
Sub-National Regionalism and the European Union

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the relationship between sub-national regionalism and the European Union. Specific attention is paid to the influence of EU accession on regionalism and regionalisation in Poland, especially the situation of the Mazovian Region. It is argued that the relationship between sub-national regionalism and the European Union (as a form of European integration) is determined by four factors: firstly, the decrease of the traditional role of nation state after the second world war and redefinition of international (interstate) relations which made more space both for European integration and regionalism; secondly, practical activities of the EU, especially its funds for regional development, which prompted or encouraged some countries, especially the new members states from central-eastern Europe, to create regions and stimulated regionalism; thirdly, the recent austerity policy prescribed by the EU in some countries, especially in Spain, which stimulates radicalism of regionalist movements (the case of Catalonia); fourthly, the very existence of the EU and the need to negotiate EU membership which discourages those regionalist-nationalist movements which aim to separate their regions from the existing EU member states while remaining in the EU.

Introductory comments

The purpose of this paper is to analyse relationships between “sub-national” regionalism and the European Union. The adjective “sub-national” is used to distinguish two completely different meanings of the word “regionalism”: one relating to regions understood as parts of the existing nation states¹ and the other (supra-national regionalism) relating to regions as parts of the world and consisting of integration of countries belonging to the same world region². In other words, there are two kinds of regionalism in Europe – sub-national and

¹ See for example the following definition of regionalism: *Regionalism: The active promotion of regional interests in political, economic, social and cultural terms*. In the following, these regions are mentioned as examples of regions, among others: Catalonia, Basque Country, Galicia, Wales, Scotland, Flanders, Bavaria etc. Mathias 2006, 216-218. A similar definition is proposed e.g. by Polish researchers I. Sagan and B. Jałowicki, M.S. Szczepański and G. Gorzelak: *Regionalism is a movement, bottom-up tendency ethnic and cultural specificity, form of tradition. Regionalism aims to valorise a region's own culture, defending its identity against unification and assimilation by the majority* (Sagan 2009, p. 27, my translation from Polish – R.Sz.). [*Regionalism [is] a socio-cultural movement aiming at valorisation of a given area. (...) Regionalism is a social movement based on local culture and specific needs and aspirations of inhabitants demanding greater justice. Regionalism is usually based on the feeling of identity*] (Jałowicki, Szczepański, Gorzelak 2007 p. 208, 210/211, my translation from Polish – R. Sz.).

² For this particular understanding of the notion of regionalism, see e.g.: *Research on regionalism was stimulated by the emergence in the late 1980s of the so-called new regionalism. Expansion and transformation of existing regional organizations such as the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU) and the emergence of new regional groupings, for example, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) led to a reawakening of interest in regionalism and the construction of a new agenda in the study of regionalism.* (O'Brien, Williams 2007, p. 33). This particular way of understanding the notion of regionalism is dominant not only in English-language political studies. For instance, Hungarian scholar Békési (Békési 2004, p. 175) defines regionalism (in Hungarian: regionalismus) as follows: “Regionalism is links, relations between states located in geographical proximity, these links being first of all expressed in political, and at present all the more in economic, cooperation of these states” (my translation from Hungarian). A detailed and extensive analysis of theory and history of this kind of regionalism can be found e.g. in Tavares 2004. This author, however, recognizes the existence of regionalism of sub-national regions, referring to it as “micro-regionalism” (Tavares 2004, p. 21)

supra-national. In the following text the term “regionalism” should be understood as sub-national regionalism.

The paper aims to answer the question of whether European integration and the European Union itself stimulate or hinder regionalism, which instruments are used by the EU influencing (intentionally and unintentionally) regionalism, and the expectations of regions and regionalist movements from the European Union.

