LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT – AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE THE TERM AND ITS SCOPE

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An important element of the democracy system is the social organisations system, that include all the social groups, thus frame the whole society. The social organisations system constitute the best participation field for the society members in case of socio-economic matters management. The local government is an important factor of social life in every organisational system of a country, an environment or a group. Territory managements is based on stating some aims, i.e. the needs that may and should be realised by the organisation, not at taking decisions dealing with tasks, resources and deadlines for realisations. The aim of the following article is an attempt to frame theoretically the territory management system and the possibility to improve it on the basis of a local government, the most common form of a government. The article is of a cognitive and application nature. The paper is based on the related literature, observations and the author’s conclusions.

Key words: government, local government, self-governance, territory management.
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1. Introduction

A self-government is a form of relations between units in a group, between social groups and between groups and the state. It means an individual and independent management of one’s issues involving performance of state functions by a stated body having an administrative character. The self-government does not include only the self-stated administrative tasks, handed to the self-government bodies, but there also is management of issues of a given community that had not been within an administration’s scope. Performing the administrative tasks cannot be the only or dominant form of activity.

One of the most important features of the self-government is an orientation towards the social initiatives (Owsiak, 2005). Participation in the process of decisions taking dealing with allocation of resources gives the sense of responsibility and promotes actions fostering the socio-economic development. The ability to manage independently one’s own matters, and related to it assignment of responsibilities for tasks realisation, leads to the state when having some autonomy is very important for the self-government that is expressed in independency and undergoes some judicial protection as a legal personality.
A management is most often defined as an effective administration, use and coordination of the resources such as: capital, equipment, materials and work for reaching set aims. It results from the definition that management includes any activities concerning planning, organisation, leading and controlling that aims at coordination of the organisation resources use for efficient and effective realisation of its goals. The management includes– three types of processes i.e. decision-making, execution and control.

At the beginning of the 1980’s one could notice a development of a concept known nowadays as new public management (New Public Management – NMP) directed to e. g. adaptation of methods and instruments of management typical for a commercial sector, with a simultaneous assumption of bureaucracy reduction and extension of flexibility and new practices, searching for solutions allowing real management. This concept caused bigger clarity and understanding of set aims, expressed in the form of precise final results that serve as a basis for an evaluation of effectiveness of public organisations functioning (Zalewski, 2005).

2. Self-government, self-governance

Self-governance includes two ideas: self-help and co-management. A self-governance is a process having definite structure and dynamics. The structural aspect is constituted by territory organisations of various type and level. However, the dynamic aspect includes possibilities and chances that are presented to social units and groups and out of which they make choices accordingly to a given need. On the other hand, the self-governance includes two concepts – self-help and co-management.

The above shows that a self-government means execution of a power or other type of an organisational activity through a territory or union groups of people via chosen bodies, people exercising authority.

Most often it is assumed that a self-government is an organised, self-governing activity of its members, local environment citizens, based on public law authorisation set by law acts and its own means together with those given by the state. The aim of this activity is a better fulfilment of people needs, realisation and protection of shared, socially justified aims, creation of social relations based on fairness, improvement of social conditions and fostering economic development of a given area, generating opportunities for participation of every person in management.

Self-government is a legally dedicated group of citizens, sharing common goal and being in disposition of awarded proper law acts, authorisations to act on one’s behalf, that fulfills its needs individually. Here, separation is seen in terms of legal individuality of local community’s aim, at least as far as management of its issues, and mostly also recognition of its power binding at least in general cases (Kulesza, 1990). One can now notice that the basic requirement is to appoint the self-government accordingly to the law points in order to realise the tasks and functions that are of public character.

The most common form of public administration decentralisation is the local self-government, that is seen as relation of a local community, named in the structure of the state, established and governed by law, appointed to realise independently
tasks of public administration, equipped in material resources allowing realisation of the tasks (Ochendowski, 2002). The core issue of the local self-government is to manage the public affairs by the concerned community itself (Tarno, 2004).

