

## TARGETED ANALYSIS //

# METRO

The role and future perspectives of Cohesion  
Policy in the planning of Metropolitan Areas and  
Cities

Annex VII // Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area case study



Metropolitan Area  
Gdańsk Gdynia Sopot

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# Table of contents

<b>Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Foreword by Michał Glaser .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2 Case study area contextualisation .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3 Metropolitan governance structure and cooperation activities .....</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Institutional framework .....	13
3.1.1 Other forms of cooperation .....	14
3.2 Evolution of metropolitan cooperation .....	16
3.3 Metropolitan development goals .....	18
3.3.1 Coherence with national and regional goals .....	19
3.3.2 Coherence with municipal goals .....	20
3.4 Metropolitan development and planning instruments .....	23
3.4.1 Instruments in the framework of other cooperation initiatives .....	27
3.4.2 Instrument and initiatives related to COVID-19 .....	28
3.5 Metropolitan financing and budgeting .....	29
3.6 Role of social groups and the business community in metropolitan governance .....	30
3.6.1 Social groups and the civil society .....	31
3.6.2 Business community .....	31
3.7 Participation to policy networks .....	31
<b>4 Cohesion policy governance .....</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1 EU cohesion policy institutional architecture and competences .....	33
4.1.1 The role of metropolitan actors .....	34
4.2 EU cohesion policy instruments at the metropolitan level .....	36
4.3 Involvement of social groups and the business community in the EU cohesion policy .....	39
4.4 The governance of EU cohesion policy in the COVID-19 emergency .....	40
4.5 Coordinating metropolitan governance and EU cohesion policy .....	41
<b>5 Cohesion policy impact .....</b>	<b>45</b>
5.1 EU cohesion policy objectives and actions .....	45
5.1.1 Funded measures: main sectors and spatial distribution .....	47
5.2 Coherence and synergies with metropolitan objectives and instruments .....	51
5.2.1 Alignment with the goals defined in metropolitan instruments .....	53
5.2.2 Thematic priorities .....	54
5.2.3 Funding magnitude .....	54
5.3 Outcomes .....	56
5.4 The impact of the EU cohesion policy in the COVID-19 emergency .....	58
5.5 The impact of the EU cohesion policy on metropolitan governance and cooperation .....	59
<b>6 Main challenges and recommendations .....</b>	<b>61</b>
6.1 The role of metropolitan areas in the EU cohesion policy governance .....	61
6.2 Impact of the EU cohesion policy on (the achievement of) metropolitan goals .....	62
6.3 Impact of the EU cohesion policy on metropolitan governance and cooperation .....	63

# List of maps, figures, charts and tables

## List of figures

Figure 2.1	Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan area territorial structure .....	10
Figure 2.2	Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Functional Urban Area .....	11
Figure 2.3	Gravity zones of the Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot .....	11
Figure 3.1	Institutional framework of the MAG .....	14
Figure 3.2	Spatial coverage of the MZKZG .....	15
Figure 3.3	Norda.....	17
Figure 3.4	Timeline of metropolitan cooperation.....	18
Figure 3.5	Coordination mechanisms between the metropolitan development goals and the framework of national, regional and municipal goals .....	23
Figure 4.1	The governance of the EU Cohesion policy in Poland.....	34
Figure 4.2	Illustration of the ITI design .....	35
Figure 4.3	The role of metropolitan actors in the EU cohesion policy .....	36
Figure 4.4	ITI in Poland .....	38
Figure 4.5	The governance of the EU recovery fund in Poland .....	41
Figure 4.6	The metropolitan governance network of MAG .....	43
Figure 5.1	Distribution of funding in the metropolitan area .....	51

## List of tables

Table 3.1	Overview of the development visions or overarching strategic goals for the largest cities in the MAG and selected towns and townships .....	21
Table 3.2	Main instruments at national, regional, metropolitan and local level.....	26
Table 3.3	Other instruments .....	28
Table 4.1	EU cohesion policy programmes and instruments in the metropolitan area .....	38
Table 5.1	Objectives of the EU cohesion policy in the metropolitan area .....	46
Table 5.2	Operational Programmes implemented in the metropolitan area .....	47
Table 5.3	Comparison of the amount of EUCP funds spent in the whole ITI area and the core ITI area .....	48
Table 5.4	Comparison of the amount of EUCP funds spent in the whole ITI area and the core ITI area with total public expenditures in the years 2014-2019 in the ITI area.....	49
Table 5.5	Strategic goals of MAG Association and ITI vis a vis OP priority axis .....	52
Table 5.6	Alignment of the strategic goals of Spatial Development Plan of MAG with EUCP Represented by ITI strategic goals and ROP priority axis. ....	54
Table 5.7	EU financed projects and their total budgets under different OP .....	55
Table 5.8	Successful outcomes.....	57

# Abbreviations

TEN-T – Trans-European Transport Network

BSR – Baltic Sea Region

LAU – Local Administrative Units

EEA – European Environment Agency

ITI – Integrated Territorial Investments

MAG – Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot

MZKZG – Metropolitan Union of Public Transport of the Gulf of Gdańsk

GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation

ROP – Regional Operational Programme

RPS – Regional Strategic Programmes

OP – Operational Programmes

CP – Cohesion Policy

ERDF – European Regional Development Fund

ESF – European Social Fund

EAFRD – European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

EMFF – European Maritime and Fisheries Funds

EUCP – European Union cohesion policy

ASI – Strategic Intervention Areas

## Foreword by Michał Glaser

The Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area (OMGGS) comprises 59 local authorities, which account for 70% of the population of the Pomeranian Voivodeship. The core cities of the OMGGS are among the most attractive to live in nationwide. The area is the engine of the region's development, while at the same time it is the focal point of key problems in the fields of energy and environment, transport or social affairs.

The EU Cohesion Policy is a fundamental issue for us. The experience of recent years clearly shows that the implementation of EU projects has a key impact on the development of our area. Solving the problems of the metropolis is closely dependent on how the EU Cohesion Policy programs are designed and implemented. - In the current financial perspective 2014-2020, almost 2,000 projects have been implemented in our metropolitan area with Cohesion Policy funds. We have also managed to develop best practices and support standards in the area of social activities (for people with disabilities or immigrants), as well as in the area of urban transport infrastructure (standards for the implementation of interchanges).

This report shows unequivocally that within the framework of the new EU budget 2021-2027, metropolises should have a greater influence on the shaping and implementation of EU programmes, and the inclusion of metropolises in the programming of the EU Cohesion Policy will be crucial for the coordination of policies and instruments in cities, peri-urban and rural areas. Cohesion Policy should provide a framework to address the long-term needs of individual metropolitan areas. These actions should primarily focus on issues such as climate change, sustainable development, socio-economic polarisation on a metropolitan scale, as tackling these issues requires a strategy across administrative borders.

The results of the ESPON METRO project clearly indicate that such an approach to program planning and implementation should be implemented at all levels - EU, national, regional and local. Without such a systemic approach it is not possible to effectively implement EU programs and to achieve the expected indicators of socio-economic development.

Our association was established in 2011 on the initiative of the Mayor of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz, however until today it has not been formally recognized as a metropolis by the national government. This problem was also noticed by the authors of the report. The legal framework for the functioning of metropolises is very important, as the funding dedicated to metropolitan areas is insufficient and far from being adequate for the goals and tasks facing metropolises. At present, Cohesion Policy supports metropolitan policy directly only through the implementation of the ITI mechanism. Meanwhile, the Cohesion Policy would have a stronger impact on the development of our metropolis if the government adopted a metropolitan law for Pomerania.

We are very grateful for the invitation to participate in the ESPON METRO project. The results of this project show that the formal and legal conditions under which european metropolises operate are very different. However, the main conclusion of the research is the need to increase the involvement of metropolises in the cohesion policy, which is essential to ensure sustainable and harmonious development of the European Union countries.

We will analyze in detail the possibility of implementing the results of the project. Making good use of development opportunities in the coming years is of strategic importance to us, because a well functioning metropolis means concrete, everyday benefits for our residents.



Michał Glaser,  
Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area CEO

# 1 Introduction

Metropolitan Area of Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot (MAG) is the most important urban centre in northern Poland and, at the same time, in the southern part of the Baltic Sea Region. Intensification of the urbanisation processes has triggered a search for new organisational solutions for the emerging vast, multifunctional urban area. In 1990-ties the Tri City Agglomeration (Gdańsk–Gdynia–Sopot) was one of the first, among the largest Polish cities, to face the barriers and limitations resulting from the incompatibility of the existing territorial and administrative structures with the new needs and challenges. The necessity of reforms aimed at creating metropolitan structures has initiated a metropolitan debate in Pomorskie region.

Discussing the issue of the creation and functioning of metropolitan areas in the context of Polish settlement system it has to be emphasised that the idea of creating a network of metropolitan centres based on the regularly spread over the territory of the country network of biggest cities, is of critical importance for maintaining the polycentric system. Such a system is very beneficial for sustainable and cohesive territorial development of the country. However, the creation of metropolitan areas in Poland is still at the initial stage. So far MAG does not possess the metropolitan legal act.

The Metropolitan Area of Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot represents the fusion-type polycentric metropolis. It is a type of a metropolitan area where there is no a clear domination of one, significantly bigger city over the others. The joint urban area was created in a process of increased integration of neighbouring cities in order to better take advantage of benefits of scale by 'borrowing size'. However, one of the main obstacles in the process of metropolitan integration of the cities is the weak compatibility of their functions. The tendency for redundancy of functional structures of networking cities results in the domination of the competitive mode of urban policy over the policy of cooperation.

In the case of the MAG, the two main cities—Gdańsk and Gdynia—represent very similar structures of port-cities located in next to each other. The distance between the centres of the cities is only 22 kilometres. Two separate ports with increasing turnover in each of the cities together with two airports having one of the highest dynamics of passenger growth in the country constitute the base node of the TEN-T for the Baltic-Adriatic corridor. Obtaining legal provisions facilitating the functioning of the metropolitan area is of a crucial meaning for a further development and adequate use of endogenous potential of a region.

The financial instrument of EU Cohesion Policy – Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) –introduced in the framework 2014–2020 was not only the most effective tool for supporting large, complex and territorially integrated investments in the metropolitan area but also the final impulse for establishing cooperation between territorial units. In 2015 the Metropolitan Area of Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot was created on the base on voluntary agreement of local governments. The MAG performs duties of ITI Intermediate Body within a framework of Pomorskie Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020.

It is to be emphasised that the role of EU CP funds is not only limited to financial support. The interviewed representatives of MAG local authorities have claimed that managing the funds, implementing new programmes and implementing projects co-financed by the EU has had a great impact on increasing the quality of management system in the area. The institutional culture has also changed, while the process of learning good governance practices has been accelerated. That is why the process of devolution of the European funds management to metropolitan level plays a practical role in introducing metropolitan governance.

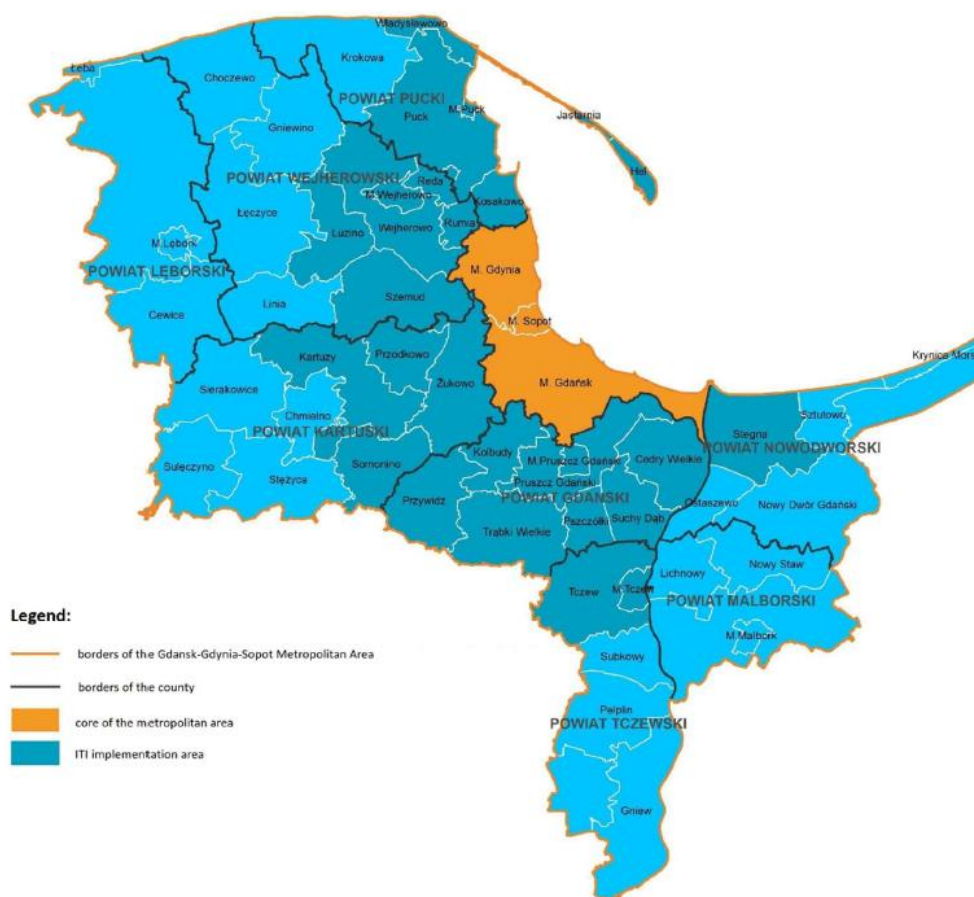
The Metropolitan Area of Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot brings together 59 local governments. MAG covers a total area of nearly 6,768km<sup>2</sup> and is inhabited by more than 1.55 million inhabitants which is 67% of the population of Pomorskie Region. Demographic changes positively distinguish MAG from other metropolises due to the positive rate of population growth and migration.

Several universities are located in MAG including these ranked among top ten best universities in Poland. Around 90 thousand university students study in MAG. In the metropolis there is a fast growth of knowledge intensive industries on the basis of FDIs (IT, electronics, biotechnology, marine industries).

The high quality of life in MAG translates into the highest levels of resident's satisfaction in Poland. All three core cities of metropolitan area are at the top of the list of the most attractive cities in the country to live in. Environmental quality plays a key role in the development of MAG.

## 2 Case study area contextualisation

**Figure 2.1**  
Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan area territorial structure



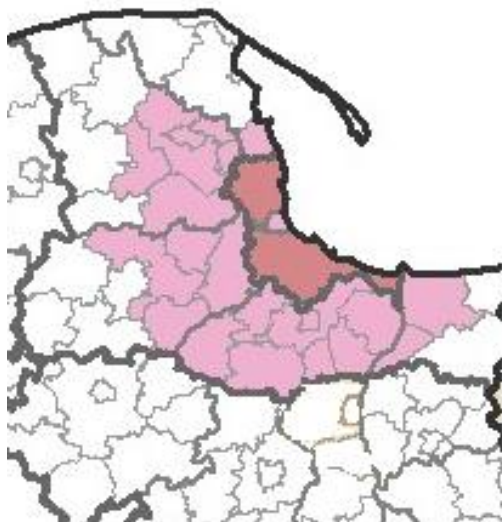
Source: Pomeranian Regional Planning Office

The Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot (MAG) located in Pomorskie region in the Polish part of the Baltic Sea region (BSR) is the fastest growing area of northern Poland. It is also a significant centre of integration processes in the BSR as well as being an important transport (the largest Polish harbours, rapidly developing airport – 5.5 million passengers in 2019, railway node with direct passenger connections to all other Polish metropolises and also to Berlin and Vienna), energy and ITI (seat of Intel branch) hub. The citizens of MAG reports the highest level of quality of life in Poland. The metropolitan area is of bi-polar nature with two big cities playing a leading role: Gdynia and Gdańsk. The MAG core is formed by these cities and the smaller town of Sopot located between them. The core is a continuous urban area.

The MAG Association was established on September 15, 2011 as the result of voluntary agreement of the local and county governments around cities of Gdańsk and Gdynia. In fact, the association combined two previously established co-operation networks formed around Gdańsk and Gdynia. The discussions, which led to the establishment of the MAG, lasted several months. Currently, 59 local governments (both LAU1 and 2) operate within MAG, which covers a total area of nearly 6,768 km<sup>2</sup> (LAU 1 measurement), and is inhabited by more than 1.55 million inhabitants (67% of the population of Pomorskie Region). MAG is also responsible as an Intermediate Body for executing MAG ITI programme however, the area covered by this programme is smaller than the entire MAG area (please see the fig. 2.1. with ITI indicated in dark blue). The

ITI area is almost the same (slightly larger) than MAG FUA delimited within EU Urban audit (see Figure 2.2 at which orange is the core and pink depicts suburbs).

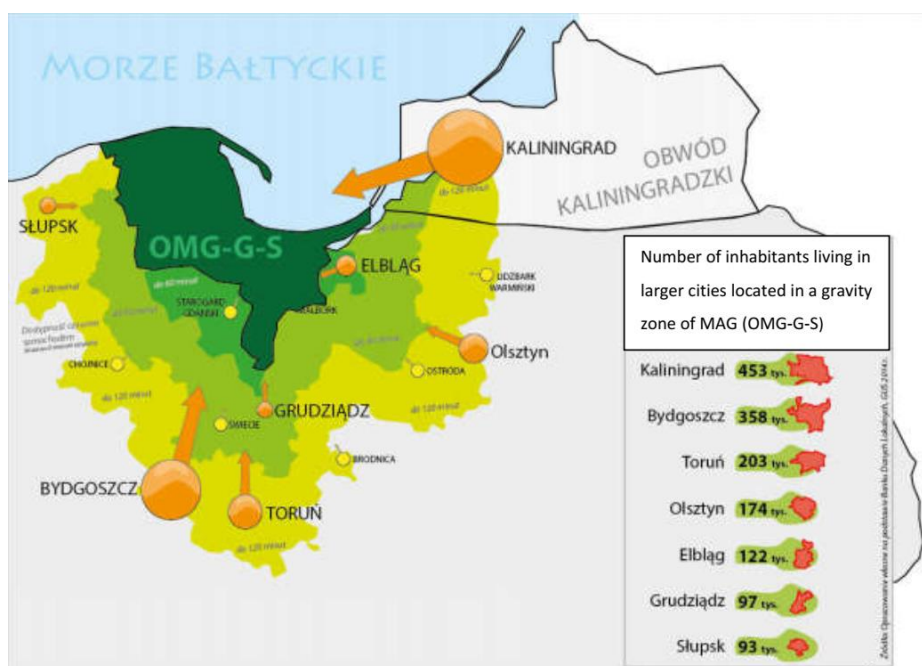
**Figure 2.2**  
**Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Functional Urban Area**



Source: authors' elaboration

The MAG metropolitan area, due to the concentration of many potentials in the form of demographic, economic, spatial and social resources has created a vast catchment zone (Figure. 2.3). The range of the MAG area's impact exceeds the Pomeranian Voivodeship boundaries and reaches the country eastern borders and beyond to Kaliningrad Oblast. The metropolis attracts a high number of visitors coming for various purposes, including use of services provided at the metropolitan level.