Regionalism can take on several forms, three of these deserve special attention: political regionalism, cultural regionalism and economic regionalism. Political regionalism consists of activities aimed at establishing a region (a sub-national territorial administrative unit) or at strengthening its power in relation to the central government and/or other regions. In other words, this kind of regionalism is applicable to territorial government institutions. Cultural regionalism is activity aimed at preserving or promoting the cultural characteristics of the inhabitants living in a given area, irrespective of its territorial-administrative status. Examples of cultural regionalism are Low German regionalism in Germany or Occitan regionalism in France, both aiming to preserve local linguistic variations and their cultures in several political-territorial or territorial-administrative units (*Länder, régions*). Political regionalism does not exclude the cultural aspect. Economic regionalism aims at gaining economic advantages in its relations with central government and/or other regions: for instance reduction of the region’s contribution to the common budget (in the case of wealthy regions) or demands for a greater influx of funds for the region from the central government (in poorer regions) or greater autonomy in the region’s internal economic policy.

The European Union and regionalism – roots of the “Europe of Regions” concept

The relationship between the European Union and regionalism should be analyzed separately for Western Europe (EU-15) and Central-Eastern Europe (countries which joined the EU in 2004-07-13). In Western Europe the post WW2 European integration (consecutive enlargements of the CEE/EC/EU, strengthening interrelations between member states) was accompanied by a growing role of the regions. To some extent both phenomena arose for the same reason: to overcome or abandon the mentality of nationalism which had led to detrimental rivalry between European nations in the past and to the two world wars. Abandoning or weakening hostile nationalism (at least among the ruling elites) enabled Western European nation states to cooperate and integrate, giving up a part of their power to common European institutions. At the same time, the weakening of nationalism and of the related concept of nation-building through centralized power and unification of the population (in accordance with the “one state - one nation – one language/culture” ideology) created more room for decentralization of state power (political regionalism) an expression of cultures other than the “standard national” culture (for cultural regionalism). Mutual trust between integrating nation states removed the threat of any change in borders and of one state undermining another state’s integrity by supporting irredentist or separatist movements. This way, regionalism was not regarded as a danger to territorial integrity or political stability.

In addition to these common characteristics of relations between European integration and regionalism, country-specific relations between the two processes also existed. To mention a few examples, Germany was intensely interested in European integration to overcome its political and economic isolation after it had commenced and lost the war, and the occupying powers (USA, UK, France) encouraged or forced Germany to adopt a federal system of government to weaken German nationalism and thus to decentralise power (Sweden 2006). In Spain, democratisation after the end of Franco's regime in the 1970s on the one hand opened up the way for Spain's integration with Europe (European Economic Community) and on the other, loosened the grip over regionalist movements suppressed after the civil war. In the UK the loss of the empire and the prospect of being left totally outside Europe motivated its government to join the CEE. This very loss of the empire and the resulting weakening of the British identity created room for expression of Scottish and Welsh identities (Jugde 2007) In the case of Scottish regionalism/nationalism, the discovery of oil and gas off the Scottish coast played a relevant part.

Apart from the above political motivations there were also pragmatic or economic reasons in favour of regionalisation and regionalism: there was a belief that according power to, or strengthening the power of regions could improve public administration. Of specific importance were the developments of the 1970s when states in Western Europe found themselves in economic hardship and were looking for new ways of governing. One of these was decentralisation of competences to sub-national levels which gave rise to regionalism. (Applegate 1999, in Cabada 2009 p. 18). This was the reasoning behind the wave of decentralisation processes in Western Europe in the 1980s³.

Regionalism was also a self-reinforcing process: successes in some regions encouraged and inspired others. Of specific importance were the Spanish regions (especially Catalonia) and the Spanish notion of "estado regional" ("regional state", a supposedly third form of organization of state, somewhere between a unitary state and federation) and the British devolution. For instance, Italian reforms in the first decade of the 21st century made explicit reference to the "estado regional" and "devolution" (including the use of this term in its original language). It can be said that regionalism became fashionable in (Western) Europe, to the extent that it appeared even in as centralistic a state as France (introduction of regions as territorial-administrative units, (re)emergence of ethno-cultural regionalisms).

