

Andrzej W. Jablonski

Final Report

Europeanization of Public Administration in Central Europe. Poland in
Comparative Perspective

I. The problem of europeanization of a public administration

The countries of the region are in the midst of the process of development of administrative structures and procedures modeled on respective Western institutions. The concept of „europeanization” is conceived in this study as a multi-dimensional process of democratization , decentralization , deetatization and comprehensive modernization of public administrations of Central European states. West European nations have developed the consolidated states and central administrative systems during the evolutionary process by the early nineteenth century. In Central Europe building of the modern nation states has been hampered in the nineteenth century by the socio-economic backwardness and the policies of multinational empires. The communist regimes imposed in these countries in the second half of the twentieth century has further delayed the nation and state building in the region The regaining of national sovereignty in 1989 has opened a new era of consolidation of the national states in the Eastern part of the continent .The fundamental dimensions of this historical process are : an establishment of stable parliamentary democracy and civil society , an effective and democratically accountable executive and efficient administration , building an institutional framework of market economy and adjustment of legal and administrative institutions to the future integration within the European Union. All these processes have been undergoing simultaneously in every country of the region but the achievements of a decade-long transformations are differentiated across the countries and policy areas .Poland ,Hungary and the Czech Republic are usually classified as „successfully transformed political democracies and market economies”, so the scope of their institutional reforms may be subject of comparative insights .Democratic changes have been so far most successful in the spheres of party systems and parliamentary politics of post-communist states .Modernization of the administrative organs of government required more time and have been less successful.

Reforms of this sort usually do not evoke so much public attention and popular support as the revolutionary changes of political regimes. An average citizen usually interested only in the outcomes of public administration or in politics of recruitment of top administrative officials , but does not care much about the reorganizations of governmental departments or agencies. This is not difficult to explain. While regime transformation involves fundamental values of individual dignity , freedom and property, the administrative changes are motivated mainly by instrumental values of effective governance , stability and impartiality. In the process of democratic transformation the latter are secondary to the first. Administrative issues are less conflict ridden and being such are less attractive for the media. When socio-economic problems arise citizens tend to blame an incumbent government rather than administrative rules or civil servants. Public administration scholars have not established a strong causal relationship between the outcomes of government on the one side and its structures , processes and personnel ,on the other. Analyzing policy processes one have to assume that some factors are accountable for a quality of governing . They include a quality of decision - making , a knowledge capability of governments ,a capacity to mediate between political interests and an effectiveness of administrative institutions responsible for the implementation of governmental policies .

Every government consists of political and administrative actors playing roles within organizations. A quality of governance depends upon the characteristics of both abovementioned factors. The character of political and administrative leaderships is of utmost importance for the governing process in every country. Constitutional rules that constrain political and administrative actors constitute a legal framework for their operations. Actors and institutions are also influenced by political and administrative cultures that permeate human societies. A thorough examination of the public administration in any country has to take under scrutiny all above mentioned factors. In order to evaluate the characteristics of change one must also take under examination the forces of reform and resistance existing in society , their values , life and work habits , structures of interests , intentions , character of education . An explanations of changes or resistance to changes in administrative systems is not easy task for the researchers. The mainstream theory of post-communist transition assumes the ongoing convergence of political and administrative systems as an adjustment to a universal functional challenges of goals to be achieved: an increase of effectiveness and legitimacy of public administrations across countries. A

conventional wisdom claims that in the era of economic globalization and internationalization the less developed states would imitate organizational features of the „modern” systems of the West. With regard to the postcommunist countries of Central Europe which are going down the road „back to Europe” this theory also sounds well. Never the less, there are many important questions regarding characteristics of the state models which are to be followed. One has also remember that country-specific cultural and institutional traditions are usually an important factor in the process of modernization of traditional states and societies. As reminds the renown expert „Institutional adaptations and reforms will have to be based on a careful institutional analysis of the existing institutional contexts and problems in each individual country” /Toonen ,1992 , 232/. The progress of convergence of administrative structures of East Central European states to their Western counterparts depends on a strength of traditional institutions and the forces of national distinctiveness , a strength of innovative leaderships and an attractiveness of external politico-administrative systems .One has also to remember about multi-dimensional character of the postcommunist transitions. The notion of an interdependency between cultural , economic, political and administrative factors involved in the process is crucial in an explanation of the undergoing processes of change. Analyzing Western political and administrative systems as guidelines for future developments of the postcommunist Central Europe , a researcher should be aware that institutions and patterns of operation of the former also undergo serious changes and may not be conceived of as the indisputable models to be followed by the countries of Eastern Europe.

II . A state and social forces during the postcommunist transition

One of central theoretical problems which arise in the times of a comprehensive socio-economic change is the role of state as collective actor supervising institutional reforms of economic and administrative systems. In the main-stream political science literature there has been recently a growing opinion that democratic state conceived of as collective actor has a very important role to play in the system of market economy ,especially in the countries where major capitalist reforms are underway. The recent research on the public policies in many countries / Great Britain, Germany, France, Japan, South Korea , Chile / has weakened the theory of

diminishing state and has brought about a new evidence that „ government has an important function in organizing political life and influencing the power of collective actors”./ Dohler ,1995 / In the postcommunist countries the problem of the role of state has a dual nature. On the one side the postcommunist state has had to abandon the Leninist legacy of full control over society and to justify its presence in society on the base of popular legitimacy ,and to constrain its interventionist stance in the economic and social life to much more a limited extent than during the system of real socialism .On the other hand the state administration has to be effective in promoting institutional reforms and minimizing the social costs of economic transformation. Many authors believe that a weakening of state would be a serious obstacle which could hinder the pace of marketization of postcommunist economies and social policy institutions. J.Hage and Z.J. Shi note that while the states in Eastern Europe should be significantly downsized and their roles reduced , weakening the state is not a viable choice. As the authors put it „We should not confuse the issue of restructuring the state with the issue of reducing state’s capacity. To govern the conflict-laden process of market reform, it is imperative not only to restructure the state , but through this restructuring to enhance the state’s capacity to steer societal transformation. More specifically , the state must be effective during the transition period in order to handle at least three basic issues : the resistance to change , the proper balance between state and market ,and the build-up of institutions necessary for the market and democracy to function effectively” / Hage , Shi , 1993 , 472 /

The list of tasks , that the postcommunist states have to fulfill is very long . The most important of them , as outlined by the recent publications , are the following :” The formation of a coherent economic policy to maintain a reasonable macroeconomic environment conducive to business growth , the provision of a necessary safety belt to protect the poor and the weak from being victimized , the promotion of dialogue and compromise between conflicting interest groups , and mechanisms to manage conflict and violence /.../ At the international level the state has to bargain with external actors /.../ while at the domestic level the state needs to search for balance between autonomy and responsiveness to the social-economic impact of policies. The success or failure of any large-scale market -oriented transition depends , in the long run , on states capacity to make theses bargains ,, / Hage , Shi , 475 /

After the collapse of authoritarian socialist regimes , the postcommunist governments have found themselves in to the domestic and international environment of socio-political pluralism and global capitalist system of economic relations. The new elites have had to learn of their new roles in the process of making difficult political decisions in the complex system of open society and in the situation of economic and social crisis inherited from the communist regimes . Democratization of political systems in Central European countries created the domestic socio-political arenas consisting of plurality of interest groups , operating freely and making the process of governance much more complicated and more difficult than under socialist regimes . This process had to be conducted under the pressures from a plurality of social movements , interest groups and political parties representing the variety of interests rooted in postcommunist social structures. Due to democratization of political systems ,the governments in East Central Europe had acquired a capital of public legitimacy that former socialist regimes were not able to get during nearly the half century of their political and economic administration. Nationwide support was a necessary condition for a new political elites to obtaining a popular consent for their policies of economic stability ,fiscal discipline and mass-scale privatization .Democratic transformation of the political systems in Central Europe was a precondition to the undertaking of major socio- economic reforms, necessary for an increase of an effectiveness of economic development , creating consumer and capital markets and bringing about the consumer society. The latter of these aims was believed by many Central East Europeans as the most important and reachable soon after the overhaul of the communist political regimes , restoration of markets and joining the capitalist West .Rapid implementation of these tasks turned out to be much more difficult than democratization of the constitutional systems .Notwithstanding the contextual conditions, the success of reforms has been dependent upon a legitimate and effective political entrepreneurship and well organized and highly qualified cadre of administrators and managers. As S. Holmes has put it / 1995 , s. 76 / „The most difficult problem facing the countries of East Central Europe today is the creation of governments that can pursue effective reforms while maintaining public confidence and remaining democratically accountable”

The task of establishment of acceptable balance between the aims of maintenance of popular legitimacy of the new regimes on the one side and effectiveness of governmental executives on the other in the countries of Central Europe has proved to be very difficult .The

democratic revolutions in Central Europe have established constitutional framework of freedom of associations, what meant also the freedom of standing in opposition to the policies pursued by incumbent elites, and acting against the elites themselves. A revival of freedom for media of mass communications has opened widely the public arena for a variety of political discourses, programs and policy options often very critical to the ruling incumbents. Political leaders in Poland and other postsocialist states have become objects of critical press commentaries shortly after they took over the public offices. The policy-making procedures in the parliaments and in the cabinet ministers have become more open to public information and participation. Democratization of political life has restored the liberal constitutional state with its division of state power among legislature, executive and independent juridical institutions. Central and local administration of the new democracies became responsive to democratically elected political assemblies and open to influence of the media, political parties and diverse interest groups. The constitutional reforms have restored the legal constraints on the power holders, thus making the process of government much more complex and its results more uncertain for the policy makers in comparison with authoritarian style of governance of the former socialist governments. In many sensitive policy areas such as privatization and reprivatization, tax policies distribution of incomes and social welfare, the legislative bills proposed by the governments had to be negotiated and compromised with trade unions and interested social organizations. Many governmental decisions were confronted with diverse forms of social protests, including hunger strikes, occupations of public offices and street demonstrations of industrial workers, militant peasants' unions or public sector employees. This pluralistic environmental context of decision-making processes especially in Poland, have been eroding the will of policy makers to go forward with bold policy reforms in social, economic and administrative systems.

One may say that opening the policy making systems in former socialist countries has brought about a situation which the renowned political scientist Adam Przeworski has named the "institutionalization of uncertainty". In Przeworski's opinion, "Democratization is a process of subjecting all interests to competition, of institutionalization of uncertainty. It is thus this very devolution of power over outcomes which constitutes the decisive step toward democracy." / Przeworski, 1993, 63 /

Democratization perceived as a process of devolution of power and enabling citizens to participate in politics on all levels of government has brought about a new policy style of collective bargaining as a new standard of operation of governing elites in Poland and elsewhere in Central Europe. The processes of post-communist transformations may be described as the interactions of interest-based political struggles, ideas and policy legacies. However the results of interactions are mediated by the political and administrative institutions which insulate the governing elites from direct social pressures. In other words, the institutions put restraints on the actions of elites, even as elites are capable of changing the institutions. Thus, to the extent that post-communist elites adopted democratic institutions /legal freedoms of parties and associations, electoral rules, constitutional and administrative courts etc. /it has become difficult for the governing parties to ignore the demands of organized groups of civic society or violate democratic rules of political games without jeopardizing their political futures. Furthermore, institutional and policy legacies of the postcommunist societies put also constraints on the options available to ruling elites to the extent that „policy making and state building are path-dependent processes”/ Campbell, 49 / Given these circumstances, one may employ the concept of „semi-sovereign state „which, according to one author, is „equipped only with a limited capacity to enforce controversial policy measures” / Dohler, 401 /

In the next section I will examine some impacts on the governance exerted by constitutional provisions of postcommunist Poland in the period of 1989-1996 and will make some comparative remarks concerning the governance style of the Czech Republic.

