

Functioning of local government on the example of Pomerania in years 1998-2018

Abstract: The aim of this work is a predictive explanation of what is and what function is performed by a local government, showing schemes of its development over the years and presenting its future challenges. The research problem of the dissertation is showing the characteristics and analysis of a local government as a lasting element of contemporary democracies based on the example of Poland, including Pomeranian Voivodeship.

The problem of a local government is a diverse and multifaceted matter, which can be considered from multiple angles – social, sociological, legal, historical, economic or political science.

Among other research techniques, institutional and legal analysis was performed as one of the oldest methods in political science. In relation to the work, it is connected with an overview of chosen political institutions and local governments - their conditioning, function and scope of responsibilities. The goal is to show those mechanisms together with their influence on the country's performance.

The historical method refers to the search for and studying of the phenomena connected with a local government as an institution of social and political life, its origins and essence as well as historical components of the research subject with the aim of drawing conclusion and developing scientific laws. While studying extensive literature, the method of analysis was used, by which it followed that the topic of a local government has been studied extensively. Based on it, further information was gathered with regard to how the local government in Poland is evolving, what are its operations in a selection of European countries, and how it functions in the Pomeranian Voivodeship in particular.

Furthermore, institutional and legal materials were analyzed, which allowed for studying the formal legislation governing the functioning of a local government. Synthesizing the data enabled combining the separate elements gathered before, thanks to which an attempt at drafting the concept of the functioning of a local government was made.

One of the basic empirical techniques applied herein was a survey. It comprised 28 questions asked in a way which enabled eliciting the answers to the questions posed in the research aims of the dissertation.

A survey in the form of a questionnaire was shown to a group of respondents. The survey was filled out by 68 members of the local government – councilors of the Pomeranian Regional Assembly (Polish: Sejmik Województwa Pomorskiego) and officials of various levels from the Marshal's Office of Pomorskie Voivodeship (Polish: Urząd Marszałkowski Województwa Pomorskiego), Hel City office (Polish: Urząd Miasta Helu), Puck City Office (Polish: Urząd Miasta Pucka) as well as the representatives of local governments in Gdynia, Wejherowo, Łeba and Jastarnia.

The research done on the example of the Pomeranian Voivodeship enabled addressing the economic, social and cultural changes as well as the phenomenon of building the civil society. The results of the research provided scope for evaluating the condition of particular economic sectors of the Voivodeship, such as: industry, construction, transport, intra-industry trade, silver economy, education, and tourism.

Keywords: local government, civil society, state, democracy.