowej rangi w inwestycjach infrastrukturalnych transportowi publicznemu, kolei, drogom wodnym oraz transportowi morskemu.

W warunkach polskich zasada zrównoważonego rozwoju powinna zostać włączana w zdecydowanie szerszym zakresie. Wydaje się, że w wymiarze instytucjonalnym realizacja zasady zrównoważonego rozwoju powinna obecnie polegać na opracowywaniu i wdrażaniu w skali światowej, a przynajmniej europejskiej, instytucji i rozwiązań korzystnych dla środowiska. Przykładem powyższego może być procedura związana z oceną oddziaływania na środowisko. Powyższy postulowany kierunek oraz relacje pomiędzy polityką transportową a zasadą zrównoważonego rozwoju skłaniają do wniosku, że w pełni zasadny jest postulat dotyczący włączenia do polskiego systemu prawnego oraz przestrzennej koncepcji „Zielonych korytarzy”.

Aktualnie w literaturze przedmiotu wskazuje się następujące cechy łączące się w sposób istotny z koncepcją „Zielonych korytarzy”:

- „Zielone korytarze” powinny oferować komplementarność usług przewozowych przez zintegrowanie transportu drogowego, kolejowego, żeglugi morskiej bliskiego zasięgu oraz żeglugi śródlądowej,
- wybór środka transportu w „Zielonym korytarzu” stanowi autonomiczną decyzję podmiotów korzystających z transportu pod warunkiem, że są one w stanie wykazać efektywność energetyczną oraz zmniejszone oddziaływanie na otoczenie – powyższy wymóg wiąże się z koniecznością wprowadzenia mechanizmów kontrolnych oraz ewaluacyjnych,
- strategiczne obszary w ramach „Zielonych korytarzy” powinny być wyposażone w infrastrukturę przeładunkową oraz stacje zasilania w paliwa otrzymywane z zasobów odnawialnych,
- na obszarze „Zielonych korytarzy” należy badać oraz weryfikować nowe technologie transportowe oraz zdalne systemy kontroli ruchu,
- funkcjonowanie „Zielonych korytarzy” wymaga zharmonizowania przepisów administracyjnych obowiązujących na obszarach przez które one przebiegają oraz zapewnienia swobodnego dostępu do korytarzy dla wszystkich zainteresowanych podmiotów.

Spójność terytorialna – rozumiana jako podstawa koncepcji gospodarki przestrzennej na szczeblu europejskim - stanowi bardzo dobry instrument koordynacji różnych działań sektorowych w regionach. Zgodnie z nowym sposobem postrzegania polityki spójności polityka rozwojowa UE powinna integrować różne zagadnienia społeczno – gospodarcze w odniesieniu do terytorium i dbać o wykorzystanie potencjałów rozwojowych każdego z regionów.

W sektorze transportu cele określone na szczeblu unijnym polegają w szczególności na:

- zapewnieniu spójności przestrzennej przez rozbudowę odcinków transeuropejskich sieci transportowych na terenie danego państwa,
- zagospodarowaniu transportowym granic w celu ułatwienia ich przekraczania,
- aktywizacji społeczno – gospodarczej regionów przez rozwój infrastruktury transportowej,
- zmniejszeniu negatywnego wpływu infrastruktury transportowej na środowisko.

Aby wkomponować zasady związane z koncepcją „Zielonych korytarzy” do polskiego systemu zarządzania przestrzenią należy podjąć działania zarówno na szczeblu krajowym, regionalnym i lokalnym gwarantujące możliwość efektywnego wykorzystania poszczególnych instrumentów. Zaznaczyć należy, że część z tych instrumentów jest już w różny sposób wdrażana.