



'Investor Service Standards in Local Government'

**Case study of Polish ESF project under the study
'Progress Assessment of the ESF Support to
Public Administration' (PAPA)**

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Project background

INVESTOR SERVICE STANDARDS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Operational Programme	The project titled 'Investor Service Standards in Local Government' (pol. 'Standardy obsługi inwestora w samorządzie') is co-financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund under the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development 2014–2020 – Priority II Effective public policies on the labour market, economy and education; Measure 2.18 High quality administrative services.
Beneficiary organisation	Ministry of the Interior and Administration
Target groups	Local government administration at gmina (commune/municipality) level in Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship
Project duration	01/08/2016 – 28/02/2019
Budget	EUR 774,514.99 (European funds (ESF): EUR 652,761.23; national contribution: EUR 121,753.76)
Project manager (email address)	Marek Śliwiński, Head of Section, Ministry of the Interior and Administration, Department of Public Administration, (e-mail: marek.sliwinski@mswia.gov.pl)
Partners	Polish Investment and Trade Agency, Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency
Project/organisation website	http://administracja.mswia.gov.pl/adm/projekty-ue/standardy-obslugi-inwes/o-projekcie https://baza.paih.gov.pl/instructions/13

This case study was produced as part of the project "Progress Assessment of the ESF Support to Public Administration – PAPA) contracted by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission. The purpose of this project was to present specific cases of ESF-funded public administration reform and capacity building initiatives, as well as to show the role of ESF financial support to public administration for accountability purposes. This report provides a story on the project '**Investor Service Standards in Local Government**', which discusses its context and purpose; characteristics of the team implementing it; the main challenges faced and difficulties encountered during implementation; the key developments during the implementation process; results and impacts achieved as well as lessons learnt and the role of ESF contribution.

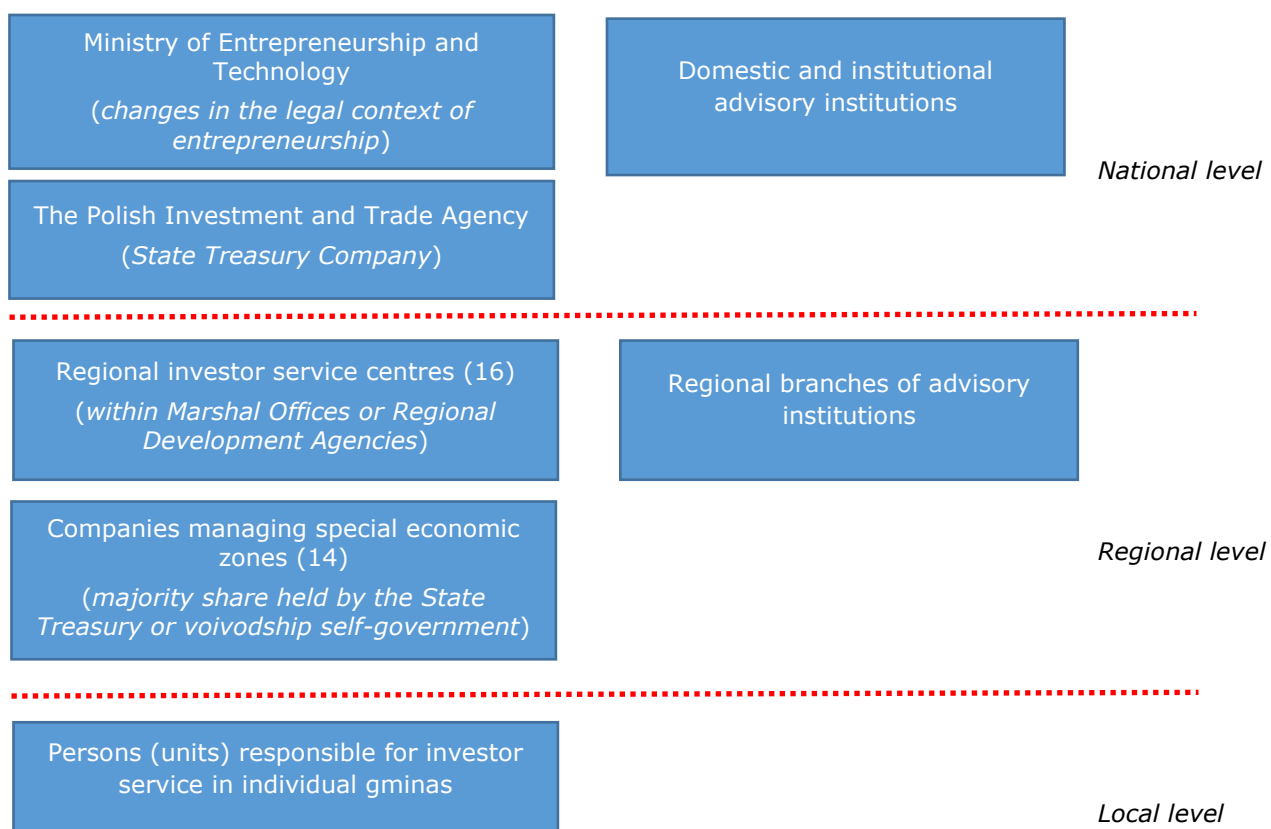
Investor Service Standards in Local Government

