

## Sustainability of Strategic Planning in Šiauliai County

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### Abstract

Sustainability in its municipalities strategic planning and is analysed in Šiauliai county in the article. Šiauliai region, Šiauliai city and its five county municipalities' strategic development plans have been analysed. In strategic planning according to theoretical sources, it is recommended to keep to a 2K conception: competition and cooperation. Research has shown that this conception is not kept in Šiauliai county planning, and strategic planning is basically not sustainable: municipalities do not adjust strategic aims and tasks among themselves; the region's development plan organisers put provided activities' means according to themselves.

**Key words:** strategic development plan, strategic planning sustainability, competition and cooperation.

### Introduction

**Research relevance and significance.** *Regional development* in scientific literature is defined as the integral community life social, economic, environmental, health care, technology, culture and recreation aspects development in a particular concrete territory. The region's development must be based on its optimal expansion of its constituents (social, nature, economic regions' development aspects) proportionally and aimed at life level and quality improvement through the mentioned constituents. *Regional development* encompasses not only traditional policy in a particular territory, but also the socio-economic process organised in a specific political and cultural context (Alberti, Susskind, 1996; Atkinson, 1996; Boldrin, Canova, 2001; Bourdeu, 1996; Feng, Xu, 1998; Huang, Wong, Chen, 1998; Yoon, Lee, 2003; Spangenberg, 2002; Spangenberg, Pfahl, Deller, 2002; Bagdzevičienė, Dokurnevič, 2002; Bagdzevičienė, 2001; Bagzevičienė, Tamkus, 2000; Grauzinis, 2001; Streimikienė, 2002a; 2002b; Tamosiūnas, 2003b, 2004).

Therefore the strategic regional development planning must be related to the sustainability concept, sustainability principles must be applied to different

development processes and the total planned strategies. Unfortunately, sustainability (well-balanced state) is extremely rarely analysed in strategic planning (Čepinskis, 2002; Čiegis, 2008).

In scientific literature the strategic planning methodological aspects are frequently stressed (Arimavičiūtė, 2004, 2005; Boal, Canova, 2001), the main aims of regional development (Jauhiaiainen, 2000; Masser, 2001). In this article specific strategic planning methodology **problematic questions** are raised: what the main sustainable strategic planning theoretical and practical principles are; how they manifest themselves in a particular case strategic planning of Šiauliai county and its municipalities.

**Research object:** Šiauliai county and its municipalities strategic planning sustainability.

**Research aim:** to analyze Šiauliai county and its municipalities strategic planning sustainability.

To achieve the aim the following **tasks** have been raised:

1. To identify the region's main development principles and aims according to scientific literature.
2. To focus on the main strategic planning methodological features.
3. To analyse the main theoretical sustainable development conception principles.
4. To analyse Šiauliai county, the Šiauliai city, Pakruojis, Kelme, Radviliškis, Joniškis districts' strategic planning using the aspect of strategic priorities, and aims among them.

**Research methodology:** theoretical (analysis, generalisation, filling) and **empirical** (document analysis, quantitative and qualitative data analysis) research methods have been applied. In order to identify sustainable planning principles, *qualitative* 7 strategic development planning content analysis has been carried out. These plans have been analysed using four layers: methodological quality of the identified plans, analysis of the content related to priorities-aims-tasks. According to one region's example applications of strategic development principles have been identified. The present region's strategic planning methodologies have been identified, attention has been focused on holistic development aspects of the region.

## Regional planning principles

Regional planning principles basically focus on the region's development aims. Scientists (Alberti, Susskind, 1996; Atkinson, 1996; Boldrin, Canova, 2001; Bourdeu, 1996; Feng, Xu, 1998; Huang, Wong, Chen, 1998; Yoon, Lee, 2003; Spangenberg,

2002; Spangenberg, Pfahl, Deller, 2002) emphasize that the region's development must be purposeful and based not only on real urban possibilities, but also on realisation of society demands.

These principles should be applied in regional policy formation and implementation (Apie regioninę politiką, 2002) (Table 1):

Table 1

### Regional policy formation and implementation principles

<i>Principle</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<b>Coordination principle</b>	Regional policy implementation success directly depends on various interested state and municipalities' institutions activity coordination firstly, planning investments from public sources.
<b>Partnership, local initiative principle</b>	Real economic expansion is carried out at regional and local levels. Private initiatives and local government's partnership is one of the most effective regional policy effective implementation factors.
<b>Local growth and temporality principle</b>	All the mentioned principles are interrelated and show that the most important regional policy aim is to add to business growth and development in places so that there would be adequately strong economic potential (this principle is not implemented if, e.g. the larger part of the workforce in the district / town is dependable on workplaces through central budget financed institutions, hospitals, schools, etc). Regional policy must be temporary means to achieve or foster this potential.
<b>Concentration principle</b>	According to this principle, only the chosen spheres defined in the national social-economic expansion plan would be supported, also they are included in it while planning the coming period's state and region's economy expansion.

Prepared by E. Bivainis according to the source: *About regional politics*. [Accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: <<http://www.nrda.lt/>>.

The distinguished 4 regional policy principles systemise general region's development guidelines, but region's development means must be anticipated. According to V. Damasiene (2003), direct public investments to four main economy spheres: industry and services, agriculture, human resources, economy infrastructure must be sought in the regions.

Other authors (Leksinas, Svecovas, 2000) distinguish three regions' development features: consistency, sustainability and social integration. They could be called the basic regions' development principles, ignorance of which reduces the region's functionality possibilities.

According to A. Thierstein, M. Walser (1997), today sustainability is used to explain different attitudes, different development processes, planning strategies. One of sustainability characteristics at the regional level is that it links local needs and requirements and integrates them to the central policy, strategy, priorities.

