



# Evaluation of the impact of revitalisation measures on the situation in degraded areas, including social and economic revival and the quality of life of residents

Research financed from the European Social Fund under the Technical Assistance for the Regional Operational Programme for Lubelskie Voivodeship 2014-2020 (RPO WL 2014-2020)

## ABOUT THE STUDY

### MAIN GOAL:

Identification of the impact of the Regional Operational Programme for Lubelskie Voivodeship 2014-2020 (RPO WL 2014-2020) on improving the situation in degraded areas, including improving the quality of life of residents as well as social and economic revival in areas that have been revitalised

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES INCLUDED:

1. Assessment of effectiveness, usefulness, efficiency and durability of support under RPO WL 2014-2020 in the scope of Measures regarding revitalisation.
2. Indication of the factors that contributed to the achievement of the goals and barriers that made it difficult to obtain the intended effects within the framework of Measures concerning revitalisation.
3. Identification of good practices and indication of recommended actions aimed at revitalising degraded areas in the 2021-2027 perspective.
4. Identification of those elements of the RPO WL 2014-2020 implementation system that effectively supported the implementation of local and municipal revitalisation programmes.

The study was carried out between July and October 2023. The research covered interventions implemented from February 12, 2015 to June 30, 2023.

### METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

A wide catalogue of research methods was used as part of the study, including an analysis of existing data and field research:

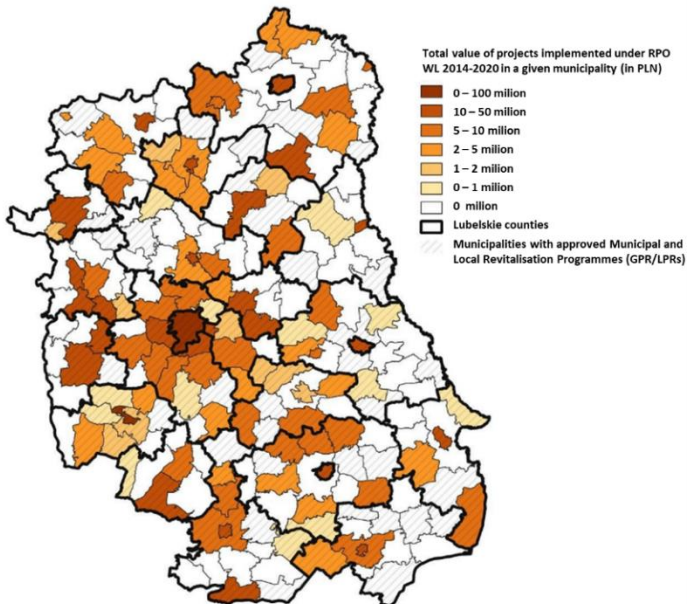
- surveys of project participants – **300 phone surveys;**
- surveys of beneficiaries – **66 online surveys;**
- surveys of social welfare centres representatives – **44 postal questionnaires;**
- interviews with representatives of the Marshal's Office of the Lubelskie Voivodeship and the Voivodeship Labour Office – **5 in-depth interviews;**
- interviews with Local Action Groups representatives - **5 phone interviews;**
- **5 case studies;**
- expert panel **with representatives of the academic community of Lublin universities.**

## SCOPE AND EFFECTS OF SUPPORT

### RPO WL 2014-2020 supported Projects resulting from Municipal and Local Revitalisation Programmes

- Revitalisation programmes were prepared by 133 out of 213 municipalities (gminas) in Lubelskie Voivodeship.
- Those programmes covered on average 12% of the municipal area and the total of 9% of the voivodeship area.
- The total of 315 thousand people live in those areas, i.e. almost 15% of all inhabitants of Lubelskie Voivodeship.

**RPO WL 2014-2020 funds allowed for funding 143 projects, including 96 infrastructure projects and 47 undertakings focused on social and professional activation of residents of revitalised areas. These projects were implemented in 97 gminas.**



Map 1. Total value of revitalisation projects financed under RPO WL 2014-2020 in Lubelskie Voivodeship gminas 2014-2020 w gminach województwa lubelskiego

# PHYSICAL REVITALISATION

## IP 9b Physical, economic and social revitalisation

Measures 13.3, 13.4 and 13.8 of RPO WL 2014-2020

**Main Objective:** Leading degraded areas from the crisis status, aimed at limiting poverty in the region

**96** co-financed projects

Value of EU co-financing: **PLN 513.5 million**

### Key effects of the projects:



975 ha of areas covered with revitalisation



26.5 ha of open space created or reclaimed in urban areas



38.6 thousand m<sup>2</sup> surface area of the buildings constructed or renovated in urban areas



66 enterprises located in revitalised areas



262 supported service facilities located in revitalised areas

## KEY BENEFITS FROM PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION

**Increasing availability of social services**, especially where - thanks to modernisation – it was possible to create new facilities or extend the scope of existing activities.

