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## **Is a new administrative division reform necessary? A voice in the discussion on self-government reform**

The ongoing discussion in many communities in Poland (elected local government members, scientists engaged in the subject, central-level politicians) on a necessity of implementing a new administrative division reform, calls for a situational overview. All existing discussions, on the central level and specifically in the Sejm, treating on metropolitan powiats seem to be out of touch with reality and require a question: What is the purpose of these attempts to push this bill through? It should be added, that a negative stand in this matter took, among others, the government and a large group of self-government politicians. On the other hand, following the Czech Republic's example, there are calls to dismantle the institution of powiats, or even proposals to return to 49-voivodeship system. It seems that the sources of these discussions should be sought in what happened with the proposal of the self-government and the new administrative divisions reform in 1998. This allows to compose further questions, this time on evaluation of then – implemented changes, not only from the perspective of local and regional communities, but also from the perspective of the National interest. It's worth reminding where the dismantling of powiats and reducing the voivodeships have led.

The current form of the local and regional administration was ultimately shaped by the Act on the Powiat-Level Self-Government and the Act on the Voivodeship-Level Self-Government dated June 5, 1998 and the Act on Direct Elections of Gmina Administrators, Mayors and City-Mayors dated June 20, 2002. The reform measures were initiated by the Act on the Gmina-Level Self-government dated March 8, 1990. Ever since then, the territorial self-government acts were revised multiple times.

Enacting laws reforming the administrative division of the State was possible thanks to implementation of the new Constitution. Very helpful in

this matter were the provisions stating that the State's territorial structure will be based on the decentralization principle. Of course, this did not pre-judge the existence of future gminas and powiats. Nevertheless, it made the implementation of these objectives feasible by means of a statute (The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 15). This regulation resulted in ceding the power of restoring the three-level country division to a statute. The Constitution only determined the existence of the territorial self-government units inasmuch as, according to its content, the residents of the territorial self-government units shall form a self-governing community in accordance with law (Konstytucja RP, Article 16 Paragraph 1). The Constitution introduced a principle of subsidiarity as the foundation of territorial system in Poland. This means that the bigger units of administrative division, and only then- central administration, perform their public duties only if their size gives them an advantage over the smaller units in terms of effectiveness. However, a question arises here: Where, in fact, do the capabilities of smaller administrative division units end? It is difficult to draw a clear-cut line in this matter.

The main purpose of the administrative division reform was supposed to be a creation of strong, in territorial, economic and population terms, regions. This would create realistic chances for them to function as subjects of regional policies in the country and also, after accession, in the European Union (Gilowska, Wysocka, Płoskonka, Prutis, Stec, 1997, p. 17–18).

The administrative division reform met the expectations of a further decentralization of public power, articulated mainly by self-government activists. However, the vast majority of population believed that the reform was unnecessary. The planned reform awakened hopes that thanks to the country's decentralization – following the example of the European Union Members – it would be easier to overcome the most severely felt challenges of social problems. According to the bill's creators, the basis of the reform was “to build a public administration capable of solving problems at the level that is closest to the general public, and which allows to control the officials” (*Po co nam reforma administracji?*, 1998, p. 3).

The previous administrative system of the Polish state was strongly centralized. Each level of government had a very unclear sphere of competence. The implemented in the 1975 reform led to a creation of voivodeships, which weren't regions in the geographical terms, nor in spatial or historical. Moreover, they had a limited subjectivity (Gilowska, Wysocka, Płoskonka, Prutis, Stec, 1997, p. 10).

As a warning to those who support the liquidation of powiats, it's worth pointing out here the reform implemented in 1975 and its disastrous effects on the functioning of the country and its administration. The Act on the two-level administrative division of the State of May 28, 1975 completely changed the model of administrative division and the model of local authorities and administration. One of the levels got eliminated – a powiat. Moreover, abolished was the divide between cities of powiat – and non-powiat status, and also the subdivisions of Poznań, Gdańsk and Szczecin (Gebert, 1975, p. 14–15).

One of the tasks carried out by powiats was to coordinate the measures of institutions fulfilling economic, social and cultural needs of cities and districts. By implementing the reform in 1972, the lawmakers conveyed this responsibility on gminas. As a result, it led to a reduction on auditing powers on powiat's part, and also – as was expected – an overgrowth of competences on the level of powiat. The decision to dismantle the powiats and to fragment the regions, instead of reforming the institution of powiat based on territorial extension and changes in regards of competence and tasks, led to a decrease of the gap between gminas and voivodeships on one hand, and a fragmentation and weakening of voivodeships on the other. Additionally, the liquidation of powiats meant one more thing- elimination of leftover jurisdictional separations between government and self-government administrations (Zakrzewski, 1976, p. 10–11).

