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Limiting the term of office in local government – a perspective of rural municipalities in the Łódź voivodeship

Abstract: The paper analyses the term limit that the 2018 amendment introduced to the Electoral Code. By limiting the number of terms to two, it is one of the critical institutional changes facing local government in Poland today. The consequences of this change remain uncertain and may impact future local government structures. One essential question is how such a significant institutional amendment affects local governments' performance. Another paramount issue concerns how local leaders' acceptance or lack thereof affects its implementation. The paper problematises the opinions of commune chairpersons on their role within the local government structure, their perceptions of term limits for executive bodies, and their assessments of the changes taking place in the Polish local government system, hypothesising that the socio-economic development of municipalities and the experience of rural commune heads shape their perceptions of changes in local government, including attitudes toward term limits. The research materials come from a survey conducted in 2021 among members of 133 rural municipalities in the Łódź voivodeship, located in central Poland, supplemented by in-depth questionnaire interviews conducted in 2022 among the rural municipality mayors of ten diverse municipalities in this region. The research revealed divided opinions among decision-makers regarding the reported change, depending on their length of term of office and the socio-economic situation of the municipality. In the opinion of the leaders surveyed, the municipality's socio-economic status is more important than formal regulations on term limits.

Keywords: term limits, local elections, rural municipalities, multi-term office holding, Polish self-government

Introduction

Institutions play a fundamental role in establishing the rules that govern socio-economic interactions and remain among the most crucial determinants of how public authorities act. It is equally true for local governments, where the

electoral system determines both the effectiveness of development and the attitudes of voters and elected representatives.

In the literature on how local government functions, the view that decentralisation of power brings benefits is widely accepted. These benefits can be identified both in functional terms (administrative decentralisation) and political terms (political decentralisation) (Pollitt 2005, p. 381). Functional decentralisation is argued to accelerate decision-making and better align social services with the needs and preferences of local citizens. It also increases the ability to adapt activities to the local context. Arguments in favour of political decentralisation refer to the potential for greater accountability of politicians to citizens. Furthermore, political decentralisation may encourage citizens to actively participate in democratic processes and provide more frequent opportunities for citizens to express their expectations.

However, decentralisation is not a value *per se*. For many, it is merely an institutional prerequisite for democratic and effective governance and is justified only to the extent that it serves more specific objectives (Ayres 2018, p. 221). Therefore, detailed solutions for the decentralisation of power remain important from an institutional point of view, and they include, among other things, determining how long local leaders can exercise this power. In this context, the method of election – whether municipality mayors are elected directly or indirectly (by previously elected legislative bodies) – becomes particularly significant. For example, in the US, Canada and Japan, directly elected municipality mayors are a typical and traditional feature of local political systems. However, in many European countries (e.g. Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary and England), such solutions have been adopted relatively recently (Hambleton, Sweeting 2015). In other Eastern European countries, for example, in the Czech Republic, Serbia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, indirect election of local executives is also becoming increasingly rare. It is becoming gradually more popular to strengthen the position of local executive authorities by legally establishing their direct election by citizens. Poland serves as a notable example, where the strong position of rural municipality mayors stems from their leadership of local administration, their possession of many exclusive financial powers, the authority to appoint key officials (municipal treasurer or secretary general), and legally enshrined protections against removal from office (Gendźwiłł, Swianiewicz 2017).

The advantages of systems with directly elected municipality mayors include, above all, the possibility to establish a more direct link between leaders and the electorate, along with the associated greater accountability, increased visibility for leaders, their greater independence from the main political parties, a long-term outlook and a greater focus on accountability. All this has the potential to increase public interest in elections. Among the disadvantages, however, theorists point to an excessive focus on media-driven, populist politics, which draws attention away from more fundamental matters, limited space for different or opposing voices, and difficulty recalling incumbent mayors (Sweeting 2017).

Apart from the issue of the direct election of local executive authorities, the discussion on the number of terms they can serve is gaining equal importance.