III. The constitutional framework of governance

I will begin this part of analysis from the review of some theories of governmental performance which have been recently discussed in the political science literature, and I propose to employ them into the analysis of the nature of governance in the post-communist countries of East Central Europe. The main attention of this part of the study concentrates on the institutions of executive policy-making in Poland and their dealing with the socio-economic

reforms after 1989. Theories of governance and public administration emphasize a variety of conditions facilitating the effective government. A theoretical assumption orienting the institutional studies of policy-making and public administration assume that institutions /mainly the structures of central governments / of political and administrative systems may be conceived of as the independent variables that account for a cross-national variations of the policy orientations and effectiveness of governance. Some authors argue that institutional structures did mattered in differentiation of policy outcomes having been achieved by the ruling elites of different nations .For instance ,one author claims that „institutional arrangements always have a policy content ,and benefit some economic interests at the expense of others. Constitutional frameworks and policy regimes are a product of struggles and alliances among collective actors defined by economic interests and institutional realignments occur when the interests and the power of relevant actors change.” / J. Pontusson 1995 , 140 / M.L.Crepaz emphasizes a role of institutional arrangements to the regime performance. He is of opinion that „ regime performance is critically influenced by the rules of the regime” / Crepaz 1996 , 5 / „Rules of the regime” are such constitutional features as the pattern of executive - legislative relations , the type of electoral system , or the type of the party system / Ibid. / With regard to this issue political science literature nurtures a theoretical debate on the policy influence exerted by the two basic models of government : majoritarian vs consensual .For example , some authors argue that „consensus oriented” countries have been more successful in the field of macro-economic policies than „majoritarian -oriented” cases .According to this view , the former have institutional mechanisms that allow broad-based access and participation in the political process : executive power sharing ,proportional electoral systems , multiparty systems and corporatist forms of interest intermediation./ Switzerland , The Netherlands , Finland / . The latter are characterized by single party ,bare majority cabinets ,single member district electoral rules , pluralist forms of interest intermediation /United Kingdom ,Canada ,New Zealand/.These countries tend to create strong parties and executives and produce more „responsible” public policies./ Crepaz , 7 /.They represent more adversarial policy style than collegially ruled / executive power sharing / regimes .Gamble and Walkland have argued that „ consensual forms of government possess the capacity to create stable and predictable policies , thus installing confidence among the most important decision makers / .../ that should manifest itself in higher regime performance” / Crepaz , 9 / . Aberbach and Rockman noticed both , the

positive and negative policy implications of the two above-mentioned systems of government : „ Majoritarian systems deter the proliferation of veto points and thus make it easier to act . But if there is fairly regular alternation of parties , there may be little policy stability. Majoritarian principles however are action facilitating ones „ / Aberbach and Rockman , 142 /

For the researchers of the institutional conditions of administrative reforms ,an examination of some aspects of British political system may bring about interesting observations. F.F. Ridley , seeking an explanation why the „New Public Management” has been more effective tendency in the British public administration than in the continental Europe. His focus was on „the country specific situations which permit the translation of reform proposals into law and the application of law into practice” / Ridley , 1996 , 23 /

Ridley points out that the specific constitutional factors that helped the managerial revolution in Britain are following : ”Britain has no /.../ constitutional law which is superior to ordinary legislation /.../ and which is /.../ difficult to amend /.../ Parliament is said to be sovereign , which means that it can pass any legislation and repel any previous legislation. No aspect of administration is protected./.../ Britain has an electoral system which generally leads to a single party having majority in the House of Commons. Party discipline is strong /.../ there are no countervailing centers of power, as in coalition governments , systems with less disciplined parties ,systems with a powerful second chamber or federalism : determined governments can get their projects through parliament /.../ Nothing so easy is to be found in continental Europe. Legislation concerning administrative reform has often run into difficulties there.” Ridley , 1996 , 23 /

Do these tendencies observed in Western democracies may be helpful for an examination of the Central European political systems ? . It seems that only weak arguments support the „majoritarian - consensual government” scheme of analysis in the constitutional settings of Poland and other postsocialist countries , because no political regimes of this sort can be identified in the region. The Westminster parliamentary system with one large party in government and another large party in opposition has attracted little attention in Central Europe during the first decade of democracy .On the other hand there has appeared no pattern of government built upon a broad political consensus among the main party elites /somehow consensual national elite / Multi-party cabinets have constituted a dominant pattern of government in Central Europe but

coalition building was a functional response to high fragmentation of the party systems and proportional electoral laws adopted by these countries after 1989. Especially in the case of Poland, the early cabinet coalitions were composed of parties having very different views on many political and economic issues. Thereby it was often very difficult for the coalition cabinets to reach a consensus on various governmental policies. This situation had often negative impact on the fulfillment of the electoral platforms of the parties, once getting in power. Nevertheless some tentative comparisons of policy outcomes of the diverse governmental structures of selected countries of Central Europe may be hypothesized. Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary have developed different types of relations between parliaments and prime ministers and different internal structures of the political executives in terms of an integration of policy making coalitions. These differences conceivably had some effects on the differentiation of governments' performance in these countries and accounted for some achievements and failures of post-communist transitions. However a comprehensive comparative analysis of the country by country results of reform achievements, seeking an explanation of the policy outcomes by reference to the characters of national policy-making styles or types of coalitions is extremely difficult. There is no ready set of criteria available for scientific comparative assessments of the policy achievements of national political leaderships across the policy areas. The different past legacies, different levels of economic developments, various qualities of the managerial and working classes and many other factors acting simultaneously account for the achievements of economic and administrative reforms in postcommunist Central Europe. Looking for eventual relationships between these variables one can put a hypothesis that relatively stronger and better integrated political executive in the Czech Republic in comparison with Poland in the period of 1990-1995 may be conceived of as an institutional factor accounting for the relatively better macroeconomic performance of the Czech executive in this period / lower inflation, unemployment, sooner implementation of large scale privatization program and reforms of social policy, higher influx of foreign investments per capita and higher level of social peace /compared to Poland and Hungary.

With regard to the nature of governmental policy making structures there is an assumption that a strong parliamentary position of internally cohesive executive may be a reform facilitating factor. The same may be said of strong constitutional and political position of the prime minister

heading a reform oriented cabinet .A type of relationships / consensual or adversary / between the president and prime minister may have an impact on the executive's capability to govern effectively. The internal structure of cabinet ministers in terms of the number of parties sharing the cabinet portfolios may be also conceived of as an independent variable accounting for a differentiation of the executives' will to reform and their capacities to go through the legislative process. With reference to the variable of the cabinet's fragmentation , one may assume that the larger the number of parties that is necessary to create a stable governmental coalition , the more difficult it would be for a cabinet to reach effective policy agreements and pursue reform policies within the political system.

Looking for an empirical evidence that may illustrate an impact of abovementioned variables on the efficiency of governmental policies of some Central European states ,one may point to some exemplary cases of the policy making in Poland and the Czech Republic in the first half of the current decade .

One of the striking features of the post 1989 governmental system of Poland compared to most European states has been a weak and highly fragmented executive , operating in a context which the Hungarian political scientist Atilla Agh named an „overparliamentarization” of politics. / Agh , 1995 , s. 203 /.According to Agh , „Parliaments have been the „central sites” of change and parties the „major actors” of transformation” in Central Europe ./ Agh , 204 /.,The essence of overparliamentarization is that the other political institutions are either missing , half made or are still weak .Thus the parliament as a mother institution which produces all the others , is of particular importance even for the strongest political body : the executive power of government .On the other hand the real actor is not a parliament /.../ but a conglomerate of political parties ,, / Agh, 1995 , s. 205 / The important reason of the weakness of the executive branch of government in Poland after 1989 was a disunity of the national political elite and some constitutional flaws. One of the institutional shortcomings of the early period of transition /1989-1991/was very short a procedure of defeating a cabinet through the motion of non -confidence. The other factor was a disunity of state executive comprised of the President and Cabinet Ministers contributing frequently to various conflicts between the two centers of executive power. These conflicts were especially damaging for the policy making performance in times when the positions of the President and Prime Minister were held by the leaders of the opposite political parties. In the

situation of party fragmentation of the parliament and hostility of relations between the two parts of the dual executive, the art of governance was often a subject of frequent constitutional battles between the two power centers and resulted in a paralysis of legislation by the political crises. Institutional deficiencies and elite struggles had accumulated in Poland especially in the period of 1990-1995, thus weakening the executives' capacity of effective implementation of administrative and economic reforms. The number of conflicts has only slightly diminished after the resurrection of the postcommunist cabinet ministers in September 1993 parliamentary elections. As pointed out by one study: „the executive / In Poland / remains weak under the configuration of parties in 1991-1993. The executive power never had the ability to control the legislative process and timetable. Deputies who identified weaknesses in the government's legislation could use their discovery to embarrass the government and obstruct its proposals almost without limits. As a result Bielecki's government has found it hard to speed up the reform process by introducing mass privatization or constitutional reform, but Olszewski's government found it difficult to loosen macroeconomic policy „, / Johnson, Loveman, 1995, 228 /

In Czechoslovakia / the Czech Republic since January, 1993 / the Cabinet Ministers led by Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus was in much more comfortable situation than cabinet ministers of Poland in 1991-1993. Since the June 1992 parliamentary elections the Vaclav Klaus's cabinet was in full control of the reform policies in the Czech Republic. This comfortable institutional arrangements have changed after 1996 parliamentary elections. The examination of elections' results for the possible change of governance style made by one Czech analyst is useful in describing the previously dominant policy style: „This year's elections / in the Czech Republic / mark a clear shift from the executive to the legislature. Political culture of the country has suffered in the last four years because the ruling coalition governed virtually unopposed. The CDP leaders and Klaus in particular, have tended to disregard or show disrespect to not only the opposition and the media but frequently their coalition allies as well. The lack of political bipolarity combined with the relative success of reforms, has encouraged Czech media to be predominantly pro-government. The CDP has blocked decentralization reform and the establishment of Ombudsman claiming that such measures were aimed at weakening its power. / Pehe, 1996, 36 /

Relationships between prime ministers and presidents in Poland and the Czech Republic in the period of 1990-1995 were also different. In the Czech Republic they were more conducive to

high effectiveness of governance than in Poland. As one observer noticed : „The only one of East Central European current presidents who has not engaged in protracted conflicts with at least one of his prime ministers is Vaclaw Havel /.../ The ability of Havel and Klaus to keep their differences from erupting into bitter conflict probably reflects some sober calculations on both sides and a sense of complementarity of their respective roles” / Baylis, 1996 , 316 / In Poland dual executive / semi-presidential system of government /and personal antagonisms were creating numerous conflicts over policies between president Lech Wałęsa and successive prime ministers. :T. Mazowiecki , J. Olszewski ,W. Pawlak and J. Oleksy In the period of 1990-1993 Poland had fit well to the T.Baylis’s observation, that „Ambition counteracting ambition in ECE dual executives, as in Madison’s theory , has at times served as to check the abuse of power , but at other times it has contributed to political deadlocks and popular alienation” / Baylis , 321 / After the presidential elections of 1995 the relations between the two constitutional powers in Poland have changed and since then have become more cooperative.

