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Polish Cities as a Centre of Regional Development

The great changes, which take place at Poland on 1989, threw the structure of then existing and functioning authorities into disarray and gave the origin of brand new decision-making centres in spatial aspect. The radical change influenced the range and territorial reach of administrative, judicial and municipal authorities. These structural changes are typical for periods of governmental transformation in every political system. As we know, the spatial division of a country always exerts an influence on shaping social and economic relations, together with communications system in a particular region. After last changes at Polish administrative division in 1998 at place of 49 local voivodship capitols there have been established only 16 ones additionally with 2 at Lubuskie and Pomorsko-Kujawskie voivodships. Starting since 1998 we can observe how rest of former voivodships capitols slowly lost its positions and influence at country economy and regional development. However, according to this process we can find that some of them, after losing former positions turn into a local, regional center of development. Respecting this facts, the main goal of undertaken research will be presentation of new categorisation of local, regional and over regional center of social and economical development.

In order to obtain the goals of work, functioning of the previous and present administrative division of Poland should be estimated in consideration of historical and geographical lands and the economic regions, basing on the existing literature. The essential stage of the research was to study spatial dimension of the authorities in regard of functioning of governmental, religious, social and economic structure and environmental conditions, the extent they played on forming the territorial divisions. An attempt has been made to show the succeeding changes in spatial differentiation of governmental centres, political, administrative, judicial center cities at XX c. in order to demonstrate continuity or variability of the center of development. For economic and self-governmental institutions, forming of decisive centres were presented after 1989, mainly due to their variability or their lack.

Comparison of department structure, which shows no common features, has become an utterly separate problem. Only are the headquarters of the most important units located in the biggest urban centres. Complicated system of the judiciary structure divided into courts of various properties shows no connection with the territorial state division neither with department institutions nor with the councils structure which, in addition, double half of the department structure authorities. Analysis of numerous regional division conceptions and their changes carried out during the new administrative divisions of the country helped to point at the main power centres of over-regional significance. Natural conditions, especially location of transportation and occurring or lack of natural resources, had a great influence on their formation. In order to present the power centres it has been provisionally accepted that according to the latest administrative division it occurs on three levels of control. First - over-regional (provinces), second - regional (administrative units) and last one - local centre of development, which according to the extent of the authorities and level of concentration have not been judged.

In order to put together cities of over-regional significance fulfilling seventeen functions criterion was chosen. Six categories among the chosen criterion define the provincial capital's status as the state administrative centre since 1700 until the present time. Historical criterion in forming a centre justifies the choice since in case of increasing number of units of equivalent centres power was generally located in power centres which had already existed. The next two include future power centres concerning the plan of state division into macro-economic regions and a government proposal of 1998 state division. Taking these two group into consideration is a logical adoption of regional, design and economic research results carried out after 1950, especially after dividing the state into 49 units on 1975. The government proposal was accepted as the second criterion ensue a trial of adjusting regions, that as regards the area and the number of people could compete with the EU regions as regards economy.

Another criterion taken into consideration in cities division is a number of institutions and their net income, that has visible influence on forming power centres, sometimes even creating administrative units. Institutions from the '500' list accomplishing income of over 50 million zloty net were considered. Along with bank headquarters spatial diversity, it has enabled to define financial significance of certain centres. In this case

appears a problem of investments location in places surrounding big centres such as Tarnowo Podgórne near Poznań, towns of Warsaw agglomeration or Katowice conurbation as well as the matter of separate classification of Gdańsk and Gdynia which are included in the Tri-City. Another criterion connected with finance is locating bank headquarters in towns. In this case, banks head offices concentration determines extremely low diversity extent of centres, thus all banks regardless their number of branches, capital and the range of provided sendees. The next criterion concerns the number and intensity of foreign connections as well as the influence of national minorities that to some extent decide about appointing consular post in a centre. For that criterion it seems that port centres (such as Gdańsk, Gdynia and Szczecin) and those that appear in border zones have privileged position. It is not, however, entirely settled since e.g. the Ukrainian consulate situated in Gdansk has no such a post in more appropriate place, like Lublin or Rzeszów. On assessing a power centre, the biggest insurance company on the Polish market - PZU, which departments and other posts branches are located in over 400 places, was taken into consideration. For this reason, only towns with these institutions' head offices were to assess the centre's importance.

