

Summary of the PhD thesis entitled: „The management model of a commune in the strategies of regional development of the Silesian Voivodeship”

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The dissertation refers to the issue of operating a commune in the Silesian Voivodeship in regard to the contemporary challenges faced by the authorities in the context of socio-economical changes. The ever-rising social expectations of the inhabitants directed to the authorities, and the deteriorating financial situation of many communes, require the authorities to search still newer directions for development and funding. Such challenges present the local authorities with a need to possess necessary knowledge on public management and on the method of strategic management of commune development, including a widespread use of all available tools. The conducted survey of the subject literature reveals a deficit of essential knowledge in the mentioned subject.

The development of communes in the Silesian Voivodeship is closely linked to the regional development of the whole Silesia, therefore the main inspiration for this dissertation was an emerging doubt if the process of management of communes in the Silesian Voivodeship is correct and if it guarantees an optimal level of development of both the communes and the whole region. The results of the conducted studies show that the authorities of municipalities in the management process do not fully use all developmental opportunities (including the economic potential, commune entities, instruments and management attributes), that is why the development process of Silesian communes and thus, the whole region, is not optimal. Improvement of the current situation with the use of the instruments supporting this process, should take place as soon as possible, since efficient management of the commune will directly influence the living conditions of inhabitants.

The thesis attempts to fill the following research gaps:

- a theoretical gap - in the field of a managerial approach to management of a commune (literature to date in this subject mainly focuses on business organisations with insufficient interest in the public sector),
- a methodical gap - on the basis of the conducted research, a model of commune management in accordance with the new directions of development for the Silesian Voivodeship will be elaborated,

- an empirical gap - within which an analysis of commune management on the basis of the development directions will be prepared.

The main aim of the present dissertation is to prepare a model of commune management coherent with the development strategies of the Silesian Voivodeship. Designation of the research area in this dissertation as well as the main objective and specific objectives, required to put forth the following main hypothesis: Implementation of the model of commune management coherent with the development strategies of the Silesian Voivodeship, with the use of modern instruments of strategic management and attributes, may significantly increase development capabilities of the commune and the whole region. The consequence of this was a development of a suitable methodical conception, based on which the empirical study was conducted, on the selected group of twenty-two urban/rural communes of the Silesian Voivodeship, the results of which were to verify the hypotheses.

The structure and logic of the present dissertation are linked to the specified research issue, objectives, hypotheses and a proposed method of own research. It consists of 6 chapters - first two concern theoretical discourse, the next two chapters are theoretical and empirical, while the last two are empirical chapters.

In the theoretical chapters the issue of public management is discussed as a sub-discipline of the management and quality sciences. The chapters concern the specificity of commune operation as a public entity as well as the characteristic of tasks in communes, strategic management in communes with the use of strategic instruments in managing the commune - particularly the role of a strategy, and the process of development management of the commune within the existing conditions.

The theoretical and empirical chapters are devoted to regional development with a particular reference to the factors underpinning this development, as well as a detailed analysis of the strategic documents of the Silesian Voivodeship. Moreover, the principles of modelling and assumption for the project of the future model of commune management are discussed. In the further part, a case study of the records analysis in the strategic documents of the Silesian Voivodeship is conducted, in terms of developmental objectives, dedicated for Silesian Voivodeship communes, as well as the analysis of the developmental strategy of the twenty-two studies urban/rural communes in the Silesian Voivodeship.

Chapters five and six focus only on the empirical part and contain conceptual and methodical assumptions to conduct empirical studies and the characteristic of the research object. Furthermore, they include a detailed analysis of the development strategy of all studied communes - a case study. In the further empirical part, the results of the conducted studies are

presented with a detailed discussion and verification of the research hypotheses. In addition, an original model of commune management is developed and the conditions for its implementation are described for management of the commune development with recommendations.

Conducting the research process and obtaining the results from twenty-two urban/rural communes in the Silesian Voivodeship allow to verify the research objectives in the dissertation as well as the implementation of the stated objective which was to develop a model of commune management coherent with the strategies of the regional development of the Silesian Voivodeship. This model when properly implemented in the strategic development management of the commune by its authorities, may undoubtedly contribute to improved effectivity of commune management by optimisation of all tasks.

The presented results of the conducted empirical studies and theoretical deliberations certainly do not exhaust the subject of commune management within contemporary conditions of the regional development due to its complexity and a significant cognitive nature. Taking into account the importance and topicality of the subject matter, the author attempts only to create a contribution to the further in-depth studies in the field of a modern strategic management of communes, managerial competencies of commune authorities, involvement of partners in commune management and contemporary conditions for commune development.

Key words: commune, local development, regional development, strategic management, commune development strategy, management model

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