European integration and regionalism were seen as not only two phenomena which happened to manifest themselves at the same time and in the same place, but also as two "allies". Supporters of further integration of Europe, transforming it into a "United States of Europe", believed that regions would become an "antidote" to the main obstacle in this transformation: nation states and nationalism. On the other hand, regions (or perhaps one should say, some leaders of some regions and regionalist movements) regarded the European Union (its

³ J. Mathias notes that in the mid-1980s, quite unexpectedly and almost throughout the whole of (Western) Europe, there was a shift of competences from central government to lower levels of government, similar process occurred after 1990 in the former eastern block countries, these changes being accompanied by reinvigoration of regionalism – a regionalist movement in many European countries (Mathias 2006, p. 213).

central institutions) as both their protector (against national governments) and as a platform on which to present their interests, opinions and their very existence (Biscoe 2001). Every significant regionalist movement (be it Scottish, Welsh, Bask or Catalan), continually or in a period of its activity, declared that its goal was a presence in Europe (as an “equal among equals in Europe”) (Keating 2001), none declared an intention to abandon the EU after possible secession from its nation state. The would-be alliance between the EU and regions was confirmed (or at least this was the belief) by a certain presence of regions in the EU, first of all in the Committee of the Regions, established in 1994 in after the Maastricht Treaty of the European Union (Cabada 2009, p. 20). A symbolic link between regions and the EU were (and still are) the representations (offices) of regions in Brussels – they played a dual role – by taking care of economic interests of the regions, and as quasi-embassies demonstrating aspirations of respective regions to be visible at international level and their economic and political ability to sustain such an office in Brussels.

In such an atmosphere the notion of a “Europe of regions” was born. Followers of this idea hoped to create a second chamber in the EU parliament composed of representatives of regions. Supporters of this idea often combined it with the concept of the European Union as a three-level federation containing the federation level itself, nation-states and regions⁴.

It should be said that the notion of a “Europe of regions” and the reality behind it (the alliance between the EU and regions) had its weaknesses. The first was the very vagueness of this idea. The role which regions should play in Europe was ambiguous (apart from the failed project of the second chamber of the European Parliament). The second weakness was the limited role of the regions in European institutions (both in the EEC/EC/EU and in the Council of Europe). These institutions were established by states and not by regions, and it is states which decide on their functioning. Even the smallest states in the EU have more formal power than much larger (in terms of population, area, GDP, etc.) regions. The latter can influence the EU only indirectly via their national governments. Members of the European parliament are elected by inhabitants of their constituencies, and not by regions. The Committee of the Regions is far from being representative of the regions. Firstly, it is a committee of regional and *local* authorities rather than of regions. Secondly, their members are not elected (or delegated) directly by regions but are accepted by national governments, and national governments have full control on the Committee’s activities. The presence of regional representatives in other EU bodies, such as the Council of Ministers, is only sporadic and conditional (some national delegations sometimes invite regional representatives when a matter under regional competence is discussed). Attempts by some Spanish regions to secure themselves a permanent place in the Spanish delegation failed. No regional language

⁴ Compare arguments in support of regions and regionalism as constitutive elements of the European federation: “The third level can become that of the regions. (...) it is important not to underestimate the role of the region in an integrated Europe. Europe is a distant notion, the state is anonymous, and the region is becoming increasingly the identification-point for citizens. In many areas in Europe, positive feelings towards regionalism still persist, but an appearance of regionalism seems likely ? and is in fact already perceptible. (...) If regionalism will get its own place within the process that leads to the E.C. [European Community – R. Sz.], then regionalism need not be seen as a threat to the integration process. On the contrary, the E.C. could specifically promote regionalism, so that this process wouldn’t be too dangerous. (Kalkwiek 1994, p 94, 96).

(including Catalan which millions of people speak and which has an official status) is an official EU language. There are 24 official languages, many of them being the regional language of a smaller population than Catalan (they include, e.g. Irish (Gaelic). and Maltese, languages which were probably never used during debates in EU institutions, however, there are EU websites in these languages).

