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POLISH CITIES FACE THE EU –
EUROPEANISATION OF POST-SOCIALIST CITIES AS A TYPE OF OUTWARD POLITICAL RESCALING
DRAFT

Track: Reforming local governments: what role (if any) for the EU?

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Abstract

Access of the Central-Eastern Europe states to the European Union has opened a new promising field of empirical research for students of European integration. In parallel, a growing body of literature deals with the presumed increased space for urban political manoeuvre, linked to the phenomenon of de- and renationalisation. Within this approach, the impact of Europeanization on urban politics can be analysed as a special type of outward political rescaling. Taking this perspective, I look at the strategies the post-socialist cities adopt in front of the EU political multilevel system as a part of their wider strategy of political internationalisation.

The empirical evidence is based on the study of the 12 largest Polish cities, members of Eurocities and other lobbying organisations. Leaning on the Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) typology of possible orientation of public authorities in front of the global pressures, I discuss the character of urban strategies developed in three fields of activities: networking, bilateral and individual activities. The main question of the study is: What does the Europeanisation of the largest Polish cities look like? Especially: Are they rather reactive or creative and strategic? Do they undertake any bottom-up actions? The study reveals that the assumed reactive and non-strategic participation of Polish cities in Europeanisation is true only to a certain extent.

Introduction

Since the late 1980s, cities all over the world have been experiencing extensive changes related to the broad restructuring of the capital accumulation system (see Jessop 2002, Brenner 2004). The processes of globalisation, especially the rise of numerous supranational organisations and the development of transborder regional forms of state cooperation having both economic and political interests (like the EU) have contributed to the phenomenon sometimes called 'the crisis of the state.' The term, although deceiving (see Jessop 2002), draws attention to the undeniable change in the position of the state apparatus in the global market and political system (Sassen 2006). National territories ceased to be units which control and enclose economic activity and power relations. As a result a kind of political vacuum has emerged. Some researchers (Le Galès and Bagnasco 2000) claim that this room has been filled in by subnational units, leading to the resurgence of localities, regions, and cities (Brenner 2004: 5-7). Creating new spaces for political action, rescaling (Brenner 2003, 2004) is closely connected to the phenomenon of glocalisation – shifts of power in both directions: upwards and downwards from the state level (Swyngedouw 1997, 2004, Sassen 2006). Attention has therefore turned towards localities and regions, as the sites where the global processes take the real

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form. It is claimed that subnational units (especially the largest cities) can react faster and more adequately to the dynamics of the global system. As Brenner (1998: 4) states, 'the key feature of this emergent configuration of world capitalism is that cities – or more precisely large-scale urbanized regions – rather than territorial economies of states are its most fundamental geographical units.' Under the rescaled global system and the change in states' roles, cities have become not only important nodes of the economic space of flows generating innovation and creative industries, but also 'new political territories' (Brenner 1999). The thesis on dominant role of the cities is sometimes contested as exaggerated, but Le Galès and Bagnasco (2000: 7) convincingly state that 'This space may be limited, yet the room for manoeuvre is growing for cities.'

Indeed, one may claim that the loosening grasp of national states has contributed to the re-gaining by cities political autonomy, which they had had before the establishment of the national states in the late medieval age in Europe (Atkinson, Rossignolo 2008: 5-6). As a consequence of the changes in recent decades, cities have largely ceased to be the parts of the national systems, subordinated to state apparatus. These processes have been strengthened by the global economic pressure of competitiveness exerted on subnational units. Cities have started to carry out entrepreneurial policies in order to enhance their competitive advantage (see Harvey 1989). Lefevre and d'Albergo (2007) distinguish three strategies of internationalisation of urban politics: economic (perhaps the most popular), political, and social. In practice the distinction is not clear, as we usually deal with mixtures of motives and one can only speak about prevailing orientations. Political motives, placed in the centre of this study, come into question when the international activities are intended to strengthen a city's political role or position. These actions include international lobbying and influencing decision making on the international scene, as well as 'diplomacy from below' (or 'para-diplomacy' as Aldecoa and Keating 1999 call it).

The resurgence of the urban political power in the European context is strongly linked to the European integration. Changes in the sovereignty of the states deriving from the EU membership, together with the EU principals of subsidiarity and participation, and documents stressing the role of the cities as the centres of innovations and high-tech development have contributed to the strengthening of the cities' position. Moreover, cities entangled in the EU multilevel governance system have started a conscious build of their position in this system, e.g. by making themselves visible on the political scene above all by acting within the institutions of the European Union (EU). This leads us to the concept of Europeanisation, understood as a process of mutual adjustment of the EU structures and norms and the ones of the states and sub-state actors. Europeanisation has been usually analysed with relation to states and regions, only recently has it also been discussed with regard to cities (Tofarides 2003, Hamedinger et al. 2008, Heinelt, Niederhafner 2008). In general the research on Europeanisation tends to lean towards a top-down perspective and this is especially true for the studies on subnational units. Their ability and effective power to influence the EU level seems fairly limited (what was confirmed by the study of Heinelt and Niederhafner 2008) what strengthens the inclination to deal with the top-down Europeanisation only (or mainly). However, without the bottom-up approach talking about Europeanisation in terms of para-diplomacy and rescaling is all but complex and profound. Trials to influence the broad, international context of functioning by the cities correspond to the idea of the extended room for political manoeuvre much more than adopting the EU rules in the light of top-down approach. In conceptualising the attitude of urban authorities towards the EU, a very helpful tool is the distinction the four possible strategies by Klijn and

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Koopenjan (2000). They stated that public authorities can act in different ways towards global networks and pressures. These strategies are: (1) negation or retrenchment, (2) joining existing networks, (3) taking the leading role in existing networks (e.g. modifying them), (4) creation of own network(s). One can assume that two last types correspond to the bottom-up direction of influence on the line EU-subnational units (at least under the condition that the network itself has a possibility to reach and influence the EU level).

Methodological note

In the paper I deal with Europeanisation of Polish largest cities, whereby I treat Europeanisation as an example of outward political rescaling (Fig. 1), what allows a wider conceptual background often missed in the Europeanisation studies (Lodge 2006). This implies taking into consideration not only top-down Europeanisation but also a bottom-up one perspective (production of scales implies both directions). I endeavour to analyse both aspects referring to the typology by Klijn and Koopenjan (2000).

