

Quality of Government at Regional Level – Case of Lithuanian and Polish NUTS 2 Regions

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Abstract. *The aim of the article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the quality of government (QoG) in Lithuania (treated as a single NUTS 2 region) and in Polish Voivodships (16 NUTS 2 regions). The analysis of the quality of government was conducted on the basis of indicators quality of government in the European regions developed twice, in 2010 and in 2013, by the Quality of Government Institute in Gothenborg. The results of the performed analyzes show that in both cases the quality of government in Lithuania and in Poland was relatively low, and as regards the quality of government, Lithuania was placed very low in the ranking of the 17 analyzed NUTS 2 regions. The article is of theoretical and empirical nature. The theoretical part is dedicated to presenting public tasks implemented by self-government units in Lithuania and in Poland along with the concept of the QoG. The empirical part contains description of the methodology of research and results of conducted comparative analysis. The article is concluded with a summary, in which the main conclusions from the study are presented.*

Keywords: *quality of government, self-government, NUTS 2 regions, Lithuania, Poland.*

Raktažodžiai: *valdymo kokybė, NUTS 2 regionai, Lietuva, Lenkija.*

Introduction

The main function of the public sector in the economy is to provide public goods to the citizens on both national and local levels (Davulis et al., 2013). In this process, units of local self-governments, constituting a democratic, institutional, systematic and decentralized form of public government and one of the organs of the State and public administration (Izdebski, 2011, p. 23-55; Lis, 2012, p. 161), represent a different point of view than central units. They should identify local and regional point of view. (Kisiel, 2015, p. 13), so that meeting the needs of local communities ceases to be attributed to the State (on the central level) and is passed onto self-governed communities⁸, in accordance with the principle of decentralization. Literature points out that local communities are better organized and tasks performed by local self-government gain more attention from the members of these communities and stimulate their activity (Szczechowicz, 2010, p. 90).

Local self-government is a system in which power is exercised by the means of relevant institutional structure, in the meaning of specific form of government (Dębski, 2014, p. 171). Local authorities are attributed a significant role in development processes. They represent local community and make decisions profitable from its point of view. To the extent permitted by the law, they have the capacity to manage and control some public affairs acting in the interest of the local community at the same time bearing entire responsibility for their actions. They are also authorized to perform functions delegated by the central government at their own discretion, taking into account local conditionings (Davulis, 2007). By exercising the competences conferred upon them by the law, understood as domains of their activities and powers, (Astrauskas & Gecikova, 2014), implementing their functions and tasks, units of self-governments strive to achieve their primary goal, which is providing the best conditions for the development of the local community (Lidström & Baldersheim, 2016). While creating the environment for the activity of all regional and local subjects, self-government authorities are at the same time responsible before their own communities for proper performance of their public tasks, defined as ‘meeting collective and individual needs of men resulting from their cooperation in societies’ (Fundowicz, 2009, p. 154). The conditions and standard of living of every citizen, as well as development opportunities for local economies and communities all depend on efficient performance of self-governments and the quality of their power.

Assessment of quality of tasks implemented by local self-government should refer to two types of parameters: technical (the result – what is provided) and func-

8 In different countries there are different mechanisms of assigning competences and tasks to the government units and public administration and of method of their distribution into different levels of those units. However, in general, they can be divided into mechanisms in which competences and tasks are distributed among units on national, regional and local levels and general (parallel, overlapping) in which competences and tasks may be assigned to various or all levels of government and public administration. See also (Baltušnikienė, Astrauskas, 2009).

tional ones (the process – how it is provided). Quality is usually perceived in subjective terms and there are no cardinal measures to help establish its level, which is why the assessment process is a complicated one. When evaluating quality in the context of public affairs it is important to refer to the satisfaction of an individual, which is why surveys on individual opinions should be fundamental for the assessment of implementation of public tasks (Kondrotaitė, 2012). Therefore, evaluation of activity of local self-governments from the point of view of local communities should be based not only on the number of tasks implemented by the authorities or volume of public goods provided by their units. It is also important to assess local self-governments from the point of view of quality of implementing public tasks. According to G. Kondrotaitė (2012), quality is achieved when public institutions have to obey specific requirements. An important field for evaluating performance of regional authorities may therefore be the requirement of impartiality referring to provision of public services and goods, which, according to the QoG concept, is a good indicator of the quality of government exercised in the region.