Another group of four criterion is spatial diversity of the judiciary centres. As the number of district courts includes over 290 cities distinguishing cities with head office of regional courts was accepted as the first criterion of this group. Due to complicated divisions of regional courts structure, partly including labour, social insurance and economic courts as well as departments of registers and deposits, it is extremely difficult to compare centres on regional courts level (Table 1).

Next two divisions of the judiciary (courts of appeal and garrison), similarly to out-of-town NSA (General Administrative Court) departments, significantly promote over-regional centres which need to be distinguished in this study. Additionally, ganison courts were helpful in distinguishing those centres on the operation tenitory of which follows concentration of military units. However, the importance and significance of Gdynia have been artificially strengthened at the cost of Gdańsk and Zielona Góra, on the other hand, though, it allows to assess these centres' influence on the military structure. If there were no military units' significant concentrations in the western part of the country, yet there would not have been a need to appoint out-of-town department of garrison court in Poznan with a head office in Zielona Góra. As for

barrister courts, that double the number of courts of appeal, they have enabled to determine places of barrister councils headquarters, appointed with government institutions' consent, however, as a result of self-organisation of barrister councils they exemplify a sign of strong influence of societies which are not connected with the justice department structure.

Table 1. Cities with 4 or more civil tribunal courts in 2004

City with court	Local courts			Over local			X
	A	B	C	A	B	C	
Lublin	6
Warszawa	6
Wrocław	6
Kraków	6
Białystok	6
Gdańsk	6
Poznań	5
Katowice	5
Łódź	5
Rzeszów	5
Szczecin	5
Bydgoszcz	5
Bielsko-Biała	5
Koszalin	5
Olsztyn	4
Zielona Góra	4

A - court;

B-court of work;

C - court for economical jurisdiction;

D-court of appeal;

X - whole number of institutions.

Source: Authors study.

The last two divisions result from considering the higher education influence as a factor that moulds the importance and significance of a centre. The first one divides places into campuses and the others. Its choice results from the significant number of

students that gained education at universities. Another reason for choosing this criterion is the possibility of free studies which for some students poses the main factor when thinking about taking up studies. Polytechnics, however, could also be taken into consideration since, in financial respect, they fulfil the same criterion as universities but the number of students at this kind of college is smaller and they definitely offer profiled majors. As for pedagogical, medical and other state colleges they cannot play a role of significant academic centre themselves as the number of students is not big enough. Also it would be hard to except the criterion of economic colleges since part of them are private colleges collecting high tuition fees. The second criterion, compensating to a large degree weak points of the first one, is taking into consideration places with high schools. However, for the sake of numerous such centres only these were chosen which were at the 'best colleges' list published in the *Wprost* (Polish political weekly magazine) colleges ranking.

After considering the above-mentioned criterion, a ranking differentiating seventy-seven cities into four categories that fulfil the criterion has been drawn up. Over-regional centres include the first eleven cities which appeared for more than fifteen among twenty accepted criterion. They include in alphabetical order: Białystok, Cracow, Gdańsk, Katowice, Łódź, Lublin, Olsztyn, Poznań, Szczecin, Warsaw and Wrocław. Except for Olsztyn they are the biggest cities of the country. If the role and significance of Warsaw, Cracow, Poznań and Wrocław are undisputed, then lower place of Gdańsk results from taking over part of them by Gdynia. Weaker position of Łódź, however, results from the concentration of functions in the nearby Warsaw with which Łódź is not able to compete in respect of the power centre's size. The same situation is shared by Katowice with reference to Cracow⁷ what explains lower by two points position of the city. However, increased position of Olsztyn - the smallest place of this group is quite significant. Its function results from lack of any significant centres in this part of the country; similarly, to some extent, compared to other centres the significance of Lublin or Białystok which fulfil power centre's function only in the east, being reduced by the strong Warsaw influence.

