



**Zgierz – a modern city
after hours.**

Good practices



Zgierz - a modern city after hours

**We are creating a citizen-friendly city
by improving the quality of life
for its residents.**

Zgierz - a modern city after hours project
implemented by the Municipality of Zgierz
from July 2021 to April 2024, co-financed by
the Norwegian Financial Mechanism
and the European Economic Area Financial
Mechanism
for the years 2014 - 2021, under the Local
Development programme.

Total funding amount:

17 665 902,19 zł

About project

In October 2021, Waldemar Buda, Vice-Minister of Funds and Regional Policy, signed an agreement for the funding of the project 'Zgierz - a modern city after hours'.

The amount of funding was a little more than 15 million PLN. We are another city on the list of 29 winners in the 'Local Development' programme, which received support from the Norwegian and EEA Funds.

With the support of the EEA Financial Mechanism, Zgierz wants to become an ecological city by 2030, created by its inhabitants, for whom the quality of their lives, living, working and relaxing in the city is very important. The city and the project partners also focus on the development of cultural and industrial heritage.



Przemysław Staniszewski, Mayor of the City of Zgierz

In August 2023, taking advantage of new opportunities, we applied for an increase in funding. The application received a favourable opinion and from then on the project received additional funding from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism. In January 2024, we submitted another application, which was also approved. In this way, the total amount of funding increased to PLN 17,665,902.19.

The 'Zgierz – a modern city after hours' project consists of almost 30 different undertakings with the common aim of improving the quality of life of the inhabitants. Among them, convenient and practical online tools, such as the City of Zgierz mobile application and the Zgierz Resident Card.

The project has enabled a series of investments to be made, including within the Weavers' Town Cultural Park, where an Ancient Crafts Zone, a Local Activity Centre and Blooming Gardens have been created. In addition, it was possible to create a Youth Chillout Zone, set up information totems at five bus stops, renovate a building to be used as a Shared Services Centre, and set up several hundred containers for selective waste collection. The Zgierz City Hall has a newly built lift, which has significantly increased the accessibility of the building for people with special need.

An important result of the project is the preparation of strategic documents, crucial for the further development of the city. These include the "Zgierz City Development Strategy for the years 2023-2030 with the perspective until 2040", the "City Development Programme based on the Smart City concept", the "Youth City after Hours. Youth policy of the Municipality of the City of Zgierz - diagnosis, recommendations, implementation", "Accessibility standards for the Municipality of the City of Zgierz", as well as "Determination of the current state of the non-recultivated landfills, their impact on the environment and the technology and costs of their recultivation", which indicates the directions of recultivation of the landfills on the territory of the former "Boruta" plants.

Finally, it is impossible to omit the soft results of institutional development that have been achieved through the implementation of the project. First of all, it is necessary to mention the creation of an Human Resources department in the City Hall in place of the former department; the creation of a Shared Services Centre, which provides services to 21 units of the City, the creation of a team of accessibility leaders, the carrying out of numerous workshops, trainings and courses.



All this as part of a coherent concept of a modern Zgierz - green and friendly to its inhabitants, offering a wide range of leisure activities for whole families returning home after work or school.

Blooming gardens in the City of Weavers

This is what we did

We revitalised several courtyards in the historic part of Zgierz.



An integral part of the project was the participation of residents, both in the planning and in the implementation of the project.

In the first phase, therefore, there was a consultation on how to redevelop the courtyards. Residents, civil servants and scientific experts jointly selected sites which, through participation in the project, were to become small enclaves of leisure, visually and stylistically coherent with the historic character of the Weavers' Town Cultural Park, attractive to both residents and tourists. The research involving the inhabitants of the courtyards was conducted by a team of ethnologists from the University of Łódź under the direction of Alicja Piotrowska, PhD.

Residents took part in workshops and a research walk, and filled in questionnaires. During the discussion groups, among other things, they mentioned positive aspects of their space in the courtyards (e.g. plantings) and things to improve, (e.g. unsightly rubbish bins that would be best hidden). The discussions also emphasised the need to build a youth zone and to include the youngest in the co-creation of the Blooming Gardens.



Together, therefore, the areas where the blooming gardens will be created were selected according to the needs and suggestions of the residents. A research report was prepared, diagnosing and summarising the residents' participatory potential and allowing further activities to be planned in the context of residents' participation in the creation and maintenance of the gardens. An important part of the project is that the gardens will be looked after by the residents themselves. We have also assumed that attractive courtyards, where residents can spend time pleasantly and at the same time feel responsible for their surroundings, will be helpful in establishing neighbourly relations.

In accordance with the suggestions of the residents, the scope of investment works mainly included the removal of old fences and arborvitae, dilapidated benches, trash bins, etc., the construction of entrances and pathways with granite blocks, the erection of garbage shelters, the painting of cell doors, the installation of lighting, the protection

of existing greenery and the establishment of rain gardens the installation of rain barrels. Together with residents in the courtyards, we planted new plants, established vegetable and herb gardens in boxes, installed lightweight structures for climbing plants, put up benches, rubbish bins, picnic tables and barbecues. The final crowning touch is a mural, inspired by the 19th century architecture of industrial Zgierz, depicting, among other things, the former Borst factory.