The main purpose of the article is therefore to analyze the quality of government exercised by local self-governments, as perceived by the citizens benefiting from selected public goods and services. Comparative analysis performed in the article examines NUTS 2 regions in Poland (16 voivodships) and in Lithuania (classified as a single NUTS 2 region according to the nomenclature of the European Union). Results of qualitative (survey) research conducted in 2010 and 2013 by the Quality of Government Institute (IQoG) of the University of Gothenburg were used in the article. They allowed to conduct analysis of quality of government in a time and space cross-section in selected regions. The article is of theoretical and empirical nature. Its first part presents the scope of competence and tasks of local self-governments functioning in Lithuania and in Poland. The second part is devoted to the review of literature concerning the multi-dimensional QoG concept. The third part features the methodology of conducted research, and results of the analyses are presented in the fourth part. The article ends with a summary of conclusions and indication of opportunities for future research.

Local self-government in the Republic of Lithuania and in Poland

Functioning of local self-government is an important system feature of local authority of contemporary democratic countries in Europe. In Lithuania and in Poland local self-governments were created as a result of decentralization conducted in these countries from the beginning of the transformation processes. In both countries organization and functioning of local self-governments was based on the European Charter of Local Self-Government, passed in Strasburg on 15 October 1985 and ratified by them both. Article 1 of the Charter indicates that local self-government stands for law and capacity of local communities to manage essential part of public affairs at their own responsibility, in the interests and for the benefit of

their members, to the extent permitted by the law (Europejska Karta Samorządu Terytorialnego, 1994). According to the Charter, principles of functioning of local self-government and its basic competences are set out in internal legal provisions of particular countries, and, if possible, in their Constitutions. Territorial communities have the right to deal with any matter that has not been excluded from their jurisdiction or transferred to other bodies, yet other competences may be assigned to them by the provisions of the laws.

Organization and principles of functioning of local self-government in the Republic of Lithuania and in Poland are set out in both Constitutions of these countries and national legal acts. Currently, there are 60 self-governed territories in Lithuania – the so-called *savivaldybė* (municipalities), which are units of lower-level territorial administration (according to Eurostat classified as NUTS 4 regions). Lithuania also has 10 high-level territorial administration units – the so-called *apskritis* (classified as NUTS 3 regions). In each *apskritis* there is a unit dedicated for the implementation of regional policy in Lithuania called the Council of Regional Development. The Councils are mixed administration units since they consist of both representatives authorized by the central government and representatives authorized by municipal councils (mayors and councilors) (Junevičius & Ereminaitė, 2012, Astrauskas, 2013).

Constitutional basis for the functioning of self-government authorities in Lithuania is the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, adopted on 25 October 1992. The provisions associated with the local self-government are included in the chapter 10 (articles 119–124), entitled *Local self-government and management* (Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, 1992). However, the basic legal act regulating the activity of local self-government in Lithuania is the Law on local self-government of 1994 (Lithuania Law on Local Governments, 1994), regulating the activity of municipalities as basic units of local self-government. Provisions of the Law divide competences of municipalities according to the criterion of autonomy in decision-making process and the criterion of the nature of activity (Astrauskas, 2014). The first criterion is introduced in article 5 of the Law, which divides functions of municipal authorities into own, the so-called independent, autonomous and assigned by the State, i.e. delegated by the State to municipalities. Municipalities perform own functions within competences assigned to them in the Constitution and separate laws and in accordance with their obligations to the society and in its interests. In performing those functions municipalities are endowed with the right to act at their own discretion as regards accepting its functions and their performance, and are in this scope responsible for their own actions. Activities undertaken by municipalities in this scope have to be compliant with applicable law. Article 6 (Lithuania Law on Local Governments, 1994) mentions 43 own functions, but also indicates that municipalities may take over other functions, not reserved by law for State institutions.

