Abstract

The article presents selected results of research carried out among the local self-government units in the West Pomerania Province. The aim of the article was to identify the main tasks of local self-government in shaping the passenger transport system in the region and an analysis of the status and scope of its realization in the studied region. The research method applied involved critical analysis of literature, documentary method and the method of the survey using a questionnaire. The results indicated an unsatisfactory level of involvement of local self-government units in West Pomerania province in the process of developing the passenger transport system in the region in reference to the needs of its users. Actions taken by local self-governments in this area come down only to the minimum provided in the Act on public transport (and often taken with a significant delay).

Keywords: transport systems, passenger transport, regional transport, local self-government, West Pomerania Province

Introduction

Transport policy conducted at European, national and regional level, which is focused on the implementation of the concept of sustainable development,
cohesion and supporting the mobility of society, determines the need to develop ways of shaping transport systems conducive to its implementation. For this purpose it is necessary to make rational solutions affecting the rational division of transport tasks between public transport and individual transport. These activities are reflected in the process of meeting and shaping communication needs and behavior of users of passenger transport systems in the regions. The implementation of such measures requires the cooperation of all actors operating within the transport system, in particular local self-governments as organizers of public transport, passenger transport system users, as well as experts of transport market. Such cooperation should result in coordination of plans and decisions taken in this regard by those actors.

**The tasks of local self-government in shaping the passenger transport system in the regions under applicable legislation**

Region (province), as an economic and spatial system, maps one isolated segment of the economy. It is an object permanently and continuously inhabited, developed and controlled by a specific community and authority appointed for that area. On its territory operates a number of units, which are important components of the region as a system, creating a real area of this system – enterprises, households, and regulatory area – government agencies, local self-governments and institutions.²

Local self-government as a basic form of decentralization of public administration, and more specifically – decentralization of the administration,³ participates in the exercise of public authority, and it is entitled to a substantial part of public tasks performed on its own behalf and on its own responsibility. The detailed scope of activities and responsibilities of local self-governments at various levels of public administration are defined respectively in the following acts:

- Act of 8 March 1990 on Gmina local self-government,⁴

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The Role of Local Self-Government in Shaping...

– Act of 5 June 1998 on Powiat local self-government,


In terms of organization and management of passenger transport system, the appropriate legal acts regulate the responsibilities for the different local self-government units in terms of spatial extent, where:

– gminas (municipalities) are responsible for all public matters of local importance, not reserved by law for other entities, in particular meeting the needs of the community, including the local public transport;

– powiats (districts) are responsible for public tasks provided by the law, which are beyond gminas, including tasks in the field of public transport and public roads;

– provinces are responsible for tasks at a provincial level provided by the law, in particular tasks in the field of public transport and public roads.

In addition, the act regulating the rules of organization and functioning of public transport is the Act of 16 December 2010 on public transport. In particular, it defines the rules of organization and operation of the carriage of passengers in the public transport, carried out on Polish territory and in border areas of road, rail, different rail, ropeway, funicular, sea and inland waterway transport. In accordance with the provisions of the Act, public transport shall be understood as widely available and regular transport of passengers carried out at specified intervals in the specified communication line, the communication lines or communication network.

The Act on public transport defines the tasks for the various levels of local self-government (in the case of rail transport – public administration) in the field

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7 Act of 8 March 1990 on Gmina local self-government, Art. 6, par. 1 and art. 7, par. 1.


11 Ibidem, art. 1, par. 1.

12 Ibidem, art. 4, par. 1, point 14.
of transport development planning, as well as organization and management of public transport. These tasks were assigned to Organizer of public transport, which are the following entities:\(^\text{13}\)

- gmina, on the communication line or network in the transport carried out within the relevant gmina or wider area under the agreement with other gminas;
- association of gminas, on the communication line or network in the transport carried out within the relevant area of gminas forming the association;
- powiat, on the communication line or network in the transport within the relevant powiat or wider area under the agreement with other powiats;
- association of powiats, on the communication line or network in the transport carried out within the relevant area of powiats forming the association;
- province, on the communication line or network in the transport carried out within the relevant area of the province, on the communication line or network in the transport carried out within this and other provinces, if the longest stretch of line is located in this province (in agreement with the other involved provinces), on the communication line or network in the area of transport carried out in the area relevant in terms of line/network of provinces, under the agreement;
- the minister responsible for transport, on the communication line in interprovincial and international passenger rail transport.

It should be noted that the task implemented by different levels of government administration in planning, organizing and managing passenger transport cannot be in conflict with each other – they should be complementary and consequently constitute a coherent and effective system.