National Sustainable Development Strategy (2003) and its implementation means are based on the following principles: management, responsibility, ecological effectiveness, science, knowledge and technological advancement, caution, participation (partnership) and others.

R. Ciegis (2003) distinguishes the following society sustainable development management prin-

ciples:

- *complexity* principle which requires to analyze balanced development as the four systems (ecological, economic, social and institutional) interaction;
- *sociality* principle because in order to ensure socially stable development in a modern society it is essential further to develop wider as possible people's participation in taking decisions;
- *prevention* principle requires to use moderation resources in order to protect oneself safely from present activity potential catastrophic effects in the future.
- *holistic thinking* principle when while solving a complex balanced development problem it is essential to pay attention to every factor influencing every problem.
- *subsidiarity* principle: institutional decisions must be taken possibly at the lowest level;
- *planning* principle: society's balanced development implementation process must be planned using "Local Agenda 21" as one of possible planning stages;
- *profitability* principle, because companies and partnerships seek profits, therefore, business and environment must be concerned to help but not limit or disturb each other.

## Regional development differences in Lithuania

The main development differences among Lithuanian counties are determined by various factors. The following main reasons, which determine Lithuanian regional development differences have been distinguished (Bagdzeviciene, Dokurnevic, 2002; Bagdzeviciene, 2001; Damasiene, 2004):

- More urbanized Lithuanian towns' infrastructure, firstly, transport system.
- Larger state's cities attract more investments than other Lithuanian regions.
- There is a stronger services sector in the largest Lithuanian cities.
- In the state's largest cities a larger part (according to production, number of workforce, etc.) is made by newer and more modern industry branches. In smaller towns and villages production capacities are even smaller. Moreover, in smaller towns, villages there small or medium size business is weaker developed.
- Workforce qualification differences in separate Lithuanian regions: in larger towns bigger qualified workforce concentration could be noticed.
- Residents of the largest cities use more IT than other residents.

Unequal development possibilities of Lithuanian regions exist not only because of economic and social differences. Regions can lag behind because of other reasons: historical reasons, unfavorable geographical location, cultural recession, market conjuncture differences. However, all lagging behind regions face with similar (though of a different scale) problems (Bagdzeviciene, 2001): inadequately developed physical (basic) infrastructure (transport, telecommunications, energetics, water supply and sewerage, environment protection means); small use of science research and development of new technologies, lack of financial means; lack of high qualification workforce, great differentiation of residents' income.

As it is stated by R. Bagdzeviciene (2001), in some cases regions and regional institutions at the regional level are "the outstretched state's arms". While solving regional management problems it is suggested management decentralization, which enables regions to organize social and economic policy themselves. According to government's decentralization level and region's specific conditions, historical conditions, management conditions, formation of a local regional policy implementation model could be noticed. According to R. Bagdzeviciene, A. Tamkus (2002), currently regional government and management problems are actual in whole Europe. Traditional regional government faces crisis because of ineffective "from top to bottom" management methods

and inability to satisfy more differentiated demands of various interest groups.

## Strategic planning process in the region

Regional development is indistinguishable from strategic planning. Strategic planning provides many advantages. Firstly, it allows to analyze and evaluate the institution as the system and to seek that its all elements would be in pursuit of the defined goals. It allows more clearly to understand the institution's aims and more rationally distribute financial, material and work resources. While analyzing the situation, raising strategic aims and forecasting the expected results, conditions are created to better coordinate institution's elements activities and modify them paying attention to institution's changes, also to better control how the goals are implemented; to evaluate and motivate workers.

In scientific literature two attitudes towards management ideas of integration at the regional level are given: "top-down" or "centre-down", "bottom-up" (Thierstein, Walser, 1999).

Scientists (Macleod, 1997) note that from the 1960s the attitude "top-down" in the regions' development theory dominated in the world. This attitude is considered to be traditional. However, the domination of the mentioned attitude did not reduce differences between different subsistence levels. Uneven elements increased both among social layers of society and geographical spheres. Therefore various authors give an alternative attitude towards regioned development: "bottom-up". F. Leloup, L. Moyart (2003) contrast this attitude to the traditional one. While analyzing the attitude "top-down" G. Macleod (1997) states that general rejection of the theory arose because, according to this theory, not many investments are made and most frequently only into specific economics or geographic spheres with the hope that the benefit will be distributed also for other spheres. This author distinguishes other features typical for this theory (Macleod, 1997):

1. *Traditional theories emphasize centre / periphery polarization*, when capital moves from the center to periphery, and resources come back from periphery to center (e.g. investments into agriculture sector where raw material is grown investments are moved from big cities to regions, but the final (the grown) product goes back to town for recycling and realization;
2. An attitude is noted that *development* (spontaneous or artificial) *starts in some dynamic spheres or geographical places and later spreads to other spheres or places*;
3. Development based on this attitude *encompasses great volume investment projects and efforts*,

which are concentrated on functional and territorial integration and *fosters* private and public sectors organizations *need to move development aspects* to separate integrated units using big distribution mechanisms to reduce economic, social, cultural and institutional changes which hinder this movement.

At this moment, the dominating attitude “bottom-up” is based on the statement that decisions and influence must be as close as possible to “bottom”, i.e. must rise from regions, but not be raised from top. This new uninterrupted development paradigm focuses on local networks and potential actualization, when the local environment characteristics become the region’s economic development catalysts (Le-loup, Moyart, 2003).

S. Illeris (1993) formulated inductive regional development theory, the main features of which are the following: every region’s economic structure makes great impact on its development; the idea if the region will be strengthened and will win, or vice

versa, depends on local conditions such as political institutions, help in the regional policy, infrastructure, qualified workforce, population density and social qualification.