At the heart of this reform was to make public authorities and administration closer to citizens. Most of the public institutions' competences were concentrated in cities and gminas. This was – according to Stanisław Gerbert – a very important feature of socialist statehood and acted as instrument to deepen the socialist democracy. However, attempts to bridge the gap between the population and the government and administration caused this gap to actually widen. This created a threat to efficiency of the country's administration, which would also influence the economic and social development. The cities and gminas' adoption of most tasks from powiats was supposed to speed up aligning the standards of living in urban and rural areas. The same purpose was in establishing common councils for big cities and their surrounding gminas. This, however, created a threat to areas surrounding cities. On one hand, cities could have been a positive force in cultural, educational, scientific and industrial terms. On the other, however, it made it possible to predominate the suburbs and to focus on development of urban areas only (Gebert, 1975, p. 15–16).

It would be interesting to learn what was the government's reasoning behind the purpose of implementing the new administrative division into voivodeships. The government decided that the previous division into voivodeships did not meet expectations of socio-economic development and demands of rational land-use planning of the country. Additionally, voivodeships allegedly did not form coherent regions, which would allow a better coordination of actions leading to development both on the regional level and nationwide (Bocheński, Gebert, Służewski, 1977, p. 69). It is hard to agree with some of these arguments, because by creating new voivodeships the coherence of regions was even further diminished by the additional fragmentation.

Any further reasoning to justify a validity of these decisions seems to be even more inconclusive. The creation of new voivodeships led to – according to administration – developing coherent regions, which boundaries were adapted to the already-formed economic structures of the country. In drawing the boundaries of the new voivodeships, the administration followed the criteria of: natural bonds in particular areas, sense of community, characteristic natural conditions and habits, a specific type of industry, specific to the area type of agriculture, special services and recreational capabilities, gravitating towards one dominating environment (Bocheński, Gebert, Służewski, 1977, p. 69–70).

Whereas, in creating a voivodeship that cannot be an equivalent to a region, different criteria should be used. This area should be homogeneous from a geographical, historical, environmental and cultural point. In the area an independent ecological, social, economic, civilizational and cultural policies should be – in accordance to its specifics – implemented by the own regional institutions.

The administration did not meet any of these simple, as it seems, criteria. Dismantling of the powiat and carrying most of its previous competences on gminas, while maintaining the big in size voivodeships, caused even greater gap between residents of particular gminas – especially sub-urban ones – and the decision-making center (Zawadzka, 1989, p. 289).

In creating new voivodeships the administration had absolutely no concern about what was the most needed for the best functioning of the State. Not without significance to the further development of the regions was the fact that the big towns were stripped of the role of leading centers; centers that were affecting the region by stimulating and leading the economic, social, ecological, civilizational and cultural development. A bizarre example here would be that cities with voivodeship rights: Kraków,

Warszawa and Łódź, were completely stripped of their territorial support, thus limiting their jurisdiction to city limits and a few adjacent gminas. Competences given to voivodes were limited to representing the government at the local level, and not to acting as a region's host with decision-making abilities. The new, created in 1975, voivodeships differed significantly in their economic development capabilities, to such a degree that some of them had no such resources at all (Gilowska, Wysocka, Płoskonka, Stec, 1997, p. 5).

The dismantling of regions brought yet another negative effect. Namely, it led to an increase of territorial and special divisions. When drafting the reform, no provisions regarding 20 of then-existing special divisions were included. Their jurisdiction fell over powiats and voivodeships. This meant that the extent of their tasks and competences of the first-level special administration's bodies, fell under a then-basic administrative unit – a powiat. Introducing the new administrative division units in the form of powiat and voivodeship led to a situation where it turned out that this units were too small to be able to play a role of special division units. Hence, under the government's ordinance of May 30, 1975 on adjusting the field organizational units to the new administrative division of the State, new special territorial divisions were introduced. However, the indispensability test was not applied, meaning that regardless of a new special territorial unit being needed or not – it had to be created. As a result of the actions taken under the government's ordinance, local administrative areas were created as supragmina special division units that covered gminas or a town with adjacent gminas. Whereas the second-level constituted of districts, creating supravoivodeship special division units. These covered a few of neighboring voivodeships (Chróścielewski, 1980, p. 97–99, Janku, 1981, p. 163–198).