Considering post-socialist context means tracing some interesting specificities steaming from the fact that Polish cities have entered the global (and EU) system only recently. It is unquestionable that the room for political manoeuvring for post-socialist cities has increased significantly over the last 20 years. What is more, the change in the latitude for political action have been much bigger for post-socialist cities, than for west European ones. This is because the point of departure was totally different. For cities of CEE a shift was from functioning in the centrally commanded non-democratic regime, to the operating in the decetralised, self-governmental democratic system opened to the international influence. The difference was also generated by the sudden character, complexity and intensity of changes in post-socialist context. The end of the communist era suddenly exposed Polish cities to the processes which had already been taking place in the capitalist world (Węclawowicz 2007). The pressures of globalisation, influencing the capitalist (Western) cities since the early 1980's, have gradually changed their logic from the local growth system to the one of the 'entrepreneurial machines' (Jessop 1997, Sagan 2009). These pressures were exerted on the post-socialist cities very abruptly, as one of the consequences of domestic political transformation.¹ Complexity and intensity of changes steamed from the fact that for post-socialist cities the changes of the global system went in parallel with national transformation. The interwoven character of global and domestic transformation is illustrated by the term 'transformation cascade' or 'double transition.' In a simpler scheme of double transition, two trends are distinguished (Sykora 2000): (1) Central-Eastern European transition to a market economy and democratic policy-making (which includes opening to the world economy) and (2) the global transformation caused by economic globalisation. Sykora (2000: 45) claims that 'this double transition is a key feature of post-communist cities, which distinguishes them from other types of urban transitions.' However, these processes can be treated in a more detailed way, which leads to the concept of a transformation cascade composed of modernisation, metropolitanisation, political transformation and globalisation (Zborowski 2001). One can also add Europeanisation to this list. Moreover, mere political transformation cannot be

¹ In Poland the main changes were carried out within the co called 'Barcelowicz Plan.' This Plan of the complex reforms was elaborated within a few months of 1989. Its realisation form 1990 aimed at transforming Poland and its economy from a centrally planned system to a liberal market one. In parallel, administration reform was conducted in 1990 and 1998 (including the creation of territorial governments).

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regarded as a homogeneous phenomenon. It included profound changes in the state (recreation of democratic structures and self-government), society (recreation of democratic civil society), and economy (reintroduction of the private sector, which hardly existed under the totalitarian system). Therefore it seems reasonable to expect a higher intensity of changes related to the usage of the newly extended space for political action with regard to post-socialist cities than the capitalist ones. The main research question is: What does the Europeanisation of the largest Polish cities look like? Especially: Are they rather reactive or creative and strategic? Do they undertake any bottom-up actions? Considering the relatively recent joining the EU by the Polish cities, we may expect them to act rather passively and reactively than dominantly in the new arena. Moreover, taking into account previous studies showing the weakness of strategic management in local policies in Poland, we can assume that non-strategic conformist behavior prevails also in internationalization. Keeping this in mind I am especially interested in detecting any signs opposing this thesis, that is showing strategic thinking and creative activities of Polish cities in front of the new possibilities created by the domestic political transformation, globalization pressures and the EU membership.

I discuss the character of urban strategies developed in three fields of activities:

- networking (especially activities in Eurocities);
- bilateral activities (cities twinning);
- individual undertakings (like beating for and hosting big international events, or using the EU funds).

Table 1 Scheme of consideration on the wider background

Scale	Orientation of rescaling								
	political			economic			social		
Inward									
Upward									
Outward national context (domestic rescaling)									
Outward international context (international rescaling, Europeanisation) i.a.									
	N	T	I	N	T	I	N	T	I
	Type of action								

Own elaboration

N-networking, T- twinning, I- individual activities

The empirical matters elaborated on in the following section are based on a study comprised of the 12 largest cities in Poland, members of Eurocities (at least for some time), and of the Union of Polish Metropolises. The study included the review of the official documents issued by the cities, and city associations, analysis of statistical data, and in-depth face-to-face interviews. These interviews were carried out with urban politicians (deputy mayors and councillors) and officials responsible for city activity in the investigated networks as well as with employees of the chosen urban institutions (office directors of metropolitan associations, Convention Bureaus, international networks the

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secretaries of which are located in Poland). In addition, a mail-survey was sent to all 12 cities, gathering 10 responses. Material was collected between 2010 and 2012.

Europeanisation by networks

Let us start with network activities, which have the strongest political orientation and biggest influential power. There is no doubt that collective lobbying has greater power of interest mediation and can be more successful than the undertakings of single cities (see Heinelt, Niederhafner 2008: 176). In general, networks are most likely to develop goals connected to political pressure and influencing institutional context. Obviously enough, networks differ regarding their orientation. We may speak about strict political networks focused on representation tasks (including lobbying), and functionally oriented sectoral networks focused on both the exchange of experience, and on cooperation in precisely defined policy fields (see Brunazzo 2010: 303). Considering the theme of the research, I concentrate on the first type of organisation, even though they often develop more functional branches, making Brunazzo's distinction vague.

The most influential political urban network in European contest is definitely Eurocities (Tofarides 2003, Heinelt, Niederhafner 2008). Being the widest network in Europe both in terms of membership and scope of activity, Eurocities has established influential channels of access to the EU policy-making process and therefore can be treated as the most relevant body when speaking of urban political rescaling.

In 2012, 11 out of 12 city-members of the UMP were the full members of the Eurocities. Only three countries have a larger number of member-cities (UK 17, France 13, Germany 13), which can be interpreted either as early enthusiasm, or a lack of strategic thought by the cities located in the New EU Member States. In 2004, Polish accession to the EU opened the way for Polish cities to become full members of Eurocities, and an immediate reaction was a campaign by the Union of Polish Metropolises (UMP)² to have all its members in this prestigious European group. This aim was accomplished in November 2005. However, in 2010 the first withdrawal from Eurocities took place, which may be seen as a first sign of more selective and strategic thinking about internationalisation. The city of Szczecin decided against further membership, arguing that the benefits were unclear and unsatisfactory, whereas the annual fee was high. Moreover, Szczecin has decided to focus on active participation in a more specific organization – The Union of the Baltic Cities, which better answers the specific needs of the city (Szczecin, in North-Western Poland, is a port city located 60 km from the Baltic shore). In autumn 2012, Cracow started the procedure of withdrawal and that time an obvious reason was the search for savings in times of financial crisis. Indeed, membership in Eurocities is expensive, especially when compared to other international urban organisations. Interviewed urban officials and politicians agreed that 'it is not worth being a passive member – if you pay so much for access to a group, you want to act!' (interviews). Perhaps this simple calculation is one of the reasons why Polish cities are not as passive members as expected.

