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## Roles of Advisory Councils in Urban Governance<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Urban governance (UG) is a place-based network of cooperation between public and non-public actors where public authorities play a strategic role in deciding on city matters. A number of UG actors include advisory councils (ACs), characterized by a long tradition, universality, stability and objectives related to urban affairs. The article aims to identify AC roles in UG. In addition, the author hypothesizes a correlation between the number of official (statutory) and informal (not legally regulated) roles and differences between ACs in terms of the roles they play. The hypotheses were verified in qualitative research. 57 semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of the youth councils, senior citizen councils, sport councils, and councils for residents with disabilities in 16 Polish cities. The interview transcripts were uploaded to QDA Miner for encoding and analysis. It was found that all ACs, regardless of their official roles, play informal roles, and all these roles are related to UG. There is no correlation between the number of official and informal roles, which would make ACs very similar unless the mandatory character of the roles played by the council for residents with disabilities, which differs this AC from the other. The results of the study lead the author to recommend revisions to AC regulations in order to increase their participation in the UG.

**Key words:** advisory council, social council, city, role, urban governance, Poland

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### Introduction

Urban governance means both a process in public management and a theoretical approach to studying and explaining complex trends in contemporary cities. Already in the 1990s Le Galés defined governance as “the capacity to integrate and give form to local interests, organizations and social groups and, on the other hand, the capacity to represent them outside, to develop more or less unified strategies towards the market, the state, other cities and other levels of government” (1998, p. 496). In the same vein, Le Galés defines urban governance enriching it with the place-based identity and collective organization. Later, scholars, in response to the enthusiastically welcomed “shift from government to governance”, emphasized the importance of formal arrangements and vertical relations in solving intricate city problems (Hendriks, 2014). Contrary to the American tradition, which seeks for “the synergy between political and corporate capabilities” (Pierre, 2014, p. 867), in the European management and administrative culture, the role of public authorities has always been critical in governing the city. In this study, urban governance is understood as various – more or less institutionalized – forms of co-

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operation between public and non-public actors, where public authorities play a strategic role in deciding on city matters.

Advisory councils (ACs) are institutionalized actors of urban governance, although they are not of particular interest to researchers of urban areas. Hendriks (2014) is one of the few who mentions them in the context of urban governance. Nevertheless, the long AC tradition, their universality, institutional stability, objectives related to the city's affairs and the participation of residents predispose them to the role of actors in urban governance.

Opinion-giving and advice to public authorities are the basic roles of ACs. Nevertheless, the author makes the assumption that ACs produce additionally roles, which are – according to the definition of a role in symbolic interactionism – responses to social expectations, not formally predefined purposes. The aim of this article is, first, to confirm the above assumption; and secondly, to identify roles played by ACs in Polish cities. The study is also to indicate differences between ACs in terms of roles they play.

The article presents the results of the research performed in 49 councils located in 16 Polish cities. The following ACs were investigated: youth councils, senior citizen councils, councils for the residents with disabilities, and sport councils. 57 semi-structured interviews with AC members were performed. Their verbatim transcripts were uploaded to QDA Miner and coded. The results of the frequency of codes' occurrence and analysis of coding by variables are presented in the present article.

The article is organized as follows. The next part presents the theoretical framework of the research, i.e., the urban governance and role theory. Subsequently, ACs in general and ACs investigated are discussed together with a literature review. Hypotheses and research questions are elaborated in the methodology part together with methods of the research. This is followed by the research results. The study ends with a conclusion.

### **Urban governance and role theory as a theoretical framework for research**

Urban governance is defined here as local governance (see Denters, 2011), complemented by actors, problems and processes relating to the city. As an analytical model, urban governance includes:

- a) actors – institutions and people who represent different local interests, groups, social movements and organizations, and, despite their diversity, create a locality. Urban governance, as Pierre says, goes beyond the “institutions of the local state” (2005, p. 452), but the “local state”, which means local authorities and administration, plays an essential role in attempting to achieve collective objectives in harmony with private interests. Therefore, “understanding the capabilities of local government organizations is essential for understanding urban governance” (1999, pp. 374–75);
- b) objectives – the creation of collective actors with collective objectives (Maloutas, Pantelidou Malouta, 2004, pp. 455–456), which is a starting point for the implementation of many objectives – from the daily management of public services, through the representation of local interests, local policy making, to building the local community and the implementation of broader strategies on local development;
- c) mechanisms through which “significant and resource-full actors coordinate their actions and resources in the pursuit of collectively defined objectives” (Pierre, 2005,

p. 452). The very idea of urban governance is based on the active (not passive) participation of citizens at all stages of policy making. This 'active participation' is accomplished through self-organizing networks and grassroots initiatives, but also through partly regulated movement (Maloutas & Pantelidou Malouta, 2004, p. 456), a legal mandate, or "by order of the central government or a ministry" (Dekker, van Kempen, 2004, p. 110).

Summarizing the above components of urban governance, I define it – based on the Maloutas and Pantelidou Malouta (2004) – as organized articulation and the active participation of various local interests in managing local affairs by partially taking over, partially supplementing the traditional forms of representative local government. In this study, it is important to stress that local authorities have the capacity and the motivation to stimulate collective actors and to shape conditions to perform collective goals, that other actors do not have.

The advisory councils are somewhere between the "local state" and the non-state domain. They are anchored in the local state by their creation by local authorities and entrust them with opinions and advisory roles to these authorities. On the other hand, ACs are linked to the non-state domain through their members – individuals and representatives of social groups and organizations – and to the key role of non-state actors in recruiting their members. It is assumed here that this AC double anchor is also reflected in their actions: the fulfilment of the roles assigned to them by law and those expected of their members and the social environment.

In role theory, the social role is defined as "a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms, and behaviors that a person has to face and fulfill." (Barnett, 2014, p. 5591). This definition shows the normative and behavioral dimensions of the role, and also implies the predictability of individual behavior and its dependence on the context. In the theory of symbolic interactionism roles are interpreted as "emergent social objects" (Harnisch, 2012, p. 53), 'bundles' of stakeholder expectations "directed at people occupying specific positions within a specific social structure" (Pańków, 2014, pp. 63–64). These expectations may be clearly or implicitly formulated and may have various degrees of formality. On the other hand, Edelenbos' governance-oriented research refers to the 'role' in the area of action belonging to the actor, without specifying the conditions for undertaking a particular action – integrated in a formal or informal arrangement (2005, p. 116).

In the current study, formal (official) and informal arrangements qua roles are important. They established the theoretical and methodological framework for research. The official role of AC is determined by law, while its informal role is the result of the interaction between AC members and their community. In subsequent parts of the study, both aspects of the roles played by ACs in urban governance are presented.

### **Advisory councils as an actor in urban governance and the object of the research**

ACs have a long and uninterrupted tradition in contemporary democracies dating back to the 1970s. The first were the youth councils (in the United States) and the senior citizen councils (in the Federal Republic of Germany) (Augsberger et al., 2017; Walker, 1999). The following decades brought new developments of the ACs – first as an instru-

ment for supporting local public policies and then as a form of civic participation. ACs have begun to diversify both in terms of the issues they represent and in terms of the organization (Radzik-Maruszak, 2020).

The creation and development of advisory councils in Poland reflects the significance of the national context – the restitution of local government in 1990, and since then the democratization of the governance system, the development of civil society and the dissemination of forms of participation, which Pierre calls the most powerful factors in explaining various aspects of urban politics (1999, p. 375).

Among the ACs considered in this article, the youth councils, which began to be formed in 1990, were the first. The dynamics of their development intensified with the amendment to the Municipal Government Act of 1990, which laid the foundations for the optional establishment of a youth council in the municipality. In accordance with the 1997 Act on the Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities, mandatory councils for persons with disabilities were established in the counties. Their creation is associated with the development of public policies directed towards these people. Sport councils operate under the provisions of the 2010 Sport Law. These Councils are optional, consisting of representatives of institutions and organizations that carry out tasks relating to physical education (mainly sports clubs) in municipalities.

Among the ACs discussed in this article, the shortest story is about the senior citizen councils. The first was established in 2006, and although their number has grown since then, it gained momentum only after 2013, when these ACs were introduced into the Municipal Government Act. This amendment is one of the elements of the Government programme for active elderly people for 2014–2020. This in turn, as in other European countries that implement a senior citizen policy, is the result of demographic changes observed in highly developed countries.