Especially important tasks of local self-government units under the Act on public transport concern the obligation to prepare the so-called Transport Plan. Article 9, paragraph 1 of the analyzed Act sets the conditions, under which local self-governments as organizers of public transport in the area concerned are obliged to prepare such a plan. This obligation concerns:\(^\text{14}\)

- gminas in the area inhabited by at least 50,000 people,
- powiats in the area inhabited by at least 80,000 people,
- the province regardless of the number of inhabitants.

\(^{13}\) *Ibidem*, art. 7, par. 1, point 1–6.

\(^{14}\) *Act of 16 December 2010 on public transport...*, art. 9, par. 1, point 1–5.
In addition, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, Transport Plan should be made by local self-governments under agreements concluded:\textsuperscript{15}

- between gminas, if the area is inhabited by at least 80,000 people,
- between powiats, if the area is inhabited by at least 120,000 people,
- between provinces regardless of the number of inhabitants.

It should be noted that the Transport Plan can also be developed by units with less inhabitants than indicated in the Act. It seems that this provision is particularly important from the point of view of local self-governments, which see drawing up such a plan as necessary for the proper organization of the transport system in their territory.

Especially important tasks of local self-government units arise directly from the provisions of the Act on public transport in the field of elements to be included in the Transport Plan. In accordance with Article 12, Transport Plan should specify:\textsuperscript{16}

- communication network, which is a base for planned public transport,
- assessment and forecast of transport needs,
- projected financing for transport services,
- preference regarding the choice of mode of transport,
- rules for the organization of public transport market,
- the desired standard of transport services in the public transport,
- expected way of organizing information system for the passenger.

It should be noted that a kind of directory provided in the Act is informational only and seems to be too general. From the point of view of a consistent, tailored to the needs of the community passenger transport system in the whole region, it seems that this directory there lacks details e.g. in terms of frequency, scope and methodology of research on communication needs, preferences and behavior of system users. This may result in a lack of coordination in carrying out similar research in different parts of the region (by various gminas and powiats), and prepared plans in the given region may be characterized by a different time horizon, a different structure, different degrees of detail and the limited ability to compare the results of the market research conducted.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibidem, art. 9, par. 1, point 1–5.

\textsuperscript{16} Act of 16 December 2010 on public transport..., art. 12, par. 1.
The research on local self-government units in West Pomerania province in shaping the regional passenger transport system (selected results)

Market research and marketing research are an integral element of a mature market economy. This maturity is associated with an increase in needs for analysis and information resources, necessary for legislative authorities and any economic organization interested in evolution of market conditions. Research is a tool to obtain information about the market and its surroundings, or the system and its environment. In terms of shaping a system of passenger transport responding to the needs of its users, conducting such research in the regions seems to be essential also in view of the changes taking place in the field of passenger transport market consumer behaviors and preferences.

The research on local self-government units in the West Pomerania province was conducted in the period from January to June 2013. This included all the offices representing local self-government units in the province at all levels of the administrative division of Poland – gmina, powiat and province. The questionnaire was sent to 136 agencies in the province. 101 questionnaires were sent back, representing 74% of the research population, and therefore the sample was representative.

Questions included in the questionnaire concerned, e.g.:
- obligation to draw up a Transport Plan by the relevant unit,
- type of actions undertaken by the local self-government unit to draw up a Transport Plan,
- reasons for any lack of action by unit to draw up a Transport Plan.

When analyzing the CSO (Central Statistical Office – GUS) data concerning the number of people living in the West Pomerania province divided into powiats and gminas as of 1 January 2013, it should be noted that apart from the province, the obligation to draw up a Transport Plan was imposed on three country powiats – Goleniów powiat, Gryfino powiat and Stargard powiat, two

cities with powiat rights – Szczecin and Koszalin, and Stargard Szczecinski gmina – therefore a total of 7 local self-government units. Additionally, in West Pomerania province there are areas whose population is close to the minimum specified in the Act imposing an obligation to prepare a Transport Plan; these are Kolobrzeg powiat and Szczecinek powiat with more than 79 000 inhabitants, as well as Kolobrzeg gmina with a population of over 46 000 people. Given the touristic and spa nature of Kolobrzeg powiat and gmina, it seems reasonable to consider the issue of the development of such a document by these particular units.