### Sustainable planning principles

One of the possible principles for sustainable planning could be *General Evaluation Model* (further in the text – *GEM*), which has been prepared according to the European Foundation for Quality Management Perfection Model and is a free ISO system alternative.

*GEM* performs four main functions: 1) sets unique public sector organisations’ features; 2) serves as the means for heads seeking to improve the organisations’ activities; 3) links various quality management models; 4) allows to contrast public sector organisations.

*GEM* (see Figure 1) was developed to be applied in all public sector, in public sector organizations of regional, national and local levels.

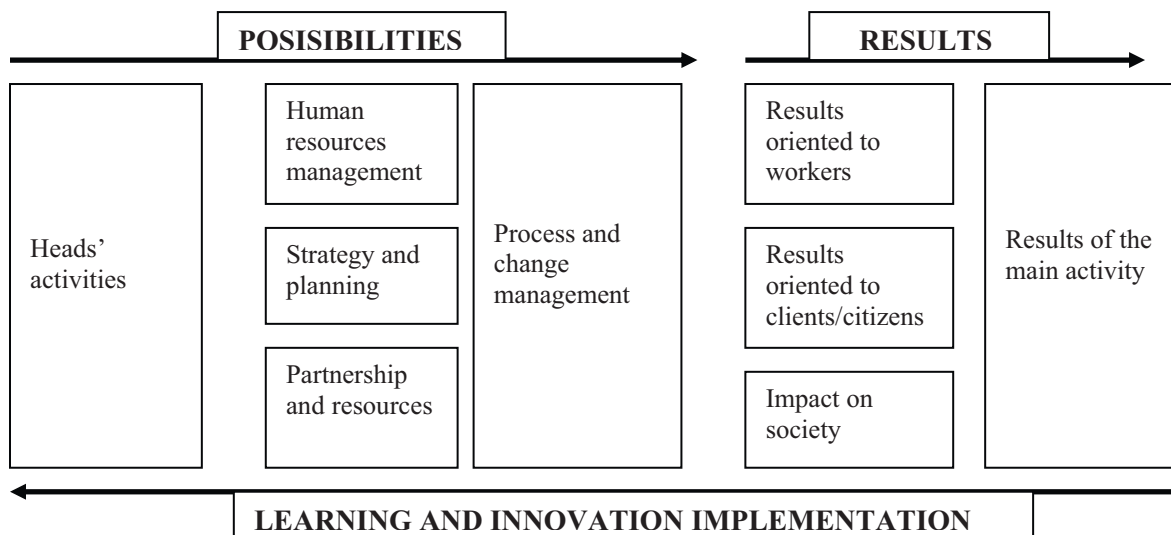


Fig. 1. General Evaluation model

Source: *General Evaluation Model* (2005). [Accessed on 2008-05-02].  
 Access on the Internet: <<http://www.livadis.lt/livadis/lt/upfiles/GEM.pdf>>.

A nine block structure encompasses the most important aspects, which could be analyzed in every organization. In each block criteria for organizations’ evaluation are given.

The advantages of *GEM*: evaluation is obtained based on proofs; using it the activity direction is set and it is settled what must be done to improve organization’s activity; it evaluates according to criteria, recognized in all Europe; it could be used as progress means periodically; it shows link among aims, strategies and processes; it helps to secure the mentioned activity spheres’ improvement, which are

needed; it allows possibilities to see good experience and share it with other organizations; it helps to motivate workers involving them into the organization’s activity improvement process; it allows to estimate progress level and achievements; it helps to integrate various activity quality improvement initiatives into usual activity processes.

However, this model more reflects usual tendencies. In the region’s planning process the main dimensions of it could be used while carrying out environment and resources analysis, while analyzing results.



Analysis of scientific literature allowed to create sustainable development strategic planning conceptual model – 2K (see Figure 2). It should be noted

that two main sustainable strategic planning principles, competition and cooperation, are given in this model.

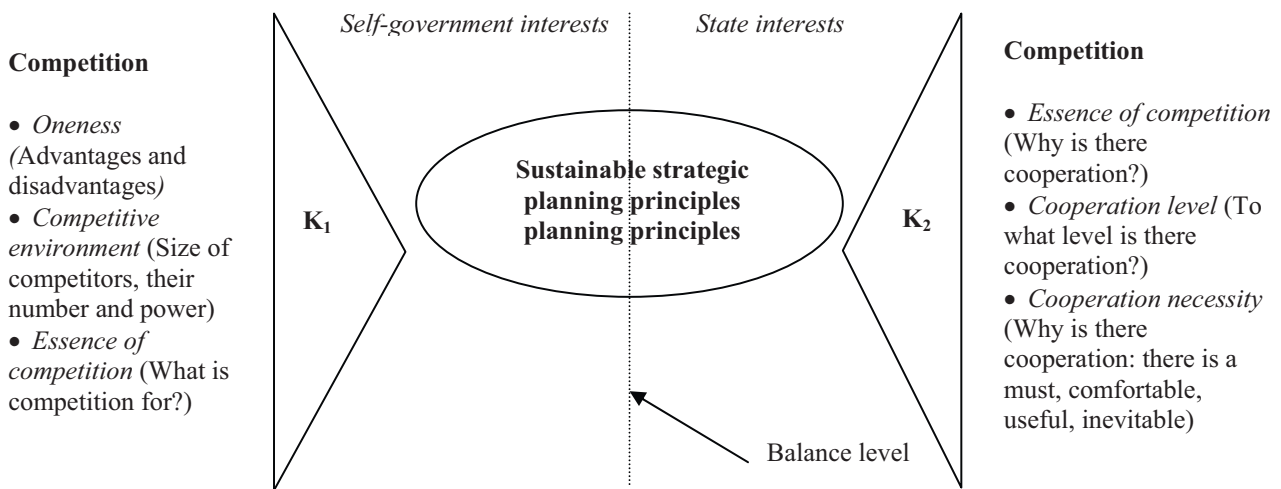


Fig. 2. Sustainable strategic planning model 2K

The essence of this strategic planning model – is match between two components (K): **K<sub>1</sub> – competition** component (including *oneness*, *competitive environment* (size of competitors, number, power), *the essence of competition* (why is there a need to compete?).