While direct election is increasingly common in mature democracies, the landscape of local government term limits is somewhat more diverse. According to a comparative report by the Council of Europe's Venice Commission on term limits for local and regional authorities across 63 countries, term limits are used in various forms in many countries (Venice Commission 2019). Although term limits at the local level are relatively rare in Europe, the debate on such limits (most often restricting officials to two terms) regularly resurfaces.

In recent years, the Polish legislator has introduced changes concerning the terms of office of local government bodies. In 2018, a rule was established limiting municipality mayors to a maximum of two consecutive terms, and the term of office of local government bodies was extended from previous four to five years (Journal of Laws 2018, item 130, as amended). These rules intended to for the first time after the end of the ninth term of office, counted from 1990 when the self-government institution was re-established in Poland, i.e. from 2022 onwards. In the explanatory memorandum to the parliamentary bill, this change was explained by the willingness to exclude the undesirable phenomena, including the emergence of broadly understood corruption-generating mechanisms and interest groups emergence unrelated to the development of the municipality or city (Print No. 2001). These claims, however, were not confirmed by the broader public. For instance, the research of the Public Opinion Research Centre, showed moderate public support for introducing a two-term limit for executive bodies in local governments – with 51% of respondents in favour, 40% opposed, and 9% undecided. By contrast, the idea of combining the term limit with an extension of the term to five years received less support and was evaluated less clearly than the proposal to limit the number of terms alone (CBOS 2017). Currently also, research by the Public Opinion Research Center in 2024 showed that trust in local governments and mayors remains high – local authorities enjoy significantly higher public trust (71%) than the government (43%), the Sejm and Senate (41%), the President (40%), or political parties (25%) (CBOS 2024) – which suggests that the functioning of this level of government is a subject of social concern.

These processes took place in an atmosphere where political concerns apparently prevailed over meritocratic arguments. For example, the monitoring reports by the Council of Europe's European Charter of Local Self-Government (see Local and Regional Democracy in Poland 2019) were the first reliably and thoroughly documented signs of the alarming trend of power centralisation by limiting the independence of Polish local governments, including inadequate funding for local-level public tasks and central government interference in local government powers. In this context, it is not unexpected that no formal consultations were held on the term limit before it was adopted in 2018. The debate on this issue took place mainly in the media and local government bodies. Official consultations in the form of electronic opinion gathering only appeared recently, when drafts concerning the amendment or repeal of this regulation were presented.

There are many arguments both for and against term limits. Proponents argue that term limits can prevent the concentration of power in the hands of one

person, thereby increasing citizen participation in the election, functioning, and oversight activities in the municipality. They also recognise that a municipality mayor who has served multiple terms has an advantage over new potential candidates in the form of long-standing networks and relationships, which can effectively block access to power for people outside the informal interest group. Unlimited multiple terms of office, they contend, can lead to the erosion of power and a decline in the rationality of management decisions. Supporters also warn of ‘negative democracy’ – a situation where the only way to bring about change is through the desire to remove long-serving municipality mayors from office. Limiting the number of terms also increases the likelihood of a more systematic generational change and, consequently, greater volatility in local politics. Increased competition in the local political arena, in turn, is intended to ensure that election promises are more reliably fulfilled.

Opponents of term limits, on the other hand, argue that they remove stability from local executive authorities. This stability is tied to the professionalisation of more experienced municipality mayors and the reduced costs associated with incumbents not having to repeatedly learn the intricacies of local government. Long-term electoral support allows the mayor to engage in more longer-term planning. From a democratic perspective, residents should be able to vote for a candidate who has proven themselves in their position, and term limits infringe on this right. In practice, problems such as corruption or incompetence can be solved by oversight institutions, investigative bodies and procedures, the possibility of electing another candidate during elections, or dismissal through a referendum. Allowing the municipality mayor to hold office for an unlimited number of terms is a sign of respect for democracy, leaving decisions about re-election to the residents themselves, especially at the most local level of government (Kowalik 2015, Składowski 2019, Stasiak 2024).