Good practices

It is good practice to have community consultation and co-responsibility of the residents for the revitalised space.

The creation of the gardens was preceded by a comprehensive needs survey and joint investment planning. Now the residents themselves take care of the equipment, maintain the gardens and enjoy the harvest of their labour.

Youth policy of the Municipality of Zgierz

This is what we did

Youth policy is the policy of the future. The way we take care of the young inhabitants of our city today will be reflected in a few years, when today's young people, as conscious citizens, will shape the social and economic situation with their decisions, while as mothers and fathers they will become carriers of values, models of attitudes and behaviours for the next generations. It is therefore important to involve young people in decision-making processes and to take their point of view into account in the broad spectrum of issues in our city.



In order to diagnose the areas of youth policy that are most important from the perspective of those involved themselves, we conducted a series of activities with young people and youth workers: meetings, workshops, surveys, research walks, focus studies. An open-air event was organised, the theme of which was youth participation in the development of the City's youth policy and the implementation of the developed solutions.

The result of the analysis of the obtained results and local and national data is the creation of a strategic document: 'Youth city after hours. Youth policy of the Municipality of the City of Zgierz - diagnosis, recommendations, implementation'. As part of the implementation of the recommendations, among others, a position of Plenipotentiary for Youth Affairs was created in the Department of Education and Youth at the Zgierz City Hall.

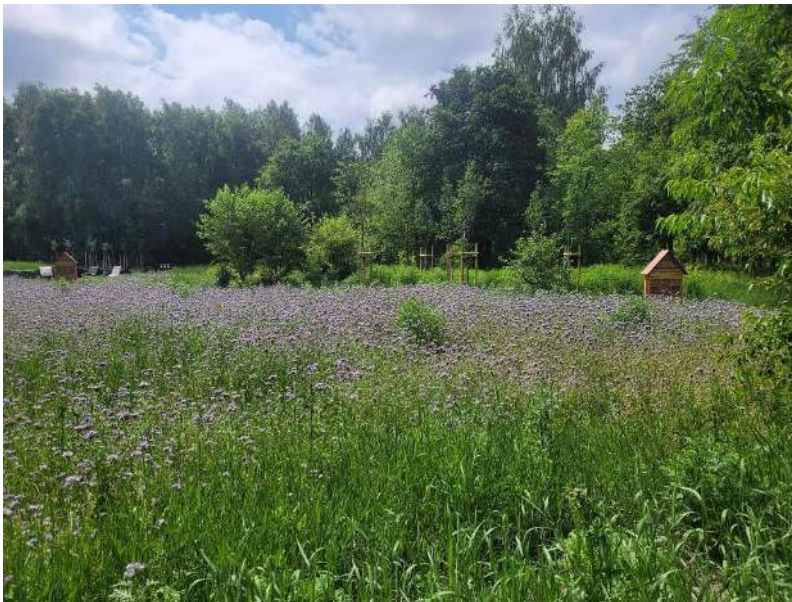
Good practices

It is good practice to involve young people in the affairs of the City, to participate in decision-making, especially those affecting young people themselves, and to create a document, structuring the principles of local youth policy.

Youthful Chillout zone

This is what we did

As part of one of the investment projects, we created a Youth Chillout Zone. The essence of the task was to create a meeting place for young people, arranged according to their ideas. We therefore began implementation with a public consultation. The topic of 'space for young people' came up again and again during the preparation of the city's youth policy, during research walks and other activities. It also came up in focus interviews. Then, using the city app, we conducted a short survey, which we promoted mainly during the youth Glitter Party. In the survey, we asked questions that were directly related to the planned investment: what equipment should be included in the chillout zone and what materials should they be made of.



As a result of the consultation, we agreed that it was desirable to keep the chosen area as wild and natural as possible, while tidying it up and enhancing its aesthetic, recreational and leisure qualities. The chillout zone has therefore included benches, seating, deckchairs, street workout, bike racks, waste segregation bins and insect houses. The zone is illuminated and monitored.

The equipment is mainly made of wood, the alleys have mineral surfaces and the planting retains the natural character of the space. The whole is complemented by a nearby flower meadow.



Good practices

Public consultation is a good practice. Decisions are made together with the residents, so a place revitalised for young people should meet the expectations of this particular group. Before implementation, it was worth asking the people concerned whether they want such a place, where it should be and what it should look like.

Report on the status of landfill sites of the former "Boruta" plant

This is what we did

The issue of the former "Boruta" dye industry sites is known throughout Poland, and Zgierz is one of the five cities covered by the Large Degraded Areas Special Act.

The report includes a presentation of the landfill sites in terms of the administrative and legal documentation issued, their current status and condition on the ground, an identification of the environmental impact of the various landfill sites and historical industrial waste sites, and a proposal of remediation technologies with an estimate of their cost.