III. Political leadership and governmental performance

Political science literature and empirical analyses of the countries in Western Europe offer rich evidence that a proper combination of institutional and leadership factors account for substantial part of success or failure of reform strategies in democratic countries . In the political science literature there has been a debate trying to answer „ whether the primary explanation for the governmental performance is to be found in organizations and structures or in people „ / Aberbach and Rockman ,145/ Some authors propose to take a compromise perspective upon an examination of this problem As write Aberbach and Rockman „We cannot solve the „ organizations versus people „problem other than to recognize the importance of each , and their interdependence” / Ibid. / In the previous section I have focused the attention on some institutional factors of effective governance. In this part I will focus on the leadership factor of policy-making in the new democracies.

The leadership’s focus has been employed in the studies of innovative leadership , political entrepreneurship in policy making and policy change. The concept of „innovative leadership” , as

employed by J. Moon „, assumes a relatively coherent policy vision and enough understanding of policy processes to approximate intended outcomes. It entails not just taking others along a path ,but doing so in a fashion sufficiently informed to achieve lasting policy redirection” /.../ Irrespective of its direction and goals, innovative leadership requires a sense of purpose backed up with some coherence” / Moon ,1995 3 /.Innovative leadership ,according to this theory , merges a strong political will and strong policy capacity .This combination of factors enables not only to develop a strategy of change but also to make it implemented into life. According to Moon , the Margaret Thatcher’s governments had met the criteria of innovative leadership /a combination of strong political will and policy capacity and this had made their reform policies so successful. A high policy capacity of Thatcher’s governments is of special interest of governance scholars , because it may teach how to implement reform strategies in the democratic political system. One interesting lesson from Thatcher’s administration’s policy is that „, government emphasized the benefits that changes /.../ would bring to citizenry , while opponents failed to portray consistently the changes as retreats from collective benefits ”./ Moon , 7 /Another observation which may be of importance for our analysis is the time that the cabinet is in office .As Moon convincingly points out : „, the length of Thatchers premiership provided her government with opportunities to learn from its experiences and , by building on its early efforts , gain confidence in innovating” / Ibid. /On the other hand some political scientists pointed that the „British system is more conducive to innovative leadership than most of Western democracies.”/... /The distinguishing features of British system deliver almost unrivaled formal power to elected governments and contrast markedly with other democratic systems. /.../ innovative leadership , in formal terms, at least , may be easier in Britain than other democracies” / Moon , 23 /

Whilst the British political system offers illustrative examples of governance based on a combination of leaders and institutions contributing jointly to successful reform policies ,one may find in the literature some other cases which inform about successful leaders that have had to overcome the institutional obstacles in order to get reform policies done. One such example of German health care reform was recently examined by M.Dohler / 1995 / .The case of successful implementation of reform of health care in Germany was conceived of by this author as the substantial policy achievement of the Federal Health Ministry. The reform was implemented in the institutional environment that has for two decades been pictured as immune to any serious reforms

,due to the resistance of powerful interest groups , the legislative veto right of the federal lands , and many other./ Dohler , 380 / According to Dohler, one lesson from this case is that „, we need to modify the „Katzensteinian image of Germany as semi-sovereign state ,equipped only with a limited capacity to enforce controversial policy measures ”/ 401/ .The main factor explaining government ability to go along with an innovative policy , was a change in the interest structure of the policy field. However there was also an important contextual opportunity :„the worsening of financial conditions in the wake of German unification has increased the economic and political pressure to reduce health care costs increases ” / Bohler , 382 /

Can these West European examples of successful reform policies be used in an analysis of the politics of reforms in Central Europe ? It seems that regardless of the important differences between the countries of East and West of Europe , the cases of this sort point to the relevance of the concept of innovative leadership as a factor facilitating reform policies in both the mature and developing democracies.

Having used the definition of innovative leadership proposed by Moon , I think that the following scheme of effective leadership may be analytically useful upon a closer examination of internal structure of the concept ./ Pontusson , 1995 , 117 /

1. the degree to which governmental leadership form a cohesive group capable of regulating their own policy prescriptions
2. the ability of state officials to resist societal pressures
3. the ability of state officials to elicit the cooperation of private actors
4. the administrative capacity of the state

In Poland a team of political entrepreneurs led by the Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the Vice-Prime Minister and Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz may be referred to as a sort of political endeavor fitting the model of innovative leadership. Balcerowicz's performance may be characterized by a strong will to rebuild the economic system and a possession of high professional qualifications to realize this task .In the Czech Republic the Prime Minister Waclaw Klaus and his early cabinet ministers were considered by many observers as successful political entrepreneurs .Both these leaderships in Poland and the Czech Republic were able to design and to enact the reform policies that changed the basic rules of economic systems of respective countries even if many institutions were left intact .However, these early market reforms were

done in the exceptionally supportive climate of social enthusiasm that accompanied the historical events of 1989. The reform policies led by of the architects of a new socio-economic order in Poland and the Czech Republic continue to be the subject of academic and political debates in both countries referring to their achievements and failures. These discussions will probably continue among the politicians, sociologists and economists, as most of the criteria of evaluation of public policies are value laden. I agree with the opinion of two Harvard economists, S. Johnson and G.W. Loveman, that „Under the circumstances of mid-1989 and considering the lack of experience with postcommunist economic transformation, the Balcerowicz Plan was incredibly effective” / Johnson, Loveman, p. 235 /

Many critics of the style of governance of Mazowiecki-Balcerowicz cabinet of 1989-1990 stressed its low capability to secure mass political support and to overcome societal fears for privatization, unemployment, and financial austerity policies. In Poland some critiques argue that an inefficient political „selling out” of the reform strategies of post-1989 is to be blamed for the relatively fast decline of the mass support for the radical economic reforms. It is also considered as an important shortcoming in the policy of reforms in Hungary. An underestimation of an eventual societal resistance to reform policies and the inability to secure enough public support for the continuation of economic stabilization strategies were a commonplace weakness of the first democratically elected governments in both countries. The top policy-makers have underestimated the advice that central to innovative leadership is the ability of change of the way people behave and think. For the comparative illustration of the similar case albeit under quite different circumstances, of radical socio-economic reforms one may refer to the British economic reforms undertaken by the government led by Margaret Thatcher. Many analysts think that the Thatcherite strategy overhauling the prevailing economic orthodoxy was successful because it created a situation in which „popular opinion about the causes and solutions to unemployment was reshaped to justify not reflating the economy. Policy was not molded by anticipating electoral behavior; government sought instead to refashion attitudes” / Moon, 5 / As an administrative reform is concerned „In Britain a strong-willed, ideologically determined to debureaucratise the civil service, was able to use her disciplined parliamentary majority and her executive powers, and to ignore other constraints / notably civil service unions, whose influence, like that of other unions was much diminished under her rule in a way that previous governments had either not

wished or not dared .She had the will as well as the power to start a movement of radical reforms”/Ridley , 1996 , 24/

Western analysts usually point to the Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus and his dealing with socio-economic reforms in the first half of the decade as an illustrative case of innovative leadership . According to one scholar ,the Czech Prime Minister is the exceptional figure in Central Europe ,, who has been successful both in setting forth a determined course of policy and in undertaking a permanent campaign /including regular trips outside Prague and weekly radio talks and newspaper column / to persuade the public of its correctness”.Klaus is also distinctive in his success at creating a strong, well financed ,ideologically homogenous and popular political party to back him ,, /Baylis , 1995 , 309 / Opinions of this sort have changed in 1997 when the Czech Republic saw financial and political crisis caused by flawed budgetary policies of the Premier Klaus’s government.

In Poland the cabinets which succeeded the Mazowiecki-Balcerowicz government have lacked sufficient political will and policy capacity to continue vital institutional reforms. An internal disunity of coalition governments was a cause of forced resignations of the six consecutive cabinets and was creating the successive periods of governmental chaos .Even if the successive prime ministers at the beginning of their terms declared a will to continue reforms of the economic and administrative systems , they lacked a deep political conviction , policy capacity and political skills to materialize these goals in the pluralistic context of parliamentary democracy and militant attitudes of trade unions and other interest groups. An inability of the political and administrative elites of Poland to reform the socialist institutional framework of social insurance , health care and education as well as to restructure the traditional industries and decentralize administrative system well illustrate a low effectiveness of governance during these seven years of post-communist transition.

There are diverse reasons of the low efficiency of governance in Poland in various areas of reforms , including decentralization of state administration .One of most important have been a lack of unity of national political elite.This factor is conceived as crucial in modernization of states. ”Modern elite theorists stress the crucial role of inter-elite consensus in achieving a stable democratic rule after turmoil /... /Elite culture ,which includes operational values, orientations and

behavioral norms , plays a key role in facilitating agreement and in preventing excessive conflict and fragmentation among the ruling and competing elites”/ Szablowski , Derlien , 1993 , 312 /

Regarding a decision-making process , an involvement of a large number of actors and advocacy coalitions / the Presidency , the parliamentary caucuses , political parties and coalitions , the Constitutional Tribunal ,policy advisers ,administrative courts, variety of trade unions, organizations of business groups , media , and a multitude of pressure groups / have engaged political executives and top decision -makers into difficult negotiations over passing their policies through the parliament and enacted by the administrative personnel. In many cases an efficient „muddling through” these policy networks requires time ,experience and knowledge. In democratizing Central Europe it often turned out to be too complex a task for the weak executives lacking internal cohesion and strong policy will . Throughout the first decade of the postcommunist transition ,Poland has not yet developed the political-administrative mechanisms of joint decision making comparable to the West European patterns of a liberal state. This factor , regardless of the difficulty of the process itself , delayed many important reforms of social and administrative system in Poland during the first seven years of transition .The lack of clear political visions and unstable parliamentary support undermined reform ambitions of subsequent executives. For example , none of the seven cabinet ministers in the period of 1989 -1997 has been able to implement the badly needed comprehensive program of social policy reforms , regardless of the fact that „Events of the last five years have demonstrated the significance of social policy reform as one of the key preconditions of long term political and economic stability. The attempts to resolve the social insurance crisis by combination of broad-based spending cuts and concealed fiscal maneuvers produced considerable political damage”/... / the failure to carry out even as small scale family benefit reform demonstrated the limited effectiveness of executive decision making in the new political context”./Inglot ,1995 ,372/.In an important policy area of decentralization of public administration the cabinet ministers led by the Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka did prepared the ambitious package of legislative bills but it was unable to pass it through the parliamentary law making system .The Premier Suchocka was even unable to collect enough parliamentary votes to win the required majority and her cabinet fell down after the unexpected vote of no confidence in the government that was called by the „Solidarity” parliamentary caucus .By this political action , the last of the post - Solidarity cabinets before the

resurrection of power by the post-communists in September 1993, was voted out of office, and had paved the way for the parties of postcommunist left to take over in 1993. The vital reform policies in the social, economic and administrative fields have been slowly continued by the post-communist coalition government consisting of only two parties, but suffering from similar difficulties of internal disunity as prior „Solidarity” leaderships.