The other component – **K<sub>2</sub> – cooperation**, which encompasses *cooperation essence* (what for to cooperate?), *cooperation level* (to what extent to cooperate?), *cooperation necessity* (why there is cooperation – is it compulsory, comfortable, useful, inevitable?).

In this model both two components must be matched, i.e. the balance level must be mobile, but none of the mentioned components could dominate. A successful match of both components must be reflected in strategic plans, especially priorities, strategic aims, tasks identification.

Cooperation and competition principles must help public sector organizations to keep sustainability between their own and state interests, i.e. there must be seen the situation with whom and when to cooperate, and when and with whom to compete. Also in this model *General Evaluation Model* main advantages are integrated (e.g. paying attention to competition and cooperation components, activity direction is set and settled what must be done to improve organization’s activity; also links among aims, strategies, processes and other things are shown).

### Research methodology of sustainable strategic planning in Šiauliai region

While analyzing strategic planning in Šiauliai region, qualitative research has been carried out, because it has been sought to identify cause-consequence relations, which are very difficult to research using quantitative research methods. In qualitative research attention is paid to content analysis, but not statistical data distributions.

In Lithuania 5 empirical research (see Table 2) on self-government’s strategic planning has been carried out; the aims and tasks of which are different. Generalizing, four main aspects could be distinguished: in general all research is oriented to quantitative research, but only in one of them (Volosciuk and others, 2007) document analysis has been carried out; all research has been carried out since 2003, i.e. very old. State and municipalities’ strategic planning is a constant process and it must be analyzed constantly; empirical research which will cover all the region’s strategic plans’ complex qualitative analysis have not been carried out. Only in research by I. Volosciuk and others (2007), titled “Regional development: tendencies and problems in the EU support implementation” one aspect, the EU support implementation, is covered.

## Empirical research on strategic planning in Lithuanian self-government

Research	Aim, tasks	Results
I. Volosciuk, J. Rimkute, A. Driskiuvienė, V. Motiekaitienė, (2007). <i>Regional development: tendencies and problems in the EU support implementation.</i>	The study's "Regional development: tendencies and problems. The EU support implementation" aim: to analyze prepared plans of the state counties and municipalities according to the following aspects: 1) Counties and municipalities' problems and needs identification and correspondence to long-term development priorities; 2) Counties' and municipalities' possibilities to implement national development priorities using EU structural funds.	To analyze Lithuanian counties and municipalities strategic plans provided on the websites of counties and municipalities and officially provided data about the EU support implementation on the websites of Finance Ministry and European Social Fund Agency.
M. Arimavičiūtė (2004). <i>Sociological survey research of strategic management in Lithuanian municipalities</i>	The aim: while analyzing strategic management system in municipality institutions to identify the most important strategic management obstacles, mistakes, planning department and planning committee performed functions.	In October of 2003 there have been carried out sociological survey in municipalities, 25 respondents from 17 biggest Lithuanian towns' municipalities have been questioned.
A. V. Matulionis, S. Mikenienė, R. Rauleckas (2003). <i>Local government development in Lithuania (1991-2001): sociological research of municipality employees' attitudes.</i>	Lithuanian self-government systemic changes during the last ten year period was analyzed. The aim: to reveal change tendencies and perspectives in local municipalities. Change analysis was carried out reviewing legal basis creation process and results. Municipalities and counties' functions were defined and the premise if the main problems while implementing municipality functions arise because of law imperfection and different political forces in the Parliament and local municipalities was checked. Subjective indicators revealing municipality heads' power and autonomy while implementing function were analyzed.	There are analyzed municipalities leaders' surveys carried out in 1991, 1995, 1998 and 2001 according to international "Democracy and local government" researches' programs' methodology, results revealing attitudes of administrative personnel and politicians working in municipalities after each elections of 1990, 1995, 1997 and 2000.
A. Bakaveckas, (2002). <i>The executive branch institutions' system in the Republic of Lithuania: problems and solutions.</i>	The aim was using a systemic approach to investigate and research the essence of the executive branch, its system, organizational and functionality problems of the executive branch institutions existing in them and to offer possible solutions and to form legal and management improvement premises.	There is analyzed the executive power institutions system evolution from March 11, 1990 up to January 1, 2002.
N. Kundrotienė, K. Reikerta (2002). <i>Strategic planning implementation in public administration institutions of the Republic of Lithuania.</i>	In a practical approach article strategic planning implementation in Lithuania beginning, strategic planning methodology principles approved by the Government and the mentioned methodology application in public administration institutions was given.	Strategic planning changes after 2001 were analyzed, and concrete suggestions were given.

*Šiauliai region* is defined as the first level metropolitan regional category center in the General plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania. The metropolitan center is the widest functional structure with the highest level creative and analytical potential frequently related to university research basis, financial, production and other high service possibilities in respect to the state's largest territory size. Šiauliai region development is coordinated by the Regional Development Council made up of 15 members and 2 advisers.