The level of activity of Polish cities in Eurocities is very differentiated. Measuring it I took into consideration four elements: participation in fora and working groups, hosting Eurocities events and chairing its subgroups (for an index description, see the appendix). I also took into consideration

² UMP is a Polish organisation gathering 12 largest Polish cities. It has a strong political orientation and is very active as far as domestic law proposals are concerned. It fights for special status for metropolitan areas, as well as for establishing urban policy in Poland and the EU.

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information from the survey and interviews, but could not include them in the index as the referred to some cities only.

It turns out that there is a large group of cities which support the thesis of passive participation in the association. Most of the cities admitted they neither had come up with any initiatives nor had realized a project with other Eurocities members. Participation seems limited to the frequently received e-mails (information flowing in one-direction: from the association to a city) and participation in an annual General Assembly. This group of passive cities is composed mainly of the cities not participating in any of the subgroups. Their representatives admit that they see themselves as observers, receiving information, and learning (thanks to the possibility of contact with the bigger and better developed European cities), but not yet ready to give their own input. The relation of Cinderella and the rich Prince described by Swianiewicz (2005, compare: Baldersheim, Ståhlberg 1999) is strongly present in these utterances.

Figure1. Index of activity in Eurocities

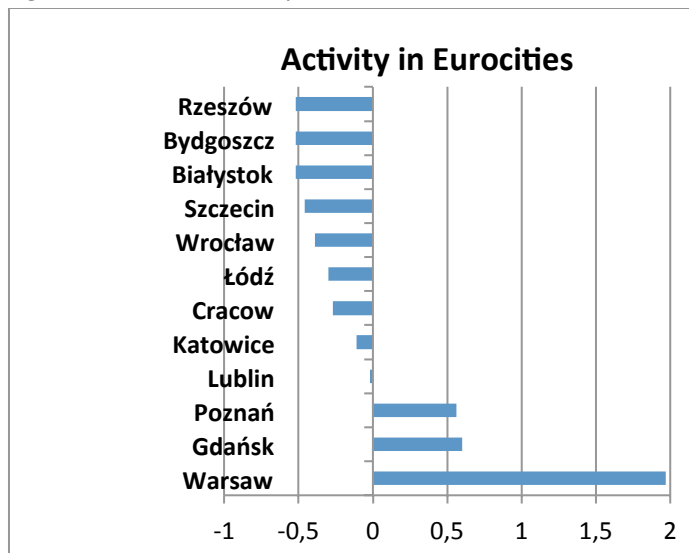


Figure 1 Index of activity of Polish cities

Note: The X axis presents standardised (z-score) values of the index. The data comes from the end of 2010, which allowed for inclusion of all 12 cities under study (including Szczecin, which has no longer been a member of Eurocities since 2011.

Author's calculations

Table 2 Activity of Polish cities in Eurocities

	Fora	WGs	events	chairing
Białystok	0	0	0	0
Bydgoszcz	0	0	0	0
Gdańsk	5	7	9	0
Katowice	4	3	1	0
Cracow	2	2	1	0
Lublin	3	8	1	0
Łódź	2	3	0	0
Poznań	2	3	7	1
Rzeszów	0	0	0	0
Szczecin	1	0	0	0
Warsaw	6	21	10	2
Wrocław	1	0	1	0

There is also a group of very active cities, which not only join a network, but also make efforts to modify it and take a leading position in its various parts. It comes as no surprise, that the capital city has the safe leading position in this group (the best illustration of which is the fact that in November 2012, Warsaw's mayor became the president of Eurocities). Also, the cities of Poznań (chair of the Economic Forum) and Gdańsk appear as very active. The only city from Eastern Poland getting somewhat close to this group is Lublin.

A good illustration of such creative, strategic activities is the fact that two working groups (WG) now operating within the Eurocities were initiated by Polish cities: Branding & City Attractiveness WG by Lublin, and East Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement WG by Warsaw. Moreover, it turns out that these two WGs are the ones most popular with Polish cities. This proves that the modification of the

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network proposed by two Polish cities indeed made the network more attractive to the entire national group. The East Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement WG helps answer specific Polish demands connected to national policy. Poland acts in the EU as a state fostering Eastern Partnership, and Polish cities have undertaken a role in this area of Polish foreign policy (see also next section).

Polish cities also participate in other urban networks. However, due to their less political and more functional character, we will not give them as much attention as the Eurocities. It is enough to say that also here some traces of strategic and selective thinking are visible. Some cities are members of numerous groups (7-9!), what could be seen as opportunist and non-strategic behavior. Yet, looking at the organizations chosen by single cities, one finds a hint of specialization. Warsaw, the capital, participates in big, political organizations, like the one gathering the European capital cities. Gdańsk and Szczecin, due to their location in the Baltic region, are active in specific Baltic-oriented organizations (Gdańsk is a board member and hosts the Secretariat of the Union of the Baltic Cities). Cracow, a UNESCO city, participates in many organizations connected to tourism and historical heritage. Łódź, with its traditions of textile industries, found itself a place in the ACTE. Indeed, evidence of strategic choices is quite apparent. Among the networks of a mixed politico-functional character, in which Polish cities participate, one should mention (apart from Eurocities) the Union of the Baltic Cities and Metrex. Warsaw is also a member in Baltic Metropolises Network (BaltMet) and Union of Capitals of the EU (UCUE) both of which reveal a strong political orientation. This indicates that the will to keep updated and informed about European political matters is there among largest cities. The discussion about how this will and ambition is being realized (and what are the real legal possibilities of such a bottom-up influence) is yet another question.

A sign of such a political interest is also the fact that Polish cities reach European institutions by the means of domestic organizations. Both of the biggest urban associations in Poland (Union of Polish Metropolises and Association of Polish Cities) do not limit themselves to the national-wide activities. They also refer a lot to the EU law proposals (in case of UMP almost 40% of its position papers issued in 2004-2010 referred to the European level!), have their representatives in the EU institutions (like Council of European Municipalities and Regions, Committee of the Regions and The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe), and foster international relations of their city-members.

Yet another aspect of Europeanisation are project-networks. Here the most important one, often discussed with reference to cities' Europeanisation are the URBAN and URBACT projects (Tofarides 2003, Hamedinger et al 2008). however, their goal is rather apolitical, focused on experience exchange and joint problem solving instead of lobbying. Therefore it will be mentioned only briefly, as an interesting example of sharing norms, values and ideas among EU cities without EU institutions involved in the process. The only element of top-down 'Europeanisation' is the mere funding and general support by the EU. Polish cities have participated in both stages of this EU initiative (considering 12 cities under study, in URBACT I five of them did not participated, in URBACT II only three). As the most active appear Warsaw and Poznań (taking part in five projects each), but there are also many cities with three projects. It is interesting that the cities which are not active in URBACT are also relatively passive members in Eurocities.