Delegated functions are implemented by Lithuanian municipalities on behalf of the State, regardless of interests of the people. While performing these functions, local self-government units act at their own discretion to the extent permitted by the law, but activities of the municipalities are limited by decisions of State institutions (and or clerks). Article 7 (Lithuania Law on Local Governments, 1994) lists 34 functions of this kind, but it also indicates the possibility of implementation of other tasks, delegated in compliance with law.

According to the criterion of the nature of the activity, competences of Lithuanian municipalities can be divided into: performing functions of local self-government, public administration and providing public services. Both criteria for division of municipal functions overlap. Autonomic competences include functions of local self-government and providing public services, and delegated functions, apart from those associated with providing public services, include functions of public administration (Stonkutė & Gaule, 2016, p. 404-405). Autonomic and delegated functions cover various areas of municipal activity, including education, health protection and public safety (Astrauskas & Gecikova, 2014, Stonkutė & Gaule, 2016, p. 405-406), the performance of which is assessed for impartiality within the QoG evaluation.

In Poland local self-government is organized on three levels including: municipalities (2478), poviats (*powiaty*) (380) – the clusters of which create 72 NUTS 3 regions – and voivodships (16) treated as NUTS 2 regions. However, the Constitution of the Republic of Poland states in its article 164 that ‘the basic unit of local self-government is municipality’, and that ‘other units of regional or local self-government are established by separate laws’ (Konstytucja RP, 1997). In chapter VII (articles 163-172) entitled *Local self-government* the Constitution endows local self-government units in Poland with competences to carry out public tasks not reserved by the Constitution and separate laws for central administration, consisting in satisfying collective needs of local communities, and also delegated by the laws, if it is justified by legitimate needs of the State.

Therefore, in Poland tasks of the local self-government can be divided into delegated and own. Delegated tasks are carried out by self-government units on behalf and for the benefit of the delegating party, their aim is to satisfy collective needs of the entire society organized in the form of State. These tasks fall in the scope of central administration competences, assigned by laws or in agreements. Public tasks of local or regional character, the purpose of which is to satisfy needs of self-government communities are in turn performed by self-government units as their own tasks. Such public tasks could be too troublesome for national authorities to be coordinated on national level. Local self-governments are capable of more effective and efficient performance since ‘...thanks to direct and live contact with the needs of local communities, they are able to better diagnose their needs, chances of implementation and to react more flexibly in case of occurrence of events justifying their modifications’ (Lis, 2012, p. 164).

Detailed scope of public tasks on different levels of self-government in Poland not reserved for central organs of administration is set out in three separate system laws: the Law on Municipal Self-government (LMSG) (Ustawa, 1990), the Law on Poviat Self-government (LPSG) (Ustawa (a), 1998) and the Law on Voivodship Self-government (LVSG) (Ustawa (b), 1998). Tasks assigned in the above mentioned laws are performed by local self-governments on their own behalf, at their own responsibility, in general public interest, also in the scope of finances (Kończakowski & Ratajczak, 2010, p. 23). They include administrative tasks (associated with providing administrative assistance to local community), technical tasks (associated with the functioning of technical infrastructure) and social tasks (Cibor, 2014, p. 4).

Among 20 fields assigned to the municipality listed in the LMSG and 23 fields from supra-municipal level listed in the LPSG and performed by poviat, the main areas of own social tasks include providing services in the scope of promotion and protection of health, public education, public order and safety of the citizens. Public social tasks of regional character are performed by self-governments on voivodship level. According to the LVSG, these include maintenance and development of social infrastructure and supporting actions for raising the level of education.