Only Šiauliai region's plans have been analyzed: Šiauliai city general plan preparation economic and social context, general tendencies, etc. (Tamosiunas, 2003b; Tamosiunas, 2004; Rakučevičūtė, Nausėda, Juozaitienė, Tamosiunas, 2006).

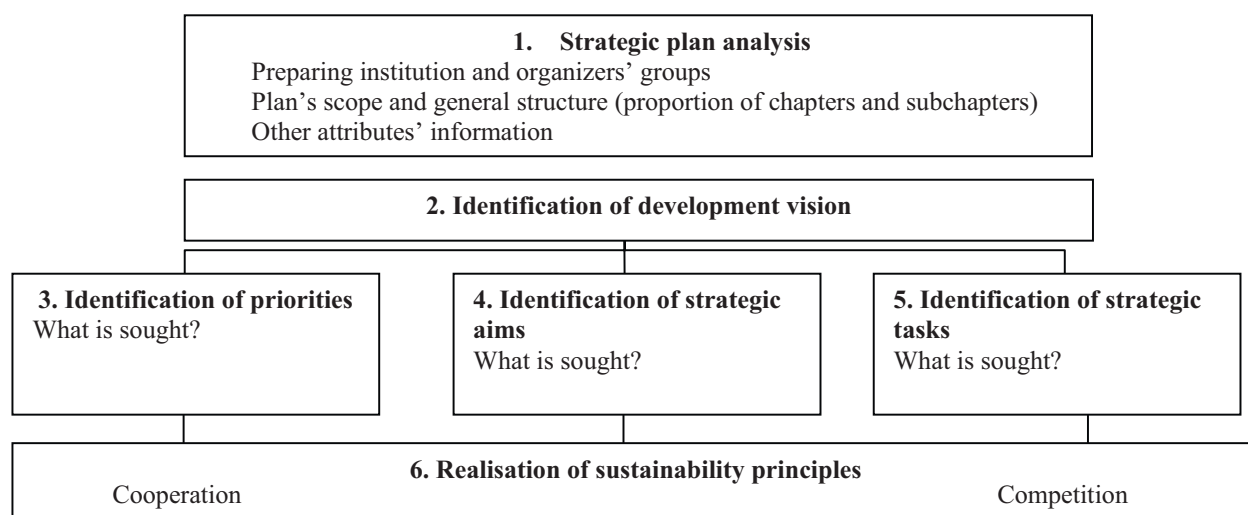
In order to identify sustainable strategic planning principles, strategic development plan's content research has been carried out. The plan's has been analyzed using several layers. The methodological quality of the plans have been identified (see Table 3).

### Results of strategic plan's quality methodological operationalization

<i>Methodological quality components</i>	<i>Features</i>
<b>Plan's structure</b>	Preparing institution
	Plan's scope
	Total structure (chapters and subchapters relation)
	Organizers' group size
	Used sources
	People responsible for plan monitoring
	Other attributive research information defined in the plan
	Research methods used while preparing the plan

Šiauliai region strategic development plans have been also analyzed using other layers': in order to research how sustainable planning principles (cooperation, competition) are realized in the regional plans, a logical qualitative research structure encompassing the most important stages has been prepared (see Figure 3).

The following important stages have been distinguished: analysis of the methodological quality of the strategic development plan, identification of the development vision, identification of priorities, aims, tasks and realization of sustainability principles.



**Fig. 3.** Logical structure of qualitative research

Different methods, also different methodologies (see Table 4) are used for the analyzed strategic development plans. Generalizing, there could be dis-

tinguished 3 main groups of methods used: 1) Strategic planning methodology; 2) Regioned development plans' preparation and renewal methodology; 3) complex methodology.

Table 4

### Identification of methods used for Šiauliai region and municipalities strategic plans

<i>Group of used methods</i>	<i>Plans</i>
Strategic planning methodology prepared for government institutions was used, according to which PEST analysis, SWOT analysis was carried out, also goals, tasks, means and evaluation criteria identification technique was applied.	Radviliškis district strategic development plan
Regional development plan preparation and renewal methodology was applied, according to which out different sectors groups' situation analysis was carried.	Šiauliai region strategic development plan
Complex methodology where Strategic planning and Regional development plan preparation methodologies were integrated	Joniškis, Kelmė, Pakruojis, Šiauliai districts strategic development plans

Sources: 1) Joniskis district municipality plan for 2008-2013. (JRSPP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Inter-

net: <http://www.joniskis.lt/2008-2013-m.-pl%C4%97tros-planas-442k.html>;

2) *Kelme district municipality development means' plan for 2008-2012*. (KRSP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: <http://www.kelme.lt/article/archive/222/>;

3) *Pakruojis district municipality strategic development plan of 2007-2013 report*. (PRSP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: <http://www.pakruojis.lt/index.php?374522973>;

4) *Radviliskis district development strategic plan for 2004-2010*. (RRSP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: <http://www.radviliskis.lt/content/view/24/37/>;

5) *Šiauliai district development strategic plan for 2003-2013*. (ŠRASPP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: <http://www.Siauliai-r.sav.lt/>;

6) *Šiauliai region development plan for 2007-2013* (ŠRSPP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: [http://www.Siauliai.aps.lt/ava/selectPage.do;jsessionid=6526968FFDDA190CB2E0BD325E6B36A0?docLocator=FDE239E6351111DCA860746164617373&in-language=lt&pathId=6](http://www.Siauliai.aps.lt/ava/selectPage.do;jsessionid=6526968FFDDA190CB2E0BD325E6B36A0?docLocator=FDE239E6351111DCA860746164617373&in-language=lt&pathId=6;);

7) *The Šiauliai city strategic development plan for 2007-2016*. (ŠMSPP). [accessed on 2008-05-02]. Access on the Internet: [http://www.Siauliai.lt/miestas/strateginis\\_planas.php](http://www.Siauliai.lt/miestas/strateginis_planas.php).