The problem of hazardous substances left behind by the "Boruta" plant keeps both the inhabitants and the authorities of Zgierz awake at night. Therefore, one of the project undertakings was to *determine the current status of the uncompleted landfills, their impact on the environment and the technology and costs of their rehabilitation.*

As part of a two-stage project, research was carried out and a report was prepared, which presents the essential elements of a comprehensive assessment of the state of the environment in the degraded area.

Zgierz – a modern city after hours

The report presents information on the waste to be landfilled and deposited, its quantities, types, codes and properties. The areas of landfills and collection sites for historical industrial waste and the quantities of waste deposited on them were estimated. The results of water samples taken from piezometers and the Bzura River, samples from landfill leachate and soil samples, as well as the conclusions of the site visits carried out, were presented. Environmental risks were identified and assessed, taking into account the latest technologies for rapid response to uncontrolled emissions. A risk analysis was carried out, identifying possible events leading to material, human and environmental losses. Possible risks and various emergency scenarios were presented. The impact of the current state of the landfill sites on the environment was also presented, and ways of protecting them from negative environmental impacts in the period before remediation work begins were proposed, together with an estimate of costs. Based on the analysis of the results of the work carried out and the results of the studies, methods of waste disposal were selected, together with estimated costs and possible sources of funding.

Good practices

It is good practice to involve young people in the affairs of the City. The research report was discussed at a conference and is available on the City's website, but we also organised a special environmental debate with the report's authors, to which high school students and pupils in the oldest grades of primary schools were invited.



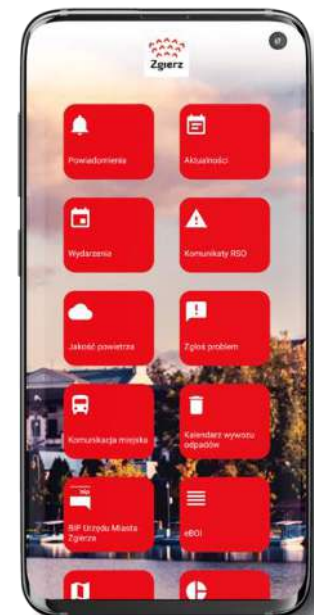
Zgierz Resident Card and Zgierz City App

This is what we did

The newly introduced Zgierz Resident Card combines the benefits of the previously functioning products: Zgierz Senior Citizen Card and Zgierz Large Family Card. It is a loyalty programme promoting people who settle their taxes in Zgierz. In addition to institutions such as the Municipal Cultural Centre or the Zgierz City Museum, almost fifty Zgierz entrepreneurs have joined the Card in a short period of time. Card holders benefit from a number of discounts, discounts and promotions offered by Zgierz entrepreneurs. For entrepreneurs, in turn, the Card is a form of promotion and a way to more effectively reach customers with their offer.

As part of the project, we have also implemented a tool for automatic verification of the Card and entitlement to discounted purchase of a selected monthly or season ticket plan. As a result, our residents can purchase a monthly or season ticket at ticket machines, on the migawka.lodz.pl website and at customer service points.

We have also launched the City of Zgierz mobile app. We started the task by asking Zgierz residents what modules would be most useful. We wanted this product to fully respond to the needs of residents of different ages. First of all, we launched news, a waste collection calendar, an interactive map and modules for public consultations and reporting problems.





Good practices

It is good practice to consult the public and implement local solutions to make it easier for residents to access services and information. The modules to be included in the application were decided by the residents, who were asked to complete surveys on the subject.

The two urban online products are integrated with each other on a crossposting basis. On the app, there is up-to-date information on benefits and the possibility to go to the mobile version of the Card's website, while on the website we have a tab dedicated to the app and links to online shops where it can be downloaded free of charge.



HR Department

This is what we did

We set up an Human Resources Department in place of the "previous, traditional" Staff Department. The three-person team had big plans within the project and... they were all realised! The team's activities were aimed at extensively improving the quality of human resources at Zgierz City Hall, among other things by raising the competences and motivation of employees. As usual, we started with a survey of needs. We therefore took questionnaires, the compilation of which became the basis for determining the directions of action. We tried to approach the needs of employees in the most flexible way possible. As a result, a total of around 290 people from the Town Hall and its subordinate units took part in courses and training to improve their competences and professional qualifications.



Thanks to the expansion of the HR Department's competences, we have carried out interesting programmes and implemented several new solutions. One of them is an onboarding brochure for new employees. Each newly hired person receives a brochure so that he or she can more easily

find his or her way in the new place, get to know the people and the rules of cooperation.

As part of the project, we conducted and implemented a programme of development paths and identification of professional predispositions among City Hall employees 'Career Paths'. Twenty-two people participated in the multi-stage programme.

We have also developed a 'Strategy for the development of Zgierz City Hall employees'. This is a document that will help employees of the various departments of the Office to enter the process of learning and developing expert and soft competences. The strategy was prepared by an external expert, after interviews with the employees of the Office, using the latest development methods and business trends related to the improvement of employees' competences in the context of personal, business and managerial development.



Good practices

It is good practice to extend the competences of the Human Resources Department, as well as to introduce new measures to support staff management: onboarding brochure, 'Career Paths', staff development strategy.



Photos from the archives of the Zgierz City Hall

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