The concept of the quality of government and its dimensions

In the early 1990s the Quality of Government and related concepts, such as Good Governance and State Capacity were the focus of attention of theorists dealing with developing and transitioning countries. These notions refer to the desired effect of exercising public authority (Agnafors, 2013) and were initially applied in the assessment of those countries by international institutions. Currently they are used to evaluate the power exercised in all the countries, including developed ones, and to assess the quality of government at the regional level.

The quality of government is a frequently promoted and used term. Although it has many definitions, full consensus has never been reached on what it is actually composed of. One concept that has been developing over many years is a proposal combining different dimensions of the QoG. According to L. Tomini (2011), the QoG concept is composed of four dimensions: impartiality, efficiency, responsibility and sensitivity. Impartiality is treated as prerequisite for the provision of public services irrespective of preferences, relations and personal likings or antipathies between the provider of the service and the citizen. Impartiality is closely linked to the phenomenon of corruption, but the absence of corruption is not the only condition for maintaining impartiality. Efficiency is viewed in the context of indicators for empirical assessment of the situation. On another note, it is the dimension of responsibility that the author describes as the heart of democracy. Sensitivity of the government is in turn necessary to determine whether the government's activity reflects the preferences of the citizens and if it is perceived as legitimate and compliant with law. A good government responds to the expectations of the citizens and is able to implement policy that

meets those demands. Therefore, even in the countries with growing GDP *per capita*, which is a material result of the process of governing, the governments cannot solely depend on activities leading to the improvement of economic situation.

B. Halleröd, H. Ekbrand and D. Gordon (2014) distinguish five aspects of the QoG: democracy and representation, human rights, the rule of law, efficiency, transparency and responsibility. On the other hand, B. Rothstein and M. Tannenber (2015) indicate that the QoG is composed of: the rule of law, the quality of civil service and the efficiency of government agencies responsible for the implementation of public policy.

B. Rothstein and J. Teorell (2008) have also noticed that however equal access to power, democratic state, the rule of law and efficiency are significant elements of the assessment of the quality of government, another important component is the impartiality of exercised power. State institutions should act in accordance with public interest and not be guided by particular motives. The authors also indicate that good governance undoubtedly should be free from corruption (Rothstein & Teorell, 2012, p. 23-24). According to B. Rothstein and J. Teorell, the QoG refers to exercising public power and therefore should be defined as impartiality of institutions endowed with this power (Rothstein & Teorell, 2008, Rothstein, 2014).

Therefore, the literature uses the QoG term to summarize the concept of impartial, efficient and uncorrupted government (Rothstein & Teorell, 2012, p. 26-28, Europejska Karta Samorządu Terytorialnego, 1994). It also points out that impartial public institutions affect institutional trust, economic growth and individual happiness. The notion of impartiality helps to integrate four clearly distinguished literary themes concerning the consequences of activity of public institutions: literature on corruption and social capital, on economic development and growth, on bureaucracy and civil war and dedicated to subjective perception of welfare and happiness (35 Tomini, 2011). The literature also highlights that the QoG is the main indicator of many welfare-related variables and the QoG concept offers an explanation why living conditions in countries and regions may differ significantly despite having similar or identical level of GDP *per capita* (Halleröd et al., 2014). It also stressed that what the authorities provide is less important than how they implement their policy (Holmberg et al., 2009).

Methodology of research

Quality assessment of regional governance was based on indicators developed by The Quality of Government Institute of the University of Gothenburg on the basis of the results of a survey composed of 16 questions. The aim of interviews conducted by the Institute was to get acquainted with views and experiences of common citizens associated with the reception of selected public goods and services (in terms of quality, impartiality, equal treatment and the occurrence of corruption) and to assess the processes of political choices and the impartiality of media. In compliance with the definition of the QoG put forward by B. Rothstein and J. Teorell, the fields of activity recognized as representative included education, healthcare and the execution of law, since managing

or administration of these public goods and services and their financing is usually assigned to local authorities (Charron et al., 2014). Studies on the quality of government were carried out at NUTS 2 level in 236 regions of 28 UE countries, two accession states – Turkey and Serbia, and only six regions of Ukraine⁹. Answers to 16 questions included in the survey were measured mainly using the Likert method allowing for evaluation of attitudes and views of the respondents; quantitative order scale with 10- and 4-level answer scale was used in the questions. Dichotomous nominal scale (yes/no) was used only in one question. Obtained results were aggregated and standardized. 16 indices thus created were assigned levels from +3 to -3¹⁰. Standardization of data from examined countries allowed for comparing regions in different countries.