**Figure 2.3**  
**Gravity zones of the Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot**



Source: based on the Strategy of the Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot until 2030

In the national Foundation of the Union of Polish Metropolises MAG is represented by the Gdańsk city. As an association, the Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot actively participates in the work of the European URBACT network. The activities of the MAG association include participation in the RiConnect project, the main assumption of which is to develop an approach to the issue of sustainable mobility. The main objective of the project is to solve common problems in the area and to draw up integrated action plans for sustainable urban development. Metropolitan Area Gdańsk Gdynia Sopot has also participated in the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Program for 2014-2020, which supports integrated territorial development and cooperation for a more innovative, better accessible and a sustainable Baltic Sea region

### 3 Metropolitan governance structure and cooperation activities

#### 3.1 Institutional framework

The Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area (MAG) is governed by the MAG Association established voluntarily as bottom-up initiative by agreement between participating local self-governments (LAU1 and LAU2). The most important governing body of the Association is the General Assembly of Members, which includes all local government units associated in the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area. They are represented by their representatives - elected on the basis of resolutions of Councils of counties (LAU1) and cities (both LAU1 and LAU2) and communes (LAU2). The General Assembly of Members is convened at least once a year. The votes of the participants of the General Meeting of Members are equal. One vote is due both to the city of Gdańsk, which has a population of nearly half a million, and municipalities with a population of several thousand. The most important tasks of the General Assembly are following: adoption of the program of activities of the Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area, adoption and amendment of Association Charter (Rules of procedures), the selection of the Association's Board and the evaluation of its performance.

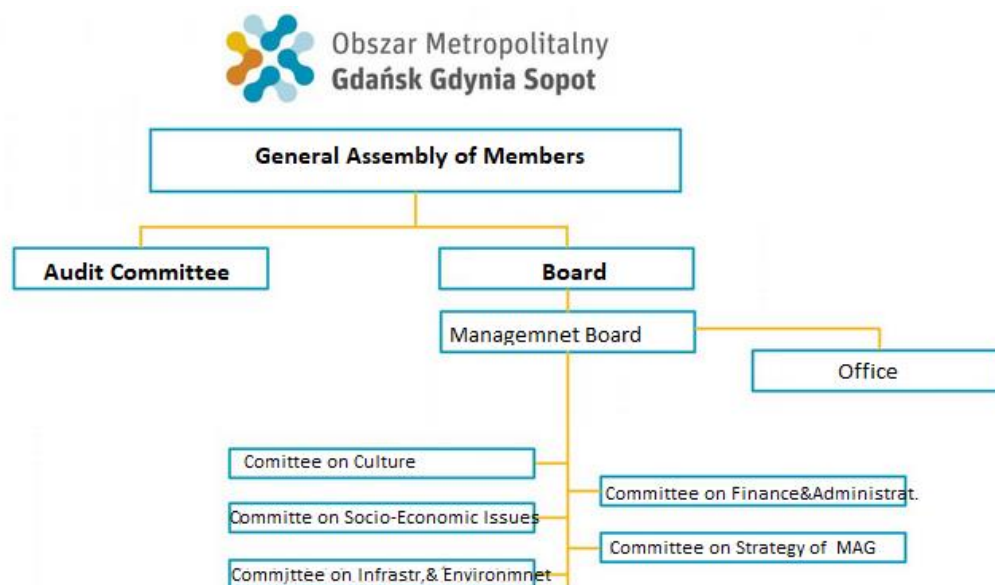
The Board sets out and verifies the strategic directions of development of the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area. Its term of office is equal to the term of office of local government authorities. The competences of the Board include election of members of the Management Board, approval of draft resolutions of the General Meeting of Members, including the draft annual budget. According to the Association's Charter, the Board consists of no more than twelve and no less than six members, including the Chair and two deputy chairs. In the Council, each county has its representative. Currently the Board is composed of following persons: Jacek Karnowski Chair of the Board – Mayor of *Sopot*, Wojciech Szczurek Deputy Chair of the Board – Mayor of *Gdynia*, Aleksandra Dulciewicz Deputy Chair of the Board – Mayor of *Gdańsk*, Gabriela Lisius member of the Board – Head of county *Wejherowski*, Jacek Michalski member of the Board – Mayor of *Nowy Dwór Gdański*, Mirosław Pobłocki member of the Board – Mayor of *Tczew*, Mirosław Jan Czapla member of the Board – Head of county *Malborski*, Marek Zimakowski member of the Board – Head of *Przywidz* municipality, Jarosław Białk member of the Board – Head of county *Pucki*, Bogdan Łapa member of the Board – Head of county *Kartuski*, Krzysztof Hildebrandt member of the Board – Mayor of *Wejherowo*, Alicja Zajęczkowska member of the Board – Head of county *Lęborski*. This is in strike contrast to the other metropolitan types of associations in Poland in which representatives of regional capital have a decisive vote. Moreover in MAG association chairmanship is executed on the rotation basis, so the first Chair was Mayor of Gdańsk, now it is Mayor of Sopot, next will be Mayor of Gdynia.

Practical work is performed by the Management Board which is the executive body of the Association. It manages its day-to-day activities and represents the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area outside. It is elected by the council to which it is responsible for its work. It consists of one to three people (currently the persons staff the Management Board). The competences of the Management Board include implementation of resolutions and other documents of the General Assembly of Members and the Council, preparation of the annual budget of the Association and management of its assets, implementation of the tasks of the Association of Integrated Territorial Investments, obtaining external funds and submitting reports on activities.

The Audit Committee is an internal control and supervision body in the Association, selected by its General Assembly. The resolutions of the Committee are adopted in the presence of at least three members of this body. According to the OMG-G-S Articles of Association, it consists of three to five members, including the Chairman and at least one Vice-Chairman. Currently it is staffed by three persons from the middle level of the local government officials.

The institutional framework is depicted at Figure 3.1

**Figure 3.1**  
**Institutional framework of the MAG**



Source: MAG website (<https://www.metropoliagdansk.pl/kim-jestesmy/wladze-omggs/>)

The work of the Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area is handled by committee meetings which focus on different themes. They discuss and implement specific projects such as the joint purchase of goods and services, introduction of metropolitan standards (i.e. for improving accessibility of handicapped persons) or the preparation of development plans and investment funds which cover several local authorities. A key element of cooperation is the exchange of experiences and good practice in the projects carried out by local governments, public procurement rules, financial discipline, etc. There are also supporting members (including municipal companies), with an advisory voice participating in the work of MAG Association.

Since February 2014, the office of the Association has acted as the headquarters of the Association of Integrated Territorial Investments, which is a new instrument for metropolitan cooperation.

Summing up institutionalisation of MAG one can conclude the following:

- MAG association is a volunteer co-operation of local governers (both LAU1 and 2 Level).
- It was established as a conscious decision of local governments around Gdynia and Gdańsk as a response to the growing needs of coordination of some activities beyond the administrative borders of LAU1 and LAU 2 (need of multi-level flexible governance), EU Cohesion facilitated its establishment by offering ITIs. Thus MAG should be considered mainly as a grass root establishment however with an important role of some top-down incentives.
- The Structure of MAG association is not considered among formal tiers of territorial administration in Poland, although MAG received an important role in implementation of the part of EU Cohesion Policy in terms of coordinating EU funds spending.
- The MAG authority is given by delegation of some functions to MAG bodies by the participating local governments
- MAG governance structure is based on the principle of equal footing.

### 3.1.1 Other forms of cooperation

In the area of MAG there are some other volunteer types of co-operation between local governments involved in MAG. They are built around important communal tasks that could be performed in a more efficient way in intermunicipal cooperation. Few examples of such cooperation are provided below. They use a legal frame of the inter-municipal unions - specific public law corporations established by municipal governments on the basis of the provisions of the Act of March 8, 1990 on municipal self-government (Journal of Laws of

2020, item 713), by way of agreements subsequently approved by resolutions of municipal councils, in order to establish joint performance of public tasks. The inter-municipal union has legal personality. In comparison to the association of municipalities the inter-municipal unions have clear focus on deliver of concrete public services on behalf of member municipalities. Associations are established on the basis of private law, why unions on the basis of public law.

The **Metropolitan Union of Public Transport of the Gulf of Gdańsk (MZKZG)** was entered into the Register of Inter-municipal Unions on June 5, 2007. MZKZG with its seat in the city of Gdańsk was created by: the cities of Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot, Pruszcz Gdański, Wejherowo, Rumia, Reda and municipalities of Pruszcz Gdański, Luzino, Kolbudy, Kosakowo, Szemud, Żukowo. The union has legal personality and performs public tasks on its own behalf and under its own responsibility. Supervision over the Union in terms of legality is exercised by the Prime Minister and the Pomeranian Governor. Supervision and financial control is exercised by the Regional Audit Chamber in Gdańsk. The task of the Union is to shape a common communication policy and to ensure the conditions for the proper functioning of the integrated ticket system in the form of a metropolitan ticket, which includes in particular:

- issuing and distributing metropolitan tickets,
- adopting prices and tariffs for metropolitan tickets,
- undertaking cooperation with relevant organizers, operators, carriers regarding the introduction and operation of metropolitan tickets in public transport, including by integrating toll collection systems in the context of the operation of metropolitan tickets,
- settlement of revenues from metropolitan tickets,
- market research, forecasting and planning of public transport in the context of the functioning of metropolitan tickets,
- promoting public transport in the context of the functioning of metropolitan tickets.

The Figure 3.2 presents the spatial coverage of the MZKZG

**Figure 3.2**  
**Spatial coverage of the MZKZG**



Source: MZKZG website (<https://mzkzg.org/o-mzkzg>)

The Assembly of the Union is a key decision-making and controlling body of the Metropolitan Union of Public Transport of the Gulf of Gdańsk. The Assembly consists of presidents, mayors and commune heads of communes - as statutory representatives of the members of the Association and additional representatives of communes, whose representation depends on the number of inhabitants of a given commune. Additional members of the Assembly representing the members of the Union in the Assembly are elected by the council of a given commune. The Assembly elects the Chairman of the Assembly. The term of office of the Chairman is one year. Each year, the duty of Chairman of the Assembly is performed by a representative of another commune.

The **Communal Union of Municipalities „Dolina Redy i Chylonki”** (Chylonka and Reda valley) was established in 1991 on the basis of the Act on local self-governments as an inter-municipal union. The Union's Charter defines the key areas of activity, i.e. ensuring water supply and sewage collection, waste treatment in member cities and municipalities, central heating systems, waste management including municipal waste treatment, maintaining order and cleanliness, environmental protection (atmospheric air, soils, forests, underground and surface water), providing environmental related information and environmental education for the local community in areas covered by the Union's activity. The Union performs public duties on behalf of municipalities and coordinates operations. It is here that strategies are developed, controversies discussed and union act as the platform for mutual understanding. The area of Union's activity covers following cities: Gdynia, Reda, Rumia, Wejherowo, Sopot, and municipalities Kosakowo, Wejherowo, Szemud. The governing bodies of the Union are the Assembly and the Board. The assembly consists of 19 representatives delegated by municipal councils - Gdynia has five votes, each of the other municipalities two. The Assembly has powers that determine the Union's budget, contributions from communes, and the KZG's program of operation. The chairmen of the Assembly are representatives of subsequent communes.

All these initiative are only loosely related to the activities of the MAG, although for instance MAG strives to participate and play an active role in integration of the public transport in the metropolitan area (undertakes some initiatives on that). In general various form of co-operation between local governments are run in parallel and they are mainly linked by the same persons participating in them.

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Tripolar character of the metropolis (three large entities in terms of budget and personality leadership)
  - Voluntary character of co-operation (co-operation based on private law)
  - Lack of a political leader of the metropolis 100% committed to metropolitan affairs
  - Domination of local authorities (limited room for the actors without clear jurisdiction)
- 

### 3.2 Evolution of metropolitan cooperation

The debate on metropolisation in Pomorskie region has started in 90s. There were several proposals concerning the tasks of a new metropolitan body. The following issues were proposed most vigorously: public transport integration, coordination of spatial planning, environmental protection, promotion of the metropolitan area, preparation of the joint development strategy. In this context it was proposed to form the Gdańsk Metropolitan Group. The discussions continued in the entire first decade of the current century but they were widened by encompassing also business and research sector. In 2003 Metropolitan Council of the Gulf of Gdansk was established as an informal body working on integration of the public transport in the metropolitan area. This informal Council was composed of representatives of local and regional governments. Then the "Tri-City Manifesto" was revealed in 2005. The document urged to launch a very wide public debate on creation of the Tri-city metropolis, since without which the Tri-city development would slow –down. There was a clear plea in this document for a strong institutionalized government of the Tri-city metropolis. As the result the Social Committee for the Tri-City Metropolis was established with participation of business and science representatives. The article "Seven Deadly Sins of the Tri-City" by Jan Grzechowiak, published in "Gazeta Wyborcza Trójmiasto" triggered another metropolitan debate, which culminated in the development of the "Tri-City Charter" by GW and its signing on March 28, 2007 by the presidents of Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot and the Marshal Pomeranian Region. The authors of the "Charter" indicated ten tasks to be carried out. For

example: a joint public transport ticket, creating a joint calendar of cultural events, building a Tri-City network of bicycle paths, joint promotion of Tri-City's tourist attractions in Poland and abroad, and also jointly attracting new investments.

On 13 September 2011 under the leadership of Gdynia representatives of 15 municipalities from the northern part of Pomorskie Region launched the partnership agreement of "NORDA". The main aims of this partnership was promotion and implementation of the Northern Ring Road concept, jointly enhancement of tourism and education, coordinated promotional activities. The cooperation of North Pomeranian self-governments has been based on voluntary participation in systematically organized consultation meetings and has served to strengthen metropolitan ties of local self-governments. The Nord Forum is not an association of municipalities. It was created by a group of people who believe that joint effort sometimes gives better results than individual activities and who care about the successful development of their communes and counties. On April 2, 2012, in connection with the admission of new members to the Forum, the name of the Forum was changed to Metropolitan NORDA Forum of Mayors, Presidents and Heads of counties (23 altogether).

**Figure 3.3**  
**Norda**



Source: Norda Forum website ([http://www.nordaforum.pl/o\\_nas.html](http://www.nordaforum.pl/o_nas.html))

On 15 September 2011 Gdańsk Metropolitan Area Association was established. 29 local governments declared their willingness to belong to this association. In 2015 this association was merging with some self-governments from the Norda Forum (which is still continuing its activities) in order to form single body in Pomerania Region responsible for managing ITI. This gave birth to institutionalisation of metropolitan governance in Pomorskie Region and the name of association was changed into Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area Association.

**Figure 3.4**  
**Timeline of metropolitan cooperation**

<i>National level</i>	<i>Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot level</i>
<b>1990s</b>	General debate in Pomorkie region concerning the necessity of metropolitan area creation
<b>2003</b>	"Metropolitan Council of the Gulf of Gdańsk" – public transport integrating body
<b>2005</b>	"Tri-City Manifesto" calling for the creation of Tri-City metropolis
<b>2007</b>	Tri-City Charter" introduced
<b>2011</b>	Establishment of Gdańsk Metropolitan Area Association and partnership agreement of "NORDA"
<b>2015</b>	Establishment of the Metropolitan Area Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot (MAG)

Source: authors' elaboration

## Challenges and critical elements

- Building trust through common actions
- Strong leadership in core cities
- Limited administrative resources in comparison to the ambitions
- Lack of support for an idea of metropolitan governments at national level
- Still relatively weak cooperation culture and trust-deficits

## 3.3 Metropolitan development goals

The MAG Association have developed the following vision of MAG:

- MAG is a fully innovative metropolis in 2030 and that this innovation applies to virtually every sphere of life. MAG is a metropolis of social innovation, an important cultural centre on a national and European scale, be able to demonstrate innovative educational solutions, have an innovative economy, largely based on a strong, diverse sector of science and research.
- A sustainable metropolis is not only an area with a clean and safe natural environment, but also a rational spatial development, providing the basis for a further, sustainable increase in the quality of life of its inhabitants. It also means equal opportunities for the development of each of the municipalities and counties of MAG, using the potential of internal diversification and balancing the demographic structure.
- The basis for the metropolis' competitiveness will be its growing investment and settlement attractiveness, based on the high quality of the environment, economy and education of the inhabitants.

These factors will translate into market competitiveness, growth dynamics and attracting financial, intellectual and cultural capital throughout the metropolitan area.

This vision has been operationalised with following targets with 2030 as a time horizon. In 2030 MAG is:

- the third economic urban centre of the country; with 1.5 million inhabitants, who identify strongly with their place of residence and local community;
- a metropolis attractive to visitors, including foreigners;
- the largest Baltic port complex and logistics hub;
- a business centre dominating in the region, connecting the Nordic and Central European markets;
- a metropolis with a coordinated spatial planning system;
- the largest leisure and tourism centre in the Baltic Sea region;
- a metropolis leading in the quality and availability of public services in Poland;
- a metropolis with perfectly integrated public transport;
- a national leader in the use of active mobility and multimodal solutions;
- a model place for social dialogue for Poland.

The Strategy adopted by MAG specifies the strategic goal for the association which is to create mechanisms to strengthen the cohesion of the Metropolis by coordinating activities, cross-sectoral cooperation and obtaining compromise solutions for better development of each of the entities forming the Metropolis. This is a general goal but underlines importance of coordination of activities of local governments within metropolitan area

### 3.3.1 Coherence with national and regional goals

The MAG vision of establishment of strong and vibrant economy was in line with Polish National Spatial Development Concept (KPZK 2030) which put emphasis on strengthening role of the largest urban regions in Poland as vehicles for national development and improving Polish competitive position at European and global scale. Unfortunately this strategy was abolished last year. Currently Poland does not pose any long-term guiding strategic document. There is only medium term strategy i.e. Strategy for Responsible Development. In this document stipulates as an overriding objective "creation of conditions for increasing incomes earned by the Poles, along with simultaneous increase in social, economic, environmental and territorial cohesion". Such a formulation does not oppose an idea of formation of strong metropolitan areas but the practical implementation of this strategy shows that the emphasis is put rather on diminishing disparities which in practice leads to increasing concentration of the regional policy on problem areas.

Strategy for Responsible Development points also "implementation of the metropolitan union act in the Śląskie Voivodeship and intensification of work on the regulation of issues related to the creation of metropolitan unions". After 2020, discussed Strategy, is proposing also "implementing, based on the experience related to the functioning of the Metropolitan Union Act in the Silesian Voivodeship, legal solutions for the functioning of metropolitan areas ". These declarations are of the critical meaning for the future of MAG association.