Together with the liquidation of powiats, changed was the status of the specialized units that were subordinate to the national councils and field public administration. Until the reform, their competences fell within the limits of a powiat. After the implementation of the reform, gminas turned out to be too small of organizational units to be able to function as specialized units. Hence, these units got placed within district structures, but – as subsidiary division units. Organizational structures of the subsidiary division units did not operate in each gmina (Chróścielewski, 1980, p. 99–100).

The issue of the liquidation of powiats as well as shaping the boundaries of new voivodeships, indicate that the reform of 1975 from the very

beginning was not well prepared. This was, indeed, a desirable situation for the administration, because this strengthened the government's role as the only decision-making and governing center. The administration was actually not thoroughly reformed. Vast majority of institutions, special administration bodies and those functioning within powiats – formed a so-called administrative districts. In sum, the reform of 1975 contributed to the administrative collapse of the country; a country that, on the verge of the 1990s, found itself at the eve of administrative efficiency collapse. The only chance for development and proper functioning was an administration and self-government reform.

The first phase of the reform consisted of passing the Act on Gmina-Level Self-Government in 1990. Another step was supposed to be enacting the acts on powiat and voivodeship self-government. The result of which – the three-level administrative division was implemented. The Act on the three-level administrative division of the State led to the biggest controversies. On January 8, 1998 the Sejm Deputies from Polish People's Party submitted a bill on the voivodeship self-government that was aimed to create a two-level administrative division with a gmina as its first level. The second level was supposed to consist of 49 voivodeships led by voivodes and regional parliaments. About a month later, on February 6, 1998, the Sejm rejected the bill (Słobodzian, 2006, p. 112–123; Olszewski, 2007, p. 119–120).

The Sejm Deputies from the Polish People's Party probably wanted to beat the government in proposing the bill and present them with a fait accompli in case of a successful voting. The Government Plenipotentiary for the System Reform, Michał Kulesza, after the Jerzy Buzek's government took over on October 31, 1997, was working on such bill. In his works, the Plenipotentiary based mainly on the following criteria: geographical, historical, cultural, environmental, functional, mass security – both internal and external, social consensus, adjustment to European standards and finally, the National interest. This stand was also supported by analysis of the Western Europe's administrative division. A creation of 12 new voivodeships was proposed, with an intermediate level – powiat. In accordance with the bill received by the Sejm, the new administrative division was to be implemented on January 1, 1999. The second level of self-government was supposed to be formed by 310 powiats and 47 towns excluded from the powiats (Słobodzian, 2006, p. 114–115; Piasecki, 2012, p. 41–42; Miszczuk, 2003, p. 149–151).

Concurrently with the government's proposals, a group of Democratic Left Alliance deputies made a proposal of creating 17 voivodeships.

Thereby, two bills made it to the Sejm at the same time. A decision thus had to be made, as to which of the two bills was a leading one and which will be an amendment to the main bill. This caused numerous disruptions. Immediately many amendments emerged that amounted to increasing the number of voivodeships to 16, 17, 18 and 27. A motion to keep the 49 voivodeships was also filed (Słobodzian, 2006, p. 117–119; Miszczuk, p. 152–154; Habuda, 2005, p. 56–57, 59–61).

All the amendments, together with the deputies' bill, were rejected. A government's bill, with a recommendation of enacting by means of statute, on creation of 12 voivodeships was submitted to the Sejm. On June 5, 1998, during voting on a legislative package reforming the administrative system of the State, the Sejm outvoted the government bill on 12 voivodeships. Unfortunately, no lobbying – on the Sejm and the President's part – was conducted to enact the bill in the further legislation process (Habuda, 2005, p. 57–58, 64). On June 19, 1982 the Senate amended the bill by adding additional 3 voivodeships. On July 1, 1998, the Sejm passed the Senate's amendments and sent it to the President to be signed into a law. The President vetoed the bill. In justifying his stand, he concluded that the administrative division proposed by the Parliament was unconstitutional because the existing social and cultural bonds were not considered. The President also suggested a creation of 2 additional voivodeships, Old-Polish and Mid-Pomeranian (Słobodzian, 2006, p. 121–124; Piasecki, 2002, p. 42; Miszczuk, 2003, p. 156). Because the Mid-Pomeranian voivodeship was supposed to be created on the area Aleksander Kwaśniewski was originally from, a previous Koszalin Voivodeship, suspicions started circulating that he vetoed the bill because it did not include this voivodeship (Habuda, 2005, p. 57).

