

The Bauska County Strategy of Sustainable Development

The Bauska County Strategy of Sustainable Development is a long-term planning document for the period of 2012-2030 determining the strategic objectives and priorities of the county's development and marking the spatial prospective of the county's development. The long-term development strategy is the basis for targeted planning of the Bauska County Council's development program priorities, activities and investments and for elaboration of the territorial plan.

Basis of the elaboration of sustainable development strategy:

- Law on Municipalities;
- Development Planning System Law;
- Law on Territorial Development Planning;
- The Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No. 970 of 25 August 2009 "Procedure of Public Participation in the Development Planning Process";
- The Cabinet of Ministers Draft Regulations "Regulations on Local Level Territorial Development Planning Documents".

What Characterises the Bauska County?

The Bauska County is located in the central part of Latvia and the Zemgale Region, it borders with the Republic of Lithuania and the counties of Iecava, Vecumnieki, Rundāle, Jelgava and Ozolnieki. The area of the county is 786.6 km², and Bauska Town covers 6.14 km² of them. Forest territories cover 15,630.3 ha, and agricultural land covers 52,970.5 ha.

The administrative centre of the county, i.e. Bauska Town, is situated 68 km from Riga, 62 km from Jelgava and 19 km from the Latvia-Lithuania border.

A span of the international motorway E67, i.e. national motorway A7 and regional roads P-103 (Bauska–Dobele) and P87 (Bauska –Aizkraukle) are crossing the county.

Iecava, Mūsa and Mēmele Rivers and the Lielupe River flow through the county's territory.

Pursuant to the Law on Administrative Territories and Populated Areas, the Bauska County consists of the following territorial units - Bauska Town, Brunava Parish, Ceraukste Parish, Code Parish, Dāviņi Parish, Gailīši Parish, Īslīce Parish, Mežotne Parish and Vecsaule Parish.

According to the data of the Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, on 1 January 2014 the number of the Bauska County population was 26,348, but during the recent three years the county's population has reduced by 5.3%. The largest number of population in the Bauska County is concentrated in Bauska Town with 9,528 (-4.4%) residents or almost 36% of the entire county population. Dāviņi Parish is the least populated area with 772 (-14%) residents.

Most Important Fields of the Bauska County Development

Agriculture

Agricultural land covers 80.4% or 63,259.2 ha from the entire territory of the Bauska County; moreover, these are agricultural territories of national importance, since their fertility exceeds 50 and 60 points. Gailīši, Īslīce and Mežotne parishes have the largest part of the highly valuable agricultural land.

The most important directions of producing agricultural products are cultivation of grain, potatoes and other vegetables.

Environment and Tourism

The Bauska County's natural environment is a resource of active recreation and tourism. The largest rivers of the county are Lielupe, Mūsa, Mēmele, Iecava, Īslīce and Ceraukste. The Bauska County has several particularly protected areas, and the nature park „Bauska” (NATURA 2000 – EU protected natural area of 892.9 ha) is the most important of them, and there are also several natural monuments and natural restricted areas. Three nature trails are available to tourists.

The county has important cultural historic monuments and objects: Bauska Palace Museum, Bauska Old Town, Mežotne Palace (Mežotne Parish), Brukna Manor (Dāviņi Parish), Bauska Lutheran Church of St. Spirit, Bauska Town Hall, etc. Bauska Local History and Art Museum, Bauska Palace Museum and Bauska Town Hall offer several educational programs or shows.

The tracks of the sports complex Mūsa in the Bauska County are the only European level autocross tracks in the Baltic States.

Environment Risk Categories

Environment quality of the Bauska County may be considered good. The most important environment risks in the county are imposed by the transportation flow, activity of manufacturing companies, threat of natural and technogenic floods and threat of geological and fire risk. Civil Defence Plan has been elaborated for the purposes of gathering information about the environmental risks, their prevention and elimination of consequences. Air quality in the Bauska County is influenced by both fixed and mobile sources. Emissions of fixed sources in the air are mainly caused by industrial companies in Bauska and Ceraukste, Code, Gailīši and Īslīce Parishes, while the emissions of mobile sources in Bauska come from land transportation, i.e. mainly by the national importance motorway A7 (Riga – Bauska – border of Lithuania (Grenctāle)) and regional motorways P103 (Bauska-Dobele) and P87 (Bauska-Aizkraukle). Quality of the underground and overground water conforms to the normative standards. Waste waters are generally treated and penetrate the environment in compliance with the normative standards. According to the information from the Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Centre, at the moment, no polluted areas have been registered in the Bauska County. The

Bauska County has 55 registered potentially polluted areas (2011) and in most cases those are the places of manufacturing or agricultural activity, GFS or waste management territories (including re-cultivated dumpsites).