The value of theoretical deliberations on term limits becomes more apparent when confronted with empirical research. However, evidence from studies on local democratic processes remains scarce and often ambiguous. For example, Han et al. (2019) found a negative relationship between tenure length and efficiency in South Korean local governments. Research on Portuguese self-governments revealed comparable tendencies. Veiga and Veiga (2016) demonstrated that term-limited municipality mayors tend to make more effective fiscal policy choices by balancing budgets and managing public expenditures and revenues in a less opportunistic manner. Furthermore, the introduction of term limits robustly increased voter participation in Portugal (Veiga, Veiga 2018).

These findings contrast with previous research from California, where Nalder (2007) reported that term limits actually reduced voter turnout. However, Kuhlmann and Lewis (2017) found that at the state level across 21 U.S. states during the 2010s, term limits significantly increased voting rates in state legislative elections. Using a political agency model that captures the key features of a representative democracy, Smart and Sturm (2013) showed that term limits encourage politicians to choose policies closer to their own preferences and this increased authenticity improves the electorate’s ability to effectively evaluate incumbents.

Because term limits are rarely implemented in political practice, other studies on this issue attempt to indirectly capture the relationship between the length of local government terms and voter satisfaction or individuals' performance. For example, Levitt and Snyder (1997), Katsimi and Sarantides (2015), and Guinjoan and Rodon (2021) found that public spending positively impacts the prospects for re-election, while Brender (2003) and Guzman (2016) found that fiscal performance has a positive effect.

Since term limits are rarely introduced, research on the topic remains limited, reducing the number of available studies and making it difficult to validate results, which are geographically diverse. In Poland, an opportunity to explore this topic arose with the 2018 amendment to the Electoral Code, which limited the number of terms to two. Since only one term has passed since this change, research is still ongoing. One of the first studies on the topic comes from almost 100 Polish communes in a central region that is representative of the country's 16 regions. However, this study (Stasiak 2024) has not yet indicated a clear pattern.

The quantitative and qualitative data collected for this study enable preliminary analysis of the relationship between term limits and the economic and political performance of these regions. It also allowed us to capture the opinions and attitudes of the interested parties, i.e., those running for election or already holding local government positions.

The paper is structured as follows. The following section describes the methodology used to collect the data for this study. The next section presents the study's results, reflecting the respondents' experiences and attitudes to the way local governments act, including resident participation in decision-making. The findings also reveal the attitudes to term limits in the context of Polish local government. The last section offers concluding remarks.

Materials and methods

The survey targeted rural municipality mayors who, according to data from the Polish National Electoral Commission (PKW), were elected in the 2018 local elections. We treated this group as having the most comprehensive insider perspective on activities within their communes. The survey was conducted between September and November 2021 using the Computer-Assisted Web Interview (CAWI) technique, ensuring respondent anonymity. A link to the questionnaire was sent to all 133 rural municipal offices, requesting municipality mayors to complete it.

The high response rate (93 completed questionnaires, representing 70% of the population surveyed) can be attributed to the issue's importance and the nature of the respondent group. Firstly, the participants had been elected to municipal executive bodies in the 2018 local elections, which was a key moment during the legislative changes. As they were directly affected by the new regulations, the respondents were eager to participate in the survey.

The questionnaire began with demographic and background questions concerning the length of service in the executive body, age, education, length of

residence in the municipality, and career history. The following questions addressed key issues related to the way local governments act, such as the participation of residents in elections, views on multiple re-elections of the municipality mayor, and their opinions on the introduction of term limits for in Poland.