Despite the prevalence of ACs and their many years of experience, the research on ACs is not particularly extensive. It was only in the last decade that an increase in the number of publications in ACs was observed. This is likely related to the dissemination of innovative forms of participatory and deliberative public engagement (more in Coleman et al., 2016; Fung, Wright, 2011; Jacquet, van der Does, 2021; Kersting, 2017; Saward, 2000; Smith, 2009; Sørensen, Torfing, 2011) and complementing ACs' initial advisory function with additional self-shaping roles. Particularly remarkable are the studies on ACs conducted in Belgium and Spain due to their complexity and scope (Alarcón, Rico Motos, 2019; Bherer et al., 2016; Brugué, Font, Ruiz, 2021; Fobé et al., 2013, 2017; Galais et al., 2020; Van Damme et al., 2011).

ACs in Poland have been investigated mainly as a subject of legal regulations. Empirical studies were rarely conducted (e.g., Frączkiewicz-Wronka et al., 2019), although some of them were quite extensive and multidimensional (Pawłowska et al., 2020; Pawłowska, Kołomycew, 2021; Pawłowska, Radzik-Maruszak, 2022). It is worth highlighting, though, the growing interest in ACs as a subject of research in recent years. It is the result, on the one hand, of the increased interest of citizens and local authorities in various forms of public participation in the local decision-making process, and on the other – discovering, along with the dissemination of these forms, their weaknesses – high costs, results disproportionate to expectations, one-offness (Fernández-Martínez et al., 2020). Compared to other, innovative forms of participa-

tion, ACs turn out to be less time-consuming and cost-intensive forms of activating residents and at the same time permanent, efficient, and predictable in terms of the results of their activities.

### Methodology of the research

The present research assumes that ACs are actors in urban governance – they are, on the one hand, a manifestation of the local authorities' capabilities to organize social support for their decisions, and on the other – a mechanism for the active citizens to influence local matters. The research also hypothesizes that:

H1: Advisory councils, apart from the roles defined in statutes (official roles), generate informal roles they play in the local community – the ACs compensate limited number of official roles generating number of informal roles.

H2: Optional creation and weak regulation of youth, senior citizen, and sport councils distinguish them from mandatory and thoroughly regulated councils for residents with disabilities in terms of the number and type of roles performed.

In order to verify the above hypotheses, the following research questions were formulated:

- 1) What are official and informal roles of the ACs?
- 2) Do informal roles performed by the ACs constitute a margin of their activity, balance the official roles or do they dominate?
- 3) What are the roles of individual ACs, and are ACs similar in terms of their roles?

In addition to the usual analysis of scientific literature, desk research aimed to identify the official AC roles from the text of the laws. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2.

Qualitative empirical research was carried out to identify informal AC roles. The research sample was selected from the county cities where the investigated ACs are established. There are 66 such cities in Poland – 16 (25%) of them were selected for the study. When deciding on the particular cities to be studied, their size and location were taken into account. Cities were divided into three groups: 1) large cities – more than 250,000 inhabitants (11 cities); medium cities – from 100,000 up to 250,000 inhabitants (28 cities); small cities – up to 100,000 inhabitants (27 cities). To maintain the proportion of cities of a certain size in the research sample, two large cities, seven medium, and seven small cities were selected for the study. Subsequently, cities were selected according to their location in eight macroregions (NUTS1) – at least one city from each was selected for the study – to maintain the nation-wide character of the research.

At the beginning, it was examined whether ACs had been established in all selected cities. The results of this preliminary research are presented in table 1. There were a total of fifty-five ACs in the selected cities. The invitation to participate in the research was addressed to all of them, and the majority responded.

The selection of AC members to participate in semi-structured interviews was random – the research team most often contacted the AC chairperson or a city official asking for assistance in establishing contact with AC members. The snowball technique as well as FB were also helpful in reaching the potential interviewees.

Table 1

**Number of ACs and interviews conducted in selected cities**

	ACs in cities selected for the study (N) <sup>a)</sup>	ACs participating in the study (N)	Interviews (N)
Councils for residents with disabilities	16	15	18
Youth councils	15	13	15
Senior citizen councils	15	14	16
Sport councils	10	8	8
Total	55	50	57

<sup>a)</sup> As of the last quarter of 2018.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

Interviews were conducted by seven researchers, in accordance with a universal scenario covering questions on a number of topics: the way of AC members recruitment; AC internal procedures, relations with municipal authorities and the local community; AC activities that exceed its statutory roles; AC contribution to the development of the local community, and other. The interviews were performed at the turn of 2018 and 2019.