Introduction: the context of the project

Potential investors (both domestic and international), when deciding to locate their investments in Poland, may benefit from the support of various institutions operating at different levels of administration. On central and local government level they include the following bodies: 1) Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) (until 2017, Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency); 2) Sixteen regional investor support centres (one in each voivodship - provinces); 3) Fourteen companies managing special economic zones (companies with a majority share held by the State Treasury or voivodship self-government); 4) Units responsible for investor services in particular municipalities (gminas). In practice, in some, especially smaller gminas, the investor may negotiate directly with the mayor/gmina head.

The Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Technology oversees changes in the legal context of doing business in Poland. A context where besides the government bodies also national and international advisory institutions support investors.

Figure 1. Institutions responsible for investment support in Poland



Source: developed by the author.

In order to obtain investment support, the potential investor may apply to any of the above institutions and then (if necessary) will be redirected further. However, while PAIH, regional

investor service centres, companies managing special economic zones, and advisory institutions operate in accordance with recognised standards and have the necessary experience in investor service, the same cannot always be said about investment service in gminas, where there are no uniform standards, and quite often investment support is primarily interpreted as the provision of an appropriate investment area.

Meanwhile, **investment support** applies to all the investment stages, i.e.: **recognition of investment opportunities, investment planning, investment implementation and post-investment care**. The basic entity in Poland offering the so-called **investor package** (including location consulting, business advocacy: solving current problems associated with doing business in Poland, mediation support, relational services, facilitating contacts with central administration and local government units, and investment incentives: government grants [employment and investment grants], opportunities for tax exemptions [income tax and property tax]) is the aforementioned PAIH – a company whose sole shareholder is the State Treasury.

However, another issue is more important in this case study, namely, in each case, if only due to the necessity to fulfil the formal and legal obligations, the investor has to deal with the authorities of the gmina where he decides to do business. At the same time, until recently in Poland there was no proposal for uniform investor service standards at local government level, which would cover all the stages of an investment conducted by competent individuals employed by the gmina office. The lack of such uniform standards may not be a problem for gminas actively seeking investors (especially larger cities), as they usually have specialised staff and organisational units dedicated to this purpose (e.g. investor service centres). Nevertheless, in the case of other gminas, such a lack of uniform standards may substantially impede attracting investments.

To sum up, it was necessary to implement a reform which would:

1. Propose comprehensive standards of investment services in gminas.
2. Provide gmina leaders and individuals responsible for dealing with prospective investors with knowledge and skills in the field of comprehensive investor service, including not only investment preparation, but also support during and after the investment has been made; and
3. Develop a standardised tool to enable gminas to present their investment offer in a comprehensive way.

At this point it should be emphasised that this case description refers to the pilot project carried out in the Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship. Positive experiences from its execution will facilitate the implementation of the developed solutions in gminas located in the remaining 15 Polish voivodships.