Table 3 URBACT Project realised by Polish cities under study

Polish partner	Project in URBACT II	Project in URBACT I
Białystok	REDIS	MEDINT, URBAMAS

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Bydgoszcz		HOUS-ES, PHYRE
Gdańsk	My Generation	Eco-Fin-Net, ISN
Katowice	EVUE, Nodus	EQUIPTI
Cracow	Suite	CHORUS, URBANITAS
Lublin	HerO	
Łódź	URBAMECO, Building Healthy Communities	
Poznań	JESSICA 4 Cities, Open Cities	EQUIPTI, Support 4 Cities, HOUS-ES
Rzeszów		
Szczecin		
Warsaw	My Generation	HOUS-ES, ISN, REGENERA, SecurCity
Wrocław	URBAMECO	

Based on Baucz (2007) and *Projekty URBACT II...*

It seems that participation in URBACT confirms a thesis on reactive and non-strategic international activities of Polish cities. None of the 12 cities under study acted as a project leader. They only joined the existing initiatives. The observation is especially telling as we are talking about biggest Polish cities, which were most likely to undertake leading role. In this case, interpreting reactivity in terms of top-down Europeanisation would be deceiving. As mentioned above, URBACT projects are created by the cities, so they present a tool for bottom-up rather than top-down Europeanisation. Therefore the fact that Polish cities use this tool only in a passive way, can be treated as a retrenchment/neglecting opportunity to co-shape EU reality.

However, this does not mean that Polish cities make a suboptimal usage of the URBACT projects. A good explanation are the words of city hall officers from Poznań:

We, as the city, are usual the partners in these projects, only rarely we act as leaders. (...) I think it is still too early for us, Polish cities. Being a leader of a big project is a huge work! We do not have such a project-oriented organizational culture yet... to realize that we need some staff to coordinate, to carry out financial matters etc. it depend on a structure of the city hall. Our foreign partners find it easier to work horizontally, they have teams, working groups. We still have a vertical, hierarchical structure. It would be a big problem to adjust it to the project, to include leaders tasks in this structure. We are still learning...

(...)

We do as much as we can here, locally, to use up the fact that we participate in a project, to benefit and learn from it. But in fact we often have a feeling of being added to a project, a feeling that the main topic of this project is not the main problem of our city!

Europeanisation by bilateral activities

At first sight twinning seems hardly political, and therefore not very crucial for the topic of this study. It is strongly focused on the experience exchange, solving specific problems, and international cooperation going beyond city halls (involving groups of citizens, schools, and local NGOs). It does not aim at political lobbying or direct position building (Baldersheim et al. 2002). Nonetheless, in many terms is occurs political! Firstly, development of twinning in Europe after the 2nd World War had a strong 'political' aim of preventing yet another conflict by fostering peaceful contacts in culture,

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sports, and education between the nations. As such twinning is definitely the most bottom-up form of international relations, leaning on activities of local communities and escaping any top-down rules. Secondly, as I will try to show in this section, many of such twinning activities contribute to the incremental and often unnoticed reaching of the strict political goals of the states.

Looking at the most popular directions of bilateral cooperation of Polish cities, we find strong traces of the past. Two most popular foreign cities with which Polish ones cooperate are Lviv and Vilnius – both ones located within the boundaries of Poland. In a wider perspective, interest in East Europe and support for East Partnership national policy is clearly visible. 20% of the twinning agreements signed by 12 largest Polish cities are constituted by cities located in Central-East Europe, especially Ukraine, Russia, and Georgia. Moreover, since the beginning of the 21st century, this has become the most dynamically developing direction of bilateral cooperation (next to China, Figure 2). Officers of various city halls comment with astonishing unanimity way: 'In the 1990's we [Polish cities] received a lot from the Western European cities (...) know-how, experience, advice, support in various forms (...) Now we give it back to the East. It is a kind of a mission' (interviews). This intense cooperation of Polish cities with East partners, from a non-EU states can be seen as a *bottom-up extension of the EU*. Indeed, contacts and cooperation with Polish cities, bring these East European cities closer to the EU zone. There are examples of non-EU cities becoming associated members of Eurocities after having been involved in the organization by Polish partner.

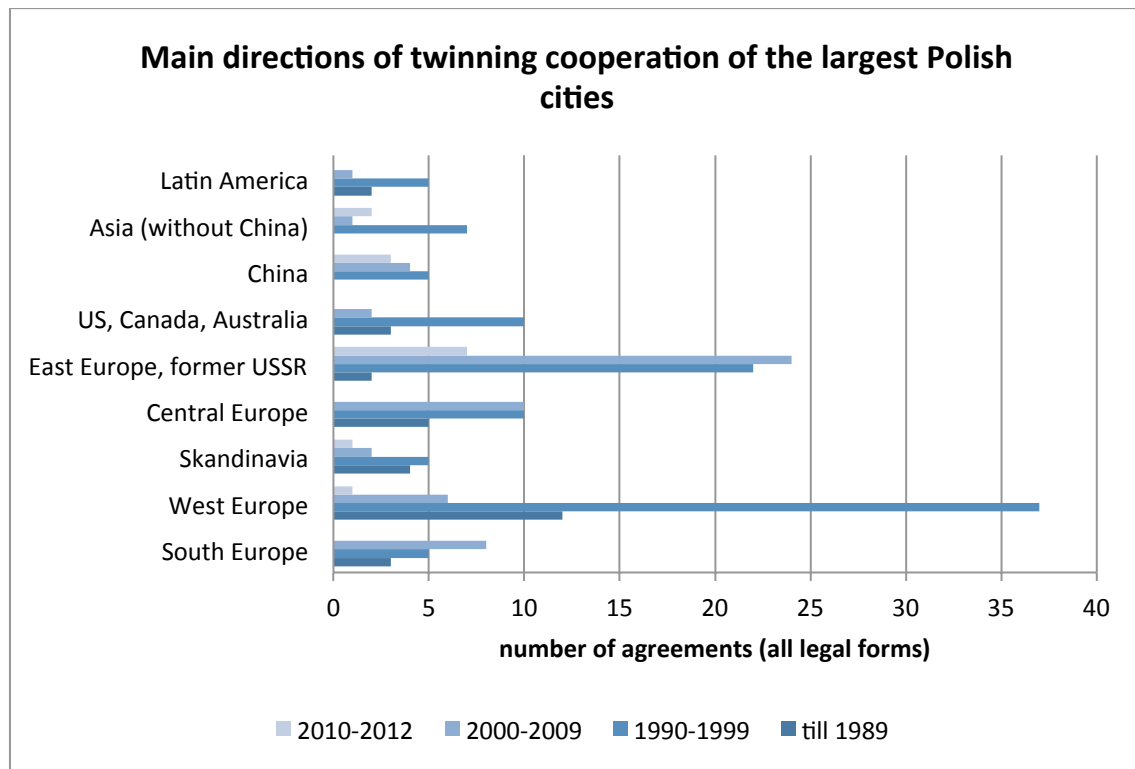


Figure 2 Twinning agreements signed by Polish cities after the country of a partner city in subsequent periods.