Partial indicators served the Institute to calculate aggregated European Quality of Government Index (EQI) calculated for each of the 30 surveyed countries and each of their 236 regions. The authors of the EQI have expanded their index by integrating it on national level with the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators. Additionally, on the basis of the EQI, the Institute developed the EQI100 index¹¹, situating the QoG on a 0-100 scale (Charron et al., 2014). Value 100 is attributed to the region that received the highest quality rating in a given year and value 0 to the lowest rated region.

EQI and EQI100 indexes can be used for a variety of purposes. They allow, for example, to compare the quality of government in NUTS 2 regions in the analyzed countries, and to compare changes in the quality of government over time. Thanks to this, politicians and policymakers have the opportunity to see whether the development in all European regions or in a given country is harmonious and to recognize developmental differences between regions.

Results of comparative analysis of the quality of government in the examined regions

According to EQI100 values calculated by the IQoG for 30 examined countries, the quality of government in 2013 in each of them was rated lower than in 2010. EQI100 index values for 30 examined European countries are shown in Fig. 1. In both years the first place in the ranking was held by Denmark (index value 94.5 in 2010 and 79.4 in 2013), and the last place by Serbia. The QoG index value for this country in both years is five times less than for Denmark. In 2010 Lithuania was ranked at 24 (EQI100/2010 = 42.0), and in 2013 it moved to 22 (EQI100/2013 = 37.6). Poland was ranked 22 and 19 respectively, with the QoG ratings of 43.2 and 40.5. Therefore, both countries belong to a group of countries in which the quality of government is relatively low – in both years it was lower than the average for all 30 countries (59.0 and 49.0 respectively) and from the median (60.6 and 50.6 respectively).

9 This country was omitted in the analyses performed for the purposes of this article due to the lack of data for each of its NUTS 2 regions.

10 Detailed description of the methodology of research is included in: (Charron et al., 2014).

11 The EQI is presented in this manner later in the article.

EQI100 value calculated for each of 236 NUTS 2 regions was used to create their ranking, according to their position. Positions occupied by Lithuania and Polish voivodships are presented in Table 1. As a NUTS 2 region Lithuania took 180 position in 2010 and in 2013 moved up by one place (to 179). Polish NUTS 2 regions were placed on relatively low positions in the ranking. In 2010 the highest place among Polish regions was taken by opolskie voivodship (150), which moved to 131 in 2013. This, however, still means that just like other Polish NUTS 2 regions it fell into the category of European regions in which the quality of government is lower than the average value for all the examined regions. The lowest position among Polish regions was taken by dolnośląskie voivodship - 192 in 2010 and 187 in 2013.

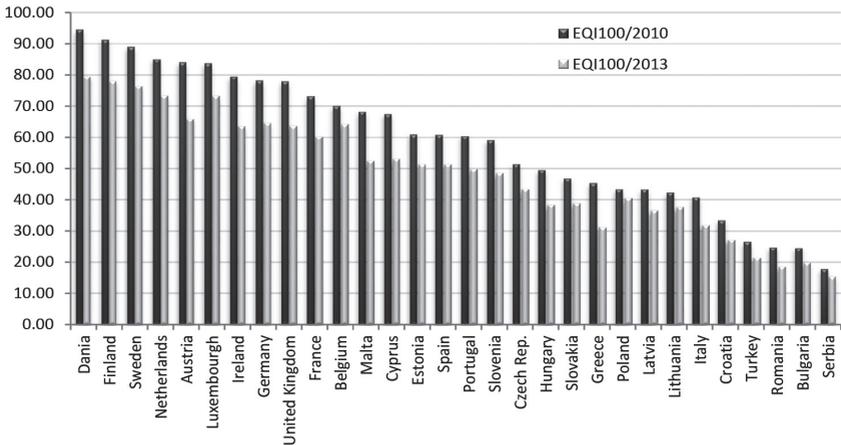


Fig. 1. Evaluation of the quality of government (EQG100) in 30 analyzed countries

Source: based on database (Charron et al., 2016).