In this strategy key fields of activities of the urban policy of Poland with regard to Polish agglomeration have been specified as following:

- supporting cooperation and coordination of pro-development activities in functional areas of agglomerations that include both urban and rural administrative areas,
- supporting the implementation of municipal low-carbon strategies with public and private partners and ITI strategies, which are fundamental to the objectives set out in the Strategy in the field of reindustrialisation, electromobility, environmental protection and creating conditions for attracting advanced product investments (zero-emission public transport, efficiency energy, cooperation between science and enterprises, etc.),
- rational urbanization in metropolitan areas of cities, which requires the introduction of appropriate legal mechanisms and deepening cooperation between local governments within the functional area, in terms of planning joint investment, expansion and modernization of transport networks,

spatial planning, including land-use policies regulating use of land for various forms of development, economic uses, and land protection, and accessibility to services (schools, kindergartens, public transport, etc.),

- the reuse of brownfields, which is of particular importance in cities with existing (or existed) traditional industries such as mining coal, metallurgy, chemical industry, etc.,
- supporting the creation of network connections on a national and international scale and functional connections between cities with complementary resources or a complementary social and economic structures, e.g. Warsaw-Łódź, Kraków-Upper Silesian Conurbation, Tricity

Similar motives one can find in National Strategy for Regional Development (NSRD 2030). The strategy is the basic strategic document of the state's regional policy until 2030. This strategy is a set of common values, principles of cooperation between the government and local governments as well as social and economic partners for the development of the country and regions. The document defines the systemic framework for conducting regional policy both by the government towards the regions and within the regions. NSRD 2030 places emphasis on the balanced development of the entire country, i.e. reducing disproportions in the level of socio-economic development of various areas, mainly urban and rural. The strategy provides for a more effective identification of the development needs of all areas of the country, as well as a more effective recognition of resources at their disposal, and an indication of development challenges and barriers. Such an approach will translate into a better adjustment of intervention tools (e.g. programs) to the development possibilities and potentials of individual areas of the country. One of the objectives of the NSRD is to ensure greater cohesion in Poland by supporting economically weaker areas. According to NRDS 2030 previous support for metropolises has contributed to deepening the differences between cities and their less developed surroundings. Hence, NRDS is not intended to supporting the development of bigger agglomerations and metropolitan areas. The document indicates that the areas of strategic intervention (ASI) that will receive special support will be areas at risk of permanent marginalization, medium-sized cities losing their socio-economic functions, and others

The goals of MAG partially fit into the national goals in particular in terms of coordination of pro-development activities. The same is true for the MAG ambitions related to the spatial development. However, the general emphasis and focus of national and MAG goals differ. MAG goals seem much more growth oriented whereas national strategy is more on lowering various tensions. The strategy of the Pomorskie Region till 2020 treats the Tri-City Metropolitan Area as one of key assets of the region as one of the leading development centres of Poland and the Baltic Sea Region and gaining importance international transport and logistics hub. It also acknowledges insufficient cooperation and coordination of development initiatives in the Tricity Metropolitan Area as a noticeable weakness of the regional development. However, in practice it designs the role of the MAG mainly as development engine of the region. Thus a MAG is treated as a kind of territory at which economies of agglomeration in natural way enhanced the business sector productivity, result in formation of high-quality human capital etc. There is no word in this document on the practical ways of strengthening of metropolitan governance. However, Integrated Territorial Agreements have been being introduced, i.e. mechanisms of dialogue between the region and functional areas (including the METRO area). The necessity to conclude them means that individual subregional Functional Areas (including MAG) have to build their institutional capacity (as did the MAG in the case of ITI). In the new strategy (to be approved in March 2021) metropolitan sub-region was delimited as a unit of analysis and addressed with a policy interventions. However, the MAG goals have not been analysed and MAG institutionalization has not been indicated as a strategic goal of the region.

Summing up one can see limited coherence between the metropolitan development goals and the development goals defined at the national level. Better coherence one can notice between regional goals and metropolitan ones. However, a key problem is that both at national and regional level metropolises are seen as a kind of a black-box, machinery for production of wealth and wellbeing without acknowledging needs for supporting their internal functioning, e.g. creation of metropolitan institutional structures and taking into consideration practical representation of metropolitan interests in a development dialogue.

### 3.3.2 Coherence with municipal goals

In Poland municipalities have not been obliged to produce strategies of their socio-economic development. This responsibility was imposed on them only in November 2020. But many of them had been doing that even prior to this date for their internal purposes. In particular as a rule large cities try to compile such documents specifying their development path usually in ten years horizon. The table 3.XZZZ presents an

overview of the development visions or overarching strategic goals for the largest cities in the MAG plus few examples for towns and townships.

**Table 3.1**

**Overview of the development visions or overarching strategic goals for the largest cities in the MAG and selected towns and townships**

City.town.town-ship	Time horizon	Vision or strategic goal(s)
Pruszcz Gdański municipality	2018 – 2020+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further development of the road infrastructure in the commune</li> <li>• Increasing the involvement of residents in the life of the commune</li> <li>• Improving the quality of public services and offers for various social groups</li> <li>• Institutional development of the commune and good administrative services</li> </ul>
Pruszcz Gdański town	2020-2030	In 2030, Pruszcz Gdański will be an attractive, modern city with a strong supra-local importance, where sustainable economic development is important, as well as the management of public spaces based on the values associated with a high level of local identity. The inhabitants of the city form a community that is open, committed, active and attached to the tradition and history of the region.
Kartuzy county	2016-40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapting education to changing challenges.</li> <li>• Improving the quality of the county's space in a sustainable and sustainable manner</li> <li>• Improving spatial accessibility for the largest possible group of users</li> </ul>
Malbork FUA	2014-20	<p>The Municipal Functional Area of Malbork in 2020 is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An internally integrated area with a unique all-year-round tourist offer on a national scale;</li> <li>• An attractive place for investors;</li> <li>• A sub-regional educational centre with an offer tailored to the needs of the local labour market;</li> <li>• The area of creative and entrepreneurial residents, involved in the socio-economic life of functionally related local governments;</li> <li>• An area with a rich cultural, sports and recreational offer;</li> <li>• An area with a clean environment in terms of communication and technology.</li> </ul>
Puck municipality	2015-25	<p>Vision: Puck as a port/hub of innovation</p> <p>Strategic goals: 1. Social and economic cohesion 2. Sustainable spatial development 3. Puck as a tourist brand</p>
Town of Reda	2020-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I live and work in Reda. " Increase in the number of jobs and competitiveness of the local economy.</li> <li>• "Reda ... with a green perspective" Ensuring the sustainable development of urban space and protection of the natural environment</li> <li>• "There is a place for everyone in Reda." Improving the quality of life of inhabitants and strengthening the civil society</li> </ul>
Town of Rumia	2020-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening the economic potential of Rumia.</li> <li>• Improving the quality of life and living conditions of the inhabitants of Rumia.</li> </ul>

City.town.town-ship	Time horizon	Vision or strategic goal(s)
City of Wejherowo	2012–2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of new and repair of existing city roads.</li> <li>• Modernization of the main transport connections.</li> <li>• Creation of conditions for the development of commercial service and production activities.</li> <li>• Development of business based on tourism.</li> <li>• Increase of the attractiveness of the social offer.</li> <li>• Improvement of living conditions of inhabitants.</li> <li>• Orderly and attractive spatial development of the city.</li> <li>• Protection of the natural environment.</li> </ul>
Town of Lebork	2015-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating favourable and flexible conditions for the development of entrepreneurship.</li> <li>• Creating conditions for the creation of new jobs and for reducing the effects of unemployment.</li> <li>• Creating an encouraging settlement offer for new residents and the development of the transport intensive services as well as the location of investors searching for good transport connections.</li> </ul>
City of Tczew	2019-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing economic growth.</li> <li>• Strengthening essential city zones.</li> <li>• Strengthening the transport system.</li> <li>• Increasing the quality of housing and public services.</li> <li>• Enhancing development of a civic society</li> </ul>
City of Sopot	2014 – 2020	<p>Sopot is a resort - a place where we want to live, work, create, actively spend time and relax.</p> <p>Important element of that vision is taking part in the process of creation of the metropolis</p>
City of Gdynia	2020-30	<p>A modern city with a very high quality of life in the country and Europe, taking full advantage of the potential of its location</p> <p>Important element of that vision is that Gdynia is a dynamic centre that participate in formation of a metropolitan area</p>
City of Gdańsk	2014-30	<p>Gdańsk is a city gathering and attracting what is most valuable – people who are proud of their heritage, community spirited, open-minded, creative, developing and jointly shaping their future.</p> <p><i>The strategy states: that one of the greatest opportunities in terms of the whole Pomeranian region's development is the process of metropolisation.</i></p>

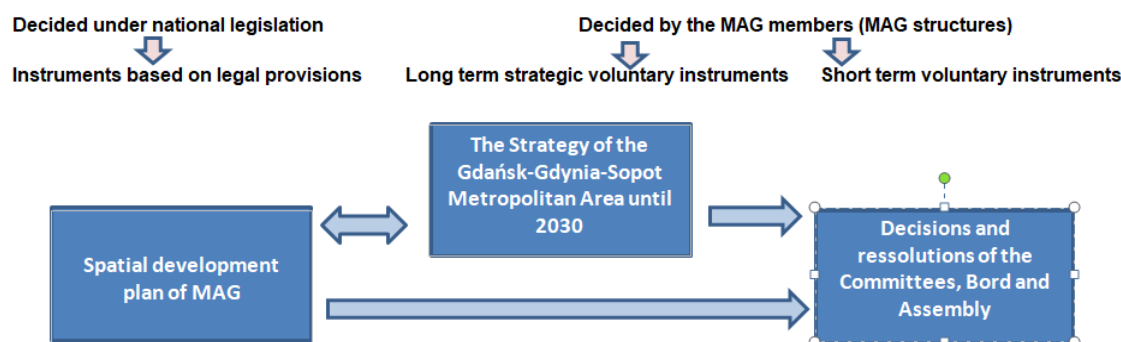
Source: authors' elaboration

The comparison of goals and visions provided in the table shows that the goals of MAG are compatible mainly with strategic considerations of the cities forming core of the MAG area. In their strategic documents process of formation of metropolis is directly mentioned. Moreover, their visionary statements are very close to the vision of MAG. This is not necessarily the case for the towns and cities and municipalities from outside the core of MAG. Majority of them underline need of good and reliable connection to the core so the transport seem a natural common field of co-operation between MAG members. In many strategies also environmental concerns are visible and underlined. Thus climate change and green connectivity might be an important topic for metropolitan co-operation. However, in many strategies one can also see clear attempts of building local competitive position in opposition to (or without cooperation with) the other MAG partners i.e. attempts to attract new inhabitants (usually from the core). Thus it seems that these local government from outside the core might demonstrate very selective approach to the metropolitan governance searching for benefits for their own residents while restricting resource sharing.

The main coordination mechanism is the MAG strategy and the MAG spatial plan. The first document was adopted by the MAG General Assembly and prepared on the MAG initiative. The second document was prepared and adopted by the regional authorities of the Pomerania Region with active involvement of MAG members. In particular spatial planning offices from Gdynia and Gdańsk were involved in this exercise. Also other regional strategic documents like Strategy for the Pomerania Region or Regional Operational Programme and Regional Strategic Policies play similar role although involvement of MAG structures in their elaboration was limited. However, MAG members participated in their elaboration together with other local governments from the Pomorskie Region. These documents can be seen as indirect vehicles of coordination metropolitan and local goals and are detailed below.

**Figure 3.5**

**Coordination mechanisms between the metropolitan development goals and the framework of national, regional and municipal goals**



Source: authors' elaboration

## Challenges and critical elements

- Weak position of metropolitan level in setting up development goals at national, regional and local level
- Lack of formal mechanisms for agreeing metropolitan goals and national regional and local goals and very limited discussions regarding this issue
- Coherence between metropolitan development goals and goals of MAG members evident mainly for the core cities
- Lack of coherent and regularly updated knowledge-base on the METRO area development and trends
- Integrated Territorial Agreements supported MAG to build its institutional capacity

## 3.4 Metropolitan development and planning instruments

There are several metropolitan development and planning instruments run at the metropolitan level: strategies for development of MAG and the spatial development plan of MAG. The key and the leading document is the MAG development strategy until 2030. It was developed in an interactive process designed and run by the research entities under supervision of the MAG Board. Several business and academia (research) partners participated in this process in addition to the local and regional governments. First, expert draft of the strategy was compiled and it served as an input for the final drafting executed by the MAG Office. The Strategy was approved in 2015 by the MAG Assembly. It covers 15 years (its time horizon is the year 2030). The financing for its preparation was obtained under the project submitted and operated by the MAG Office: "INTIS. Integration and Synergy. Strategy of the Gdańsk Metropolitan Area for the years 2014-2030". The

project was implemented under the Program of the EEA Fund for Regional Cooperation 2009-2014 (The Fund is an initiative which supports regional cross-border and transnational projects. The EEA Grants are financed by the three donor countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway). The MAG when applying for the project was supported by the Union of Polish Cities and the Association of Polish Counties.

On the basis of the strategy, a declaration of cooperation was signed, which is an obligation to work together for the development of the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area. The signatories of the declaration are: Head of the Management Board of MAG and his vice-heads, Marshal of the Pomorskie Region (head of the regional self-government), Pomeranian Governor (representative of the national government in the region, Rector of the University of Gdańsk, Rector of Gdańsk technical University, Rector of the Gdańsk Medical University, President of the Pomeranian Employers' Organization, Chairman of the Pomeranian Council of NGOs.

The MAG strategic documents package until 2030 consists of three parts:

- Diagnosis - an in-depth analysis of the determinants of MAG development,
- Strategy 2030 - vision and goals of MAG,
- Action Plan - identification of tasks, methods of their implementation, time frames and levels of cooperation within the metropolis.

The Strategy of the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area until 2030 is a document programming long-term development, not intended to address the daily needs of MAG residents. The condition for this is high and stable growth dynamics of MAG which is a key motive of the strategy. The strategy identifies tasks that are important from the point of view of the entire metropolis. However, it omits those that are only valid for individual entities. The Strategy describes the assumptions on the basis of which the development directions were selected. It sets the vision, goals and directions for metropolitan cooperation. It is a tool enabling the coordination of activities in priority areas of cooperation.

Work is currently underway on the preparation of the MAG supralocal development strategy. However, this strategy is part of the ITI programming in the years 2021-27, therefore it will not be discussed here.

There are two other important strategies: The Transport and Mobility Strategy of the Metropolitan Area until 2030 together with the Low-Emission Plan. These documents address one of the most important MAG challenge of the development of MAG transport system.

The Transport and Mobility Strategy of the Metropolitan Area until 2030 sets goals and priority actions until 2030, taking into account local, regional, national and EU strategic documents regarding transport policy and socio-economic and spatial development. In the period until 2030, it is proposed to focus on two areas of intervention: external (A) and internal (B). The area of external intervention includes activities providing transport service to MAG in external connections supporting the development of the international node. Two strategic goals were formulated within this area. The area of external intervention includes activities ensuring the transport service of MAG in internal (inter-municipal) connections supporting the development of MAG as a functional area. Within this area, three strategic goals were formulated. The appendices to the strategy further detail and justify the transport projects indicated in the Integrated Territorial Investments Strategy for the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area until 2020. Moreover, the MAG Transport Development Program, defines the set of projects to be implemented in the 2014 financial perspective.

The Low-Emission Plan is a document of strategic importance. It indicates activities leading to the transformation of all sectors of the MAG economy. Along with the development of the Low-Emission Plan document, a basic inventory of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants was made, including the calculation of the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted as a result of energy consumption in the MAG area. Low-Emission Plans are promoted and co-financed by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, they strengthen activities to improve air quality and in this respect are complementary to similar-sounding Low Emission Reduction Programs. The Low-Emission Plan covers 31 MAG municipalities.

The spatial development plan for the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area 2030 is part of the spatial development plan for the Pomeranian Region. It was drawn up on the basis of Art. 39 sec. 6 of the Act of 27 March 2003 on spatial planning and development (i.e. Journal of Laws of 2015, item 199, as amended). It was adopted by a resolution of the Pomeranian Region Assembly of December 29, 2016. The spatial planning office of Gdynia and Gdańsk actively prepared in its participation.

The main purpose of preparing the spatial development plan for the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot 2030 Metropolitan Area, is to define a vision for the spatial development of the metropolitan area by 2030, desirable from the point of view of:

- 1) Long-term national development goals, defined in Long Term National Development Strategy 2030 and National Spatial Development Concept 2030;
- 2) Long-term development goals of the metropolitan area, defined in MAG Strategy 2030;
- 3) medium-term development goals of the region defined in the Pomorskie Development Strategy 2020.

The plan defines the vision of the spatial development of the metropolitan area (the desired functional and spatial structure) and the manner of its implementation by defining the spatial policy in the form of objectives and directions of the spatial development policy and the principles of spatial development relating to priority issues for its development. The objectives of drawing up the Plan were following:

- 1) The need to coordinate the activities of the regional, county and municipal self-governments in the field of supra-local investments, including metropolitan ones (including staging), affecting the spatial development of the area;
- 2) the need to create the basis for programming development on a metropolitan scale (formulating inputs/suggestions to the regional strategic programmes (RPSes), Territorial Contract, Integrated Territorial Investments in order to obtain funds more effectively under the Cohesion Policy in the current and future EU prospects).

The plan comprises of some bindings and guiding (non-binding) stipulations. The stipulations that are binding for communes in the preparation of their Studies on the conditions and directions of spatial development and local spatial development plans and the regional government when agreeing the drafts of these documents include, among others, stipulations regarding public purpose investments of supra-local importance.

In addition to these two aforesaid documents important role in coordinating metropolitan development is played by the decisions and resolutions of the MAG Committees or MAG Board. Example of the initiatives or projects undertaken on such basis are provided below. These projects, as a rule, are rather of coordinative nature and have not required substantive external financing.

MAG, as the only metropolis in Poland, introduced systemic solutions for foreigners included in the so-called Minimum Standard in Integration. The standard includes, among others professional support, legal advice, Polish language courses, as well as issues such as security, training for officials and the creation of county teams for migration. The minimum standard in integration is a set of basic tasks that are to help foreigners integrate in the best possible way in each of the MAG municipality/county.

In 2019, work was completed on the audit of the bicycle policy based on the BYPAD methodology in 14 municipalities implementing the metropolitan bicycle project. A 24-month action plan was developed for each of the municipalities, the implementation of which will improve the functioning of bicycle transport in such areas as: infrastructure and safety, human resources, information and education, and strategic documents. In parallel with the BYPAD audit, guidelines and recommendations were developed in the field of standards for the construction of bicycle infrastructure for local governments and MAG road managers i.e. a set of best practices in the field of creating a modern, safe and functional bicycle infrastructure. The standards support municipalities that do not have specialists in implementing the cycling policy.

MAG has developed a mobility development strategy adapted to the changing technological and social realities. Thanks to the cooperation with the European Commission and Polish central authorities, the Jaspers Initiative and CEUTP, the Sustainable Mobility Plan for metropolises was created.

In 2019, a metropolitan Working Group for the Metropolitan Strategy for People with Disabilities and Their Guardians was established. This is a team of 80 experts, including Plenipotentiaries for Persons with Disabilities that developed a minimum standard for people with disabilities. It is a collection of key principles to be implemented in all cities, communes and counties of the metropolis. As part of the group's work, good practices of local governments were presented. There were also study visits to institutions working for People with Disabilities, training for local officials to better understand the Accessibility Plus Act. Group has also developed recommendations and comments to documents regulating solutions for dependent persons at the regional and national level.

Since 2022 MAG will offer the expert support for functional areas of medium-sized cities losing their socio-economic functions. This is directly in line with the aims of the National Strategy of Regional Development 2030.