The biggest part of the plans were prepared using complex methodology when Strategic planning and Regional development plans preparation methodologies are integrated. It influences the variety of existing methodologies in Lithuania and possibility for public administration institutions to choose preparation of strategic plan according to concrete methodology.

Generalizing Šiauliai region's and municipalities' strategic development plan data inductive analysis it is possible to state that all plans were prepared for different period (from 6 to 11 years), so in essence all plans are long-termed ones, preparation of plans for different periods determines distinguishing different priorities and their representation, because they are oriented to different realization period.

Having carried out plan analysis it is possible to state that different size organizers' groups contributed to their preparation and situation analysis; different research methods (frequently SWOT) were used.

Because of the difference in strategic planning periods, while analyzing them it is difficult to reveal interrelationship links because in general strategic plans get unequal time and aims' realization dimensions. The region's plan must encompass the municipalities plans of the territories subject / belonging to the region, but the municipalities give the region's plan their own regional dimension reflecting means as suggestions. Further follows priority statement of the regional plan's organizers. Observance / monitoring system is not clearly given in all plans.

### **Analysis of the vision provided in the Šiauliai region and municipalities' strategic development plans**

The most important and first strategic planning stage is mission and vision identification. It is impos-

sible to prepare an adequate plan if the organization does not understand its aim and pursuance.

While analyzing the visions provided in the strategic development plans of Šiauliai region and municipalities it was noticed that they are very long and even cumbersome. The most laconic one is Joniškis district municipality's vision defined in the plan for 2008–2013: *“Attractive region for work and investment, where high life quality of a person is guaranteed and balanced long-term economy development exists”*. But this vision is universal, i.e. applicable to all districts, because there is no substantial difference or attractiveness.

Community possibilities to participate in different activities, be active and similar things are widely emphasized. *“The district community: free and responsible, educated, democratic and safe. The education system and local institutions' cooperation with the state's general and university education and vocational education institutions guarantees the population's education level, openness to new ideas, prolonged education and constant qualification improvement possibility, human resources capital growth in various spheres. Adequate attention is paid to the population's healthcare and illnesses prevention, safety, social disjuncture prevention, social integration”, “Competitive human resources encompassin are also developed g: a) people's creativity, productivity, openness to change and improvement; b) social partnership and active social-civic participation; c) constructive organizational environment oriented to personal and professional self – expressions”*; *“The city and its people's welfare growth is determined by strong, active and creative community formed according to the principles of culture traditions, respect and tolerance”*; *“The city attracts, develops, educates and provides value to people who increase and develop the city's creative and cultural potential”*.

In general, the essence of pursuance of sustain-



nability is defined in all visions, but sustainability is treated as an interrelated economic and community interest. In the visions of Šiauliai region's and municipalities' strategic development plans not either possible *cooperation* aspects, nor *competition* emphasis aspects are given (mostly competition is defined as the economy or the general economic result.

### Analysis of priorities, aims and tasks in the region's and municipalities' strategic development plans

In order to identify the principles of sustainable strategic planning strategic development plans' content research was carried out. One of the analyzed aspects was the strategic priorities – aims – tasks analysis. Quantitative distribution of strategic priorities-aims-tasks is given in Figure 4.

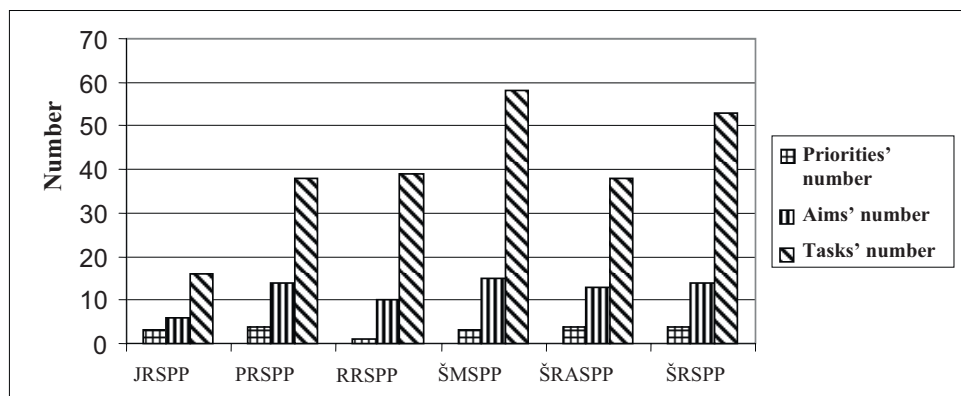


Fig. 4. Priorities-aims-tasks in Šiauliai region's and its municipalities' strategic development plans

Source: prepared by E. Bivainis according to Šiauliai region and its municipalities strategic development plans (Table 4)

Development priorities are given in the regional plans, aims and tasks are distinguished. While analyzing quantitative expression Šiauliai city and the region strategic plans stand out.

According to research logic priorities' analysis was carried out. In the analyzed region's and municipalities' strategic development plans from 1 to 4 priorities could be distinguished, which point to the main development directions. In every priority sustainability in general is mentioned, e.g. "Šiauliai region cohesion programme", "In accordance to the balanced development principle to seek the region's greater competitiveness and life quality" and similar things.

It should be emphasized that all priorities are adequately universal, i.e. acceptable to almost all, e.g. "Life place environment quality"; "Environment attractive to business and foreign investments" and similar things. While analyzing the strategic development plans, a lack of clearly defined competition and cooperation could be noticed because if these two

components are mentioned they do not reflect oneness. E.g. "Competitive and modern agriculture" as a priority could be defined in all Šiauliai region municipalities' strategic development plans.