The interviews (with the informed consent of the respondents) were recorded, pseudonymised, and their transcripts were uploaded to QDA Miner for coding and analysis. Mixed coding was used – deductive and inductive. Deductive coding was used for the roles defined in national legislation, which means that the codes representing AC roles were specified before the coding process and reflect the language of the regulations. Although the author tried to preserve the original wording, two different role labels than those of the law were adopted. These labels are ‘initiating’ and ‘supervising’, the meaning of which was defined in Table 3.

The roles articulated by AC members were encoded inductively, which means that the coding followed the language of the interviewees, but did not necessarily maintain their wording. The author often interpreted the statement of the interviewee by creating a code describing the role s/he referred to in her/his statement (cf. Adu, 2019; Fereday, Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

Eventually, the code book contains seventeen codes labelling AC roles in two categories (Table 3).

**Results of the research**

The analysis of laws governing the four types of councils chosen for the study allowed a total of six official roles to be distinguished. Their distribution among ACs is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

**The official (statutory) roles of ACs**

Councils \ Roles	Opinion-giving	Consulting	Advising	Inspiring	Initiating	Supervising
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Councils for residents with disabilities	x			x		x

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Youth councils		x	x <sup>a)</sup>		x <sup>a)</sup>	
Senior citizen councils		x	x		x	
Sport councils	x					

<sup>a)</sup> Youth councils were complemented with advising and initiating roles in 2021, after the accomplishment of the present study.

**Source:** Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 r. o samorządzie gminnym (t.j. Dz. U. 2022, poz. 559); ustawa z dnia 27 sierpnia 1997 r. o rehabilitacji zawodowej i społecznej oraz zatrudnianiu osób niepełnosprawnych (Dz. U. 1997, Nr 123, poz. 776); ustawa z dnia 25 czerwca 2010 r. o sporcie (Dz. U. 2010, Nr 127, poz. 857).

Table 3 lists the codes, the number of indications (count) and the number of interviews (cases) in which individual codes were used. A count analysis allows to identify the codes that have been used most frequently. The count of a given code/role varies from case to case (in some interviews a given role could be indicated more often than in others). The number of cases in which the codes appeared is taken into account in further analysis, to minimize the potential bias in the encoding process.

Table 3

**Codes, their meaning and frequency**

Category	Code	Code meaning	Count (N) <sup>a)</sup>	Cases (% cases) <sup>b)</sup>
1	2	3	4	5
Official roles	opinion-giving	Taking a formal position on a given matter by the AC, usually in writing, at the request of the local authority	68	43 (75.4)
	advising	Giving suggestions to local authorities on the direction of their actions; making suggestions to individuals and organizations about their activities.	34	23 (40.4)
	consulting	Making a less formal statement, often verbally, on a topic raised by a local authority.	11	10 (17.5)
	inspiring	Attempting to persuade local authorities to take action in particular case; influencing decisions made by local authorities.	1	1 (1.8)
	initiating	Submitting motions to local authorities and comments to local regulations; carrying out activities.	113	50 (87.7)
	supervising	Monitoring and / or evaluation of the implementation of different local policy programs, usually consulted with an AC as a draft; evaluation of the activities of local authorities related to public policy implementation.	1	1 (1.8)
Informal roles	distributing funds	Advising/deciding on the allocation of funds	11	10 (17.5)
	representing	Speaking on behalf of a particular social group or organization; advocacy of someone's interests.	27	20 (35.1)
	informing	Dissemination of information about a matter, event, decisions, and actions of local authorities and ACs.	16	13 (22.8)
	decision-making	Making decisions on issues handled by AC; participating in decision-making procedure.	7	5 (8.8)
	implementing	Performing tasks related to public policy.	20	17 (29.8)

1	2	3	4	5
	instrumental/ fulfilling the statutory obligation	The use of an AC by local authorities for their own purposes or because of the legal requirement.	14	11 (19.3)
	deliberating	Developing a culture of public discussion.	8	5 (8.8)
	influencing decisions	Pressure on public authorities to make the particular decision.	13	10 (17.5)
	supporting	Assisting local authorities or other local actors in their activities; helping people.	4	4 (7.0)
	influencing community	Influencing local development.	29	21 (36.8)
	integrating	Activities aimed at good communication within a social group or intergroup communication, and within a local community.	9	9 (15.8)

<sup>a)</sup> The number of hits of a code in interviews.