Another eleven cities are numbered among the second group of over-regional centres. Presented in alphabetical order they include: Bydgoszcz, Częstochowa, Kielce, Koszalin, Opole, Płock, Radom, Rzeszów, Siedlce, Toruń and Zielona Góra. They fulfil the function of the second category power centres in a natural way. Six

provincial capitals among them suggest that either a new territorial state division into ten or eleven big provinces should have been introduced in 1999 or that on increasing the number of units demands of the following eleven cities inhabitants should be consequently satisfied and twenty or twenty-one medium-size regions should be formed. Unfortunately, a compromise solution was chosen and it is hard to answer why a province with a capital in Koszalin or Częstochowa administering similar potential and situated in the same power centres group as Kielce and Opole was not brought into life. Six cities of this group owe their power range, to some extent, to the latest decisions made on the base of political entertainment since they received an additional point for location of provincial seats which eventually increased their importance and significance. Another five cities are centres of alternative power coming in the sphere between first-degree over-regional power centres. For example, Opole between Katowice and Wrocław, Radom between Kielce and Warsaw and Częstochowa between Łódź and Cracow. Rzeszów is located in the weakening influence sphere of both Lublin and Cracow; similarly Zielona Góra and Siedlce among the nearest big centres. Absent in this group Gorzów Wielkopolski, the only provincial capital classified in a lower category, is an example of overestimating city's rank as a power centre that has no reflection in reality.

In the third group there are as many as twenty-one centres that could be described either as third-rate over-regional power centres or as first-rate local power centres. They are somehow 'suspended' as despite their aspirations they do not fulfil the over-regional power centre function yet but with their size, economic potential and the number of functions they have exceeded the function of local and over-regional power centre. Except for Gdynia and Gliwice all of them were recognised as provincial capitals in 1975 and some of them are centres that used to fulfil administrative functions in the times of the first Polish dynasty reign (Kalisz, Przemyśl, Elbląg, Sandomierz, Legnica, Piotrków Trybunalski, Sieradz, Słupsk and Włocławek). They are the best example of local power centres in which most of decisions of local significance were made up. Among them is Gorzów Wielkopolski whose provincial centre importance is weakened by its location between Szczecin and Poznań-two big over-regional power centres that prevent its development as well as fulfilling over-regional functions. The thirty-three remaining centres from the considered ranking are included since they fulfilled at least one of the chosen criterion. However, only do they fulfil local

power centres function, some of them even that of the biggest but administrative unit's power.

From the comparison of the criteria, that the remaining cities taken under consideration meet, concludes that, in the last group - 12 out of 34 cities lack previously considered divisions in 20 kinds of classification. Those cities were not the centres of power during the period between the world wars or even after the reform from 19-50. They have also never been among the cities of central power, nor among any propositions from the government referring to the country's administrative division change. None of them has ever become archbishop's abode. The regional courts function in most of them, in some of them, however - the territorial courts, and the lack any higher instance courts or military judicature. Nevertheless, not universities but at least high schools exist there. There are nine capitals of the provinces, from the country's division from 1975, among them, what proves that these particular nine cities shouldn't be included in the very last country's division. They only meet one or two criteria out of chosen 20, as far as a lower range of a local centre of power is concerned. The most common criterion that was crucial in regarding them was the decision about establishing the new university or localisation the company bringing net profits over 50 milliard zlotys. Those centres will surely take the places falling by right for them only when the general criteria for the city-centres of district power are assumed.

ten criteria were taken under consideration to estimate the variability of the centres of district power, similarly as in case of the centres of power with over-regional meaning. Among all of the district centres of power, 22 functioning as over-regional power's centres, were excluded. For all the remaining ones, the first criterion to meet to become the local centre of power, was to have 30.000 inhabitants having permanent address there. The other three more criteria were connected to having now or during the times of the II Polish Republic, the regional or territorial judicial power. The next criterion was having now or having had in the past, the function of the governmental administration centre in the particular region. The sixth criterion bases itself on estimating the power and meaning of the specific administrative district as a distinguishing power centre in voivodeship; this criterion results from the analysis done in the part of this project, revolving the centres of administrative districts in the new administrative division. Existing of the Polish Insurance Institution inspectorate

was the next criterion. The last two criteria indicate the nobility the centre as a city with an enterprise's abode, giving the profits, from the list of "500" biggest business, elaborated by the Polish magazine "Politics". The very- last criterion refers to an educational influence of the centre; where all the cities having at least one university were taken into account. The sum of total amount of points is shown in the last column, assuming that one point is given for each compliance of the function. In order to arrange the table of administrative districts, all land districts were eliminated; which by the way have their city equivalents and all of the cities that enter the composition of 22 cities with over-regional importance.