In searching for compromise between the deputies' bill that was not accepted by the President and the President's suggestions that in turn were not accepted by the deputies, a creation of 16 voivodeships, 308 powiats and 65 towns on powiat's rights was proposed. On July 24, 1998, the Sejm passed the Bill, and the President signed into a law – the Act on a three-level territorial division of the State (Piasecki, 2002, p. 42).

The implementation of 16 voivodeships is very arguable. Most of the present voivodeships do not meet the criteria of modern European regions. A lack of any serious lobbying to create 12 voivodeships resulted in proposals and even demands to form new voivodeships. Particular interests of local politicians started dominating; politicians who were in fear of losing their lucrative positions. Additionally, there was a matter of divi-



sion of forces in voivodeships between political groups, specifically between Solidarity Electoral Action and Democratic Left Alliance. Besides the battle in the Parliament, “spontaneously organized” (or rather-organized by local politicians) protests started, as well as referendums and even human chains from one voivodeship to another. Incidentally, the local clergy was also involved in these actions. They were trying to prove that some voivodeships, such as Opole Voivodeship, are regions in all respects; which is definitely not true as some of the today’s powiats: Brzeg and Namysłów, are areas that geographically, culturally and environmentally belong to Lower Silesia. The rest of today’s Opole Voivodeship consists of the Upper Silesia, and Opole is a historical capital of Upper Silesia. However, for the eastern part of Upper Silesia – a Silesia Voivodeship name was given. It is an odd name, especially taking into consideration its history and geography. Lower Silesia is also part of Silesia, and Wrocław is after all a historical capital of the whole Silesia. Today’s Lubusz Voivodeship is an artificial creation consisting in part of Lower Silesia, Greater Poland and Western Pomerania voivodeships, and even Brandenburg (Habuda, 2005, p. 56–59, 61–63; Habuda, 2009, p. 442–444).

By the way of these “spontaneous protests”, the discussion was getting even more heated – which resulted in a lot of negative emotions towards the adjacent voivodeships. The gap that was created then – is still visible today. In two instances, a creation of 2 voivodeships: Lubusz and Kuyavian-Pomeranian, resulted in such strong tensions over where the capital with a voivode was supposed to be located, that a division of offices had to be decided upon. The most important element that was not exploited was the local community mobilization. After saving the voivodeships, the social energy was not used to increase the importance of the voivodeship and its development.

Looking back at the last 15 years of the functioning of the new 16 voivodeships, a valid argument emerges – that this division is inadequate to the real needs and criteria. Basing on pressures and particular interests resulted in a lot of damage, especially in the area of economic development (Habuda, 2005, p. 54–55; Habuda, p. 444–449).

The self-government reform of 1990 was justifiably limited to the gmina level. Too many of issues were ill-equipped, e.g. municipal assets on a voivodeship level or the number of voivodeships. They could have led to a demise of the reform and discourage the idea of self-governance.

In implementing the reform in 1990 a solution was adapted to disentangle, on a gmina level, executive and legislative powers. This was, how-



ever, done with a detriment of executive power. A dominating position of legislative power was pronounced. Finally, in 1995 there was an enactment of provisions that strengthened the executive power. Albeit, a primacy of the council as a control authority was sustained.

The reforms of 1990, 1998 and 2002 introduced many structural and institutional changes. Above all, these reforms decentralized the decision-making process by transferring the decision-making competences to gminas; executive competences were, simultaneously, restructured. To follow this example, changed were also the competences of the central administration and government administration in voivodeship, including a voivode. Residents of gminas, powiats and voivodeships were also given an opportunity to exercise their right to govern and to have an influence on decision-making processes by means of elections or referendums. The lawmaker did not implement any coercion in this matter. It's the gmina's residents that have to decide whether they want to exercise the opportunities made available to them, or whether they want to remain passive.

The reforms completely changed the face of the State. It was assumed that dividing administration competences between decision centers on a local, regional and central level would improve the quality and efficiency of governing. Certain mistakes were made, however. The most important one was that too many voivodeships were created. The optimum solution would have been a creation of 9 strong voivodeships of large area, high population and economic potential, based on historical and geographical grounds. Today's 16 voivodeships are not embedded on any of this elements. They are extremely diverse in terms of acreage, population and economy. It results in their uneven development. Next to rich voivodeships there are also poor ones. A fewer number of voivodeships would ensure a more even development and better and more efficient governing of the country. The number of the mid-level units – powiats – raises similar concerns. There should most definitely be fewer of them. As in the issue of voivodeships, an uneven development has been observed. This state of affairs consists of the same causes as in voivodeships.