IV. The administrative structures

Having characterized the theoretical concepts and ideas of effective governance and reform policies as well as socio-political contexts of policy-making I will now focus on the policy reforms in the field of public administration. As I have mentioned above, after the political revolutions of 1989 in Central Europe, the attention of the anticommunist reformers had focused on building of parliamentary institutions of the new democracies and bypassed for a time being the task of comprehensive reforms of the administrative structures and civil service. A rapid overwhelming reform of existing administrative structures was not perceived as necessary in the early processes of democratization of the former communist regimes. What had been changed immediately, there were only the institutions of communist security apparatuses and central planning bureaucracy. The more comprehensive reform schemes of local and central administration appeared as early as spring 1990 with the legal acts reviving democratic local governments in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The further reforms had to wait longer. In the period of 1990-1991 many analysts and public officials in Poland and elsewhere began to realize of the shortcomings of the existing administrative systems and notice that old administrative rules and the personnel inherited from the communist past may hinder the processes of state building, further marketization of the economic systems, getting out of socio-economic crises and development of a favorable social climate for an emergence of a mature civil society. In the spring 1993 one leading expert painted the situation in the Polish administrative system as being critical: / Kulesza, 1993, p. 36 / „The administrative system which is presently operating in Poland makes it impossible for the government to manage efficiently public affairs. This situation is a result of taking over the state structures that existed under the former regime without introducing any substantial changes”.

Under the socialist regimes an understanding of the necessity of substantial changes of public administration in Poland and Hungary existed within the academic communities and the liberal wings of the ruling establishment , as the communist political and economic systems were eroding in these countries during the eighties. None the less , the idea of „rational ,manageable and competent government”/ Kulesza ,1993 , ibid. /could be placed in the parliamentary agenda of the Central European establishment only after the dismantling of the communist regimes .The priority lists of aims that were conceived of as vital for the reform of the system varied in the different countries but were also based on the common basic values and goals . One of the leading Polish specialists in the field of public administration and the former chief adviser to „Solidarity” cabinet led by Hanna Suchocka , prof. Micha³ Kulesza / 1993 , 240 / had outlined „the four main goals and values which ought to inspire the reform process” : 1. a rational , manageable and competent government 2.a civil state 3.an economical and efficient state 4. a fair , accountable and impartial state .Every category comprised a list of the concrete goals to be implemented in the process of change .The first category ”a rational , manageable and competent government” contained the following reform issues :

- the organization of governance
- the role and organization of the ministries
- the place and the role of central administration
- the reorganization of the territorial structure of the state
- the development of a model of public service
- the introduction of the new techniques of administrative work
- the creation of a separate Ministry / or agency/ of Public Administration

The Minister of Education in the SLD -PSL cabinet - J.J. Wiatr / 1995 / had underlined the two broad goals to be realized in the system of public administration of Poland :1.The establishment of a system of accountable and effective administration in the counties and other administrative units through decentralization of the bureaucratic state apparatuses of real socialism and implementation of an institutional framework of democratic local and district governments 2. Increasing of efficiency of the state performance through „creating a more operative center of

executive power and by putting in order the structures of central and territorial administration” /
Wiatr ,1995 , p. 156 / .

In Hungary the modernization program of public administration adopted by the Hungarian government / 1993 / addressed the main following issues: / Balazs , 1993 , p.83 /

-the definition of the role of the modern state and modern public administration under the specific conditions of the Hungarian political economic , social and cultural systems;

-the administrative implications of the transition towards a market economy and , in particular the consequences of marketization for the intergovernmental distribution of powers and competencies;

-the question to what extent a highly decentralized system of public administration can be reconciled with the requirements for a uniform operation of the public sector ;

-inter administrative co-ordination and mechanisms for improved internal and external control of administrative activity ;

-the interministerial allocation of tasks and competences ;

-the intermediate level of public administration, and here in particular the role of the Commissioners of the Republic , the counties and the deconcentrated organs of state administration;

-the system of local government finance , controls over the financial management of local government and organizational capacities for service provisions to the general public.

According to Czech specialists of Public Administration , the principal operations that should be done to rebuild the administrative systems in the Czech and Slovak republics are the following :/ Hendrych , 1993 , 48 /

- reassess its tasks, with a view to bringing them in line with the standards of other European democracies based on market type economies

-redefine the responsibilities of the different levels and branches of public administration .This includes the development of effective judicial controls over administrative authorities and competent supervision by higher administrative authorities over the operation of lower level units

-create an administrative culture which is informed by the virtues of economy , efficiency effectiveness , professionalism , and an orientation towards citizens needs .

The strategies of reforms of public administration in Poland and other postsocialist countries of Central Europe which have been worked out in the period of 1989 -1993 , shared the same basic principles : / Toonen , 1993 , 154 /

-the retreat from the discredited central government towards decentralization and privatization ;

-the improvement of channels of communication between governments and the citizens in respond to a demand for participation ;

-the creation of a hospitable business environment and an adequate institutional infrastructure for a market economy;

-a concern for public welfare and social justice in terms of services and human rights;

-an efficient government administration at all levels within a setting of public review and internal and external accountability.

V. Decentralization of public administration in Central Europe 1990 -1993

The democratic reorganization of the Leninist states of East Central Europe began from the process of decentralization of political and administrative power .The idea of dismantling the bureaucratic party states was one of the most clearly articulated values in the political thought of the anticommunist opposition In Poland this idea is anchored in the historical self-government tradition , having its roots in the seventeenth century. It survived in the political culture of the nation as reaction against the centralist doctrine of the communist state , and was occasionally used for the propagandistic purpose by the party and state authorities in the times of successive political crises of 1956 ,1970 and 1980 . In the period of 1980-1981 the idea of „Selfgoverning Republic”/ „Samorz¹dna Rzeczpospolita” was put in the centre of the „Solidarity”’s image of independent Poland.From the perspective of political struggles for democracy and pluralism the program was to play a crucial role in the process of dismantling of the centralist party state of real

socialism. The concept of „selfgoverning republic” was influenced by strong localist thinking which idealized the local communities treating them as a shelter against the bureaucratic system of the communist state / Pokladecki , 1995,70 / It is thus quite understandable that the legislative bills containing the proposals of decentralization of the territorial structures of Public Administration in the postcommunist countries were put on the political agenda in the earliest stages of transformations. In Poland the demands for radical local government reforms were presented during the Round Table talks between the ruling coalition and Solidarity that were held in February , March and April of 1989. The program of the Round Table’s Solidarity representatives concerning the reforms of territorial administration comprised the following postulates : / Elander , Gustafson , 1993 , 302 /

- The abolition of the constitutional principle of uniform state power : the local councils should represent the local society only , and be released from hierarchical dependencies;
- New democratic electoral law;
- Recognition of communal legal entity and ownership rights;
- A stable and controllable system of supplying local budgets , free of arbitrary decisions by state administration;
- Limitation of state interference in local affairs to control of the legality of communal ; decisions only, and abolition of administrative regulations concerning communal tasks
- Transfer of local state administration to communal control ;
- Freedom to establish intercommunal associations - local and goal-oriented as well as national - to represent local interests in central government ;

The most decisive change in the pattern of relations between central and local governments was accomplished by the first non-communist Polish government elected after the Round Table agreements headed by Tadeusz Mazowiecki .An adoption by the parliament the „Territorial Selfgovernment Act” of March 8 , 1990 have established the legal framework for the independent local governments and had cleared a way to the free elections to the county councils .Within the bulk of the public opinion this reform was conceived of as a virtually revolutionary change in the Polish political and administrative system , which have recreated the open political arenas in the Polish municipal and rural communities which were absent during the half century

domination of the bureaucratic power centers in Warsaw and the provincial capitals controlled by the apparatuses of the communist party. The local government reform of 1990 had strong ideological appeals. It was informed by the two main political premises :

- The creation of the platform for citizens' participation in the local politics;
- An overcoming of the power networks of the former party nomenclature and its clients.

One of the central task of the „self-government revolution” in Poland was to be a change of the local political elites , what meant the replacement of the former elites with a new officials recruited from the „Solidarity”circles.This was to be accomplished through the mechanism of the democratic election to the local councils. /Pokladecki , 1995 , 72 / These expectations were only partly materialized. The public participation in the first democratic local elections in May , 1990 , was rather small with the turn out of 42.27 % , only to get worse during the second local elections in 1994 / ca 34% / From the political perspective the election of 1990 was a success of the Solidarity /53% of votes / and independent candidates /25% of votes/ who took over the municipal councils. A part of the old local administration officers were left in office because of their administrative skills and a lack of a new educated cadres to fill up the vacant posts. These officials have been later coopted into the emerging local elite networks .The bulk of the deputies to local assemblies had previously no experience in politics or administration .Only 1/3 of them , according to the poll in 1990 , felt to be competent in the area of management of a public office / Pokladecki , 1995 , 74 /.The research conducted five years after the establishment of a new system indicated that „The process of political transformations taking place in local communities meets a number of obstacles and barriers. One of them is the low level of political integration of the communities .The deficient and faulty mechanisms of political participation characterizing different levels of the political system of the „People's Poland” have disappeared after 1989 while the process of creation of the new pattern of political integration based on political participation and developed system of articulation of interests is still in the beginning phase. Political parties and organizations ,weakly rooted in local communities, play a minor role in the political life of communes.No strong interests groups have been created on the local political stages.In this istuation only two institutions aspire to the role of political integration centers : commune councils

and self-government administration. the scope and the level of integration is to a great extent the result of their struggle for power and domineering place in local life. Though the Act on Territorial Government of March 1990 gives the main role in the local government to commune councils, the local administration has more trumps as to become the central institution of political integration in communes. it has at its disposal decision-making, organization, human and material resources, the knowledge of law and of techniques of functioning. The domination of bureaucracy in political integration may have a hindering effect on the formation of local democracy” / Pokladecki, 1995, 118 /

The overall condition of local democracy in Poland after seven years of an existence of the new system is differentiated. On the negative side there is a widespread public passivity and very weakly developed attitude of political competence among citizens of municipalities and provinces. On the positive side there is an evidence of emerging a new perceptions of the role of the local representatives and executives and the common responsibility for socio-economic developments of the local communities, as well as stronger feelings of belongings of people to their own counties and municipalities.

The legislative reforms of similar sort, albeit not identical to the Polish case, were passed through the new parliaments in Hungary /„Act on Local Government” of September 1990 / and Czechoslovakia /November, 1990 /. The speed of the implementation of these reforms in comparison with the slow change of other public administration institutions illustrates well a strong ideology of localism versus central state administration that was prevailing in the first awe of democratization of the liberated countries of East Central Europe.