The fundamental principles of local self-government functioning is precisely set by the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Charter, 1995):

- principle of local self-governance must be approved by the internal law, and possibly by the Constitution of the country;
- local self-government means law and ability of local community, within the law boundaries, to direct and manage the essential number of public affairs on its own responsibility and for the good of the community members; this right is realised by the councils and meeting, where members elected in free, secret, equal, direct and common ballots are authorised to administer executive bodies that are subject to them;
- the basic competence of the local community bodies are clearly named in the Constitution or in the law act; it does not exclude a possibility to award the local community rights necessary to realise specific tasks accordingly to the law rules;
- local communities have – accordingly to the range set by the law – full freedom of acting in every case that is not excluded from the competence of its bodies or is not included in the competence of other bodies;
- local communities have right, accordingly to the national economic policy, to possess sufficient financial resources, which can be freely administered for execution of their power.

The basic features characterising the self-government include (Leoński, 2002):

- union (corporate) character – guaranteed by law to social groups and law bodies nominated by them to manage their matters;
- mandatory participation at self-government appointment; one becomes a member of the self-government by the power of the law act;
- execution of the tasks of public administration by the self-government and its bodies;
- managing the matters that is based on the rule of independence and decentralisation, control over the activity is possible only in the forms already set in the law act.

The independence of the self-government should be considered in a few aspects. The law aspect sees it as awarding self-government the legal entity, that is understood as independence and ability to manage own matters. The political aspect is a result of allocation the right to choose the direction of actions. The economic aspect is related to realisation of tasks and performing the activity, with taking into account the real conditions under which those organisations function, that particularly include: rise of public sector importance, necessity to accept the changes in the technique, influence of the market economy and globalisation, the need to reglamentation of expenses on the public services and so on. While, the organisational view connects independence with management, and particularly with the right to establish its own bodies, organisational units and to appoint people to a given positions, and to decide on the directions of resources allocation and the manner in which the tasks are performed (Filipiak-Dylewska, 2002).
3. Self-governance – an attempt to define the term

The general scope includes the issues as a whole, and one can point to the following qualities of self-government management (Wojciechowski, 2003, pp. 11–12):
- it is a typical communicative-decision-making process,
- it is of a managing and team-working work character,
- it is a system of the regulative actions applied accordingly to the set goals,
- it is a coordinative process that harmonises the actions of various people, institutions and economic operators.

In the literature one can find two viewpoints on the interpretation of the management notion: 1) institutional one – sees management as a group of people who were delegated to give instructions within the organisation, 2) functional one – it applies to the actions undertaken to manage the work (Steinmann, 2001). When one defines the management, he most often points to the link between this notion and the organised actions of people, he underlines the core role of a person in this process. The management is a regulative process, since it creates the behaviour of people and whole organisations. The management is also a practical operation – i.e. conscious and purposeful behaviour of people that seek to change the present reality, undergoing constant modifications and alterations (Sudol, 2007).

The self-government bodies act in a collegiate way, what means that all of its members are equal. The resolutions are taken by the majority of votes. The president of a given body has an equivalent position to other members when it comes to the essential issues.

In the process of community management the following participate:
- the territory self-government as a collectivity that has a legal personality and its own autonomous powers;
- the municipal council as a decision-making body that was appointed in the direct and democratic elections by the territory self-government;
- the mayor as the executive body appointed to realise the resolutions of the council, directly supervising the realisation of set tasks;
- the organisational units of the community.

The local self-government management includes:
- setting the assumptions of the community’s policy accordingly to the stated general activities of the community;
- coordination of the local policy realisation;
- monitoring the use of resources and assets that are within the community’s disposition;
- verification of the effects of the activities related to the realisation of the community’s policy.

The self-government management is a process that takes place within the self-government structures. Its core, range, intensity and meaning depends on many processes forming those structures, such as e. g. range of decentralisation, liberalisation,
democracy, proprietary changes in the economy, the policy of implementation of the pro-effective solutions in the public sector and so on.