Of the 93 rural municipality mayors surveyed, 30% were serving their first term, while 16% declared that their current term would be their last. Some had been in office continuously since the 1990s, indicating significant variation in the length of their tenure. The majority of mayors were aged 40–59, with the oldest being 64 and the youngest 27. The vast majority (84%) had a master's degree. Over 40% had previous experience as councillors, while 17% had no prior involvement in local government. Most municipality mayors came from the municipalities they managed, especially those with longer tenures. One in four were from another commune, while 9% neither lived nor were born in the municipality they run. In addition, 8% were born in the commune but lived elsewhere.

The survey was supplemented by in-depth interviews with ten rural municipality mayors, who were diverse in terms of the number of terms of office and the size and location of the municipalities in the province. The respondents were aged 40 and over, with higher education, and managed rural municipalities of up to 7,000 inhabitants. Each in-person interview was conducted in November 2022 and was recorded and then transcribed for further analysis. The interviewees, as elected public officials, consented to the publication of their opinions and comments. They were also informed that the results of the interviews would be anonymized. The interviews focused on deepening our understanding of changes to Polish local government. Specifically, we asked about the impact of direct elections on the rural commune head's position, their assessment of the two-term limit, the optimal length of the term of office, their motivation for public service in local government, and the factors that help the same person remain in power.

The primary objective of the study was to capture the rural municipality mayors' opinions on the legislative change limiting executive terms in local government and to assess its potential impact on local government functioning. The study also identified factors that influence electoral support, mayors' perceptions of their re-election chances, and how long-term leadership affects the effectiveness of municipal management and civic engagement.

Results

In the interviews, the respondents stated that the introduction of direct elections for municipality mayors strengthened the position of this office, as it expressed a more direct link with the will of voters and built a greater sense of residents' influence on local politics. A direct electoral mandate also increased the independence of the municipality mayor, limiting the influence of political parties. However, they also noted that effective governance still requires cooperation with the municipal council, as many decisions need its approval.

Almost half of the survey respondents (49%) believed their current position as rural municipality mayors gave them an advantage over potential competitors in the upcoming elections. This opinion was most common among mayors aged 40–59 with higher education and who were serving their first or second term. Conversely, 35% had no opinion on this subject – primarily those who had held executive office since 2014 and who were aged 40–59 with higher education). Those less inclined to agree with this opinion were in their first term or had been elected mayor since 2002 or earlier – including people who had been managing the municipality since 1990 (Fig. 1).

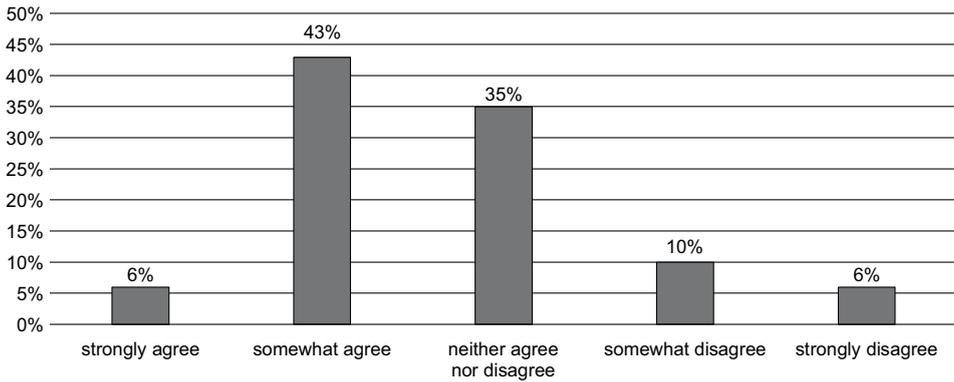


Fig. 1. Do you agree you have a higher chance of winning as the current rural commune head?
Source: own study.

On the other hand, most respondents disagreed that voters in previous municipality mayors' elections were unwilling to familiarise themselves with new candidates and instead preferred those with a proven track record. This view was particularly common among those who had held executive office since 2014 or were first elected in 2018. Only 18% agreed with this statement, and just 4% expressed strong agreement (Fig. 2). In other words, serving multiple terms in office does not appear to be a significant deterrent to voter participation in local elections.