In Hungary a process of democratization of the administrative system has brought about the multiplication of the local communities. The Act on Local Government of 1990 has granted to every settlement, regardless of its size, a right to elect its own council and mayor and to establish a formal independence from the central state. Decisions undertaken by these authorities within their competencies are binding for the local administrative units and may not be changed by other organs until they do not violate the state laws. One of the results of the new regulation was an increase of the number of local administrative units and elected councils from 1600 at the beginning of the reform to 3200 under the new system /Palne, 1996, p.3 /. The new

Hungarian legislation on local government followed the principles of the Charter on local Government of the Council of Europe .On the other hand it recalls back some traditions from the interwar period /Balazs , 1993 , 1993 /. The central position in the system have been granted to the great number of small municipalities .The new legislation has diminished the significance of the greater units : the counties .These territorial power centers ceased to exert an administrative control over the municipalities which they had possessed under the old system. According to Hungarian academic experts , the 1990 local government reform established one of the most liberal systems of local government in Europe.”The number of municipalities nearly doubled from 1.584 under the former system to 3. 092. There are now a large number of villages which often find it difficult to fulfill their mandatory tasks and to make effective use of their scope of discretion.”/ Balazs , 1993, 85 / „few doubt that the Act /on Local Government /exaggerates certain local autonomies and it clearly fails to provide for the adequate coordination , integration and supervision of Hungary’s more than 3.000 municipalities” / Verebelyi , 1993 , 112 / The decentralization of the system that was motivated by the democratic ideals , in the opinion of many experts does not seem to produce effective outcomes. ”The proliferation of very small rural local authorities which resulted from the break-up of joint authorities ,represents a step backwards , especially if it is considered in the context of local government reorganization efforts in other European countries.The fragmentation ,even atomization ,is one of its major deficiencies., / Szabo ,1993, 101/

In former Czechoslovakia the system of local government was also deeply reconstructed The nationwide elections in November 1990 „brought into being new communal governments constitutionally regulated by new acts ratified by the Czech and Slovak national councils in September the same year ,, The number of communes increased by 40 % and reached 5769 / Elander , Gustaffson , 1993 , p.307- 310 / .In 1991 there were 5.745 towns and localities in the Czech Republic and 2.830 in the Slovak Republic./Hendrych,1993,54 /The downfall of communism had evoked the similar reactions concerning the dispersion of the state power to the local units of self-governments like in other countries of the region. This tendency has been illustrated by „One outstanding trend in the development of the Czech local government system which has been the fragmentation of communes.”/.../As a protest against the former centralism , almost every settlement unit wants to have its own local authority.Unfortunately this

fragmentation has not been guided by any criteria of organizational and economic efficiency” / Elander , Gustafson , 1993 , 308 /

VI. Reorganization of the central government

The wide scale reforms of central administration in Poland have been delayed in time and in mid -1997 they constitute an unfinished process .The will of restructuring of the central government of Poland has been widely shared by the elites of the main political parties . The political and legislative processes of doing the reforms had lasted five years until some partly solutions were adopted in the late 1996 .The first legislative works began in 1991 under the government of Jan K. Bielecki, which had proposed a bill on the Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs. The bill was defeated in the parliament. Since that time the successive cabinets were working on the legislative projects concerning reforms of the Council of Ministers The more comprehensive legislative package was done by the cabinet presided by the Premier Hanna Suchocka , but the short life of government has not allowed him to pass this package through the Sejm .Nevertheless the package of bills adopted by Suchocka’s council of ministers between January and September 1993 , was an important step in the process of preparation of the legal framework for a new organization of the centre of public administration /„centrum rz¹du”/.The proposals were influenced by the British and French models of the organization of the Council of Ministers and .the internal structure of ministries. The Suchocka’s reform package focused on the following objectives : / Wiatr ,1995 , 156-7 /

1. the reforms were seen as a necessary precondition for increasing efficiency of the state administration , through the formation of the integrated and effective „center of government” ;
2. decentralization of the public administration through the creation of the intermediate level of local government ;
3. computerization of the administrative system ;
4. creation of the system of politically independent state civil service , based on the

distinction between the political appointees and professional civil servants;

5. the establishment of the Office of Public Orders, that would reform the system of allocation of the public orders.

The parliamentary election of September 1993 had brought about the resurrection of the coalition of the two post-communist parties (SLD and PSL) in the position of controlling majority in Sejm .The leaderships of the two parties were divided over the extent and structure of the administrative reforms, but they have not questioned the necessity of the reform itself. Under the SLD PSL coalition , the legislative works on the preparation of the new bills on the reforms of central government continued very slowly , following the path paved by the previous cabinet. After three years of legislative works and severe political struggles between the parties of the incumbent coalition , the package of bills on the reform of „center of government,, had successfully passed through the parliament in August 1996 and was signed by the President.The new legislation had embraced the majority of proposals developed by the earlier draft laws drawn by the cabinet of Hanna Suchocka. One important omission from the 1993 legislative proposals has been the exclusion of the bill on the reform of territorial administration that intended to recreate the selfgovernment districts at the intermediate level of state administration .Thus the adopted laws have been devoted exclusively to the reform of central level of state administration.

The structure of Polish central government and administration , mainly the organization of the Cabinet Ministers including inter-ministerial relations , were conceived by many administrative experts and politicians as a source of a serious shortcomings of political and economic management of Poland. One of these shortcomings has been a lack of cooperation and coordination of the policies of the semi-independent ministries , creating the decision making chaos. A fragmentation and overlapping of the policy areas , especially in the economic sphere have been a cause of many conflicts of competencies and interests among the branch ministries .The ministries in charge of different branches of economy had no incentives to cooperate in solving problems and issues that were outgoing beyond the spheres of their responsibilities .These circumstances created many „ incoherent and often contradictory decisions adopted by particular ministries ,and more generally , slowing down of all administrative policy making , which requires

inter-ministerial CO-operation”./Taras ,1993 , p.27 /.The financial conflicts among the administrative departments at the central and regional levels of government were detrimental to the position of the state executive versus the other parts of state powers and interest groups. The bureaucratic politics around the budgetary resources was also eroding the ability of central administration to cope with the growing challenges of socio-economic transformation. In the opinion of one analyst . As examined by the Dutch expert /Toonen ,1993 /,The system of joint decision making in Poland displays in an extreme and enlarged form all the problems of ministerial collegial government which can also be found elsewhere. The Council of Ministers is obviously too weak to act as an integrating force , and the same is true for the president and the parliament ,which has not been able to tip the balance to either’ advantage. Where a collegial ministerial and cabinet system already creates serious problems of interdepartmental coordination , this is afortiori true for Polish government, where the informal culture and routines of consociational and consensual politics and administration have also had no time to develop.”

The problem of a weakness of coordinated governance which had characterized the Polish state in the period of 1992 -1996 was additionally strengthened by the dual constitutional position of the so called presidential ministries / under the „Small Constitution” of 1992 /which , according to constitutional regulations were supposed to be supervised by the Prime Minister but were also partially subordinated to the President of the Republic .The controversies focused on the „security” ministers : the Ministry of Defence , the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs .The unclear constitutional status of these ministries was used politically by the former President Lech Wa³ęsa during his term in office. He attempted to exert a substantial control over the key personnel of these state organs ,especially over the right of nomination of the ministers .Many critics of the institutional structure of the cabinet ministers in Poland in the first half of the 1990s pointed out , that it was resembling more a „loose federation” of ministries and departments than a integrated unit of collective decision making .As noticed one analyst / Pe³czyński , 1993 , p. 3 /,„Some ministers, albeit formally act on behalf of the government ,de facto conduct their own policies”.The former Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak , once he held the prime minister’s office, was quoted as saying :„The sectoral division of Poland continues its existence and hampers the possibility of overcoming the problems which stand across the

ministerial jurisdictions. /.../ the country needs a functional centre coordinating a work of individual ministers” / Lipszyc , 1994 , 3 /

The new legislation that was passed through the parliament in August 1996 and has been under enforcement since January 1.1997, adopted the strengthening of the position of the Prime Minister in the structure and process of government as an institutional device intended to improve the governance in Poland .Under the previous legislation inherited from the socialist regime , the minister’s responsibilities were prescribed in the statutes of the ministries. After the recent reform of the law on the Council of Ministers , the premier has obtained a discretionary power over the tasks of the particular ministers .The new Act on the Cabinet Ministers of 1996 has defined the role of the premier as a decisive power broker in coordination of work of the ministers , except for the security ministers whose duties are defined by the status.The previous regulation prescribing that „ Minister supervises over the particular field of administration” have been changed and the range of prescribed tasks of the field ministers has been put under the jurisdiction of the prime minister , albeit within the limits of the rule of laws ./Winczorek , 1996 , p. 5 /. This change was made in response to many critical voices which argued that Poland needed an administrative organs to secure the active governmental policies accounted for by the prime minister. The emphasis has been put on the concept of governance perceived in terms of stronger executive power , different from the pure implementation functions of ministerial offices that are prescribed by statutes / Kulesza , 1996 , 15 ; Pe³czynski , 1996 , 4 ; Winczorek , 1996 , 5 / The new regulations are intended to build central institution coordinating of the work of the ministers , thus to improve the government performance. After the collapse of the communist party which fulfilled such a role within the state bureaucracy, under the new system there was a lack of strategic coordinating institution that could take over the coordinating function .The center of government , as assumed by the Polish specialists to be followed the models of Great Britain , France and Germany , was to be based on the strong position of the prime minister and a highly qualified civil service.This way of thinking refers to the growing impact of public management in the contemporary public administration in Europe, what is especially noticeable in Great Britain. In Poland during the socialist epoch the theory of public management had no opportunity to get any influence within the state bureaucracies and after 1989 was mostly a legal school of thought which informed the process of rebuilding of the system of

public administration under democracy. The notion of the minister's obligations as being strictly regulated by the statutes, had left a very small area for a political entrepreneurship to the ministers and the premier, thus making these figures only the guardians of statutes and preventing them from undertaking more active style of governance. /Kulesza, 1996; Pełczyński, 1996/

The strengthening of the role of the prime minister has been accompanied by the creation of the Prime Minister's Office/"Kancelaria Premiera"/. This new organ of the central administration have replaced the former Office of the Council of Ministers - the remnant of the socialist epoch. The new institution is planned to be a central machine working for the prime minister and responsible to his him. The chief of the office is nominated by the premier and works on his behalf. The office comprises a complex structure, containing the deputies prime ministers, secretaries and undersecretaries of state, General Director, Secretary of the Council of Ministers and 23 departments and bureaus / Subotic, 1997, 4 /

Among the new elements of the cabinet ministers after the recent changes there is a clause that prevent the ministers to take an open critical stance against the collective decisions taken by the council of ministers as a whole. This legal measure is informed by the notion of the cabinet „speaking with one voice” after its decisions were taken collegially.

General directions of the recent changes seem to respond to a theoretical premises of the cabinet ministers specialists in the political science literature. For example according to the Laver-Shepsle theory: „In certain circumstances collective cabinet decision making is inevitable. Most obviously, if different government departments come into direct conflict with one another, then it will not be possible for each of the ministers to act autonomously, and such conflicts must be resolved if deadlock is not to result. In addition, certain policy problems, for example urban regeneration, will be intrinsically „inter-departmental in character and will require coordinated policy making and implementation”./ Laver and Shepsle, 1991, 12 /.

Among the most important institutional reforms of the structure of the cabinet ministers in Poland to be implemented in 1997 within the framework of the new legislation is the concentration of the economic administration through the establishment of the single Ministry of Economy / Ministertstwo Gospodarki /. This new ministerial organ took over the duties of the formerly existing three separate sectoral ministries: the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation, and the Ministry of the Regional Economy and

Housing The amalgamation of central industrial administration into a single Ministry of Economy , in force since January 1 ,1997 is expected by the architects of the reform to enhance the state's capacity of working out a long term strategies of socio-economic development and to raising the competitiveness of the Polish firms in the international market. The public opinion supports a view that the overall reform of public administration will bring about an improvement of the policy capacity of the center of state . In the public opinion poll organized by the large daily „Rzeczpospolita” / September 1996 , No 205 , p. 1 -2 / , 76 % of the interviewed population believed that the current reforms of public administration would make the state administration in Poland more effective./ Rzeczpospolita, 1996 /

The other newly established ministry in the field of economic administration is the Ministry of State Treasury /”Ministerstwo Skarbu” / whose main role is to exert control of public property remaining under state's supervision A role of the Finance Ministry has been respectively downgraded .Its duties are to be focused in the area of a short-term supervision of the budgetary policies. Part of the prerogatives of the formerly very powerful Finance Ministry have been transferred towards the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Treasury.