**Improving local infrastructure status**. The projects contributed to the improved aesthetics of the place, thanks to which the community began to use the available infrastructure more. This resulted in a change in the image of places covered by support.

**Creating places for leisure activities for all age groups**, from the youngest (e.g. playgrounds), through children and teenagers (sports and recreation infrastructure), to the elderly (seniors' clubs, places where rural women's clubs operate).

**Increasing attractiveness of towns undergoing revitalisation**, including tourist attractiveness, especially thanks to those projects that explicitly provided for the creation of a recreational space.

## GOOD PRACTICES

**Separation of allocation into urban&rural areas, and Lublin Functional Area** - thanks to this, municipalities of extremely different sizes and other specifics of the needs did not compete for revitalisation funds.

**Focus on projects using existing infrastructure and providing them with new functions**, and also on creating new places for spending free time.

The widespread use of energy-saving lighting and the implementation of video monitoring systems increased security in revitalised areas.

In many projects they tried to comprehensively accomplish the tasks resulting from LPR/GPRs by financing a number of investments, even at various sub-areas of revitalisation, instead of being limited to one facility or area.

# SOCIAL REVITALISATION

## IP 9i Active social inclusion in revitalised areas

**Main objective:** Increase in social integration and improvement of access to the labour market among those excluded or threatened with poverty and social exclusion in the region through the implementation of comprehensive activation programmes as well as services of reintegration and social and vocational rehabilitation.

**47** co-financed projects

Value of EU co-financing: **PLN 47.3 million**

### Key effects of the projects:



2569 persons at the risk of poverty or social exclusion covered by the programme support



794 persons at the risk of poverty or social exclusion work after leaving the programme (including self-employed persons)



2040 persons at the risk of poverty or social exclusion obtained qualifications

## KEY BENEFITS FROM PROJECTS IMPLEMENTATION

**Quality of life of 68% of people covered by support has improved.**

Participation in the project was an important factor improving the quality of life of its participants.

**31% of participants started work**, thus improving their financial situation and limiting the use of social assistance.

**80% of participants obtained qualifications** or acquired competences as a result of participation in vocational training.

**59% of persons were activated to search for work** from among those previously vocationally passive.

**Social competence and independence of project participants increased** (They engaged in volunteering, made new friends, developed new interests).

## GOOD PRACTICES

**Beneficiaries put a lot of effort in helping participants**, including mobilising them to presence in class or motivating them to actively participate.

**Active cooperation of beneficiaries and social assistance institutions in recruitment for projects improved implementation.**

**Psychological support was a valuable element for participants**, making it easier for them to transition from the crisis and increasing motivation to act.

## SUPPORT EFFICIENCY

**The greatest impact of support for revitalisation activities is visible in the case of infrastructure projects which:**



contribute to improving the quality and availability of public spaces, creating places to spend free time for both residents and tourists



contribute to renovations, modernisation and retrofitting of buildings in which services are provided for local communities and thanks to which the possibility of developing the offer of these services in the future is created

**Due to the scale of the intervention which covered less than 1% of residents of areas requiring revitalisation:**



this support cannot solve social problems and activate the community on a noticeable scale...



... but undoubtedly improves the quality of life and activates direct recipients of support (participants of activation projects)

**Supporting social and professional activation, especially that limited to residents of revitalised areas, encounters problems:**



the phenomenon of "professional project participants" is already visible, namely of people who do not want to change their lives but only to benefit from support, in particular the provided financial support



limiting activation and animation activities only to marginalised groups limits the possibility of improving social cohesion in revitalised areas



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. CONCLUSION:

The requirement of obligatory combining ERFR support with ESF social projects was a problem for beneficiaries.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Withdrawal from the obligatory requirement to supplement investment support with the ESF+ project. The requirement of obligatory combining ERFR support with ESF social projects was a problem for beneficiaries.

### 2. CONCLUSION:

Many towns, thanks to RPO WL 2014-2020 funds, have undergone renewal - partly at the expense of the existing, though sometimes neglected, greenery. Concrete-lined parking lots, market squares made of paving stones were created, with scarce plantings. Thus, the phenomenon of the so-called "concreteosis", which admittedly improves aesthetics and is functional but at the same time reduces the greenery and biologically active areas.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Issues of greenery protection and biodiversity should be a fixed element of support. It is important to include them already at the GPR preparation stage.

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