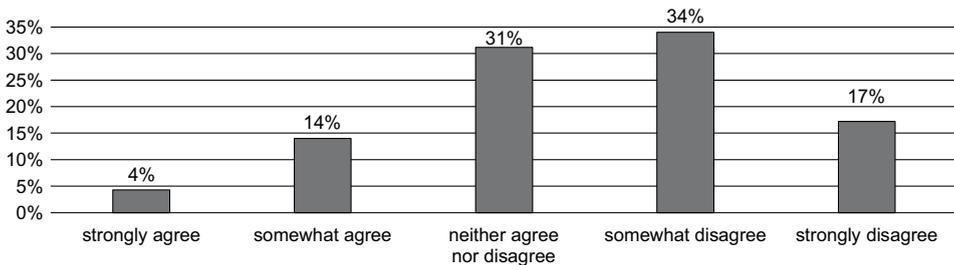


Fig. 2. Do you agree voters are not willing to learn about new candidates, preferring the current municipality mayor?
Source: own study.

When asked whether being re-elected several times significantly contributes to a re-election, a substantial portion of respondents (nearly one in three) did not take a clear position. The differences in opinion among the remaining participants indicate a lack of consensus that may reflect their diverse experiences and perceptions of the factors that determine electoral success (Fig. 3). Therefore, in the in-depth interviews, we also asked the rural commune heads what factors contribute most to maintaining power in the commune. The most common response was maintaining good relations with citizens. They noted that cooperation with residents and local government employees was the foundation of success and facilitated better recognition of local concerns. Another important factor is the rural commune head's strong identification with the municipality and its residents, which facilitates efficient action. Additionally, local government and administrative experience make it possible to set out a clear vision and development strategy for the coming years.

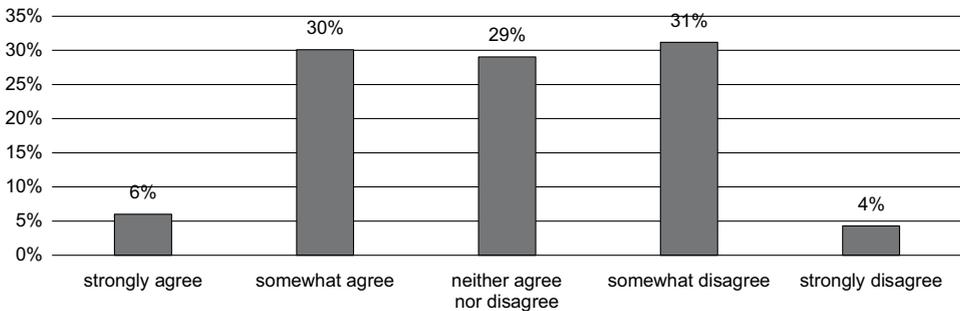


Fig. 3. Do you agree the number of terms increases your chances of re-election?
Source: own study.

In other words, rather than viewing term limits as a solution to weaknesses in local government, most respondents highlighted the importance of knowledge and experience gained in local government as key factors that support re-election and the pursuit of positions at higher levels of government. The belief that competencies developed at the municipal level constitute significant political capital was widespread among the rural municipality mayors (Fig. 4). However, some respondents expressed a cautionary attitude, declaring they had no aspirations for this type of political advancement. Similarly, during the in-depth interviews, the mayors had mixed opinions on whether local government is a stepping stone to higher political careers. Nonetheless, most had a negative view of treating local government as a springboard for further advancement, considering it primarily as a service to citizens, and emphasising the importance of strong relationships with voters.

More than half of the respondents, including many long-serving rural municipality mayors, disagreed with the assertion that longer terms of office lead to poorer performance. Long-term service may be conducive to effective management thanks to the experience gained and better knowledge of local needs.