The new Ministry of Public Administration and Internal Affairs / „Ministerstwo Administracji i Spraw Wewnętrznych” / which has begun formal existence since January 1 ,1997 as a part of the new structure of the Council of Ministers was designed as very influential and important organ of government .It supervises the whole structure of the public administration , the criminal and security police , border police ,central fire department , immigration affairs ,civil defense, special military units and the Office of European Integration and Transborder Cooperation ./ The offices of European Integration are to be created in the structures of all the ministries./

The Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs has taken over the duties of the former Ministry of Internal Affairs and The Ministry of the Territorial Economy which both have been abolished in a new legislation.

In sum under the current stage of reform of the central government of Poland , seven ministries and central agencies had been abolished and eight new ministries and central agencies have been put into life.

1. The new ministries and governmental agencies established by the reform Acts of 1996

- The Ministry of Administration and Internal affairs
- The Ministry of Economy
- The Office of Prime Minister
- The Center of Strategic Studies
- The Committee of European Integration
- The Office of Housing and the Development of Cities
- The Main Geodesic Office

2. The government institutions abolished through the reform Acts of 1996

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs
- The Office of the Council of Ministers
- The Ministry of the Ownership Transformation
- The Ministry of International Economic Cooperation
- The Ministry of Industry and Trade
- The Main Office of Planning
- The Ministry of Construction

VII. The policies of decentralization and regionalization

One of the main difficulties of modernization of the public administration in Central Europe is a lack of consensus among political elites as well as professional experts concerning the question of a rational equilibrium between the centralism, regionalism and localism and a lack of the clear vision of territorial organization of the states. The decentralization of public administration after the collapse of the system of real socialism have been most successful in the bottom levels of government. / counties, municipalities and other local settlements/. The attempts to extend further the process of decentralization towards the intermediate / meso / levels of public administration have been not equally successful and the directions of future changes are vague. Throughout the period of seven years of post-socialist transition the political elites have

been engaged in the lengthy discussions concerning an optimal model of the territorial organization of the public administration of their countries. These debates have brought about a consensus that the reforms of the early nineties had constituted only a first step of the processes of modernization of the state and must be continued in the near future. The critiques of the recent reorganization of central administration of Poland in 1996-1997 criticize its limited scope and the failure to address the central question of the decentralization of the state and its administration.

The issues of decentralization and regionalization in Poland have revolved since the early nineties around an eventual introduction of intermediate level of public administration./„powiat” / and the enlargement of the regional units of state administration./ voivodship /.Both these issues have been closely interconnected with each other. As the district / „powiat” /unit of government is concerned , the main point of controversy focused on the project of re-establishment of the intermediate level of selfgovernment , that would fill up the space between the central state organs and local government structures. Bringing back the „powiat” would mean a return to the three tier administrative model that did exist in Poland prior 1975. At that time the state administration was organized into 17 regions / voivodships / divided into districts / „powiats” / which were further fragmented into smaller units -the counties. The 1975 communist administrative reform had centralized the system of power at the capital level and had established weak voivodships , being easy to be controlled from the top of the party-state machinery .All the units had the bureaucratic and so called „selfgovernment” bodies which in the system of authoritarian rule were almost completely controlled by the state and party bureaucrats. After 1989 the regional representative bodies were abolished and the voivodships have obtained the status of territorial units of state administration. The chief executives /voivods/ have become the representatives of the central government in the provinces being nominated by the Prime Minister and responsive to him .There is a prevailing opinion that current size of voivodships is too small and the voivods are too weak to could realize efficiently the tasks of the regional development. Most of them lack the sufficient means of field infrastructure and qualified cadres to deal with growing problems of economic and technological transformation ,unemployment , ecological crisis , internationalization of the markets and an emerging European regionalism . Many opinion making centers in Poland support an idea of building a system of larger and stronger regional units

where the number of regions would vary from 12 to 25 .These larger regions would be divided into the districts / „powiats”/ organized on the self-government basis .Both elements of such a potential change are linked and should be enacted at about the same time.The new large administrative regions / voivodships /should have a dual / selfgovernment and government /political statue The projects assume that a new district /”powiat” /would extend the scope of local selfgovernment and civil participation in the system of politics and administration in Poland.The advocates of decentralization emphasize that the future economic development of the country is dependent on the strong regional units capable to implementation of effective development strategies based on sufficient infrastructural resources as well as financial and human capital .They argue that the existing structure of the territorial administration is highly ineffective and that decentralization reform lies in the vital interest of the whole society .Among the strongest supporters of the „powiat” reform is the Union of the Polish Municipalities and other selfgovernment associations / Kaczmarek ,1996 ,5 /.A general consensus has been reached that „powiat” reform and the enlargement of the existing regions are interdependent and neither may be implemented separately. Small size of the most of existing voivodships does not allow for their division in to a number of smaller selfgovernmental districts.The enlargement of voivodships implies the reduction of their number.The discussed variants of a future territorial division of Poland contain 12 , 17 or 25 larger regions and 320 districts /„powiat” /

One more concrete step towards decentralization has been recently adopted Act on Large Cities / effective in Poland since January ,1996 / .The cities with a population over 100.000 inhabitants/ 46 cities / have got a right to take under their supervision secondary schools , hospitals , roads , theaters. cultural centers , sport facilities ,etc.

The capital city of Poland, Warsaw has been granted a special statute which quarantines the municipal government more powers than the other cities .

A process of implementation of this act has met many difficulties because the widening of tasks were not followed by the respective transfers of financial resources from the center down. Governments of many cities lack sufficient means to fulfill their duties.The conflicts between the ministry of finance and the large municipalities over the interpretation of legal acts concerning financial issues have recently deepened and some major cities have decided to sue the ministry of finance to the court on a charge of violating the law on municipalities.

VIII. The program of decentralization and selfgovernment in Poland issued by the Council of Ministers in September 1996

In September 1996 the Cabinet Ministers of the Republic of Poland had adopted and published in press the document entitled : „The Efficient , Friendly and Secure state. The Premises of the Program of the Decentralization of State Functions and the Development of the Territorial Selfgovernment”. This official document illustrates the intentions of the incumbent political administration regarding a future of reforms of public administration in Poland. The authors of the document have elaborated the following strategic goals to be realized in the next phase of the process of public administration reforms :

- decentralization - perceived as a transfer of competencies from the central state organs to local and regional levels of selfgovernment;

- deconcentration - perceived as a transfer of policy competencies and tasks from the higher to the lower tiers of state administration ;

- deetatization and deregulation - lowering the scope of direct interventions and restrictions of state bureaucracy in to the economy and developing a system of policy tools ;

- strengthening of legal and financial resources of the territorial selfgovernment ;

- maintaining the unitary character of the state.

The „Program” has presented two / optional / models of the future territorial organization of state :

I. The Three level model of the public administration

This model comprises three territorial units : a region / voivodship / , subregion / „powiat”/ county/ „gmina”/ In the regional level the main actors of a policy process would consist of a political representation of the voivodship /selfgovernmental voivodship / , deconcentrated

organs of the state administration / and the non-governmental organizations. The revived administrative district /"powiat"/ would constitute an intermediate /subregional / unit of selfgovernment ,being responsible for the policy areas which are too large and costly to could be efficiently managed by the single counties.

II. The Two level model of public administration

This model consists of two basic units :the regions / selfgovernment and administrative voivodship of the existing size and number / and the counties. This model , being an alternative to the former, instead of creating the third tier of government postulates the making of functional associations of the counties as optional units, which would strengthen the county selfgovernment and allow the counties to finance the local investments of a larger scale.

The common premise of both models is the maintenance of the strong basic level of selfgovernment /county/ whose competencies should not be limited by the eventual implementation of additional units of government.Each of the two models has its advocates and opponents .The choice between the options has been not yet done.The public mood seem to be more in favor of the three tier model. Within the governing coalition there is a lack of consensus regarding a future model of the organization of state .The document of the Council of Ministers advises that the main criteria to be taken under consideration should be „the future constitution of the state ,the historic structure of the Polish territory, the Polish cultural tradition of the organization of society, and learning from the best examples of the other countries”/.../

IX. The political process of administrative reforms

Administrative reforms in Poland have been always highly influenced by the political interests of competing political elites.The existing structure of territorial organization of the country has been established by the Gierek leadership in the 1975 .The changes of that time were motivated by the political calculation of the communist party leadership : strengthening of the control of the party-state central apparatus over the peripheral centers of political and administrative power and to centralize the state as a political and administrative unit .The

administrative reform of 1975 had destroyed the formerly existing system of 17 large regions /voivodships /and the accompanying network of districts /„powiats”/. Eradication of the traditional administrative structure and replacing it with a network of 49 small voivodships have undermined the well established structure of social , economic and political relationships in the state periphery. The new system have created the situation of full dependency of the periphery on the centre, hindered the evolutionary developments of strong economic agglomerations and their civilization impact on the provincial areas ,and brought about the breaking down all the autonomy of the local communities.

Under the democratic regime of the nineties the demands of redrawing the existing territorial map of public administration has been one of the main issues of the political platforms of major parties and have been a fashionable theme of public discussions in media.

During the public debates on this issue , the center-right and center left parties / Union of Freedom , Democratic Left Alliance / have been presenting supportive stance towards the three level model, while the Polish Peasant Party has been strongly in favor of the other scheme. /The Union of Freedom / previously the Democratic Union / has been the strongest advocate of the revival of the district selfgovernment / so called „powiat”reform / .The second party of the ruling coalition / Polish Peasant Party- PSL / has presented itself as an opponent of bringing back in the „powiat” as an intermediate level of self-government and administration in Poland. The political platform of PSL underlines a superiority of the two tier system of public administration, consisting of selfgovernment woivodship /wojewodztwo samorz¹dowe/ and selfgovernment counties.