Design and execution of the project

Set-up of the project

The current EU financial perspective for thematic objective 11 of the ESIF 2014-2020 programming period envisages far-reaching interventions in selected areas concerning the interface between local government and business. Possibilities for this kind of initiatives were envisaged under Priority Axis II *Effective public policies for the labour market, economy and education* of the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development 2014–2020 (PO WER programme), where, measures have been implemented concerning systemic and structural reforms in selected areas of public policies, crucial from the point of view of the Europe 2020 Strategy and national reform programmes. As regards the implementation of solutions improving the effectiveness of management of services essential for conducting economic activity provided

by public administration, measures were envisaged concerning taxes and local fees, real estate management and **investor service** (measure 2.18 of the PO WER).

Under measure 2.18 PO WER mentioned above, interventions in the area of implementation of procedures for cooperation between local government and investors are allowed. In view of the lack of uniform investor service standards in local governments mentioned in the Introduction, a decision was made to prepare an appropriate project application **addressed to gmina authorities concerning the formulation and implementation of uniform investor service standards at this level. In order for such standards to be implemented in specific gminas, it was also necessary to offer training and advisory activities associated with the implementation of the developed standards.** This is how the idea for the project was born. M. Śliwiński says, 'This is the first large-scale project to address the issue of standardisation of public services provided to investors by gminas in such a comprehensive way.'

The issues addressed required the establishment of an appropriate partnership. The natural leader of the project application was the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, which coordinates central government's policy towards local governments and implements various projects in this area, simultaneously acting as Intermediate Body for Measure 2.18 of the PO WER Programme. It was decided that in order to implement such a complex project, it was necessary to set up a partnership involving the leader, the content partner, and the implementing partner. Therefore, it was justified to involve a partner experienced in investor service and an entity dealing with supporting the development of gminas (including cooperation with investors) at the regional level. The Ministry of Interior and Administration announced an open competition for partners in the future project, as a result of which the target partnership was established.

The leader of the project and the implementing body was the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (MIA), specifically the Unit for the Selection and Implementation of ESF Projects in the Department of Public Administration. As a result of an open call for partners, the MIA selected two institutions: Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) as the content partner and the Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency (WMARR) as the implementing partner. Then, in cooperation with partners, a project proposal was prepared and submitted for evaluation (by the Implementing Body in the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (MIA) and in second stage also two independent experts), which was subsequently accepted for execution.

The project was aligned with Objective 4: 'Improvement of quality and monitoring of the process of providing administrative services essential for running a business' of investment priority 11I PO WER, titled 'Investment in institutional capacity and efficiency of public administration and effectiveness of public services at the national, regional and local level in order to implement reforms, including better law-making and good governance'. At the same time, it contributes to the achievement of the indicator described as 'The number of local government units which have implemented or modernized investor service procedures.'

It should be emphasised that the leader and both project partners have substantial experience in implementing projects associated with public administration. The MIA, both in the 2007–2013 programming period and in subsequent years (2014–2020), has implemented a number of ESF-assisted projects dedicated to public administration. The PAIH has considerable experience in attracting and offering services to domestic and international investors. WMARR in Olsztyn (capital of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship) shareholders include the Voivodship Self-Government, entities of local government, government legal entities, individuals and other private entities. The agency's mission is to foster the economic development of Warmia and Mazury as a region, especially by supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This objective is achieved through various activities related to direct support for enterprises in the form of grants, loans for business development, consultancy in various forms and areas,

organising and conducting training, and information activities. WMARR facilitates contacts between domestic and international entities in the field of business activity.

The project partners were thus appropriately matched to the intended activities:

- An experienced partner dealing with implementation of reforms in public administration (MIA), including local government, coordinated the project addressed to gminas, intended to develop and implement investor service standards at local government level.
- For this purpose, project partners included entities with experience in supporting entrepreneurship and cooperation with local governments, namely: an agency working for regional development (WMARR) and a unit dealing with investment support (PAIH).
- The voivodship unit was a natural partner of the project that due to the fact that the coordination of economic development in its jurisdiction constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of regional self-governments in Poland (although it should be emphasised that individual voivodships substantially differ in their approach to the coordination of economic development and cooperation with gminas).
- The participation of WMARR, a regional development agency, had one more justification – the project in question was a pilot, and consisted in the implementation of investor services in one of 16 Polish voivodships. Its successful execution will make it possible to disseminate its achievements throughout the remaining 15 voivodships.

