SUMMARY

„International Cooperation of Local Self-Government Units of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region”

The processes of integration and globalisation taking place in the international environment in the last few decades have led to the creation of new participants in international relations. Their subjects have become, inter alia, Polish territorial self-government units, which carry out tasks of international cooperation (regulated in legislation with territorial units from other countries). Over the years, the way in which classical diplomacy, hitherto carried out by state governments, has been exercised has changed towards diplomacy involving sub-state actors. This leads to the conclusion that the value of the paradigm of conducting foreign policy only by states is being exhausted, while international cooperation conducted by local and regional governments is gaining importance.

The research problem formulated in this paper is: What is the scale of international cooperation between local and regional government units in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region?

In addition, two main research hypotheses were adopted:

1) Traditional international relations, realised between state actors, are currently complemented by a new network of links between local and regional communities in the form of cooperation transcending national borders. This cooperation, as an important competence realising the constitutional principle of self-government independence, has been conferred on Polish local government units by virtue of system laws regulating the status of these units.

2) International cooperation of territorial self-government units in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region is an important factor favouring the development of local and regional communities, realised by the self-government primarily as cooperation of a formal nature. The dynamics of international cooperation in individual local government units from the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region varies.

The scope of research additionally encompassed a number of research questions concerning, inter alia: the international subjectivity of local self-governments, the legal status of foreign representations of local self-governments, the supervision of international cooperation conducted by Polish local self-governments or the scale, barriers and effects of international cooperation conducted by local self-governments from the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region. The research covered not only paradiplomacy carried out under ‘standard’ conditions, but also during the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic and after the full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine.

The presented doctoral thesis consists of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography and an appendix. The first chapter contains theoretical considerations on important concepts present in the thesis, including an explanation of the term ‘international cooperation of local government units’. In addition, the genesis of international cooperation of territorial units is presented, as well as the issue of public diplomacy and the role of local governments in its implementation. The second chapter covers the problems concerning the legal foundations of international cooperation, moreover, in this part of the dissertation special

attention was paid to the forms of international cooperation. The author of the thesis also analysed the supervision of government administration over international cooperation realised by local self-government. The analysis contained in the third chapter covered considerations on international cooperation of local governments from the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship. This part of the work characterises the international cooperation activities of the main actors of international cooperation in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodeship (primarily the voivodeship's self-government bodies) and the communal and district self-governments of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region. A detailed analysis of the minutes of the Sejmik of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship, including its committees of relevance to this work, as well as normative acts passed by the organs of local self-government units of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship and contracts or agreements concluded with international cooperation partners are presented here. The fourth chapter presents the results of surveys, which discuss the directions, subject and dynamics of international cooperation of local government units of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region.

The conclusion of this dissertation is a summary of reflections on international cooperation of territorial self-government units of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region, and, what is important, includes a reference to the hypotheses and research questions contained in the introduction.

The theoretical considerations presented in the paper, as well as the results and conclusions of the conducted research, are an attempt to order and deepen the issue of international cooperation of local governments, especially in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region. The primary objective of the conducted research was cognitive, thanks to which the cognitive gap in scientific research was filled. Moreover, the presented dissertation and its conclusions are of an applied character and may constitute a basis for further in-depth analyses and considerations as well as stimulate discussion.

Keywords: international cooperation, local government, paradiplomacy