This strategy amounts to a wide range of changes in twinning policy. In the 1990s, Polish cities experienced a boom in formal agreements with foreign partners (54% of all partnerships of the 12

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UMP cities come from the period 1990-1999). Moreover, these were mainly agreements with better developed cities of Western Europe or the US (Polish cities put themselves in a position of Cinderella, benefiting from a relation with Prince, Swianiewicz 2005). Only recently has it changed. Polish cities have started to act as a Prince themselves; they have gone from learning from the others to learning by teaching others. Interviewed officers mention that in the partnership with Ukrainian or Georgian cities we give a lot, but we also benefit from these relations.

Another element of change is that Polish cities have become more strategic, carefully selecting new partners. Talking to the officials responsible for twinning relations, I was often presented with a list of criteria for a potential partner (among other things, similar size and level of development, similar problems, and European location). One can note that twinning has changed its goal: from a sign of a city's prestige (materialized in a long list of distant and exotic friends) to the more down-to-earth aim of joint problem solving which implies a careful selection of partners. This usually strengthens the European dimension of twinning: looking for close partners with similar problems and operating in similar conditions, cities in many cases limit their search to the EU context. Among partner-cities of the 12 investigated Polish cities, 1/3 is from the EU member states (as we remember further 20% is from East Europe, what together composes more than 50% of all twinning agreements).

Yet another issue (which will not be discussed in the paper) is a shift from formal agreements on twinning, toward project-oriented cooperation, which is especially visible among the biggest cities (Fuksiewicz et al. 2012). This also has to do with increasing flexibility of governance, which poses aq new trend in international relations of local governments.

Table 4 Main Directions of twinning cooperation of Polish cities

Country	Number of agreements signed with cities in this state by 12 Polish largest cities	% of all twinning agreements of Polish 12 largest cities
Ukraine	24	11,27
Germany	22	10,33
France	13	6,10
Russia	13	6,10
China	12	5,63
The US	12	5,63
Hungary	8	3,76
Netherlands	7	3,29
Great Britain	6	2,82
Georgia	5	2,35
Spain	5	2,35
Israel	5	2,35
Italy	5	2,35

To conclude, talking about Europeanisation via twinning we should keep in mind that much of convergence in this case occurs without broking of the EU structures. Twinning is to a large extend escaping a narrow definition of Europeanisation fostered by political scientists. It is rather about

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spreading 'European' ideas and values among local communities disregarding the EU structures. To a certain point we may even talk about horizontal (bottom) cooperation, without 'up' element (links and mutual influence between city-partners only). Yet, there are also aspects shifting twinning to the upper levels. This is mainly due to the ways in which forms of cooperation evolve. There are two complementary directions:

- (1) from a network to bilateral action – this happens when a city finds itself a suitable partner from a wider network and starts with him a close cooperation, independent from a network. 70% of investigated Polish cities admitted that thanks to the membership in Eurocities they have started cooperation with chosen cities. "Partner search" service of Eurocities is a highly valued option. Investigated officers claim that when looking for a partner (e.g. for a project) there are two first thoughts: to ask twinning partners or to look in networks the city is in.
- (2) from bilateral cooperation to a network – this seems a natural way of cooperation development. Along with the concept of spill over in neofunctionalism, cooperation with one partner can extend on other actors and lead to the creation of network. Lublin, having an extensive network of partner-cities in the Ukraine, is considering launching a network on this basis. Also international organizations gathering cities usually had their beginning in a close cooperation of two or more cities.

Yet another option is creation of sub-networks in a big organization, i.e. selection of a small group interested in one specific topic (in this way working groups and for a in Eurocities are created). Sometimes this action can be triggered by bilateral cooperation of network-members.

Taking all this into account we should be aware of the twinning political potential in building coherent Europe.

Europeanisation by individual activities

It may also happen that single cities undertake political initiatives, notwithstanding the formal networks or twinning agreements. These initiatives, however, are usually much weaker than joint actions. Moreover, their goal is usually slightly different, further from political lobbying. Individual activities aim to build the cities' position and visibility on the domestic and international scene, rather than at changing the legal setting in which a city operates. Among such undertakings we find a lot of initiatives stimulated by the EU, and therefore fostering Europeanisation processes, like: awards of the Council of Europe, hosting big European events or using the EU funds. Ex definitione these activities combine top-down and bottom-up aspects: on the one hand the rules and general frames are given by the EU institutions (e.g. requirements to be awarded with the prize of the Council of Europe or selection of cities granted with the title of European Capital of Culture), but on the other hand the way in which these frames are filled in, depends on the cities.

The biggest group of individual outward rescaling activities is bidding for and hosting international events. In the literature on urban politics and development this is a separate subject which is often claimed to impact urban governance strongly. Organising big sport, cultural or economic event is an occasion to present (at a cost of media broadcasting the event) a new image of a city. Apart from marketing gains, a city can benefit in different areas, such as: economic (additional income e.g.

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generated by tourist movement), infrastructure (not only directly connected to the event³), planning (changing the spatial structure of a district), governance culture (developing a habit of cooperation), social solidarity (local community mobilisation, identification with a place).