Out of 101 local self-government units in the research, the obligation to draw up a Transport Plan was indicated only by 5 units, including 3 country powiats, 1 city with powiat rights and 1 gmina. As the basis for the obligation laid down in the Act all units indicated the number of inhabitants, and 1 unit indicated additionally agreement between gminas. Thus, analyzing the responses of local self-government units, there is a noticeable lack of initiative on their part to conclude agreements or associations, and hence, lack of interest in drawing up a Transport Plan for the area comprising the territory of the unit in conjunction with neighboring units.

Among the units, which indicated in the questionnaire the lack of obligation to prepare a Transport Plan in accordance with the Act (96 units), only 4 indicated that they are considering developing such a plan; the remaining 92 units have declared no plans in this respect. Interest in developing a transport plan by local self-governments, which are not obliged to do so under the Act on public transport, was therefore negligible and amounted to just a little above 4%.

Among the units, which are obliged to draw up a Transport Plan and units, who do not have such an obligation but consider it, only 4 declared taking specific actions aimed at drawing up such a plan. Due to the fact that the provisions of the Act on public transport came into force on 1 March 2011, and the survey for local self-governments in the West Pomerania province was conducted two years later, it was necessary to understand, on the one hand, the reasons for the lack of action towards the preparation of a Transport Plan (Table 1), and on the other hand – in the case certain actions were taken – what were their types (Table 2).
Table 1

Reasons for the lack of actions taken by local self-government units of the West Pomerania Province to draw up a Transport Plan (TP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>No. of indications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is too early to take such actions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of financial resources to develop TP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of uniform guidelines for the development of TP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of relevant bodies responsible for this matter within the local self-government unit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No deadline for developing TP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of technical knowledge in the development of TP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of appropriate implementing acts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study based on surveys.

As shown in Table 1, the reason most often indicated by the local self-governments was the declaration that it is too early – the answer was given by 75% of the surveyed units. As the reason half of the respondents indicated: lack of financial resources, lack of uniform guidelines, lack of relevant bodies responsible for this matter within the local self-government, and no deadline for the development of the Plan. In addition, 1 unit indicated the lack of technical knowledge and the lack of appropriate implementing acts. It should be noted that the Article 84 paragraph 2 of the Act on public transport provides the deadline for developing a National Transport Plan by the minister responsible for transport (18 months from the date of entry into force of the Act). In the case of local self-government units it is a period of 3 years from the date of entry into force of the Act. However, it was not specified whether there are any consequences arising from failure to meet the above-mentioned deadline. The motivation shall be the fact that without it, the organizers of public transport are limited by the capabilities of its organization – a contract for the provision of public transport can then be concluded for a period not longer than three years.20

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20 Act of 16 December 2010 on public transport..., op. cit., art. 84, par. 2, point 2.
Table 2

Actions taken by local self-government units of West Pomerania Province to draw up a Transport Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of action</th>
<th>No. of indications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination of a communication network covered by TP</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research on transport needs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forecast of transport needs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of sources of funding transport services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of information system for the passengers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions/actions taken with other local self-governments to develop a joint TP</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – development of initial TOR* documents to begin the tender procedure aimed at selecting the TP contractor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination of preferences for modes of transport</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination of the rules for organizing transport market</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination of the required standard of services in public transport</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of the legal conditions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of appropriate organizational body within the local self-government unit responsible for preparing a TP</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* TOR – Terms of Reference

Source: own study based on surveys.

As shown in Table 2, until 30 June 2013 none of the surveyed local self-government units has developed all the elements of the Transport Plan provided in the Act. One of them has taken initial steps to hold a tender to select a contractor for drawing up the Transport Plan. As shown by surveys, during the period of more than two years since the Act on public transport has entered into force, the progress of actions taken for the preparation of Transport Plans of local self-governments is disappointing.

In connection with the necessity to take into account the provisions of the documents prepared at the higher self-government level, when drawing up the Transport Plan, the units participating in the survey were also asked about knowledge of the intentions of the higher level units in the organization of public transport. In response to this question, only less than 12% of units indicated that they know intentions of higher units. More than 88% of units answered that they do not know the plans of higher units in this area. More precisely, units were asked about obligation to draw up the Transport Plan by higher local self-government units and their knowledge about taking or not actions in this...
regard. Almost 36% of the local self-government units declared lack of knowledge with regard to both issues. These results clearly indicate limited knowledge of local self-governments on their basic obligations arising from applicable legislation.

When analyzing the progress of works for drawing up Transport Plans by local self-government units of West Pomerania province as of 30 June 2014, it should be noted that this document was adopted by 5 out of 7 units obliged by the law to do so (Table 3).