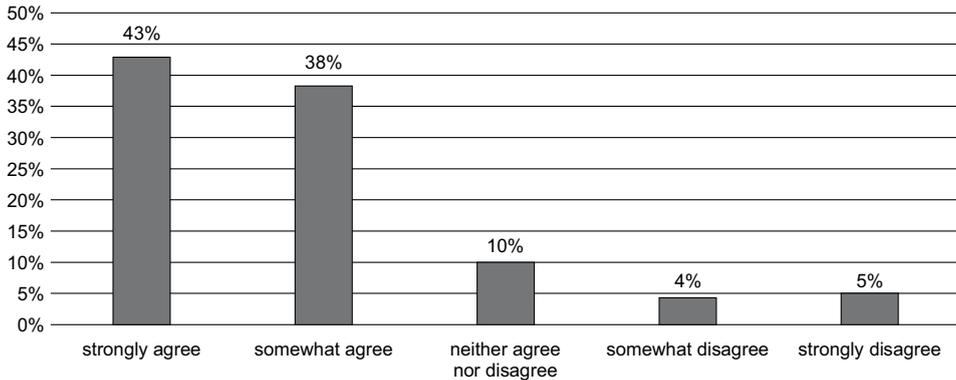


Fig. 4. Do you agree that holding municipality mayor's office at least two terms provide experience at higher power levels?

Source: own study.

The minority who expressed the opposite opinion may suggest a diverse range of approaches to assessing long-term governance in the local context. These differences may result from individual experiences, which shape their understanding of the political context and may influence their perception of the challenges associated with long-term office.

The qualitative interviews revealed that limiting the number of terms may affect how current municipality mayors exercise power. Some argued that it would be difficult to find a candidate willing to manage the municipality for only two terms if they plan larger investments that require more time. While some interviews also expressed opposing views – suggesting that even in a very well-developed commune, a change in local government is necessary – these opinions were not dominant.

The interviews also allowed for a more nuanced view of the pros and cons of limiting terms of office to two terms. Supporters usually argued that term limits help prevent nepotism and corruption and expand the pool of potential candidates in subsequent elections. However, they noted the need for similar restrictions at other levels of government. Opponents, on the other hand, most often argued that term limits restrict the right of voters to choose and make it difficult for local government officials to plan their future careers.

While rural municipality mayors' opinions on limiting the number of terms were divided, the institutional change of extending the term of office from four to five years was generally welcomed. They noted that a longer term of office allows for the implementation of longer-term strategies. It suggests that many mayors recognise the value of long-term experience in municipal management, which may translate into a better understanding of local needs and challenges.

More than half of the respondents saw a link between improvements in the socio-economic development of their municipality and their re-election. Achievements in this area are perceived as a key element in building public trust and legitimising local authorities. The respondents also stated that increased prosperity

in their municipality translates into increased interest in municipal affairs. Only 27% of respondents disagreed with this statement (Table 1).

Table 1. Assessment of the impact of the socio-economic situation of the commune on the citizens' social engagement

Assertion	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Changes in socio-economic conditions – whether improvement or deterioration – positively affect social engagement	11%	34%	28%	24%	3%
Deterioration of socio-economic conditions positively affects social engagement	12%	30%	30%	22%	6%
Improved socio-economic conditions positively affect social engagement	26%	41%	14%	16%	3%

Source: own study.

The respondents recognised that the socio-economic development of the municipality correlates with citizen engagement (Table 1). For a significant number of those expressing this opinion, the 2018–2023 term was not their first as municipality mayor, and for almost half of those responding, it was at least their third term. Therefore, long serving rural municipality mayors particularly value citizen activity, especially entrepreneurship. Among those who declared this opinion, cooperation leads to a better understanding of local needs and expectations, which contributes to better decision-making and may increase satisfaction and overall trust in local authorities.