EU accession and regionalism in central-eastern Europe

After the change of the political system in 1989 or in 1990-91 and disintegration of three federations (USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia) eleven countries of central-eastern Europe decided to join “the West” or the EU and NATO. Out of those eleven countries seven were indeed parts (“regions”) of former states – these were Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (former USSR), the Czech Republic and Slovakia (former Czechoslovakia) and Slovenia and Croatia (former Yugoslavia). The other four were Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. The phenomenon of regionalism in those eleven countries considerably differed from that in Western Europe. If regions with strong cultural-linguistic identity and autonomy within federal states had become independent states, there would be no such regions as Scotland, Wales, Catalonia, Basque Country etc. left in central-eastern Europe – with a strong cultural identity and which were territorial-political units. There were some areas of large populations of national or linguistic minorities (e.g. Hungarian minorities in Slovakia and Romania, Russian or Russian speaking minorities in Estonia and Latvia, the Polish minority in Lithuania, the Turkish and Muslim minority in Bulgaria, etc.) demanding rights as national minorities, but their activities can hardly be classed as regionalism. In fact, there are some areas and communities which fit the definition of ethno-cultural regionalism. Here, one could mention the Võro area in Estonia, Latgalia in Latvia, Kashubia and Silesia in Poland, Moravia in the Czech Republic, the Sekler country and perhaps Moldavia and some others in Romania. They, however, do not fit into the territorial-administrative units system and their respective regional movements are rather weak in comparison to regionalist movements in western Europe⁵. One cannot rule out the possibility that in the future some of them, especially the Silesian movement, will gain in strength. For some of them, especially in the beginnings of Kashubian and Silesian regionalism, the example and inspiration of west European regionalism and the idea of “Europe of regions” was evident.

During the preparatory procedures for EU accession, central-eastern European countries were confronted with suggestions by the EU concerning their territorial organisation. There was a belief that introducing sub-national level units (regions) large enough to manage EU structural funds would facilitate their accession and consequently the efficient management of the funds. In some countries where the existing sub-national level units were considered

⁵ This opinion is shared by other authors also, see e.g. the opinion of a Czech specialist in regionalism in Europe, Ladislav Cabada: *After twenty years of democracy or democratisation in this area East European regionalism is not nearly as strong as is the case with the most visible regional, autonomist or separatists movements in Western Europe* (Cabada 2009, p. 20, my translation from Czech – R.Sz.)

not large enough, they were consolidated to form planning units of a certain nature, managed by a government agency, without any self-government bodies. It can be said that accession to the EU encouraged regionalisation and regionalist tendencies in central-eastern Europe⁶

In Poland, the largest among the candidate countries, an extensive territorial reform was carried out. In the period of change of the political system in Poland in 1989, there were two tiers of territorial organization: 49 units of the higher level (*voivodships*) and several thousand units of the lower level (*communes*). Both levels had councils and executives but given the then political system, elections to councils were not fully democratic. In the first step in 1990, the new, democratic authorities abolished *voivodship* councils transforming *voivodships* into purely administrative units, headed by a central government representative called a *voivod*, and introduced democratic elections at local (*commune*) level. Because of the popularity of the notion of a “Europe of regions” amongst the new ruling elite, the conviction that Poland had to adapt to “European standards”, the belief that regions and regionalism was a “European standard”, and that introducing fully-fledged regions would both improve the functioning of the state and economy, and facilitate accession negotiations, the government commenced a territorial reform in the second half of the 1990s. It was introduced in 1999. The new territorial organisation consisted of three levels. Every level has democratically elected councils and executives elected by respective councils. At the highest level (officially still called *voivodship* but quite often also *region*) there were 16 units. According to the original project there were to be 12 regions, but this project sparked a wave of protests from some local (regional) communities which didn’t want to be included in the proposed new *voivodships* and the government increased their number to 16. It is worth mentioning that in the years 1950-1975 there were 17 *voivodships*, so that the new territorial division of the country introduced in 1999 was almost identical to the old one. At *voivodship* level the system of the government’s representative controlling legality of self-government bodies (of all levels) and fulfillment of some tasks (policing, rescue in natural catastrophes) conferred by the central government was retained.

One of the aims of the reform was to mobilize regionalism, in the belief that regionalism was a constructive force, that it would release social energy. To this end, the new-old *voivodships/regions* were given “historical” names (before, the *voivodship*’s name was identical to the name of its capital city). There was a certain concept that Polish *voivodships* should be large enough and have enough power to be partners for German *Länder*. However, there was opposition to regions having too much power, because of fear that national unity would be threatened. Ultimately, the final version of the reform gave the regions somewhat moderate power in terms of finance and competence, and, in addition, the institution of *voivod* was retained.