<sup>b)</sup> The number and percentage of cases (interviews) in which a code has been used.

**Source:** Coding, their categorization and meaning elaborated by the author; code frequency calculated by QDA Miner v. 5.0.35.

None of the codes defining AC roles was mentioned so often as opinion-giving and initiating. Advising, representing (more on the AC representation in Pawłowska, 2022) and influencing community – the next in line in frequency of indications – are far behind. At the opposite end – roles mentioned occasionally – are official roles of inspiring and supervising, indicated in one interview each. Among informal roles, the codes ‘supporting’, ‘deliberating’ and ‘decision-making’ were used in less than 10% of interviews.

Table 4 lists the number of statutory roles, statutory roles that AC members believe their council actually plays, the number of informal roles played by ACs, and the total number of roles per AC.

Table 4

**Number of official and informal roles performed by ACs**

Councils	Roles	Official roles <sup>a)</sup>	Official roles performed	Informal roles	Roles performed in total
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(b + c)
Councils for residents with disabilities		3	2	13	15
Youth councils		1	1	13	14
Senior citizen councils		3	3	10	13
Sport councils		1	1	13	14

<sup>a)</sup> Number of roles performed at the time of research (2018–2019).

**Source:** Coding by variable (AC) calculated by QDA Miner v. 5.0.35.

One question that needs to be clarified is that the roles that are here as official are often played by ACs that are not provided for them by the respective statute. Such roles are then defined as informal. For example, in addition to the role of opinion-giving, which is the official role of sport councils, these ACs, according to their members, play other ‘official’ roles, such as advising and initiating. Thus, these roles are informal for sports councils.



All ACs studied supplemented their official roles with informal roles, whose number varies only with respect to senior citizen councils. Members of the ACs studied declared the performance of all official roles, with the exception of members of councils for residents with disabilities, who have not referred to the supervisory role (the only indication of this role belongs to the sport council). It should also be noted that the inspiring, official role of councils for residents with disabilities was only mentioned in an interview once by a member of this AC. The differences in the number of all roles played by the ACs are insignificant. Councils for residents with disabilities play the most roles, while senior citizen councils play the least. It is worth noting, however, that the respective statutes define three roles for each of these ACs. The number of hits of particular roles broken down into ACs is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

**AC roles broken down into AC types (N)**

<b>Codes/roles</b>	<b>Councils</b>	<b>Senior citizen councils</b>	<b>Youth councils</b>	<b>Councils for residents with disabilities</b>	<b>Sport councils</b>
Representing		5	7	6	2
Informing		6	3	–	4
Advising		9	4	4	6
Opinion-giving		10	10	16	7
Initiating		16	12	16	6
Decision-making		2	1	1	1
Implementing		6	7	2	2
Distributing funds		–	1	8	1
Instrumental		2	5	2	2
Deliberating		2	–	3	–
Influencing decisions		6	1	1	2
Supporting		–	1	2	1
Supervising		–	–	–	1
Influencing community		6	4	11	–
Integrating		1	5	2	1
Consulting		2	3	4	1
Inspiring		–	–	1	–

