

Deliberations discussed in this doctoral dissertation are focused on functioning of local parties on the political scenes in the cities with county right in Silesia province over the period 2002-2018. The analysis of the current academic achievements do not provide one, widely accepted definition of the local parties. The majority of the researchers indicate that local parties have features of political parties by realizing functions which are specific for the nationwide political parties. The key aim of the local parties, analogically to the aim of the nationwide parties, is to gain and maintain power. The local parties participate only in the local elections and they are not interested in engaging in the elections on the nationwide level. The local parties' programs are focused on the key issues essential for the local communities which confirms their non-ideological character. As a result, in the Polish legislation local parties are defined as all entities that participate only in the local elections and do not have any formal connections with the nationwide political parties.

The emergence of the local parties is the result of the revival of the local government which in turn is the result of the political transformation that began after the fall of the communism in 1989. Implementation of direct election of the mayor of the city in 2002 had the key role in the carried out analysis. It reinforced the position of the mayor of the city in the local authorities and changed the character of the local parties. The introduction of new regulations leded also to formation of municipal presidential parties- entities created by independent mayors of the cities. The main aim of their creation is building the permanent majority in the city council which is the key source of effective power. Since 2006 municipal presidential parties have constituted the key form of local parties on the political scenes in the cities with county rights.

The relevance level of the local parties on the political scenes in the cities with county right in the Silesia province is the result of the carried out analysis of the local election results over the period 2002-2014. The performed analysis shows the specificity of the Silesia province in comparison to other regions. It is expressed in one of the lowest share of councilmen from political parties in the city council. The level of local parties relevance has evolved significantly over the considered period. In 2002 in the cities with county rights in Silesia province these parties gained the result on the average level 60,3%. In next elections this indicator had following values: 39,6% in 2006, 46,4% in 2010 and 42,6% in 2014. The results confirm the significant transition of the local politics in Poland after 2006. The performed analysis also proved that in each city with county rights in Silesia province the results of the local parties were significantly different.

In this doctoral dissertation the analysis of the party affiliation of mayors of the cities has been also carried out. The specificity of the cities with county rights in Silesia province has been also expressed by the fact that in every local election over the period 2002-2014 the majority of the mayors of the cities was connected with the local parties. In 2002 fourteen presidents of the cities with county rights in Silesia province represented the local parties. In 2006 the number of those presidents was fifteen, four years later thirteen and in 2014 twelve. Moreover, the analysis of the correlation between the result of the municipal presidential parties and the result of mayors of the cities has been also carried out.

In this doctoral dissertation there has been performed research related to the established coalitions in the city councils in cities with county rights in the Silesia province. Local parties participate in most of the established parties' coalitions. This is the result of holding key functions in the city council by councilmen from local parties. Therefore, local parties have the real impact on the governance in the cities taken into the analysis.