

# **Democratic legitimacy of the Polish European Policy – the system analysis**

*Abstract*

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Ph.D. thesis prepared under the supervision of  
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The Ph.D. dissertation provides a complete description of a democratic legitimacy of the Polish European policy. The analysis of the role of the Sejm, Senate and territorial self-government authorities is portrayed through the theoretical view of a new institutionalism. Additionally, author uses a method of a system analysis to present a comprehensive panorama of the national political actors and mechanisms regarding the legitimacy of national European policy.

Author assumed to achieve three research objectives in the Ph.D. dissertation. First of them was to create a model of the Polish European policy system. Second objective concerned the analysis of a current position and role of the Sejm, Senate and territorial self-government institutions in a system of national European policy. Third research objective was focused on empirical examination of the effectiveness of the Polish parliament, local and regional government in the processes occurring within the system of national European policy. In order to accomplish given objectives, the author verified eleven hypothesis in particular chapters of the Ph.D. dissertation.

The model of the Polish European Policy has been presented in the first chapter of the dissertation. Firstly, it is the aim of a national European policy, which is defined by the formal demands stemming from legal norms, political strategies of the ruling parties and the opposition, as well as the expectations of the benefits gained from EU membership. Secondly, to the system of the Polish European policy belong institutions and bodies of public administration and also political actors (officials, MPs, senators, MEPs). The system is additionally composed of national legal norms, internal regulations of public administration, selected elements of *acquis communautaire*, as well as of informal rules such as procedures developed in political practice. The author uses the *path dependence process* in the first chapter in order to describe the change of the decision centre from the domain of the Prime Minister to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Third element of the system of the national European policy is composed of all the public administration mechanisms which are used by the above mentioned institutions and political actors. These procedures are based on the Artur Nowak-Far's conception of four so called relational spheres of the Polish European policy.

Second chapter, as well as the first one, is theoretical. The aim of this part is to identify the most important external factors, which have impact on the legitimacy of the national European policy provided by parliament and local and regional authorities. The analysis presented in this chapter proves, that position of the Sejm, Senate and territorial self-government within the system of Polish European policy is determined by the EU treaties change and implementation of the new methods of governance.

In the third chapter the author analyzes the legitimacy function of the Sejm and Senate within the system on national European policy. The first part provides detailed description of seven cooperation mechanisms between the parliament and government, which concern European issues. Those mechanisms were identified on the basis of the act of 8 October 2010 regarding the cooperation rules of the parliament and the Council of Ministers in the matters of the EU membership, as well as other related national and EU legislations. In the second part of this chapter the author uses the description of statistical data and case studies methods in order to empirically examine the effectiveness of the parliament in legitimizing the system of Polish European policy. The indicators of the effectiveness in this case are based on four areas of parliamentary activity: information about the participation of government in the EU lawmaking process; giving opinions and advise referring the EU law creation; giving opinions on the candidates for certain posts in the EU; influence on the preparation and holding the presidency in the Council of European Union in second half of the year 2011. On the basis of achieved results in this chapter it is possible to draw the conclusions which can improve the efficiency of the parliament activity in the EU issues.

The fourth chapter presents the competencies of the territorial self-government regarding the EU membership issues. The role of the territorial self-government within the system of Polish European policy is to complement the democratic legitimacy of this policy. The reason is that the growing role of the local and regional authorities in the EU allows them to be more active in the creation of the EU public policies. Significant in this case is also the territorial self-government position in the Polish political system. Thus, in order to effectively implement the EU obligation, local and regional authorities use the variety of subnational cooperation structures, such as self-government units corporations, conventions of local and regional executive bodies and Joined Commission of Government and Local and Regional Government. Involvement of this institutions in programming the implementations mechanisms of cohesion policy allowed the central government to legitimate their efforts in this matter. Using the case study method, author examines the influence of the territorial self-

government units on the strategic documents and legal acts concerning the cohesion policy in the years 2007-2013 and 2014-2020.

Participation of the Sejm, Senate and territorial self-government authorities in implementing the Polish European policy is complex and multifaceted issue of political science. However, the more important national parliaments and regions of the member states are in the EU, the more necessary is a comprehensive analysis of their efficiency. Hence, the results of the research presented in this dissertation can serve as a basis for further systematic examination of the parliament, local and regional authorities' activities in a Polish European Policy.