Engineering Networks

The total infrastructure of Bauska Town's centralised water supply consists of 23.2 km long water supply network, 8 artesian bores and 1 water treatment station. In Bauska Town, the centralised drinking water supply is ensured with using artesian water from 8 wells 6 of which are working wells and 2 are used as reserve wells. The volume of the approximate load on artesian bores is 33% of their total productivity.

In the remaining territory of the county, underground waters are used for water supply. Often the mechanic and electric equipment of the artesian wells has not been replaced since their construction. In smaller villages, only one artesian well is working and, if this well has to be repaired, the residents lose their water supply.

One centralised sewerage system of 32.21 km is working in Bauska Town. Sewerage systems in the Bauska County have been built over many years.

The oldest systems are combined in most cases, i.e. they gather household, industrial and rain water sewage. In general, in villages, the sewerage systems have been constructed in smaller territories, similarly to water pipe networks.

In the Bauska County, the centralised heating systems have been established in Bauska Town and in the Ceraukste, Īslīce and Mežotne Parishes.

Since 2000, in Bauska Town, a co-generation station with capacity of 3.75 MW and heating capacity of 4 MW has been working.

The territory of the Bauska County is crossed by arterial gas pipes. Gas supply is available to certain territories of Bauska.

Transportation, Communication

The Code, Ceraukste and Brunava Parishes in the Bauska County and Bauska Town are crossed by VIA Baltica.

The regional motorways P103 Dobeles – Bauska (crossing Bauska Town), P87 Aizkraukle – Bauska (crossing Bauska Town, Code and Vecsaule Parishes), P88 Bauska – Linde (crossing Bauska Town, Code and Dāviņi Parishes), P89 Ķekava – Skaistkalne (crossing Dāviņi and Vecsaule Parishes) are important.

The county has 23 local importance national motorways.

Operators of both mobile and fixed electronic communication networks are operating in the Bauska County.

Health and Social Field

Both primary and secondary healthcare is available in the Bauska County. The available practices of physicians in Bauska are working in the following fields of healthcare – dermatology, gynaecology, neurology, otolaryngology, paediatrics, psychiatry, rehabilitology, traumatology, physiotherapy and dentistry. Also school healthcare stations and Zemgales mutes veselības centrs Ltd. are working in the county. Ambulatory department of Bauskas slimnīca Ltd. offers physiotherapy and rehabilitation services.

Provision of social aid in the Bauska County is stipulated by the binding regulations of the Council, which guarantee that in case of need every resident of the county can receive the necessary aid in compliance with uniform principles. The Bauska County Social Service structure consists of four directions of social work: social aid, social services for families with children, social services for children, social services for persons with addiction problems; social care and rehabilitation.

Culture

The most important cultural historic monuments and objects in the county are the Bauska Palace, Bauska Old Town, Bauska Castle Mound, Mežotne Palace (Mežotne Parish), Brukna Manor (Dāviņi Parish), Bauska Lutheran Church of St. Spirit, Bauska Town Hall. The county has five operating museums. The Bauska County also has 33 local importance cultural monuments, including 17 monuments of archaeology, 9 monuments of architecture and 7 monuments of art.

In total, over 60 different amateur collectives with approximately 1,180 participants are active in the Bauska County; each parish offers dancing or singing opportunities and sometimes also other activities. The amateur art collectives involve 4.24 participants out of every 100 residents, which is by 37% more than the average figure in the country.

The Bauska County has 19 operational libraries. In 2010, the total number of users of the services of the Bauska County libraries constituted 30% of the entire Bauska County's population.

Education

The services of preschool education institutions (PEI) are available in Bauska, but the preschool education groups combined with schools are available in the Parishes of Gailīši, Ceraukste, Code, Īslīce, Brunava, Mežotne and Vecsaule.

In the academic year 2013/2014, 20 educational institutions were operating in the Bauska County, which included a state gymnasium, three secondary schools, a boarding secondary

school, special boarding elementary school, eight elementary schools, two preschool educational institutions, three vocational educational institutions and one institution of education of interests.

In Bauska, also the vocational and interests education is ensured at an art, music and sports school and at the Children and Youth Centre.

Frontier Area, Cross-border Cooperation

The Bauska County borders with Lithuania, and the administrative centre of the county, i.e. Bauska Town, is situated 19 km from the border of Latvia-Lithuania.