Sustainable strategic planning model's aspects are not identified in the analyzed plans. According to scientific literature and regional planning and development general principles, it is possible to state that local growth and temporality principle dominates in the plans.

According to the set research logic, strategic aims and tasks analysis was carried out. There were given from 2 aims for 1 priority up to 10 aims for 1 priority in the analyzed plans. While planning their development the municipalities and the county are "free", so strategic aims' number is too big. Some strategic aims are good to all Lithuania, e.g. "To increase purchasing power of population" and similar things. Many tasks in the strategic development plans are given. According to quantitative research logic, tasks were ground into categories (see Table 5).

Table 5

### Categories of the defined tasks in the strategic region's and municipalities' development plans

Series number	Category	Category tasks' number	Series' number	Category	Category tasks' number
1.	Financing	1	10.	Reduction	6
2.	Initiation	1	11.	Creation	10

Table 5 to be continued

3.	Effectiveness	2	12.	Reconstruction	10
4.	Accomplishment	2	13.	Adaptation	11
5.	Implementation	3	14.	Security	18
6.	Development	3	15.	Improvement	21
7.	Installation	4	16.	Expansion	29
8.	Training	4	17.	Modernization	41
9.	Support	6	18.	Stimulation	47

Source: prepared according to Šiauliai region and its municipalities strategic development plans (see Table 4)

While analyzing 18 categories were distinguished, but not any of them is related to sustainability. The results of qualitative research have shown that cooperation or coordination is not sought (see Table 5).

Most attention is given to modernization, stimulation and development in the analyzed plans. Some of the distinguished tasks' categories could be related to partnership, local initiative principles. E. Ragauskienė (2005) states that districts' strategic development plans mostly reflect the vision of Lithuania and possibilities how the Lisbon strategy could be implemented. The raised priorities and aims in all ten districts correspond to the national and the Lisbon strategy development priorities. However, most districts' strategic development plans are of "infrastructural" approach. Social-economic cohesion priority is not adequately evaluated in the county's strategic development plans. Territorial differences are not precisely identified as a separate development problem.

As Šiauliai region strategic development plan's qualitative analysis has shown not only development, modernization and improvement is sought but there is no competition, cooperation dimensions emphasis.

## Conclusions

Scientific literature analysis has shown that there must exist a strategic management system, which, according to the holism principle must help to desegregate strategic aims to lower management levels.

As one of possible strategic planning theoretical conception basics 2K model could be, where two main strategic planning principles, competition and cooperation are given. The competition component encompasses *openness*, *competitive environment* (size of competitors, competitors' number and cooperation). The other component, cooperation encompasses *cooperation essence* (what for to cooperate?), *cooperation level* (To what extent to cooperate?), *cooperation necessity* (Why is there cooperation: useful, comfortable, inevitable?).

In this model both components must be coordinated, i.e. the balance level must be movable, but none of the components could dominate. Successful

coordination of both principles must be reflected in the strategic plans, especially in identification of strategic aims, tasks.

Cooperation and competition principles must help public institutions keep sustainability between its own and the state interests, i.e. attention to the situation when and with whom to cooperate and when and with whom to compete must be paid. Also *General Evaluation Model* basic advantages are integrated in this model (e.g. paying attention to competition and cooperation components the activity direction is set and if is agreed what must be done to improve the organization's activity; links between aims, strategies and processes are shown, etc.).

*Having carried out sustainable planning research in Šiauliai region the following conclusions could be given:*

In Lithuanian public administration institutions while planning their development 2 methodologies could be used: Strategic Planning Methodology and Regional Development Plans Preparation and Renewal Methodology. It causes much obscurity and complexity. The analyzed plans were prepared using different methodologies.

Inductive analysis of Šiauliai region strategic development plans shows that all the analyzed plans were prepared for different periods (from 6 up to 11 years), so in essence all plans are long-term. The plans' creation for different periods is predetermined by distinguishing different priorities and their presentation because they are oriented to different realization periods.

Having carried out plan analysis it is possible to state that different size organizers' groups contributed to their preparation and analysis; also different methods were used. The regional plan must encompass the municipalities' plans of the territories of the region, but the municipalities give the regional plan their own regional dimension reflecting means as suggestions. Regional plan's organizers give priorities differently than municipalities' planners.

Not in all analyzed plans an observance/monitoring system is clearly given.

In the strategic a competitiveness aspect plans was not been fully analyzed, general and universal

visions were not defined, as they determine generally formulated strategic aims.

Having analyzed visions and strategic aims given in the strategic development a attempt to improve something, perfect something it was found out, but less attention is paid to modernization, stimulation and development, i.e. plans are of “infrastructural” approach.

There is no relation among municipalities, regional strategic plans and the state strategic aims and priorities is given, though this link is the basic foundation for strategic plan preparation.

Owing to different competencies of strategic plan creation workgroups and knowledge, there is a possibility to interpret various strategic planning aspects differently, so it does not allow to contrast some data or it distorts some concrete comparison and analysis aspects.

The conclusions made during research confirms the premise that strategic planning in Šiauliai region is not sustainable because strategic development plans prepared by the municipalities do not have common points.

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## Strateginio planavimo darba Šiaulių apskrityje

### Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama Šiaulių apskrities ir jos savivaldybių strateginio planavimo darba. Išanalizuoti Šiaulių miesto, rajono, regiono ir Joniškio, Kelmės, Pakruojo, Radviliškio rajonų savivaldybių strateginiai plėtros planai, atlikta lyginamoji šių planų vizijų, prioritetų, strateginių tikslų ir uždavinių analizė.