Besides the already mentioned regular Conference "Smart Metropolis", the MAG Board and MAG Office has organized numerous workshops and webinars supporting implementation of the MAG Strategy. Few examples are provided below:

- debate entitled Metropolitan Act as an opportunity for further development of Pomerania,
- cyclical workshops on the elaboration of the Electromobility Development Strategy;
- training on effective air quality monitoring;
- Workshops for the Metropolitan Subregional Working Group on the new Strategy of the Pomeranian Region 2030, on the environment and climate, culture and some others.

MAG was also involved in some URBACT INTERREG and Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund projects (e.g. Liquid Energy or RiConnect or European Platform of Integrating Cities). MAG continues to lobby for the Metropolitan Act for the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area.

Currently MAG is working on the Metropolitan Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (the working title). The document is designed as the diagnosis of existing situation and is planned to be prepared by September 2021. As part of its development, the local governments have been involved in collecting data on extreme weather / climate situations occurring in their area.

**Table 3.2**

**Main instruments at national, regional, metropolitan and local level**

Instrument	Level	Type	Statutory/mandatory	Binding/non-binding	Main Goals
MAG Strategy 2030	metropolitan	Strategy	Statutory but not mandatory	Non-binding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social development</li> <li>• Innovative and competitive economy</li> <li>• Sustainable space</li> </ul>
The Transport and Mobility Strategy of the MAG until 2030	metropolitan	Strategy	Statutory but not mandatory	Non-binding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A.1 Improving the transport accessibility of MAG</li> <li>• A.2 Improving the quality of transport infrastructure determining the availability of sea and airport ports in the TEN-T</li> <li>• B.1 Improving the efficiency of transport networks in OM</li> <li>• B.2 Improving public and non-motorized transport services</li> <li>• B.3 Reducing the negative effects of transport</li> </ul>
The Low-Emission Plan.	metropolitan	Operational plan	Statutory but not mandatory	Non-binding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions,</li> <li>• Increased share of renewable energy in the energy balance,</li> <li>• Reduction of final energy consumption by increasing energy efficiency,</li> <li>• Improving air quality.</li> </ul>
MAG spatial development plan	regional	Spatial plan	Statutory, mandatory	Partially binding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaping the structures of the settlement network according to the requirements of spatial order.</li> <li>• Shaping a high-quality housing environment.</li> </ul>

Instrument	Level	Type	Statutory/mandatory	Binding/non-binding	Main Goals
Resolutions and other decisions of the MAG Board and MAG Committees	Metropolitan	Decisions	Statutory but not mandatory	Non-binding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rationalization of the deployment and improvement of the accessibility of social infrastructure and public services in this scope.</li> <li>• Prevention and reduction of the effects of floods and other natural hazards.</li> <li>• Development of metropolitan functions.</li> <li>• Shaping spatial structures enabling the creation of new and permanent workplaces.</li> <li>• Strengthening the all-year attractive tourist offer based on natural and cultural resources and values, landscape and metropolitan functions.</li> <li>• Shaping a rational spatial structure of the transport network.</li> <li>• Increasing the degree of energy security and efficiency of the production, transmission and distribution systems of electric and heat energy, gas, oil and petroleum products.</li> <li>• Shaping spatial structures supporting the state's defence capacity.</li> <li>• Preserving and restoring natural environmental resources and its consistency.</li> <li>• Protection of areas with a characteristic cultural landscape or historical significance.</li> <li>• Reduction of emission of environmental pollutants.</li> <li>• In line with the specificity of the problem dealt</li> </ul>

Source: authors' elaboration

### 3.4.1 Instruments in the framework of other cooperation initiatives

The additional influencing directly development of MAG are the ones produced at regional level: i.e. Development Strategy of the Pomorskie Region, Pomorskie Regional Operational Programme (ROP) and the regional strategic programs (RPS) for harmonious operationalization of activities of the Strategy 2030 in its various thematic areas. MAG participate indirectly in preparation of this new Strategy 2030 mainly through its members, however it organised meetings and workshops for discussing draft document. The strategy acknowledges importance of the Pomeranian metropolis. For elaboration of the Strategy 2030 Subregional Working Groups were established. One of the sub-regions was the metropolitan sub-region, however, delimited not in line with the MAG area. Reports summarizing the work of each group identified development potentials and trends, indicated barriers and problems as well as priority actions in the perspective of 2030

for each subregion including the metropolitan one. The reports defined the proposed interventions directed in a special (priority) manner to subregions under the implementation of the Strategy. The same territorial typology will be used for the ROP under which ITI will be financed. This territorial approach will be taken into consideration also in RPSes. Out of the three mentioned above documents only ROP is directly related to the EU Cohesion Policy. Therefore only Strategy 2030 and RPSes are described in table 3.2. However, these two other documents are also EU Cohesion Policy driven.

**Table 3.3**  
**Other instruments**

Instrument	Level	Type	Statutory/man- datory	Binding/non- binding	Main Goals
Strategy 2030	regional	Strategy	Statutory and mandatory	Binding for re- gional govern- ment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lasting safety</li> <li>• open regional community</li> <li>• a resilient economy</li> </ul>
RPSes	regional	Sectorial pro- grammes	Statutory non mandatory	Binding for re- gional govern- ment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• economic re- vival and competitive- ness</li> <li>• sustainable tourism and cultural herit- age</li> <li>• stronger edu- cation sys- tem, robust labour mar- ket, active civil society</li> <li>• better health sector ser- vices</li> <li>• eco-efficient and green re- gion</li> <li>• better mobil- ity infrastruc- ture and ser- vices</li> </ul>

Source: authors' elaboration.

### 3.4.2 Instrument and initiatives related to COVID-19

The MAG has undertaken several initiatives related to covid. They were mainly "of a soft" i.e. promotional co-ordinating nature. There is no separate section concerning covid at the MAG website so it seems that these initiatives were taken at ad.hoc basis. Few examples are provided below:

- Nearly 45 thousand PLN was obtained by local entrepreneurs thanks to the "Half-price Metropolis" campaign. The inhabitants of Pomerania Region bought over 200 vouchers for services worth nearly 90 thousand. PLN. The Christmas edition of the action was organized by 58 MAG local governments to help the local tourism industry, which was in a tragic situation as a result of the

pandemic. The "Half-price Metropolis" campaign lasted from 11 to 20 December 2020. 17 companies applied for participation. These included hotels, tour guide companies, theatres, escape rooms etc.

- During the ZOOM ON CULTURE webinars in December 2020, there was a discussion about off-line cultural initiatives during the pandemic. The possibilities of operating in the sound space were discussed.
- MAG came out with the initiative of the #zamawiamBOWspieram! (#buyingTOSupprt). On the MAG websites, the inhabitants of the metropolis were encouraged to order any meal: dinner, soup, coffee, cake etc. take a photo and publish it on social media with the hashtag #zamawiamBOWspieram. The aim was to help local gastronomy survive the hard time of the pandemic, because the restaurants remained open only for delivery and takeaway during the first wave of the pandemic.
- Intervention measures have also been launched in connection with the corona virus under MAG Minimum Standard in Integration.
- At the MAG website a campaign #posilekdlaMedyka (#mealforddoctor) was promoted. MAG encouraged citizens of the metropolis to support this initiative by expressing gratitude to doctors, paramedics and nurses for their hard work. People were asked to donate PLN 16 to Bistro Dalba for preparing and delivering a meal to the hospital doctors on duty. Dalba Social Cooperative is a social business in which the majority of the staff are disabled people.
- MAG prepared a survey, the purpose of which is to investigate how cultural institutions, non-governmental organizations and artists function during an epidemic. The collected responses allowed the MAG Culture Committee to create a set of recommendations for local governments that aimed at facilitating the functioning of the cultural sector during the pandemic.
- MAG encouraged metropolitan residents to participate in a survey on how they deal with involuntary isolation related to corona virus. The survey was conducted by scientists from the Medical University of Gdańsk and the University of Gdańsk.

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## Challenges and critical elements

Challenges related to Covid:

- Ad hoc situational actions
- Lack of systematic approach
- Support for various sector suffering from lock-down
- Lack of strategic considerations

Challenges related to programming development

- Despite thorough planning only limited instruments in discretion of MAG
  - Good alignment of metropolitan and regional strategic goals
  - Limited correspondence between national and metropolitan development goals
  - Mosaic correspondence between metropolitan and local development goals depending on theme and type of the municipality
- 

### 3.5 Metropolitan financing and budgeting

The work of Association is covered from fees of its members. The General Assembly decides on the amount or mechanism of calculating membership fees. The MAG Board carries out matters related to obtaining external funds for the implementation of the Association's activities. The draft budget is prepared by the Management Board and approved by the Board. Permanent revenues (from fees) are sufficient to support functioning of the institutional structures of the MAG i.e. work of Committees and of the permanent Office. Working time of the Committee members is paid by the local governments they represent. In 2011, MAG budget was PLN 324 thousand. (Around EUR 73 thousand) and it came entirely as a donation from the Municipality of the City of Gdańsk. The first contributions were paid in 2012 by members of the Association and constituted 100% of MAG's income that year. The fees financing administration and MUF functioning

(basic fees) remained at stable level. MAG OFFICE employment financed through the fees does not exceed 10 permanent metropolitan officers. The rest of staff is employed on project basis. Association is applying for various project financed by EU that enables additional employment and implementation of some initiatives. The contribution to these project is covered by additional purpose oriented fees of MAG members.

The decisions on the spending are taken by the Management Board. Some other MAG activities are covered from other sources. For instance preparation of the MAG spatial development plan was covered by regional government which was obliged to do that by law. However Gdynia and Gdańsk also contributed to this by financing working time of their officers employed in municipal planning offices. There is no specific budget dedicated to react to the COVID-19 emergency.

Since 2014, the Association has acted as the IB for Pomorskie Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 responsible for ITI implementation (this part of the Association's activities is covered by the OP Technical Assistance Programme). Since 2015, the MAG Office therefore has been allowed for the support for ITI associations financed from the Technical Assistance Operational Program. For instance in 2019, the subsidy amounted to PLN 1.97 million, of which following was financed

- 12 salaries of MAG officers,
- 13 training courses for ITI beneficiaries,
- 89 meetings, incl. thematic committees (27), the Board (10), General Assemblies (3),
- 39 duty trips of MAG officers to national conferences and foreign study visits
- expert opinions and analyses (including the establishment of the MZT, energy audit, bicycle policy audit in 14 municipalities - BYPAD, GDPR regulations and analysis of expenditure in public procurement in local governments of metropolis)

A large part of the ITI related funds was allocated to the functioning of the office (rent, IT support, services postal and courier services, repair of office equipment, office supplies, website).

Summing up, the structure of revenues of MAG association in 2011-2018 was dominated by subsidies from external funds amounting PLN 38 million. Membership fees (basic and for own contribution to the project) amounted PLN 11.5 million in total. Together, both components accounted for 94% of the Association's revenues. The amount of donations from supporting members amounted to approx. PLN 2 million, which constitutes 5% of all revenues. Nearly 1% of revenues were revenues from financial instruments such as interest from banks or budget savings from previous years. Since 2011, the budget of the Association has increased more than tenfold, despite the maintenance of the basic membership fees at a similar level.

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Very moderate permanent financing based on discretionary decisions of the Assembly
  - Project based budgeting
  - Understaffing as a result
- 

## 3.6 Role of social groups and the business community in metropolitan governance

The role and participation of social groups and the business community in metropolitan governance is limited. MAG full membership is reserved for local governments. These groups seem very proud and happy of emerging the MAG initiative, but their formal role is limited. Several local businesses, business supporting structures and local University are supporting members of MAG. Majority of them however are owned by local governments forming MAG. Supporting member of the Association: determines the form and type of support for the Association with the Management Board of the Association, does not have passive and active voting rights but can participate in meetings of the Association's authorities in an advisory capacity. Such a member is obliged to provide the declared support, comply with the Association Charter and resolutions of the Association's authorities. The following entities have acquired the status of the supporting member: Gdańsk Water and Sewage Infrastructure Company, Saur Neptun Gdańsk Company, Zakład Utylizacyjny

Company in Gdansk, Energa Company, MZK Wejherowo, Gdańsk Foundation of Entrepreneurship, Lech Wałęsa Airport, Olivia Business Centre, Gdańskie Przedsiębiorstwo Energetyki Ciepłej Company, University of Gdansk, Rumia Invest Park Company, Clean Energy Port. The other business actors the most actively collaborating and involved in MAG activity without holding the status of supporting member are Pomeranian Employers Association, Pomeranian Chamber of Commerce. The social actors are not particularly present in the OMGGS policy realisation.

### 3.6.1 Social groups and the civil society

Civil society involvement is limited to participation in the events organised by MAG structure such as the Congress "Smart Metropolis". This is the largest annual congress in Poland devoted to the issues of cooperation between large and small municipalities in metropolitan areas and the relationship between metropolises and the rest of the country. The following topics were discussed during various congresses: smart cities, social policy, free time, security, urban development, European policy towards metropolises and the climate crisis. There is also a group of scientists working closely with the MAG. For instance they have compiled, signed the letter to the members of the Polish Parliament (the letter was sent by MAG office) urging them to continue their work on providing a legal framework for granting MAG similar legal status as the Silesian metropolis. Also general public is involved in the MAG projects. E.g. when planning Metropolitan Bike project there were also meetings with residents, as an element of involving the society in the planning of MAG activities. Within the MAG statutory Committee on Socio-Economic Issues there are groups for the integration of immigrants and immigrant women, the Metropolitan Labour Market, local purchasing, education, entrepreneurship, civic budget and activities for people with disabilities and their environment. The Committee constantly cooperates with representatives of local governments, as well as with business and non-governmental organizations.

### 3.6.2 Business community

The representatives of the business sector underline importance of the existence of metropolis for running their businesses. So they are very pleased with this process and support it at least verbally. Business sector participated in preparation of the MAG strategy. MAG officers frequently underline importance of the metropolitan business sector for smooth and innovative driven development of metropolis. Since the first wave of pandemic MAG structure has offered a soft forms of support to the metropolitan businesses. The "Dobra Robota" ("Well done") Social Economy Support Centre, operating within the OMGGS, cooperates with the Staff of Pomeranian Entrepreneurs gathering the largest business organizations, in formulating joint appeals and positions. Pomeranian economic self-government organizations, together with the presidents and mayors of MAG, summarized the actions to counteract the effects of the corona virus pandemic, which are severely felt by the business community. OMGGS also supports the tourism industry. Research considering the condition of metropolitan tourists companies were conducted after the first wave of pandemic, which helped to develop new forms of business support, including "Half Metropolis" promote service in December 2020. The offer of companies from the Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area were presented at MAG website. The citizens were urged to buy vouchers for their product by informing about very difficult economic situation of hotels, theatres and tourist facilities. The following slogan underpinned the whole undertaking: "For entrepreneurs it is an opportunity to raise funds for functioning, for you - an opportunity to get to know the Metropolis or an idea for a Christmas gift for your loved ones. As it was already indicated the MAG statutory Committee on Socio-Economic Issues cooperates with representatives of local business."

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Bias towards regional governments (public authorities) in the MAG structures
  - Resource limitations hampering broader co-operation of metropolitan institutions with the representatives of the civic society and business sector
  - Focus on implementation of ITIs
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## 3.7 Participation to policy networks

MAG structure does not participate directly in policy networks such as Euroregion Bałtyk, Regional Assembly, Association of Polish Cities, Union of the Baltic Cities, Union of maritime cities and communities Poland.

MAG does not even participate in The Union of Polish Metropolises and is not the member of Metropolitan Union of Public Transport of the Gulf of Gdańsk. The main reason is “informal” character of MAG structures (based on private law) and lack of legal basis for such participation. Another reason is financial and human constraint since the number of MAG officers is very limited. Many of them has not a permanent employment contract (they work on project basis). So in fact MAG is quasi represented in the policy process by the MAG partners who speak mainly on behalf of their local governments but voluntarily can also present MAG opinions and suggestions. This depends on their actual commitment to the idea of metropolisation.

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Weak legal position of metropolises in Poland with exception of the Silesian Metropolis.
  - Understaffing of MAG structures
  - Limited discretionary (non-project based) budget of MAG.
  - Very focused use of the support of policy networks for key MAG priorities (e.g. obtaining funds for elaboration of MAG Strategy 2030)
- 

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establishment of a legal basis for MAG functioning as an intermediary between local and regional governments.
- Increasing financial allocations for functioning of metropolitan institutions.
- Much more active involvement in the programming phase (at regional / national level). Closer cooperation with other METRO areas in Poland on that.
- Taking the role of „creator” rather than „administrator” of Cohesion Policy money flows.
- Serving – together with other METRO areas in Poland – as national frontrunner promoting / testing innovative approaches to efficient ESIF spending (through e.g. financial instruments, PPPs, crowdfunding, etc.)
- Engaging important METRO actors, such as universities, bigger tax-payers, key infrastructure / service providers (e.g. seaports), NGOs
- Including the most complex, systemic and long-term challenges on board (climate crisis, life digitalisation, population ageing, etc.) into development policy agenda.

## 4 Cohesion policy governance

### 4.1 EU cohesion policy institutional architecture and competences

The Minister of Funds and Regional Policy is responsible for the EU cohesion policy in Poland. In Poland implementation of CP is broken down into two main levels: the national level system and the regional systems. EU funding for project implementation is appropriately divided between the national fund distributed by the Ministry and the 16 regional funds distributed by the Marshals of regions. Marshal offices of regions distributes the CP funds to the municipal and rural communes of the particular region through project competitions designed according to EU policy aims and main objectives of regional development strategies. The architecture of EU Cohesion policy implementation in Poland stands behind the successful regional development of the country and strong, highly trained and highly operational regional management bodies (Regional Operational Program Managing Authority (MA of the ROP).

In the programming period 2014-2020 Poland has obtained 82.5 billion Euro and managed six national Operational Programmes (OPs) and 16 regional programmes (one for each region with a budget from 0.9 up till 3.5 billion Euro each)

- The **OP Infrastructure & Environment** enhancing energy efficiency and transformation towards low-carbon economy (27.4 billion Euro);
- The OP **Smart Development** supporting private sector research and development (8.6 billion Euro);
- The OP **Knowledge, Education & Development** improving the quality and efficiency of the Polish higher education system, labour market functioning and social inclusion (5.4 billion Euro);
- The OP **Digital Poland** dedicated to ICT projects, broadband networks and e-services (2.2 billion Euro);
- The OP **Eastern Poland** focusing on development of lagging behind regions in Eastern Poland (2.0 billion Euro);
- The OP **Technical Assistance** for the smooth implementation of structural and investment funds in Poland;
- The 16 **Regional Operational Programmes** (ROPs) financing regional actions complementary to the ones financed under national programmes. Their focus was mainly on promotion of entrepreneurship, education, employment, social inclusion, ICT, infrastructure, environment, energy and transport.