Among 305 administrative districts' capitals, excluding land districts by city's administrative districts and 22 largest centres, only 36 cities meet the five or even more previously chosen criteria (Table 2) and are decisive centres of local power with widest range and the intensity of actions. There are 28 former capitals of provinces among them and also 7 strong urban agglomerates, that did not in fact become the capitals of province, because there were bigger centres around them. Gdynia forms Tri-City together with Gdańsk and Sopot, Gliwice and Sosnowiec are situated in the sphere of action of Katowice, Gniezno lies too close to Poznań, Jasło between Rzeszów and Cracow and not too far from Krosno and Tarnów, Kołobrzeg much too close to Koszalin, what is more negative for this city as Starogard Szczeciński as well- it is limited by Szczecin's influence. Żywiec, however, is located too near to Bielsko-Biała, which during the industrial development in XIX c. Completely dominated the old centre of power. Except from Żywiec, Kołobrzeg, Jasło and Gniezno, the rest of the centres are or somehow could be the city's administrative districts. They have more than 30.000 inhabitants and have regional courts. Most of them have over-local function as territorial courts. Almost all of them dominate as economic centres, with reference to a single inhabitant's income in his province. The big part of them is in a great degree financially independent from governmental grant-in-aid and subsidies, mainly due to relatively high percentage of personal incomes and numerous firms regularly enriching particular districts' budgets. All of the centres hold huge chances of being transformed into centres of over-local and over-regional importance, comparable to those second dignity, over-regional centres. There are 127 cities from administrative districts are in the next group that meet one to four chosen criteria. They can be specified as local centres of particular district's power

centres. Their development will be considerably connected with the changes that take place in the whole region, but the amount of money given from the national budget is much too little to make independent politics. Those cities, where numerous trading companies function, especially those with the foreign capital, are in much better situation.

Table 2. Over-regional cities

Cities	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	X
Gdansk		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Kraków	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Lublin	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Poznań	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Szczecin	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Warszawa	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Wrocław	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	8
Białystok		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	7
Olsztyn	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	7
Katowice			+	+	+	+	+	+	6
Łódź			+	+	+	+	+	+	6
Opole		+	+	+	+	+		+	6
Kielce		+	+	+	+	+			5
Bydgoszcz	+	+		+	+	+			5
Rzeszów				+	+	+	+		4
Toruń			+		+	+		+	4
Koszalin			+	+	+				3
Płock	+	+			+				3
Siedlce		+			+				2
Radom		+			+				2
Zielona Góra					+	+			2
Częstochowa					+				1

A - voivodships cities in 1700

B - voivodships cities 1807-1914

C - voivodships cities 1914-1945

D - voivodships cities in 1950

E - voivodships cities in 1975

F - voivodships cities in 1999

G - cities with high civil tribunal courts

H - university cities

X-number of function

Source: Authors study

In the second group of the centres of administrative districts' power, which meet from 2 to 4 criteria, most of the cities are of high economic and social potential and, in addition, they develop nearby bigger centres. In this particular group only Świdnica gained a point for having territorial court's abode, and this qualifies as an exception, because lawyer counsel is neighbouring Wałbrzych. Also Ciechanów obtained the statutes of capital of province after administrative division from 1975. None of the cities from the group does not have the abode of PZU (Polish Insurance Institution), what basically means neighbourhood with a bigger city with the insurance inspectorate, and, on the other hand, some of the cities have a weak insurance market not requiring forming a local insurance companies' branches. Łowicz, which lies between Warsaw and Łódź, can be explained the same way, however, the location of Elk and Sandomierz, having in mind that Tarnobrzeg and Suwałki could have been chosen, seems to be motivated by willingness to enlarging the zone of ascendancy, what appears to be much easier in a smaller centre than in a large one. Practically thinking, what definitely decided on affiliation to the group of centres of power was the number of inhabitants, the regional court's abode and the powerful position of the administrative district in the province, the number of inhabitants, the area, personal income, the whole administrative district's income. The local centres' authorities probably put a lot of effort into encouraging the investors, what proves the fact of relatively high contribution of companies' from the list of 500 biggest enterprises in the country. Education yet is distinctly weakly developed. Only four centres, Chrzanów, Łowicz, Mysłowice and Pułtusk gained points for higher education institutes placed on very good positions in the ranking list.

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