Starting point and aims of the project

The fundamental goal of the project was to develop and test a uniform approach to investor services, which should ultimately be applied by all the gminas in Poland. The intention was to develop a comprehensive, rather than fragmented, approach to the issue of standardisation of investor services – not as an obligation, but as a good practice.

The concept behind the service standards was that the operating procedures of gmina offices should match the needs and expectations of entrepreneurs. This would involve among others:

- Standardising and organising data relevant from the investor's point of view (gminas are struggling with data dispersion and information on websites inadequate for investors' needs); and
- Providing gmina and town mayors, as well as individuals responsible for investor services, with comprehensive knowledge of, for example, cooperating with an investor (how to negotiate with investors, how to effectively and transparently seek out investors).

For example, the scope and contents of information published on gminas' websites concerning their investment offer is pivotal to the success of attracting investors. Changes implemented in this area are expected to improve access to what individual gminas have to offer to potential investors. A dedicated website is usually the first source of information about a gmina and its offer for a potential investor, therefore a well-designed and user-friendly website addressed to the investor with up-to-date information on the gmina economy and investment offer is a very important tool in investor services. Uniform standards of presentation of data on investment in generally accepted and used formats should allow the gmina to prepare their offers quickly. At the same time, prospective investors should be able to easily compare the offer presented by different territorial self-government units.

Matching investors' needs and expectations might also necessitate changes in the organisational structure of the gmina office itself. In small gminas, for example, investor services are usually provided directly by the gmina or town mayors, but it does not always work well. In order to

achieve this goal, it is important to show gmina or town mayors the benefits of having an operational investor service unit in the gmina.

The scope of the services standards developed in the course of the project included the stage of acquiring an investor, service and post-investment support. Such standardisation is expected to deliver better, more efficient and more professional investor services in self-government, which, in turn, will have a positive impact on the image of the gmina and its evaluation as a place to invest, and as a result may contribute to its economic development and the inflow of new entrepreneurs or the development of existing ones. In a broader perspective, a gmina that is friendly to investors is also one friendly to entrepreneurs – regardless of their investment plans.¹

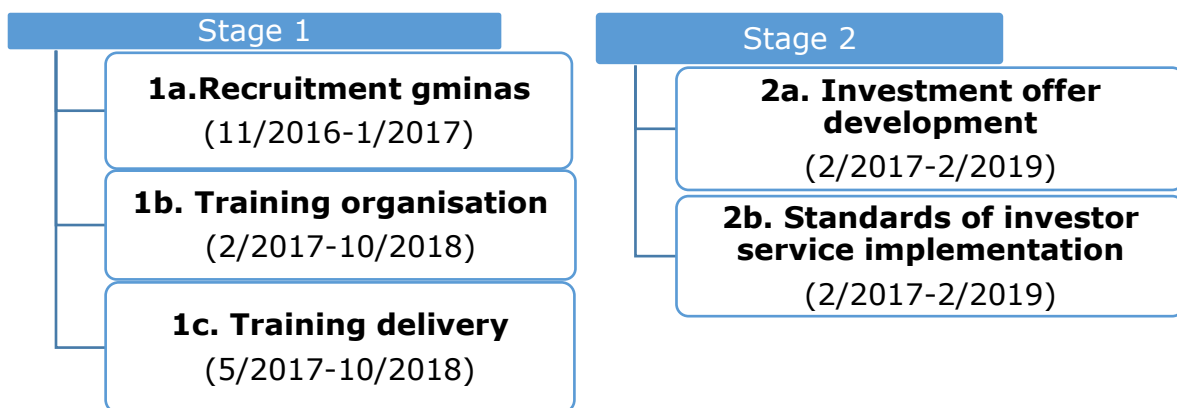
Hence, the objective of the project was formulated as: to develop and implement procedures for cooperation with investors, and solutions to enhance investment attractiveness in gminas, including the preparation, dissemination and updating of information on gmina investment offers. The following groups of tasks were carried out within the framework of the project:

- Training courses on the preparation of strategic management of economic development, investment offer, competitive advantage of location;
- Individual consultancy (audit, monitoring of investment areas, preparation of a professional investment offer in accordance with international standards, presentation of the gmina from a business point of view, and individual consultations on the creation of investment offers);
- Preparation of promotional materials – investment folders containing information about selected investment areas and economic information about the gmina;
- Organisation of the Open Day of the Investor Assistance System in the pilot region;
- Organisation of a national conference with a separate exhibition area for territorial self-government units; and
- Study visit for managers of territorial self-government units.