Išskirti regiono planavimo principai, panagrinėtos teorinės Lietuvos regionų plėtros skirtumų priežastys. Darniam strateginiam planavimui siūlomas *Bendrasis vertinimo modelis*, parengtas remiantis Europos kokybės vadybos fondo tobulumo modeliu. Jis yra ISO sistemos alternatyva. Remiantis teoriniais šaltiniais regiono strateginiame planavime rekomenduojama vadovautis 2K koncepcija: konkurencija ir kooperacija.

Straipsnyje išnagrinėta darnaus strateginio planavimo Šiaulių regione tyrimo metodologija. Lentelėje susisteminti 4 empiriniai tyrimai, skirti Lietuvos savivaldos strateginiam planavimui. Šiaulių regiono strateginiai plėtros planai analizuoti siekiant ištirti, kaip regiono planuose realizuojami darnaus strateginio planavimo principai (kooperacijos ir konkurencijos), parengta loginė kokybinio tyrimo struktūra, apimanti pagrindinius etapus: strateginio plėtros plano metodologinės kokybės analizę, plėtros vizijų identifikavimą, prioritetų, tikslų, uždavinių identifikavimą ir darnumo principų realizavimą.

Analizuojamuose strateginiuose planuose taikomi skirtingi metodai ir įvairi metodika. Išskirtos 3 pagrindinės panaudotų metodų grupės: 1) Strateginio planavimo metodika, 2) Regionų plėtros planų rengimo ir atnaujinimo metodika, 3) Kompleksinė metodika. Didžioji dalis planų parengta vadovaujantis kompleksine metodika. Šiuo atveju integruojamos Strateginio planavimo ir Regionų plėtros planų rengimo metodikos. Planai apima labai skirtingus laikotarpius (nuo 6 iki 11 metų), tad iš esmės visi jie yra ilgalaikiai. Planų kūrimas skirtingam laikotarpiui lemia nevienodą prioritetų išskyrimą ir pateikimą, nes orientuojamasi į įvairios trukmės realizavimo laikotarpius.

Planų rengimą ir situaciją analizavo skirtingo dydžio rengėjų grupės, pasitelkti įvairūs tyrimo metodai.

Regiono planas turėtų apimti regionui priklausantių savivaldybių planus, tačiau savivaldybės regiono planui teikia regioninę dimensiją atspindinčias priemones tik kaip pasiūlymus. Regiono plane prioritetai sudėlioti kitaip nei savivaldybių planuose. Ne visuose planuose aiškiai pateikiama stebėsenos / monitoringo sistema.

Nagrinėtų planų vizijos yra ilgos ir kartais netgi

gremėzdiškos. Dažnai vizija yra universali, t. y. tinka ir kitiems rajonams, nes joje nėra jokio esminio išskirtinumo ir patrauklumo. Visose vizijose akcentuojamas atvirumas investicijoms. Bendraja prasme darnos siekimas paminėtas visose vizijose, tačiau darba traktuojama kaip tarpusavyje suderinti ekonominiai ir bendruomenės interesai. Vizijose nėra pateikta nei galimų *kooperacijos*, nei *konkurencijos* išryškavimo aspektų.

Analizuojamuose planuose išskirta nuo 1 iki 4 prioritetų. Prioritetai nurodo pagrindines vystymosi kryptis. Ne viename prioritete kalbama apie darnumą apskritai, pavyzdžiui: *Remiantis subalansuotos plėtros principu siekti didesnio rajono konkurencingumo ir gyvenimo kokybės*. Prioritetai taip pat yra universalūs, t. y. tinka visiems, pavyzdžiui, *Gyvenamosios aplinkos kokybė; Patraukli verslui, užsienio investicijoms aplinka*. Pasigendama aiškiai apibrėžtos konkurencijos ir kooperacijos. Jeigu šie du komponentai ir pateikiami, tai jie neatspindi išskirtinumo, pavyzdžiui, *Konkurencingas ir modernus žemės ūkis* kaip prioritetas gali būti paminėtas visuose Šiaulių regiono rajonų savivaldybių strateginiuose plėtros planuose.

Analizuotose planuose neidentifikuojami darnaus strateginio planavimo modelio aspektai. Remiantis mokslinės literatūros analize ir bendraisiais regionų planavimo bei plėtros principais, galima teigti, kad planuose dominuoja vietinio augimo ir laikinumo principas.

Nagrinėjamuose planuose daugiausia dėmesio skiriama modernizavimui, skatinimui ir plėtrai. Kai kurios uždavinių kategorijos galėtų būti susietos su partnerystės, vietos iniciatyvos principais. Šie planai daugiausia atspindi Lietuvos viziją bei galimybes, kaip turėtų būti įgyvendinama Lisabonos strategija. Išskirti prioritetai bei tikslai iš esmės atitinka nacionalinius ir Lisabonos strategijos raidos prioritetus. Dauguma strateginių plėtros planų yra „infrastruktūrinio“ pobūdžio. Planuose nėra pakankamai įvertintas socialinės-ekonominės sanglaudos prioritetas. Iš tiesų yra siekiama tik plėtros, modernizavimo, tobulinimo, tačiau neaktualizuojamos konkurencijos ir kooperacijos dimensijos.

Tyrimas parodė, kad Šiaulių apskrities planavime 2K koncepcija nesivadovaujama, strateginis planavimas iš esmės nėra darnus: savivaldybės strateginių tikslų ir uždavinių nederina tarpusavyje, o regiono plėtros plano rengėjai savaip sudėlioja savivaldybių pateiktas veiklos priemones.