For us though, the most important impact is the improvement of the position and visibility of a city on the national and international arena. In these terms we can mention a few recent initiatives, in which Polish large cities participated:

- (1) EURO UEFA 2012 Championships – a decision to organize the Europe Championships in Poland, started an intense competition between a few cities for hosting the games. Finally five of them hosted the games.
- (2) European Capital of Culture 2016 – at first almost all of the 12 cities under study competed for the title. The second stage of competition concerned a well developed initiatives, including study tours to the foreign partner cities who happened to had the title before. Cities learnt from one another and used their experience by preparing the proposals. In this way one of the assumptions of the ECC was fulfilled, namely fostering cooperation among the European cities and exchange of good practices. An interesting aspect is the exchange of experience between Polish cities. In 2000 Cracow was awarded the title (at that time the procedure and title were a bit different) and some cities fighting for the title of 2016 asked Cracow for advice. In such case we have a mixture of scales: national one (cooperation between Polish cities) and international one (i.e. the aim going beyond national boundaries). Interestingly some enlivenment in field of culture and local initiatives (like Councils of Culture) emerged in the cities (like Lublin) despite losing the competition or even in smaller cities (like Elbląg) which did not bid for the title at all. This proves that Europeanisation pressure bears a features of spillover effect.
- (3) Meetings within the Presidency of Poland in the EU Council – the selection of the hosts of these international diplomatic and accompanying (cultural) meetings was made in Poland, by a group composed of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for Regional Development. Therefore we have again an example of an intersection of the scales: domestic one (deciding on the location) and the EU one (actually involved in the meetings). Definitely hosting the events connected to the Polish EU Presidency was a good opportunity to advertise a city both in the national and European context.
- (4) The Europe Prize – the Council of Europe established four awards for local and regional authorities which foster the ideas of European solidarity, identity and cooperation. The list of requirements to receive the award contains elements connected to the EU, which is why this award (organized by a non-EU institution) can be seen as a tool of Europeanisation. Since 1993 Polish cities have stood for the competition to win one of the four awards (there is the main prize, Plaque of Honour, Flag of Honour and Diploma of Honour) and until 2012 they succeeded 157 times (three cities were awarded with the highest prize). Reading through the application forms of the cities one may note that the reciprocal character of this tool: the Council decided on the set of criteria, but its fulfillment is in the discretion of the cities.

³ According to Gold and Gold (2011: 3), only 17 % of all spending for organizing Olympic Games in Barcelona in 1992 was dedicated for sport facilities. A lion's share was spent on accompanying urban investments, improving the image of the city.

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Table 5 Polish cities awarded with the Europe Prize (only 12 cities under study included)

1. Europe Prize	3. Flag of Honour
2008 Katowice	1997 Gdańsk, Wrocław
	1998 Katowice,
2. Plaque of Honour	2000 Poznań
2000 Katowice	2006 Łódź
2002 Poznań	2008 Lublin
	4. Diploma of Honour
	2007 Lublin

Table 6 Europeanisation of Polish cities via individual activities

	ECC 2016*	EURO UEFA 2012	Polish Presidency in the Council EU		Awards of the Council of Europe **
			diplomatic meetings	cultural programme meetings	
Białystok	0,5	0	0	1	0
Bydgoszcz	0,5	0	0	0	0
Gdańsk	1	1	3	0	0,5
Katowice	1	0	0	1	2
Cracow	0,5	1	12	1	0
Lublin	1	0	0	1	1
Łódź	0,5	0	0	0	0,5
Poznań	0,5	1	7	1	1
Rzeszów	0	0	0	0	0
Szczecin	0,5	0	0	0	0
Warsaw	1	1	21	1	0
Wrocław	2	1	10	1	0,5

*. 0,5 = participated in the 1st stage of competition, 1=participated in both stages of competition, 2=won the bid.

** main prize=1, plaque, flague, diploma=0,5 point each.

The last element considered in the study of Europeanisation of the Polish cities is the usage of the EU funds. On the one hand it seems obvious, that this is a means of exerting influence of the EU (and its rules accompanying the funding) on the beneficiaries. On the other hand though, its political dimension remains unclear. Harvey (1989) mentions obtaining external funding as a one of four strategies of entrepreneur urban policy, but its consequences seem to lie rather in economic development or increase of quality of life than in building political position of a beneficiary. Yet, this is not exactly true. Looking at the procedures of applying for EU funds within Sectoral and Regional Operational Programmes, we notice that the result is a political matter, connected to the strategic choices of the cities as well as to the power constellation in different scales. Interestingly enough, using EU money can be easily treated as an element of *domestic* power play. Decision about granting a unit with the funding is made either in a region or on the national level. As a result we have yet

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another example of blurring the boundaries between domestic and foreign policies in the EU multilevel context.

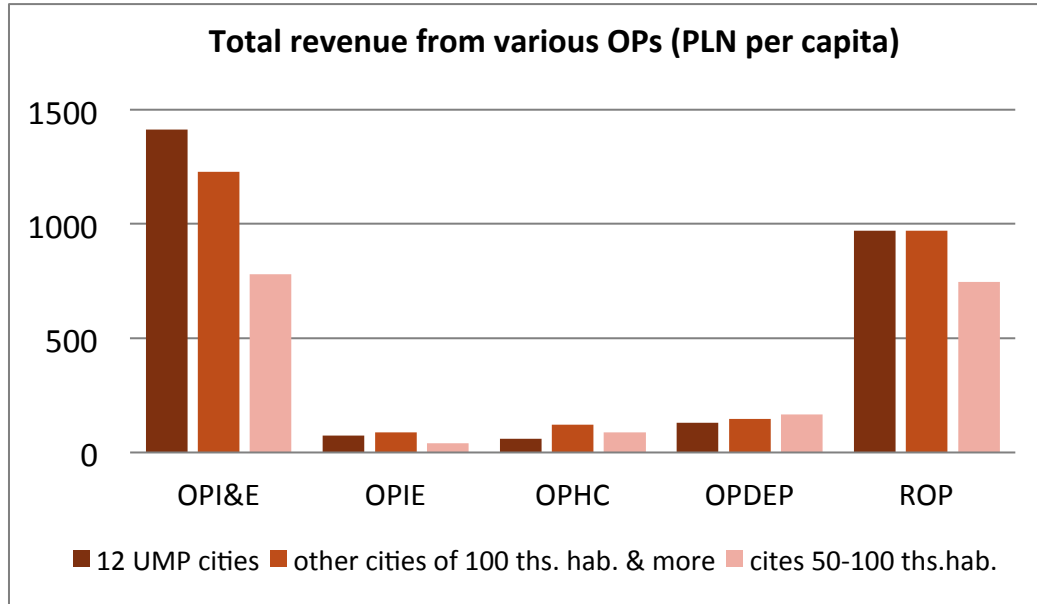


Figure 3 Cities as beneficiaries of EU Operational Programmes

Authors' calculation based on the data of the Ministry of Regional Development (database from April 2011)

Note: ROP – Regional Operational Programme; OPHC – Operational Programme Human Resources; OPI&E – Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment; OPIE – Operational Programme Innovative Economy; OPDEP – Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland.