It should be noted that there was no demand for the self-governed regions by the population. Now, over ten years on from their establishment, the attitude of their inhabitants is rather indifferent. The general opinion is that the regions failed to create regionalism, re-

⁶W. Downs (Downs 2002, p. 2002, Cabada 2009 p. 16), for instance, already came to such a conclusion before these countries became EU members. According to him the influence of the EU through its regional policy on regionalist tendencies was especially relevant in Poland and the Czech Republic.

gional pride and identity (Kleina 2009, Zarycki 2009). They are almost exclusively run by coalitions established by all-national parties⁷. Only in a few cases do local (regional) parties or organisations have representatives in regional parliaments. The main activity of regions now is cooperation with national and EU authorities in managing regional development funds. Applying for national and EU funds and then managing them is otherwise an important, if not main, activity at all levels of territorial administration. Creating or strengthening regional identity as a positive force mobilising the development of a region, however, has not been excluded from the objectives of regional authorities⁸.

Recent tendencies: the EU financial problems, regionalism and separatism

The economic problems (crisis/recession/slump) which began in 2008 and the way these are being coped with in and by the European Union (fiscal austerity in the debtor countries in exchange for help from the EU/creditor countries) have an impact on regionalism also. There are three ways in which the economic situation and policy has an influence on regionalism. Firstly, it reduces the scope in which regions (understood as administrative-political units) are able to act in the economic sphere and provokes critical analysis of the efficiency of regional governments which quite often reveals corruption and waste of money for irrational projects⁹. This has a negative effect on the general attitude towards regionalism. Secondly, it increases dissatisfaction with interregional distribution of funds in regions considering they are exploited by poorer and less productive regions. In some cases it leads to the concept of independence, which would stop this exploitation. Thirdly, The European Union implicitly and explicitly warns that secession of regions from the EU member states would cause them serious problems – they cannot expect to be automatically admitted to the EU.

Spain is the most evident example of the impact of the economic crisis and policy on regionalism. A critical analysis of economic performance of regional governments has revealed many instances of what their critics see as a waste of money and detriment to economic efficiency. These include, among other things, actions in support of what regionalists consider to be defence of, or building regional identity – for instance financing and promoting education in regional languages. According to critics of some regions' language policy, a preference for regional languages at the expense of Spanish (Castilian) discourages specialists from other regions from coming in and encourages local specialists to migrate because they don't want to send their children to schools with regional languages as the language in which their children receive educational instruction¹⁰. At the same time economic austerity has radicalised

⁷ See a publication which in a way sums up ten years of regional government in Poland: Szomburg (ed.) 2009 *Jak uczynić regiony motorami rozwoju i modernizacji Polski*, Wolność i Solidarność nr 19, Gdansk 2009 ("How to make regions the driving forces of development and modernization of Poland", in Polish)

⁸ For instance, in a strategic document produced by one of the regional government offices of Mazowieckie Voivodship in Poland the lack of Mazovian Regional identity is considered to be one of the main obstacles to the region's development. (Strzelecki ed. 2013, p. 188-190)

⁹ See, for example, a long list of the "transgressions" of regional governments in Spain in: Mir S. y Cruz G. 2012

¹⁰ Interestingly, it concerns not only the two regions with the strongest identity and regionalist/nationalist movements – Catalonia and the Basque Country, but also Galicia. Sandra Mir and Gabriel Cruz (Mir S, Cruz G. 2012 p. 254) mention a business club in Vigo (in Galicia) complaining about the language policy of local authorities promoting the regional

centrifugal tendencies in one of Spanish regions – Catalonia, to the extent that the regional government, supported by a vast sector of society, speaks of the need for and right to independence. The regional leader, Artur Mas, suggests that the Catalan government be prepared to call for a referendum on independence, even without the consent of the central authorities in Madrid¹¹.