Implementation of the ESF project: main developments

The project 'Investor Service Standards in Local Government' comprised two stages (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Stages of 'Investor service standards in local government' project



Source: developed by the author.

¹ See: <http://administracja.mswia.gov.pl/adm/projekty-ue/standardy-obslugi-inwes/o-projekcie/10100,Zalozenia-projektu.html>; accessed: 10.06.2019

The recruitment procedure was carried out in two stages (Stage 1a). The first one comprised official applications from gminas for participation in the project. Then, as part of the recruitment audit process, advisers from WMARR held meetings in gminas interested in participating in the project. At these meetings, experts identified solutions and tools used by gminas in the process of investor service and economic promotion. The findings of the audits were reported by WMARR for each gmina. On the basis of these inputs, PAIH prepared a comprehensive report indicating the state of development of gminas in the area of investor support.

Moreover, the audit was used to determine the scope of training courses for gminas' management staff and office employees and to prepare training materials, guidelines, manuals, etc. The audit was also used to determine the scope of training courses for gminas' management staff and office employees (stage 1b).

The training sessions (stage 1c) covered issues related to investor service standards necessary to acquire specialist competencies in the field of investor service in gminas. The training was dedicated to employees from gmina offices (maximum two persons per office) responsible for investor service and managers. Employees of gmina offices were given nine days of full-time training, while managers of gminas were given four days of full-time training and a two-day study visit.

Individual consultations included, among others, the development of an investment offer based on the standard adopted in the project, preparation of the content of a website presenting the investment offer of a gmina, and preparation of information materials concerning an investment offer of a single area or property of a gmina. The implementation of solutions meant that the gmina, with the support of WMARR, developed a comprehensive investment offer for one of its areas or properties and published it on its website (stage 2a), as well as procedures for investor service, in accordance with the standard developed by PAIH under the project (a publication titled *Investor service standards – A handbook for gminas*²) (stage 2b). The project also included a meeting with an entrepreneur experienced in investing in a gmina, which was treated as a simulation meeting with a potential investor. The aim of these meetings was to individually evaluate the investment offer prepared by the gmina and the way the investor was assisted in the office³.

The factors that influence the potential attractiveness of the project for the gminas include the following:⁴

- Diagnosis of the gmina at the outset of the project, which resulted in a report on its investment attractiveness;
- Preparation of investor service standards, the implementation of which by the gmina was confirmed by a certificate;
- Substantive support in modifying gminas' websites in order to meet the entrepreneurs' expectations;
- Supporting gmina offices in the process of modification of materials promoting their investment offers (including free aerial photographs for offers);
- Participation of gmina leaders and office staff in training courses on comprehensive investor service;
- Training of gmina employees in the use of the investment offer generator, which will likely become a key tool for presenting such offers of gminas in Poland;
- Participation of gmina staff in the Local Government Meeting, a two-day event in the form of workshops and expert debates aimed at familiarizing project participants with

² Wolff, Odziemczyk 2018

³ WMARR, 2016.

⁴ Dziemianowicz, Piróg 2018, p. 14

modern techniques and tools used in the field of territorial marketing and business promotion;

- Participation of gmina and town mayors and presidents in a study visit which included the presentation of successful solutions applied by cities and gminas. A decision was made to present the experiences of two cities – Bydgoszcz and Włocławek – and the gmina of Brześć Kujawski which adopted a different approach to the organization of investor services, located in a voivodship adjacent to Warmia-Mazury Voivodship;
- Dividing gminas into groups of five units and assigning to each group a technical supervisor supporting not only the participation of a given gmina in the project, but also helping to answer questions concerning current problems with investor services; and
- After the implementation of the standards, the opportunity for gminas to test their investment prospects through a simulated meeting with the investor.