The Bauska County is crossed by Via Baltica – national importance motorway A7 Riga – Bauska – Border of Lithuania (Grenctāle) – span of the international motorways E 67 (Helsinki – Tallinn – Riga – Panevezys – Kaunas – Warsaw – Pjotrkuva – Tribunalska – Wroclaw – Klodzko – Belowes – Nahoda – Hradec Kralove – Prague).

Parishes of Īslīce, Gailīši and Brunava of the Bauska County have direct border with Lithuania (~54 km).

Specialisation of the Municipality

The main field of entrepreneurship in the Bauska County is agriculture, and processing of agriculture products is also well developed (see the image “Prospective Development Fields”) which generally conforms to the prospective national economy fields defined for the Zemgale Region and Latvia. The Bauska County already historically has had a well-developed agriculture and processing of products (granary of Latvia) determined by the fertile agricultural lands and good accessibility of the capital city Riga. Rich farms have been created as the result of the aforementioned.

The Bauska County has important tourism resources, including a palace, museums, sightseeing objects, rivers, unpolluted nature, etc. Such conditions allow developing the cultural historic tourism and active natural tourism. Also, Bauska Old Town is a significant tourism resource.

The Bauska County is also in the influence area of Riga agglomeration since it is much easier to reach Riga than the established regional centre Jelgava. Via Baltica – the national importance motorway A7 Riga – Bauska – border of Lithuania – ensures the flow of people and transport (also cargos) in the directions of Riga and Lithuania. There is also a connection with the international and inter-city traffic direction Russia – Daugavpils – Aizkraukle – Bauska – Eleja, Dobeļe, Liepāja.

Figure. Prospective Development Fields



By assessing the resources and values of the county, the specialisation of the county is:

- agriculture and processing;
- tourism and associated services;
- transportation and logistics.

Spatial Development Prospective

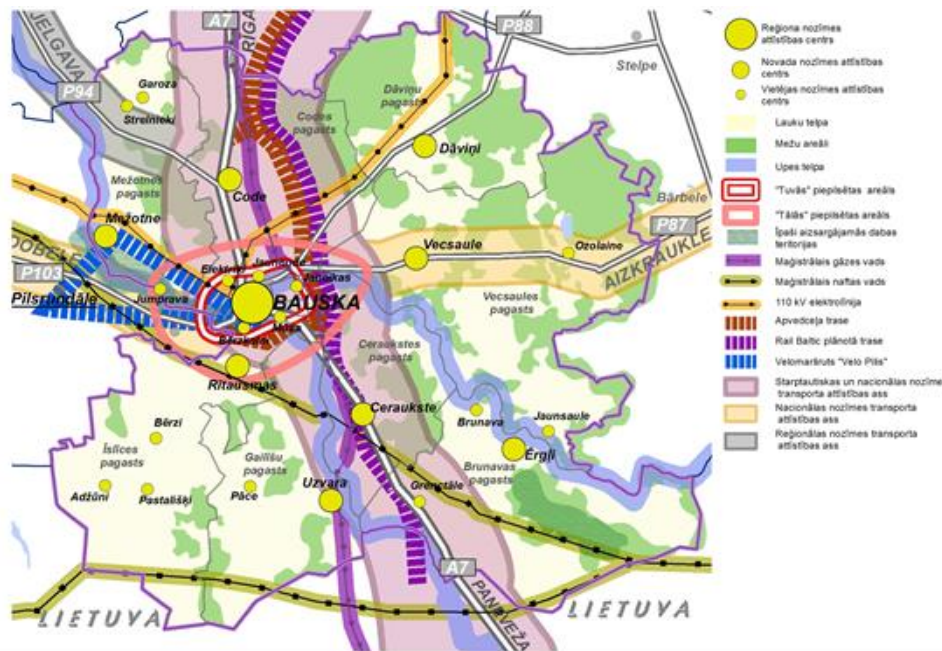
The spatial development opportunities of the Bauska County have an advancing effect on the county's specialisation development. Agriculture land covers the majority of the rural area and it includes also forest territories. The potential of tourism development is ensured by the combined sightseeing route of the "Golden Circle" (Zelta loks): Bauska – Mežotne – Rundāle Palaces; and the bicycle route "Palaces and Cycling" (Velo pilis). The crossing of transport hubs and frontier area of Lithuania advance the development of logistics and transportation.

Bauska Town is a regional importance development centre whose merging with the adjacent villages has already begun. New agglomeration of Bauska is in progress, Bauska Town is growing, and its role and significance as a development centre is also increasing.