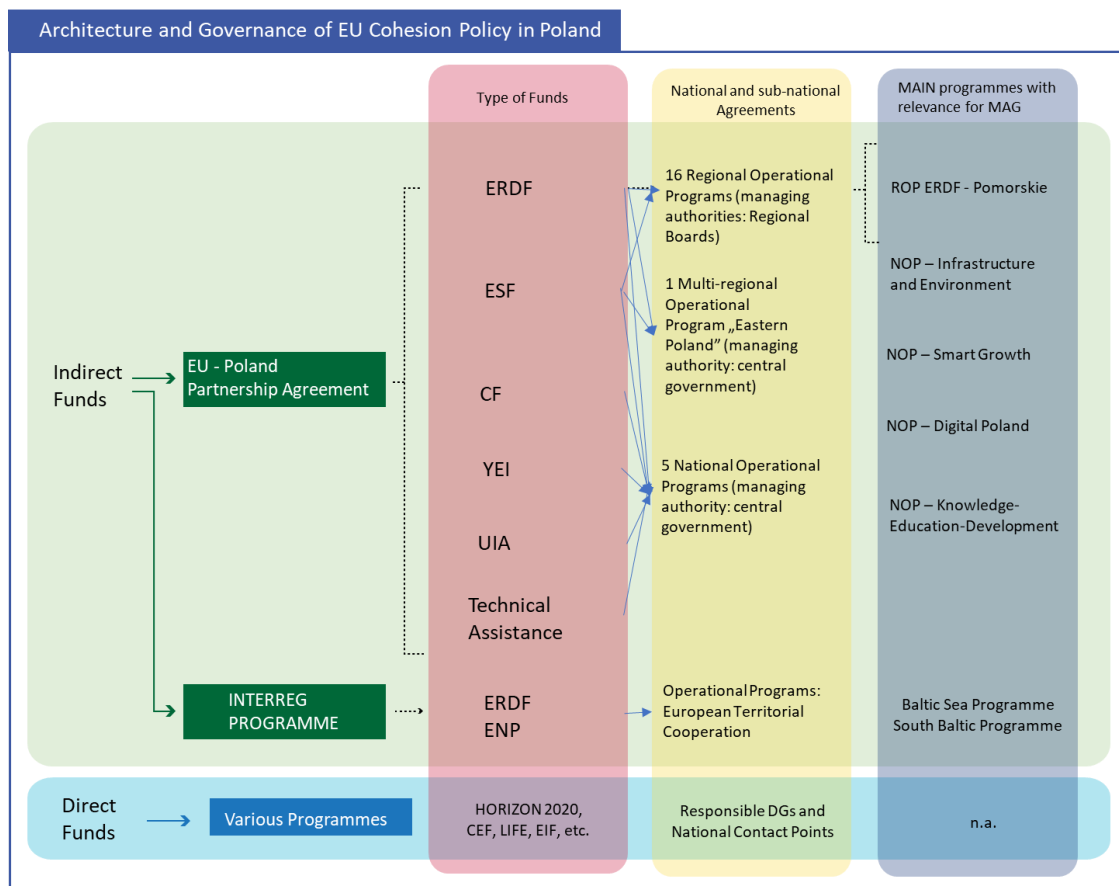
Thus the characteristic features of the CP in Poland are decentralisation, orientation on alleviation of the basic development problems (infrastructure, protection of environment) and relatively large magnitude (ESI funds as a main source of public investments in the country and main driver of its modernisation).

In the next funding period, the allocations envisaged for CP are lower (at least by 10 bln of Euro). They will be used for:

- further innovating and modernizing Polish economy;
- facilitating transition towards green and low-carbon economy;
- investing in honing skills so as to maintain competitiveness and cohesion.

These objectives are in line with the five main objectives of the Cohesion Policy after 2020, namely Smarter Europe; Greener, Carbon free Europe; Connected Europe; Social Europe and Europe closer to citizens. At least some of them might be seen as promising from the perspective of metropolitan areas.

**Figure 4.1**  
**The governance of the EU Cohesion policy in Poland**



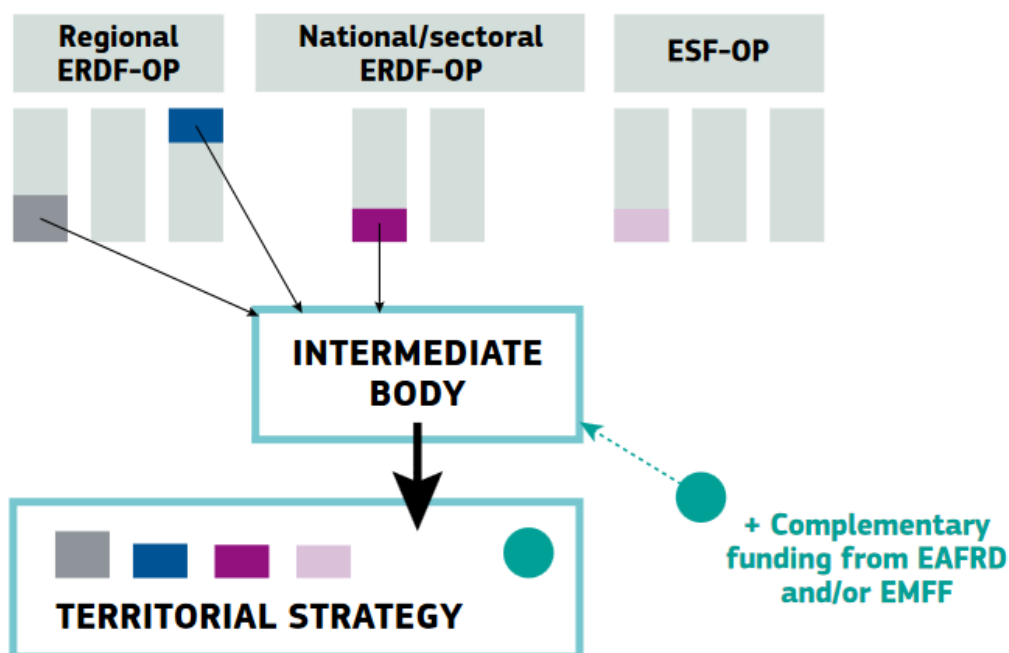
Source: authors' elaboration

#### 4.1.1 The role of metropolitan actors

In Poland, all but one metropolitan areas are not legally recognised territorial units. The one exception is The Metropolis of Upper Silesia and Zagłębie which was established on the basis of the dedicated to it Metropolitan Act in 2017. For this reason, there were no metropolitan institutions that could participate in programming the cohesion policy in Poland. Local self-governments are considered mainly as final beneficiaries (see Figure 4.2).

However, in the recent financial perspective the metropolitan actors were endowed with some more prominent role in administration of the part of EU Structural funds financing integrated territorial investments (ITI). The integrated territorial investments allows EU Member States to combine investments from several priority axes of one or more Operational Programmes for the purposes of multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral intervention. ITI is a tool to implement territorial strategies in an integrated way. It is not an operation, nor a sub-priority of an Operational Programme. They can involve investments from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and Cohesion Fund. The funding can be complemented with support from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) or the European Maritime and Fisheries Funds (EMFF). It is not compulsory to combine all Funds in each ITI. The Managing Authority of the Operational Programme bears the final responsibility for managing and implementing the operations of an ITI. However, it may designate intermediary bodies, including local authorities, regional development bodies or non-governmental organisations, to carry out some or all of the management and implementation tasks. The form and degree of the ITI management delegation may vary according to the administrative arrangements of the Member State or region. If ITI implements integrated actions for sustainable urban development (Article 7 of the ERDF regulation) delegation to urban authorities of tasks relating, at least, to the selection of operation is obligatory.

**Figure 4.2**  
**Illustration of the ITI design**

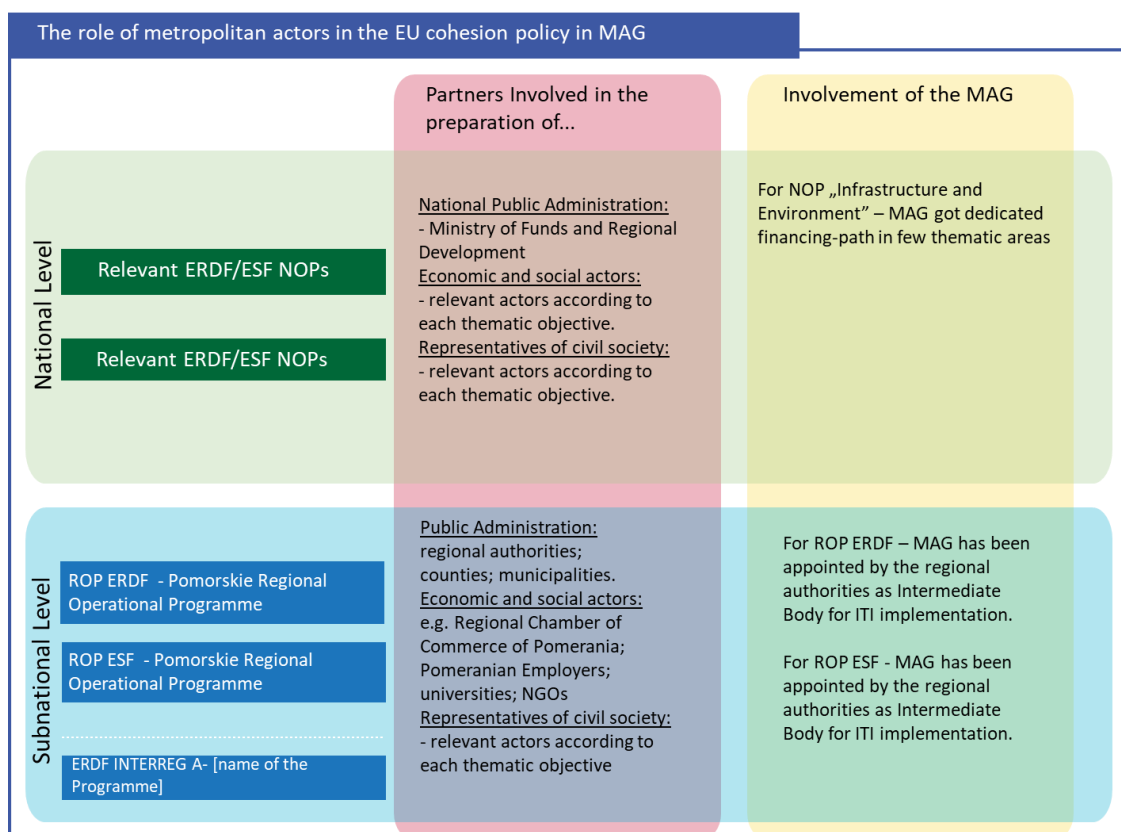


Source: EC Presentation 'ITI and its urban dimension: sustainable urban development'

The role of metropolitan structures in ITI is rather retro-active. Although metropolitan actors proposed the spatial coverage of ITI and selected the ITI priorities applicable to a given area (in form of territorial ITI strategy).

Instrument of ITI was introduced first time by the European Commission in the 2014-20 financial perspective. This idea was welcomed by Polish central authorities, since that time development of urban nodes was among top spatial priorities at the national level. However, in case of Poland ITIs were designed and implemented top-down. Perhaps the reason was weak institutional structure of metropolises in our country. In the Polish Partnership Agreement for 2014-2020 Regional capitals and their functional areas were listed among Areas of Strategic Intervention (ASI) at the national level in the years 2014-2020. The Ministry of Regional Development (then Investment and Development) developed the rules for their implementation, identified the EUCP priorities to be financed under ITI and elaborated the schedule for the ITIs implementation, consulted and provided legal support for their establishment.

Despite this top-down approach one should note that ITI played important role for enhancement of formation of metropolitan areas Poland. They could be considered as main and innovative vehicle applied to this end. At least metropolitan actors should agree on the priorities they have to finance under ITI mechanism and select the most important projects. Prior to ITI there were two separate metropolitan cooperation platforms with little co-operation between them: Gdańsk OM and NORDA Association. As a result of the introduction of ITI, the two metropolitan associations existing in the region, dividing the functional urban area into two parts, united around Gdańsk and Gdynia, were merged into one Metropolitan Area (MAG). The duality of the metropolitan governance, was overcome thanks to ITI (at least to some extent).

**Figure 4.3****The role of metropolitan actors in the EU cohesion policy**

Source: authors' elaboration

## Challenges and critical elements

- Passive role of metropolitan bodies in designing EUCP
- Limited role of metropolitan bodies in the implementation of EUCP

## 4.2 EU cohesion policy instruments at the metropolitan level

Several Operational Programmes (OP) financed by EU Structural and Investment Funds were implemented in “the MAG area”. They are listed below.

- Infrastructure and Environment (CF/ERDF)\*
- Regional Operational Programme (ERDF/ESF)\*
- Smart Growth (ERDF)
- Knowledge Education Development (ESF)
- Digital Poland (ERDF)

However, their implementation was conducted without practical involvement of the MAG structures (MAG however, could apply for the money from these programmes as a beneficiary) with one noticeable exception of ITI which was directed at metropolitan areas in Poland. Programmes financing ITI are marked with star. Therefore only ITI could be considered as genuine EUCP instruments consciously implemented for the benefit of metropolitan areas in Poland.

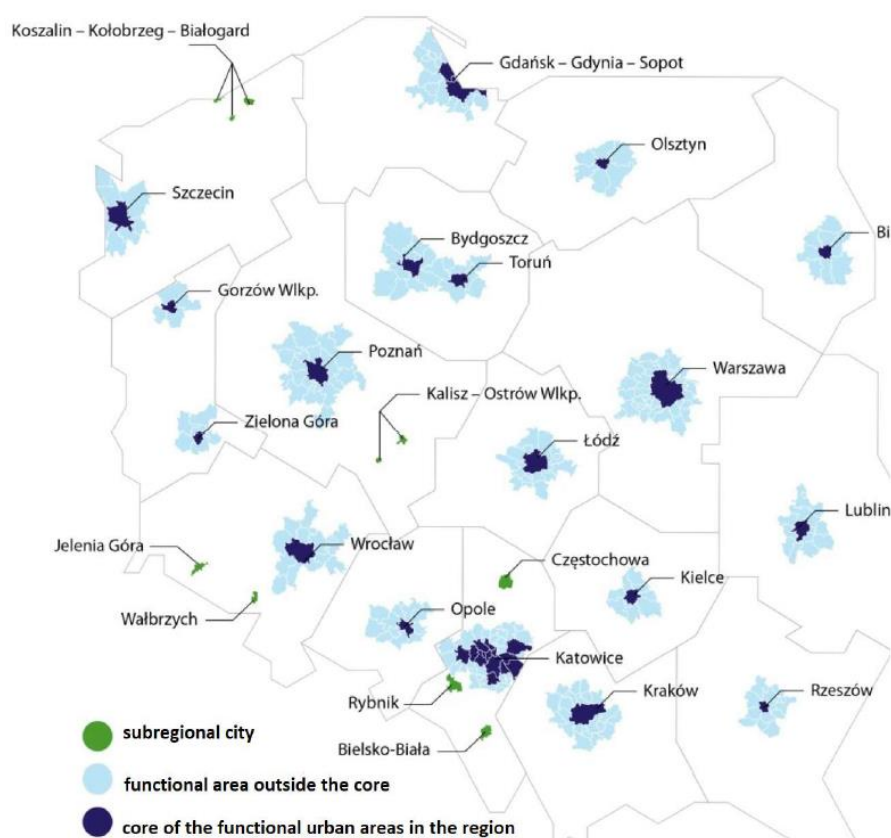
ITI, in principle should enhance development of the functional areas of the large urban regions. In Poland, ITIs are implemented in 24 areas (Figure 4.4) and financed as special purpose “envelopes” of regional operational programs (ROPs). They also have priority access to some parts of the OP Infrastructure & Environment. The delimitation of the areas covered by ITI has been agreed jointly by the regional self-government and the municipalities interested in implementing the ITI. This area was then specified in a relevant resolution of the Regional Board of Pomorskie Region.

The ITI implementation in Pomorskie begun with the establishment of ITI Associations, which developed ITI Strategies for its area, and then agreements were signed between the ITI Associations and the Regional Operational Program Managing Authority (MA of the ROP), i.e. the Regional Board of Pomorskie. After reaching an agreement ITI Associations started to play the role of Intermediate Body (IB) managing part of ROP. The Association of Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot Metropolitan Area has been acting as IB for the Pomorskie Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020 managing European funds worth PLN 1.8 billion PLN, which accounted for the share of European funds in the implementation of 190 projects of a total value of PLN 3.37 billion. The CP financial funds were divided between two main programmes: RPO – 167 projects of the total value of 1.97 billion PLN with the EU contribution of 1.1 billion PLN and 23 projects of Infrastructure and Environment OP of the total value of 1.4 billion PLN and the EU contribution of 0.7 billion PLN.

MAG (more concretely MAG ITI association being part of MAG structures) as an IB has a seat in the Monitoring Committee of the Pomorskie Operational programme 2013-20 (is one of the 45 members). Such a Committee is an independent advisory and opinion-making body, appointed by the Managing Authority. This means that at least MAG has right to evaluate and comment and advice on the implementation of this programme that finances part of ITI. On top of that many mayors of the cities and towns and communes that are part of the MAG and are active in the MAG structures have a seat in the Monitoring Committee. However, formally, they represent there another organizations than MAG. In total MAG voting power in this Committee can be estimated around 5-6 votes. There is no MAG ITI representative in the Monitoring Committee of the OP Infrastructure and Environment (all Polish ITIs have a proxy-representative from the Union of Polish Metropolises).

In the absence of the state legal regulation for metropolitan areas in Poland, ITI Associations established on the basis of the agreement signed by the main metropolitan local governments become the seed for larger metropolitan association of MAG. The MAG is responsible for ITI implementation although the MAG are and membership is larger than ITI area in Pomorskie Region. Therefore MAG established the Office of ITI Association as a part of its structures. This office manages the ITI projects. The implementation and realisation of ITI is very positively valued by local government bodies being the members of the MAG of course those entitled to the ITI support.

**Figure 4.4**  
**ITI in Poland**



Source: Integrated Territorial Investments in the financial perspective 2014-2020, website:

(<https://www.nik.gov.pl/aktualnosci/zintegrowane-inwestycje-terytorialne.html>)

**Table 4.1**  
**EU cohesion policy programmes and instruments in the metropolitan area**

Instrument	Level (geographical scope)	Type	Program-ming	Manage-ment	Implementa-tion	Role of metropoli-tan actors
Integrated Territorial In-vestments	Metropolitan / urban ag-gglomeration functional area	Regional Op-erational Programme – ITI		The Board of the MAG As-sociation and the ITI Asso-ciation Office	167 pro-jects funded within ROP and 23 pro-jects funded by OP IE	basic- im-plementa-tion of the ITI pro-gramme

Source: authors' elaboration

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Broad coverage of metropolitan areas by the various OP
  - Dedicated EUCP instrument for metropolitan areas ITI
  - Influence of MAG on ROP
  - Lack of direct influence of MAG on other Ops
  - Important role of ITI in triggering metropolisation in Poland
- 

### 4.3 Involvement of social groups and the business community in the EU cohesion policy

Each Polish OP is endowed with the Monitoring Committee (MC). The Committee acts as an independent advisory and opinion-making body, appointed by the Managing Authority. It is composed of representatives of the government, local government and organizations outside the administration (including representatives of science, non-governmental organizations, social partners). Representatives of the European Commission also take part in the work of the Monitoring Committee in an advisory capacity. Moreover, representatives of other institutions may participate in the meetings as observers. However, the metropolitan structures has no statutory role in these committees. MAG social partners do not participate in MCs meetings as a rule.