Comparing the amounts of money from the EU funds consumed by the 12 largest cities with the amounts donated for other big cities, we notice some patterns. Clearly, Operational Programme for Infrastructure and Environment is the one most often used by the largest units, whereas in other programmes the difference is not that visible. From the Regional OPs in general also other big cities benefit equally, but when looking at the regions separately, one sees big differences. There is a group of regional capitals which seem to use Regional OP only to a limited extent. Cities like Warsaw, Bydgoszcz and Wrocław receive less money per capita from this source than other big cities in their region. This may mean that either their position is weak or contested in the region (or, more precise, in the regional self-government which makes a final decision on the money allocation), or these cities deliberately decided not to use the regional allocation and go for Sectoral Operational Programmes (SOP). During the research on territorial beneficiaries of EU funds we encountered examples of both situations. Some respondents (city politicians and officials) called the second attitude "regional patriotism" (Lackowska-Madurowicz, Swianiewicz 2012). Regional capital, having greater needs, more resources for matching funds and able to prepare bigger projects – should apply for funding from centrally managed SOPs rather than compete within their region for regional allocation. By using centrally managed programmes, they would "save" the limited resources of the regional programmes for smaller jurisdictions, which were in no position to apply for central funding. According to many of our respondents, such a stance would benefit the entire region. It is interesting, that this attitude of "regional patriotism" was stated not only by peripheral authorities and regional politicians, but was also shared by city politicians and staff. It seems that the non-strategic management of regional funds contributed to the development of a specific strategy by the cities. Respondents from all three regions emphasized that in SOPs there was less competition as the criteria were more specific, whereas in ROPs the lack of strategic thinking and the ability to formulate

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collective regional priorities contributed both to heightened competition and a greater likelihood of decisions being based on unclear criteria.

But there is also a group of cities representing of totally different strategy. Katowice, Cracow and Lublin use more money from their Regional Programmes than other big cities in their regions (Figure 4). Yet, even for these cities ROP is not a main source of the EU money (Figure 5). Actually, there are only two cities in the investigated group (Szczecin 77% and Rzeszów 67%; both cities being peripheral ones located in the opposed corners of Poland) which uses mainly ROP. For many others it is the OP I&E which poses the biggest source of the EU funding.