If this took place, it would put Catalonia in an extremely embarrassing situation as it would be illegal. Therefore, Catalonia could hardly expect that the EU, and other EU states would accept its independence, especially Spain itself, which would be necessary to join the EU¹². The European Commission has warned, that even in the least probable case of legal separation from Spain, Catalonia would have to come secede from the EU¹³. The problem of the EU's reaction also applies to Scotland wanting independence from the UK¹⁴. Both Catalonia and Scotland as candidate countries, would have to go through lengthy accession negotiations, which have never taken place before. As ever, in cases of secessions, the geopolitical interests of third parties would be involved, and not necessarily welcomed by those with the most interests, and certainly disadvantageous for the European Union.

The situation, although much less serious than in Spain and the UK, also occurs in other countries. In Germany, which is the biggest net payer into the EU budget and the main “rescuer” of the debtor countries, the situation of interregional money transfers is similar to that in Spain. There are net “givers” and net “takers” of money, the biggest payer being Bavaria. Among the “takers”, apart from poorer regions in the east, are the big cities-Länder – Berlin and Bremen. Therefore, Bavaria is under a double burden – it must allocate funds to some German regions and, as part of Germany, to some EU countries. Some discontent has been voiced in Bavaria¹⁵ in view of this.

language to the detriment of Spanish, which is causing problems for local entrepreneurs. It is noteworthy that the website of the local Vigo authority is, for the large part, in Galician, see: <http://hoxe.vigo.org> (Access: March 5, 2014)

¹¹ In autumn 2014 Mas declared that it wanted a referendum on self-determination in Catalonia, On January 23, 2013 the regional parliament voted in, by a large majority, the “Declaration of Sovereignty and of the Right to Decide of the Catalan People” the “Declaration of Sovereignty and of the Right to Decide of the Catalan People”, in November 9, 2014 the Catalan government organized an unofficial referendum on the “investigation of public opinion” in which most participants (80%) voted for independence but the turnout was well below 50%, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29982960> on January 16, 2014 the regional parliament voted on a petition to the central Spanish government to allow such a referendum. See <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/02/us-spain-catalonia-idUSBREA1107M20140202>

¹² *Mr Mas is also accused of adventurism in pretending that Catalonia can unilaterally become an independent state in the EU. According to several opinions from the European Commission, an independent Catalonia would not automatically become a member of the EU, and Spain would have to approve its (re)admission* Briefing Spain and Catalonia. The trials of keeping a country together, “The Economist” November 24th 2012, p. 26

¹³ Brussels has stated that an independent Catalonia would have to leave the EU. <http://www.euractiv.com/video/brussels-independent-catalonia-n-530496>

¹⁴ The Scottish independence referendum (legal, after negotiations with the central UK government) took place on September 18, 2014. This referendum rejected the idea of Scottish independence by a majority of 55:45%, with a high (85%) turnout. It should be added, however, that before the referendum, to persuade the undecided voters, the central government in London promised further strengthening of Scottish autonomy if the voters reject the independence. In this way, the referendum did not stop the centrifugal tendency in Scotland. For more on this referendum see the Scottish government’s special referendum website: <http://www.scotreferendum.com/>, for results see: <http://www.bbc.com/news/events/scotland-decides>

¹⁵ See: Germany’s federal states: Givers and takers, “The Economist”, October 25, 2012

Poland also has a mechanism for redistribution of money from richer regions and cities to poorer ones, which frustrate the richer ones. Although Poland has avoided recession and unlike the countries located in the southern part of EU, does not need to operate a drastic fiscal austerity policy, the slump has reduced revenues at all levels and the policy of the Ministry of Finance has made it more difficult for local and regional governments to borrow money. In addition, the mechanism of redistribution of money is evidently disadvantageous for the richer regions and cities: the amount of money they must allocate is calculated with a two-year delay, so that this year they must pay a certain percentage of their revenues from amounts received two years ago. Given the decrease in revenues, this involves a higher percentage of redistribution. (Of some consolation is the fact that if the trend reverses, they will have to pay a lower percentage of revenue). For this reason two main contributors to the redistribution system – the cities of Warsaw and Krakow, and the Mazovia Region (the region which includes Warsaw, the biggest contributor to the interregional fund) and other richer cities and regions, appealed for a change in the system. After several delays, the Constitutional Court on January 21, 2013 ruled that the system was legal and binding¹⁶ but a year later, on March 4, 2014, when the financial situation of the Mazovia Region had deteriorated considerably, the Court ruled that the redistribution mechanism was unconstitutional and set the government an 18 months period to change it.¹⁷