The management in the self-government is directed to caring for realisation of the public interest, and its essential problem is to correctly state the goals, that will be in line with the self-government functioning, and realised under conditions when real process take place. The obligation to direct the public interest leads to the situation when the self-government realises mostly the aims set by the community members – that serve fulfilment of their needs. It is related to the necessity of paying the special attention to the core issue of human capital, such as e.g. fulfilment of inhabitants’ needs or striving to maximalise the social welfare, and its strictly related to dynamic reactions to changes caused by the previous activity of the self-government.

The self-government management focuses at development and functioning of the organisation from the governmental sub-sector and it includes the actions executed at spatial, social and economic structures (Wojciechowski, 2003). It is realised by taking into account the valid democratic procedures, what leads to the state when economic situation and development possibilities of those organisations are dependent on their efficiency.

One of the most important tasks of the territory self-government is to guarantee conditions proper for local development. It constitutes a harmonised and a systematic activity (the changing complexity) of the community, public authorities and other operators functioning within a given unit of the territory self-government, aiming at creation of the new and improvement of the existing usability conditions of the territory unit, creation of favourable conditions for the economy and provision of the spatial and ecological order (Parysek, 1996). Achievement of success and ability to provide the long-term development requires fulfilment of the following elements: activity – the ability to make decisions and act intensively; Thrift – economical and skilled management; revivification – intensivity, boom, energy boost. Those qualities bring the management at the territory self-government, and thus, the activity of the local authorities, to deal with various levels and areas of activity. The state of multiaspect is related to the need of development of the adaptation skill to the constantly dynamic, and often unpredictable conditions of activity (Markowski, 1999).

The territory self-government is dependent on the economical aspect of functioning of the self-government bodies. They are a special type of the economic operator, that has right to make decisions, having own administration, property and independent financial resources. The present conditions of territory self-government functioning are related to the financial crisis, its dependence on other local operators and higher level systems that it also constitutes, together with the requirement to adjust itself to the rules of the market economy, leads to the transformation of the local self-government that takes place accordingly to the direction of the system changes.

The self-government bodies are institution that are of economic character, where the management processes are oriented at every kind of resources, nonetheless their actions and decisions taken have spatial meaning, regardless of the discipline that it concerns whether its economy or the area development planning (Wojciechowski, 2003, p. 43).
The rationality of the area development planning forces those organisations to coordinate the activities of different member of the community. One particularly must limit the arousing disagreements between the public interest and the group or personal interest, between the current activity and the investments, and so on.

Very important in the activity of the self-government bodies, resulting from the obligation to cooperate and the need to realise the paradigm of groupware – in accordance with the concept of the facilitative self-government (Swaniewicz, 1997; Wojciechowski, 2003).

Hence, the self-government management is a process, where the basic study regard is paid to the efficiency of the functioning of the public bodies net related by the authority of the self-government bodies or being under their supervisory. Its specification results from the fact that it is being realised by the proper bodies of the territory self-government bodies (provincial council, district council or community council), with the departure from the realisation of the unit’s welfare for the sake of the shared welfare of the group belonging to the given self-government unit.

4. The tasks of the self-government units

The territory self-government conducts the public tasks such as economic, social, cultural, administralional ones and so on, that are not reserved for the bodies of other public authorities. The aim of those tasks is to fulfil the various, collective needs of the local community. The narrow scope would see it as the tasks involving the fulfilment of the direct, repeatable, typical social needs e.g. within the educational range. The wide scope includes fulfilment of every need, involving the indirect ones.

The tasks of the community include the issues from three basic activity areas:
- organisation – powers to resolve the community’s charter, decide on the course of actions of the executive body;
- finance – competence of the community council to resolve the community budget, acceptance of the report of the financial activity of the community (the executive body), giving the vote of approval, adaptation of resolutions dealing with the taxes and fees, raising the loans and issuing state bonds;
- local economy – community powers to prepare the economy programmes and create the prognosis of particular areas development.