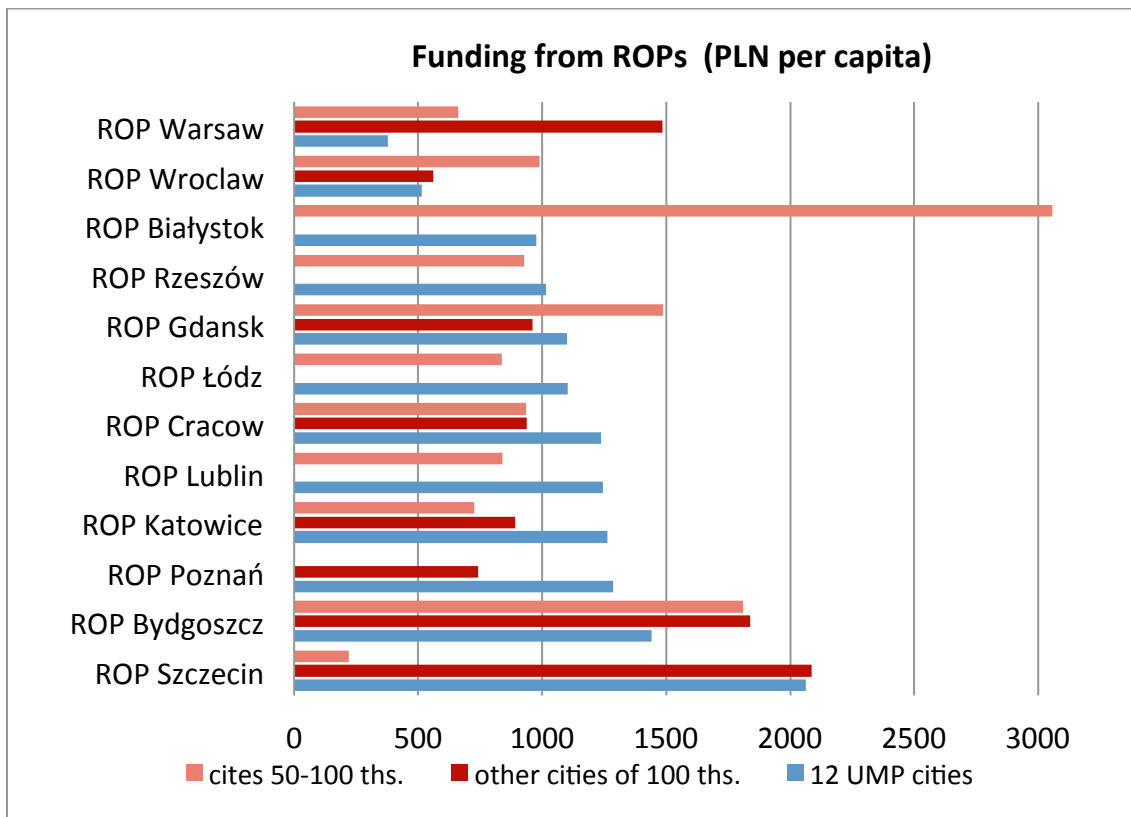


Figure 4 Regional capital and ot he big cities as beneficiaries of Regional OPs

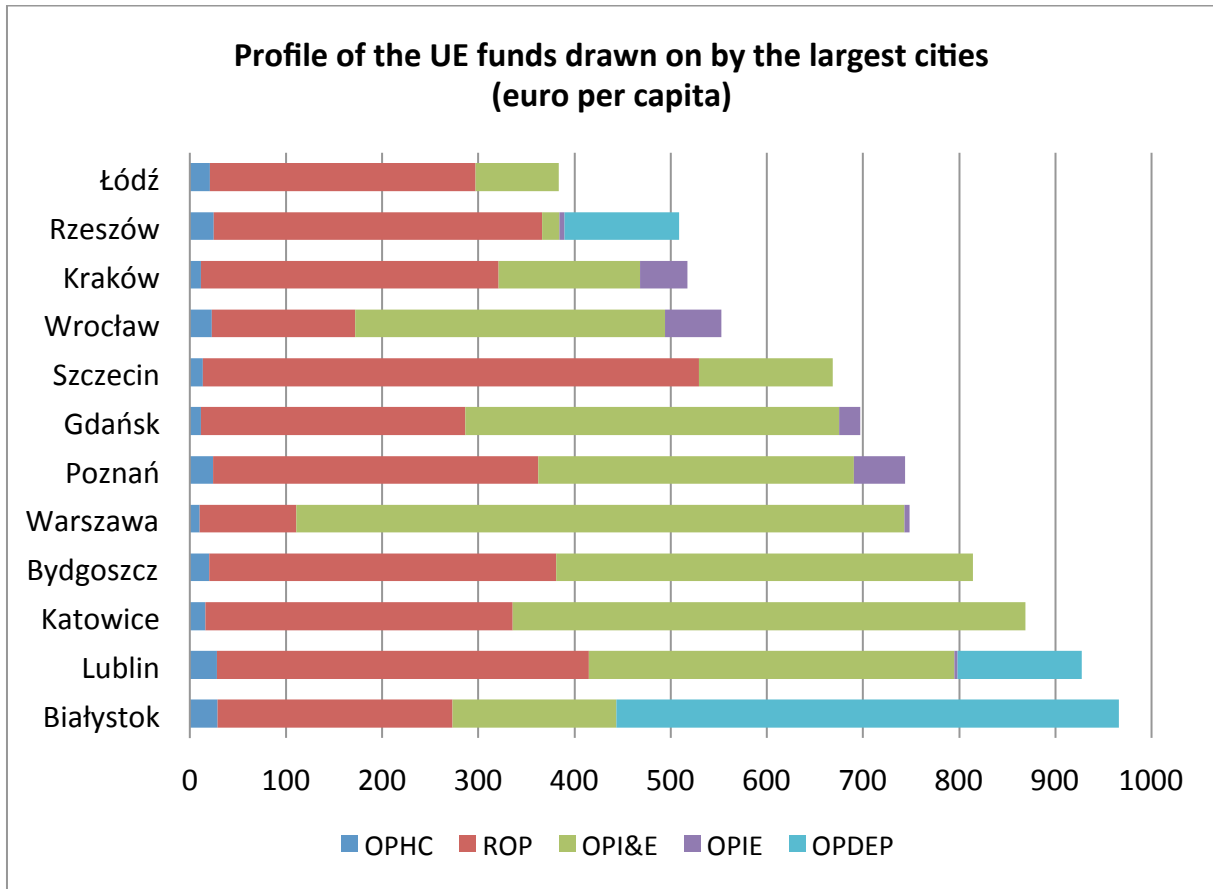


Figure 5 Structure of EU grants in the 12 largest Polish cities

Yet another possibility of a response to the Europeanisation by the EU funds has been created by the Operational Programme Development of Eastern Poland (OP DEP), which was available for five poorest Polish regions, i.e. for cities of Rzeszów, Białystok and Lublin. As we see Białystok has concentrated by large on this specific programme (55% of all EU money spent by the city comes from this Programme). On the contrary, Rzeszów does not make any use of the OP DEP, while Lublin remains in between.

Form this short analysis we may draw a conclusion on a relatively deliberate (strategic?) approach towards applying for EU funds. Cities have their favourite Operational Programmes, from which they benefit the most. In general this is OPI&E, but there are also more subtle differences between the cities. Definitely one has to state that EU regional policy as a tool of Europeanisation has also a strong domestic (national and regional) dimension. Many decisions about this interplay are made in scales others that city-EU one.

To conclude, the individual activities in Europeanisation are very diverse and can be hardly put to a common denominator. They differ in terms of aims and methods, as well as degree and direction of Europeanisation. The prevailing attitude seems to the top-down approach here with a strong determination from the EU as far as the rules and principals are concerned. Nonetheless also here we can find some traces of bottom-up or initiatives and strategies built in front of the EU pressures instead of a simple conformist behaviour.

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Conclusions

Considering Europeanisation in terms of outward rescaling allows focusing research on the scales (relations) that are being produced between the agents of the European multi-level governance system. In this way the main element distinguishing types of Europeanisation is underscored. Not only can we focus on direction of relation/influence (top-down or bottom-up), but we have a tool to think about the levels connected by the scale as well. And this subject is gaining on importance in the studies of Europeanisation: first they focused on the relation EU-Member States only, then they expanded on the relations towards the regions, and finally have found interest in localities (especially cities).

The research has also shown a phenomenon described with regard to multi-level governance systems, namely the blurring of the distinction between domestic and foreign policies (Hooghe, Marks 2001: 4). This was visible in all types of investigated action: individual activities (cooperation by hosting events or domestic decisions on hosts of international events), networks (Polish associations reaching the EU ones), and twinning (solving local, domestic problems by the means of foreign expertise).

Analyzing Europeanisation of the largest Polish cities we have found a wide variety of attitudes and methods used. Despite being relatively new in the EU context, post-socialist cities happen not only to learn from others and join their initiatives, they also endeavour to make some modifications in the existing structures, making them more suitable for their own means. This bottom-up activity may not always reach a level of the EU institution, but it poses a promising sign of ambition, courage and interest in widely understood European matters. This of course applies above all to a few largest and wealthiest cities like Warsaw, Poznań, Gdańsk, to a lesser extent Cracow, Katowice and Lublin. The activity varies depending on the type (individual activities are the domain of Wrocław, whereas networking is preferred by Poznań and Gdańsk) and specific undertaking (there are cities focusing on Eurocities, like Warsaw and Poznań, and cities more connected to other organizations, e.g. Gdańsk and Union of Baltic Cities). In general big cities are much more active in the international networks than other localities (Fuksiewicz 2012), which speaks for their interest in political lobbying. They also tend to consider traditional twinning as a *passé* method of internationalization – they prefer project-based, often time-limited cooperation. This proved an inclination of the largest cities to influence EU affairs (networks give this opportunity in a most certain, direct way). Obviously enough, there is a group of cities still acting in a passive way, remaining on the stage of joining an initiative rather than changing it or taking the lead. One has to remember, that international activity and lobbying is a 'luxury' or a sort of additional activity which can be afforded only by the strongest actors. Engagement of strongest Polish cities in European relations, via networking, twinning and individually built position, can be interpreted as realization of an ambition which remained suppressed for a long time. After a 'return' to the European community in 1989, recreated territorial governments have eagerly taken up a possibility to act as political and independent actors both on the national in international arena. This boom of long suppressed ambition explains why, despite a relatively short time, some Polish cities occupy a strong position in the EU multilevel system (with Warsaw mayor being a president of Eurocities at the moment). Let me end with a quotation of a deputy mayor of one of the activist cities:

We have to build the consciousness of the largest Polish cities that they are able to influence and shape the EU policies! It is not only states and regions that matter!

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Appendix

Index of activity in Eurocities comprises four variables:

- Number of fora in which a city participates (weight 0.5 reflects the fact that the mere formal participation in a forum does not speak for activity in its undertakings)
- Number of working groups in which a city participates (for similar reasons the weight is lowered to 0.75; WGs are smaller and more functionally oriented, so free-riding is more difficult than in case of fora)
- Number of Eurocities events hosted by a city in 2004-2010 (weight 1)
- Chairing or vice-chairing a forum or WG (weight 1)