Much of the discussions in the media, the party caucuses , and academic communities over the past years has revolved around an optimal scheme of relations between central , regional and local governments.The parties of political center-right emphasize that further decentralization of the existing territorial structure of public administration is necessary in order to continue a historic task of state modernization , initiated by the revolution of 1989 .The idea of widening of a legal and political framework for the extension of participation democracy to the district level has obtained a substantial approval of majority local government activists ,most academic specialists and parties .The latter represent mainly the parties of liberal right and liberal left /SLD./ A public opinion regarding the eventuality of implementation of a third tier of selfgovernment /„powiat”/ is not consensual .A recent survey of local government elites has

pointed out that as many as 70 % of the county officials in Poland would like the broadening of the scope of their competencies , and 80 % demanded a change of budgetary rules in favor of the counties / Under the present financial system only 12 -13% of the local revenues is left in the counties' budgets / .Most of local governments' officials understand the necessity of a reduction of the existing number of voivodships ,and re-establishment of a larger unit of self-government /„powiat/. This variant is congruent with the European Charter of Territorial Selfgovernment /Rzeczpospolita ,1996 ,No. 192 , p. 2/ The mood of public opinion on the „powiat” issue has been evolving during the past three years towards a less favorite attitude. The public opinion polls conducted in 1996 by the two independent institutes showed that 43% and 40% of the respondents were against the implementation of the „powiat” sort of districts. The percentage of supporters were 36% and 34% respectively /Rzeczpospolita,25.09.1996/ The opponents of the „powiat” reform are representing an opinion, that three tier administrative system in the country of Poland 's size would create too dense a network of territorial authorities , which would eventually enlarge the arena for political parties and interest groups pressures to obtain the financial resources, increase the amount of public sector jobs and enlarge the budgetary sector of economy which is now enough big and inefficient. Thus, according to the opponents of the three tiers model ,the costs of the reform of this sort would put too high a burden for the state budget. The critics also notice a danger of a further growth of the bureaucratic class through the public sector employment , which have already taken place over the years of postcommunist transition, despite of the official antibureaucratic rhetoric. Some academic experts claim that from the perspective of contemporary organizational theory the „powiat” proposal does not take into account an undergoing revolution in telecommunication and new trends in the science of public management / Kiełun , 1996 , 16 /.According to this view, the two level system of public administration in Poland, provided it extends the selfgovernment councils into the existing regions /49 voivodships/ is the only reasonable model for our country. /Kiełun , 1996, 17 /. Similar proposition may be drawn upon the comparison of the Polish and Scandinavian system of local government. An examination of the Scandinavian system of territorial organization has led one researcher to a conclusion that the Polish county should have 50-90 thousands of inhabitants and the number of counties should be no greater than 600 / instead of existing 2.400 / By the same estimations the number of voivodships should be 19-24 .The author believes that „, in this context

, so called „powiat” reform is not the rational idea and should be abandoned.” / Dobrowolski , Wróbel , 1995 , 142 /

Such arguments fit well to the PSL’s electoral platform .The reform policy of this party is informed mainly by electoral calculations. „The Peasant Party is strong in the rural communities, but it is practically non existent in larger cities./.../ It is therefore not interested in creating middle level of territorial administration on which its politically strong rural base would be diluted within a less friendly urban environment.”/ Wiatr , 1995, 158 /. The impartial policy on the administrative reforms is also difficult to be achieved because of the political bargaining of the regional lobbies in the parliament. Groups of deputies elected from the small voivodships have been campaigning against the decentralization , because such a reform would reduce the number of voivodships , disturb the interests of small regions and change the regional balance of power of the ruling parties.

The controversies between the supporters and opponents of the „powiat” in 1996 and 1997 have created a legislative stalemate in the parliament. A good illustration of the most recent success of PSL’s anti-powiat campaign has been the withdrawal of the „powiat” clause from the Constitution of the Polish Republic adopted by the national referendum of May 25 .The Union of Freedom - the largest party of the center right parliamentary opposition and one which strongly supports the „powiat” variant of decentralization has recently abandoned the special parliamentary committee protesting in this way against the delay of legislative works on the „powiat” reform by the incumbent postcommunist government. The future of the decentralization reform in Poland is unclear, even more so because of the next parliamentary election that will be held in autumn 1997.In the pre-election period the parties of the ruling coalition ,especially the Polish Peasant Party are not eager to get involved into the politically risky tasks of decentralization reforms.

In Hungary the public discourse on the administration reforms during the past two years has focused upon the methods of upgrading of an economic efficiency of administrative organs versus the political rationality of existing network of administrative units : the central government, the counties and local settlements. There has been a growing evidence that local councils which were created in the 1990 turned out to be too weak for effective governance into their communities. According to one Hungarian expert in the area , „The splattering of the local administration has corrupted the professional naive ,has weakened the efficiency of administration

and local services. / ... / Nowadays there is an intention to make the system more effective, but it seems to be very difficult to cut the democratic rights of small local settlements, to integrate the independent units, to prefer the rational investments in the more dynamic areas against the social equity, / Palne, 1996, p. 3 /

Like in Poland, the problem of decentralization of government at the meso level has not been satisfactorily resolved in this country. The formerly existing counties have been deprived of their power through the 1990 legislation. The territorial branches of central ministries and other state agencies gained more influence in the local affairs. According to the country specialist, „the Hungarian state of public administration is not as decentralized as it could be theoretically. The state organs insist on their power and hesitate to transfer their former tasks and competencies. The local governments /... / are not appropriate to carry out every local and territorial tasks because of their size, personal and financial capacities” / Palne, 1996 /. There are strong opponents of the continuation of the decentralization process including so diverse actors as the central ministries, small villages and town councils which are not interested in giving more power to the counties. The existing selfgovernment vacuum has been filled up by the deconcentrated units of the central government. The expansion of local branches of central organs / deconcentration / has decreased the democratic control over local administration. Like in Poland, in Hungary prevails now an opinion, that financial dependence of local governments on the central government is too much a burden and that decision making system with regard to the budget redistribution is over-centralized / Palne, 1996, p. 8 /. The degree of citizens' participation at the local level of government and politics is very low and most people do not feel that they may have some real impact on the decisions and policies of their local authorities and representatives. Similarly to Poland, the local communities have not yet been established and the degree of political integration of small municipalities and villages is still very low, as evidenced by the low participation rate in the local elections / Antoszewski, 1995 /. In both countries the governmental programs of further reforms of public administration have been adopted but their implementation is very slow due to the counter-pressures of interest groups, inertia of bureaucratic politics and the passivity of the citizens. The lack of innovative leaderships at the central level of political power and immobility of citizenry leaves some key ingredients of the modernization of Central European states for the future innovative leaderships.

X. The administrative personnel and civil service

The low quality of administrative personnel was traditionally a part of characteristics of Central European administrative systems. There had been no tradition of the state service as a kind of a profession, an accumulation of an evaluation criteria of the acting officers and building a high prestige of state civil servants. Unlike in Great Britain where „from the middle of the nineteenth century developed slowly a tradition and a code of behavior which belongs to whole civil service and not any one department or to any one grade or class of civil servants”/ Capman, O’Toole, 1995,8/

The establishment of the professional civil service based on the European and U.S. models had entered the reform agenda of innovative leaderships in Central Europe soon after 1989 democratic changes. Under the socialist regimes the key personnel policy in administration was controlled by the headquarters of the communist party. The high rank officials from all levels of government were part of the nomenclature and had to be loyal to the party executives, even if they were formally not party members. The bureaucratic party-state of real socialism had employed a great number of bureaucrats controlling the economic system and all other spheres of social life.

The new legislation on the civil service modeled on the West European directives, has been adopted by the Polish parliament in June 14, 1996. This Act has created a new category of employees of the government administration: the public servants. The editorial of the independent daily „Gazeta Wyborcza” referred to this act as „one of the most important reforms of the state, which clearly defines the administrative positions from the political ones, protects the civil servants against political arbitrariness. Without this act, all other political and economic reforms would have been useless.” / Gazeta Wyborcza 15-16.06.1996 /. After the Act on Civil Service of July 5, 1996 was enforced, the successful candidates to the governmental jobs would constitute the corps of civil servants. These specialists in the public management are to be recruited on the basis of high professional merit, M.A. university degree, and at least seven years of prior administrative experience. The last criterion was highly criticized by the parliamentary opposition of 1993-1997 parliamentary term, which accused the authors of the statute that it favors the candidates with substantial experience within the former socialist administration. A recruitment process to the civil service is going to be conducted by the special state commission consisted of independent high rank civil servants. The Act on Civil Service defines the legal status of the

persons employed in the executive organs of the central and regional government administration. It does not include selfgovernment level of administration and employees working at the public agencies ,public economic sector, educational system etc. The Act established the four categories of civil servants. The category „A” comprises the administrative executives which should have the highest organizational and leadership skills, and to have at least seven years of administrative experience. the second, „B” category requires at least five years of experience and the candidate’s capability of „analytic and synthetic” thinking. The category „S”, comprises the „specialists”. The candidates to all these positions must possess a university level degree and to know at least one foreign language. The latter is not required of the candidates belonging to the category „C”, whose functions are to be of secondary importance. / Rzeczpospolita , 14. 10. 1996/

The highest rank official to supervising the civil service corps is a new created position of the general director of civil service whose position is that of the central organ of state administration. The heads of the regional corps of civil service will be the General Directors of the regional executives /voivodship offices /. This position created by the Act on Civil Service is quite new in the Polish practice .It was modeled upon the British administrative system .The „Chief of the Civil Service” , „Secretary of the Ministry” and „General Director” in the regional executives are the highest „apolitical” positions in the administrative hierarchy. The „political” staff embraces the ministers, deputy ministers, political secretary of the minister , advisers to the ministers, heads of regional executives and deputy head executives / wojewoda , vice -wojewoda /

According to the new legal provisions , the members of the civil service elite are not allowed to maintain any partisan links. The highest category of civil servants and the general directors are legally obliged not to be members of any political party. One may see in these provisions an inspiration of the classical paradigm of the dichotomy between politics and administration, which is difficult to observe in the practice of governance in contemporary West European states. Excluded from the civil service employees are the political chiefs of departments who are to be nominated by the winning parties and will be required by law and to resign their posts after alternative party takes over. An ethical code of civil service is furnished by the virtues of „high professionalism ,fairness ,political neutrality ,loyalty to state , obedience to law , cooperation with the principal”

A full enforcement of the new legislation into governmental practice of Poland will take at least ten years. The only institutions which have been so far put into life under the new legislation are the General Director of Civil Service, the administrative secretaries of the ministries and the general directors of the regional executives. The High Commission of the Civil Service - an independent organ of a recruitment and an evaluation of the candidates to civil service will be soon established, as well as the other institutions which must be put in life to secure an enforcement of the other parts of the civil service. A consolidation of the institution of civil service in the practice of public offices in Central Europe will have to overcome the old bad tradition of treatment a state administration as the instrument of power of the incumbent establishments. The legacies of central european authoritarianism in the interwar period and the fatal experience of socialist party-states are not quite forgotten still have a hindering impact on the evolutionary development of an impartial public administration.

The ambitions of political parties about having „their own people” in the strategic administrative positions has been a long tradition in the administrative cultures of Central European ruling elites and have persisted until today. This is true not only in Poland where coalition governments are often the prisoners of party constituencies. In the Czech Republic the problem of power networks including state officials and the party machines has been recently a subject of growing public concern. Some observers of Central European scenes notice that „the pursuit of particularistic party interest within the contexts of administrative reforms will replicate rather than repress the patterns of neo-traditionalism and fragmentation inherited from the past. Unfortunately, this type of centralization via the appropriation of power by a single party is likely to dominate efforts at administrative reforms throughout the region”/ Cirtautas, 1995, 300 /

Such phenomena may obstruct the efforts of the reform minded legislators who want to establish an impartial, committed to public duties public administration and problem-oriented style of governance. The examples of a „new traditionalism” are numerous across the region. In Poland the leading daily have recently published an evidence that the recruitment process to the newly established posts of the general directors in the regional /voivodship /administration has been interfered by the the parties of the government coalition. According to the press reports, quite a many of these recently nominated high rank civil servants have been recruited out of the ranks of

the officials linked formally with the acting leaderships of the ruling parties /SLD and PSL /.This rapid nominations have put in doubt the fairness of the recruitment process and the observance of a rule of equal opportunity of selection to civil service staff. / GW 14.02.96

In the Czech Republic the re-centralization of state power and consolidation of power networks of business and administration is also under way as illustrated by the growth of partisan „keys” of recruitment’s to administration positions / Gabal , 1997 , 16 /

The traditional administrative cultures and styles of governance in East Central Europe had no historical opportunity to get modernized throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was heavily affected by clientelism , low professional competence, weakly developed work ethics, the lack of public responsibility ,arrogance and corruption. If such a legacy continues to be a part of administrative behaviour in the next century /as it still does across Central Europe / it may hamper a development of mature democratic societies .Especially important to development of the democratic patterns of relationships between the state and civil society is the administrative culture of municipal bureaucrats and servicemen working in housing administration ,local tax administration , unemployment bureaus , social security and health care offices, consumer protection agencies , local police officers etc. The nature of relations between the citizen and administrative personnel depends on the quality of work ethics ,cultural habits ,work and pay satisfaction of administrative staff , transparency of decision-making procedures and logic of legal norms .These are the socio-economic conditions which in Poland ,and in other postsocialist countries of Central Europe may be achieved only throughout the evolutionary processes of economic ,cultural and moral developments. Europeanization of rules, behaviour patterns and policies may be very helpful in this process.