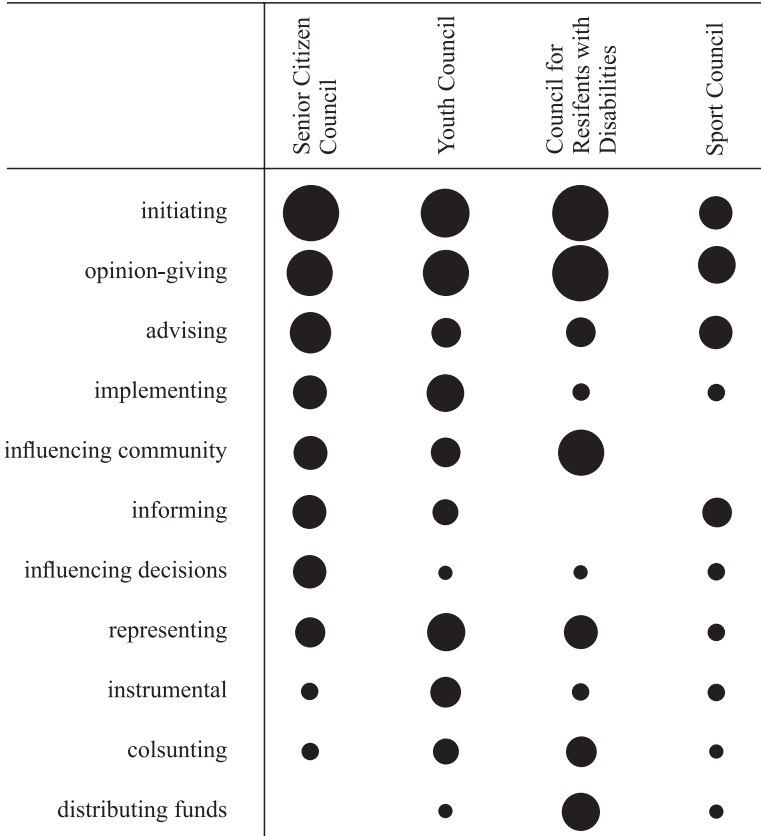
Source: Coding by variable (AC) calculated by QDA Miner v. 5.0.35.

All AC roles – formal and informal – form urban governance. ‘Representing’, articulated in each AC type, complements the representation of municipal councils. The roles of ‘initiating’, ‘informing’, ‘supporting’, or ‘influencing decisions’ reflect the community orientation of the ACs, while ‘opinion-giving’, ‘advising’, ‘implementing’, or ‘influencing community’ show their orientation towards local authorities. On the other hand, the instrumental role, mentioned in nearly 20% of the interviews, reflects the attitude of local authorities towards ACs as a mere issue of statutory requirements or a creation legitimizing their decisions.

The importance of particular role for studied ACs is presented in bubble chart (Figure 1). The codes, which gathered hits in less than 10% interviews have been excluded from the analysis. The chart gives an idea of the importance of particular roles for the ACs under study. ‘Initiating’ and ‘opinion-giving’ are the most important roles in every AC, regardless of whether the role is official or informal. Both roles are equally im-

portant for councils for residents with disabilities, although only ‘opinion-giving’ is an official role of this AC. The importance of the other roles varies depending on each AC.

**Figure 1. Importance of roles broken down into AC types**



**Source:** Coding by variable (AC) calculated by QDA Miner v. 5.0.35.

In order to determine the level of similarity between the examined ACs in terms of their roles, the similarity analysis was performed. The similarity index describes the proximity of the role sets of the ACs studied. The closer the index value is to 1, the more similar AC role sets are. Index values are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

**Similarity analysis of ACs in reference to performed roles**

	Senior Citizen Council	Youth Council	Council for Residents with Disabilities	Sport Council
Senior Citizen Council	–	0.90	0.84	0.91
Youth Council	0.90	–	0.86	0.86
Council for Residents with Disabilities	0.84	0.86	–	0.76
Sport Council	0.91	0.86	0.76	–

**Source:** Coding by variable (AC) calculated by QDA Miner v. 5.0.35.

The results of the similarity analysis show that ACs are close in two pairs: 1) senior citizen councils and sport councils, with an index value of 0.91; and 2) senior citizen councils and youth councils, with an index value of 0.9. Consequently, it can be concluded that the three ACs mentioned are quite similar in terms of their roles. The councils for residents with disabilities are more 'remote' in terms of roles, but the similarity indexes in this case are also relatively high, from 0.76 to 0.86. Thus, the ACs studied appear to be very similar in terms of number and type of roles. However, it is essential to stress, that they are not similar when it comes to the importance of the roles they play. Since councils for residents with disabilities are mandatory, their advice is also mandatory. Before making final decision on issues relating to people with disabilities, local authorities must ask the respective council for its opinion, which cannot be easily ignored by the municipal council or mayor. This makes a significant difference between mandatory council for residents with disabilities and other ACs investigated.