Not all issues regarding gminas were regulated by the Act of 1990. Hence, all the amendments that were implemented in 1990–2002 had two purposes:

- 1) to correct the “bungles”;
- 2) to increase the efficiency of self-government functioning.

This purpose was served by, inter alia, provisions that:

- 1) organized and clarified government administration competences regarding local government – by eliminating possibilities of competence

- conflicts; the less the state interventionism in the local government, the better for the State itself;
- 2) clearly described the relations between gminas' legislative and executive bodies;
  - 3) clearly described tasks and competences of local government;
  - 4) relayed new, further tasks to be fulfilled by particular levels of local government according to the subsidiarity principle.

However, the efficiency of local government functioning constitutes of more than just more tasks and competences. Above all, it constitutes of clearly defined sources of revenue and an ability to freely dispose of it. The efficiency of local government functioning is limited by a financial barrier. These units should be subject to constitutional protection. In drafting the new constitution in 1997, its creators included a very general provision, that in regards of financing – it refers to a statute, meaning the laws of lower rank. It definitely weakens the local government's position in favor of the government administration and its possibilities of measures. In preparing the Constitution's draft what should have been done was to reach to already tried and tested European standards and to enclose the provisions of local government financing in the Constitution, even if the proportions of each sources that go to particular self-government level had to be included. Thus, a comprehensive public finance reform is needed, and a one that would also cover the local government's matters.

The recurring in Poland voices to dismantle the powiats are based on the Czech Republic's example where, allegedly, the powiats were liquidated. This is definitely not a good example because of the following reasons: People who use this example as an argument to dismantle powiats in Poland probably do not fully understand the specifics of administrative division in the Czech Republic. Size-wise this country belongs to medium-sized countries. The specifics of its administrative division and each level's functions are derived from its size, but also from its traditions and history.

Local government in the Czech Republic was, until 2000, present exclusively on a gmina level. This was directly derived from the time in history during which the Czech Republic belonged to Austria-Hungary, and when local government was being formed on a gmina level only. A then-powiat had a similar role as it does currently. A powiat does exist in the Czech Republic, despite what opponents of dismantling powiats in Poland say. It only has an organizational function to: courts, police, health care and also serves statistical purposes. The second level of local government

in the Czech Republic is, from 2000, a kraj (Siwek, 2010, p. 531, 542–543). Thus references to the Czech Republic's example, in argument for dismantling of powiats in Poland, seem to be completely invalid.

There is therefore no doubt that Poland is slowly getting ready to start a broad discussion on yet another administrative division reform. Perhaps such debates would not have been needed if not for the political bargaining that had happened in the Sejm in 1998, when for many politicians their own interests were more important than the National interest. As a result, the reform was halted halfway. There are too many voivodeships and also powiats that are limited in their competences and own revenue. Over the 15 years of functioning of this broken reform, a lot of problems arose, which politicians do not seem to notice.

Recently, however, there has been more and more studies on a state of local-governance. The conclusions of these studies are not too optimistic (Bober, Hausner, Izdebski et al., 2013; Rydlewski, 2014). Additionally, a depopulation process in many local territorial units results in a revenue decrease. Reducing the local territorial units' income leads to a situation where they cannot carry out their tasks. In local territorial units' budgets, various kinds of subsidies and grants start to dominate, which literally makes them dependent on government. Their independence slowly starts to seem illusive.

In the recent months, there have been talks of a proposal of enacting, by means of statute, a metropolitan powiat as a solution to powiats' weakness. It seems that the creators of this idea are trying to kill two birds with one stone: no specific vision on metropolisation and problems in functioning of the Uppersilesian-Dąbrowa Coal Basin conurbation. The government took a negative stand on this concept, yet the deputies are still trying to push it through. In the Western Europe the same idea is based on the principles of agglomerations and metropolis under voluntary cooperation. They are always special-purpose associations and not units or levels of territorial self-government.