Concluding remarks

The institutional changes on this level were undertaken in the first phase of the post-communist transformations in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary albeit the variety of reforms contributed to a lack of their comprehensiveness and strategic orientation to the future trends. The early reformers focused on the abolition of the organs of internal security and ousting the personnel of political police and establishment of economic administrations capable to deal with

emerging market economies. Reorganization of the ministries of internal affairs and making them accountable to elective representatives were one of the first steps done in the process of democratization of the former communist regimes. The economic administration had to be rebuilt after the abolishment of the system of central planning and starting the programs of privatization. The new ministries of privatization have been quickly incorporated into the structures of governments of the new democracies. Beside these innovations, many other central offices and state agencies dealing with economic reforms were put into existence like an office for economic competition and consumer protection, agencies of agricultural market, customs agencies, committee for European integration, etc.

The second major phase of reforms at the central level had started in Poland in 1996 and has been undergoing since January 1, 1997. The main purpose of this phase was a reorganization of the cabinet ministers so that it converges with West European patterns of the governmental executive and its administrative organs. This reform should lead to adjustments of governmental structures and ways of work to main European patterns. A reorganization of the center of government is only a preliminary task in the series of comprehensive reform policies regarding the whole system of territorial public administrations in Poland and other countries of the region.

A territorial decentralization of state powers has been one of the most controversial issues of the post 1989 administrative reforms. The current state of relations between the powers of central, regional and local administrations is perceived as being far from an optimum but there is a lack of political consensus about what an optimal model should look like and what would be the costs of its implementation. The new Constitution of the Republic of Poland / effective since October, 1997 / assumes that an organization of state must be based on such basic values like the rule of law, of state and the territorial selfgovernment.

In the current administrative practice the over-centralized state creates a democracy deficit at the regional levels of governance and deprives regional communities much of their creativity and financial resources. The debates over the regional structures of government are the sources of conflicts among the political parties, municipalities and administrative authorities. A self centered rationality of political actors often contradicts the assumptions of rationalist vision of public administration. Central European countries do not have a tradition of federalism and are afraid of eventual weakening of territorial integrity of their national states. Major historical regions like

Upper Silesia , Moravia and Bohemia have been well integrated into unitary states of Central Europe and any demands for subnational , regional autonomy are seen as illegitimate . European regions which embraced parts of Central European historical regions have had until now very limited influence on the lives of the nations of Poland and other countries of the area .Probably in the near future their role will be growing respectively to a progress of European Union's enlargement to the East. A europeanization of regional structures of postcommunist Europe requires more coordination of works of regional and local administrations in diverse areas , such like environmental protection agencies, control of the external borders , police departments.etc . An europeanization of administrative systems of central europe requires that administration offices and their personnel will have to directly cooperate with European institutions , policies and procedures of conduct. This requires adjustments of legal systems , personnel education and changes of work habits.

The incorporation of the idea of selfgoverning local community protected by the legal statute , electing its authorities and responsible for its own budgetary policy is conceived of as the most substantial change in the organization of public administration systems in Central European countries after 1989 . An administration of the counties and municipalities ceased to be a part of state administration and ruled by the centralized state .The acts on local selfgovernment in the region follow - as a general rule - the principles of the Charter on Local Government of the Council of Europe .Local elective institutions have opened the channels of public participation for populations living in the cities, towns , and rural areas. The institutions of local democracy established in the Visegrad countries in 1990 have passed the test of practical experience and have become inadvertable achievement of democratization .However citizens ,administrative experts and the elective representatives of the inhabitants of local settlements see some weak points in the current institutional arrangements and financial rules of self government. Most scholarly reports indicate the shortcomings of the system of financial transfers between the counties and central budgets, the insufficient resources necessary to providing vital services and satisfying the expectations of local communities .Democratization has not yet brought about as much citizenship participation as were expected by the democratic ideals of the revolutions of 1989 .There are many signals of public alienation from local politics and the bureaucratization of municipal governments . The catastrophic flood in Poland in July 1997 has showed serious

shortcomings of structures and people responsible for the organization of civil and military defense . The crisis showed a lack of coordination and cooperation between various organs of administration and organizational chaos in many places.

In their everyday lives, municipalities and rural counties face numerous difficulties in financing social services and investments and often complain that too much of their incomes are taken out of them by the governmental administration. There have been a plenty of administrative conflicts between the central ministries and local selfgovernments regarding a shortage of finance resources necessary to fulfillment of their tasks imposed by statutes .A financial dependence of municipalities on central budget deprives central European selfgovernments much of their early popular sentiments and authority among city dwellers and farmers.

Re-definition a role of public administration vis-a-vis private and public sectors of economy in Poland is an unfinished process. The rules of market economy have changed the mechanisms of administrative control over private sector but reforms of the public sector have been accomplished only partially .The state bureaucracy has ceased to administer over some areas of social and economic policies that require its active involvement / internal affairs , organized crime , corruption , trade deficit , foreign investments ,unemployment , housing , health care reform - to mention only a few areas/ .On the other hand government organs continue to hold an extensive control in the sphere of privatization .In Poland the proportion of the public sector in the national economy / 36 % / is still much larger than in Western Europe.

Restructuring and privatization of the large enterprises and public sector companies have been slow in Poland .The telecommunication, electric power plants , water pipes , sewage , railroads , bus transpiration in the large cities, etc. are controlled by the state or municipal monopolies An administration over these enterprises by the ministerial or municipal bureaucracy protects large and ineffective companies against market rules. The offices of competition and consumer protection , the new organs of public administration in Poland which have legal obligation to fight antimonopolistic practices , lacks effective legal instruments and a real power to prevent the restrictive policies of governmental regulations and licensing to protect consumers ND private firms against high prices charged by the huge companies having no competitors on the market. The substantial part of a market is protected against foreign and domestic competition by administrative regulations and restrictions.

There is no easy way of rapid development of a professional cadre of civil servants in the countries without the tradition of impartial public service. The historical delay in the development of modern nation states in East Central Europe makes the development of civil service an urgent task. The progress in this respect has been so far rather modest. The replacement of the acting public bureaucrats by the new people must take time of a decade or more. The laws on the civil service have created the legal frameworks for the emerging civil service systems. Institutions of higher education devoted to training of public officers have been established in Hungary and Poland. For example the National School of Public Administration in Warsaw leaves annually ca 80 graduates.

There is an evidence of a persistent tendency of overemployment in bureaucratic institutions. In Poland the number of employees in central administration institutions amounted to ca 110.000. It rose by more than 100 percent over the period of 1990 -1995. An employment in the deconcentrated organs of central administration grew over the same time from ca 34.000 to ca 90.000 persons. A half the current size of government employment entered the administration offices in the past five years. The new adopted law on the civil service has upgraded the prestige of civil servants and created ground for improvement of civil servants' working conditions, linked with raising professional qualifications and experience. Being such the new laws are the crucial element of the modernization strategies of Central European states.

As the associated countries of Central Europe are approaching a date of getting full membership rights and obligations in the European Union they must adjust most of their legal and administrative systems to West European standards. There is a growing understanding that organizations and personnel of public administration must be prepared to the oncoming accession procedures. This challenge requires a constant change of legal frameworks of vital areas of social and economic life. In Poland the task of coordination of these works has moved recently to hands of the Committee on European Integration, established by the statutory act of August 8, 1996. The main goals of the Committee as an organ of government administration are: the planning and coordination of the policies of introduction Poland into European Union, and coordination of policies of other organs of state administration in the area of foreign aid. The Act on The Committee of the European Integration specified the following tasks of this institution:

- Coordination of the process of adjustment and integration of Poland into the European Union
- Adjustments in the sphere of law , giving opinions on the conformity of legislative process with European Union law
- Cooperation with the European Commission on implementation of integration
- Evaluation of the progress with adjustment
- coordination of activities connected with obtaining and use of foreign assistance
- initiation of activities aiming of preparation of information , concepts and personnel for the integration processes
- Cooperation with local government with a view to involving them in the different institutional structures of the European union
- Performing tasks in the sphere of defense and security of the state

The Committee presents to the Council of Ministers :

- Programs of adjustments and integration into the European Union
- Draft decisions as regards the allocation of foreign assistance resources
- Proposed legal acts concerning adjustments and integration activities
- Reports on implementation of adjustment programs and integration activities

Among the most important tasks to be undertaken within the framework of the Polish Strategy of Integration with European Union there is a development of the comprehensive system of training the administrative personnel of ministries, central agencies and regional offices in the subjects of EU laws, decision-making procedures, institutions and policies. The committee estimates that there is currently about several hundred Polish experts on law ,economy and policies of the European Union which may be employed as instructors .An urgent problem that must be solved is a poor knowledge of European languages by the administrative personnel.

In the past two months the committee has been very busy in two forms of actions :

- Working on the official answer of the Polish government to the EU's report / avis / concerning Poland as a candidate country invited to negotiations with European Union ;

-Working as a coordinator of the humanitarian aid granted by the European Commission to Poland after the devastating flood of July 1997.

In 1998 and the nearest years the completion of administrative reforms will be one of the main areas of preparations of Central European countries to the full membership of the European Union and NATO.

Summary

The research project examined and assessed the reforms of administrative structures and policy processes in the Visegrad countries of Central Europe, with special attention focused on Poland. The main areas of research interest were the directions of reorganization of central state administrations, decentralization of territorial administrations, establishment of local selfgovernment and its political and economic role in the new democracies, the relationships between administrative institutions and political interest groups, the development of the Western type civil service and establishing the institutions of European integration as integral parts of central government. The research indicated the achievements and failures which occurred in the process of reforms, the socio-political barriers against the modernization, and the most important areas waiting for reforms. The overall picture of institutional system of public administration in Poland and other Visegrad countries after eight years of reforms shows that substantial democratization and modernization of post-communist party states has taken place, albeit the progress in some areas of public administration has been more than modest. The most difficult problem challenging the new leaderships have become the decentralization of state and implementation of selfgovernmental institutions at the regional level of selfgovernment. In Poland the "Solidarity" cabinet ministers which took over after the September 1997 parliamentary elections has forwarded the new conception of administrative reforms, conceived of as the crucial step in the process of europeanization of the political and economic system, especially modernization of the public sector of the economy, including first of all social insurance and health care institution, inherited from the communist regimes. The further progress will be dependent on innovative leadership and policy capacity of the political and administrative elites. The involvement of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in the processes of European integration constitute most significant external environment for the future institutional reforms in these countries.

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