Table 1. Ranking of examined NUTS 2 regions with reference to the EQI100 value

Year	Number of regions	Dolnośląskie	Śląskie	Wielkopolskie	Mazowieckie	Lithuania	Podlaskie	Kujawsko-pomorskie	Lubuskie	Lubelskie	Małopolskie	Zachodnio-pomorskie	Pomorskie	Podkarpackie	Łódzkie	Świętokrzyskie	Warmińsko-mazurskie	Opolskie
	2010	236	192	191	183	182	180	179	177	174	173	171	169	168	167	165	164	155
2013	236	187	186	161	180	179	142	133	147	164	156	155	145	178	175	169	157	131
	17	17	16	9	15	14	3	2	5	10	8	7	4	13	12	11	6	1

Source: based on database (Charron et al., 2016) and own elaboration.

At the same time, this means that among 17 NUTS 2 regions chosen for comparative analysis (Lithuania and 16 Polish voivodships) dolnośląskie voivodship achieved the lower EQI100 value in both years (17 position in the ranking), and opolskie voivodship the highest one (1st position in the ranking) (see Table 1). Among the remaining Polish regions 5 of them in 2013 improved their position in the ranking (wielkopolskie, podlaskie, kujawsko-pomorskie, lubuskie, pomorskie), 6 dropped (mazowieckie, lubelskie, podkarpackie, łódzkie, świętokrzyskie, warmińsko-mazurskie), and the position of three voivodships did not change. These include śląskie (16), małopolskie (8) and zachodniopomorskie (7) voivodships. In the first group of regions, despite decreasing EQI100 tendency in 2013, 3 voivodships received higher QoG rating than in 2010 (lubuskie, kujawsko-pomorskie, podlaskie). EQI100 levels in 2010 and 2013 for 17 examined regions are presented in Fig. 2.

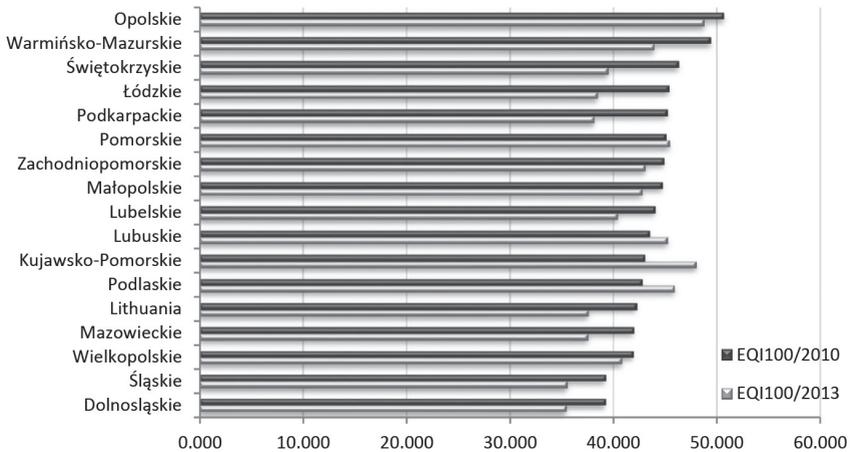


Fig. 2. Evaluation of the quality of government (EQG100) in 17 selected regions NUTS 2

Source: own elaboration.