The axis of the international and national importance transport development joining Riga (and Europe through the airport) and with Bauska and further with Lithuania is well developed and continues its development. Unfortunately, the large-scale traffic is being directed through Bauska town, and therefore construction of a detour road around Bauska Town is required. Rail Baltic tracks will also cross the county.

The horizontal axis of the national importance transport joining Bauska with Liepāja and Latgale (and CIS countries) is less developed. Its further development is crucial for the development of entrepreneurship and tourism not only in the Bauska County, but also in the entire Zemgale Region. Also the regional importance transport development direction to the national importance centre Jelgava where the residents and entrepreneurs of the county receive a range of necessary services requires significant improvements to reduce the time of travel.

Figure. Preferred Spatial Structure



Priority development territories are the territories located by the development axes and Bauska Town Development Territory.

Population Density and Development Centres

Objectives of development:

- Ensuring availability of services in keeping with the level of the development centre;
- Development of Bauska Town into a national importance development centre.

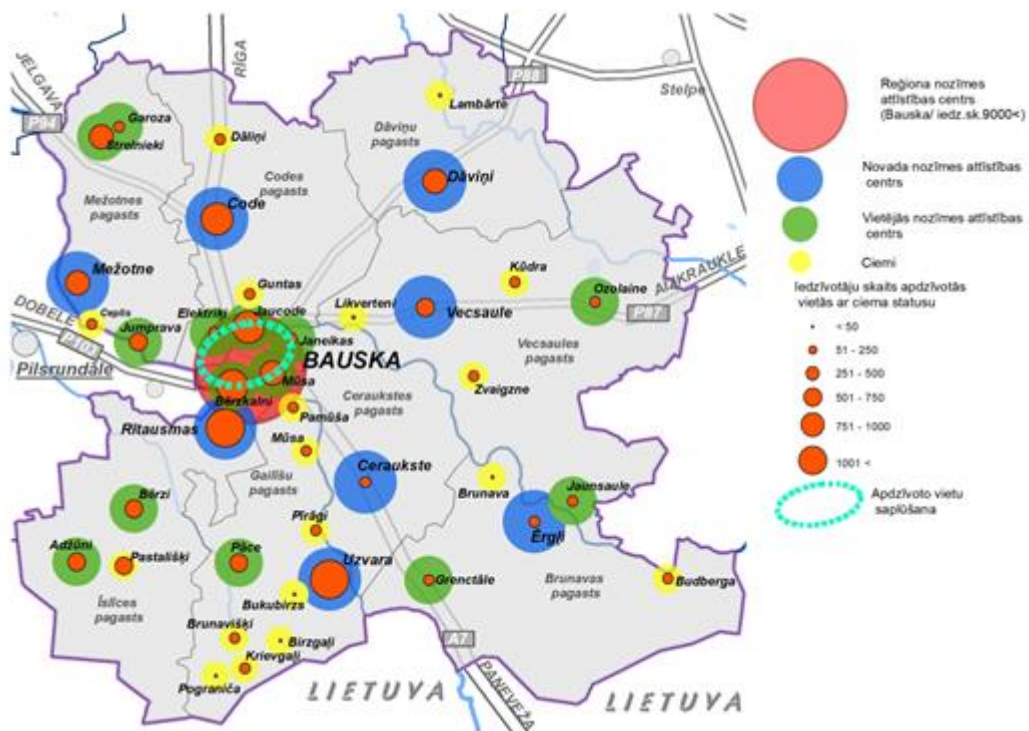
Tasks (for implementation in the county's development program and territorial plan):

- Development of services for residents and entrepreneurs in keeping with the level of the centre;
- Ensuring quality and fast accessibility of all development centres;
- Ensuring quality international accessibility of Bauska.

Expected results (by implementing the county's development program and territorial plan):

- Increase of population in Bauska Town;
- Increase of the number of jobs in the county;
- Less time necessary for travelling to/from the county's centres.

Figure. Bauska County Population Density



Procedure for Monitoring of the Development Strategy Implementation

The Bauska County Strategy of Sustainable Development for 2012-2030 is a long-term planning document. The strategy determines the vision of the county's development, long-term development priorities and strategic objectives. Implementation of the strategy is closely related with the implementation of the county's development program (DP), which determines the activities for a seven years period and an investment plan for a three years period. DP is an instrument for implementation of the strategic objectives and priorities determined in the strategy section that includes an action plan and an investment plan. To advance the achievement of the Bauska County long-term objectives, implementation of 29 tasks according to the five established medium-term development priorities has been planned in the period of 2012–2018.