The reverse is also true, as many respondents agreed that the residents' mobilisation and interest in municipal affairs increased significantly when the socio-economic situation deteriorated (Table 1). This view was particularly common among those respondents elected in recent terms, especially those with higher education. Of these rural municipality mayors, 34 indicated that the improved socio-economic condition of the commune was one of the main reasons for their re-election; few respondents completely disagreed with this opinion.

More than half of the respondents also believe that extending the term of office from four to five years (introduced in conjunction with limiting the number of terms) could bring benefits and improve the residents' quality of life (Fig. 5). This view was predominantly expressed by municipality mayors in their first or second term, aged 40–59, with higher education, and planning to run in the upcoming elections. These respondents claimed that extending the term of office will enable better planning and the implementation of measures that yield long-term results while ensuring a sense of stability. A small percentage of respondents expressed a different opinion, particularly those aged 50 and over with higher education.

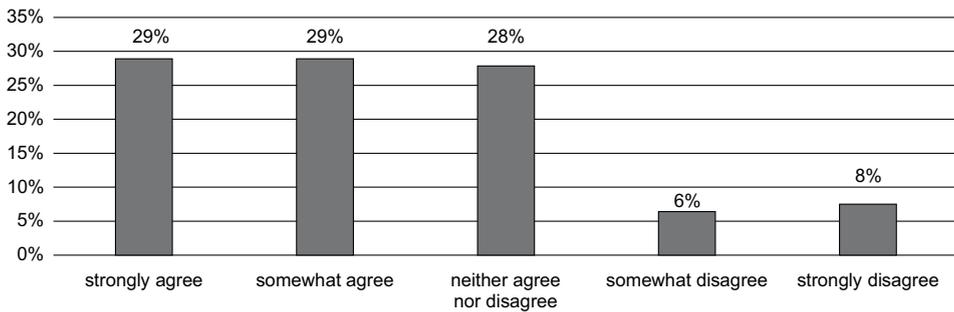


Fig. 5. Do you agree the term of office extension to five years improved the quality of life of the local community?

Source: own study.

Finally, in the in-depth interviews, the rural municipality mayors stated that the shift to two-term limits was not a significant factor in commune development. They considered other factors to be more important, such as geographical location, environmental conditions, transport connections, and, to a lesser extent, external funding for investments. In the case of external funding, the effectiveness of local administrators was considered significant.

Conclusions

The study examined the opinions of rural municipality mayors on their role in the structure of local government, the term length of executive bodies, and their assessment of changes in the Polish local government system, drawing on both their experience and views on how local governments function. In both the survey and in-depth interviews, the respondents highlighted that incumbent municipality mayors have a significant advantage in subsequent elections, primarily due to their stronger position that results from their direct electoral mandate. Direct elections have increased their autonomy, limited the influence of political parties, and strengthened their sense of control over local politics.

However, they also noted that the key factors that contribute to retaining power are not so much the number of terms in office as the satisfaction of citizens, good cooperation with the local community and municipal employees, strong identification of local leaders with the community, and administrative experience. Despite the relatively strong position of municipality mayors Polish self-government, effective governance still requires cooperation with the municipal council, which retains significant decision-making powers.

The survey revealed divided opinions on limiting the number of terms to two. Many mayors stated that serving multiple terms allows them to gain experience and knowledge that translates into practical work. Most respondents did not see a link between long-term service and abuse of power or a decline in voter turnout. However, it was often pointed out during the in-depth interviews that two

terms are too short to implement ambitious projects and long-term development strategies for the commune. There were also concerns that finding candidates willing to take office would be difficult without the prospect of longer-term career planning. Conversely, some respondents supported the introduction of term limits, arguing that it would help to counteract abuses of power, refresh the political scene, and extend the pool of potential candidates. At the same time, they emphasised that re-election should be decided primarily by the voters and not institutional change. Most respondents also responded positively to extending the term of office to five years, considering it beneficial for the stability and efficiency of municipal management.