The quality of government in Lithuania in 2010 was assessed higher than in 4 out of 16 Polish voivodships, therefore ranking 13. In 2013, despite lower than in 2010 value of the EQI100 index for as many as 13 regions, it still dropped to the 14. The assessment of quality of government in this country in both these years was therefore lower than the average EQI100 value for the 17 regions (amounting to 44.1 in 2010 and 41.6 in 2013) and lower than the mean value (amounting to 40.8 and 44.5 respectively). Compared to opolskie voivodship, which was rated best in terms of the QoG, the EQI100 index value for Lithuania was lower in Lithuania in the examined years by 20-30%. And compared to the worst-rated dolnośląskie region, it scored only 6-7% higher.

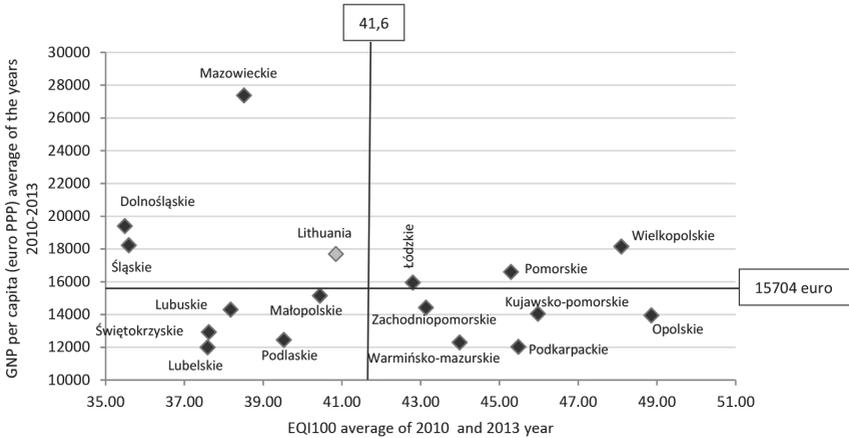


Fig. 3. Comparison of GDP per capita and quality of government in 17 surveyed regions NUTS 2

Source: own elaboration.

The quality of government understood as, according to the definition by B. Rothstein and J. Teorell, impartiality of public authorities in the process of providing goods and services for which they are responsible is an important element referring to the living conditions of the inhabitants. Therefore, besides the most commonly used indicator expressing only material living conditions, that is GDP *per capita*, the QoG can (and even should) be used to show diversity of living conditions in examined 17 regions. The relationship between average GDP *per capita* value (from the years 2010-2013) expressed in EUR, according to the purchasing power parity for each region and average EQI100 value (from the years 2010 and 2013) calculated for them is presented in Fig. 3.

Using the positioning of the centuries-long measure (GDP *per capita* and the EQI100 for 17 regions), examined regions may be divided into the following groups:

- I – characterized by relatively high GDP *per capita* and relatively low quality of government (mazowieckie, dolnośląskie, śląskie and Lithuania);
- II – characterized by relatively high GDP *per capita* and relatively high quality of government (łódzkie, pomorskie, wielkopolskie);
- III – characterized by relatively low GDP *per capita* and relatively high quality of government (zachodniopomorskie, kujawsko-pomorskie, opolskie, podkarpackie; warmińsko-mazurskie);
- IV – characterized by relatively low GDP *per capita* and relatively low quality of government (lubuskie, małopolskie, podlaskie, lubelskie, świętokrzyskie).

Lithuania was classified into group I since, as was already mentioned, it is characterized by relatively low, as compared to other regions, level of the quality of government and relatively high average value of GDP *per capita* in the years 2010-2013 – higher than the average value of 17 regions (15 704 EUR). Only four Polish NUTS 2 regions reached a significantly higher or slightly higher level of this indicator, and three of them qualified in the same group as Lithuania. It should be stressed, however, that although the material living conditions in Lithuania are comparable to, for example, wielkopolskie voivodship, in the opinion of the Lithuanian citizens, conditions provided by the impartiality of the self-government authorities in the country are far worse than the conditions provided by local authorities in wielkopolskie voivodship. Similar differentiation of living conditions resulting from different quality of government occurs in the case of the following voivodships: lubuskie, zachodniopomorskie, kujawsko-pomorskie, opolskie and lubelskie, podkarpackie, podlaskie, warmińsko-mazurskie.