Another source of tensions in Poland between the central government and poorer regions on the one hand, and the richer ones, is the manner of distribution of EU funds for regional policy. Fortunately, hopefully for all parties, the amount of money that Poland will receive in the next financial perspective (2014-2020) will not be significantly lower (if at all) than previously. It will secure the existence of regions and their infrastructure for the next years. However, there is a widespread conviction that it will be the last generous EU budget for Poland. Thereafter, many things, including the model of regional policy and the justification for the existence of the regions will have to be re-examined.

It should be noted that until recently problems of competences of the regions, redistribution of funds between regions, etc. was a matter of interest to almost exclusively regional governments and their narrow circle of partners. However, the latest complaints of Mazovia and Warsaw about the “Janosik money” seem to have had a broader social repercussion and created a sense of regional Mazovian identity, typical for richer regions that have to allocate some of their money to regions in a less fortunate position.

Final comments

As can be seen from the above discussion, relations between regionalism and European integration are quite complicated. Firstly, for most of the post-war period the two phenomena were parallel, determined by some diminishing of the traditional role of the nation

¹⁶ See: *Żółta kartka za Janosikowe*, “Gazeta Wyborcza” Warsaw, Poland, February 1, 2013, (“Yellow card for “Janosik” Money” in Polish – Janosik is a legendary “good” brigand who took money from the rich and gave it to the poor, Polish (and Slovak) equivalent of the English Robin Hood)

¹⁷ Wojtczuk 2014

state and redefinition of international (interstate) relations which made more space both for European integration and regionalism. It created a conviction that regionalism and the EU were “natural allies” as a concept of a “Europe composed of regions”. Secondly, the practical activities of the EU, especially its funds for regional development, prompted or encouraged some countries, especially the new members states, to create regions and stimulate regionalism. Thirdly, the recent austerity policy prescribed by the EU in some countries, especially in Spain, stimulates the radicalism of regionalist movements (as in the case of Catalonia). Fourthly, the very existence of the EU and the necessity to negotiate EU membership discourages those regionalist-nationalist movements which want to cut themselves off from the existing EU member states while remaining in the EU.

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Regionalizm a Unia Europejska

STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł omawia relacje między regionalizmem (gdzie pod pojęciem regionu rozumie się części składowe państw) a Unią Europejską. Specjalną uwagę zwraca się na wpływ akcesji do UE na regionalizm i regionalizację w Polsce, szczególnie na sytuację województwa mazowieckiego. Stwierdza się, że relacje między regionalizmem a Unią Europejską (jako formą integracji europejskiej) są określone przez cztery czynniki: po pierwsze, zmniejszenie, po drugiej wojnie światowej, tradycyjnej roli państwa narodowego i redefinicja stosunków międzynarodowych (międzypaństwowych), które stworzyły więcej przestrzeni zarówno dla integracji europejskiej jak i regionalizmu; po drugie, praktyczne działania UE, zwłaszcza fundusze na rozwój regionalny, która zainspirowała lub zachęciła niektóre kraje, zwłaszcza nowe państwa członkowskie z Europy środkowo-wschodniej, do stworzenia regionów i stymulowała regionalizm; po trzecie, polityka oszczędności budżetowych zalecana ostatnio przez UE w niektórych krajach, zwłaszcza w Hiszpanii, która stymuluje radykalizm ruchów regionalnych (szczególny przypadek Katalonii dążącej do niepodległości); po czwarte, samo istnienie UE i konieczność negocjacji członkostwa w UE, które zniechęcają ruchy regionalistyczno-nacjonalistyczne do oddzielenia swoich regionów z obecnych państw członkowskich UE przy jednoczesnym pozostaniu w UE.

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