Despite such an attractive programme, the project did not progress without certain problems. They occurred both at the stage of recruitment of gminas to the project and at the stage of implementation. In the first case, thanks to participation in previous projects implemented by WMARR, 30 gminas immediately applied for participation, but it was difficult to recruit the remaining 15 gminas. Among other things, contractual penalties for breach of contract by the gmina⁵ procedures governing the processing of the participants' personal data (which, in some people's opinion, is time-consuming.) and the national requirements of the PO WER programme (also in some cases time-consuming, which is particularly important in the case of understaffed gmina offices) might have discouraged gminas from participating in the project. Moreover, few gminas actually met the project access criterion, i.e. having an investment offer or at least an area available for investment owned by the gmina.⁶

WMARR also indicated the following were challenges in the project's implementation:⁷

- Frequent substitutions of participants in meetings, even in individual gminas);
- Changes in the context – when a gmina comes to the conclusion that it is no longer capable of participating in the project (e.g. after the sale of the only available investment land), or after the start of the project, its authorities decide that it would be worth taking part in it;
- Insufficient commitment coupled with high expectations of some project participants;
- Time pressure that resulted in large training groups, despite two training centres available in Olsztyn and Giżycko;
- Lengthy public procurement procedures (from 2 to 4 months), the problem of grossly low price⁸s, limitations ensuing from the rates adopted in the whole project (difficulties in booking a hotel, for example), the need to balance the very precise description of the subject of the contract in the ToR with the expected flexibility on the part of the training providers (the number of groups could vary substantially).

Despite these obstacles, the project was successfully completed in February 2019, thanks to the experience and determination of the project partners and in some cases even exceeded the originally adopted values of indicators. As M. Piskorz emphasises, 'Thanks to this project, gminas perceive investment offers not only from the perspective of access to their own investment

⁵ According to the Rules of Participation of Gminas adopted in the project, failure by the gmina to implement the investor service standard could result in it being required to refund the incurred project costs in the part attributable to that gmina.

⁶ Dziemianowicz, Piróg 2018, p. 15

⁷ Dziemianowicz, Piróg 2018, p. 20

⁸ Abnormally low price is defined as an unreliable price offered by a potential bidder when compared to market prices for a given service, product delivery, or construction work:

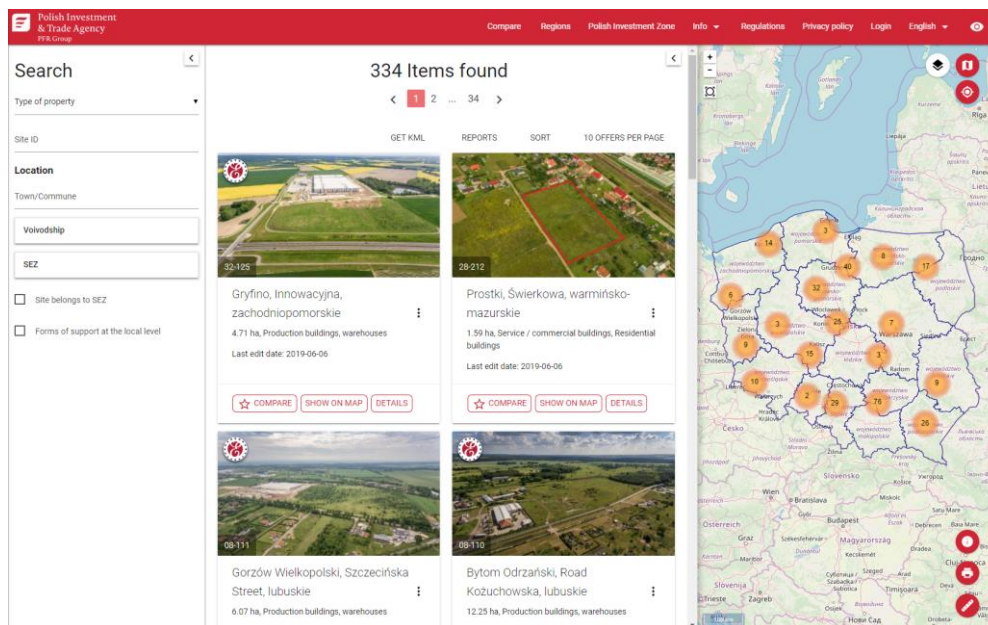
http://www.komunikaty.pl/komunikaty/1,124833,11543643,Razaco_niska_cena___poznaj_definicje.html (accessed 23.07.2019)