From the MAG point of view of key importance is the Monitoring Committee of the Pomorskie Region Operational Programme in which MAG was entrusted with a role of IB. The Committee has 45 members, including 10 representatives of the government, 17 representatives of local government and 18 representatives of partners from outside the public administration, such as NGOs, employers' organizations, trade unions, Local Action Groups, Local Fisheries Groups, the scientific and economic community. Moreover, the Committee is composed of 30 observers, incl. representatives of the Pomeranian Governor Office. The European Commission plays an advisory role in the work of the Committee. However among those bodies there is no single one having a status of the supporting member of MAG, The only partial link is provided by the presence in the MC of the representative of the University of Gdańsk that is supportive member of MAG. However, this person represents in MC the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (CRASP).

The other business actors the most actively collaborating and involved in MAG activity without holding the status of supporting member that have seats in Monitoring Committee of the Pomorskie Region Operational Programme are Polish Employers Association and Pomeranian Chamber of Commerce. The social actors are not particularly active in the design and implementation EU funded development policy in MAG. They have been involved mainly at the level of concrete projects like Social Economy Support Centre.

The general impression is that the business and social actors are not sufficiently involved in EUCP programming, management and implementation. There seems too much greater potential in the activity of these actors than is currently used by the MAG. In the opinion of the business representatives the realisation of ITI project is only the public sector driven. Private and social actors are not fully aware about the role and specificity of the ITI programme and how it is related to the metropolitan activity. Metropolitan activity is often treated as the regular regional policy and regional projects implementation. There is a lack of proper information channels and adequate marketing of ITI as a metropolitan instrument of investments.

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Limited involvement of MAG social groups and business community in designing, implementing or monitoring EUCP at the MAG territory
  - The worst situation in the case of national Ops
-

## 4.4 The governance of EU cohesion policy in the COVID-19 emergency

The MAG has not been involved in deciding on these matters. In general MAG rather absorbs financial decisions taken by the others. One MAG project has been changed because of the additional support of React EU mechanism. ITI Projects within Sub-measure 7.1.1 HEALTH PROTECTION RESOURCES - ITI MECHANISM, received additional funding and increased their material scope to prevent and combat COVID-19. In general, it is expected that Pomorskie ROP will be provided with ca. EUR 32 M under React-EU umbrella. This additional funding is likely to support SMEs (financial instruments, advisory services and direct grants) as well as health sector infrastructure (projects of regional importance dedicated mainly to post-pandemic rehabilitation). However, the decisions in this regard are and will be made by the Marshal of Pomorskie Region (Managing Authority), not the MAG. In general, the interviews have revealed that MAG is not paying sufficient attention to the possible external shocks that might affect MAG such as climate change or health care limitations in relation to EU financing.

When it comes to today's key challenges - climate, pandemic and other threats, MAG is passive. For instance, the risk of flooding of the large part of Gdańsk and Sopot is remarkably high, and there is no common MAG policy in this direction. But this will be changed as indicated in the previous chapter.

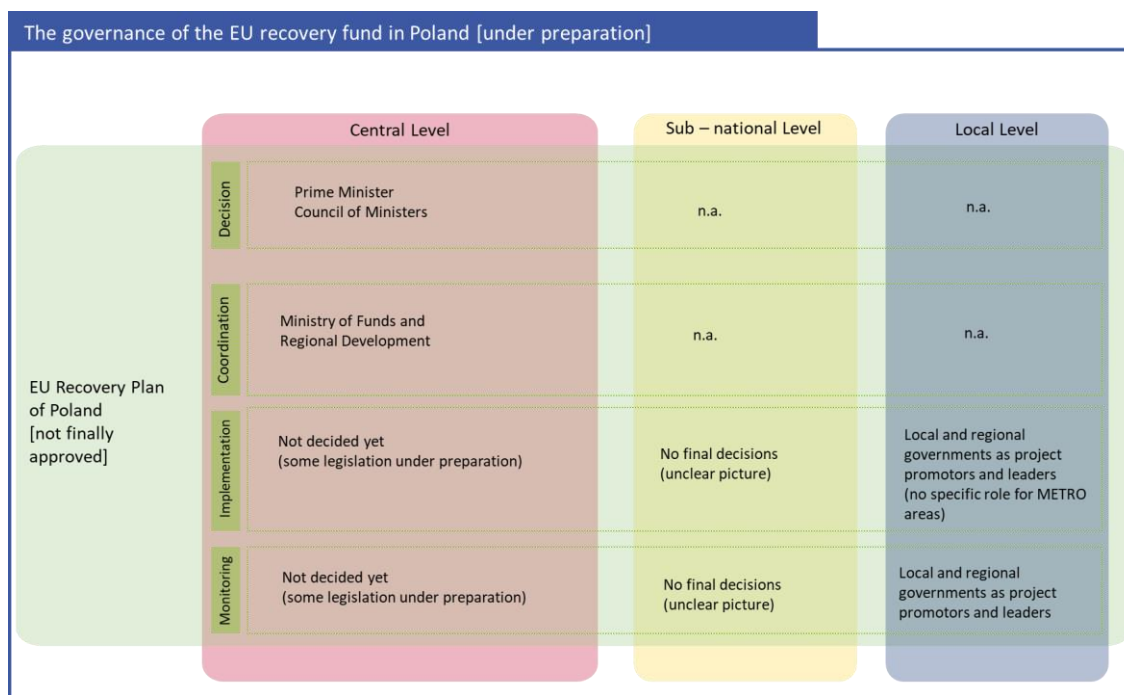
Healthcare will become one of the most important challenges for future development, especially for living conditions in large groups of people, which include metropolitan areas. But, so far, MAG has no impact on EU funding related to health care.

The MAG stakeholders also frequently referred to the housing policy in the context of important future challenges. Such a policy improving housing conditions and increasing the housing security of the metropolis is a particularly urgent and important for metropolitan areas. The pandemic made people realize that the housing conditions enabling work and remote learning for all members of a family living together become a condition for the possibility of performing professional tasks, and thus are not only a social but also an economic problem. Labour market uncertainty and income volatility caused by the pandemic have limited the ability to pay off home loans, resulting in unpaid housing and homelessness. These social problems are not addressed in metropolitan policies implemented with the use of EUCP tools. The popularization of remote work has opened up housing opportunities in medium and small centres while maintaining access to the labour market in the central area of the metropolis. This new situation creates new possibilities of balancing the housing market in the scale of the entire metropolitan area. The pandemic has revealed the enormous potential for the development of metropolitan housing policy. But this policy is not funded under EUCP.

Social challenges caused by the effects of the pandemic should be the main field for using the EU recovery fund. The reconstruction fund in Poland is still not ratified (data valid on 12/03/2021). The National Reconstruction Plan, i.e., the road map of how to use this post-pandemic EU support, is already prepared and known however also still under the process of public consultations and ratification. The National Reconstruction Plan does not contain a list of projects for implementation, but the so-called milestones (reforms) to be benchmarked against progress in implementing the plan as well as general directions for investments. Thus, it is currently not possible to assess whether and to what extent metropolitan tasks can be supported from this fund. The reconstruction fund for Poland is to amount to EUR 60 billion, of which 24 billion is a non-returnable subsidy (see figure 4.3.) and the remaining 36 billion is a loan. It is to be implemented at the central level.

Summing up future challenges, such as climate policy, which is the problem number one, but also, for example, integrated service for enterprises allowing for effective and competitive economic development, and improving the quality of education and higher education, require integration and cooperation of various actors within MAG and with these from outside of MAG. And these could be managed only by a metropolitan Board with legal authorization and competences.

**Figure 4.5**  
**The governance of the EU recovery fund in Poland**



Source: authors' elaboration

## Challenges and critical elements

- In Poland, the policy and its funds of counteracting the effects of the pandemic are highly centralized. The approach deprives metropolises of the possibility to actively participate in the fight against the social and economic consequences of the pandemic.
- Health care and housing policy among important post-covid future challenges
- Recovery fund centralised with unknown relation to metropolitan issues

## 4.5 Coordinating metropolitan governance and EU cohesion policy

Coordination of metropolitan governance and EU cohesion Policy takes place in the interactions between MAG, regional government and central government with the regional level playing important intermediary roles since the main mechanism of coordination of metropolitan policy and EUCP is ITI. Big part of ITI is financed under regional operational programme. Local governments play indirect role as they dominate MAG structures and play decisive role in the MAG ITI Association. Role of other bodies is almost non-existing.

The fundamental and commonly emphasized advantage of the ITI implementation is building the foundations for actual, not just declarative cooperation. The cooperation covered not only narrowly defined ITI tasks, but also other areas of commune management. The effect of metropolitan cooperation as part of the ITI implementation is the use of experience and good solutions of other local government partners. The value and new quality of cooperation in management is the cooperation of local administration officials sharing information and good management practices. Discovering the benefits of expanding cooperation is emphasized both by strong urban centres and small municipalities with limited human resources. The exchange of experiences gives them access to the expert knowledge of large city structures.

The management board of the MAG Association, established for the purposes of the ITI implementation, is the nucleus of the metropolitan institutional and management structure with the competence to create metropolitan policy.

Thanks to the implementation of ITI, valuable, new practices and experiences of co-management have emerged in the following dimensions:

- organizational: multi-level, network management, public-private partnership;
- qualitative: actual cooperation is not "equal to everything", the bigger one has greater obligations, spontaneous, bottom-up initiatives of cooperation between municipalities and cooperation of local administration systems, etc.

The benefits of implementing specific projects are widely recognized by the interviewed MAG actors:

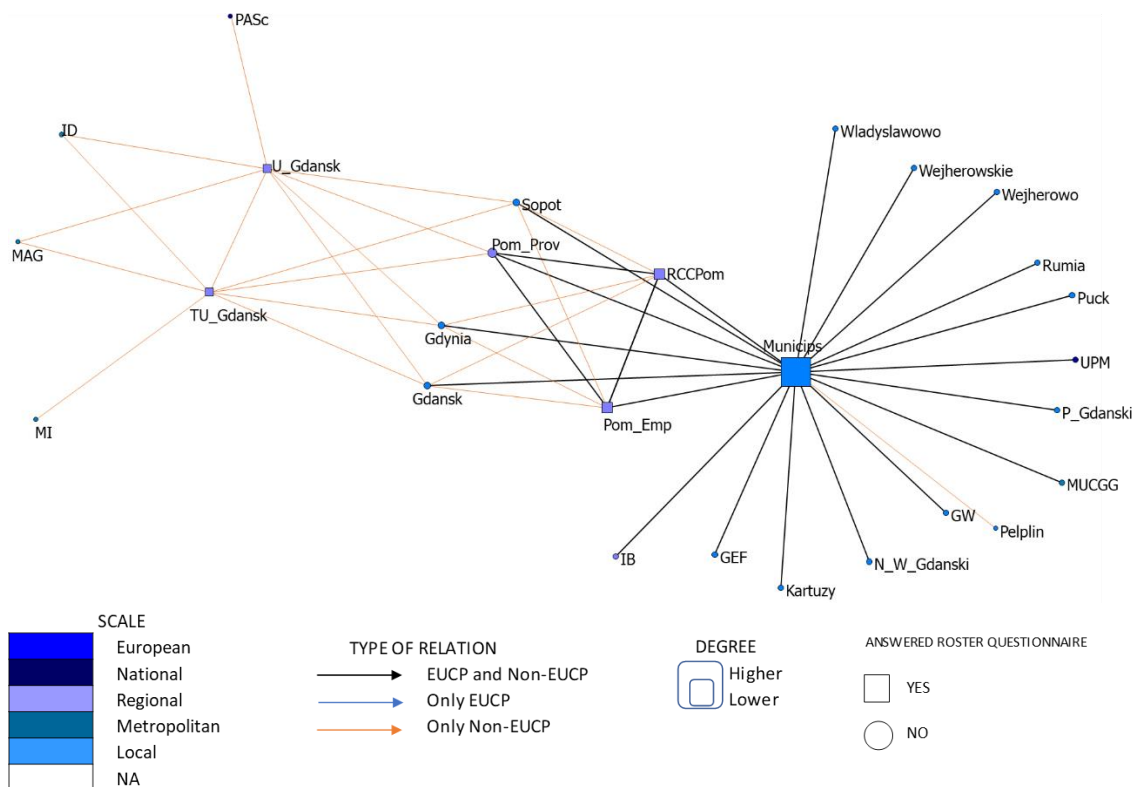
- infrastructural: thermal modernization,
- integration transport nodes,
- social issues e.g. diabetes mitigation.

The dominant belief is that metropolitan cooperation initiated as a result of ITI implementation is permanent, although its scope and form will probably evolve. A tangible proof of the will to consolidate both metropolitan cooperation and its institutional form is the bottom-up, regional initiative to submit an application for the statutory establishment of a metropolitan union in the Pomeranian Region.

Weaknesses of ITI implementation:

- lack of promotion of initiatives desired and expected by the inhabitants as activities in the implementation of the metropolitan goals of ITI;
- entrepreneurs and other citizens do not equate investments carried out with ITI funds with this specific instrument aimed at the development of metropolises, but only with EU funds from the Social Insurance Institution;
- residents do not feel integration in the metropolitan dimension, it happens at the level of public authority but not ordinary citizens. The awareness of the metropolitan community among the inhabitants is still poor;
- analogously small and medium-sized entrepreneurship is not aware that the investments implemented under ITI are investments possible thanks to and dedicated to MAG, and not regular investments carried out under the ROP and ESF funds;
- lack of skills to use ITI implementation to build a common brand, a metropolitan brand;
- the undertaken investment initiatives do not match the metropolitan challenges (such as building a metropolitan opera house);
- the weakness of the ITI project is its excessive rigidity, lack of flexibility, because ITIs impose forms of cooperation and forms of project implementation; it is a particularly strong barrier to the effectiveness of actions and taking initiatives in social projects;
- access to EU funds favours the attitudes of consumption of external funds and, as a result, makes it difficult to assess the actual propensity for metropolitan cooperation of individuals.

**Figure 4.6**  
**The metropolitan governance network of MAG**



id	id_name
GEF	Gdańsk Entrepreneurship Foundation
GW	Gdansk Waters
Gdansk	City of Gdansk
Gdynia	City of Gdynia
IB	InnoBaltica
ID	Institute dor Development
Kartuzy	City and Municipality of Kartuzy
MAG	MAG office
MI	Metropolitan Institute
MUCGG	Metropolitan Union of Communication of the Gdansk Gulf
Municips	Municipalities representatives
N_W_Gdanski	City of Nowy Dwor Gdanski
PASc	Committee for Spatial Economy and Regional Planning, Polish Academy of Sciences
P_Gdanski	Pruszcz Gdanski Municipality
Pelplin	City of Pelplin
Pom_Emp	Pomeranian Employers
Pom_Prov	Pomeranian Voivodeship Marshal Office
Puck	City of Puck
RCCPom	Regional Chamber of Commerce of Pomerania
Rumia	City of Rumia
Sopot	City of Sopot
TU_Gdansk	Technical University of Gdansk
UPM	Union of Polish Metropolises
U_Gdansk	University of Gdansk
Wejherowo	City of Wejherowo
Wejherowskie	Wejherowskie County
Wladyslawowo	City of Wladyslawowo

Source: authors' elaboration

The governance network of cooperation of MAG is of a rather limited scope. The main reason for such situation is a lack of institutional stability and strength. The network links are very fluid and the grasp picture can represent only temporary situation. Even the number of communes that are partners in the MAG association is in a permanent change; some of them are resigning some of them are joining the association.

The governance network is mainly limited to the public sector institutions. The partners from business and social spheres, including universities and NGOs, are underrepresented. It is definitely one of the challenge for the MAG to attract and to tie, with the more stable cooperation links, the actors from these spheres. The better developed governance network of cooperation will strengthen the position of the MAG vis a vis the very strong three main cities authorities as well as regional ones that keep the dominant position in the governance network.

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## Challenges and critical elements

- Limited coordination of metropolitan governance and EU cohesion Policy
  - EU policy dominating metropolitan governance at the first stage of MAG establishment and functioning
  - The governance network of cooperation of MAG is of the limited scope
  - The governance network is mainly limited to the public sector institutions. The partners from private and social spheres are underrepresented
- 

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- EU cohesion Policy should better reflect the role of metropolitan authorities in their proactive shaping and design
- ITI should not be used as an excuse for depriving metropolitan authorities of more proactive role in EUCP design and programming.
- There is a need for more proactive approach from metropolitan authorities as well i.e. engaging private businesses civic society and academia in preparing suggestions for EUCP changes and in monitoring execution of EUCP.

## 5 Cohesion policy impact

### 5.1 EU cohesion policy objectives and actions

The MAG objectives are present in EUCP executed at regional level. As it was already mentioned the ITI instrument is actually the only type of fund being under MAG Association control and use by the ITI Intermediate Body for the metropolitan policy aims realization. ITI in MAG have several axis and support numerous objectives as presented in Table 5.1. The similarly detailed analysis has no sense with regard to other OPs since in the MAG area all Polish OPs and all their priority axis are present in addition to several INTERREG programmes. Moreover, also some programmes not related to EUCP but funded by EU money operate at MAG area. Thus at MAG territory various types of projects can be implemented representing entire spectrum of the EUCP objectives. However, MAG influence on these projects in majority of cases is limited. So one can rather observe an artificial match of EUCP and MAG objectives in this case. The objectives of other CP are following:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Infrastructure and Environment (CF/ERDF)                  | Enhancing low carbon economy, environmental protection, development of the national civil engineering infrastructure and energy security.  |
| • Regional Operational Programme (ERDF/ESF)                 | Increase the competitiveness of the Pomorskie region, ensuring in parallel the improvement of living conditions of its inhabitants through the principles of sustainable development. It aims to undertake the development challenges facing the region in the economy, education, vocational and social activities, potential of individual territories, the transport system, energy and the environment |
| • Smart Growth (ERDF) Knowledge Education Development (ESF) | Activating young unemployed people under 30, supporting higher education, developing social innovations, mobility and cross-border cooperation, as well as carrying out a reform of public policies in the field of employment, social inclusion, education, health and good governance.   |
| • Digital Poland (ERDF)                                     | Increasing the availability of the Internet, establishing a citizen-friendly e-administration which will make it possible to resolve various issues via a computer and disseminating the knowledge about computers and computer skills within the society.   |
| • Smart Growth  | Enhancing research, development and innovation   |
| • EWT programmes  | Protection of cultural heritage and the environment, development of infrastructure, development of entrepreneurship and education, enhancing cross-border co-operation   |
| • HORIZON 2020  | To ensure Europe produces world-class science, removes barriers to innovation and makes it easier for the public and private sectors to work together in delivering innovation   |
| • The Maritime and Fisheries Programme Poland               | Promoting environmentally sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities; on boosting aquaculture development and on improving livelihoods in local communities that are dependent on fishery and aquaculture  |

- Rural Development Programme for 2014-2020

Improvement of competitiveness of Polish agriculture, sustainable management of natural resources, climate-oriented measures and sustainable territorial development of rural areas

**Table 5.1**

**Objectives of the EU cohesion policy in the metropolitan area**

Instrument	Type of Fund(s)	Axis/The-matic priorities	Objective
ITI	ERDF ROP	Enterprises	SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTIONS IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new businesses with the support of business incubators
ITI	ERDF ROP	Employment	PROFESSIONAL ACTIVATION OF UNEMPLOYED PERSONS PROFESSIONAL ACTIVATION facilitating active and healthy aging HEALTH ON THE LABOR MARKET
ITI	ERDF ROP and own resources of local government units and central funds	Integration	SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL ACTIVATION by active integration to improve employability
ITI	ERDF ROP and own resources of local government units and central funds	Integration	DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES to facilitate access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, including health care and social services
ITI	ERDF ROP	Health	HEALTH RESOURCES - investments in health and social infrastructure that contribute to national, regional and local development, reducing health inequalities, promoting social inclusion through better access to social, cultural and recreational services, and the transition from institutionally to community oriented services COMPREHENSIVE REVITALIZATION PROJECTS IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA implemented by supporting physical, economic and social regeneration of poor communities in urban and rural areas
ITI	ERDF ROP	Conversion and Mobility	URBAN TRANSPORT – promotion of low-carbon strategies for all types of territorial units, in particular for urban areas, including support for sustainable multimodal urban mobility and adaptation measures mitigating climate change REGIONAL RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE improvement by the development and rehabilitation of comprehensive, high quality and interoperable rail transport systems and by promotion of noise reduction measures.