The importance of the community in the enterprise development is related to the features of the territory self-government, i. e.:
- the tasks of the community are statutory defined, thus, substantial part of the budget incomes is directed to financing of the mandatory tasks, such as: medical treatment, welfare, streets and service roads, the municipal and housing management, area development planning, and so on;
- the community is statutory responsible for all the political issues on its territory;
- the most important task (aim) of the community is to fulfil the needs of the community-dwellers;
- according to the subsidiarity principle, the priority at taking the initiatives, setting the hierarchy of needs and ways of their fulfilment is given to the community-dwellers;
- the fulfilment of needs and provision of services may cause divergence in the hierarchy of goals, the way of resources use and some limits the local authority is interested in the economic growth if it realises the aims that it is responsible for Bończak-Kucharczyk E., Herbst K. and Chmura K. (1998).

The range of basic duties results from the features that differentiate the self-government from other organisation operating within the given area (Kożuch, 2002) is as follows:

- it is the host of the region and it deals with all of the economy elements, regardless of the character and the nature of the institutional solutions;
- it is responsible for the development of the region, thus, it does not narrows down its scope to the immediate actions, but it also deals with creation and realisation of the development strategy of this region;
- it realises the tasks, that it was appointed to, not only by its means but also via independent operators.

The implementation and consolidation of the market economy principles and the democratic procedures requires the development of the management, that constitutes of the factor influencing the economic-financial situation and the possibility to develop the territory self-government.

5. Conclusions

The self-government is a statutory set range of competence to independently decide on the matters of the given local community, to represent its interest in front of the state authority body and execution of the tasks imposed by the law act, contracts or agreements made.

The specification of the self-government organisations functioning narrows down the freedom of action to those that are named by the law and not reserved for other operators of this sector (the legality rule).

1. The self-government is characterised by the lower level of independence in relation to the operators of private sector, however, the biggest powers are handled by the communities. The necessity to serve the ancillary role for the community-dwellers is also very important.

2. It is the foremost rule of the self-government management process, and the legitimacy of the process results from the orientation of actions to provide the public services for the people.

3. The territory self-government is obliged to search for and choose the effective methods of public tasks realisation. This leads to the evolution of the views on the place and way of public authorities activity in the economy. The changes related to departure from the traditional attitude towards the regulatory-and-mixed model and the indirect stimulation of the local development model are taking place.

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the democratic procedures requires the development of the management, that constitutes of the factor influencing the economic-financial situation and the possibility to develop the territory self-government.

The article is of a cognitive and application nature. The paper is based on the related literature, observations and the author’s conclusions. This article should be used in the teaching process. Methods used in this article are scientific literature analysis.

References

Šio darbo tikslas yra pabandyti teoriškai apibrėžti vietos valdžios institucijų valdymo sistemą ir galimybes ją patobulinti teritorinės savivaldos, kuri yra labiausiai paplitusi Lenkijoje savivaldos forma, pavyzdžiui. Darbas yra pažintinio ir aplikacinio pobūdžio. Tyrimas grindžiamas literatūros analize, stebėjimu ir savo apmąstymais. Transformation Lenkijos teritorinėje savivaldoje yra susijusios su pasitraukimu nuo tradicinio požiūrio bei taikymo reguliavimo ir mišraus modelio prie netiesioginio lokalinio vystymosi skatinimo modelio įgyvendinimo. Šie pokyčiai veda prie ūkininkavimo vystymosi lokalinių lygių bei teikiamų teritorinės savivaldos administracinių vienetų vietos bendruomenei paslaugų kokybės gerinimo. Straipsnis gali būti naudojamas mokymo procese, taip pat viešųjų organizacijų duomenų šaltinis.

**Raktiniai žodžiai:** savivalda, teritorijų tvarkymas, vietos valdžia.

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