areas, but also look more broadly at private land, i.e. at the area of the gmina as a whole as a potential investment target.' The completed project activities include:

- Developing an investor service standard for local governments in the form of a manual;
- Developing and launching the investment offer generator (see below);
- Delivery of training and consultancy activities in the implementation of the investor service standard;
- Development of a simulation game for the management staff of territorial self-government units supported under the project;
- Organising a study visit for the managing staff of territorial self-government units covered by the support;
- Delivery of training sessions for the staff of investor service centres; and
- Organisation of two local government meetings – a two-day event in the form of workshops and expert debates aimed at familiarising project participants with modern techniques and tools applied in the field of territorial marketing and business promotion.

Thanks to the project, it was also possible to build a professional IT tool for collecting standardised information on the investment offers prepared by local government units in Poland. The Investment Offer Generator (Fig. 3) is available at <https://baza.paih.gov.pl>. The knowledge base available at the above website address in the Info tab holds all the materials produced during project execution, including a study edited by Professor Wojciech Dziemianowicz summarising the experiences of its implementation.

Figure 3. Sample investment offer generator page



Source: <https://baza.paih.gov.pl/?lang=en> (accessed: 7 June 2019).

The project deliverables will be disseminated in 2019–2021 throughout Poland as a result of a competition announced by the Intermediate Body for Measure 2.18 PO WER on 30 November 2018.⁹

Conclusion

Main results

The results of the project can be divided into 'hard' and 'soft' ones.

The 'hard' outcomes of the project certainly include the development of the Investment Offer Generator. The generator enables adding investment offers for potential investors both by private persons and entrepreneurs, as well as local government office staff and PAIH regional partners.¹⁰ This database is constantly expanding, new offers from various voivodships are posted there – not only from warmińsko-mazurskie, which participated in the pilot project. The generator is being integrated with a similar PAIH solution.

Another 'hard' result is the manual for local government units interested in introducing uniform standards of investor/entrepreneur service recommended by PAIH. These standards make it possible to meet the expectations of entrepreneurs concerning the support of the investment process by the gmina¹¹.

It is also worth noting that, individuals responsible for investor service have been appointed in gminas participating in the project. In some cases, they are directly subordinate to the mayor, in which case they have a completely different position with respect to the gmina council and gmina office, which enables them to obtain information from various units more efficiently, e.g. on conditions for a specific investment project. The project also encouraged gminas to organise and systematise data for investors.

Among the 'soft' results of the project, one should mention especially the increased local government awareness of the complexity of the issues surrounding investor service, as well as the broadening of their knowledge on investor service – namely, the investor needs comprehensive knowledge not only at the time of making the investment, but also expects support during and after the investment. Through the participation in training courses and study visits, knowledge, skills and social competences in this area have been developed among the managers and office staff. Feedback suggests that the project will enable a more expansive and proactive approach to investors.

While there is no simple causal link, according to national statistical office (GUS), investment outlays increased by 84,8%¹² year on year in the first half of 2019, by far the highest growth of all Polish regions.

Therefore, the project has had an impact on the operation of the administrative system in terms of investor service through organising and raising the level of knowledge on investor service and post-investment support.

⁹ Detailed information concerning the said competition can be found on the website of the Intermediate Body: <http://administracja.mswia.gov.pl/adm/projekty-ue/standardy-obslugi-inwes/aktualnosci/10918,Standardy-obslugi-inwestora-w-samorzadzie-podsumowanie-projektu.html>; accessed: 11.06.2019

¹⁰ The system allows only logged-in users to add investment offers. System users have different rights:

1. External users and PAIH administrators can list investment opportunities throughout the country;
2. Gmina users may list offers from the area of their gmina;
3. Regional users list offers from the area of their region.

