

New Instruments for Urban Development Management in Serbia - Case Study Nis

Ass.Prof. Aleksandra Djukic, Dr.Ratka Colic

Department of Urbanism, Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade

e-mail: adjukic@afrodita.rcub.bg.ac.rs

Phone number: +381 63 339 861

Abstract

Prompted by requirements for better planning flexibility and effectiveness, urban development management has influenced the implementation of various models in the practice. As in many countries, also in Serbia, strategic planning is being introduced as a parallel form of planning, with the basic intention to overcome limitations of traditional urban planning.

Simultaneously, new instruments for managing urban development should also become initiators of urban development for regions, especially those affected by the process of urban decline (shrinking). This paper will present the case of the city of Nis, a center of a region with the highest shrinking in recent years. A couple of years ago, the local self-government of Nis has adopted the City Development Strategy (integral strategic plan for sustainable development), and the Operative Program for its implementation (an overview of concrete projects for realization). The process of preparing both documents is characterized by: pronounced participative approach, cooperation between sectors and exchange of information, inclusion and coordination of various social sectors, partnership between institutions, and work within the framework of organized participative workshops. We are dealing with completely new instruments of development management in Serbia, directed toward realization of policies for local development, based on economy of knowledge, protection of the environment, accessibility of urban services of general interest, upgrading of conditions for employment, and measures of social inclusion.

The Strategy defines four strategic directions for city development: 1) territorial development based on a sustainable environment; 2) establishing of a reliable environment for investments as the basis for sustainable economic development; 3) a balanced and comprehensive improvement of the quality of life in the city, and 4) upgrading of the institutional environment and the management process. Through the very process of strategy formulation, the topic of management has obtained the status of a strategic direction, since it has transpired that the most important problems of the local community are – unsynchronized management, unstable political consensus about basic directions of development, insufficient participation of the public in decision making processes, as well as the very much present generally low interest of citizens in relation to decisions made at the local level.

In addition to the significance of these documents in the sense of connecting planning with the securing of financial resources, the example of the Operative Program has also introduced indicators for success of realization of identified projects according to strategic directions of development.

Keywords: urban development, management, urban policy, strategic plans, operative programs