Conclusions

1. Assessment of tasks implemented by the local self-government should be made with reference not only to objective, quantitative data on their completion, but, increasingly, to data on the impact of goods and services provided by the local self-government on the situation of their recipients and their opinions. This means that in the methodology of research on public bodies the accents have been moved in the direction of analyses regarding social reception of public goods and impact of those goods on the social welfare.
2. Data on social reception of public goods are aggregated during dedicated research being a kind of ‘thermometer’ used to measure hidden quality variables, in which way members of communities are no longer treated as passive consumers of public goods. They become partners of self-government in the process of identifying their needs, their evaluation as well as planning, monitoring and evaluating of their tasks (Bartoszewicz et al., p. 29-30).
3. It is therefore important to evaluate public sector units not only with respect to their managers or external control bodies. It is also important that their performance is assessed by the society, the members of which cannot be treated solely as customers, being the recipients of public goods. The society should become a significant element of the system of assessment of public sector units. This in particular applies to the units of local self-government, the aim of which is to meet the needs of local society and to build local community.
4. The community itself should judge not only if self-government units perform their tasks in efficient and cost-effective manner, but also if these

task are implemented in ethical, honest, legal manner and if self-government units respect the principle of equal treatment of the recipients of public goods. Such evaluations will make it possible to increase transparency and liability, reducing nepotism and corruption and ensuring fair access to created public goods. Increased cooperation between citizens and self-government units in co-managing the region is also possible. Such cooperation is based on the high level of general trust and on the trust in public institutions, which constitute an important part of social capital.

5. Comparative analysis conducted in the article and based on the indicators developed on the basis of results of the surveys conducted among local communities showed that there is a great diversity in the quality of government as perceived and evaluated by the inhabitants of analyzed regions. Decisions of local self-government in the scope of providing public education, healthcare and public safety are made not only on the basis of objective criteria but also personal views or willingness to implement own interests of people who misuse their public positions.
6. The analysis showed that in the eyes of the society, the role of local self-governments associated with providing the citizens with impartial access to selected public goods is fulfilled by the self-government in different ways, providing unequal basis for building social capital and cooperation in improving living conditions in the region.
7. The results of the analysis showed that the living conditions in given regions are very diversified. It was demonstrated that this situation results not only from differences in GDP *per capita*, but also from different level of accessibility to basic public goods provided by regional authorities. This in turn proves the weakness and low quality of formal institutions functioning at regional level.
8. Discussion on the reasons for such state of matters and comparison of obtained results with results of similar research in this scope should become the subject of further studies.

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Valdymo kokybė regioniniu lygmeniu – Lietuvos ir Lenkijos pavyzdys

Anotacija

Šio straipsnio tikslas yra lyginamoji valdymo kokybės (*Quality of Government - QoG*) analizė Lenkijos vaivadijose (16 regionų NUTS 2) bei Lietuvoje (visa laikoma kaip regionas NUTS 2). Valdymo kokybės vertinimo analizė buvo atlikta remiantis valdžios vykdymo kokybės rodikliu Europos regionuose, išnagrinėtuose du kartus Götėborgo Universiteto Vyrtausybes kokybes institute, 2010 ir 2013 metais. Atliktos analizės rezultatai rodo, kad abiem metais valdymo kokybė Lietuvoje ir Lenkijoje buvo santykinai žema, o Lietuva pagal valdymo kokybę užėmė tolimą poziciją 17 analizuojamų regionų NUTS 2 reitinge. Straipsnis yra teorinio ir empirinio pobūdžio. Teorinėje dalyje yra aprašomi Lietuvos ir Lenkijos savivaldybių įgyvendinami viešieji uždaviniai bei aprašoma QoG koncepcija. Empirinė straipsnio dalis apima tyrimų metodikos aprašymą bei lyginamosios analizės rezultatus. Straipsnį užbaigia apibendrinimas, kuriame yra pateiktos svarbiausios atliktų tyrimų išvados.

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