¹¹ Wolff, Odziewicz 2018

¹²https://stat.gov.pl/download/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/5498/3/34/1/sytuacja_spoleczno_gospodarcza_wojewodztw_2_2019.pdf

Lessons learnt

The implementation of the project supports the rationale of standardising public services in local government. In this case, standardisation is understood as any kind of compliance with specific investor service guidelines. This allows for the professionalization of investor services and, consequently, may translate into increased interest in the investment areas held by a given gmina. It is also worth emphasising the point of using the combination of 'hard' and 'soft' activities in projects addressed to public administration units. The former deliver tangible effects (such as the Investment Offer Generator or the manual on investor service standards), whereas the latter, such as training, are part of the long-term process of improving competencies of officials. The appropriate selection of project partners deserves praise as well. Thanks to the combined forces of the ministry responsible for supervising local governments, the agency responsible for investment service, and the regional partner responsible for development (which is familiar with the specificity of local government units) that the planned project results have been achieved and will be exploited in other Polish voivodships. With such a complex task as the standardisation of public services, it also seems justified to focus on the implementation of long-term projects, where first a pilot is conducted among a selected group of entities and then its results are implemented among the others.

Furthermore, the following conclusions can be drawn from direct cooperation with gminas in this project:

- Investor information and introduction of investor service standards (previously, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency mainly contacted the regions) should start at the level of individual gminas.
- Thanks to this project, the gmina authorities no longer look only at their own investment areas, but take into consideration also privately owned areas, i.e. at the potential investment target of the gmina as a whole.
- Investors' questions should not be left unanswered – not every contact with a prospective investor will be successful; nevertheless, everyone needs to be given maximum attention and time.
- The individual(s) responsible for investor service must be familiar with what most office staff working in other positions know(s) about the areas of interest to the potential investor.
- The positive experiences gathered during the project should be continued, in particular, the cooperation with the owners of attractive areas should be extended in order to broaden the investment offer of the gminas.

Role of ESF support

The project responds to long-term challenges of relevance to the quality of public policies. In the case of Poland, such a challenge is posed by the unsatisfactory quality of public services provided to entrepreneurs by gminas. It is highly likely that without the OP and the available co-funding, the project would not have been implemented due to insufficient domestic resources.

Certainly, the implementation of the project is in line with the recommendations of the latest European Commission report '2019 European Semester'. As the authors of this report argue, 'current economic conditions are favourable with continuing strong growth and improving public finances. Unemployment is at a record low and social inequalities are gradually diminishing. However, in the long run Poland's economic prospects depend on the economy's capacity to move away from a model based on low labour costs towards a knowledge-based economy producing advanced products and services'¹³. In that report it is also said that 'Investment trends will increasingly depend on various non-tangible factors like perceptions of macroeconomic

¹³ European Commission, 2019, p.2.

stability and the quality of Poland's institutions, policies, regulatory environment, and the rule of law¹⁴. The above-mentioned activities certainly contribute to the improvement of the quality of investor service institutions, which may result in attracting new investments, including those with a high level of innovation, which should favour the construction of knowledge-based economy in Poland.

The project fits perfectly into the current EU financial perspective for thematic objective 11 of the ESIF 2014-2020 programming period envisages interventions in areas concerning the interface between local government and business. In addition, the planned implementation of the project throughout the country may contribute to a change in Poland's position in the Ease of Doing Business Index ranking in terms of difficulty to set up and run a business.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.3.

References

This case study was possible thanks to information from the following sources:

1. Research conducted as part of the project, particularly: the manual on investor service standards, the Investment Offer Generator, and a study titled: Investor service standards service in local government – the experiences of the pilot project conducted in gminas of Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship. (Dziemianowicz, Piróg 2018).
2. Websites dedicated to the project maintained by the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the Polish Investment and Trade Agency, and the Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency.
3. The interviews. At this point, the author would like to thank all the interviewees for their preparation, commitment, and readiness to explain in an accessible way all the project's complexities.

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