Therefore, the rural municipality mayors' views on the highly debated legislative change that reduced their terms of office remain ambiguous. The prevailing opinion is that this change will not significantly improve the functioning or efficiency of Polish local governments, as it does not address the key weaknesses of local government. In the Polish context of rural municipalities, which are relatively small and have highly recognisable leaders, a much more important factor for a change in power is not a shift in the institutional framework but the real socio-economic situation, which mobilises voters much more effectively. As our research shows, limiting the number of terms is not the most important issue. In the respondents' opinion, this new institutional solution has both pros and cons, but it is not a key challenge for the future.

Our findings do not exhaust all relevant issues on the topic; therefore, we anticipate that interest in this field will continue to grow. This study may also serve as a basis for further analysis across broader geographical and temporal scopes. Due to the regional nature of the study, which covered only the Łódź Province, research in other parts of Poland may prove particularly interesting. Furthermore, the findings primarily reflect incumbent mayors' perspectives, without considering the opinions of different groups, such as councillors, citizens, or other candidates. Continuing this research with a focus on analysing participants' attitudes, motivations, and behaviours in the electoral process will allow for a better understanding of the dynamics of local democracy. It will facilitate the formulation of more effective communication and cooperation strategies between local authorities and communities, which may contribute to more effective municipal management and strengthen social trust.

Conflict of interest & Authors' contributions

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest. They declare that the text of the article is entirely their own work. The authors' contributions are as follows:

- conceptualisation: ES, MS,
- methodology: ES,
- research organisation: ES,
- formal analysis: ES, MS,
- writing: ES, MS.

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Ograniczenie liczby kadencji w samorządzie terytorialnym – ujęcie z perspektywy władz wykonawczych gmin wiejskich regionu centralnego Polski

Zarys treści: Artykuł analizuje kwestię limitu kadencji wprowadzoną nowelizacją kodeksu wyborczego w 2018 r. Ustanowienie maksymalnie dwóch kadencji stanowi jedną z kluczowych zmian instytucjonalnych, przed jakimi stoi dziś samorząd terytorialny w Polsce. Konsekwencje tej zmiany pozostają niepewne i mogą mieć wpływ na przyszłą strukturę władz lokalnych. Zasadniczym pytaniem jest, w jaki sposób tak istotna zmiana instytucjonalna oddziałuje na funkcjonowanie samorządów. Drugim, równie ważnym problemem, jest kwestia tego, jak akceptacja bądź brak akceptacji ze strony lokalnych liderów wpływa na proces wdrażania nowych regulacji. Artykuł przedstawia opinie wójtów dotyczące ich roli w ramach struktury samorządu terytorialnego, problematyki kadencyjności organów wykonawczych oraz oceny zmian zachodzących w polskim systemie samorządowym. Postawiono hipotezę, zgodnie z którą poziom rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego gmin oraz doświadczenie wójtów kształtują ich postrzeganie zmian w samorządzie lokalnym, w tym stosunek do ograniczeń kadencyjnych. Podstawę empiryczną stanowią wyniki badania ankietowego przeprowadzonego w 2021 r. wśród wójtów 133 gmin wiejskich w województwie łódzkim. Materiał ten uzupełniono pogłębionymi wywiadami ankietowymi zrealizowanymi w 2022 r. wśród wójtów z dziesięciu wybranych gmin wiejskich tego regionu. Wyniki badań wskazują na wyraźne zróżnicowanie opinii lokalnych decydentów na temat wprowadzonego ograniczenia kadencji, uzależnione zarówno od długości sprawowanego mandatu, jak i od rozwoju społeczno-gospodarczego gminy. Zdaniem respondentów to właśnie rozwój społeczno-gospodarczy jednostki ma większe znaczenie dla jej funkcjonowania i rozwoju niż formalne regulacje dotyczące limitu kadencji.

Słowa kluczowe: limit kadencji, wybory samorządowe, gminy wiejskie, wielokadencyjność, samorząd terytorialny w Polsce

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