### Conclusion

ACs are double-anchored actors in urban governance. They are between the local state and the local community. They are established by the local authorities and play roles to the decisions these authorities made. They are also anchored to the local community, which 'provides' members for ACs, and the ACs play roles orientated to community needs and expectations.

According to the statutes, ACs play six roles. Apart from these roles 11 informal roles were distinguished during the research, as well as that all ACs examined played such roles. Consequently, the first hypothesis has been confirmed. The similarity test indicates proximity of the four ACs, which contradicts the second hypothesis on the differences between mandatory council for residents with disabilities and other (optional) ACs. However, this test does not reflect the importance of the individual AC roles. While 'opinion giving' is obligatorily performed by councils for residents with disabilities, other ACs may play this role depending on the will of local authorities. Therefore, when formulating conclusions about the roles played by ACs, legal regulations should be taken into account. The need to appoint a given council and consult it, seriously affects its importance in urban governance.

The analysis of the intensity of AC roles shows the dominance of two of them, 'initiating' and 'opinion-giving'. The first was attributed by law to the senior citizen council only (for other ACs, it is an informal role), and the second is performed by the council for residents with disabilities and sport council (for other ACs, it is an informal role as well). The third role, 'advising', also shows high intensity, although as an official role it was played, at the time of the investigation, only by the senior citizen council. The roles played by different ACs, especially those that are official for some ACs and informal for others, show the flaws of statutory regulations. It is also demonstrated in case of official roles that were seldom or not mentioned by AC members, e.g. 'supervising' and 'inspiring'. Both roles appeared once each, which could reflect inadequate labelling by the researcher in relation to the 'supervising' code, but in the case of 'inspiring' means that this role is not performed by AC or is labelled differently by AC members, for example

as ‘initiating’. The author believes that replacing the role of ‘inspiring’ in the statutes with the role of ‘initiating’ and extending the latter to the submission of motions to local authorities would improve legal regulations and AC performance. A recent amendment to the rules on youth councils and increasing their role to include ‘advising’ and ‘initiating’ points to the need to revise AC regulations to increase their participation in urban governance.

Finally, it is important to highlight the limitations of this study. First, restraining the research to county cities, which are the largest and most affluent municipalities in terms of economic, social, and cultural wealth, does not allow the results of this research to be generalised to all municipalities. Second, this study did not take into account the activity of local authorities in the formulation of AC roles. Especially the latter can appear vital in defining AC roles in urban governance. Both, extending the research sharing it with other cities and to the city authorities in shaping the AC roles, are challenges for future studies.

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## Role rad społecznych we współrzędzeniu miastem

### Streszczenie

Współrzędzenie miastem (WM) to związana z miejscem sieć współpracy między podmiotami publicznymi i niepublicznymi, w której władze publiczne odgrywają strategiczną rolę w podejmowaniu decyzji o sprawach miasta. Wśród aktorów WM są rady społeczne (RS), które charakteryzują się długą tradycją, powszechnością, stabilnością i celami związanymi z miastem. Artykuł ma na celu identyfikację ról RS w WM. Ponadto autorka stawia hipotezę o związku między liczbą ról oficjalnych (ustawowych) i nieformalnych (nieuregulowanych prawnie) oraz o różnicach między RS pod względem pełnionych ról. Hipotezy zweryfikowano w badaniach jakościowych. Przeprowadzono 57 wywiadów częściowo ustrukturyzowanych z członkami rad młodzieżowych, rad seniorów, rad sportu i rad ds. osób niepełnosprawnych w 16 polskich miastach. Transkrypcje wywiadów zostały wprowadzone do QDA Miner w celu zakodowania i analizy. Stwierdzono, że wszystkie RS, niezależnie od swoich ról oficjal-

nych, pełnią role nieformalne, a wszystkie te role są związane z WM. Nie ma związku między liczbą ról oficjalnych i nieformalnych, co sprawia, że RS wydałyby się bardzo podobne, gdyby nie role pełnione przez radę ds. osób niepełnosprawnych, które mają charakter obowiązku ustawowego, co istotnie różni tę radę od pozostałych. Wyniki badań skłoniły autorkę do zaproponowania zmian w przepisach dotyczących RS w kierunku zwiększenia ich udziału w UG.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rada doradcza, rada społeczna, rola, współzrządzenie miastem, Polska