Instrument	Type of Fund(s)	Axis/The-matic prior-ities	Objective
ITI and state sub-sidy fund	ERDF ROP and central govern-ment financial support	Energy	ENERGY EFFICIENCY achieved by supporting energy efficiency, intelligent energy management and the use of renewable energy sources in public infrastructure, includ-ing public buildings, and in the housing sector.
ITI	ERDF OP Infras-structure and Envi-ronment	Environment	<p>Development of public transport in cities</p> <p>Comprehensive modernization and further development of the municipal heating network to support the improve-ment of energy security and the implementation of the low-emission economy plan for metropolitan area</p> <p>Comprehensive further development of the municipal heating network to support the use of thermal energy generated in conditions of highly-efficient, effective co-generation for metropolitan area</p> <p>Thermomodernization of buildings, effective distribution of heat and cold</p> <p>Promotion of products of high-efficiency cogeneration of heat and electricity</p>

Source: authors' elaboration

### 5.1.1 Funded measures: main sectors and spatial distribution

The table 5.2 synthesises the aggregated data concerning the CP Operational Programmes which are im-plemented in the metropolitan area. The financial value of projects is in PLN.

**Table 5.2**  
**Operational Programmes implemented in the metropolitan area**

Measures	N. of projects: MAG	Total project value: MAG	Resources Amount of re-sources dedi-cated to axis/ob-jectives: MAG	Number of projects: <b>Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot</b>	Total pro-ject value: <b>Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot</b>	Amount of re-sources dedi-cated to axis/ob-jectives: <b>Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot</b>
Regional Opera-tional Pro-gramme for Po-morskie (regional level)	1.051	5.491.182	3.380.528	502	2.836.556	1.544.125
Operational Pro-gramme Infra-structure and En-vironment (na-tional level)	118	14.365.081	7.585.994	83	8.676.118	4.802.549
Operational Pro-gramme Smart Growth (national level)	556	3.251.964	1.795.778	447	2.534.049	1.360.119

Measures			Resources			
Operational Programme Digital Poland (national level)	14	255.604	164.695	5	151.972	101.970
Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development (national level)	180	571.522	491.507	146	457.164	395.129
EU COHESION POLICY TOTAL (regional + national Ops)	1.919	23.935.353	13.418.502	1.183	14.655.859	8.203.891

Source: authors' elaboration.

ROP for Pomorskie is the programme under which more than half of total number of almost two thousand projects is realised. However, the sources of the highest financial support is OP Infrastructure and Environment. Almost 70% of the total value of projects is covered by OPIE.

The territorial breakdown of number of projects implemented in the MAG area and the magnitude of CP funds invested between the whole ITI implementation area and the core cities is presented in tab. 5.3. The table provides also the information about the share of ITI funds in the total CP fund spent in the MAG area. From the data provided one can read that core area consumes about half of RPO fund. For the other OPs distributed at the national level the share of core area is even higher, reaching the 80% for OP Knowledge Education Development.

**Table 5.3**

**Comparison of the amount of EUCP funds spent in the whole ITI area and the core ITI area**

Operational programme	ITI area (30 municipalities)			Core ITI area (Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot)			Core vs total ITI area		
	No. of project	Total budget	EU support	No. of project	Total budget	EU support	No. of project	Total budget	EU support
Regional Op for Pomorskie (regional level)	1.051	5.491.182	3.380.528	502	2.836.556	1.544.125	47.8%	51.7%	45.7%
OP Infrastructure and Environment (national level)	118	14.365.081	7.585.994	83	8.676.118	4.802.549	70.3%	60.4%	63.3%
OP Smart Growth (national level)	556	3.251.964	1.795.778	447	2.534.049	1.360.119	80.4%	77.9%	75.7%

Operational programme	ITI area (30 municipalities)			Core ITI area (Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot)			Core vs total ITI area		
	No. of project	Total budget	EU support	No. of project	Total budget	EU support	No. of project	Total budget	EU support
OP Digital Poland (national level)	14	255.604	164.695	5	151.972	101.970	35.7%	59.5%	61.9%
OP Knowledge Education Development (national level)	180	571.522	491.507	146	457.164	395.129	81.1%	80.0%	80.4%
EU COHESION POLICY TOTAL (regional + national Ops)	1.919	23.935.353	13.418.502	1.183	14.655.859	8.203.891	61.6%	61.2%	61.1%
Regional Op for Pomorskie (regional level) – ITI dedicated part within Regional OP	270	2.661.575	1.562.090	79	1.336.528	742.139	29.3%	50.2%	47.5%

Source: authors' elaboration.

Geographical spread of EU funding under the ITI programme implementation is shown at the fig. 5.1. The comparison of the amount of metropolis dedicated EUCP funds spent in the whole ITI area and the core of ITI area with total public expenditures in the years 2014-2019 in the area is shown in table 5.4. The comparison shows that the magnitude of EU metropolitan oriented intervention was pretty large in relative terms (around 9%) and stronger in the core area. For the total ITI area this share might be even higher (up to 9.15% in conservative estimations) since four counties of which budget are considered only partially overlap with the ITI area.

**Table 5.4**

**Comparison of the amount of EUCP funds spent in the whole ITI area and the core ITI area with total public expenditures in the years 2014-2019 in the ITI area**

Operational Programmes	ITI area (30 municipalities)		Core ITI area (Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot)	
	Total budget '000zł	EU support '000zł	Total budget '000zł	EU support '000zł
Regional OP for Pomorskie (regional level)	2 661 575	1 562 090	1 336 528	742 139
OP Infrastructure and Environment (national level)	1 512 674	763 069	1 475 852	747 205

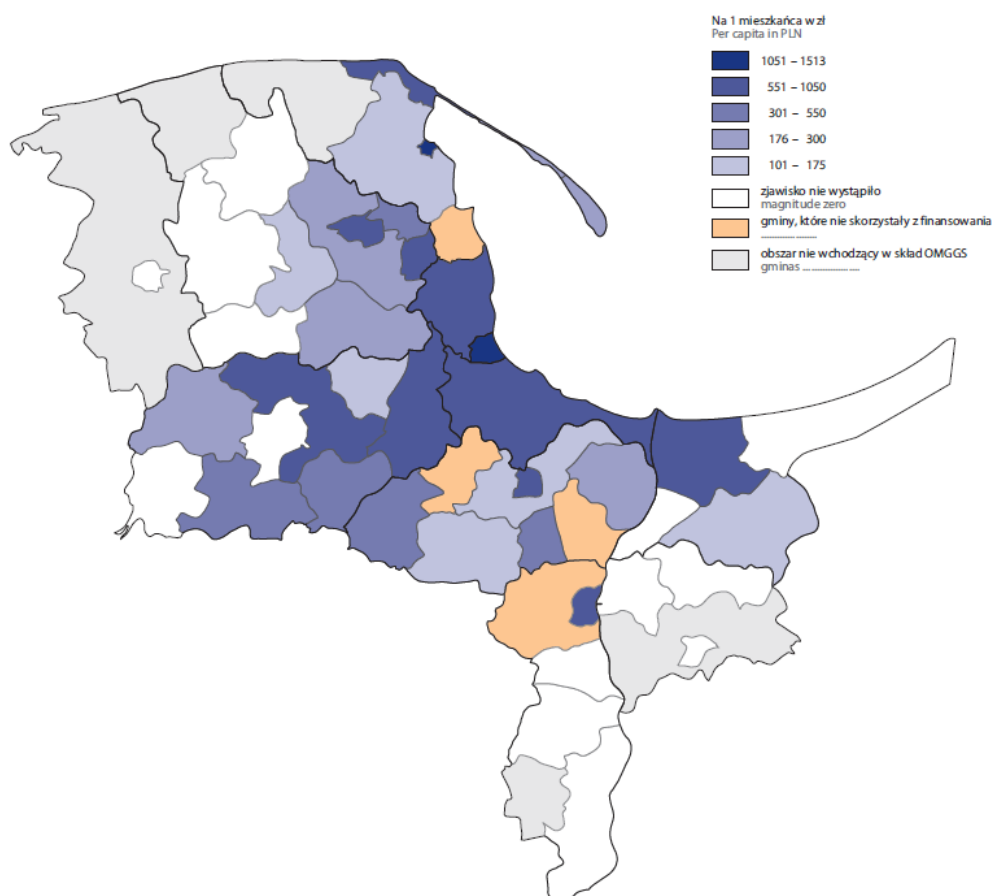
Operational Programmes	ITI area (30 municipalities)		Core ITI area (Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot)	
	Total budget '000zł	EU support '000zł	Total budget '000zł	EU support '000zł
ITI-related part within Regional OP + OP I&E	4 174 249	2 325 159	2 812 379	1 489 344
Total public expenditures of ITI municipalities and counties (2014-2019)	47 323 366		28 551 734	
ITI-related EUCP intervention vs total public expenditures (%)	8,82%		9,85%	

Source: authors' elaboration.

The core cities and the neighbouring to them communes consumed the highest amount of funds. Also the communes with the best transport connection with the core area and with the most intensive suburbanisation processes belong to the group of main beneficiaries of ITI funds.

The largest amount of money in ITI was spent for urban transport (integration nodes, railway infrastructure), then on energy efficiency (thermal modernization). Revitalization processes financially supported from the ITI fund were conducted in 8 cities and took the third position in the MAG ITI financial spending. Social and professional activation consumed also the significant amount of funds.

**Figure 5.1**  
**Distribution of funding in the metropolitan area**



Source: authors' elaboration.

## Challenges and critical elements

- although MAG territory is the recipient of huge funds from various OPs implemented under the EUPC only in the ROP, and precisely in the implementation of ITI, plays an active role performing the function of IB;
- the MAG core area consumed about half of RPO fund. For the other OPs distributed at the national level the share of core area is even higher, reaching the 80% for OP Knowledge Education Development;
- outside the core area, municipalities with the best transport connection with the core cities and with the most intensive suburbanisation processes form the group of main beneficiaries of ITI funds.

## 5.2 Coherence and synergies with metropolitan objectives and instruments

The objectives of the metropolitan policy are compiled in the MAG Strategy 2030 and the package of strategic documents including the MAG Spatial Development Plan 2030, the Transport and Mobility Strategy

and the Low-Emission Economy Plan. The main conceptual assumption of the metropolitan strategy is to expand and complete local and sectoral development strategies for the area with goals, activities and projects, the effective and efficient implementation of which is possible only at the metropolitan area level.

Providing a stable framework for cooperation under the MAG policy requires the provision of financial resources for the implementation of priority actions for the years 2021-2027. In this context, the key role will play the effective cooperation of the MAG Management Board and the Board of the Pomeranian Province in order to obtain funds from ERDF ROP designed for the implementation of ITI program in the future EU financial perspective.

The contemporary key areas of metropolitan policy include:

- Social development, understood as activities for the benefit of education and quality of life;
- Innovative and competitive economy that should be strengthened through improving and development of marketing and investments, as well as innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Sustainable space created by the development of transport and mobility, sustainable spatial planning and care for the environment and energy

The set of data collected in tab. 5.1 proves that the ITI instrument is actually the only type of fund being under MAG Association control and use by the ITI Intermediate Body for the metropolitan policy aims realization. Main metropolitan objectives defined in MAG Association strategy are equal to main strategic goals of ITI program realisation (see 5.1):

1. Development of innovative and competitive economy
2. Creation of active and open society
3. Formation of integrated space
4. Increase in energy efficiency and implementation of the low-emission strategy and more effective management of rainwater and snowmelt

The level of coherence and synergy between the objectives of MAG Association strategy, ITI realisation strategy and EU cohesion policy is presented in the table 5.5.

**Table 5.5**  
**Strategic goals of MAG Association and ITI vis a vis OP priority axis**

MAG strategy objectives		ITI strategy objectives		ROP objectives	OP Infrastructure and Environment objectives
Strategic goals	Priority axis	Strategic goals	Priority actions	Priority axis	Priority axis
1. Social development	- education people	2. Active and open society	- employment integration - health conversion	3. Education 5. Employment 6. Integration	9. Strengthening the strategic health infrastructure
2. Innovative and competitive economy	- marketing and investments - innovation and entrepreneurship	1. Competitive and innovative economy	- entrepreneurship	1. Commercialisation of knowledge 2. Enterprises	
3. Sustainable space	- transport - spatial management - environment	3. Integrated space 4. Energy efficiency and implementation of the	- mobility - energy environment	9. Mobility 10. Energy	4. Road infrastructure for cities 1. Decarbonisation of the economy

		low-emission strategy and more effective management of rainwater and snowmelt		11. Environment	2. Environmental protection, including adaptation to climate change
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Source: authors' elaboration.

The objectives of the metropolitan policy implemented by MAG that are not synergistic with the objectives defined by the CP instruments are the objectives stemming from the National Strategy for Regional Development 2030. MAG provides expert support for functional urban areas of medium size cities that are losing their socio-economic functions. FUA of Bytów, Słupsk and Malbork have been defined in the National Strategy for Regional Development as Strategic Intervention Areas (ASI) and they are under the MAG strategic support. The expert support provided by MAG includes:

- advice on setting up organizational structures,
- creating strategic documents covering not only cities, but also their surroundings (e.g. mobility strategies, supra-local development strategies, electromobility development strategies),
- good practices of establishing cooperation and methods of initiating projects,
- providing good tools / skills to create common solutions to local and supra-local problems,
- model solutions and standards supporting the implementation of FUA's goals and strategies.

### 5.2.1 Alignment with the goals defined in metropolitan instruments

The level of coherence between the EUCP initiatives and spatial development planning aims is very high. The Spatial development plan of the MAG was created by the Pomorskie Bureau of Regional Planning being an institution of Pomorskie Marshall Office in 2016. The critical element to understand the very high cohesion between the metropolitan area spatial development principles and EUCP priorities is the fact that the MAG plan was prepared by the regional authority as a part of EUCP realization. The plan is providing the spatial delimitation of ITI instrument implementation was done. The ITI area is covering the FUA of Three Cities (Gdańsk, Gdynia Sopot) core of MAG area (Figure 2.1).

The general purpose of Spatial Development Plan of the MAG is the creation of the metropolitan space use and management vision to 2030.

The practical purposes of the Plan are:

- 1) coordination of the activities of regional government and of local governments of counties and communes in the field of supralocal investments, including investments in the metropolitan area;
- 2) building the basis for spatio-functional programming development in a metropolitan scale necessary to formulate conclusions for:
  - Regional strategic programs;
  - Integrated Territorial Investments goals;
  - Territorial Contract national program and for fundraising under the EUCP in the current and future EU perspectives in a more effective way.

The main assumptions of the Plan construction influenced its high alignment with the EUCP goals (Table 5.6)

**Table 5.6**

**Alignment of the strategic goals of Spatial Development Plan of MAG with EUCP Represented by ITI strategic goals and ROP priority axis.**

Spatial Development Plan MAG Strategic goals	ITI strategy objectives Strategic goals	ROP objectives No Priority axis
1. High quality of living and work space	2. Active and open society	3. Education 5. Employment 6. Integration
4. Competitive and multifunctional economic space and energy security	1. Competitive and innovative economy	1. Commercialisation of knowledge 2. Enterprises
4. Preserved resources and environmental values	3. Integrated space	9. Mobility
	4. Energy efficiency and implementation of the low-emission strategy and more effective management of rainwater and snow-melt	10. Energy 11. Environment

Source: authors' elaboration.

### 5.2.2 Thematic priorities

The main thematic fields of OMGGS activity are divided in four groups of collaborative metropolitan activity. Each of the groups contains a list of particular policy tasks. There are as follow:

1. Energy and Environment
2. Spatial planning, transport and mobility
3. Social and economic needs and challenges
4. Sphere of culture

## Challenges and critical elements

- the role of EUCP in the creation of MAG was fundamental however, the influence of the cohesion policy is too limited in relation to the challenges and needs of metropolitan policy;
- the key element to understand the very high cohesion between the metropolitan area spatial development principles and EUCP priorities is the fact that the MAG Spatial Development Plan was prepared by the regional authority as a part of EUCP realization;
- the above resulted in a domination of ITI realisation goals over internal MAG aims and purposes.

### 5.2.3 Funding magnitude

The number of EU financed projects and their total budgets under different Ops programmes are presented in table below.

**Table 5.7****EU financed projects and their total budgets under different OP**

Operational Programme	No of identified projects in MAG, 2020	Value in PLN
Infrastructure and Environment (CF/ERDF)*	118	14.365.081
Regional Programme (ERDF/ESF)*	1051	5.491.182
Smart Growth (ERDF)	556	3.251.964
Knowledge Education Development (ESF)	180	571.522
Digital Poland (ERDF)	14	255.604

Source: authors' elaboration.

However, there is a significant difference between MAG-placed projects and MAG/ITI-induced projects, since under various OP there are many projects dedicated to support individual companies / NGOs / purely local actions. Only ITI projects can be directly attributed to the MAG development.

In addition to that EU funds constituted a lion share in financing of the operational costs of the MAG structures. MAG Office was mainly financed from OP Technical Support as an IB of ITIs. Moreover MAG structures applied for EU, funds as a final beneficiary.

The amount of the Association's budget from 2014 was closely related to the implementation of projects, when funds were obtained from external sources such as: the European Social Fund (OWES), the European Regional Development Fund (Platform of Good Practices, Low-Emission Economy Plan) and INTIS. In 2015-2017, the budget was at a similar level. Due to the required own contribution, the amount of the so-called additional contributions. In 2018, additional contributions constituted the largest component of the budget due to the commencement of the project entitled "Metropolitan Bike System".

The main component of EUCP related MAG revenues in 2011-2018 were funds for EU projects granted to MAG. In the following years, their share grew to reach 55% of the budget in 2018. The greatest value was achieved by the project financed by the Regional Operational Program for the Pomeranian Region for 2014-2020 entitled "Construction of the MAG Metropolitan Bike System". The co-financing value is 17.2 million PLN and the total value of the project is 36.7 million PLN.