Based on conducted research, the following conclusions can be made. Especially important to a country aspiring to a leadership role in this part of Eastern Europe, and within the EU – to a role of one of the leading countries, should be before anything else an efficient management of its own entity. This could be done by a further territorial self-government reform, which should be properly prepared using the experiences brought by the disputes over the reform bills in 1998. Hence – the following ought to be done:

- 1) first of all, it is essential to reduce the number of voivodeships, meaning – a comprehensive reform of the administrative division of the

State is needed. Future units of the administrative division – regions – should be based on geographical, historical and cultural criteria. Newly founded units should be thus of a high territorial, social and economic potential, and should be on a local and government – or exclusively local – level. These units would allow a more efficient management of the country and would be able, in the constantly growing European Union, to effectively compete for funds for regional development, also after 2020 when the rules for obtaining funding will change. A maximum number of voivodeships, to efficiently manage the country, should be reduced to 9;

- 2) following the gminas example, the electoral law to the local powiat and voivodeship councils should be changed and allow direct elections for powiat starosts and voivodeship marshals. This would allow a strong mandate to govern. Similar processes can be observed in many countries in which a powiat – as a level of a territorial self-government – exists, e.g. Germany;
- 3) maximum of two terms for gmina administrators, mayors and city mayors, and after implementation of direct elections – also starosts and marshals, which would strengthen the democracy at a local and regional level, liven up the political scene and significantly influence the development of gminas, powiats and voivodeships;
- 4) comprehensive change of the provisions on relations between legislative and executive bodies in gminas. Today's provisions guarantee a domination of: gmina administrators, mayors and city mayors – over councils. These provisions make them also independent from the electorate, and conflicts' impasses do not promote gminas' development and their managing;
- 5) the powiat's role ought to be extended by providing similar to gminas sources of revenue, which would allow powiats to take over some tasks from voivodeships. At the same time, the number of powiats ought to be reduced which would lead to creation of much bigger, in territorial, social and economic terms, administrative units;
- 6) the quality of task delegations ought to be improved as well. Currently, delegation of tasks to local government units are done without any clear concept of local-government development;
7. In the event of changing the voivodeship's character to a local-government level only, changes in the public administration's structures ought to be done, by transforming the Senate to an institution that represents voivodeships. The representatives of voivodeships would be

exclusively: marshals, vice-marshals and chairmen of the Sejmik. A vice-chairman of the Sejmik and another vice-marshal could be added – but this could only be allowed for voivodeships with larger population. Thus, the number of voivodeship representatives in the Senate ought to depend on the voivodeship's total population;

- 8) in the event of changing the voivodeship's character to a local and government one, the office of Voivode ought to be reduced to representing the government in a voivodeship and also to make sure local government units obey the law, and have a well-paid, competent and efficient staff of officials;
- 9) a comprehensive public finance reform ought to be implemented, and local government financing principles – with the amount (percentage-wise) from particular source per each level of local government – ought to be included in the Constitution and the acts on local government.

It is worth noting that these enumerated elements of the further local government reform will not bring expected results if the economic issues are not properly regulated. Without local government's financial independence, meaning – without own resources and budgets, the local government reform will be incomplete. Financial independence will also allow to gain autonomy in regards to central administration. These issues ought to be included in the Constitution as well, as a guarantee of integrity and to stress the importance to the whole political and administrative system of the country. Local and regional communities are entitled not only to self-governance, but they also have a right to function within a well – and effectively governed country.

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**Czy potrzebna jest nowa reforma podziału administracyjnego?  
Głos w dyskusji na temat reformy samorządu**

**Streszczenie**

Przetaczająca się przez różne środowiska w Polsce: samorządowców, naukowców zajmujących się tą problematyką, polityków szczebla centralnego dyskusja na temat konieczności przeprowadzenia reformy podziału administracyjnego państwa polskie-

go skłania do dokonania oglądu sytuacyjnego. Wszelkie dyskusje jakie się w tej chwili toczą – z jednej strony – na poziomie władzy centralnej, a konkretnie w sejmie na temat powiatu metropolitalnego wydają się być oderwane od rzeczywistości i nakazują zadać pytanie czemu mają te próby przeforsowania ustawy służyć? Dodać należy, że negatywne stanowisko w tej sprawie zajął m.in. rząd oraz liczne grono samorządowców. Z drugiej zaś strony pojawiają się głosy o likwidacji wzorem Republiki Czeskiej powiatów, czy też propozycja powrotu do koncepcji podziału na 49 województw. Czy Polskę stać na kolejny eksperyment administracyjny? Reforma administracyjna to nie tylko szczeble administracji, to także problem zarządzania państwem. Społeczności lokalne i regionalne mają prawo nie tylko do samorządności, mają również prawo do tego aby funkcjonować w ramach dobrze i efektywnie zarządzanego państwa.



