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The Role of Local Governments in the Development of City Logistics

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Abstract

In the paper the authors made an attempt to present the role of local governments in the development of city logistics taking the example of Poland. The paper is divided into four main parts. The first two present theoretical aspects of city logistics and the different roles of stakeholders. The authors have developed the model of collaborative process of local government as a policy maker in the city logistics field. The empirical part of the paper presents survey results conducted in Polish cities with county rights. Research shows a lack of a comprehensive approach to urban logistics in studied cities and poor cooperation of local authorities with other stakeholders.

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1. Introduction

City logistics is a modern concept aimed at the integration of existing resources in order to solve problems arising from the motorisation index increase in the city. According to the European Commission, several European countries are threatened by a significant increase in the level of congestion in the next few decades. Forecasts show that freight transport activity will have increased by 40% by 2030 and just over 80% by 2050 on 2005 figures. At a slightly lower rate than the freight transport, passenger traffic will increase (34% in 2030 and 51% in 2050). It is

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expected that in 2050 in the EU countries, road transport will continue to play a dominant role in both freight and passenger transport. (European Commission, 2011).

City logistics requires a huge commitment from stakeholders, such as: freight carriers, residents (consumers), manufacturing, services and trade companies (shippers), local authorities and passenger transport companies. Each of these stakeholders has different expectations towards city logistics (Taniguchi & Tamagawa, 2005; Tseng, Yue & Taylor, 2005; Witkowski, 2011; Kiba-Janiak, 2011). However, a key role in the area of city logistics is played by the local government (Kiba-Janiak 2011, Lindholm, 2012). Local government, according to the legal regulations, may introduce: restricted entry of trucks into the city centre, tolls for car entrance to the city centre, separate bus-lanes for public transport, and the changes in the road marking, traffic lights and information flow etc.

One of the main purposes of local government is to improve the citizens' quality of life by satisfying their needs, including the economic and social sphere. According to the research (Kiba-Janiak & Cheba, 2010) city logistics impacts upon these areas that are less important from the point of view of all the criteria that affects the quality of life (such as salary, access to work, health care institutions, security or housing conditions etc.). The extent to which ease of movement within a city becomes a significant cause of "complaint", is dependent on whether other causes of "discomfort" are solved.

The purpose of the research was to analyse the activities of city logistics undertaken by local governments in Polish cities with county rights. The authors made an attempt to verify the hypothesis: **Polish local governments are insufficiently involved in improving the movement of goods and people within the city, despite the fact they note the growing congestion problem.** During the research, the authors have made the diagnosis of organisational structures of local governments in terms of departments, which carry out tasks in the field of city logistics., A questionnaire was sent to the Polish cities with county rights. A survey helped elicit answers to the following questions:

- What is the significance of city logistics in the implementation of the tasks related to the city management?
- Are there departments or employees in the city councils involved in issues relating to urban logistics? If so, what kind of tasks related to urban logistics are carried out by these departments and employees?
- What kind of activities related to the organization of an efficient movement of people and goods have been taken so far by the surveyed cities, and what kind of projects will be implemented in the near future?
- Do the local governments cooperate with other stakeholders in the field of city logistics to improve the residents' quality of life?
- Do the local governments develop an information system to collect and analyse data from city logistics stakeholders?

In the empirical part of the paper the authors have focused their attention primarily on sufficient involvement of local government, which is understood as involvement of local authorities in efforts to improve, in an effective and efficient way, flows of people, goods and information related to them in an urban area. Sufficient involvement of local government has been considered in three areas: institutional arrangement, efforts (implemented projects) and results (outcome). Due to the limited size of the work, issues related to the future planned projects and ways of collecting and analysing data in the studied cities were presented in an overall summary in the conclusion.

This paper presents the results of the research project "Reference Model of City Logistics versus Quality of Life of Citizens", funded from funds for science in years 2010-2013 as a research project. The final result of the research is to develop the model that includes standards, processes, metrics and best practices to support city logistics partners in a manner similar to the SCOR model, created by SCC, to support communication among supply chain participants. (see: www.supply-chain.org).

2. City Logistics and City Logistics System

City logistics in many cities in the world plays an increasingly important role. Despite the increasing difficulties associated with the movement of goods and people within the various Polish cities, efforts towards urban logistics remain insufficient.

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