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>responsible body</th>
<th>transport plan</th>
<th>progress of works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>province</td>
<td>plan for sustainable development of public transport for the West Pomerania province</td>
<td>adopted – resolution of West Pomeranian regional assembly of 24 June 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country district (powiat ziemski)</td>
<td>plan for sustainable development of public transport for Gryfino country district</td>
<td>under development; after the public consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country district (powiat ziemski)</td>
<td>plan for sustainable development of public transport for Goleniow country district</td>
<td>adopted – resolution of Goleniow country district council of 26 June 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country district (powiat ziemski)</td>
<td>plan for sustainable development of public transport for Stargard country district</td>
<td>no information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>township (powiat grodzki)</td>
<td>plan for sustainable development of public transport for the city of Szczecin for the years 2014–2025</td>
<td>adopted – resolution of the city of Szczecin of 26 May 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>township (powiat grodzki)</td>
<td>integrated public transport development plan for the city of Koszalin for the years 2006–2013</td>
<td>adopted (requires updates) – resolution of the Koszalin city council of 26 April 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commune (gmina)</td>
<td>plan for sustainable development of public transport for the Stargard and other communes under agreement on public transport organization</td>
<td>adopted – resolution of the Stargard city council of 27 May 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own study.

As shown in Table 3, there is a lack of coordination between units and bodies at different levels in terms of deadlines for adopting documents and periods that these documents shall cover. Individual documents also differ with research methods adopted for their preparation. As indicated by K. Grzelec and O. Wyszomirski, it results from no clear legal interpretation regarding the content
of Plans.\textsuperscript{21} In view of the foregoing, there is a concern for coherence and complementarity between the provisions of Transport Plans adopted at different levels of public administration, which can affect the limitations in the process of shaping a sustainable and integrated passenger transport system in the studied region.

\textbf{Conclusion}

Surveys conducted among local self-government units indicate significant problems and limitations in the process of shaping a sustainable and coordinated system of passenger transport in West Pomerania province. Analysis of the results obtained in this regard indicates:

- incomplete level of knowledge of legislation relating to the organization of public passenger transport and the resulting obligations, including in particular the provisions of the Act on public transport;
- insufficient flow of information between the various levels of local self-governments in relation to their actions to organize public passenger transport in the region;
- the lack of coordination of actions taken towards the development of the passenger transport system, responding to the needs of its users;
- limitation of actions taken by local self-governments only to meeting a specific law obligation in this respect, and thus lack of taking initiatives by local self-governments as organizers of public transport that go beyond the “legal minimum”;
- too long implementation of the provisions of the Act on public transport.

To achieve and maintain a significant share of public passenger transport in handling transportation needs, it seems necessary to conduct an active organization policy by public administration.\textsuperscript{22} All levels of local self-governments should notice a significant role in shaping the passenger transport system, not only within their territory, but also throughout the region.


References


Powierzchnia i ludność w przekroju terytorialnym w 2013 r., Informacje i opracowania statystyczne, Central Statistical Office, Warszawa 2013.


ROLA JEDNOSTEK SAMORZĄDU TERYTORIALNEGO
W KSZTAŁTOWANIU SYSTEMU TRANSPORTU PASAŻERSKIEGO
W REGIONACH NA PRZYKŁADZIE WOJEWÓDZTWA
ZACHODNIOPOMORSKIEGO

Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono wybrane wyniki badań zrealizowanych wśród jednostek samorządu terytorialnego na obszarze województwa zachodniopomorskiego. Celem artykułu była identyfikacja głównych zadań jednostek samorządu terytorialnego w kształcie systemu transportu pasażerskiego w regionach oraz analiza stanu i zakresu ich realizacji w badanym regionie. Do osiągnięcia założonego celu wykorzystano metodę krytycznej analizy literatury, metodę dokumentacyjną oraz metodę badań ankietowych, zastosowaną przy wykorzystaniu kwestionariusza ankiety. Uzyskane wyniki wskazały na niezadowalający poziom zaangażowania jednostek samorządowych w województwie zachodniopomorskim w proces kształtowania systemu transportu pasażerskiego regionu, odpowiadającego potrzebom jego użytkowników. Podejmowane przez jednostki samorządowe działania w tym zakresie sprowadzają się jedynie do wykonania założonego w Ustawie o publicznym transporcie zbiorowym minimum (częstokroć z dużym opóźnieniem).

Słowa kluczowe: systemy transportowe, transport pasażerski, transport regionalny, jednostki samorządu terytorialnego, województwo zachodniopomorskie