**Table 5.3****Amount of EU funds per main projects compared to the overall metropolitan budget**

Policy area	Responsible body(es)	EU cohesion policy funds	Total budget
Ośrodek Wsparcia Ekonomii Społecznej/ Social Economy Support Centre	MAG/ITI Association	18,2 million PLN	21.4 million PLN
Budowa Systemu Roweru Metropolitalnego MEVO/Metropolitan Bike	OMGGS/ITI Association	17,2 million PLN	36,7 million PLN

Source: authors' elaboration

## Challenges and critical elements

- the largest number of projects in the metropolitan area was carried out under the ROP, but the greatest financial value related to projects implemented under the OPIE distributed by the national level;
- in a case of OPs elaborated on the national level, MAG was only 'the provider of the territory' for the investments and actions implemented;
- on the contrary to the national level, the very active and efficient support of regional government and its policy in the development of metropolitan policy and strengthening the role of MAG as a partner and an important level in the multilevel governance structures

### 5.3 Outcomes

The effect of using EU funds by MAG structures are projects in which MAG is a lead beneficiary / partner. The biggest project is "Construction of the OMGGS Metropolitan Bike System (MEVO)". The project aims to enable the use of public bicycles in 14 municipalities of the metropolitan area and has combined them into a network integrated with interchange nodes. The co-financing value is PLN 17.2 million, and the total value of the MEVO project is PLN 36.7 million. Unfortunately, the project ended in failure so far. The second project is Support for Social Economy. The Social Economy Support Centre (*OWES Dobra Robota*) provides substantive and financial support to social economy entities. The project was implemented in 2013-2015 in the metropolitan and Vistula subregions - the total value of this project is PLN 21.4. The partners of the project were: Caritas of the Archdiocese of Gdańsk, Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Foundation Regional Centre for Information and Support of NGOs, Employers of Pomerania. In 2015-2022, the OWES project has been implemented in the metropolitan area with co-financing in the amount of 21.5 million (including PLN 2.5 million for OMGGS). The partners of the project are Caritas of the Archdiocese of Gdańsk, Pomeranian Special Economic Zone, Association of mutual assistance Saint Brother Albert, Employers of Pomerania, Generation Foundation.

The thermo-modernization program is assessed very positively, especially by representatives of smaller towns and communes. Although they notice its shortcomings, such as the only fragmentary possibility of implementing thermal modernization measures resulting from property rights.

To give a more general picture it is fair to say that many projects agreed within the MAG Association seem often too narrow and short-term in relation to the challenges and needs that are faced by long-term MAG development policy. It means they are often satisfying the individual expectations of local governments and not necessarily touching the strategic (long-term) initiatives.

One of the reasons for that is probably still limited institutional capacity of the MAG. In many cases, it was not strong enough to use EUCP instruments (including the ITI) to address such complex issues as the climate crisis, socio-economic polarisation or public service delivery/quality at the metropolitan level.

**Table 5.8**  
**Successful outcomes**

Action	Field	Outcome	Added value	Role of the metropolitan institution
ITI Programme	Business and SME	TriPOLIS - an integrated program of cooperation between business incubators and science and technology parks	Increase of the competitiveness and innovation of enterprises and their potential to expand sales markets for their products and services by ensuring better access of enterprises to the high-quality integrated offer of services (in particular specialized) offered by BEI operating in the Metropolitan Area.	Role of MAG as Intermediate Body in the ROP ERDF, ROP ESF and NOPs
	Social Development	Innovative employment support system in MAG.	Professional activation of unemployed people through comprehensive support in obtaining qualifications necessary for employment and support for employers operating in the metropolitan area	
		Metropolitan Health Policy Program for the prevention of type B diabetes	Reduction of the health and economic effects of type 2 diabetes among MAG residents of working age	
		Metropolitan System of Social and Professional Activation	Increase of the level of social and professional activity of people and families affected by and at risk of poverty and social exclusion; development of the social economy	
		Geriatrics Center	Increase of the availability and leveling the differences in the provision of health services in MAG area; development of geriatric care as well as long-term care and rehabilitation	
	Transport and mobility	Development of transport integration hubs together with access routes	Creation of 24 transfer nodes in the MAG area, integrating various means of transport	
	Energy and the environment	Comprehensive energy modernization of public utility buildings and municipal residential buildings in the MAG area	Reduction of energy consumption in public and municipal buildings through deep thermal modernization with the use of renewable energy installations and replacement of heat sources, as well as increasing the efficiency of using the existing transmission networks	

Source: authors' elaboration

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## Challenges and critical elements

- two initiatives of the large scale and social impact undertaken by MAG are: Social Economy Support Centre and MEVO – Metropolitan Bike System
  - highly valued and appreciated role of the metropolitan initiatives and investments completed in the frame of the ESF projects.
  - widespread recognition of the importance and benefits of integrated cooperation resulted from ITI implementation but going beyond the projects realization
  - usage of EUCP intervention-logic and methods to better identify the future opportunities and threats of the MAG development and to stimulate long-term initiatives for the whole area.
- 

### 5.4 The impact of the EU cohesion policy in the COVID-19 emergency

No any influence of the EU cohesion policy in the Covid-19 emergency activities was possible to identify. There are two main reasons for this:

- the lack of EU cohesion policy instruments that could be used by metropolitan governance in the case of unexpected and unplanned necessary activities; in other words a limited flexibility of adjusting the CP instruments to new challenges;
- the general lack of active involvement of MAG in the pandemic emergency activity.

Similarly, there is no active involvement of MAG in other crisis phenomena, such as climate improvement activities. The activities in these areas are in the initial phase of implementation by MAG.

One of the fundamental limitations of the efficient conduct of climate policy is the lack of a clear division of competences in the field of climate actions, which by their nature require integrated initiatives. In the Pomeranian region, a spectacular example in this regard is the area of Żuławy, which is a fertile agricultural area located in the depression of the Vistula delta. In order to effectively protect the environmental values of Żuławy and to counteract the risk of their flooding, the competences cannot be distributed among individual communes, as is the case today. The grassroots initiative of Żuławy communes and the establishment of the Association of Żuławy Communes is proof of the need for such cooperation on a supra-local level. The contemporary plans for Recovery Fund use and distribution are not known due to the still not ratified by Poland agreement (see point 4.4.)

As for the future EU programming and particularly for the Recovery Fund there is a potential for metropolitan governance to be involved. The health care policy needs to be built on a devolution principle and regional, subregional and local levels should perform much more active and important role than they have today. The pandemic time in Poland proved that local, bottom-up mobilisation of local governments and civil society organisations had helped to overcome the most critical situations.

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## Challenges and critical elements

- It is necessary to verify the scopes of competences of individual levels of the national territorial and administrative structure. The metropolitan level should be clearly defined within the structure.
  - The EUCP programming implementation is dominated by the individualization of activities and goals. In practice it results in the lack of coherent, metropolitan policy. It became especially clear in the situation of not standard, emergency needs of crisis time. The lack of effective information channels further complicated the situation. During a pandemic, core cities took the strategic decisions of financial help for the entrepreneurs operating at their territories but did not inform other partners in the metropolitan area about these decisions. This presents how shallow is the culture of metropolitan cooperation among particular territorial partners.
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## 5.5 The impact of the EU cohesion policy on metropolitan governance and cooperation

- Although the role of EUCP in the creation of the MAG was fundamental, the influence of the SE is too limited in relation to the challenges and needs of metropolitan policy. Support of metropolitan structures through CP instruments implementation dedicated to them would strengthen the still far too weak institutional potential of MAG and its anchoring in the organizational and decision-making structures of local administration. In its present form, the metropolis does not have a strong foundation in strong partnerships.
- The EUCP and its tools would have a stronger impact on strengthening metropolitan potentials if they were followed by Polish law and strengthened the legislative activity in metropolitan areas. The legal framework is all the more important as the financial resources dedicated to metropolitan areas are too small and far inadequate in relation to the goals and tasks facing metropolises. Significant funds under the EUCP allocated to activities in metropolitan areas could stimulate cooperation and the implementation of metropolitan legal regulations, being a kind of compensation for local governments for lost competences and reduction of powers.
- Strengthening the metropolitan policy requires a permanent, institutionally stabilised team monitoring the socio-economic situation and conducting a forward-looking policy for planning and development of the area, and not only the implementation of ITI projects. The metropolitan management and coordination centre should be built on efficient managers, experts and political visionaries, i.e. the classic Triple Helix.
- Metropolis in an institutionalized form opens the possibility of obtaining funds not only from the EUCP but also from other sources, including funds distributed by the national government.
- The more unstable and changeable the socio-political environment in which a metropolis functions, the more necessary and urgent its institutional anchoring becomes
- The need for institutional strengthening of the metropolis should be anticipated in the future EUCP perspective. Today, EUCP supports metropolitan policy directly only through ITI implementation. The EUCP should promote and influence the change in the operation of the administration, making it more flexible - this is an important field of EUCP intervention.

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### Challenges and critical elements

- The role of EUCP in the creation of the institutional form MAG was fundamental;
  - The EUCP and its tools would have a stronger impact on strengthening metropolitan potentials if they were followed by Polish law and strengthened the legislative activity in metropolitan areas;
  - The need for institutional strengthening of the metropolis should be anticipated in the future EUCP perspective
- 

### - RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is a strong need to continue the CP projects aimed at the development of territorially integrated initiatives and investments;
- The implementation of metropolitan governance tools and incentives in CP will significantly and effectively help to overcome the strongly differentiated interests of basic territorial units
- The active involvement of the representatives of the metropolitan areas in CP planning would improve addressing the metropolitan governance needs;

- Taking into account the European call for public services improvement the European Social Fund should strongly address the need for development and improvement of public services, including health systems, housing policy in the scale of metropolitan areas
- The EUCP and its tools would have a stronger impact on the development of metropolitan area if they were followed by Polish law and metropolitan act for MAG was approved
- The need of institutional strengthening of the metropolitan areas should be anticipated in the future EUCP perspective

## 6 Main challenges and recommendations

### 6.1 The role of metropolitan areas in the EU cohesion policy governance

#### Challenges

- reactive role of metropolitan bodies in the designing EUCP;
- marginal role of metropolitan bodies in the programming and implementation of EUCP at the national level; their role is mainly limited to ROPs' implementation;
- broad coverage of metropolitan area by the various EUOPs however MAG is only the area, 'the container' of nationally planned projects and there is not a direct participation of MAG Association in EUCP funds distribution by the national level;
- critical (though unstable) role of ITI instrument in triggering and shaping metropolitan processes in Poland;
- the strong tendency rather to satisfy the individual investment needs of local governments unites belonging to metropolitan area than to undertake the strategic and most important initiatives that would shape the future of the metropolis;
- the poorly developed horizontal relations of MAG with different stakeholders, including business community and representatives of universities, in designing, implementing or monitoring EUCP at the MAG territory;
- no involvement of social groups and business community in the case of national EUOPs;
- in Poland, the policy and the EUCP support for counteracting the effects of the pandemic are highly centralized; the approach deprives metropolises of the possibility to actively participate in the fight against the long-term social and economic consequences of the pandemic;
- the national administration at the regional level (the governor) stays not interested in and has not undertaken the cooperation with MAG;
- the need to verify the scopes of competences of individual levels of the national territorial and administrative structure; the metropolitan level should be clearly defined within the structure to make possible its actual involvement in different actions;
- health care and housing policy are becoming very important post-Covid-19 future challenges;
- programming of the post-Covid-19 recovery instrument (recovery and resilience plan) is fully centralised with almost no influence of metropolitan level;
- the role of local governments and metropolitan areas in its implementation is still not decided.



#### Recommendations for the Metropolitan Area of Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot (metropolitan level)

- The legal empowerment of the metropolis will open the possibility of obtaining funds not only from the EUCP but also from other sources, including national budget funds;
- ITI implementation should be treated as one of several instruments of a more active and independent metropolitan policy.



#### Recommendations for the regional and national level

- The active involvement of the representatives of metropolitan areas in EUCP OPs preparation (programming exercise) at national and regional levels would improve

addressing the metropolitan governance needs and would rise the efficiency of funds spending;

- The EUCP and its tools would have a stronger impact on the development of metropolitan areas if the functioning of metropolitan areas were anchored in national legislation and the metropolitan act for MAG was adopted.



### Recommendations for the EU level

- The active involvement of the representatives of regions and metropolitan areas in EUCP planning and programming would improve addressing the metropolitan governance needs and strengthen the multi-level governance;
- Including the metropolitan areas governance in EUCP programming will have a key meaning for the coordination of the policies and instruments of cities, towns, suburban and rural areas within such important spheres of inhabitants' needs like housing, mobility, green infrastructure, waste management, energy management etc.
- Establishing the European Metropolitan Policy Observatory providing among others the statistical data for the EU metropolitan areas would significantly improve an evidence-based metropolitan policy both at the EU and at the national states level.

## 6.2 Impact of the EU cohesion policy on (the achievement of) metropolitan goals

### Challenges

- the role of EUCP in the creation of the MAG was fundamental however, the influence
- of the cohesion policy is too limited (and probably short-term) in relation to the challenges and needs that are faced by metropolitan policy;
- EUCP impact is limited almost entirely to ITI instrument;
- domination of ITI implementing goals above the overall MAG aims and purposes;
- widespread recognition of the importance and benefits of integrated cooperation resulted from
- ITI implementation but going beyond the pure projects' implementation;
- in a case of national OPs MAG was only 'the provider of the territory'
- for the investments and actions implemented;
- positioning MAG in the multilevel governance structure according to its role and potential; critical for achieving the position are the relations with national level.



### Recommendations for the Metropolitan Area of Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot (metropolitan level)

- Taking into account the European call for public services improvement the projects under European Social Fund should strongly address the need for development and improvement of public services, including health systems, housing policy in the scale of metropolitan areas;
- Long-term goals of strategic metropolitan planning included in EUCP may help to identify the future opportunities and threats of individual metropolitan areas development and may stimulate undertaking the long-term initiatives within MAG;

- The institutionally and organizationally weak metropolis is not able to undertake tasks related to such complex problems like climate crisis or economic crisis management therefore the institutional capacity of MAG should be strengthened with the use of adequate EUCP instruments (like for instance NextGen ITI).



### Recommendations for the regional and national level

- Solving the pending problems and achieving the goals of metropolitan areas development depend strongly on how EUCP OPs are designed and implemented;
- Development of metropolitan policy shall create the nexus between urban policy and multilevel metropolitan governance.



### Recommendations for the EU level

- The impact of EUCP on the achievement of metropolitan goals depends strongly on how its instruments are implemented at national and/or regional level; it should be taken into account in the next perspective of the EUCP;
- EUCP should explicitly address such issues like climate change, sustainable development, socio-economic polarisation on metropolitan scale as it is the relevant scale to intervene with a cohesion policy instruments; tackling these problems needs strategies across administrative boundaries;
- EUCP interventions directly dedicated to metropolitan areas may turn them into the drivers of global environmental change (climate catching-up).

## 6.3 Impact of the EU cohesion policy on metropolitan governance and cooperation

### Challenges

- polycentric nature of MAG created by the fusion of three core cities: Gdansk, Gdynia and Sopot;
- two main core cities - Gdansk and Gdynia, are of the competitive rather than complementary functional structure; both of them are the biggest Polish port cities, seats of sea-born industry, and universities as well as developed the cultural and sport centres;
- the strong position of local governments led by strong leaders (mayors) too narrowly focused on their territorial unit needs;
- voluntary character of metropolitan co-operation (MAG is an association) combined with still relatively weak cooperation culture and trust-deficits among the local government units; lack of support for an idea of metropolitan governments at national level; only one metropolis in Poland has its metropolitan act;
- marginal role of metropolitan level in setting up development goals at national, regional and local level;
- poorly developed MAG decision-making mechanisms to reach consensus and common understanding of metropolitan development goals and the metropolitan policy in relation to local, regional and national developments goals;
- metropolitan development policy dominated by the directions and goals set in the core cities' development strategies;

### Challenges

- institutional capacity of MAG built predominantly on ITI and its role as the Intermediate Body for Regional OP;
- MAG financial resources highly limited and mainly related to the implementation of ITI (technical assistance);
- activity of MAG focus almost exclusively on the ITI implementation;
- limited human resources of MAG Association in relation to the needs of institutional metropolitan tasks;
- domination of the public sector actors in the structure, decision-making and activities of MAG;
- resource limitations hampering broader co-operation of metropolitan institutions with the representatives of the civic society and business sector.



### Recommendations for the Metropolitan Area of Gdansk-Gdynia-Sopot (metropolitan level)

- The implementation of metropolitan governance tools and incentives in EUCP will significantly and effectively help to overcome the strongly differentiated interests of basic territorial units constituting the metropolitan area and will help to elaborate the new level of common interests;
- There is a strong need for policy framework concerning a direct and permanent engagement of citizens' organisations, NGOs, science and business representatives in the most important metropolitan governance decision-making processes; it should also help to provide EUCP projects with both democratic legitimacy and the efficiency;
- Further strengthening metropolitan structures through EUCP tools would strengthen institutional potential of MAG and help to anchor the metropolitan level in the organizational and decision-making structures of multilevel governance;
- The metropolitan policy requires the strong, well organized and stable management and coordination centre built on managers, experts and political visioners, i.e. on the classic Triple Helix;
- The more unstable and changeable is the socio-political environment -, the more necessary and urgent is institutional stabilisation and legal authorization of the metropolis.



### Recommendations for the regional and national level

- To effectively support the future regional as well as metropolitan development the regional authorities cannot play only a role of Managing Authorities for regional OPs but have to take the more subjective role in national territorial structures and policy.



### Recommendations for the EU level

- There is a strong need to continue the EUCP projects aimed at the development of territorially integrated initiatives and investments. The EUCP stimulus and support for cooperative forms of territorial initiatives will result in development of regular territorially integrated strategies aimed at solving problems of supralocal and subregional (in the NUTS2 meaning) nature;

- The metropolitan governance modes and the capacity to implement integrated planning tools are sensitive to specific context; EUCP should provide a framework that allows tasks and long-term actions to be tailored to the needs of particular metropolitan areas;
- The need of institutional strengthening of the metropolitan areas should be anticipated in the EUCP 2021+. The ITI instrument would not be enough to meet the approaching challenges resulting from Covid-19 crisis, economic crisis and/or climate crisis;
- The regional policy has played the most important role in metropolitan area functioning and in ITI implementation - for this reason the strategic role of ERDF, Cohesion Fund and ESF in the metropolitan processes should be more broadly addressed in EUCP 2021+;
- Future EUCP tools and incentives dedicated to metropolitan areas development will help to overcome difficulties in tackling the problems of the administratively divided functional urban areas consisting of the 'soft spaces' and 'fuzzy boundaries'; it will help to achieve one of EU Territorial Agenda priorities for balanced growth of Functional Regions built on linkages and flows of people, resources and policies between cities, towns and rural areas;
- The direct addressing the metropolitan governance in the EUCP 2021+ will have a positive impact on strengthening and development of multi-level and multi-stakeholder cooperation being one of the aims of the Urban Agenda for the EU.







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